

COMMUNITY ENGAGED DESIGN



OUR GOALS

To provide you the tools to lead and engage with the community to gather ideas and inspiration for a large community focused public art project/mural.

To outline and explore 5 community engagement tools that will encourage participants to share their own stories as part of us gathering the greater “our story” for the public art design.

To create a safe, alternative space where everyone is welcome

TOOL 1: OPENING AND CLOSING THE SPACE

PURPOSE

We intentionally open and close each community session as a tool for evaluation (checking the temperature of the room). It also can be used to call participants into being present in the space and into community with each other. This check in and check out helps create a safe space in which we name from the beginning that every voice counts.

STEP BY STEP

- 1 At the beginning of your workshop, you can introduce yourself, welcome folks and name that it is time to intentionally open the space.
- 2 To do this we will go around the room and each offer our name, preferred pronoun, and 1 word that describes how we are entering the space. (optional: professional title)
 - a Ex: Greta McLain, Community Muralist, She/Her/Hers, excited
 - b You as the facilitator start by modeling the exercise.
- 3 Once you’ve made it around the room, declare that the space is open and jump into your workshop.
- 4 5 minutes before the end of the workshop time we end each session by going around the room and simply offering 1 word as a closing evaluation (once again checking the temperature of the room) and check in on how we are leaving the space. This will indicate that we are closing the session and the intentional design space. (ex: supported, inspired, curious).

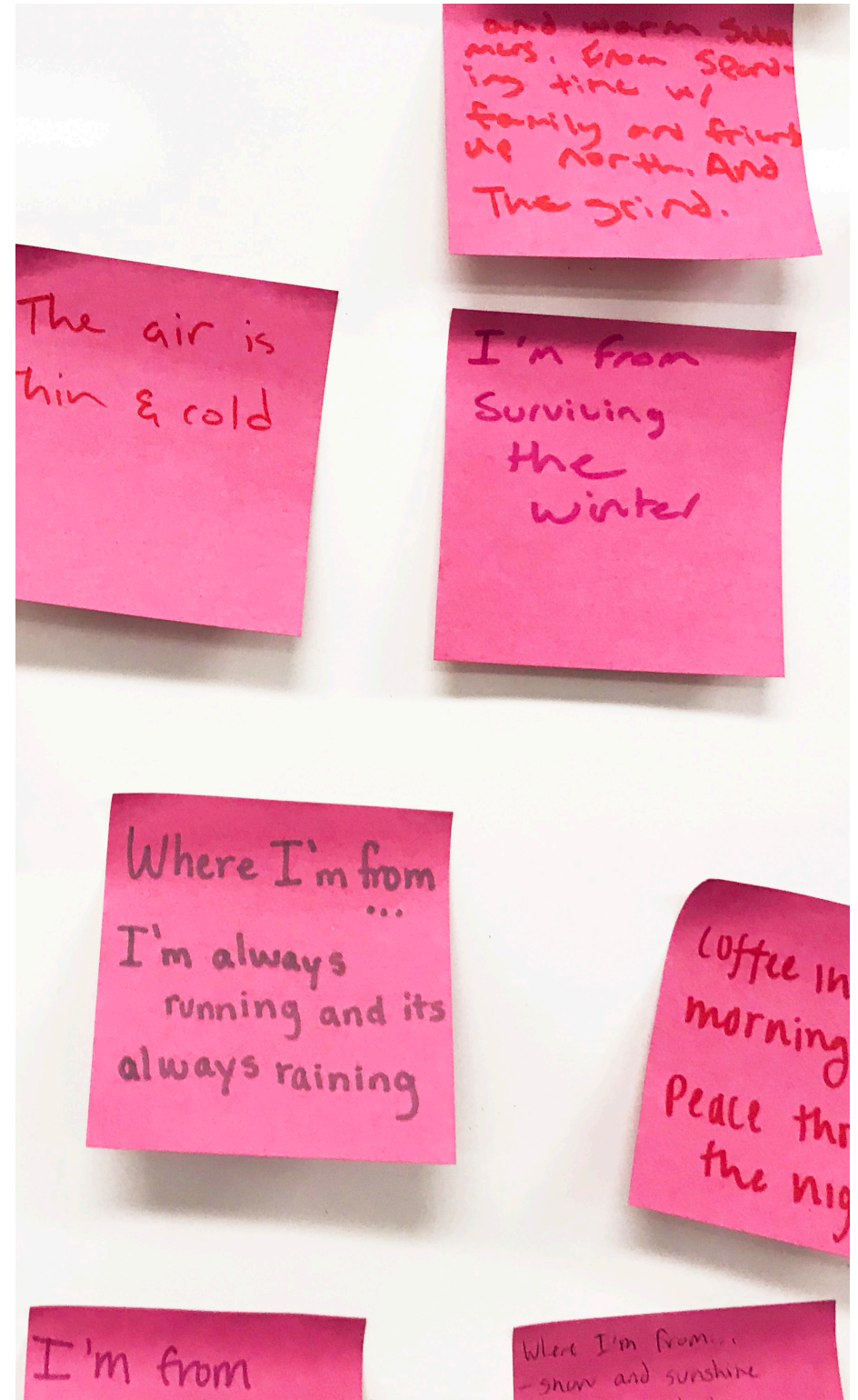
TOOL 2: SAFE SPACE VALUES

PURPOSE

Set expectations for your workshop and create a safe/welcoming space for deeper community connection and sharing. This is another tool to create an alternative feel to your workshop and inspire deeper community sharing. In a longer, classroom setting, these values can be created with the group.

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Ahead of time (with your project design team/admin team) create simple expectations of how you want to hold the workshop space.
Example: During the time/space of this workshop we will practice the following:
 - a Deep Listening
 - b Enthusiastic Curiosity
 - c Respectful Acceptance/Openness.
- 2 Write/post your “Safe Space Values/Workshop Expectations” somewhere visible and go over them as part of your “opening” of the workshop. Have participants offer their interpretations of what they might mean.
- 3 During the course of the workshop, reference back to the Safe Space Values during sharings or different activities where it may be relevant.



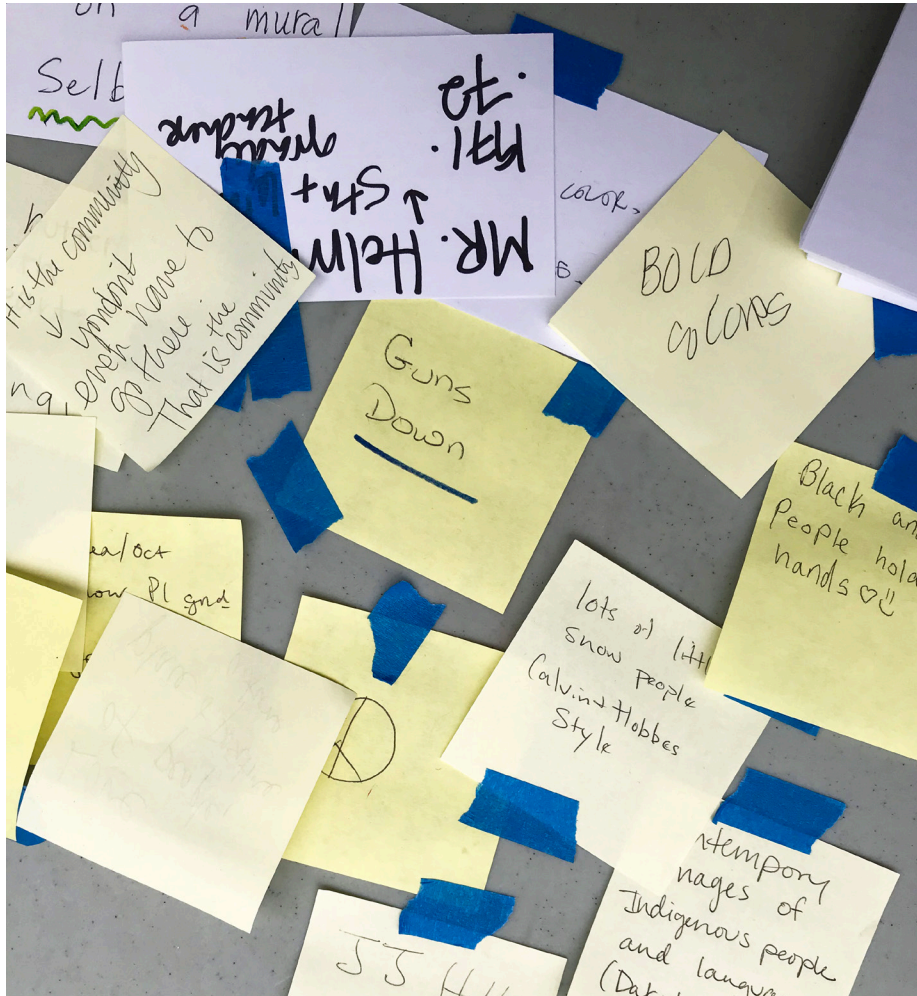
TOOL 3: IF YOU REALLY KNEW ME YOU WOULD KNOW...

PURPOSE

These are a series of prompts that promote participant interaction and encourage safe, connected community ideation. These prompts can be icebreakers and/or serve as tools to collect design theme ideas.

MATERIALS

Large Post-It, newsprint or whiteboards, pens/markers and different colored post-its.



STEP BY STEP

(10-15 minutes)

- 1 Write 3 prompts on the board or on big pieces of paper:
 - a I feel safe when...
 - b If you really knew me you would know...
 - c A piece of my identity that I am most proud of is.../ My skill set that I am most proud of is...
- 2 Post one post-it of each color (a different color for each prompt) next to the prompt.
- 3 Ask participants to answer each prompt on the corresponding colored post-its
- 4 Model the next step by adding your own answers to the large post-its.
- 5 Pass out different colored post-its to each participant (one of each color post-it)
- 6 Give participants a few minutes to answer the prompts
- 7 Have a mingle and share time where people can turn to a neighbor, or move around the room and share one of their post-it responses.
- 8 Once participants have shared with at least 3 different people (or everyone in the room depending on the size of the group, have them stick their responses under the original prompt.

* This activity can be done in tandem with the “Where I’m From” prompt. Those answers can be gathered and turned into a group poem.

TOOL 4: "WHERE I'M FROM"

PURPOSE

This is a poetic prompt based on the poem "Where I'm From" by George Ella Lyon. Lyon is a poet from Harlen County, Kentucky and her poem has been used as an organizing and teaching tool across the country. It also can be gathered and turned into a group poem.

MATERIALS

Pens/markers and different colored post-its

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Introduce the poem, "Where I'm From" by George Ella Lyon and read it aloud to the group.

Where I'm From

By George Ella Lyon

I am from clothespins,
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.

I am from the dirt under the back porch.
(Black, glistening
it tasted like beets.)

I am from the forsythia bush,
the Dutch elm whose long gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.

I am from fudge and eyeglasses,
from Imogene and Alafair.

I'm from the know-it -alls
and the pass -it -ons,
from perk up and pipe down.
I'm from He restoreth my soul
with cottonball lamb
and ten verses I can say myself.

I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch,
fried corn and strong coffee.
From the finger my grandfather lost
to the auger the eye my father shut to keep his sight.

Under my bed was a dress box
spilling old pictures.
a sift of lost faces
to drift beneath my dreams.
I am from those moments --
snapped before I budded --
leaf-fall from the family tree.

- 2 Write the prompt "Where I'm From..." on the board or a large piece of paper.
- 3 Invite participants to answer the prompt on a post-it describing where they are from based on feelings, textures, sounds and memories.

Ex: I'm from tie-dye and nutritional yeast, brass music and tennis courts.
- 4 Give participants a few minutes to answer the prompt
- 5 Have a mingle and share time (can be combined with the Tool 3) where people can turn to a neighbor, or move around the room and share their response(s) to the poetry prompt.
- 6 Once participants have shared with at least 3 different people (or everyone in the room depending on the size of the group), have them stick their responses under the original prompt.
- 7: Read the Community Poem Aloud.

**This activity can be done in tandem with Tool 3.*

TOOL 5: STORY SPIRAL

WHO HAVE YOU BEEN? WHO ARE YOU NOW? WHO WILL YOU BE/WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

PURPOSE

A life story sharing activity to activate each of our stories and to draw connections between individual stories and the greater OUR STORY of our community.

MATERIALS

Pens/markers /colored pencils, Sheets of drawing paper

STEP BY STEP

(5-15 minutes)

- 1 Pass out materials
- 2 Have participants draw a large spiral line on the front side of the piece of paper, have this line continue onto the back of the paper.
- 3 On the front of the paper, invite participants to tell their life story in 6 events starting with their birth, and ending (on the front side) with where they are right now. These six events can be symbolized by small drawings or simply written in.

These life stories can be as broad as “What are the 6 most important things that have happened to you until today?” or you can apply different lenses related to your specific project. For example: Doing a mural at a Food Co-op? Have participants tell their food story. For a project with people experiencing homelessness, have participants tell their housing/home story.
- 4 On the back side, have participants write in 2-4 future events that describe their dreams and goals.
- 5 Partner Share: (participants can choose to share or not) turn to someone you don’t know well and share your life story, they will then have the option to share their story back.

- 6 Group Share: After completing the exercise, participants are again given 3 post-its where they can write one thing from their past, who they are today, and one dream for their future. Then they are invited to post them on a large group timeline. This becomes “OUR STORY”.

NOTE: This can be vulnerable for some participants. It is always good to model as the facilitator by sharing your story first.



TOOL 6: GROUP THINK, WHAT ARE OUR DRIVING QUESTIONS?

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to get specific feedback/ideas for your public art project and to promote the power of Group Think/ Better Together.



MATERIALS

Pens/markers /large post-it paper.

STEP BY STEP

(5-15 minutes)

- 1 Come up with 3 overarching questions to direct your community engagement. These questions can be decided in conjunction with the project organizers. Write these questions on 3 different big post-its around the room or at different tables.

- 2 Introduce your driving questions.

For Example:

- a How did you know Anoka Ramsey Community College was right for you? Describe a positive thing that has happened to you here.
- b When have you not felt welcomed, comfortable, or safe here? Describe a hard thing that's happened here.
- c What is an action that ARCC, it's staff/faculty, or its student body could take that would make this a better place, a safer space?

- 3 Invite participants to move around the room adding their answers and responses to the large sheets of paper.
- 4 Group Share: Read the responses written during the event and ask participants to offer/add anything that may have been missed.