Mindfully engaging the body in online events

How can we be both in our bodies and in the space during an online event? This question was raised during “How did you transform your physical event into a digital event?” workshop held at our Closer than Ever 2020 Member convening. Though the workshop focused on online events that were designed to compensate for the restriction of physical events, it also brought up a discussion on engagement in the digital space. Here are some of the tips and considerations for mindfully engaging the body during your event that might be useful:

- Using video: not every meeting needs video, but if you can use it - it offers a moment for people to come together, to see each other and be seen.
- We can also use photos: why do we need to see one another in real time? Taking photos of ourselves, sharing them with our colleagues and talking about the photos offers another way of seeing each other as something we build together.
- Going back to the physical: using art, journals, paper, colourful pencils, and finding ways to integrate them into the digital space, so that our bodies are not only what exists inside the frame of our cameras.
- Design your care and break sessions in the sense that they are also dynamic, besides being reflective. Think about yoga, stretching, group exercise sessions that are adjusted to diverse participants, etc. You might consider including simple video tutorials on neck/shoulder exercises during breaks or as standalone care sessions. It’s always useful to send a link, if the break session is meant to mean “going away” from the device.
- When announcing body exercises or guided meditations that involve connection with body, describe what the exercise will be about, ask if there are different health concerns and adjust. Remind participants that the session is optional. Be mindful that oftentimes bodies are not our temples, as they are also a source of physical and psychological trauma and difficulties, survived violence, gender dysphoria or body dysmorphia. Be gentle and compassionate when announcing the exercises and attentive when facilitating body sessions.
- Use music and some beautiful videos of scenery on your shared screen before the event opens, during the breaks or when wrapping up. Invite people to dance (and sing) however they want: off or on camera!

Revision #2
Created 2021-10-28 05:54:31 UTC by Cathy
Updated 2021-10-28 05:54:45 UTC by Cathy