

Shifting Edges

A journey for
educators into
difficult-
knowledge and
discomfort

INFO PACK 2025

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GLOBAL SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

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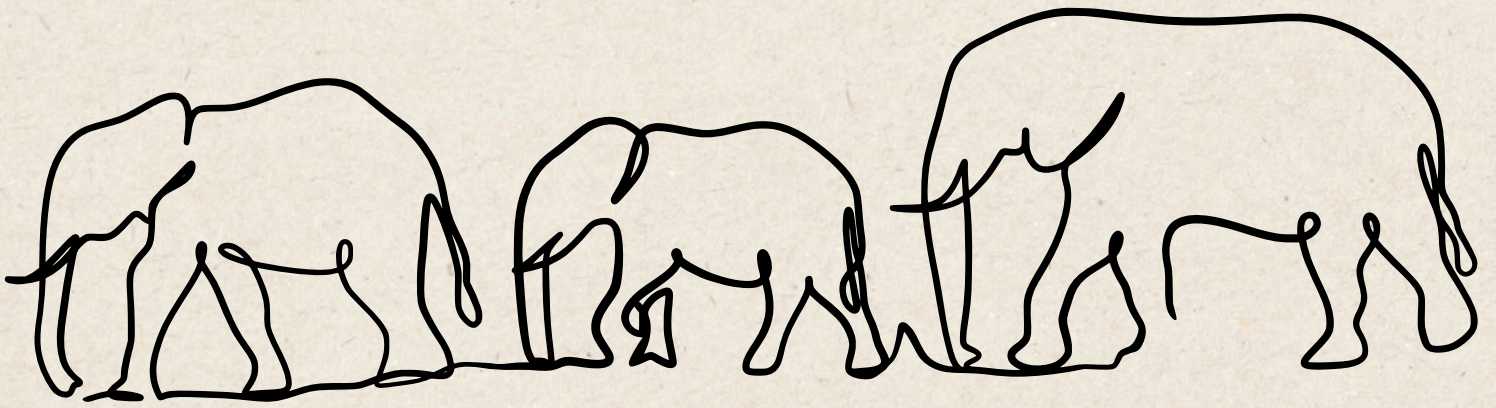
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"Things are not getting worse,
they are getting uncovered. We
must hold each other tight and
continue to pull back the veil"

adrienne maree brown



How - as educators - might we generate more
capacity within ourselves to sit with
difficult-knowledge, to stay with the
elephants in the room and, in turn, hold space
for others- especially young people that we
work with- to do similar?

DEFY, September 2023

strong and like why well that's why it's so important to change it but it just seems so blatantly obvious to this case and it's so blatantly obviously not being recognized by some people and you have the influence on the power and that like what is the point of having influence and power if you can't like you know actually make positive change in the world and like I think there's not just people like us that are questioning that right now it's people who are in those positions who feel like they can't do anything about there's and they are in these powerful positions as well so yeah. I just feel like that's very at odds with the world today and like and more and more I feel that kind of polarised kind of like having to hold multiple brains and whether that's world issues in one brain and then like the day today in the other and of whether that's like just kind of multiple projects because like in community where different things like that you run, you hold multiple projects at the same time because what maybe in a corporate company would be five jobs here is all in your one job and so yeah I think like it just feels a bit like you know if we were having you know something a crisis happening in Ireland might have like a day off to just focus on that or something whereas like everything is just gonna going along and like this huge crisis feels like happy if to weave and went hitch time and if you're a day to focus on something that seems so massive. And that kind of comes in ebb and flow but I think it's just very heightened at the moment because of the situation." Minute: Person 3: "I think I completely feel yeah that sort of what Person 1 and Person 2 have been mad articulating a little bit there as well. I'm sitting currently in my office and have the sun coming through here so we've got a curtain pulled over there. If I go too far this way then I could get a little bit blinded, so you might notice me hiding in the shadows. But yeah the sort of the running from activity to activity and sort of having 10 things on the go at once and being very conscious of all of the deadlines that are ahead of you it is something that I've really really felt quite a lot today and also they've definitely see feel that kind of almost lack of distinction or sort of emerging between the things that you're looking at and you're sort of trying to figure out how to bring other people sort of into discussions about in our context is about the kind of the kind of crisis I guess and all sort of related different issues and topics to that but then sort of also seeing it having it as a day-to-day like reality so that the marriage the marriage and the blend between so where does where does the things I do from nine to five and and then the things that are sort of all very real you know and sometimes it feels like you're not not working and then also you know also but at the same time sort of you you feel like I'm doing this because I feel like I want to do something that contributes in some small way to the to this issue or but again is that knowledge that in so many ways we are very small and related to the scale of the problem as well so just not being able to escape I suppose not that you'd want to but just yeah I don't know it's there's a mesh mash of feelings around that for me too and I think I carry that into my day-to-day life as well as into my work life a lot of the time." 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It feels quite heavy, as I was listening to it, quite heavy and that kind of struggle that must be, that I also imagine must be there to have a really really busy day, week with a really full schedule and then to say no for two hours. I'm gonna do this. And that being hard to prioritise that but also just to come into, because it's so different at the same time to have the space where we can at least check in like that and have a conversation for the next hour or so about difficult knowledge and affect of states and stuff that we maybe know as sometimes present but just doesn't get a lot of room." How we are now and how we've checked in actually maybe it's good preparation for that. It seems fitting ... and I think some of the problem and like Charlotte was hinting at it, also some of the challenges even with education spaces, we separate things out we say we're just looking at this topic today and cut out everything else and we're just focusing on this and when actually everything else has a context everything has a context so even having a conversation today and we'll be recording it and we will be pulling it. Its context is this week and the life of the world. It's context as we share and talk and as I throw a few prompts out it's it's going to be inflected with what's happening in the wider field and isn't that right that we try to do that a little bit and see. Because so often I guess some of the things you're saying are separated I have to look at this to the

1 About DEFY

DEFY works with educators active in a range of settings including schools, third level institutions, NGOs and youth organisations across Ireland, Slovenia, Germany and beyond.

The project offers tools and space for educators to explore their own entanglement in cascading crises of poverty, inequality, genocide, ecological collapse ('difficult-knowledge') and the discomfort that arises.

DEFY is interested in how this purposeful engagement with difficult-knowledge and discomfort might shift (and possibly deepen) pedagogical approaches and educator capacity to hold space for others (especially the young people with whom we work).

We are delighted to announce that applications are now open for "Shifting Edges: A journey for educators into difficult-knowledge and discomfort", an offering for educators interested in taking a deeper² journey with these themes.

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I'm talking to you guys from Dublin today and I'm using my phone as a webcam for the first time, so it's balanced quite precariously on top of my screen. So if it tumbles, if it makes a tumble at any point, that's what's happening." Minute: Person 6 (Charlotte): "I am in Cork city and I've been rushing from one end of the city to the other. I was at a new CCC campus this morning so it was really nice to be surrounded by a lot of students there and then I came back and over the weekend my partner and I came across a baby pigeon had fallen out of the nest a lady who came across at the same time ordered us to take it home to look after it and we really shouldn't have but we did and his eyes I just spent just before I came on the call we were trying to throw it up in the air to try and get it to fly, because we realised it actually can fly. But the problem is that it's blind. So every time it goes to fly, it flies into the wall and I suppose then just, I was thinking as I was coming to the call, because the last few days with work has been feeling very you know ... In the forms of all the things I should be doing but in no way linked to what is really just so over my head and so heavy on me and people have already mentioned it, the Palestine and Israel and maybe just the link there'd be like: you feel, at least I feel such an urge to act than I do and I'll go and do these actions and then just but it's into the nowhere I don't know where I'm going with it and then just you know the wall and maybe then linked to this project a little bit which is we're really interested in this like a sort of an obsession with action taking doing stuff and without really thinking about where we're going or where we're going into. 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Key dates and times

Chapter 1: Exploring

January - March

30th January, online
6th February, online
13th February, online
20th February, online
27th February, online
6th March, online

Thursday Evenings

18:30 - 20:30 Irish Time // 19.30 - 21.30 CET

15th March, In-person workshop for
participants in Germany/Slovenia

22nd March, In-person workshop for
participants in Ireland

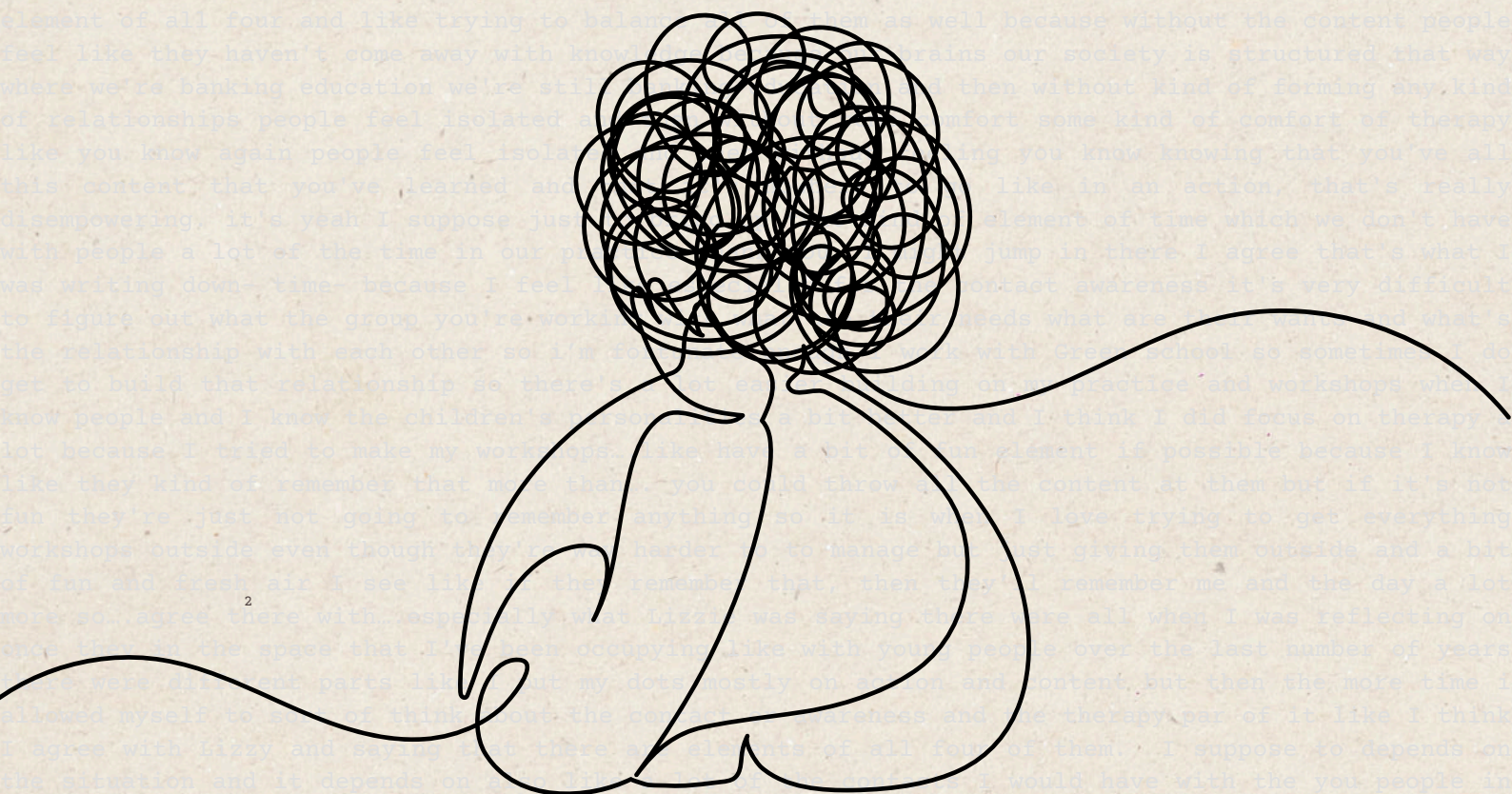
Chapter 2: Expanding

April - September

Action-experimenting
Midway online check-in, June
Final in-person workshop, September



While the schedule runs for several months, "Shifting Edges" is designed as an 'accompanier'. The course strives to resource and accompany, rather than burden (already over-stretched) educators.



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More about "Shifting Edges"

In this moment of multi-layered crises, what are we- as educators- making space for in our practice? What are we choosing to allow in? What are we holding off? What comes in anyway? What do we feel is there that is not given space or time? Where are there cracks and possibilities for other modes of engagement, for more depth?

Ultimately, how might we engage more creatively, more deeply with the cracks, with the discomfort and that which is troubling- a line that starts within ourselves and moves out into our practice?

If you are interested in these questions, "Shifting Edges" might be for you.

Designed as an extended journey into difficult-knowledge and discomfort, the course runs from **January - September 2025**, combining online evening sessions, in-person practice days and a period of action-experimenting.

Through this course, in community with others, expect to:

explore your
own edges,
resistances,
patterns and
habits in relation
to difficult-
knowledge

build stamina for the 'elephants-
in-the-room' (complexity,
entanglement, contradictions,
difference, conflict)

get closer to what education in
times of crises and collapse -
'depth education' - might look like

explore embodied
presence and what
this brings for you

become more
familiar with (and
stretch) your own
threshold for
difficult-knowledge
('window of
tolerance')

expand your picture of what belongs in an
education space, and the role that
emotion/affect/senses can (and does) play in
learning processes

Check in: is this course for you?

Stuff can get in the way of us moving closer to difficult-knowledge, including and not limited to:

overwhelm, defense, frustration, apathy, fear of it being too much, deflection, reasoning, solutioning, critique ...

Are you curious about these responses?

Ready and willing for a process that engages them? For a process that invites self-focus; that might irritate at times, or unsettle?



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Please review the DEFY Zine for more background on the process and where DEFY is drawing from.

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Minute: Person 4: "Hi everyone - yeah I guess maybe also linking in with what everyone already shared and so many things that you three said r like feeling that there's something that is unfolding in Gaza and in Palestine and it's yeah really really knowing that there's something that we feel that heaviness and we just I mean I just can switch off my phone or you can disengage and by knowing how many people can't, no matter where they are because they have friends and they have families. And yeah I feel like I'm feeling that today because I took a bit of a break yesterday and I didn't really engage and then I came back and my computer my phone and so many things came up, so I think that was something that I really feel again today is coming in into that space and thinking about that distinction between the work and the life and then I'm like up today ... as for how I come into the space, that's the energy that comes from the work and then I think there's a lot of like what I hear you saying about that not not working things there's something I've been feeling a lot. The work that I do is very similar to how I spend my spare time, looking into what I do inside of work. And I recently have been feeling that as a positive thing it's like everything's kind of pulling in the same direction and everything is feeling into each other and ... Yeah, rest is also important and perspective is also important which is part of why I think I am here today. I had a premonition that I was going to be thinking well maybe this is something that gets too prioritised and then I was like I'm gonna be pressed to do this type of work and this is a group of people who are feeling similar things together to navigate it. So maybe raising that on my priority list, which I'm glad that I did. I'm talking to you guys from Dublin today and I'm using my phone as a webcam for the first time, so it's balanced quite precariously on top of my screen. So if it tumbles, if it takes a tumble at any point, that's what's gonna happen." 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It feels quite heavy, as I was listening to it, quite heavy and that kind of struggle that must be, that I also imagine must be there to have a really really busy day, week with a really full schedule and then to say no for two hours. I'm gonna do this. And that being hard to prioritise that but also just to come into, because it's so different at the same time to have the space where we can at least check in like that and have a conversation for the next hour or so about difficult knowledge and affect of states and stuff that we maybe know as sometimes present but just doesn't get a lot of room." How we are now and how we've checked in actually maybe it's good preparation for that. It seems fitting ... and I think

4 Course structure (January- September 2025)

Chapter 1: Exploring

January to March '25

This chapter comprises of online sessions and solidarity circles, building towards an in-person workshop.

6 Weekly Online Sessions

These will be our spaces for engaging with difficult-knowledge, helped along by pedagogical tools, somatic practice and guest speakers.

Solidarity Circles

As part of the Exploring Chapter, participants will be assigned to smaller groups and, with guidance, self-organize 2 Solidarity Circles over the course of the 6 weeks. The Solidarity Circles will provide a more intimate space for sharing and experimentation.

In-Person Workshop 1

This workshop is a chance for in-person connection and a creative space for nurturing plans for the next chapter.



Chapter 2: Expanding

April to September '25

Action Experimenting

Based on inspirations, experiences and insights from the Exploring Chapter, participants will be invited to develop a plan for something they would like to try (differently) and 'action-experiment' this in their educational practice.

Online Check-ins

A whole group online check-in will be held in June (date tbd), offering the chance for participants to share mid-way reflections around their action-experimenting. Participants can also avail of one-to-one check ins with course facilitators during this time.

In-Person Workshop 2

This will be held in September 2025 and will mark the close of the course. Dates to be announced closer to the time.

5 Holding the space

Collective inquiry

DEFY is a **space for collective exploration and inquiry** with and for educators. A space to become more intimate with our own processes within the spheres of difficult-knowledge, exploring feeling by evoking feeling, with the focus on expanding our capacity to co-create and hold such spaces.

Following our guiding principles - while becoming part of DEFY's ongoing story - we ask each individual to take responsibility for their learning process and to discern what level of engagement is right for them at any given moment.

As part of this project, pieces of work (thoughts, imagery, drawings, etc.) are being collated within the ever-growing community and made part of published material along the way. This ensures that voices from within the collective are shared outside of the DEFY space and used as echoes to inform and educate further.

With this in mind, we are looking forward to your own contributions as future participants and to welcoming guest speakers as part of our (online) sessions.*

*More details regarding this will be shared along the way.



The DEFY Team

Sive Bresnihan



Training and Education Co-ordinator with Comhlámh since 2016, Sive is interested in education that startles and shifts, that nurtures agency and orientates towards justice. In terms of practice, she is always exploring and somatics (whole-body learning) is a big part of this. Sive is a Gestalt Theatre practitioner, having

completed a 2-year cycle of training in 2023. She holds an MEd in Adult Education from the University of Cape Town where she specialised in informal learning and social change.

Miriam Streit

Miriam has worked as part of finep's Education Team since 2023. In her work as an educator she tries to inspire youth engagement and has worked on global justice and especially climate related topics. She is interested in working and learning on transformational change and finding more creative and engaging methods for educational spaces.² Miriam holds degrees in Political Science and in Global Citizenship Education.



Charlotte Bishop



Charlotte has worked as STAND's Education and Research Manager since 2023. Admittedly, a keen adopter of 'traditional education' from a young age, experiencing more explorative as well as 'hands-off' approaches to learning through her teen and young adult years convinced her of the urgent need for something 'otherwise'. She spends much of her working days

exploring how best to cultivate 'otherwise' spaces; ones that explore the numerous crises of our time while centering compassion, cultivate learner-responsibility/agency and practice imagining-better.

International Project and Youth Program Coordinator with Voluntariat Institute since 2023, active in the youth sector, in the area of non-formal education since 2021, collaborating with (inter)national youth organizations and centers. Co-Working in the spheres of SME and non-formal education, she holds space for groups and individuals in various forms, co-facilitating and delivering workshops, able to support self-set learning objectives and the overall personal growth of individuals. Through her work she focuses on adapting to the learning pace of individuals, supporting mental hygiene through the practices of self-compassion, breath and voice and building healthier habit systems.

Maja Dominič



something really big is happening and you're like trying to like organize like a small event that like don't spend anything to do with like the Israel Palestine context and you're like it almost it's so it feels very at odds you know if in working in advocacy working in these Kunis like we're always juggling different things and in relation to like world issues but what it really feels like feels I think like a lot of like in my circles a lot of people feel very fed up and in terms of the advocacy and activism stuff in relation to Palestine right now and that you know like there's a lot of advocacy things that people have to really show people why it's wrong and like why well that's why it's so important to change it but it just seems so blately obvious to this case and it's so blatantly obviously not being recognized by some people and you have the influence on the power and that like what is the point of having influence and power if you can't like you know actually make positive change in the world and like I think there's not just people like us that are questioning that right now it's people who are in those positions who feel like they can't do anything about there's and they are in these powerful positions as well so yeah. I just feel like that's very at odds with the world today and like, and more and more I feel that kind of polarised kind of like having to hold multiple brains and whether that's world issues in one brain and then like the day today in the other and or whether that's like just kind of multiple projects because like in community where different things like that you run, you hold multiple projects at the same time because what maybe in a corporate company would be five jobs here is all in your one job and so yeah I think like it just feels a bit like you know if we were having you know something a crisis happening in Ireland might have like a day off to just focus on that of something whereas like everything is just gonna going along and like this huge crisis feels like happy if to weave and went hitch time and if you're a day to focus on something that seems so massive. And that kind of comes in ebb and flow but I think it's just very heightened at the moment because of the situation." Minute: Person 3: "I think I completely feel yeah that sort of what Person 1 and Person 2 have been mad articulating a little bit there as well. I'm sitting currently in my office and I have the sun coming through here so we've got a curtain pulled over there. If I go too far this way then I could get a little bit blinded, so you might notice me hiding in the shadows. But yeah the sort of the running from activity to activity and sort of having 10 things on the go at once and being very conscious of all of the deadlines that are ahead of you it is something that I've really really felt quite a lot today and also they move a definitely see feel that kind of almost lack of distinction or sort of emerging between the things that you're looking at and you're sort of trying to figure out how to bring other people sort of into discussions about in our context is about the kind of the kind of crisis I guess and all sort of related different issues and topics to that but then sort of also seeing it having it as a day-to-day like reality so that the marriage the marriage and the blend between so where does where does the things I do from nine to five and and then the things that are sort of all very real you know and sometimes it feels like you're not not working and then also you know also but at the same time sort of you you I like I'm doing this because I feel like I want to do something that contributes in some small way to the world. This issue of but again is that knowledge that in So Many Ways we are very small and related to the scale of the problem as well so just not being able to escape I suppose not that you'd want to but just yeah I don't know it's there's a mesh mash of feelings around that for me too and I think I carry that into my day-to-day life as well as into my work life a lot of the time." Minute: Person 4: "Hi everyone - yeah I guess maybe also linking in with what everyone already shared and so many things that you three said r like feeling something that is unfolding in Gaza and in Palestine and it's yeah really really knowing something that is happening and people here feel that heaviness and we just I mean I just can switch off my phone so you can't disagree and by knowing how many people can't, no matter where they are because they have friends and they have families. And yeah I feel like I'm feeling that today because I took a bit of a break yesterday and I didn't really engage and then I came back and my computer my phone and so many things came up, so I think that was something that I really feel gain today is coming in into that space and thinking about that distinction between the things that pop up today ... as for how I come into the space, that's the energy that comes from the Mau Mau Project that there's a lot of like what I hear you saying about that not not working things there's something I've been feeling a lot. The work that I do is very similar to how I spend my spare time, looking into what I do inside of work. And I recently have been feeling that as a positive thing it's like everything's kind of pulling in the same direction and everything is feeling into each other and ... Yeah, rest is also important and perspective is also important which is part of why I think I am here today. I had a pretty full day today and I was thinking well maybe this is something that gets too prioritised and then I was thinking today, I'm stressed to do this type of work and this is a group of people who are feeling similar things together to navigate it. So maybe raising that on my priority list, which I'm glad that I did. I'm talking to you guys from Dublin today and I'm using my phone as a webcam for the first time, so it's balanced quite precariously on top of my screen. So if it tumbles, if it takes a tumble at any point, that's what's happening." Minute: Person 6 (Charlotte): "I am in Cork city and I've been rushing from one end of the city to the other. I was at a new CCC campus this morning so it was really nice to be surrounded by a lot of students there and then I came back and over the weekend my partner and I came across a baby pigeon had fallen out of the nest a lady who came across at the same time ordered us to take it home to look after it and we really shouldn't have but we did and his eyes I just spent just before I came on the call we were trying to throw it up in the air to try and get it to fly, because we realised it actually can fly. But the problem is that it's blind. So every time it goes to fly, it flies into the wall and I suppose then I just, I was thinking as I was coming to the call, because the last few days with work has been feeling very you know ... In the forms of all the things I should be doing but in no way linked to what is really just so over me and so heavy on me and people have already mentioned it, the Palestine and Israel and maybe just the link there'd be like: you feel, at least I feel such an urge to act than I do and I'll go and do these actions and then just but it's into the nowhere I don't know where I'm going with it and then just you know the wall and maybe then linked to this project a little bit which is we're really interested in this like a sort of an obsession with action taking doing stuff and without really thinking about where we're going or where we're flying into. So I don't know, I think that's not ... yeah maybe it's not what I'm feeling, that was just the linking things as other people were talking as well." 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It feels quite heavy, as I was listening to it, quite heavy and that kind of struggle that must be, that I also imagine must be there to have a really really busy day, week with a really full schedule and then to say no for two hours. I'm gonna do this. And that being hard to prioritise that but also just to come into, because it's so different at the same time to have the space where we can at least check in like that and have a conversation for the next hour or so about difficult knowledge and affect of states and stuff that we maybe know as sometimes present but just doesn't get a lot of room." How we are now and how we've checked in actually maybe it's good preparation for that. It seems fitting ... and I think

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Further practical info

I'm worried about potential course costs...

There are no course fees. For in-person workshops all transport costs, food and overnight accommodation will be covered by the project.

Will I need to travel?

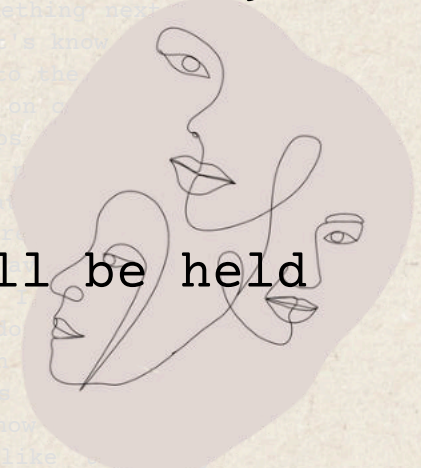
In-person workshops in Ireland will be held in Dublin.

The location of in-person workshops for Germany/Slovenia participants will be determined closer to the time and based on what is mutually convenient for participants.

Those attending the Germany/Slovenia in-person workshops may have to travel some distance- participants are therefore invited to arrive the day before the workshops. Food and accommodation will be provided.

Can anyone apply?

DEFY welcomes applications from educators currently living in Ireland, Slovenia or Germany and working with young people around themes relating to social and ecological justice. If you are living elsewhere and have interest in the program please contact us at **the.defy.collective@gmail.com**



How do I apply?

Complete your application form by following the [link](#) or scanning the QR code here:



**Closing date for applications is
Monday, November 18th 2024**



**Co-funded by
the European Union**