

### Objectives

- Encourage self-care
- To use the workshop as a laboratory to practice techniques for long-term sustainability;
- Increase participant's awareness of what balances them (and what depletes their energy).

### Time needed:

60-90 minutes

### How it's done

This design allows participants to reflect, in a natural and easy flow, about sustainability (self-care): it uses participants' experience to uncover new lessons and appreciate old ones. It's also a powerful tool for self-revelation about the relationship between depletion of energy and increase of energy.

Introduce the goals of this exercise by letting participants know this is a chance to do some reflection about themselves and how to take even better care of ourselves.

Story-telling in groups of 3

Have participants get into groups of three, preferably with people they have worked with less during the course of the training. (Have them briefly introduce themselves to each other if they do not know each other.) Then, have them settle into a moment of silence to reflect on three questions:

- How do I come to this work?
- What helps me sustain my work?
- What gets in the way of sustaining my work?

Invite people to recall a particular moment or story.

In the groups of three, share the stories. Give them about 15-20 minutes for this section (about 5-7 minutes each). Ask folks in the group to listen actively to each other, offering back reflections and questions, not advice.

Sharing reflections in the large group:

Bring the group back together and report - looking for common themes. What are people's personal motivations? What gets in the way of sustainability?

Make two lists: What Sustains You / What Depletes You.

Notice any patterns (like is physical action often used?). Be light and help the group be honest as they disclose. Also help the group notice forms of sustenance people already do.

Reflection in groups of 3:

Explain that much of self-care is about balance. There may be some wisdom in looking at the two lists together and how they relate to one's personal balance.

Send people back into their original groups of three with the question: "For you, what are the connections between what sustains you and what depletes you?"

After several minutes, reflect with the group in the plenary.

Optional: Application in buddies:

If there is time, send people back to their buddies to reflect: "What can I do for more self-care?"

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**Source:** Claudia Horwitz and Jesse Maceo Vega-Frey, Stone Circles  
<http://www.stonecircles.org>