

The Walking Project: Neighborhood Development Workshops

Two series of workshops for neighborhood development groups that facilitate the reframing of the physical space around us and connect the landscapes of individual movements and stories through collaborative walking and mapping processes.

Discovery: The First Series (available Winter/Spring 2006)

Discovery Session 1: A Walk Around The Block - What's Stopping Us?

An opportunity for personal and neighborhood transformation, by exploring the paths and routes we take in our daily lives through a local walk. It is a means to reflect on the personal stories, on the mundane and intimate moments and exchanges on these paths and within this area that have shaped and continue to shape our feelings and responses to where we live.

This workshop is inspired by the concept that changing our patterns and movement habits can change our attitudes and perceptions of ourselves and others, how taking a different path might change our perspective on our neighborhood by:

- challenging our assumptions and preconceptions about our place and roles within a community
- encouraging participation in neighborhood renewal and regeneration
- getting us to look at our physical surroundings with a view to transformation and change if we wish it
- facilitating communication within groups and gaining some understanding of one another's different paths, both literal and metaphorical
- recognizing and acknowledging where and how our paths meet.

Learning Outcomes May Include:

1. Participants will be able to demonstrate an increased awareness of their immediate neighborhood: the buildings, amenities, green spaces, retail areas, gathering places.
2. Participants will get to know at least 2 new neighbors.

Discovery Session 2: Walking and Mapping

A workshop that uses new technologies such as GPS to enable participants to observe and create personal maps of the places they walk and visit on a regular basis. Working in small groups, community members document their walks through writing, drawing, photography and stories to create annotated personal geographies of a particular neighborhood or space.

Learning Outcomes May Include:

1. Participants will demonstrate knowledge of a variety of tools and technologies to help document their neighborhoods and annotate personal and public space.
2. Participants will create a personal map of their neighborhood.

Discovery Session 3: Navigating and Storytelling

Participants exchange one another's maps and use them to navigate their neighborhoods with fresh eyes and the shared narratives of others.

Learning Outcomes May Include:

1. Participants will become more aware of the history and evolution of their neighborhood through the personal stories of other participants.
 2. Participants will recognize the importance of their own stories and lives in contributing to the creation of a community picture of the neighbourhood.
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Personal Stories/Public Connections: The Second Series (available Summer 2006)

Based on our work with participants in the Discovery Series, we will design a second series of workshops to:

- deepen the impact of community storytelling, using participatory digital media tools to re-make, re-mix and re-think individual maps from the Exploration Series.
- expand public participation in the dialogue through a presentation of and conversation about the individual and community maps created through this process.

Learning Outcomes May Include:

1. Participants will demonstrate an understanding of the role of artmaking and personal expression in creating personal and social change.
2. Participants will demonstrate an awareness of the connection of personal history to a wider community history.
3. Participants will gain an understanding of the subjectivity of mapping and develop skills that allow critical analysis of the maps they encounter in their daily lives.

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Workshop facilitators:

Erika Block and Hilary Ramsden

When:

- Discovery Series is available beginning January 2006
- Public Stories Series is available beginning June 2006

Duration:

each session will last approximately 3 hours and a series can be scheduled as follows:

- three consecutive days (stand-alone, or as part of a conference or retreat)
- two sessions on Day 1 and the third on Day 2 (weekend intensive)
- three consecutive weekly sessions (or spaced within 3 weeks)

Cost:

- \$1500 per individual session
- \$4000 for three consecutive sessions in a series, with the same participants
- includes equipment, aerial maps and materials

Participants:

- small groups will be most effective, so we recommend limiting each session to 12-16 participants
- if more people from the same group/community wish to participate together, we can split up for the first two sessions and come together for an extended third session

Contact:

Erika Block

734.417.3880

erika@walksquawk.org