

Human Library Training for Organizers/Publishing Partners

Tuesday, February 28, 2023

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Introduction

- Everybody has prejudices.
- It's natural way of navigating and understanding potential risks.
- We challenge our prejudices through safe encounters.
- "Unjudge someone" means encouraging people to reflect and "unjudge."
- Judgement is often rooted in a lack of knowledge and fear of the unknown.
 - This applies to Books + Readers

Why a Library?

- The library is a neutral place where everyone is welcome.
- Recognizable in every society
- Values align w/Human Library
- It's free.
- No one group that runs or is in control.
- Using the terms Readers and Books functions as a "role-play," which creates a safe space for dialogue.
- The titles of the Books highlight how they are objectified and stereotyped.
- The role of the librarian functions as a guide and upholder of the framework of the setting
- Celebrate diversity.
- Mission: To create a platform for inclusive and appreciative conversation, presenting the reader with an opportunity to talk to people who represent groups in society that face prejudices, stigma, discrimination, or taboo

Tool: The Pillars of Prejudice

- Is not an exhaustive list.
- Primarily internal because it can be easily misunderstood.
- Use to ensure you have as much diversity as possible
- **DO NOT SHARE THE PILLARS OF PREJUDICE PUBLICLY!**

Titles

- Title = the topic of the book (has the purpose)
 - Example: Incest could be "incest survivor," "childhood trauma," "incest"
 - A book can have several titles. But they should focus on one title per reading.
- Titles are categories of prejudice that intentionally invite Readers' biases. By acknowledging our biases we create an opportunity to actively challenge them.
- Must be concrete and clear and reflect the stereotypes of society
- Not a reflection of how the Books see themselves (neutral; not degrading)
- Creates a chance to break out of the box, through dialogue with the Reader
- **THE BOOK SHOULD HAVE A CLEAR IDEA OF THEIR TOPIC AND CONTENT BEFORE TRAINING**
- The titles will be decided with help from trainers.

- Well-formulated vs. poorly formulated title:
 - **Victim of Stalking** vs. My journey through life (not specific; everyone has a journey through life)
 - **Police Officer** OR **Amputee** vs. Amputee Police Officer (leave part of the story to be uncovered)
 - **Schizophrenic** vs. Living my life as Schizophrenic (do not add fluff)
 - **Muslim** vs. Liberated Muslim (do not spoil the plot of the book)

Who is published? Individuals who:

- Have experience of discrimination, disadvantage, hardship, or prejudice, to taboo.
- Are open-minded people and respectful of others?
- Are ready to challenge their own stereotypes.
- Have processed the trauma.
- Have the courage to be an open Book for strangers. Be able to:
 - Have a conversation, not give a lecture.
 - Create a comfortable and open atmosphere.
 - Follow the Reader's agenda.
 - Give space for questions and listens.
 - Understand that everyone judges and holds stereotypes.
 - Not cajole, convert, or convince.
 - Respond with their own experience, not as an authority.
- Like to engage in dialogue and is a good listener.
- Want to create understanding and empathy, rather than ignorance, misconception, or judgement.

(The Human Library will not publish: hatemongers, missionaries, self-promoters, storytellers, rare examples, hobbies, current criminal activity or addictions.)

Step-by-step: How to Recruit Books:

1. First contact
2. Interview
3. Fill out and send the Publishing Package (in Dropbox; spreadsheet of information and NDA signed by each Book that will attend online training)—send to Ina (email in materials)
4. Books attend training at the Book Portal (flexible/self-paced)
5. Books bring their Publishing Exercise to an Internal Book Release (***within a month of the event***)
 - a. Small, internal event for Books, Librarians, and organizers
 - b. Debrief with books after their training.
 - c. Confirmed titles (they may have crystalized during training)
 - d. Build community/brave space.
 - e. Books can have readings with one another and get to know one another and “unjudge” a fellow Book.
6. Human Library Event

Book Interviews are important:

- Explain the concept of the Human Library
- What it means to be a Book
- Try to get a clear idea of their topic
 - Expectations (expect from the organizers; expect from the experience)

- It's OK to ask tough questions in the interview—doing it for the Books' sake.
- Avoid interviews with people you know personally. You won't ask the same kinds of questions as someone who does not know them.
- If it goes well, invite them to the training.

Readers

- Up to them how they interact with a Book (must be respectful)
- Do not have eyesight when they pick a book (they have a picture that may be upended)—***need to consider for day-of set-up that the Books should not be visible at registration.***
- Aim for diversity among Readers (age, gender, education, religion, etc.)
- Should be in the right "frame of mind"
- Turn away Readers with the wrong intentions
- Introduce the Reader to the concept
 - Emphasize dialogue and conversation
- NO SHARING PERSONAL INFORMATION DURING THE READING OR RIGHT AFTER THE READING
 - Readers may leave their info with a librarian who will offer the info to the Book at the end of the event.
- No one who is under the influence of substances

How do we publish? Two types of events:

Open Book Shelf—THIS IS HOW OUR EVENT WILL OPERATE

- Open to the public
- Reader chooses the Book at the lending desk
- Librarians brief and screen individual Readers before each reading (get a sense of state of mind or motivation of a Reader; trust your gut; ok to reject someone—you can say the Book is not available at that time)
- One or two Readers at each Reading (MUST CHECK WITH BOOK BEFORE ASSIGNING TWO READERS)
- Take place at libraries, festivals, campuses and other open spaces

VENUE

- Create curiosity
- Ensure accessibility and be aware of limitations (bathrooms, parking, entrance)
- Give the books a tour of the venue before the event starts (how far can they go on breaks? Bathrooms? Break room?)
- Secure a separate room for Books and Librarians
- Talk to books about their needs
- Confirm how many readings a Book can/will participate in (they may have energy for only two of six, for example)

Reading Hall (not the TML/Cape Elizabeth event)

- Closed to the public
- Readers and Books are matched by pre-determined schedule
- Librarians brief Readers as a group before the event
- Larger groups at the Reading (no more than seven Readers per Book)
- Takes place at high schools, colleges, etc.
- The Book moves between groups of Readers

Book Portal (Where Books will attend online training)—NEW + STILL IN DEVELOPMENT

- Content—all in the Dropbox
 - Intro to Human Library
 - Book titles (how to address the Elephant in the Room)
 - Tips, Best Practices & Rules for Books/Readers
 - Publishing Exercise (***Books must complete prior to Internal Book Release***)
 - Final Survey

Before the event

- Promote: Create a Facebook event (#HumanLibrary and #UnjudgeSomeone); tag Human Library
- Share list of topics and have books training w/Human Library
- Inform Human Library of the date (October 14, 2023)
- Can have pre-registration (e.g., online signup for Readers) to schedule a reading but NOT with a specific Book
- Leave room for people to drop-in during the day.
- Marketing:
 - Ensure ® is always included after Human Library®
 - Materials must be approved by Human Library® (written approval)
 - **DO NOT PUBLISH BOOK TITLES BEFORE THE EVENT.**
 - It is possible to use examples from past/other events.
 - **DO NOT DO ANY MARKETING WITH SPECIFIC BOOKS**

After the event:

- Questionnaires to Books, in the debrief (with Librarians in separate space)
- Questionnaires to Readers after their last loan.
- Questionnaire for the Organizer—due no later than 30 days after the event.
- Share pictures and photos with the Human Library:
 - Need to ask consent for photos.
 - Ask Books at briefing for photo consent.
 - Ask Readers at screening (or put on sign-in/registration form)
 - Let Human Library know if they can use photos publicly.
- Books may become part of the online publishing.

Security

- Supervise conversations (librarians)
- Do not publicize Book titles as some may generate negative interest.

Role of Librarian:

- Caretaking of the Books
- Supervise readings
- Talking to the Books between Readings
- Communicate the concept of the Human Library to Readers
- Screening Readers motivation
- Making sure Readers and Books feel comfortable in the library
- Managing time (give five minute warnings)
 - Readings may be extended ONLY if both the Reader and Book want that, and the Librarian can coordinate it.

Good event:

- At least 10 different Books (personality, gender, age, etc.)
- Minimum of six Pillars of Prejudice and balance of content
- Enough staffing (minimum of four Librarians—more like ½ number of Books)
- Prepare Readers
- Caretaking and communication with Books
- At least three hours to ensure time for multiple Readings (each 30 minutes)
 - Breaks for Books
- Consider holding during hours of the Library (e.g., 10am to 5pm)