



The Curriculum Lab

~ with Joanna Lindenbaum ~

Create signature coursework, exercises, and content that allow your programs, products and events (online or off!) to be as powerful as working with you!

Best Practices for Breakout Rooms

- **What are breakout rooms?**
 - Any group you are leading on zoom – workshop, training session, class, retreat – an opportunity to break participants up into groups of 2 or more, and take each of those groups into their own private room for discussion and sharing
 - The breakout feature is incredibly valuable, and gives online learning the opportunity to do what we often do in in person learning, which is to have people share with the person sitting next to them, or break into groups and go to different parts of the room
 - The reason breakout rooms are so valuable is because when we are leading a group, part of the power and the value of the experience is the GROUP itself.
 - Teachers, coaches, facilitators often make the mistake of thinking that THEY - their talking, their own sharing is the most important factor. And to some extent, that's true. But, the most POWERFUL groups also take into consideration that when members of the group have opportunity to connect with each other, a few really important things happen:
 - Deeper connection is forged in the group and therefore there is more of a feeling of ownership and belonging in the group....which equals more satisfied customers, who also want to CONTINUE to be part of the community
 - Opportunity to discuss what you're learning, processing & experiencing. The best kind of learning happens not just when we HEAR great content, but when we engage about it , unpack it and discuss it with others
 - Opportunity to share your opinions, thoughts, wisdom, experience: so that community members learn from each other (the teacher doesn't hold all the wisdom in the room)
 - This is why group teachers and facilitators want to make really good use of BOTH group sharing as well as breakout rooms

- **When are good times to consider using breakouts during a group session?**

- Strategizing, Brainstorming based on what was just learned in class
- After a layered topic has been introduced and taught about, one that really benefits from discussion of the topic, or seeing how the topic relates to you personally, or getting to deeper layers
 - Being whole and complete as you are
 - What does Well being really mean to you?
- After a deep dive (usually I'll have journaling questions before this)
- Exercise that requires time that you don't have for everyone to go through in the group
- Group Bonding a Gelling AND opening up the gateways for people to feel more engaged (VIA interacting)
 - Introductions
 - Beginning of a retreat
 - Setting Intentions
 - Being seen, hear and expressed in your commitments moving forward

- **What instructions do you give to your group members to ensure they make the most of their time in their room?**

(Depends on the situation, the exercise, what you want accomplished during that time, but here are some general things to think about)

- Time and Logistics
 - This is how long you have total
 - This is how much time for each partner
 - You don't have to do anything, or click to go into the room....
 - (Best and Strongest containers are one where there is clarity)
- Sharing Etiquette
 - Is this a sacred witness or is this a discussion?
 - Would the person who just shared like feedback?
- What would you like them to share or what you like them to accomplish
 - Specifics
 - Ex: if you sense your partner could stretch more, let them know

- **What should happen after people come back from their breakouts?**

- Sometimes it's nice after breakouts to have a full group discussion and shares – what are you taking away?