

HOW DOES IT WORK?

# SHAKESPEARE IN PRISON

DETROIT PUBLIC THEATRE'S  
SIGNATURE COMMUNITY  
PROGRAM



PROCESS + OUTCOMES

# MISSION

Shakespeare in Prison (SIP) empowers incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people to reconnect with their humanity and that of others; to reflect on their past, present, and future; and to gain the confidence, self-esteem, and crucial skills they need to heal and positively impact their communities.



# OVERVIEW



## HOW DOES SIP WORK?

Our case study explores how a season of SIP helps people empower themselves



## HOW DO WE GATHER DATA?

Methods and practices for recording material, transforming it into data, and analyzing that data



## WHAT ARE SIP'S OUTCOMES?

Long-lasting benefits of SIP participation:

- self-efficacy
- community
- empathy

# CASE STUDY

HOW DO WE MEASURE  
EMPOWERMENT IN  
SHAKESPEARE IN PRISON?



# THE FRAMEWORK

## **NARRATIVE IDENTITY**

The story we tell about ourselves to make meaning of our lives

## **READER RESPONSE**

Meaning is made by a text interacting with a reader.

## **TURNING POINTS**

Perceived redirection in a person's life

# TWO PROCESSES

## **THEATRICAL**

The performative, literary, and analytical part of the program. The theatrical process includes the things that give SIP its specific character, different from a hypothetical, generic support group with a hypothetical, generic collaborative project to complete.

## **OPERATIONAL**

Membership and collaboration in the ensemble: perseverance, conflict management, supporting other members, identifying with other members, attending meetings, overcoming the fear of performing in front of peers, and meeting the challenge of memorizing lines and learning stage movement.



**BOTH THEATRICAL AND OPERATIONAL PROCESSES ARE HAPPENING ALL THE TIME**

**THERE IS NO ONE "RIGHT" MIX OF PROCESSES; SIP ALLOWS PEOPLE TO FIND THE RIGHT CONDITIONS FOR THEMSELVES**

**THE GROWTH OF AN EMPOWERING NARRATIVE IDENTITY IS USUALLY SIGNALLED BY A SHIFT IN THINKING / FEELING / CONNECTING**

**KEY FINDINGS**

**THINK  
FEEL  
CONNECT**

**THINKING**

Interpretation  
Analysis  
Problem-solving

**FEELING**

Emotion  
Reaction  
Mood

**CONNECTING**

Empathy  
Identification  
Team-building



**ME**  
**YOU**  
**US**

**ME**

self

"I"

"Me"

**YOU**

other(s)

"You"

"Y'all"

**US**

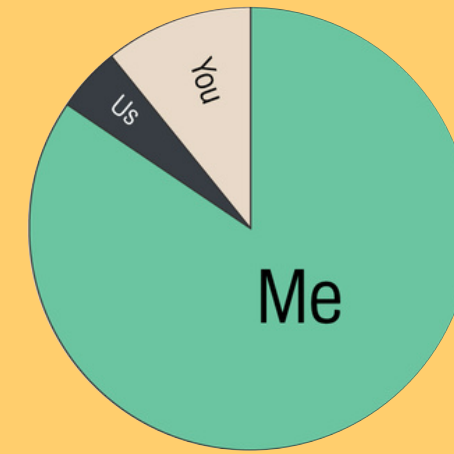
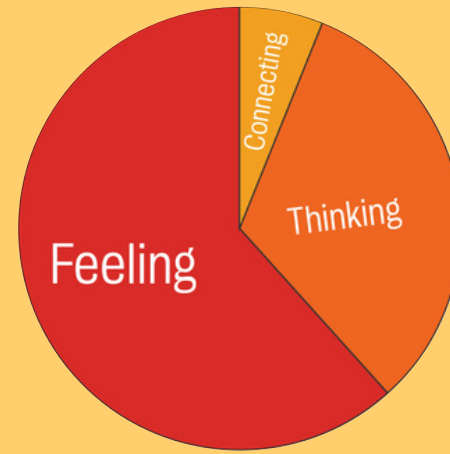
ensemble

"All y'all"

"We"

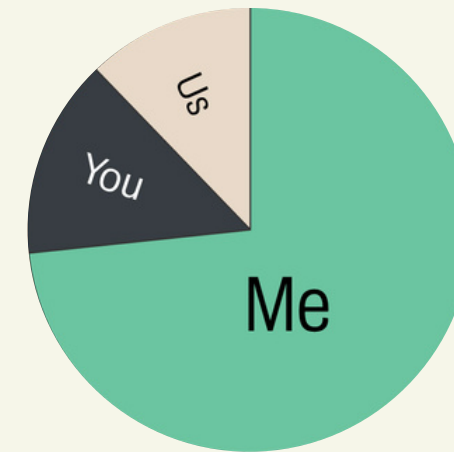
# ONE SEASON

## TURNING POINTS



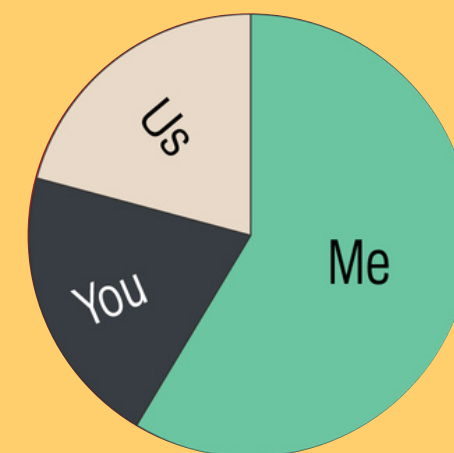
### WEEKS 1-14

This woman came to the ensemble withdrawn, emotional, and wary. The majority of her statements and actions were about her feelings, and almost exclusively on her own behalf: me. (This is common among new members.)



### WEEKS 15-31

She began problem-solving and strategizing for the ensemble as a whole. This change helped her slowly begin to trust others. As a result, the data capture a subtle shift towards thinking and speaking on behalf of others: you and us.



### WEEKS 31-40

In the final weeks of the season, she took on an even bigger leadership role. Seeing how others trusted her allowed her to open up. You see a large increase in connecting and speaking on behalf of other people.

# MANY ROUTES TO AN EMPOWERING IDENTITY



## SEASON ONE RICHARD III

Theatrical  
Playing Queen Margaret

Operational  
Being "Curtain Queen"



## SEASON TWO MACBETH

Theatrical  
Playing Macbeth

Operational  
Holding the group together



## SEASON THREE TWELFTH NIGHT

Theatrical  
Playing Sir Andrew Aguecheek

Operational  
Becoming a mentor

# OUR METHOD

NOTETAKING AND JOURNALS  
AND CODING, OH MY!

# RECORDING OBSERVATIONS

## NUTS AND BOLTS

What did we do today? How did it go?  
What did you observe about each activity?

## EVOLVING INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDES + BEHAVIORS

So-and-so read aloud for the first time today and seemed uplifted by the others' support.

## GROUP DYNAMICS

Was someone sitting off to the side? Did that continue throughout the session, or did anyone sit with them, and what impression did you get from that? How did the ensemble members interact as a group during a game/discussion/rehearsal of a scene?



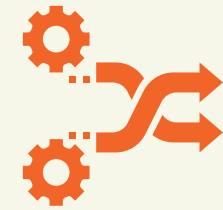
# RECORDING VERBATIM QUOTES



**CONNECTION WITH THE MATERIAL  
THROUGH PERSONAL EXPERIENCE**



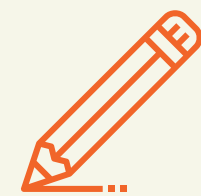
**CONNECTION WITH OTHERS  
THROUGH THE MATERIAL**



**CHANGE IN ATTITUDE, BEHAVIOR,  
THE TELLING OF ONE'S OWN LIFE  
STORY, AND/OR ONE'S  
DEFINITION/DESCRIPTION OF SELF**



**DEEP OR EVOLVING  
UNDERSTANDING OF THE  
MATERIAL ITSELF.**

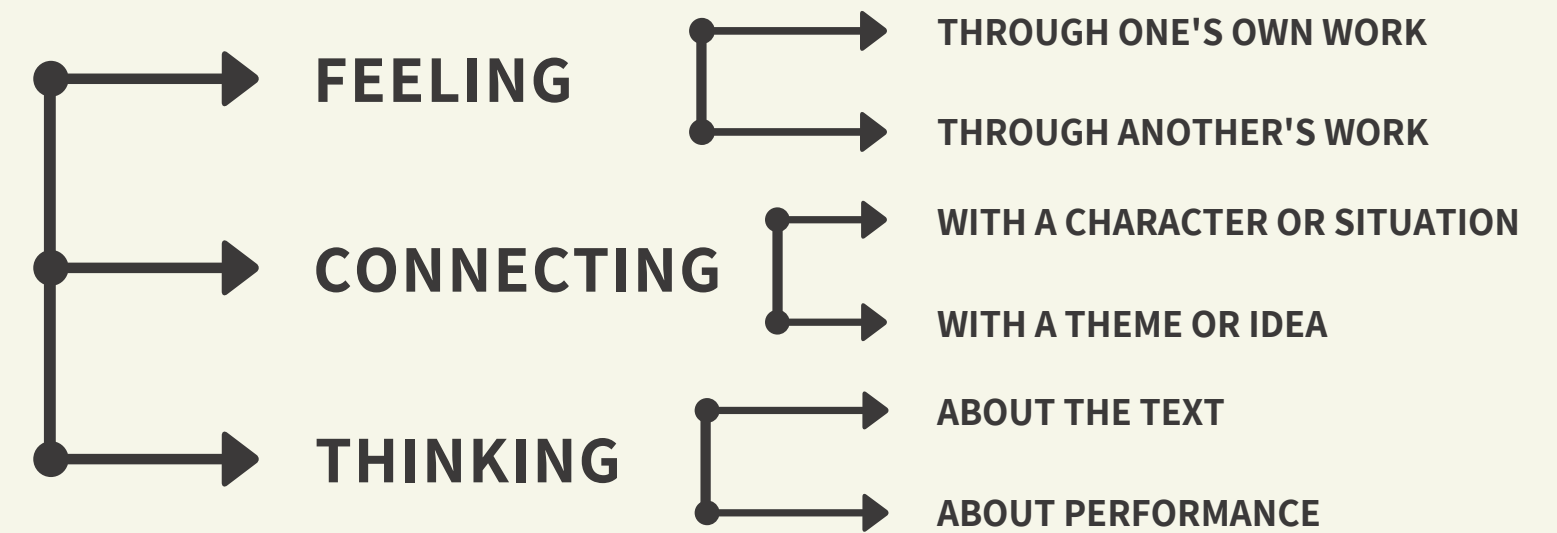


**ANYTHING ELSE THAT SEEMS  
PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY  
AND/OR COMPELLING**

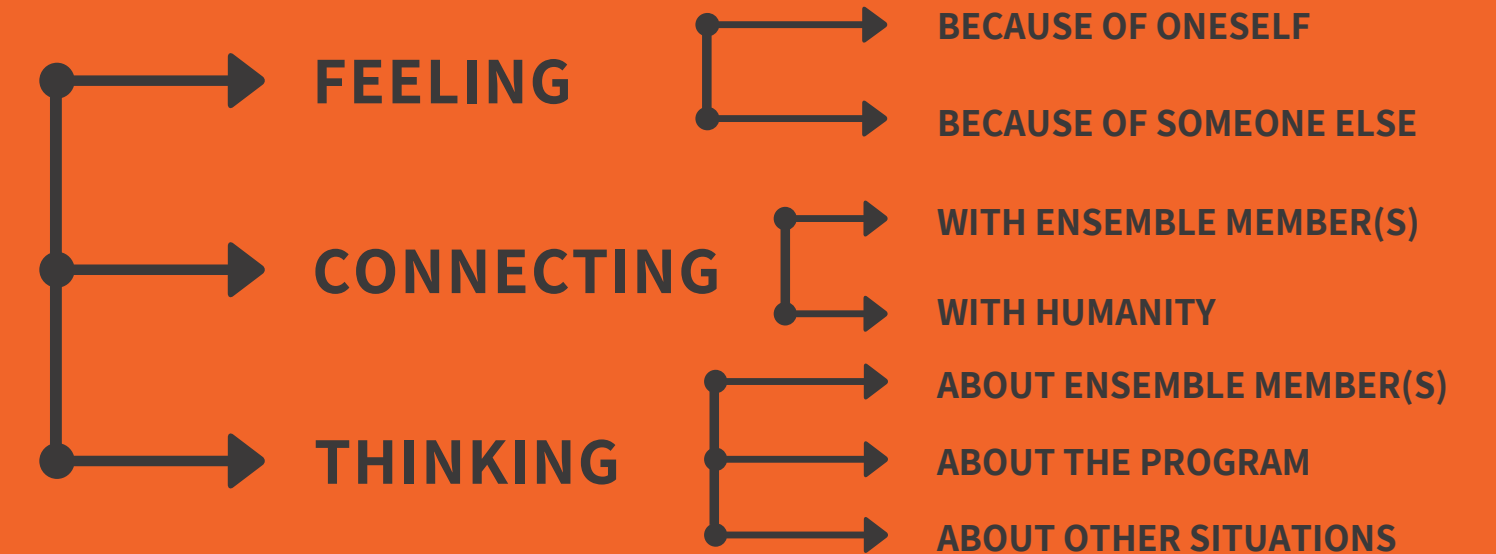
# CODING THE DATA

DIVIDING +  
SUBDIVIDING THE  
PROCESSES

## THEATRICAL PROCESS



## OPERATIONAL PROCESS



### THE ACTION/RESPONSE WAS...

- Explicit (participant's statement)
- Implicit (facilitators' observation)

### THE PARTICIPANT...

- Told their own story (\*)
- Experienced a turning point (#)

### AND IT WAS FOR...

- Myself
- You (you or y'all)
- Us (all y'all)

Each recorded quote or event is assigned at least one code of 4-5 letters, as shown on the next slide.

# CODING EXAMPLE

Thea/  
Oper

Think/  
Feel/  
Connect

How?

Implicit/  
Explicit

Me/  
You/  
Us

"I relate to Richard [III] ... All my life, my family would tell me that I was bad so I acted bad."



T + C + C + E + M

"Friday. Audition day. OMG so nervous. I just have to do it. I don't know how but I'm going to make it some how." (Journal)



O + F + A + E + M

[name] cut her speech down to 12 lines (Facilitator notes)



T + T + T + I



Week	Date	Observation	Code	Source
2	9/11	Sarah: "It's... dramatic." FSB: "Yeah?" Sarah looked at the page, laughed: "I picture him as an over-actor." FSB: "Oh, do you? That's so interesting. Would you like to — oh, I don't know — give a dramatic reading?" Sarah started cracking up. FSB: "I mean, you don't have to if you don't want to. It's an invitation, not a demand." But of course she got to her feet and gave a HILARIOUS reading, gesticulating melodramatically, even with the book in one hand. We gave her a huge round of applause. Sarah: " <i>This</i> is my role!"	TTTE / OFRIM / OFAIM / TTPEM / TFAIM	FN
2	9/14	██████: "Wait. How do you pronounce this place?" Sarah: "Ill-EAR-ia." ██████: "Sounds like a medication..." which had everyone laughing again.	TTTEY	FN
2	9/14	All Sarah says is "Madam" and we all crack up (p. 93)	TTPEM	FN
3	9/18	██████: "Okay, so that was some HORRIBLE dancing..." Sarah: "Toby's kind of a drunk instigator, even though he knows his friend Andrew is a fool."	TTPE	FN
3	9/18	(Sarah, ██████) said (as they have in the past) that their biggest frustration is that inconsistent attendance is disrespectful of the commitment demonstrated by the facilitators. I said I appreciated that and agreed. "But you also have to be in it for yourself or it doesn't mean anything," I said, and a longtime ensemble member (██████) who used to struggle with her own commitment quietly said, "That's true." Sarah: "I don't expect anyone to be hardcore." ██████: "I do. It's about dedication. You're very dedicated to us. We need to be dedicated in return." There's a double standard, she said. "What are they gonna do out in the world?" ██████ agreed, "It teaches us accountability, too."	OFREU / OTMEU / OFREM	FN

# FREQUENCY ANALYSIS

Facilitators' notes (and participants' journals) are collected and coded on an ongoing basis. They are then entered into a spreadsheet, and a picture begins to emerge of each participant's process, as well as that of the ensemble as a whole.

# IMPACT

## **UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS**

helps us guide individual ensemble members.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAM**

allows us to measure outcomes that describe what actually happens in SIP.



# FOLLOW UP

WHAT ARE THE LONG-  
LASTING EFFECTS OF  
PARTICIPATION IN SIP?

# THREE LONG- LASTING EFFECTS



**SELF-EFFICACY**



**ENHANCED EMPATHY**



**POSITIVE SENSE OF  
COMMUNITY**



**AND ONE OTHER  
THING WE MISSED...**

Interviewees reported marked growth in their **sense of capability and purpose**, and that growth appears to have continued after (sometimes long after) their in-prison participation with SIP ended. They reported feeling more **self-reliant**, better able to set and meet goals, and more likely to **attain long-term dreams**.



# SELF-EFFICACY



SIP appears to foster greater empathy for oneself and others in its participants, and that effect seems to extend long after direct involvement in the program has ceased. Interviewees reported feeling less alienated from, more understanding of, and more compassionate towards others —and, ultimately, themselves.

# ENHANCED EMPATHY

SIP imparts a positive sense of community to its participants, a sense that continues long after release from prison. Interviewees defined the SIP community primarily as the women who actively worked together, but it often extended to larger groups: the community of past and present SIP participants, the entire community of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, and the global theatrical and Shakespearean communities.



# POSITIVE SENSE OF COMMUNITY



# FACILITATORS



Interviewees spoke forcefully about the importance of facilitators to their ability to develop self-efficacy, empathy, and community. Speaking about facilitators, interviewees focused on three things: that facilitators “saw me as a human being,” that facilitators always show up and put all their energy into the work, and that facilitators are available to support MDOC-approved alumni after their release from prison (in our Shakespeare Reclaimed program).



HOW DOES IT WORK?

# SHAKESPEARE IN PRISON

DETROIT PUBLIC THEATRE'S  
SIGNATURE COMMUNITY  
PROGRAM



PROCESS + OUTCOMES