

Listening Projects at NYC Climate Week

September 2023

Location: two entrances to the United Nations, both on 1st Avenue. Walk east on 41st Street to 1st Avenue and turn left.

- a. A small plaza at 45th Street and the UN, near the main entrance.
- b. Near the south entrance near 42nd Street and 1st Avenue, on the sidewalk of the UN.

Teams:

Monday am, 9 - 11am – Ama R
Monday pm, 12 - 2pm – Annie P
Tuesday am, 9 - 11am – Randy K
Tuesday pm, 12 - 2pm – MaryRuth
Wednesday am, 9 - 11am – Malinali CR
Wednesday pm, 12 - 2pm – Davora
Wall Street – Mike M
Friday am, 9 - 11am – Hao-Li
Friday pm, 12 - 2pm – Kathy Martino
Saturday am, 9 - 11am – Amanda R

1) What is the goal of a listening project? An RC listening project is an effective tool to model the power of listening, to introduce people to RC, and to offer people a person who can listen to them on a difficult topic.

2) How do listening projects work? Usually, RCers work in pairs. They develop an interesting question that they think will engage the interest of folks walking by. The question is put on a big sheet of paper. The 2 RCers greet people as they walk by. People often stop to read the question, and many will then engage with the RCers. The goal of a listening project is to listen to folks - not talk at them or throw out a lot of information about RC.

3) Listening projects at NYC Climate Week: We plan to offer two types of listening projects:

- a) A basic listening project with an open-ended question that can serve to demonstrate the value of engaged listening and encouragement to feel and discharge
- b) A more targeted listening project with a question that directly connects to the theme of a specific workshop or other event that SAL/UER is offering. These

listening projects will be taking place both the day before and the day of each event. The goal of this listening project is to draw support for our SAL/UER work and interest people in attending the workshop or other event.

4) Language Liberation: We hope to offer listening projects in diverse languages, especially where a workshop will be interpreted into Spanish. SAL/UER delegates or volunteers who speak Spanish can make signs in Spanish and seek out areas near our workshop location where people speaking Spanish might gather. This will also serve to inform people that our event will be interpreted into Spanish.

5) Having a successful listening project: Besides listening well to someone, there are two key skills needed for offering an effective Listening Project:

a) One skill is the ability to be welcoming, make great eye contact with people you don't know as they walk by, say hello, maybe ask them an interesting question (do you know about NYC Climate Week?) or offer an appreciation (I love that scarf you are wearing!). After you have engaged a person, then point to the question and ask them the question.

b) The second skill is creating a question that people will want to answer. The key to a good listening project question is to ask a question that draws people to you, is asked in a forward moving way (not a question filled with discouragement and hopelessness), and points people toward feelings rather than intellectualizing.

An effective question: When is a time you experienced unity between groups working to end climate change?

A less effective question: How do we deal with all the divisions between our groups?

6) Sample questions for each workshop and other event (each event to come up with additional questions):

a) Workshop: *Legacy of Colonization and Racism in Africa*

Questions: How do you see the legacy of colonization and racism in Africa impacting the climate crisis there, and the ability of Africa countries to respond to the crisis?

b) Workshop: *New Yorkers and the Climate Movement*

Questions: How big a problem do you think climate change is for NYC? What do you think is the most effective climate organizing we've done in NYC?

b) Workshop: *Climate Change and Latin America*

Question: Do you think climate change in Latin America is having an impact on the situation at the Mexico/US Border? If so, how?

c) Workshop: *Fair Share & Loss and Damage*

Question: Countries in the Global South are asking the U.S. to pay it's "fair share" for the damage to the climate. What do you think is fair?

d) Workshop: *Indigenous People and the Climate Emergency*

Questions: Are the rights of Native Americans respected in the U.S.? What about their treaty rights?

e) Workshop: *The Intersection of Climate Change and Racism in the Southern US*

Question: Do you have connections in the southern U.S.? Have you noticed the impacts of climate change there?

f) Workshop: *Thinking About Disability and Climate Change*

Question: Do you have people with disabilities in your life? How can disabled people prepare for the climate crisis?

g) Workshop: *Art and Climate Justice*

Question: How important is art in your life? How can art play a role in the climate emergency?

h) Workshop: *Young People at the Forefront of the Climate Emergency*

Question: As a young person, when is a time you felt like you were a force for change in climate work? When is a time your voice was not respected?

i) Workshop: *Jews, Land, and Climate Café*

Question: Have you experienced or witnessed antisemitism recently? What happened? What was that like for you?

If you are Jewish: How has the history of Jewish trauma affected your ability to feel deeply connected to the earth? Allies to Jews: how have the historic traumas done to your people affected your ability to be fully connected to the earth?

j) Workshop: *Racism and Climate Change*

Question: How do you see racism as connected to the climate crisis?

k) Workshop: *Mental Health and Climate Justice*

Question: Is there a time you felt hopeless that we would win the battle for climate change? How do you deal with your feelings about the climate emergency?

l) Forum: *Voices from the Frontlines of the Climate Emergency*

Question: How has the climate crises directly affected you and your people? How are we as a global society doing at address climate disasters in the Global South?

m) Event: *Making a Climate for Families*

Question: How do you talk to your children about climate change? How do you help them with their fears about it?

7) General questions:

What breaks your heart about the climate crisis?

Is there a time you felt hopeless that we would win the battle for climate change?

Is there a time you were filled with hope that we could solve the climate crisis?

When is a time you or your people have experienced personal trauma as a result of the climate crisis?

What barriers have you encountered to becoming more involved on this issue?