

LEARNING INTO VULNERABILITY: The ONE photo challenge

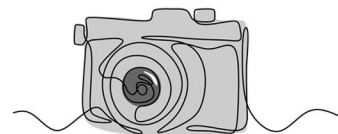
“Vulnerability is so powerful. It’s such a gift to be able to be vulnerable.” ~ Carla Rodriguez

conversation skills you will practice:

- observing
- responding
- working toward comfort with vulnerability
- honoring the vulnerability of another

1

Take one photo of yourself. Or, ask a friend to take one. **JUST ONE.** No do-overs. If possible, view the photo on a larger computer screen, or print it out.



2

Record your **observations** in a journal or on a piece of paper. What physical characteristics do you notice? Tip: imagine you are describing the photo to someone who can't see it. (e.g. “My eyes are blue.” “My lips curve up a little on the right.” “My hair is parted on the side” etc.) Go deeper -- what additional details do you notice? (e.g. Are there lines around your eyes?, A hair out of place? etc.)

3

Now allow yourself to **respond** to the photo in a more personal way.

Ask yourself:

- What do you think about when you look at the image?
- Does it remind you of anything, or anyone, other than yourself?
- What mood words might you use to describe what you see?

4

Reflection:

- What are you most comfortable seeing when you look at your photo?
- What in the photo (if anything) makes you a little uncomfortable?
- If you were told that image would be all over social media tomorrow, what would your reaction be? Do you have any feelings of **vulnerability**?
- Which was harder: to strictly observe the photo or to personally respond to it?

5

Can you imagine any benefits to strictly observing **BEFORE** responding in this activity or in a difficult conversation?

Want to do more with this activity? Invite a partner to work with you.

- Invite someone else to complete this exercise with you.
- When you have both completed steps 1-4, exchange photos with your partner.
- Complete steps 2-3 with each other's photo.
- Take turns sharing your **observations**, then sharing your personal **reflections** about each other's photo.
- Explore together: How did it feel to do this activity with your own photo? With each other's photo? Which experience felt more **vulnerable**? How did this affect how you participated in the conversation?

CONVERSATION CONSIDERATIONS

How might practicing exploring **vulnerability**, your own or that of someone you are with, help you feel more comfortable entering into difficult conversations? In what ways might the practice of **observing** before you personally **respond** be helpful when a conversation turns tough?

