



How to run your own online consciousness raising session

The extent to which CR will work for you is dependent on many things including the temperament, state of mind, mental health, attitude, willingness, attentiveness and good faith each participant brings to the group. What worked for us may not work for you. However there are some key principles that can guide you along.

- 1. Try it with some friends, and friends of friends.** CR should always be composed of a self selecting group. During lockdown and online, it's probably best for trust building purposes that no one invited, is more than one degree of separation from someone else.
- 2. What goes on CR, stays on CR** In order to build a culture where participants feel they can be free and open, it is important to set the norm that what is said in the session remains confidential. We would advise against 'carrying on the discussion elsewhere' on a different platform, or bringing up anything said during the session at a different time, even to the person themselves.
- 3. One contribution per person per question** to maintain the feel of CR and give importance to people's contributions, it's important that the event is not run like a meeting nor feels like a chat. It needs a slow, focused vibe, where participants aren't rushing to make or finish a contribution. Give people time to think and pause. CR shouldn't feel competitive where there are right and wrong answers. You just say some stuff. It doesn't have to be well thought out or rehearsed.
- 4. Allow for silence in between contributions** It may be tempting to try to fill silence with questions, jokes, prompts, but try to resist that. It is both fine and important to allow for periods of silence in CR. Whoever is ready to speak first, does so and when they are finished, the next person can begin when they in turn are ready. This helps nurture the slow meditative vibe of these sessions.
- 5. Try not to prompt each other.** It may be tempting to fill silence with jokes, banter or saying things like *person x, why don't you go next*. Try not to do that and allow natural bouts of silence to happen. Usually someone will have something to say



soon enough!



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- 6. Try not to interrupt someone's contribution.** If someone is saying something you can really empathise with, try nodding or waving your hands. If you happen to speak after that person, *its fine to say what xxxx said really resonated with me*

Questions we asked during sessions

- *How have you been feeling? (we asked this every session - plus another from the list below)*
- *How has the pandemic and lockdown changed the way you see yourself and how you fit into the world?*
- *How has it made you think differently about where you live/your home/the space you live in?*
- *When was the last time you felt hopeful about the future? What was it like?*
- *How have your relationships changed during lockdown?*
- *How do you see your life changing after lockdown?*
- *How has it made you think or feel differently about where you live- your area or your home?*
- *How do you see your life changing after lockdown?*
- *What feelings do you have about the future?*
- *How has Covid-19 and lockdown changed your relationship to your body?*
- *How has lockdown changed your sense of time?*
- *When was the most and the least free you have felt during lockdown?*
- *What do you remember most vividly about life before lockdown?*

We would highly encourage you to come up with questions that work best for your group as well!



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Extra Reading:

Plan C:

<https://www.weareplanc.org/blog/c-is-for-consciousness-raising/>

<https://2018.transmediale.de/program/event/plan-c-building-acid-communism>

Novara ACFM:

[https://soundcloud.com/novaramedia/acfm-microdose-1-theories-of-consciousness?
in=user-96181498/sets/acid-corbynism](https://soundcloud.com/novaramedia/acfm-microdose-1-theories-of-consciousness?in=user-96181498/sets/acid-corbynism)

[https://soundcloud.com/novaramedia/acfm-microdose-2-mica-nava-on-feminist-con
sciousness-raising](https://soundcloud.com/novaramedia/acfm-microdose-2-mica-nava-on-feminist-consciousness-raising)

Red Pepper:

<https://www.redpepper.org.uk/what-is-acid-corbynism/>