The Stuart Low Trust

Time to Talk Pilot

Stuart Low Trust

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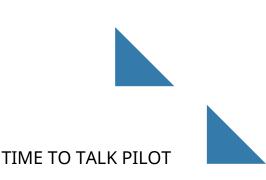
Approved by:
Hannah Kalmanowitz, Chief Executive

Pilot Aims and Outline

In March 2021, SLT launched a 'Time to Talk' pilot to create an opportunity for the participants to socialise and connect with others as would naturally have occurred when activities were running face-to-face.

We hoped this would make participants feel less isolated and more engaged.

For 6 weeks, a selected 6 Zoom workshops were extended by 20 minutes (10 minutes pre- and post-workshop) to facilitate this. Participation was voluntary, but gently encouraged.

Trial Process

Each activity engaging with the T2T (Time to Talk) pilot was clearly described and explained in promotional materials to ensure participants felt informed and comfortable with this format.

Messaging was clear to assuage any sense of vulnerability.

A Session Summary Form was specifically devised to help the SLT workshop Host to navigate this trial (which included prompts to facilitate conversations if necessary) and correlate feedback.

The aim was for the chat to be Participant-led, not Host-led. The forms were logged and reviewed on a weekly basis by the Operations and Communications Manager/Project Support Officer.

Constructive feedback from both Participants and the Host was noted, and enacted (see Participant Response section below).

In total 30 participants took part over the 6 sessions

Participant Response

Participants gave feedback after each session:

"I am so pleased that this class has been chosen to be extended for opportunity to chat and share. I adore her teaching and always feel better afterwards. She is such a gifted, and sensitive teacher and always interested in hearing how we feel before and after the workshop."

"Everyone has a chance to say something if they want to. Thanks."

"Clear chat time is a good idea. It feels natural when it includes learning from the class. Gentle facilitation helpful, gives space for everyone. Lovely!! Big thank you to organisers. SLT is very unique in how it includes people and their wishes. Thank you".
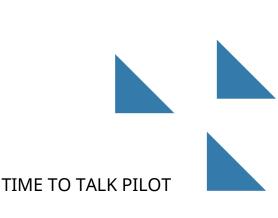
Host Feedback

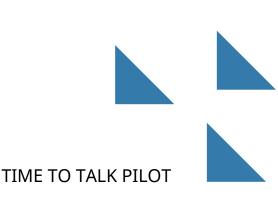"Positive feedback. Participants very pleased there would be talk time before and after".

"This works well at the beginning of the session, but is less successful at the end when often there are only workshop specific questions being asked, and less interest in general conversation with other participants."

SLT Response

SLT responded by making immediate changes to the process, as follows:

- The Host to guide pre-session extra time as efficiently as possible, welcoming everyone and encouraging some positive involvement.

- Post-workshop, the Host is to clearly announce that everyone can now unmute themselves and have the chance to share.

- To avoid people feeling unheard before the session closes, the Host is to ask if anyone who has not yet spoken would like the chance to speak/share anything.

Outcome and Conclusion

As a result of overall positive feedback from this pilot, we will be using this new extended time format in one selected workshop, once a month as budgets allow.

The Host will take a more flexible approach on the pre- and post-session time split according to the nature of the activity and the engagement levels of participants.

Feedback confirms that this is an effective format to foster a more natural sense of connection amongst participants during this period of enforced isolation.