

Hosting a Belonging Party

SAFETY + SPACE

Meet the physical needs of your guests first and foremost. Creating safety and security is the foundation for meaningful connection. Here are a few considerations.

- Provide nourishing food and drinks. It doesn't have to be fancy, but breaking bread together is one of our most basic ways of fostering connection as humans. When running an event that goes late, I love to personally offer each person tea and dark chocolate near the end. It's a way to get some face-to-face time with every individual and make them feel served.
 - Make the space conversation-friendly, with plenty of seating (or floor space), blankets, soft lighting, and Kleenex in case there are any tears. Be clear about where they can find everything (including the restroom) and which spaces they are welcome to use.
 - Create a sanctuary. Designate a room or space set apart from the action where soft music is playing and incense or candles are burning. This serves as a no-conversation zone any time someone needs a break from the deep questions.
 - Have a crafting table. This is an effective way to help guests ease into deep conversations and open up dialog. I love to make a crown-crafting station where each person can create a paper crown and write his/her name and "superpower" on it.
 - Designate a Best Questions Board where guests can post questions they found to be especially meaningful or write their own.
 - Establish a central gathering spot where everyone will come back together to transition between exercises throughout the event.
 - Identify "party principles" that establish clear ground rules and set clear expectations for ensuring every individual's needs are met and creating a space that is safe and open.
 - Have small boxes of deep questions set on the tables and around the areas where guests will congregate.
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NO SMALL TALK GAME

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- As a group, agree on 3-5 banned "small talk" questions. Typically this will be things like:
What do you do?
Where are you from?
How's the weather?
 - Give each person a bracelet with 5 beads. (You can also use tokens, buttons, or whatever you like to symbolize points.)
 - Provide an overview of the 3 simple ways everyone can gain or lose points. Fabulous prizes may be on the line!
 - Allot about 10 minutes near the end of the event for bead exchanges and awards.



3 Ways to Earn Points

1. If you overhear someone asking one of the agreed upon small talk questions, they must give you one of their beads.
2. Check your cell phone into the contraband basket for the duration of the event and earn 3 extra beads.
3. At the end of the event, you will give away 5 of your beads. They can be given to someone who listened especially well, to someone who exercised vulnerability with you, or to someone who just had a beautiful presence. Give them all to one person or one apiece to 5 people - divide them up however you like.

Creating Flow



Sample Agenda

| Welcome

- Express gratitude for everyone in attendance.
- Provide an overview of the space.
- Lay out the party principles.

| Opening meditation

Choose a meditation practice that works for you. I typically include:

Breath work

Body and energy awareness

Intention setting

| Easing in

Allow time to get food, make crowns, and sift through the questions.

| Guided conversation

Have guests pair up however they'd like and sit knee to knee. (Also provide the option of back to back if they are more comfortable with that.)

Provide a pre-selected question for them to discuss. It's a good idea to choose one that isn't too emotionally intense to begin.

| Open flow

Allow time for deep questions however they happen organically.

| Bead exchange and awards

Bring guests back to the gathering place and allot 10 minutes to give away beads.

See who has the most beads and award a fabulous prize!

| Closing ritual

Have guests pair up by drawing famous pairs from a basket and finding their match (Bonnie and Clyde, Sonny and Cher, etc.).

Once they find their partners, have them whisper to each other what the most powerful moment of the evening was for them.

| Tea, chocolate, hugs!