FACILITATING AN ART HIVE: THE COURAGE TO BELONG

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ABSTRACT

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This research paper explores the psychological concept of belonging and why it is an essential human need. Art Hives, an emerging form of nonclinical art therapy delivery, is defined and explained, as is their central principle of inclusion. Through the methodology of autoethnography, the researcher examines her own experiences of belonging as a facilitator in a particular art hive, and explores how the needs of belonging, autonomy, competency and generosity can be met in this space. The complexities of belonging are examined, including three antecedents to belonging, and the belonging paradox. The researcher supports her findings with motivational research and The Circle of Courage, which deem "belonging" to be an essential need along with autonomy, competence and generosity. Shame Resilience Theory is linked to how shame keeps people from feeling they belong. The researcher discusses ways that building the courage to be vulnerable and authentic can help facilitators and participants overcome shame. Finally, the researcher concludes that in order to sustain a welcoming Art Hive, facilitators need to nurture their own autonomy, competence, generosity and inclusion in order to experience their own sense of belonging, as well as foster these experiences in Art Hive participants.

Keywords: Art Hive, belonging, autonomy, competence, generosity, inclusion, shame, The Circle of Courage, facilitation, authenticity, vulnerability.

"In this type of journey, one will often feel disoriented and lost. Without a road map for transformation, one is pressed to develop a capacity for engaging a process of trial and error, of improvising meanings for one's new experiences, meanings that may themselves prove inadequate… Supportive and witnessing relationships will be crucial" (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p. 147).

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Introduction

When I was 18 years old, I was shocked to find myself having the time of my life in the company of strangers who were 60 to 70 years my senior. Under "normal" circumstances, you would usually find a Canadian teenager spending her time among her peers. She would likely be avoidant of, rather than drawn to seniors, for what could she possibly have in common with them? However, if you put a teenager and a group of seniors into an Art Hive, give them access to a bounty of free art supplies, and allow everyone to make whatever they want, you might find something very different occurs: comfortable interaction among seemingly diverse people who rapidly discover they have much more in common than they knew. What is an Art Hive, you may ask? An Art Hive is a free art studio space that can best be described through its principles:

An Art Hive:

- welcomes everyone as an artist and believes art making is a human behavior.
- celebrates the strengths and creative capacities of individuals and communities.
- fosters self-directed experiences of creativity, learning, and skill sharing.
- encourages emerging grass roots leaders of all ages.
- provides free access as promoted by gift economy.
- shares resources including the abundant materials available for creative reuse.
- experiments with ideas through humble inquiry and arts-based research.
- exchanges knowledge about funding strategies and economic development.
- partners with colleges and universities to promote engaged scholarship.

- gardens wherever possible to renew, regenerate, and spread seeds of social change.

(Timm-Bottos, 2014).

Craving a sense of belonging, there I was, an 18 year-old volunteer for the Veterans Arts Department in a large veterans hospital. I was sitting next to Bucky, an eighty-year-old man who was covered in bruises from a recent fall. Bucky was painting a birdhouse he had made and was telling me about the Christmas during WWII when Benny Goodman had been flown out to serenade the navy troops. Bucky chuckled as he told me how Mr. Goodman unwisely chose to sing "I'll be home for Christmas" and the soldiers threw him overboard.

It was my first experience of an open art studio, a place that demonstrated many of the principles of Art Hives listed above. In this supervised but undirected space, I witnessed the elderly men and women rediscovering their sense of self-worth through creating in community. While hands worked busily, they shared stories of war, love, and family - universal stories that reflected all of our lives. I was hooked. If a white girl from a middle-class upbringing like me lacked a sense of belonging, imagine how many others, especially those not from the dominant culture, may also be living their lives with feelings of isolation.

Art Hives are designed to be inclusive spaces that welcome everyone, especially individuals who are marginalized, disconnected and disenfranchised. Why is there a growing network of community art studios called Art Hives spreading across North

America? And why is inclusion so important? Many of us North American city-dwellers are more isolated than we realize, and perhaps this is keeping us from living more fulfilling, meaningful lives, connected to each other in community as humans. This research explores my own sense of belonging as a human need, and puts how this need is experienced in a particular art hive under the microscope.

Research Questions

My primary research question is: What is my experience of belonging in a particular art hive? My subsidiary research question is how can the needs of belonging, autonomy, competence and generosity be met in an art hive? I will investigate these questions by using an autoethnographic approach to my experience as a co-facilitator in a particular art hive. The research process is explained in greater detail within the methodology section.

Operational Definitions

Art Hive. An Art Hive is a community art studio. "Also known as 'public homeplaces,' these third spaces create multiple opportunities for dialogue, skill sharing, and art making between people of differing socio-economic backgrounds, ages, cultures and abilities" (Timm-Bottos, 2014).

Art Hive Facilitator. A person who is familiar with the Art Hive principles and who welcomes everyone who enters the studio. Facilitators foster the human behaviors of art-making and creativity through modeling quiet, focused art-making, and ensuring the

safety of all who enter the space. Their guidance and supervision is generally indirect and unobtrusive ie. they move with what is moving (Timm-Bottos, 2001).

Art Therapy. "Art therapy often is described functionally as a set of interpersonal and art-based skills used to help people come to terms with psychological, developmental, social, and behavioral stressors that impede their health and wellbeing" (Kapitan, 2010, p. 30).

Intention Witness Process. The artist sets an intention for her art making, then lets it go, and creates spontaneously. After the image feels complete, the artist carefully observes and dialogues with the artwork, writing down whatever comes to her heart and mind. The process ends by either the artist alone witnessing what has been revealed, or a safe group listening to and witnessing the artist reading from her writing without offering any comments (Allen, 2005).

Reclaiming Environment. A place where the value is seen in youth, and where they are treated with respect, with the aim of helping them to experience attachment, achievement, autonomy and altruism (Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 2002).

Literature Review

Art Hives are free public art studios, open to everyone, which support "the inclusion of marginalized populations" (Timm-Bottos & Reilly, 2015, p.4). Roberson (2006) defines inclusion as "the extent to which individuals can access information and resources, are involved in (work) groups, and have the ability to influence decision-making processes" (pp. 214-215). An Art Hive can also be seen as a "holding

environment", D.W. Winnicott's term for a safe, nurturing place that starts between mother and infant, but then expands to the family, neighbours and community. Winnicott (1969) wrote that a holding environment fosters the discovery of the self (p. 711).

Janis Timm-Bottos and Rosemary Reilly (2015) researched the transformative effects of Art Hives on postsecondary students' learning within the community, and found that "the success of community arts initiatives are often dependent upon implementing actions in a manner that involves and includes local people as equal or leading partners" (p. 30).

Janis Timm-Bottos, the founder and facilitator of several art hives in North America, is also a researcher who has spent over 20 years developing the philosophy of inclusion as it occurs in the community art studio that is foundational to the hives. Timm-Bottos (2001) teaches that everyone who enters the studio is welcomed and seen as an artist even before they pick up a paintbrush (p. 209). This warm greeting, given by facilitators and modeled for participants, conveys to everyone in the studio that newcomers are accepted as they are, when they come through the door (Timm-Bottos, 2006). This welcoming environment tends to naturally encourage 'each one, teach one', a form of knowledge sharing that has a long history but was given this name by street activist Ron Casanova (1996). Each one, teach one, happens when one person shares their skills and knowledge with another person and then that person reciprocates or later passes on another skill to someone else. In these richly diverse spaces, skills and stories are shared in a nonhierarchical way (Timm-Bottos, 2006, p.14).

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Psychology and Belonging

Psychologist D.W. Winnicott changed the direction of developmental psychology in the 1950s by arguing that we are relational beings. Hills (2015) reminds us that "we are existentially bound and driven and cannot escape from living in the 'world' or by positioning ourselves relationally" (p. 200). For most of us, the first experience of belonging is as an infant in the arms of our primary caregiver (Anant, 1970). Winnicott insisted that there is a symbiotic relationship between the infant and their primary caregiver, and it is this relationship between them that shapes the baby into an autonomous person (1971). According to both John Bowlby (1982), known as the father of attachment theory, and Winnicott (1971), the nature of the bond of the primary relationship has a huge impact on our future relational patterns. Winnicott (1950) stressed the importance of whole human interaction, stating "when healthy persons come together they each contribute a whole world, because each brings a whole person" (p. 549).

Due to the groundbreaking work of Bowlby and Winnicott, psychologists acknowledge the importance of attachment. Close attention has since been paid to the processes of developing a sense of belonging and to defining and understanding what it means to "belong." Multiple studies conclude belonging is a fundamental psychological need (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Brendtro et al., 2002; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Gere & MacDonald, 2010; Maslow, 1943; Osterman, 2000; Ryan, 1991, 1995). Belonging entails a subjective feeling of being accepted by others (Anant, 1966; Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Acceptance entails being recognized as important to and valued by others (Anant,

1966,1967; Hagerty, Lynch-Sauer, Patusky, Bouwsema, & Collier,1992; Hills, 2015), as well as being worthy of love and respect (Harris, 2011; Osterman, 2000; Lindgren, Pass, & Sime, 1990; Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Carl Rogers' humanistic theory of acceptance of the client through unconditional positive regard has been credited as a mechanism of self-actualization and therapeutic change (Williams & Lynn, 2010; Rogers, 1995).

Literature focusing on a sense of belonging indicates it is important that there is a mutual connection and that the person "fits" within a family or a group (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Berger, 2001; Brown, 2006; Hagerty et al., 1992; Lindgren, 1990; Osterman, 2000) or within a community (Osterman, 2000; Ryan, 1991) with which they have regular and stable contact (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Janis Timm-Bottos (2006) knows through sustained practice research that "safety is secured through building predictable relationships over time" (p. 18). In short, belonging is a subjective sense that one's whole self is accepted and appreciated by a person or community with which they have regular contact and things in common.

An Overview of Belonging

According to Ferguson (1989), Alfred Adler was the first in the field of psychology to put forward a theory of belongingness as a key human need. Abraham Maslow (1943) concurred, and in fact he saw belonging as so important that he placed it in the third tier of his hierarchy of human needs - "the love and affection and belonging needs" - just after the basic human needs for food, shelter and safety (p. 380). Since the time of Maslow's theory, belonging has been repeatedly studied as an important

component of human self-actualization, meaning-making, mental health and motivation (Anant, 1966, 1967, 1969, 1970; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Osterman, 2000; Gere & MacDonald, 2010; Hagerty et al., 1992; Ryan, 1991, 1995). This research has been conducted among a variety of populations. Hagerty, Lynch-Sauer, Patusky, Bouwsema, and Collier (1992) began to realize that as psychiatric nurses, they were often hearing their patients worrying about where they belonged after being diagnosed with a mental illness. They heard statements like "I don't fit anywhere!" or "I'm not a part of anything" (p. 172). This led Hagerty et al. (1992) to attempt to develop a model of human-relatedness, concluding that clients' well-being was indelibly tied to a sense of belonging. Other researchers wanted to understand differences in students' levels of academic performance and found that a feeling of community and relatedness significantly increased students' levels of academic motivation (Osterman, 2000) and ability to hold multiple points of view (Timm-Bottos & Reilly, 2015). Timm-Bottos and Reilly (2015) also found that the inverse was true: when enthusiastic students learned in an authentic community space where they could contribute their skills and share their learning, they were able to develop a sense of belonging (p. 15). Chubb and Fertman (1992) found that in adolescents, the greater their sense of belonging in their families, the higher their self-esteem.

Baumeister and Leary (1995) undertook an extensive review of the literature that had been theorized about belonging and came up with a hypothesis: that a sense of belonging is a fundamental human need. However, their research only provided indirect

evidence of this hypothesis, so Gere and MacDonald (2010) set out to empirically test Baumeister and Leary's belonging hypothesis. Some key findings were that once a person's need for belonging is satiated, they do not seek out further bonds. Also, if an attachment relationship ends, people tend to replace it with another one (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Gere & MacDonald, 2010). Perhaps one of the most important assertions put forward by Baumeister and Leary (1995) is that the need to belong is the key to understanding a great deal of human thought, emotion, and behavior (p. 497). Based on ten years of collecting and compiling brain research studies, Allen Schore (2003) found that humans are neurobiologically wired to belong. According to Schore's research, humans rapidly decide if a person or place is safe and hospitable within the first few seconds of the encounter. For this reason, a warm welcome is ideally given to each person who enters the studio space (p. 18).

A sense of belonging is not a linear process, however, it begins when we are welcomed, and ends "when membership is 'granted' by others in the group" (Harris, 2011, p. 363), but as Harris (2011) states, "belonging is a never-ending journey" (p. 7). Harris (2011) calls this uncertain journey or state a "belonging paradox" which is "somewhere between inclusion and exclusion" (p.12). He says it can be brought on by self-doubt, or differences between members, as well as social stigmas around attributes like a person's race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or occupation (p.22). Timm-Bottos' research (2006), however, modifies this, finding that once newcomers become somewhat familiar with the regularly attending members in the protected

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environment, they feel safer in a more diverse studio space, because diversity indicates that all types and ages of people are welcome and safe there (p. 18). Apparently diversity can divide people, or can convey openness to all, young and old.

Anant (1970) and Chubb and Fertman (1992) argue that belonging is subjective. In other words, "you cannot make a person feel belonging. It is he who should feel he belongs" (Anant, 1970, p. 102). Hagerty et al. (1992) agree, saying "psychologically, belonging is an internal affective or evaluative feeling, or perception" (p. 174). Harris (2011) found there are two important types of self-perception related to a person's sense of belonging: "how an individual views himself or herself, and how an individual believes others view him or her as a member" (p. 364). Based on these perceptions, belonging can then either "evolve passively in response to the actions of the group to which one aspires to belong and/or actively through the actions initiated by the individual" (Levett-Jones & Lathlean, 2008, p. 104). Hagerty et al.'s (1992) list of antecedents for belonging corroborates these findings. The antecedents necessary for belonging to be a possibility are 1) desire and energy to join from the seeker 2) energy and welcoming from the group to which the seeker wants to belong, but also 3) the probability of the seeker and the group sharing enough in common (p. 174). "The seeker" describes the person who wants to belong to a group. Hagerty et al. (1992) assert that these three antecedents are "vital to the identification of deficits in sense of belonging and subsequent interventions" (p. 174), for example, an individual's lack of desire for belonging to a group that is welcoming, could signify depression.

Mental Health and Belonging

Osterman (2000) found that among several motivational researchers "relatedness is one of three basic psychological needs that are essential to human growth and development, along with autonomy and competence" (p. 325). For example, a lack of belonging has also been linked to significantly diminished motivation and performance in students (Osterman, 2000). Brené Brown (2006) has studied the feeling of shame extensively and found that shame can cause people to isolate themselves, leading to a sense that they don't belong. Brown's (2006) definition of shame is "an intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging" (p. 45). In a shame and resilience study, Brown (2006) found that the primary (healthy) way people heal their shame is through connecting and "being with others who have had similar experiences" (p. 51). If a person perceives that they do not belong with anyone or any group, they are susceptible to a great deal of loneliness and the more severe the lack of connection to others, the more severe the individual's isolation. Lack of belonging is serious, as it has been correlated with different kinds and degrees of mental illness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Brendtro et al., 2002; Hagerty et al. 1992; Kirmayer et al., 2011; Maslow, 1943; Osterman, 2000).

In *Reclaiming Youth at Risk*, Brendtro et al. (2002) bring together their knowledge of psychology, education and youth work with Native American philosophies of child-rearing. Through their study, they developed a program called, "The Circle of Courage," a set of principles to be used for those creating reclaiming environments. Brendtro et al.

(2002) identified a sense of belonging, mastery (competence), independence (autonomy), and generosity as universal human needs (p. 138), especially applicable when working with troubled youth. Ryan (1991, 1995) also argues that belonging, competence and autonomy are three basic psychological needs essential to human growth and development. Ryan sees these needs integrated into each other and therefore, "the satisfaction of one need reinforces and supports the other needs" (as cited in Osterman, 2000, p. 239). According to Ryan (1995), satisfying these three basic needs activates important psychological processes, such as intrinsic motivation, internalization of values, and self-actualization.

Both Ryan (1991) and Brendtro et al. (2002) recognize belonging as a universal longing for human bonds. The need to be a part of something outside oneself motivates individuals to become community members, causing them to invest time and energy in common efforts and allow themselves to be influenced by the values and goals of those around them. Ryan (1991) explains "the experience of relatedness and mutuality that derives from authentic contact with others appears to play a crucial role in connecting individuals to social tasks and promoting an internalization of valued goals" (p. 119).

This literature review has described Art Hives and their philosophy of inclusion. It has also offered a synthesized definition of belonging, an overview of studies of belonging and their findings, and the theories that argue undisputedly that belonging is one of the fundamental human needs. What remains to be seen is my own actual lived experience of belonging in an art hive. If Art Hives purport to be inclusive, what does it

feel like to be a co-facilitator in such a space? Is it important that facilitators also have a sense of belonging?

Methodology

Autoethnography aims to draw the reader into the writer's culture through evocative, compelling writing and personal stories (Bochner & Ellis, 2003). Through telling personal stories about the effects that society and a particular culture have had on them, autoethnographers invite social critique (Chang, 2013, p.109). This is something I feel we need a lot more of in order to build a better world. Hopefully my research will inspire the reader to think more about the importance of a sense of belonging in this society, and what needs to change so that diverse people of all backgrounds can be welcomed in every community.

Autoethnographic style uses alternating authorial points of view using first person to share thoughts, second person to show dialogue and bring readers into a scene, and third person to establish context and report findings (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, para. 12). What researchers note in their field notes is not always pretty, so what can a qualitative researcher do to alleviate her guilt of revealing the sometimes ugly, vulnerable underbelly of her observations? Berger (2001) argues that researchers can also write about themselves in an honest, non-flattering way and be honest about their uncertainties to give a more honest picture of themselves, as well as their surroundings. According to Fasching, a narrative that invites doubt and self-questioning of the researcher is powerful because it allows room to "enter the world of the Other. Once there, we see ourselves

through the eyes of the Other, enabling us to perceive of our own lives in new ways" (as cited in Berger, 2001, p. 514).

There are also ethical questions for a researcher to consider in regards to their own health and safety. This methodology has been reported to be emotionally and mentally draining (Ellis 2011; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Also, by writing about personal thoughts and feelings, autoethnography is not always "safe" for the writer, as you open parts of yourself up for your readers, especially "the sites where my identity is continually negotiated", which could invite criticism (Berger, 2001, p. 513).

To summarize the ethical considerations of this methodology, autoethnographers have several things to consider: whether or not to include information about other participants; always keeping in mind that her perspective as an academic is privileged and that she cannot speak for others; and being prepared for her personal story to be critiqued by her readers.

Overall, the main goal of autoethnography seems to be social justice. Transformation of the reader is what autoethnographers strive for - possibly creating "efficacy and healing in (the readers') own communal lives" (Spry, 2001, p. 712), or a changed worldview (Berger, 2001, p. 508; Goodall, 1998, p.2). Sometimes, like a lot of research, it seems the result of an authoethnography is often more questions, because doing autoethnography makes us realize how much more we want to know, and makes us wonder about further meanings: "What kind of a person did that experience shape me into? What are the consequences my story produces?" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 746).

The following quote sums up what can be drawn from this deep and personal process: "Autoethnographers view research and writing as socially-just acts; rather than a preoccupation with accuracy, the goal is to produce analytical, accessible texts that change us and the world we live in for the better" (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 40).

My Research Process

There is no one recipe for the autoethnographic research process in terms of exact steps to follow. Different researchers recommend different things, but Ellis & Bochner (2000) recommend starting with your personal life and examining thoughts, feelings and even physical sensations using "what I call systematic sociological introspection and emotional recall to understand an experience I've lived through" (p. 737).

Collecting Data

"Your description of your methodology, uh, I've never heard of it by the way - autobio…er, autoethnography was it? Well it reminds me of the gratitude blog you used to write to combat that period of depression you went through. I don't think you're the kind of person who worries too much about self-exposure. You let it all hang out!" my best friend tells me over the phone. "You're right! I miss writing on my blog, and yeah, huh, I didn't hold much back did I?" I laugh. "So what are you going to use for your data?" she asks. "Well," I start, "there are many types of data that can be used in autoethnographic research, such as remembered conversations with others, like the one we're having now, and even conversations the researcher has had with herself in her own head. Anything

involving direct quotes from people or descriptions of participants, for example, would require review by the board of ethics, but I'm sticking to my own memories, thoughts, and field notes. I hope to get creative also. Do you remember that process I taught you over the summer, called Intention/Witness (Allen, 2005)?" "Yeah, that was really interesting for me! I've never set an intention, created spontaneously, then dialoged with my artwork before!" she exclaims. "I know, so I hope to make art while at the community art studio and then take it home and dialogue with it and use these dialogues as part of my data about belonging" I tell her. "I bet you'll get a lot of insight that you never would have thought of consciously!" She remarks. "Yeah, and get this" I tell her, "even the researcher's emotions are a type of data. Listen to this quote: 'heightened emotions during the research process can be markers of important data that we need to flesh out and try to make sense of' (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p.211). My emotions will hopefully point me towards important epiphanies that I have while being part of the open studio culture" (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 8). I continue: "For gathering my data, I'm using a method I learned from Janis in Community Art Studio - it's called Three Part Field Notes (Zlotkowski, 1999) where first I take objective notes on what I did, next subjective notes about how I felt (focusing on personal awareness) and finally I relate my notes to theory - what I've read in the literature. My research advisor has already reminded me to consult and reference current literature and compare and contrast my personal experiences

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against existing research (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 9). This will frame and add strength to my personal writing" I explain. "Oh my gosh - you must be getting so excited about your research! You've been involved in these studios for years and now you get to really look back and make connections about all that you've learned!" she says excitedly. "Yes, that's a big part of what I love so far about autoethnography - that personal experiences and memories are valued as data. And I have to be sure to take on-going self-reflective and self-observational memos. It's all considered to be valuable because I've had access to data which may be off limit to other researchers (Chang, 2013, p. 108). I'm stoked to share it with others." I say, pausing to take it all in. I can hear a small child's voice in the background. "This is all fascinating - you're making me want to go back to school!" she jokes. "But I've got to go now - gotta feed the kids. Let me know how it all goes - bye for now!" (Field note, November 23,2014)

Discovering My Question

Let's see…I have written two papers about the importance of diversity in Art Hives, but for some reason diversity doesn't seem as relevant with this particular studio where I want to do my research. This studio is located in a low-income housing community, populated by immigrants from many different countries. Maybe diversity is just not what I'm really interested in because it doesn't so much relate to my personal story. No, my story is more about wanting to belong - wanting to find my community, which is why I think I've always been attracted to

community art studios. That's it! My question is: What is my experience of belonging in this art hive? I rush to write this down, the first question that has felt right in my mind, gut and heart.(Field note, November 16, 2014)

As I realized, and as is so well worded in the following quote by Ellis and Bochner (2000), what interested me were the personal meanings found in life's experiences, and I was looking for a methodology that was:

> more personal, collaborative, and (about) interactive relationship, one that centered on the question of how human experience is endowed with meaning and on the moral and ethical choices we face as human beings who live in an uncertain and changing world. (p. 744)

In addition, I feel I have spent my life looking for my culture, which led me to spend valuable years in community art studios, both as a participant and a facilitator. Thus, I am excited to follow Hesse-Biber & Leavy's (2011) recommendation to "do autoethnography if you are interested in your own personal experiences and how they are situated in a cultural context" (p. 210), which may or may not feature your culture of origin. Scott-Hoy & Ellis (2008) describe the qualities that autoethnographers tend to showcase in their writing, which are also found in many art hives: "concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality, and self-consciousness" (p.130). I would argue that if these qualities are not present in a space or a text, the participant or reader might not feel invited to take part. Speaking about most academic writing, Scott-Hoy (2008) says, "I feel sad that some people may have been put off by the jargon and complexity. What

have we as feeling and thinking members of communities missed out on, because we have alienated others who wanted to contribute?" (p. 137). I want my research to feel as welcoming to my readers as the ideal Art Hive feels to a new participant.

My Struggle

"There seem to be some potential ethical issues in my research," I say in an email to my research advisor. "I am focusing on myself and my experiences of belonging in this art hive, but at the same time I am surrounded by the other studio participants, who will surely make their way into my field notes! I could disguise them by using pseudonyms, but it wouldn't take much for anyone reading my research and who knows this studio to identify them" (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 28). My advisor writes back to me, saying I need to wrestle with these questions and come up with the answers on my own, and says something along the lines of what Carolyn Ellis (2007) writes: "assume that everyone will read your research" (p. 25). So now I'm asking myself: do I need to get their informed consent? Even if I do, I see no way to manage the logistics of that as so many people come and go from the studio! When I consider writing about the participants, I think of a great quote by Chang (2013) who said "I recommend that researchers not only study themselves, but also expand their inquiries to include others, especially voiceless others in the academic discourse, whose perspectives need to be studied and documented" (p.120). Despite her compelling call for researchers to represent the underdog, Chang (2013) acknowledges that the researcher has a choice: to either "delve deeply" in individual autoethnography, using only his or her own experiences, which poses the ethical problem

of giving too narrow and usually too privileged of a perspective (p. 120), or to "incorporate the perspectives of others in their individual autoethnographies" (p. 111).

Ultimately, in order to protect the identities of the participants, I decided to write strictly about my own subjective experiences, taking the risk of offering a more narrow perspective. I used Zlotkowski's (1999) "Three Part Field Notes", taking notes each time I left the art hive, and after writing my notes, engaging in the Intention Witness Process (Allen, 2005). In my analysis of the data, I looked for common themes in the words and emotions that came up and created categories from the significant parts of my field notes, art work, journals, and theory.

Findings

This autoethnographic research was conducted over a period of eight months based on my time working as a co-facilitator in a Canadian art hive, located in a low-income housing complex. What follows is a brief background on my connection to this art hive, and a look at the main themes I found when analyzing my data that came directly from my field notes, journals, and artwork recorded after each session in the studio.

Background

I first came to know this art hive when doing service learning for a creative arts therapies class I took with Janis Timm-Bottos, called Community Art Studio: Methods and Materials. The course was taught in a studio located in the community and had the intention of encouraging art therapy students and others to start their own Art Hives. After spending three months in both of these spaces, I returned to make art from time-to-time,

as a participant. I was invited to play music on several occasions for the studio garden parties celebrating harvesting the small community garden that is seen as an extension of the studio. At the Art Hives Symposium in the summer of 2014, the main facilitator of this service learning art hive stood up and said she needed someone who was passionate about community art studios and wanted to dedicate their time, not just as an obligation or a job, to help her develop the ongoing sustainability for this space. I approached her, she told me she needed a regular commitment from me, and I agreed to start coming to the studio once a month. Shortly after this, I saw that the university was hiring a part-time facilitator to actively participate in this community art studio. I applied, was hired, and started attending the studio twice a month, for eight months, for the five hours the studio was open on Saturdays, while I was studying art therapy fulltime.

The Art Hive Space & Energy

Many of my field notes often referred to the space of the studio itself, which makes sense since our environments greatly influence our experiences. This particular art hive is a converted and renovated utility space located on the ground floor of one of the low-income apartment buildings. While Art Hives can be many different sizes and shapes, this studio is about the size of a one-bedroom apartment with low ceilings, which makes it easily feel crowded. There are also walls dividing the small space, making three main areas, each able to hold up to 7-8 people comfortably at one time. There are shelves lining the walls filled with art supplies and artwork along almost every wall. There is an entire fourth room that is taken up by a large wooden floor loom. During the cold winter

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months when the garden was covered with snow and we were limited to the indoors, it often felt to me like there were either too few or too many people in the studio space.

The energy of the space seemed to have a strong impact on my ability to focus. I found, as a co-facilitator, it was easy to lose focus when making art in this space as there were many distractions: noises, different energies, and many neighborhood children asking for help. This made me wonder if participants also found it hard to concentrate. The energy in the space could easily feel heightened, especially when anyone spoke loudly, and I observed that the other facilitator often asked people to whisper. While both adults and children attended the studio, according to my nervous system, the energy sometimes felt chaotic when more than five children came into the studio space.

Sometimes the studio energy - the energy we make - is chaotic, busy, loud and crowded - a whirlwind going everywhere and nowhere. Sometimes it is vibrant and fresh. Sometimes it is calm and peaceful like breathing. It is always intense and tangible. I want to know who you are and what you think you're doing. I want you to take yourself more seriously in the effect you have on others. (Intention Witness Art Piece, December 13, 2014)

Inclusion

In every field note I took, greetings stood out to me: how I was greeted and by whom, and how I greeted others. Despite there being hundreds of interactions and isolated events each day in the studio, the following stood out to me that contributed to a sense of

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belonging: each time I was invited by others; when I was greeted by name; and when I was hugged or kissed on the cheeks.

I felt cared-about and appreciated when a regular participant greeted me with kisses on my cheeks - something she'd never done before. (Field Note, February 14, 2015).

I also noted whenever a participant who was usually rejected or ignored by other participants was included in a group and actually made art. I noticed how much I also wanted to be included.

I am a facilitator, so my job is to welcome others, not to concern myself with whether others include me. Yet I think I really have a need to be included here too, though perhaps that is an unrealistic expectation. (Field Note: March 7, 2015)

I felt included when: I was able to join a discussion with a facilitator about difficult feelings I was having about some participants; when I felt heard and understood; when I felt I could be honest about my feelings.

My own behaviours as a co-facilitator included: greet everyone by name who enters and say goodbye to everyone; discuss more than ask probing questions; invite others to join in art making or eating; save enough food for everyone; invite others to make art with me; invite others to engage with me even if they made me feel uncomfortable and I felt out of my comfort zone. Despite these efforts, I noticed that:

Some children who arrive unaccompanied by an adult are turned away. I understand that this is because the space is so small and we facilitators can only

handle so many kids at once. Still, it makes me cringe each time children are told to come back with an adult, because they never do. They usually come back again, but without an adult, which means there is always a chance they will be turned away once more. (Field Note, March 21, 2015)

Regular Contact

Despite going to the studio twice a month for 14 weeks, I often felt like a long time had passed in-between weeks. I wondered if regular participants saw this as a lack of commitment on my part. Each time I came back I felt: I'm out of the loop; I've missed out:

I have been volunteering and working in this space on and off for a few years now, yet I still question whether or not I've been accepted here. Even though now I come more regularly - every other week - somehow each time, I feel like so much time has passed and I'm starting from scratch. One participant even remarked to me that she hadn't seen me in ages, when I'd seen her two weeks before! I don't even know if all of the regular participants know my name. Wait - I'm doing my research on belonging, yet I'm not even sure I fully belong in this art hive! (Field Note, January 31, 2015)

In my field notes I remarked that it felt good to: see a familiar person at the studio; know/recognize everyone who walked in the door; be acknowledged by a regular participant as someone "who's been there from the beginning"; to finally be able to joke with a participant. These experiences felt like the next level of connection had occurred,

like forming a special type of friendship, called a "studio relationship" (Timm-Bottos, 2006).

Divisions / Differences

Language was something I was constantly aware of when attending this particular art hive. Even though I speak French, I always felt self-conscious about my lack of dialect fluency in front of the participants - predominantly Francophone.

> The kids laugh at the way I talk. How can I expect to belong? The volunteers, students or special workshop leaders are all Anglophones. There are so many differences between the participants and myself! I do my best to speak French the same way they do, and discourage any Anglophones from speaking English, if I know they can speak French. I want the regular participants to feel they belong, so I try to accommodate and adapt my behavior to them. (Field Note, March 7, 2015)

I always found it was easier to sit and chat in French while making art side by side, as I found it put me at ease. I would translate for Anglophones if they couldn't speak French. I would wonder if they felt at ease not understanding what everyone was saying. I must admit I took some pride in being able to speak the language of the participants.

I noticed that Francophones would become silent when I spoke English with another volunteer, and I would feel bad for not including them. Even when a Francophone said they wanted to practice their English with me, I told them I preferred French because others may feel left out. At times it felt like I was being controlling by telling people

which language to use, but I also found it frustrating that they didn't think about how it would exclude others and it tired me to remind them.

My field notes indicated the following as dividing factors: my not living in the community of this art hive; my status as "facilitator" and participants knowing I was from the university; when participants asked to be waited on instead of finding/getting things themselves; hearing myself and other facilitators/workshop leaders referring to participants as "them"; rumors and gossip; mistrust of certain participants.

I see a division of sides - one side flowing and intuitive - the other more linear, patterned. Connecting two viewpoints, the mediator in the middle is trying to be balanced. The divide we make wrenches us in two, separating left from right when they belong together. What divides us? Languages, class, culture. Will I ever understand you or you me? Do we even want to understand? (Intention Witness Art Piece, March 7, 2015)

Special Workshops versus Spontaneous Art Making

Art-making in an Art Hive is un-programmed, meaning the participants self direct their creations and are free to make whatever they can dream-up, with whichever materials they can find in the studio, almost all of which have been donated (Timm-Bottos, 1995, p. 184). Art Hives, are, however, spaces that are always evolving, and this art hive was experimenting with hosting art education students interns. For several months, planned art education lessons, designed and implemented by the interns from a university were offered to the participants. I observed each time that these workshops

seemed to impact the autonomy of the participants, as their free art time was suddenly replaced by structured, directed art activities. Many of the children needed help to accomplish the proposed activities. In the process of making sense of my field notes, I realized that the workshops caused me, as a "regular" co-facilitator, to feel: self-doubt; lack of verbalized gratitude from participants and other facilitators; feeling what I brought was not enough; feeling what I did was not enough: "I don't have skills to offer"; feeling redundant in the space; more dissatisfaction from participants when I could not offer a quick solution to their problems, wants and needs.

My field notes revealed my own need to feel competent as a facilitator. I wanted to be seen as useful (mainly by the other facilitator) and felt most like I contributed on days when I brought a prepared craft/activity as she asked me to. I felt praised/recognized when the facilitator said that I knew "everyone and connected so many people to the studio". I felt proud to show the studio space to new people; like an experienced mentor with wisdom to impart to new volunteers.

On days that workshops were held, I observed participants: being asked to drop what they were working on to join the workshop, and if they resisted, being pressured or made to feel guilty; being told "it's just for a little while!" ; children not coming back for several weeks; waiting for the workshop to begin and not working on anything in the meantime. I observed myself feeling: imposed-upon, drained, resentful, annoyed, taken from, unseen, unnoticed, useless.

The negative aspect of this prescribed dynamic, in general, tended towards: the elderly participants saying repeatedly they were "not talented" and "not creative"; a lot of participants asking to be shown how to do/make something; several participants requiring an invitation to make art at each session; some participants who did not take initiative to get things for themselves; facilitators being heavily relied on; facilitators being directive; facilitators being described by some participants as "paid experts"; participants not vocalizing their appreciation or gratitude.

I cannot be sure that the workshops created this lack of confidence and autonomy in the participants. However, I feel that the controlled, directed nature of the workshops did not ameliorate the above dynamic. One thing was clear to me in my field notes: when participants were engaged in art-making, whether it was in a workshop or working on their own projects, I observed a focused attention.

It feels good to work on my art with kids around me occasionally needing help and delegating that help to the older kids. I find the kids all stay focused longer when we are all engaged in our own art making. (Field Note, May 9, 2015)

I tried to encourage competence in the children by: complimenting their efforts and artwork; teaching them to prepare their workspace and clean it up; praising them for being considerate; modeling for the children how to treat others with respect.

Whose eye are we in? The eternal eye - the eternal witness. This is you seeing yourself as you really are. And how am I? Journeying, searching, reaching, wanting. You have a deep longing. Yet you are not sure for what. How can I

know? Get in touch with your spirit more often. Get in touch with you. When you

are with others you learn about yourself. When you are alone you learn too.

(Intention Witness Art Piece, February 14, 2015)

Discussion

In analyzing the findings in my art hive field notes and intention witness

journaling, I have repeatedly reflected on Hagerty et al.'s (1992) three antecedents for

belonging: 1) desire and energy to join from the seeker who seeks to belong, 2) energy

and welcoming from the group to which the seeker wants to belong, and 3) the probability

of the seeker and the group sharing enough in common (p. 174). In the case of the Art

Hives this commonality is often parallel art making.

Autoethnographic research requires self-reflexivity, yet I have found it hard to

determine whether I have acted as a seeker of belonging, or simply one who welcomes

seeking participants. I felt I simultaneously held the seeker's energy and desire to belong

and the welcoming energy of the art hive. I would argue that although I was technically

in the position of the second antecedent - belonging to the space as a hired facilitator - this

did not automatically mean that I had a strong sense of belonging in this art hive. It seems

to me that the belonging paradox discovered by Harris (2011) in his thesis is indeed true

in my experience. My sense of belonging shifted many times every day and even every

hour I spent in the art hive, and I still do not know if I fully belong there. The art hive

acted as a "good enough" holding environment in which to explore my fluctuating

belonging: it offered a space to repair from my failings and integrate my difficult

emotions experienced there. Despite my feelings of discomfort at times and my reluctance to let my guard down, the participants and facilitators never turned me away. The other participants and facilitators were supportive enough of my trials and errors, as they too were constantly struggling and learning. We were all engaged in a "narrative of participation", which, according to Watkins and Shulman (2008) has no road map and involves a lot of questioning and ruptures (p.147).

The hive offered the potential or transitional space that Winnicott spoke of, and the art was the common language: the third antecedent for belonging. Like honey, the art and the hive kept the seekers coming back and finding commonalities, and kept the facilitators, the worker bees, continually working hard at maintaining an inclusive space. The art hive was what we had in common despite our differences:

> In liminal space, one meets the unknown, the marginalized, the synchronistic, the other, the unconscious edge of ones' former narratives. At this point, the possibility to try out new narratives, to reframe one's story becomes critical. Through narratives of participation the centre of gravity shifts from fear and defensiveness to curiosity, creativity, and celebration. (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p. 147)

Between Ryan's research (1991, 1995) and the Circle of Courage, conceived of by Brendtro et al. (2002), there are four basic psychological needs: Belonging, Autonomy, Competence, and Generosity. As stated above, the three antecedents (energy to join, welcome from the group, and a common language) were in place in this art hive, which

made a sense of belonging a possibility. Based on my fieldwork, I now argue that for

facilitators to *sustain* inclusion in an art hive, they need to continually foster their own

inner work: authentically developing their uniqueness and autonomy, and discovering and

developing their own unique competence to share with others. An inner sense of

autonomy and competence are necessary to build the ground for a facilitator's outer work,

which includes generosity and active inclusion of participants. Inner work is an ongoing

process. It can be done outside of the studio in the form of journaling and engaging in the

Intention Witness Process. It can also be done in the studio by facilitators remembering to

take time to sit quietly and make their own self-directed art, even for a short while, each

time they are in the studio. In my experience, doing this inner work gave rise to self-

confidence, as well as bolstered and inspired my outer work of reaching out to and

welcoming others. There are several benefits of a facilitator doing inner work: The

facilitator grows in his or her sense of self and personal abilities; the facilitator allows

himself or herself to be vulnerable by authentically delving into self-exploration, thereby

resisting shame; the facilitator's tangible confidence and self-acceptance encourage

participants to be authentic in developing their own sense of autonomy and competence.

The outer work of facilitating an art hive involves giving generously of one's self, time,

and abilities, and including even those participants who deeply challenge one on a

personal level. This work should perhaps come fairly readily and naturally to those drawn

to facilitation of reclaiming spaces. However, it was my experience that it was difficult to

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authentically sustain this work without taking time for inner reflection, and without a strong sense of my own autonomy and competence.

With all due respect to the deep cultural roots of the Circle of Courage (Brendtro et al., 2002), I have been examining the act of inclusion and the sense of belonging, and have come to an important distinction: inclusion is an action that leads to belonging, as I can decide to include others, but I cannot decide to belong. Likewise, others can include me, but they cannot give me a sense of belonging. Autonomy, competence, generosity, and inclusion all involve a give and take with others: we need to be given space to be ourselves, and we need to actively take that space; we need to be supported and encouraged in our capabilities, and we need to exercise our competence; we need to be given energy and empathy, as well as give it back to others; we need to be welcomed and included, as well as to take part. Belonging is a much more complex state because in order for belonging to be fully realized, several variables need to occur, such as putting energy and desire into reaching out, being accepted by others, and finding common ground. As a facilitator of an art hive, I have been approaching the Circle of Courage as a guide for my actions and for the actions of others in community. I would therefore make *inclusion* the fourth quadrant of the circle, and put belonging at the centre, to signify it being the result of the conscious actions put into autonomy, competence, generosity, and inclusion. Together, these four gifts that we can offer ourselves and others create the space and common ground for belonging (see Figure 1). Belonging is the hub at the centre of a community.

Through reaching inward and connecting with ourselves, we are more able to reach outward to others. This inner and outer movement and work requires the courage to take risks, be authentic, and therefore, be vulnerable.

The Necessity of Vulnerability

In Art Hives, we have the potential to be surrounded by everyday heroes, because according to Brené Brown (2012), to create involves taking risks, and thereby being vulnerable and courageous. How do we foster such courage? Within the safety of the art hive's holding environment we can dare to take risks, little by little. Looking back at the definition of belonging we see it is: a subjective sense that one's *whole self* is accepted and appreciated by a person or community with which they have regular contact and things in common. By holding parts of myself back from this community, I did not give them the chance to accept me as a whole person. This is contrary to assumed definitions of belonging, as it does not mean to fit in. Fitting-in means you adapt yourself in order to please a group you are seeking to join, whereas "belonging (…) doesn't require us to *change* who we are; it requires us to *be* who we are" (Brown, 2013, p. 25).

Yet in this art hive, I tried to fit-in and be accepted. I was so busy fighting against my negative self-perceptions of being an Anglophone and not having special workshops to offer, that I forgot to listen to my body and my gut and realize that I was not relaxed, but straining: I was not being myself. How can participants believe it is all right to be themselves if the facilitators are not comfortable letting their guards down? Ironically, it is possible that I would have been seen as less separate, less different if I had had the

courage to be vulnerable and admit my weaknesses and inabilities to speak French

perfectly or hold the space adequately at all times. In his article, *The Necessary and*

Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change, Carl Rogers (1957) advises

therapists to be "a congruent, genuine, integrated person. It means that within the

relationship he is freely and deeply himself, with his actual experience accurately

represented by his awareness of himself" (p. 98). The same would be good advice for

how facilitators relate to Art Hive participants. If I had admitted more often that I needed

help, I could have given the participants another chance to build their competence,

confidence and generosity in sharing their skills and knowledge with me. In opening up

more often about my struggles, I could also have given the other facilitator the

opportunity to share her own vulnerabilities. Admitting I just didn't know what to do

sometimes might have opened a window for the other facilitator to also admit she did not

know, and for us to ask for more help from the participants. Perhaps if I had found a way

to be more immersed in my own art-making on a regular basis, I would have relaxed more

and just let things be around the languages that flowed through the studio: "The idea of

becoming absorbed is crucial in the context of the studio (…) Absorption means

involvement in something as well as fascination, inclusion, and assimilation"

(Kalmanowitz & Lloyd, 2005, p.107).

The truth of my experience is that, instead of embracing what I uniquely added to

the diversity of the studio, I was ashamed to be my authentic self in this art hive. Brown

says that often when most people talk about difficult issues that separate us, like privilege,

they get "paralyzed by shame" (2012). I felt shame about many aspects of my privilege: my status as a "paid facilitator" and graduate student, my language, and my race. This shame stemmed from my self-perception regarding my belonging and how I believed the other participants viewed me (Harris, 2011). I tried to avoid questions about the fact that I was a paid facilitator, as I felt this separated me from the participants and made me into an expert, despite an Art Hive principle of setting "aside our roles as experts and professionals and begin(nig) to rely more on our everyday knowledge" (Timm-Bottos, 2006, p.12). Even when I was trying to immerse myself in quiet art-making, participants would ask for my advice, assistance, and opinion instead of asking other participants, which I assumed was because they knew I was an art therapy graduate student. Because of the brutal history of European colonialism and the defeat of the French by the English in Canada, I felt shame about being a white Anglophone in a community of what I perceived to be predominantly Francophone immigrants. Each time I spoke in my non-native tongue, I felt my Anglophone accent revealed me to be an imposter, trying to fit-in. My shame kept me hyper-vigilant about which language I was using, and kept me from letting my guard down and being my authentic self. My shame isolated me from others and kept me feeling different and separate. According to shame resilience theory, healing is derived from having the courage to be vulnerable and authentic (Brown, 2006). In being my authentic self, I could have added a necessary ingredient of diversity to the studio, which in turn could have invited others to feel freer to be themselves if they saw that anybody was accepted there, Anglophone, Francophone, and all other languages.

Within the safety of the Art Hive we can reclaim our senses of autonomy, competence, generosity, and inclusion by admitting our differences, limitations and needs, and thereby daring to admit our vulnerabilities.

Fostering a Resilience to Shame

  Autonomy. In learning about Brown's Shame Resilience Theory (2006), I can see now that my shame kept me from developing autonomy. There were many times when I disagreed with the workshop model, or when I felt like my native language would be more appropriate, or I wanted to take the space I needed to sit and make art. Sometimes I felt there was literally not enough space for me to take a place at a table, or that there was not enough energy for me to make art; that all of my energy needed to be given to meeting others' needs. At times I did not feel I had the right to be autonomous, as I equated it with independence and isolation from the group, and instead I tried to fit-in. This brought a sense of restriction, rather than freedom, which is the result of real autonomy. Freedom to do what we need to do counteracts the restricting feeling of shame (Brown, 2006).

  Competence. As a facilitator, when I realize my diversity is an asset, and admit that I am good enough and I have something to offer, despite my imperfections, I invite the participants to say the same about themselves. I build my sense of competence, and am able to model it for the participants, by simply making art out of whatever I can get my hands on, based on whatever inspires me. As Timm-Bottos (2006) attests:

When we allow ourselves to see each other as equal players, each in need of healing

and leading, we discover amazing new ways of working. We become a group of

interdisciplinary and interdependent human beings, a group of eccentric bricoleurs,

who reach for things at hand, trusting in lived experiences, and using this knowledge,

to come up with something new. (p. 13)

Brendtro et al. (2002) say that the remedy for children giving up is involvement "in an

environment with abundant opportunities for meaningful achievement"(p. 63). On the one

hand, the crafts and artwork produced in the art education workshops offered step-by-step

skill-building that resulted in aesthetically pleasing creations. Workshops can help to

increase a sense of mastery and competence in participants. On the other hand, I would

argue that self-directed, self-created artwork would have been more meaningful. For when

we see what we are capable of creating from our own minds, hearts and hands, it builds

up much more confidence than when we are required to copy step-by-step from an expert,

getting the message that we are not inherently competent: "the more controlled

environment will offer fewer opportunities to explore and express affect, symptom, and

emergent thought" (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p. 142). My findings show that I felt a

weak sense of competence when workshops were being held. My role at the art hive was

to lead quietly through example by holding a safe space and making my own art, thereby

encouraging others to do the same. When the art education students brought in new and

unusual supplies and pre-made examples, my leading from behind was completely

overshadowed by the "teaching at the front" leadership of the workshop facilitators,

especially when everyone in the studio was expected to drop their artwork and participate in the workshop. The art education students' special workshops were directive and required everyone's attention at the front, like in a classroom, whereas the Art Hive model of spontaneous self-led creation allows participants to have multiple focus points; with their own art-making, with those making something totally different beside them, and the hum in the room with creativity at the centre of it. The aim (of Art Hives) is to increase the capacity, cohesion and competence of the community (Barndt, 2008) where anyone who enters the space is seen as an artist with something to contribute (Timm-Bottos, 2006). Competence will be built over time resulting in a feeling of having the power to affect change, which also builds resilience to shame (Brown, 2006).

Generosity. With a sense of competence and power comes a sense of abundance, and a desire to give back some of what we have been given. In the Art Hives, when we give our time and company out of obligation and "without generosity, the work becomes charity work" (Timm-Bottos, personal communication, April 2015). Just to function on a basic level, the art hive is sustained through the generosity of others, as art supplies are donated and everything given is then used to create. When we feel generous, we sense a world of abundance and empathy. When we do not feel generous, we experience lack, scarcity and apathy, which can lead to the opposite of generosity or belonging: "the competitive, impoverished self" (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p.163). In my case, there were often times when I felt depleted, did not feel inspired to help others, and even felt angry as I wished they would learn to help themselves. I did not trust that my energy

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would be reciprocated: the fact that I felt the need to be given back to implies my needs were not being met. While generosity requires looking at another, seeing their need, empathizing, and giving freely, there comes a point when we need to be replenished in order to give back. If I had been regularly exercising my autonomy and competence in this community, perhaps my well would not have run dry. True generosity results in a deep empathy for ourselves because when we can empathize with others and see that our problems are similar, we build resilience to shame (Brown, 2006).

Inclusion. Ironically, as Brown points out, "we share in common what makes us feel the most apart" (2006, p. 49). In other words, the shame that isolates so many people is the same thing they have in common. We all suffer from shame, but when we hear the words "me too" we know we are not alone. I felt most included when I could speak honestly from my heart with the other facilitator. Carl Rogers (1969) said that "when I have been listened to and when I have been heard I am able to reperceive my world in a new way and to go on" (p. 225). Through feeling empathy for another human being, we connect our hearts and reach out to include them. Reaching out, by its very nature, is a vulnerable act, as it requires taking one hand off the ledge of security we cling to. When we reach out to include another, we risk rejection, but the feeling of abundance we have built from knowing ourselves, feeling competent and feeling generous encourages us to connect. Just hearing someone greet me by name was enough for me to want to reach back and to invite him or her to sit with me. When I was authentically thanked or acknowledged, regardless of whether I was "simply doing my job" as a facilitator, I felt

included in the community, which made me want to stretch and reach further for those who included me, and beyond them to those who had not yet been included. When one builds the courage to reach out and include others, connection can be found, and in connecting, we are no longer isolated in our shame (Brown, 2006).

If all seekers of belonging overcome their shame around what separates them and have the courage to risk being their authentic selves, the result could be a strong diverse community that has found its sense of belonging. A sense of belonging, as we really are, through exercising our autonomy and thereby finding freedom; belonging through knowing we have something to offer our community and thereby building our sense of power to affect change; belonging through generously giving back from our abundance of skills and feeling empathy for our brothers and sisters; and belonging through actively reaching out and including others, thereby connecting to our communities. Once we feel we are a part of something, our welcoming becomes more authentic, as we experience what true belonging feels like.

Conclusion

Since belonging is a universal human need, facilitators, while charged with the inclusion of others, also need to feel they belong to their communities, as belonging is a feeling of being whole and "part of something greater than oneself"(Goldsmith, 1998, p. 277) that can fuel great courage for social change. Motivating others to be their authentic selves in the studio space and encouraging them to take risks in art-making while also holding the space and keeping it safe takes great courage and self-knowledge. In doing

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this autoethnographic work, I have come to know myself and my needs better, as a person and a facilitator. As Berger (2001) said, "I will continue to use autoethnography because it is the process of opening inward that allows me to reach outward toward understanding" (p. 515).

The aim of autoethnographic research is changing the world for the better through social critique. As Art Hives appear in more and more neighborhoods, it is important that we critique and reflect on how we are leading in these spaces, and find more opportunities for shared ownership of the art studio. My shame in coming from the outside heightened my awareness of the disparities between facilitators and participants. Facilitators have rich opportunities to empower and put their faith in participants, which will in turn strengthen the efficacy of their communities.

The essential need to belong cannot be fulfilled in isolation through solely doing inner work, nor through pure effort and desire for membership. The antecedents for belonging need to be rooted in place, like the ground beneath a tree. In Art Hives, the art is the honey that attracts a great diversity of bees and inspires them to work together. Belonging comes from going inward and moving outward, like the weaving of roots in the soil. As we deepen our efforts to build a strong trunk of autonomy and competence, facilitators invite participants to do the same through authentically modeling reflexivity and confidence in our courage to create. We can use art to relearn who we are and what we are capable of, for "(r)eclaiming our human hands, and their ability to make something, is reclaiming our rightful inheritance" (Timm-Bottos, 2001, p. 225). As we

move outward like branches, strengthened in our core sense of self, we can give back through whole-hearted listening and helping, and genuinely welcoming all who enter the safe space of the hive. The canopy our work produces is made of the fruits of freedom, power, empathy and connection. Shame and fear of rejection will always blow around us like the winds of changing weather, causing our sense of belonging to sway. At those times we can gather together under the shade of our community trees and realize we are not alone.

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Figure 1