


Chapter Four

Teacher / Facilitator Guides (The First Five Weeks)

In Chapter 3: Who Do You Honor?,
we introduced you to the educators
we honor, the ones who have shaped
our pedagogy.

*In Chapter 4: Teacher/Facilitator
Guides,* we offer teacher/facilitator
guides, including specific assignments,
activities, practices, and worksheets
that we encourage groups to use on
the first, second, third, fourth, and
fifth days of convening. At the end of
each chapter that follows, we offer
more teacher/facilitator guides that
aim to support the material in your
space of learning.

*

We suggest that the following section be shared with the group as best suits your context, either read aloud—in whole or in part—or assigned to be discussed in your space of learning. Before you begin to read, we invite you to ground yourself in the space: notice the air on your skin and your feet on the ground. What are your feelings and sensations at this moment? What are you bringing to this text? Take a moment to become aware of this. We invite you to notice what comes up for you, as you are reading this chapter. We will ask you to reflect upon this at the end of this chapter.

In our teaching over the last six years, we have noticed that we return to some activities, practices, assignments, and worksheets repeatedly in order to make a space of learning that is more supportive and vulnerable. We are sharing these with you because they create spaces of learning that are action-oriented, community- and place-based, socially just, critical, student-centered, contemplative, co-created, and somatic. While they are integral to the framework that we will present in *Chapter 5: Capacities* and *Chapter 7: Lifecycle Phases and Framework*, we believe that they can be easily incorporated into your particular context now.

We have presented the activities and assignments in a specific order, class by class, because each activity builds upon the next, creating the possibility for trust, collaboration, and support. We use these in thirteen-to-fifteen week, semester-long courses. If you are organizing your own space of learning, we encourage you to adapt what follows to your own timeframe. In the other chapters, we do not structure activities and assignments by day because they can be used in any order, according to your context.

You will notice that we differentiate between practices, activities, assignments, and worksheets.

- A practice is a way of doing things intentionally to develop an ability or awareness. It needs to occur on a regular basis to transform and deepen our capacity to be present with ourselves and with one another.
- An activity is an exercise to demonstrate an idea or technique in a space of learning, and might not ever be repeated.
- An assignment is a task that occurs outside a space of learning to demonstrate an idea or a technique, and might not ever be repeated.
- A worksheet contains a series of prompts with empty boxes that are designed to invite your responses. These can be completed individually, in your space of learning, or at home.

We differentiate between contemplative practices and teaching activities and assignments because we want to notice which aspects of our teaching might be repeated on a daily basis to foster greater awareness of ourselves and others in the present, and which aspects of our teaching are oriented toward types of skill building.

NOTE: Every teacher, given their context, will have to assess which contemplative practices and teaching activities in their space of learning are feasible. How many conversations can a teacher have about a space of learning itself, before moving into the “content” or learning outcomes that

students expect from the course? At a minimum, we feel that dedicating one class session and a small portion of the start of each meeting after that to practices and activities that connect people to one another and to their commitment to learn will benefit the group as well as the “content” and, in doing so, will improve learning outcomes of the course.

Let us know what activities, practices, and assignments you have tried, and how you have adapted them to your context at info@bfam-faphd.com. In what ways have they been generative? What adaptations have you made? If you have other activities, practices, and assignments you would like to add to our website, please share them with us.

Reflection

1. How might you cultivate a space of learning that incorporates what you have read in this chapter?
2. * What feelings and sensations came up for you while you were reading this chapter? For example, did you feel surprise, frustration, or excitement? How did you hold these in your body? For example, did you sense these emotions in your shoulders, neck, and back while reading this chapter? *See the Social-Emotional Intelligence Project Reflection activity in this chapter for more.*⁷

In the next section of the book, we will move from spaces of learning into a description of a range of capacities that we believe are necessary in order for you to be present with yourself and with others throughout your production process.