

An L2O2 Empathy in Action Workshop

# Freedom in Relationship

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*The Power of Non-Ownership*



Learning to Love Ourselves and Others



# *What We are Exploring...*

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## Non-Ownership

Letting others be who they are – their choices, moods, and timing belong to them.



## Self-Ownership

My feelings come from my needs.



## Fixing

Caring that turns into managing someone else's world.  
Innocent... and costly.



# Non-Ownership

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## Embracing the Freedom of Others' Choices

No one belongs to us — not their mood, choices, timing, or behavior.

Their actions express their needs, not our value.

Letting go of ownership creates breathing room in relationships.

It's not apathy — it's respect.



# Self-Ownership

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Embrace your feelings and take responsibility for your needs

Self-ownership is about recognizing that *our* feelings arise from *our* needs.

By taking responsibility for our own emotional landscape, we can foster clarity and empowerment.

This approach encourages us to move away from blame and towards a deeper understanding and connection with ourselves and others.



# Fixing

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Fixing is what happens when caring mixes with fear

Fixing happens when our caring turns into managing someone else's inner world.

At its core, fixing is innocent.

Fixing is a scared, loving impulse trying to prevent pain – ours and theirs.

A tender fear that says,  
"I need you to change so I can feel okay."



# The Holiday Story Flip

## *Warmup Activity*

### 1. Recall

Reflect a stressful holiday moment



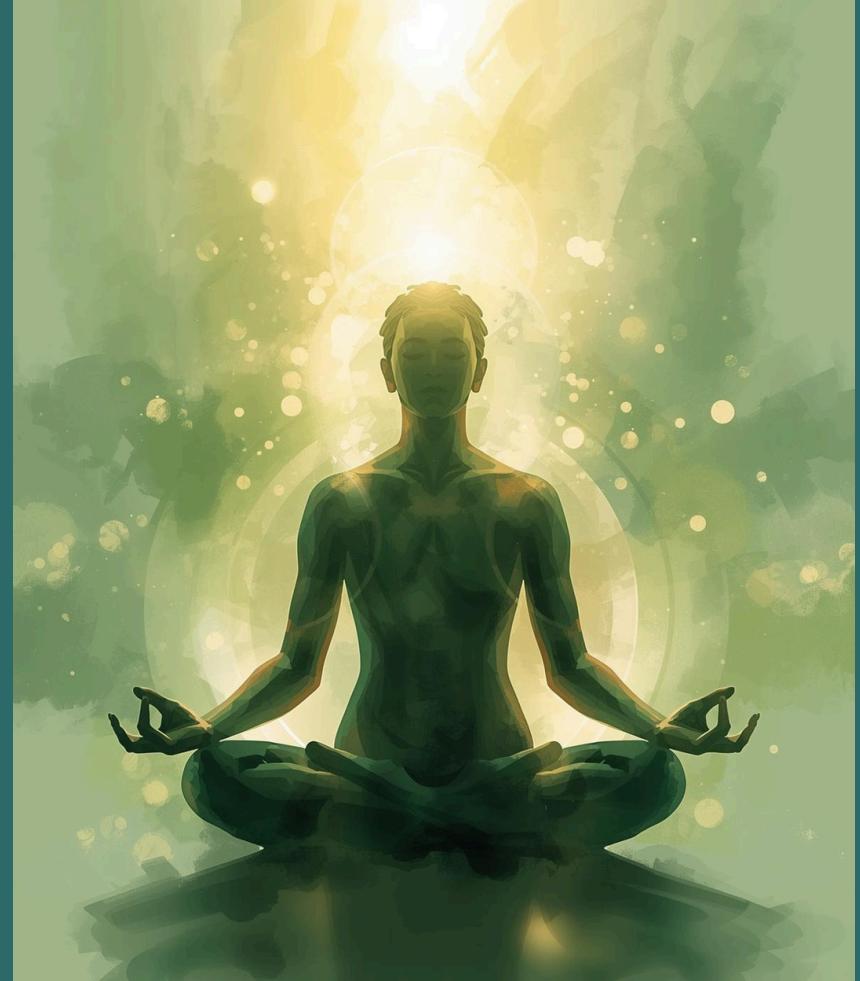
### 2. Identify

Recognize the ownership story behind it



### 3. Flip

Use OFNR to reframe the experience



### 4. Transform

Shift your perspective to create ease



# The Holiday Story Flip

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## Examples



### The “Tree Decorating Turf War”

#### Story:

“They keep moving the ornaments I hung. Why can’t they leave it alone?”

#### 🐺 Ownership story:

“They should appreciate how I decorated.”

#### 🦒 OFNR Flip:

“When the ornaments were moved, I felt discouraged because I needed creative expression and to feel considered.”



### The “Late Arrival Spiral”

#### Story:

“My sibling showed up 45 minutes late to dinner again.”

#### 🐺 Ownership story:

“They should respect my time.”

#### 🦒 OFNR Flip:

“When dinner started late, I felt anxious because I needed predictability and shared rhythm.”



## Presence

Actively listen and engage fully

## Awareness

Recognize emotional responses while interacting & do not fix!

## Compassion

Empathetically connect, with yourself and the other

## Reflection

Consider personal feelings/needs during the conversation

## Empowerment

Take ownership of your own emotional landscape

# What is Presence?

*How Can We be Present for Others' Sharing?*

# The Fixing Loop

## *Roleplay Activity*

Two volunteers.

One shares a real (but light) frustration.

The other tries to fix. On purpose.



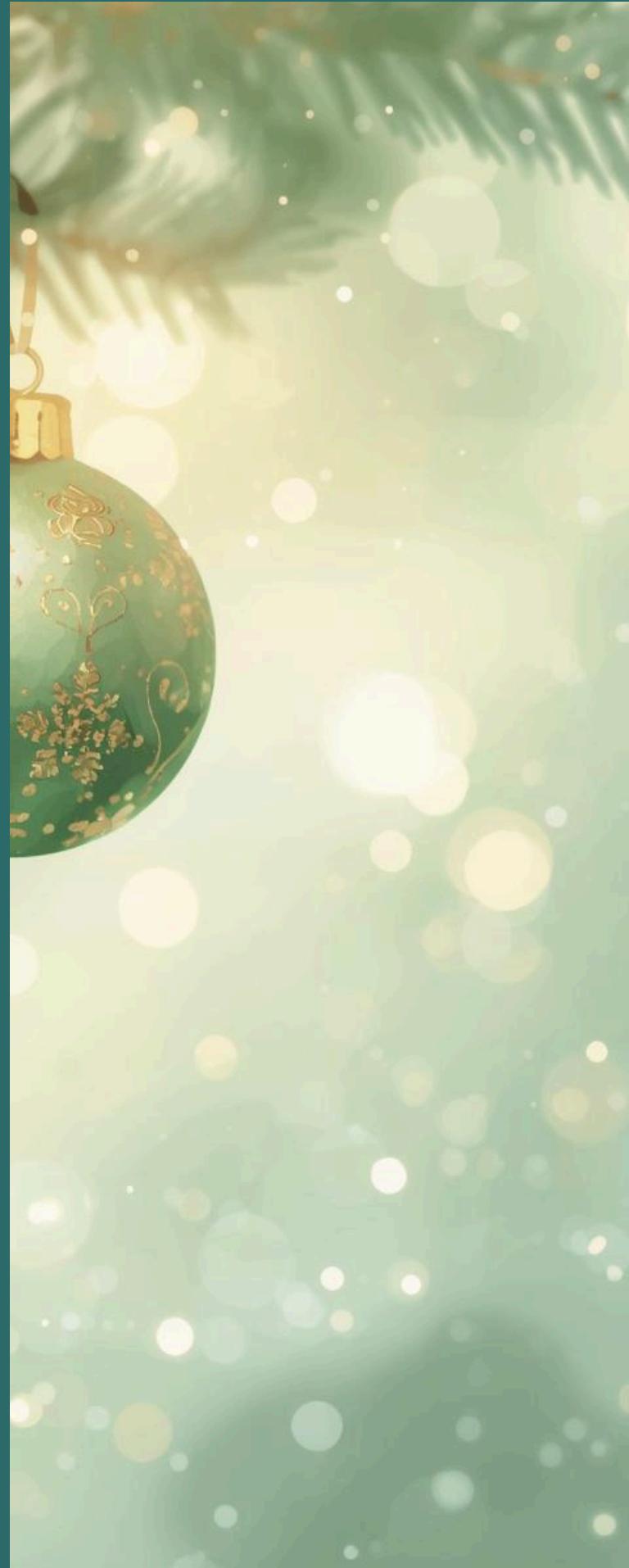
### Round 1 – “The Fixer”

- Sharer holds the jackal and shares their frustration
- Listener grabs the jackal from the sharer and:
  - Fixes them
  - Offers solutions
  - Interrupts
  - Reframes their problem
  - Tells them what they would do

### Round 2 – “The Presence Shift”

- Same sharer
- Listener switches to giraffe mode and stays anchored in presence:
  - No fixing and no rescuing
  - Uses active listening and reflection
  - Has soft curiosity
  - Asks, “Do you want to be heard, empathy, clarity or something else?”





1. “I have to buy gifts and I don’t know what to get anyone.”
2. “My family can’t agree on when to meet.”
3. “I’m stressed about hosting.”
4. “I feel pressure to be cheerful, and I’m not.”
5. “I’m tired of coordinating everything for the holidays.”
6. “Someone I care about isn’t responding the way they usually do.”
7. “I feel disconnected from a friend lately.”
8. “I don’t feel heard in some conversations.”
9. “I’m worried someone is upset with me.”
10. “I feel like I’m putting more into the relationship than I’m getting back.”

# The Fixing Loop

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*Example Frustrations*

# The Fixing Loop

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## *Group Reflection*

- How did your body respond when the listener grabbed the jackal?
- What shifted when the giraffe was able to be present?
- Where did the responsibility move in you as you watched?



# The Gift of Not Fixing

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*Embrace freedom by letting go of the  
urge to fix others*

In this final reflection, consider one thing you will stop fixing in your life.

Recognize the underlying need behind it and explore how giving yourself the gift of presence can empower both you and those around you.

Celebrate this choice as a step toward deeper connections.

