

The Trust Box:

Each of my adult workshops begins with the ritual of the Trust Box. I developed this ritual at the very beginning of my teaching because the lessons that I teach require a level of risk and risk taking. The Trust Box helps people develop a sense of group and a sense of faith in the other members of the group.

If you have not participated in this ritual it is rather simple. Take a box of some sort. I prefer wooden boxes as they are organic and change and evolve over time. I am especially fond of salt cod boxes as they keep a deep aroma of the sea and my people are from Newfoundland where salting fish is practically the national art form.

Open the box and explain to your group that you are asking them to put there trust in the box today. Trust can be drawn out of your heart, from behind your ear, from a pocket, wherever you feel your trust. It is not a material thing. It is an idea. Nothing real is put into the box.

Then, as an example, draw forth some trust (I draw mine from my heart) and deposit it in the box with your fingers. Then go about and ask every person to put their trust into the box. Explain to them that the trust will remain in the box throughout the workshop but if, at any point, you no longer feel that you can trust the group, then you can withdraw your trust. Go around the circle. I would suggest that if someone is reluctant, then instead of moving on I would wait until they are ready to add their trust to the box. The ritual will only work if everyone adds their trust to the box. Keep track of latecomers and make sure they add their trust to the box.

Go around to every person and get some trust then close the lid and keep the box in a place where all participants can see it. If the class is going to run over a number of sessions and you are sure there will be no more late arrivals then you might choose to seal the box with some tape or if you choose to be fancy with some wax.

People never seem to ask me for their trust back but sometimes people ask me what I do with all the old trust. I always respond in the moment to that but the answer usually centers around the idea that the old trust is composting in there and creating the rich soil for upcoming workshops.

Good Luck!