



An Arts-based Approach to Trauma/Violence

As artists and educators, we need strategies to counteract trauma and violence.

PROCESS

Step 1: Tearing - Open the folder and tear the paper inside. As you do so, consider the impact of grief, loss, trauma, and violence in our schools and communities. Talk with each other as you tear.

Step 2: Visualizing - Close your eyes (if comfortable) and take 3 deep breathes. Imagine a rectangular box, approximately 4"x12" with a black chalkboard inside with the question written on it "what are my personal responsibilities and our collective responsibilities to end violence?" Visualize the sides of the box begin to open. Envision what action you can take to end violence.



Step 3: Creating - Use a gluestick to reassemble selected torn papers inside and/or outside the folder in ways that convey personal strategies and collective action to end violence. Use markers to add images and text, including writing your name on your collage. Take a photo of the collage.

Step 4: Sharing - present your collage of strategies/action plans to the group.

Step 5: Reflecting – On return home, use the NAEA Women's Caucus blog at <http://naeawcvoices.wordpress.com/naea-lobby-session-2013/> to share how you have taken personal responsibility for collective action.

Transcription of Groups' Presenting their Collages & Summarizing their Approach



GROUP 1 (speaker Michelle Tillander; group participants: Juli Dorff, Sheri Klein). Our group talked about the messiness of this problem, the problem of violence so we didn't feel that we wanted to make something that was closeable so all of these things are raised off the surface, they spiral out, they're interconnected, they're off the edges. We also went onto the back, because we think that the problem is kind of rooted in a lot of different things and flows through different systems.

Sheri Klein: It takes one person at a time.

Michelle Tillander: You're correct. It takes one person at a time, slowly chipping away at the positive and negative or building the positive, chipping the negative to work those two things in tandem. A lot of listening, listening, listening needs to go on. People need to hear and see the problem and personal responsibility and intent for non-violent communication and think about the self and involving the self in promoting non-violent communication. I need a mike, I need amplified.

Karen Keifer-Boyd: We need to do the human microphone, so we can hear.



GROUP 2 (speaker Jane Cera; group participants: Christine Woywod, Linda Hoepfner Poling, Stephanie Pickens). We really had a hard time paying attention and focusing, partially because it was a little loud. Because it reminded me a lot of what it's like in a chaotic moment of violence, so as we were ripping we found a face, and we thought that the face was kind of exploding like everyone's voices here in this room. So we wanted them to be hidden at some point, but also exploding. And, then our reflection afterward was that it looks like the pictures of walls of people who have been lost, a memorial. (All the voices repeat this together.)



GROUP 3 (speaker Alice Arnold; group participants: Majorie Manifold, Enid Zimmerman, Barbara Caldwell). We tore the paper while we talked, and we thought about the need primarily to raise consciousness, and to affirm individuals through art. And, to help people get in touch with their strengths and their dark sides through art. And, down, here is media violence is not acceptable. And, no guns. And, no bullying. And violent video addiction. What about the light? (All the voices repeat this together.)

We gain consciousness through understanding our own shadow side. And our light. And our light comes out of that shadow. It's about transformation. As we become we transform. As we become aware of our self and others we are transformed. And, so we as

art teachers can help others develop both those strengths, rise above, explore ways of being, and express themselves. (All the voices together.)

GROUP 4: (speaker Olga Ivashkevich; group participants: Marissa McClure, Rina Kundu, Michelle Bae-Dimitriadis, Laura Trafi-Prats). Each of us has a very different understanding of what violence is, and there is no singular representation.

Marissa McClure: I have something that I have to share that represents a particular form of violence that affects me directly that I'd like to share with you as a call to action to support insurance coverage for fertility treatment for all people of all genders in all situations regardless of employment or access. There's a facebook site, S/m/othering, (<https://www.facebook.com/SmotheringIF>) of images and information in order to advocate to lawmakers. (All the voices together.)

Karen Keifer-Boyd: It doesn't matter if you have a soft voice, we will echo you.



GROUP 5 (speaker Christine Liao; group participants: Lynda Booker, Karen Keifer-Boyd, Mary Elizabeth Meier, Jackie Thomas). We talked about awareness and education and to speak out against the violence in the media. (All the voices together.)