

Be There–Notice Activity

GOAL: To become aware of the different levels of being there and to stretch the Be There muscle.

TIME: 15 minutes

PROPS: None

This exercise can be somewhat uncomfortable, so start off with a lot of energy asking if they’ll play around while we learn about Be There. When you introduce steps that participants might be curious about, just tell them to play along. They’ll learn something soon enough!

1. Pair participants and have them face each other.
2. Each pair decides who is person A and who is person B (or other clever division).
3. Person A verbalizes what they notice as they “be with” person B (who is silent) for one minute (e.g., “I notice John has brown hair, I notice John has a button-down shirt, I notice John is smiling, I notice he has an earring). It is important to make sure the person does not stop throughout the whole minute. (Note: It is good to do a demo of each step so participants understand what to do.)
4. Process the experience. Ask participants,
 - “How did that feel and what was it like?”
 - “What distracted you?”
 - “Was it hard to bring yourself back to now?” “Why?” “Why not?”

You will get a lot of participants saying “uncomfortable.” Keep asking for different answers from participants. Now, tell them you are taking it to a new level.

5. Person A closes eyes, and keeps verbalizing what they notice for one minute.
 - At this point, participants will hear things they hadn’t noticed before, “I notice people chatting in the hallway, I notice that I’m moving my feet around, I notice I’m curious about what my partner is thinking, I notice that I’m warm.” Make sure they verbalize for the whole minute. This may be difficult for some participants!
6. Afterward, again, ask, “What was that like?”
 - Participants will have a range of answers. What you are pointing to here is there is a lot happening all around us that we don’t notice, either because we aren’t conscious or

that we are just moving too fast. The idea is to get participants really noticing what is happening around them.

7. Now tell participants you are going for the BIG stretch! A real hard core Be There. They are not allowed to talk, just be with the other person.

8. Person A and B are just silent together for one minute.

- You'll notice that participants will start laughing, get uncomfortable and sometimes squirmy. At the end of the minute you'll hear a big sigh of relief! "That felt like forever!"

9. Again, ask them what they noticed about that time together. We've got a range of responses from "That is totally unnatural" to "I feel like I got to be better friends with Fred." There is learning in it all. Ask them, "What do you think this has to do with Be There?"

10. Then tell participants that you are going to do it one more time! Have them be together silently for another minute.

11. Afterward ask participants what that was like. You'll get a range of responses. A common one is, "That wasn't as hard." Make the point that the reason we call the concepts of The FISH! Philosophy "practices" is because the more you live them, the easier they become.

12. Debrief Questions:

- What is it to Be There?
- What was easy about this exercise? Difficult?
- How could you Be There more for people? (Get ideas on action steps.)
- What will you do? (Each person decides what change they'll make.)
- In what ways can this experience help them as a team in the future?

