

Convening – Questions of Practice

Pinch Pot, Stone, Incense, Drum

Thursday, October 21, 2021

10:30 am – 12:00 pm

Standing Invitations

The Friday Fellowship practices convening skills grounded in commitments to curious inquiry, courageous dialogue, and creative responses to the places where selves, stories, and systems collide. Modeling and leading conversations that invite rest, reflection, reckoning, and relationship, Friday Fellows listen in as they learn forward together. This convening tool moves through an intentional process that builds relationships ready to hear, hold, and honor the work at hand.

Please read this full guide before and as you begin. Would you co-create a convening that feels right to those gathering? As you feel your way forward, keep going back for people, places, and things that matter. *Practice makes possible.*

Step One: ***Pinch Pot Roll Call***

Per our practice-in-the-breaking-and-making-and-more, let's begin by going back for things that matter. Before calling ourselves in, will we listen to the words and wisdom our pinch pots are sharing? What are they gleaning about this thing called fellowship?

Would you pick 2-3 sentences from your pinch pot letter to share with the group? What matters most about what your pinch pot is reflecting back to you? After reading the selection from your letter, would you place your pinch pot on our altar space? We'll hold until all pinch pots have been heard.

What are you coming back for? And why?

What remains to be seen and said and surfaced and shared?

Step Two: ***Stone***

Sometimes, our own learning is the poetry we need. In contrast to our customary celebration of others' voices, would you share some words that remind you of that which is both cornerstone and stumbling block on this shared fellowship journey?

What cornerstones of fellowship are supporting your journey?

What stumbling blocks are showing up for you and for our shared work?

What needs to be transformed from hard place to heart space?

As this group keeps coming together, hearing what matters *matters*. What are the stones and rocks that serve you and me and us? Which are millstones grinding others into the ground?

Step Three: *Incense*

Time travels. Smoke rises. And the sacred shows up in both the burning and in the blessed remains.

*Would you share a feeling that felt hot in July that has since tempered?
What do you know today that you couldn't know before?
Would you share a feeling that still feels some kind of way today?
What do you and me and we need to know differently as we move forward together?*

Step Four: *Drum*

Drums show up in all kinds of places – in people and things, too. One of their gifts is an ability to signal and to speak. Are we ready to move from inference and suggestion into a conversation with teeth and bones – heart, too? Can we become the objects of our convening without making object lessons of one another?

*Clearness is always on the horizon. What remains to be said?
Direct communication is healing. What needs to be heard and engaged?
Fellowship is in the heart. What remains to be honored?*

Step Five: *Clearness, Reprised*

We're about to go back to the top and invite a calling in of our full selves. Before we get there, another call for clearness. Convenings can deepen our awareness, challenge our knowing, and invite both individual and collective reckoning. Will we pause together and quiet hearts and minds to reflect on what has been said and offered? After two or three minutes of silence, would someone raise the following question? This is not a rhetorical flourish. Let's hear, together, this cornerstone – this smoke signal – this heart beat – of this convening process.

*Are we clear – not only to close – but to proceed?**

**Being clear to proceed does *not* require consensus or completion. Instead, it signals a personal awareness of where you and me and we are *right now* in relation to an evolving understanding of what it means to bear witness to our own – and others' – work. Convenings can sometimes bring up things we need to attend to in our own lives. These learnings and teachings are not necessarily reason to hold up a closing. Instead, if there are lingering questions that need to be asked or learning that needs to be named and deepened *with this group*, we will take the time to honor unfinished business. If the group is not clear to proceed, will we sit with one another until we have the kind of clearness that holds us all?*

Step Six: *Beginning Again – Calling In*

Much like a closing, a beginning or a return is its own work. *Please call yourself in.* Welcome!

How will you enter this seminar weekend?