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Teaching Artist Handbook 2019

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A FEW WORDS ABOUT RTA AND THE PRISON CULTURE

Katherine

We are proud to refer to you as a teaching artist rather than “volunteer”. You are a professional artist and educator and can deliver an art form that transforms lives and achieves RTA’s goals of building life skills in the men and women we serve. Note, however, that in the eyes of Department of Corrections & Community Supervision (DOCCS) everyone who works in prison who is not DOCCS staff is classified as a volunteer.

RTA and its teaching artists are guests in the house of DOCCS. You represent RTA and its reputation. Whatever judgment you make reflects on RTA, so it is important that you think carefully about your actions. We have spent over 20 years building a relationship with DOCCS at the facilities and the central office in Albany. This is what allows all of us to continue to serve the people we care about inside the walls.

This means no matter how frustrating, inconsistent and sometimes just plain wrong DOCCS’s rules and procedures are – **please keep your cool, smile and do your best when, for example:**

- gate clearances are not in place no matter how carefully they were scheduled
- the entry procedure is dragged out so long you want to scream
- a corrections officer (CO) asks you why you want to “work with these monsters” (Have you got a good answer for this one?)
- a CO speaks harshly or insults a prisoner in your presence. In this case, please remain neutral. **RTA cannot side with either the prisoner or the CO.**

A Word about Corrections Officers

CO’s offer volunteers their biggest challenge.

Men and women take these jobs for reasons like other state employees: a steady income, overtime, good benefits, early retirement, etc. Generally, they are not highly educated and have limited job training. Some are decent folks wanting to do the job, follow the rules, and go home to their families. Others find their custodial duties present opportunities for cruelty, oppression and anger. Learning how to successfully navigate these personalities is a serious undertaking.

Keep in mind that their jobs are dangerous and depressing; they work long hours and are often away from their own families. Be friendly and cordial; on the other hand, don’t be so friendly that you end up gossip buddies.

Some General RTA Guidelines

- I. The Nature of Their Crimes:** Do not ask an individual about his/her crime. We also suggest you don't look them up in the DOCCS database because if you know their crimes, it could influence how you think and work with them. RTA is about reaching for the good in each person; if a prisoner has joined RTA, chances are they are looking for ways to change.

- II. Establishing Boundaries:** Please keep your personal information to yourself and avoid talking with the incarcerated about their own families, etc. We know this is incredibly hard, but maintaining a professional distance is important for you, the incarcerated and our organization. We can feel a heady and addictive "superstar" status when working in prison. It is natural to feel this way but knowing that it can happen will help you remember that is not why you do this work. We are not there to be the incarcerated's friends.

- III. Avoid physical contact.** Other than shaking hands, avoid touching the incarcerated. If a CO decides it is inappropriate, it can be reported, and your volunteer status terminated. It is also very easy for an incarcerated person to misunderstand intentions. This can lead to problems (unsolicited letters, cards, gifts, personal requests – all of which are forbidden). No hugging under any circumstances!

- IV. Don't believe everything you hear** from either the incarcerated or CO's. We can never know the truth, so our best advice is to be compassionate but neutral.
 - a. Facility administration** (anyone beyond CO) and rules/program management? Please don't communicate directly with the facility administration on issues about RTA, and leave the program management – attendance, lateness, etc., to the steering committee. Steering committees give our participants the opportunity to learn to lead and make decisions.

 - b.** If you don't know something about a rule or an issue, contact RTA. You can almost always reach either Joe or Charles for clarification.

- V. Professionalism:** Please be on time, be prepared and follow through on what you say you are going to do. Communicate regularly with RTA on any confusing issue or question and keep us informed.

- a. **Dress appropriately.** For women this is complicated. Obviously, no halter tops, shorts (for men or women), cleavage showing, short or tight skirts or pants, sandals with open toes and without a heel strap, excessive jewelry, make-up, perfume, etc. Lovely linen for the summer can be rejected at the door as too see-through. Avoid underwire bras or be prepared to take them off when going through security (in a private room, that is) – the wires can set off the metal detector. Think conservatively and think ahead.
- b. **Empathy and compassion:** It is easy to become overly empathetic with the people we serve. This can lead to attachment, physical contact and breaking the rules by bringing things in for the incarcerated or taking something out for them. We recommend “engagement with boundaries”.

VI. What is “prison possible”? Remembering what you can and cannot bring into prisons is confusing. All electronics are easy - absolutely no cell phones, iPod, iPad, cameras, laptops, smart phones and eyeglasses, smart watches etc. Some facilities allow you to bring in car keys, others do not. Chewing gum is not allowed because of its ability to “gum up” a lock or the potential for gum to become a pattern for making a key. Water bottles must be store-bought and always sealed, except at Fishkill where they are not allowed at all. If you want to give out notebooks, make sure they do not have metal. No train schedules, magazines, newspapers, etc. And the list goes on and on. If you have a question, please ask!

Thank you,
Katherine

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS WITHIN THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

The New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision welcomes and is fully supportive of members of the community who volunteer their time and talents to assist in providing meaningful, relevant programs and services to the offender population.

Because these programs and services are provided within the confines of correctional facilities, the Department has certain expectations concerning the conduct of volunteers. As such, specific standards of conduct must be followed by all volunteers.

The following general guidelines and specific standards for volunteers must be complied with in order to ensure the safety and security of the facility staff, offender participants and volunteers.

Questions or concerns related to these guidelines and standards should be presented to the appropriate facility staff person.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

- As a volunteer, you must be registered prior to beginning your work within a correctional facility. If you meet the Department's requirements for annual Tuberculosis (TB) testing/screening, you must be tested if you enter a facility or combination of facilities for 8 hours or more, or if you enter a facility or facilities once a month or more. If you fail to have appropriate and timely TB testing/screening, you will not be allowed entry into a facility.
- You must enter and exit the facility through the same gate, which will be designated by the facility. Upon entering the facility, you will be directed to pass through a metal detector. You will be hand-stamped and you may be subjected to a search. The facility will provide you with an identification card, which you must wear while inside the facility. The identification card must be returned prior to your departure and retained on file at the facility. All items brought into the facility will be inspected.
- You will be assigned a Staff Supervisor to work with while in the facility. You will be escorted by either this staff member, a Correction Officer, or another staff member while in the facility.
- It is expected that you will be dependable and punctual. If you are unable to provide your services at the appointed time, contact your Staff Supervisor, the Volunteer Services Office, or the Watch Commander, as far in advance as possible.
- Any change in address or phone numbers should be reported to the Supervisor of Volunteer Services or your facility Volunteer Services Contact Person.

SPECIFIC STANDARDS FOR VOLUNTEERS

- **Personal Vehicles:** Parking of vehicles on State property will be permitted only in those areas designated by the facility. All vehicles will have windows closed, ignition off, doors and trunk securely locked with keys removed at all times. The vehicle will contain no firearms, ammunition, or any other weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, explosives or excessive civilian clothing.
- **Sobriety:** Persons under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol will not be allowed into any of our facilities. Prescription medication must be brought to the attention of security staff upon arrival. Only that prescription medication absolutely necessary for the duration of your service will be permitted into the facility, on your person.
- **Contraband:** Do not bring into the facility any items that might be defined as contraband. In a correctional facility, promoting prison contraband is a felony offense. Contraband is defined as:

Anything in possession that would constitute an offense under the law applicable to the public;

Any article or thing that is readily capable of being used to cause death or serious physical injury, including but not limited to, a handgun, shoulder gun, cartridge, knife, explosive, or dangerous drug (including marijuana);

Anything that is introduced into a correctional facility with the intent to transfer to an offender without the permission of the Superintendent or designee;

Anything that is not specifically authorized to be possessed by an offender in a State correctional facility according to the rules and policies of the Department or local policies of the facility. (i.e. Alcohol and money are among the items offenders are not permitted to possess).

- **Appropriate Dress:** Clothing should be appropriate and in general, keeping with Department requirements for all visitors (i.e. no halter/tank tops, mini-skirts, shorts above the knee, see-through clothing, plunging necklines, T-shirts containing statements or references promoting crime, drugs, alcohol, or sadistic/violent, sexual, pornographic, vulgar, gang-related references, or ethnic slurs, shoes must be securely fitted to the foot, no flip flops, or sandals without a heel strap). If in doubt, you should not wear a questionable article of clothing, because you will not be admitted to provide your service at the facility.
- **Articles Brought Into the Facility**

- If your program requires that you bring in special materials, you must get a gate clearance for the items in advance with your Staff Supervisor.
- The taking of photographs anywhere on the facility property or inside the facility is prohibited, without specific prior approval from the Superintendent. Tape recorders, cassettes or cameras may be brought into the facility only with special permission of the Superintendent.
- **Absolutely no cell phones, ipads, smart watches, cameras, recording devices, laptop computers or other similar electronic devices allowed in any area of the facility, including the front lobby.** Such items should remain securely locked in your vehicle.
- **Valuables and Handbags:** Do not carry large sums of money or wear expensive articles or jewelry while participating in programs at the facility. Handbags should not be left unattended at any time.
- **Items Given To or Taken From An Incarcerated Person**
 - The exchange of money and/or gifts with the incarcerated is prohibited.
 - Do not bring in or take anything from the incarcerated that is to be carried outside of the institution.
 - As a volunteer, you are not to carry oral messages or written correspondence in or out of the facility for an offender.
 - Do not bring in literature or video which has not been pre-approved by facility staff.
- **Facility Emergencies:** In the event of an emergency of any kind, you will be required to immediately follow the direction of facility staff.
- **Matters of the Incarcerated Discipline:** Matters of discipline are the responsibility of the security staff. Under no circumstances should you interfere. Any questions of judgment should be discussed privately with staff and never in the presence of the incarcerated. Matters of the incarcerated misconduct should be reported immediately to your Staff Supervisor or to a security staff member, never the incarcerated.
- **Confidentiality:** In your contacts outside the correctional facility, use discretion in revealing information you have acquired in the course of performing your service. Check with appropriate staff if you are doubtful about what requires confidentiality. Information gained that could adversely affect the safety and security of staff, the incarcerated, or volunteers, should immediately be reported to a security supervisor.
- **Relationship with the Incarcerated**

While working with the incarcerated on a regular basis, a professional relationship must be maintained. Care should be taken to avoid becoming emotionally involved with the incarcerated.

The New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision has zero tolerance for sexual abuse. Sexual conduct or contact with a person committed to the custody of the Department is a crime, whether it occurs inside a correctional facility, during the transportation outside a correctional facility, or while the incarcerated is a participant in a temporary release program. Any sexual abuse of the incarcerated by a volunteer or intern will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, even if the he or she “willingly” participates in the act.

Any volunteer or intern who receives a report that the incarcerated is the victim of an incident of sexual abuse, sexual threat, or staff voyeurism, must be aware of the sensitive nature of the situation. Any volunteer or intern who receives such a report shall immediately notify his or her staff supervisor who shall immediately notify the Watch Commander. If the staff supervisor is not available, the report shall be made immediately to the Watch Commander.

- **Personal Information** about yourself, such as information pertaining to your family, home address, phone number, and personal habits should not be revealed.
- **Correspondence, Visitation, and Telephone Calls:** You are not permitted to correspond with, visit or accept phone calls from the incarcerated at any of the facilities of the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. Exemptions to this prohibition may only be granted by the Deputy Commissioner for Program Services or designee. If you wish to seek an exemption, you must submit a written request to the facility Superintendent, explaining the reason for your exemption request.
- **Comments and Presentation Content:** It should be kept in mind that presentations and/or materials presented during a volunteer program should be kept positive in nature and that in a correctional setting, statements may be misconstrued or magnified by the incarcerated to the extent that they could jeopardize the safety and security of community guests, volunteers, staff, and program participants. To that end, profanity, vulgarity and comments that are critical of a particular agency or group of individuals will not be tolerated.
- **Reentry:** Volunteers who choose to work with the incarcerated upon release from the Department should only do so under a structured program whose focus is to assist formerly incarcerated persons in their community re-integration process. Before beginning to work with formerly incarcerated persons, the volunteer must communicate in writing their interest to the SCFVS. Such communication should be reported to the Superintendent and placed in the volunteer’s file.
- **Criminal Charges:** *A Report of Criminal Charges* (see Directive #2112, “Report of Criminal

Charges”) must be filed if you are charged with the commission of a felony or misdemeanor. Violations which allege possession and/or use of a controlled substance must also be reported. If you are charged with the above you must report in writing the required information to the facility Superintendent.

- **Use of Information Obtained While a Volunteer:** No information gained as a Department of Corrections and Community Supervision volunteer may be used for an interview or publication. This includes publishing information on the internet (i.e. blogging, social media web sites.) Any person working for any editorial or news department of any media or organization will not be allowed to serve as a volunteer without the specific approval of the Director of Public Information.

Twelve Top Facilitation Tips for RTA Teaching Artists

1. Begin the first session of your workshop by establishing norms for the participants around attendance, communication and class expectations. Give the participants an opportunity to add norms they would like to have as a part of the workshop. Have a discussion and make sure that everyone agrees to norms before moving forward.
2. Have a clear game plan in mind for each session. Being prepared with one or two different ways of presenting the content of your workshop can be useful. Plan a beginning, middle and end to your session. IMPORTANT: Sometimes requests for gate clearances for course materials are not processed when we would like. Develop an alternate teaching design for your session if you can't bring your materials in.
3. Always begin your session with a "check-in". Most often this takes the form of a one word "how are you feeling today?" Start the session with one or several warm-ups, team-builders, and/or energizers. They get the creative energy of the class going and can be a powerful team-building experience. This handbook offers many examples from which to choose.
4. Create a ritual that begins and ends your session. A ritual can help form the container of your class and can also be very meaningful for the participants. For example, a ritual could be a specific warm-up game that you do every week. Or, you could end your sessions with each person going around in a circle and offering a word of reflection. Perhaps ask the participants to create a ritual that is meaningful for them.
5. Allow space in your session to have the participants share their experience and thoughts. Typically, a good ratio to follow is the teaching artist talks for 25% of the time and the participants for 75% of the time.
6. Shake up the way participants interact. For example, you can divide people into pairs or groups of three to encourage them to share thoughts or to reflect upon their experience. Use writing prompts or other reflective exercises to deepen their experience. You could also empower them to lead aspects of the class, such as an energizer or the closing ritual.
7. About mid-way through your workshop, create an opportunity during a class for the participants to reflect on how the class is going for them. This can be a great opportunity to take the temperature of the class and to communicate important information and feedback.
8. Keep the conversation moving. It can be challenging to make sure one or two people do not dominate the conversation. However, if this happens, you risk losing the interest of the other members of your class. Try different tactics to address this issue. For example, you could say, "Thank you for sharing so deeply about your experience and I want to hear more

about it. Right now, though, I want to make sure that we hear many voices from the class. Is it ok with you if we move on?"

9. Be flexible. Working within the prison system can try even the most patient of us. If the class is cut short or the participants are delayed, assess what you can accomplish in the time you have remaining and commit to that new session.
10. Embrace silence. Silence during group discussion is not a bad thing. Some people process things out loud and some people process things internally. If silence remains for a couple minutes, ask the group "explain to me why there's silence", then allow them to talk, or silence to remain.
11. If participants are getting up and leaving and returning or disrupting the class, have a conversation with the entire class about the group norms you established at the beginning. If a specific person continues to act outside the bounds of the norms, please talk with a Steering Committee member about the issue.
12. Clarify your expectations for the next session. Allow enough time at the end without having to explain the expectations while rushing out the door.

Warm-Up Games, Team-Builders and Group Energizers

1. Circle Dash

Number of People: 10 or more

Everyone stands in a circle around one person who's standing in the middle. The object of the game is for any two people in the circle to silently signal each other and switch places. The person in the middle tries to get to an open spot before the switchers. The person left takes the spot in the middle. This can be a silent game.

2. Cover the Space

Number of People: 10 or more

Set up a big rectangle in the room, using four chairs or trash cans as corner markers. Have everyone start walking around in the designated space. The rules are no talking, no contact, and to keep moving. After a little while tell everyone to be aware of their own body, the bodies around them, and the space on the floor. Then, ask them to begin to make certain that the space on the floor is covered. They need to keep moving at all times, get to corners and sidelines, and to always move to empty spaces to "cover the space." If you were to shout "Freeze!" they should be evenly distributed around the space, filling it. Shout, "freeze," point out how they're doing, and send them right back to covering the space. It's a game of freezing, getting new instructions, and finding their rhythm again.

3. In-Between

Number of People: 8 or more

Everyone starts walking around the space without talking and with no contact. After a few minutes ask each person to silently pick an individual in the room that they call Person A. They continue to move around while doing so. Then, ask everyone to silently pick someone they call Person B. Everyone keeps moving around while you let the mystery of why they've done this sit there for a little while. Then tell them that their goal is to keep Person A between themselves and Person B at all times. They play this for a couple of minutes. You can also have them place themselves between Person A and Person B, etc. Fun, energizing game.

4. Zip Zap Zop

Number of People: 8 – 30

Everyone stand in a circle. Have everyone repeat the words "zip, zap, zop" three to four times, all together. You demonstrate the game by starting it. You have a bolt of energy in your hands. To

start, you send the bolt out of your hands with a strong forward motion straight at someone else in the circle (using your hands, body, and voice) saying “zip.” You must have eye contact with them when you pass it to them. They receive it with their whole body and pass it immediately on to someone else saying, “zap.” That person passes it on with a “zop.” The game continues “zip, zap, zop.”

Great activity to practice group focus and concentration. You must always have eye contact with the person you pass the bolt of energy to. Keep stressing the importance of trying to get the order of the words, even when people mess up.

5. Gesture and Sound

Number of People: Any Amount

One person stands in the circle and creates a big physical gesture with a big sound. The person to their right mimics the gesture/sound; the person to their right mimics them and so on, all around the circle. Each person should mimic as closely as they can the gesture/sound of the person next to them, even if it changes from the original gesture. After the gesture/sound has gone around the circle, the 2nd person creates a new gesture/sound and the activity continues until everyone in the circle has created and started a gesture/sound.

6. Group Stretch

Number of People: Any Amount

Stand in a circle. One person begins by leading the rest of the group in some physical stretch that feels good to them. Everyone else in the circle mirrors the stretch. The 2nd person then creates a new stretch and it goes around the circle again. Everyone in the circle has a chance to create a stretch and have it mirrored.

7. Identity Game

Number of People: 8 or more

Identity game begins a conversation about our multiple identities. When setting this up it is important to differentiate between identity based on appearance (gender, clothes, etc.) and identity that is within (experiences, opinions, desires, hopes, etc.).

- Ask participants to spread out in the room. One person steps into an open space and says “The wind blows for those who...” and they fill in with something they identify with. Individuals who identify with that statement go and stand with that person. Individuals who don’t identify can either stand where they are or move away. Take a beat to look around the room to see who identifies and does not. Repeat.

- Examples: “The wind blows for those who...”
 - Love to dance
 - Are the oldest/youngest/only child/ adopted
 - Are told not to cry
 - Are parents
 - Have lost a loved one to gun violence/drugs
 - Are artists

8. Rain

Number of People: Any Amount

Rain is a warm-up that creates the sensation of a rainstorm

- The teaching artist asks the participants to follow along. Start with hands stretched above their head then slowly bring their hands to head and begin patting slowly moving down the body until you get to the feet where you stomp loudly on the ground and then move back up the body to create a rainstorm.
- You can have different people lead the pattern of the rain, varying volume, rhythms, and patterns. This is a good way for people to share taking the lead or following others.

9. Group Juggle

Number of People: 8 or more

Group Juggle is a pattern game using tennis balls. Also a great game to learn names on the first day.

- In a circle start with one ball and create a tossing pattern around the circle. To begin each person must make eye contact and say the name of the person they are throwing it to. Once the pattern is established only use eye contact to pass the ball around the circle. Begin to add more and more balls into the tossing pattern.
- You can mix it up by reversing the pattern you began with, for example, or adding other items than the tennis balls, like a shoe or a book.
- **NOTE:** This, of course, only works if you can bring tennis balls or something similar into the facility!

10. Group Mirror Walk

Number of People: 8 or more

The participants walk around room. Without revealing who it is, pick someone, and as you walk around room simply NOTICE this person; how they walk, how they hold their head, their shoulders, feet. Observe them.

Now very SUBTLY copy or “mirror” how that person is moving. If they seem to have a small stride, mirror that. The person should not know you are mirroring them.

Now, heighten the effect. Slightly exaggerate the walk or shoulders or whatever you are seeing at this moment. Then do it even bigger – whatever you see them doing at this moment, heighten that. Then follow behind the person you are observing and do them 10X bigger.

EFFECTIVE REFLECTION TOOLS AND EXERCISES

WHAT (descriptive)

What surprised you about the experience? Describe an event/person that stands out in your mind.

SO WHAT (interpretive; meaning, feelings; why?)

What meaning did you make of the experience?

What did you learn from the experience? (or: How were you different when you left from when you entered?)

How are you similar/different from people with whom you interacted? How did the experience challenge your assumptions/expectations?

NOW WHAT? (applicative; big picture; action)

How can the experience apply to other aspects of life? What are the root causes of this issue? Where do we go from here? What's the next step?

A SAMPLING of REFLECTION ACTIVITIES

(alternatives to simple discussion or journaling)

- One word (offered in turn)
- Quotes – bring in quotes to spark group discussion
- Artifact/object – Have the participants project a meaning on an object and discuss it
- Pop culture, media, or scholarly article (esp. controversial)
- Safe Questions – written down, put in hat, each person reads one

SENTENCE STEMS

Sentence Stems can help participants begin to think about their expectations before the experience, or their perceptions after concluding the experience. The teaching artist provides the stem and the participants finish it. For example:

- “Today I hope...”

- “I am most anxious/uncertain about...”
- “I was most surprised by...” Participants pair with one or two others to discuss a specific topic. This encourages participation from individuals who are not comfortable addressing the larger group.
- After participants respond to a question/statement in pairs, have pairs combine to form a foursome. They can share answers from the previous pairing and/or respond to a new issue. Then the foursomes join another, creating groups of eight. The process is repeated. This is one way to enact “What? So What? Now What?” with each group responding at a higher level of thinking. This simple technique quickly draws on and captures the true expertise of the group. The teaching artist simply asks the participants to freely associate answers to certain questions. Answers can be stated, written on a flip chart, or posted individually on Post-It notes. The teaching artist can also engage participants and drawing connections between answers.
- “How does the artistic process facilitate personal growth?”
- “What are ways to diffuse an emotionally heightened situation?”
- “What are ways that I have changed since being involved with RTA?”
- “What is ‘empowerment’?”

STAND & DECLARE

The teaching artist makes a statement to the group, to which members can strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. Groups form around each of the four responses to the statement, or along a continuum line, showing the group's "differences." Members from each opinion group are asked to explain their stance, fleshing out the many facets of the issue. This activity helps everyone learn to disagree without being disagreeable, and to acknowledge different perspectives. Questions are intentionally stated to allow for personal interpretation and to limit responses to one of the four categories. Some group members may want to take some sort of an intermediate stance but should be encouraged to choose the stance about which they feel the strongest, or which is their instinctive response. Questions should proceed from lower risk to higher risk, more controversial statements. Participants can then discuss how it felt to be limited & categorized.

Concentric Circles

The group is divided in two, with half of the participants forming a tight circle in the center of the room, facing outward. The remaining participants then form a circle around the inner circle, such that each participant in the outer circle faces a participant in the inner circle. The teaching artist poses a question for each pair to answer to each other. After a few minutes, either the inner or outer

circle is asked to rotate a specified number of spaces to the right or left. Another question is asked for the new pair to discuss. This activity goes on as long as desired, giving participants the opportunity to have 1-on-1 discussions with different people in the group/class.

Fishbowl

This activity provides an opportunity for a select group of participants to discuss an issue, concern, experience, or strategy in an open manner, while other participants practice active listening skills. The teaching artist identifies a small group to sit in a tight circle, the “Fish Bowl” in the middle of the meeting space. The teaching artist may take volunteers, or intentionally form the groups to reflect potentially different points of view (e.g., according to gender, ethnicity, age, etc.) Two to three questions are posed of the group in the fish bowl, and others are invited to hear their perspective, without interruption. A different group can then be asked to sit in the fish bowl, with the same or different questions posed. This is a useful exercise to explore different perspectives.

Creative Writing Prompts

- What would you do if you had \$100 to spend today? \$10,000? \$1 million? What does this say about you?
- What's one thing you'd change about your appearance if you could? What's one character trait you'd change?
- Take a reader through your idea of a perfect day.
- If you were King/Queen of the World for a single day, what would you do?
- If a magic genie gave you one wish (you can't wish for more wishes!) what would it be?
- What's your idea of the perfect job?
- If your life had a soundtrack, like a movie, what songs would you include? Why?
- If you could instantly be the best in the world at anything, what would you choose?
- If you could change places with anyone for a single day, who would you pick and why?
- What are the top five qualities you would look for in a spouse?
- If your house was on fire and you could only save 3 possessions, what would you take?
- If you were stranded on a deserted island and could only have 3 books, what would you choose and why?
- If you knew you had only one year to live, what would you do? What if you only had one day? One hour?
- What would you attempt to do if you were guaranteed not to fail?
- If you could go back in time two or three years, what advice would you give yourself?
- What is your mission in life?
- If you could go back and relive one day of your life, which day would it be and why?
- Describe your alter ego — someone who is your exact opposite.
- If you could be any superhero, who would you be and why?
- If you could get the answer to any question, what would you ask?

RTA Sample Syllabus

Title of Workshop/Production

Rehabilitation Through The Arts, Name of Correctional Facility

Teaching Artist(s):

Dates of Workshop

Workshop Overview

This overview serves as a general introduction to the workshop. What are the general objectives of the workshop and how do you plan to get there? Here you can introduce key concepts essential to creating the foundation of your workshop. If you plan on having a final performance or showing of some kind, this is a good place to introduce it.

Workshop Objectives

(Please name here your specific workshop objectives. Below are some examples of objectives. Please refer to your RTA skill-wheel, which is a great resource to generate workshop objectives). Please keep in mind objectives that are helpful to our members inside and outside the walls.

Through active participation in (name of workshop) RTA members will develop:

- Capacities to visualize new possibilities for thought and action;
- Theories about inciting events, actions and outcomes;
- Capacities to become absorbed in the content, processes, and pleasure of learning;
- A greater awareness of and sensitivity to another's point of view;
- Collaborative capacities to contribute to the group's process of acquiring knowledge;
- Actions to support the conditions for openness and risk taking;
- Symbolic Understanding—understanding the ways in which a variety of methods are used to communicate ideas and feelings

Key Questions

(Please consider including key questions to help stimulate the participants thinking and workshop participation. Here are some examples of key questions:)

- How does inhabiting another character help us learn about aspects of ourselves?
- What qualities in a character would you like to acquire? Why? How?
- Where do you find the courage to be witnessed in a performance? What resistance do you notice when you take the risk to perform?
- How do we observe, reveal, and diversify our habitual responses as pathways towards personal freedom?
- What do I notice about myself when I take the risk of sharing my ideas and interpretations with the group? And how can I support the creative process in others.

Materials

Please bring a notebook and a pen or pencil to each session for in-class writing assignments and notes.

RTA Attendance Requirement

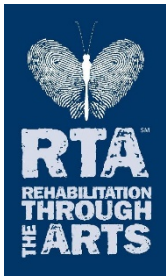
We ask that only students who can commit to all sessions take part.

Expectations

(Please insert any other class expectations you may have. You may want to check in with the Steering Committee to see if they would like to insert any expectations from their RTA community.).

Progression of Lessons

Date	Session #	Topic
	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
	6	
	7	
	8	



Rehabilitation Through The Arts

Evaluation

Class

Instructor:

Date

Thank you for participating in RTA's workshop in . Please take a few moments to complete the following evaluation questions.

1. What has been your previous experience in _____ workshops?

2. What was enjoyable about the workshop?

3. What activity did you feel needed more clarity?

4. Thinking back on the workshop sessions what were the three major life skills that you feel you could use in other aspects of your life?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

5. Are you interested in participating in other _____ workshops?

6. What other types of workshops in the arts are you interested in?

Rehabilitation Through The Arts

Suggested Reading

General Background

- Alexander, Michelle; *The New Jim Crow*, The New Press, 2010
- Berstein, Nell; *Burning Down the House, The End of Juvenile Prison*, The New Press, 2014
- Butler, Paul; *Let's Get Free*, The New Press, 2009
- Kilgore, James; *Understanding Mass Incarceration*, The New Press, 2015
- Conover, T, *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing*, NY, Random House, 2000
- Prejean, Helen, *Dead Man Walking*, NY, Random House, 1993
- Brian, Denis, *Sing Sing: The Inside Story of a Notorious Prison*, Amherst, Prometheus Books, 2005
- Anthony Papa and Jennifer Wynn, *15 to Life*, Los Angeles Federal House, 2004
- Parenti, Christian, *Lockdown America*, NY, Verso, 1999
- Chevigny, Bell, *Doing Time: 25 Years of Prison Writing*, NY, Arcade Publishing, 1999
- Gruwell, Erin, *Freedom Writers Diary*, NY, Broadway Books, 1999

Theatre in Prisons/ Applied Theatre

- Alexander, B. & Williams, R. *Teaching the Arts Behind Bars*, Danvers, MA: Univ Press of New England, 2003.
- Rohd, Michael, *Theatre for Community, Conflict & Dialogue*, Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann Drama, 1998
- Balfour, M. *Theatre in Prison: Theory and Practice*, Bristol: Intellect, 2004.
- Nicholson, H., *Applied Drama: Theatre and Performance Practices*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2005.
- Thompson, J., *Applied Theatre: Bewilderment and Beyond*. Peter Lang Publishing, 2003.
- Thompson, J. (ed), *Prison Theatre: Perspectives and Practices*, London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1998.

Theatre Games and Exercises

- Boal, A., *Games for Actors and Non-Actor*, Trans. Adrian Jackson. England: Routledge, 1992.

- Bogart, A & Landau, T., *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*, NY: TCG, 2005.
- Johnstone K., *Improv: Improvisation and the Theatre*, London, Methuen, 1981.
- Rohd, M., *Theatre for Community, Conflict and Dialogue: The Hope is Vital Training Manual*,. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1998.
- Spolin, V., *Improvisation for the Theatre*, Northwestern University Press, 1962.

Theatre and Education

- Jackson, T., *Learning through Theatre: New Perspectives on Theatre in Education*, 2nd Edition. London: Routledge, 1993.
- Landy, R., *Handbook of Educational Drama and Theatre*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982.

Pedagogical Theory

- Freire, P., *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* New York: Continuum, 1970
- Gardner, H., *Frames of Mind*, New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1985

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Volunteer Services	4650		
Deputy Superintendent of Security	5000		
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