Debriefing conversations

It's common for us to hold debriefing talks when the boat is sailing to help people take ownership of what they've seen on a field trip, but also to create this moment of exchanging perceptions and repertoires, both from the group of students and from the teachers and facilitators who are accompanying the trip.

We start with a circle, most of the time sitting on chairs, inviting them to take a brief moment to breathe, with their eyes closed, recognizing the support of their feet on the floor and how this support takes the weight of their legs, the legs lead to the perception of the support of the hips on the chair, and this region of the hips receiving all the weight of the torso up to the head. The arms can be supported with the hands on the knees. The idea is for them to recognize this reference of the support and weight of the body in that space and from there, observe how their breathing is at that moment, bringing their attention and perception to the moment here and now. We'll lead this meditation so that everyone can gradually deepen this breathing, imagining that along with the inhalation, there is a flow that comes from the soles of the feet, going through the whole body to the top of the head, which would be the apex of the inhalation, a pause, and then the exhalation movement, this flow happens in the opposite direction, from the head down the whole body, until the flow passes through the soles of the feet. This is a somewhat abstract reference for people, but they can play around with the image that makes sense to them, to help visualize this movement of air entering and leaving the body at the same time as there is a flow, which would be a flow of energy, but each person can have an image, also making this movement of going through the whole body to the head and back, and this is a reference to basic Aikido breathing that we bring to this moment.
Integrating and welcoming the group

The idea of this activity is to bring a body dynamic that puts people in a place of playful and direct exchange, in physical contact with each other, but in a safe way that doesn't put people in a situation of embarrassment so that this exchange brings about a lighter dialog, an ice-breaker and reduces resistance in communication, bringing closeness between the people in the group.

To do this, people stand in a circle, each person looking at the back of the person in front of them. The activity consists of making a kind of percussion with the hand in the shape of a shell. With a loose wrist, the person in front is only halfway out. So, if people have their left arm on the outside of the circle, we'll only percuss the left side of the person in front. And then this percussion will happen all over the shoulder, back and ribs, from the middle to the left. Then it progresses towards the neck, at which point we change the touch to a fingertip touch, also in a percussive quality with a loose wrist, to help vibrate the inner layers and not hurt the person receiving. And with this fingertip touch, we go up through the head, passing through different areas of the skull. The group is invited to recognize the sonority that this touch makes in the body and to recognize the body as a musical instrument, as a
place of sonorization, of reverberation of these frequencies, so that perception is already invited to be in another place. A place of subtleties, but also a more playful, lighter place, where you can allow yourself to recognize and experience reality in a different way. Then we move down again from the head to the neck and again with the cupped hand we percuss the back and at that moment, again, the group is invited to recognize the sound that is being made and we often invite people to intensify the percussion a little more, now that they are more used to it, and listen to how this noise echoes in the group.

To finish off, we give people a reference to do as if it were an unloading, a kind of movement to release energy from our body. We show them what the movement will be like and on the teacher’s signal, the group makes a quick, strong slide outwards with the person's arm, and then on the count of 3, we do this, often with a vocalization in the sense of giving that sound of expelling, of letting go. People feel a bit how one side of the body feels and the other, they breathe, they laugh and then we reverse the position in the circle, so the person who was receiving the percussion starts percussing the person who was percussing their back before.

This activity aims to bring about greater group integration and awakening, with a more sensory perception, of recognizing the bodies that are there and that together will experience and experiment, not only, but also in the body, new sensations, senses, textures.

**Perception of the body integrated with nature and surrender and complicity between peers**

With so many river baths taking place throughout the trip, we took advantage of the stops with more time to bring in an activity to connect the group and get a sense of the body integrated into nature and this place of mutual care between people.

This activity takes place in the water and is done in pairs: one person stands and the other floats in front of them. The person who is standing provides support in the area where the neck meets the head and another support in the lumbar region, reaching the pelvis, so that this person is supported. We advise that this touch be careful and respectful. It's just a touch of physical support so that the person who is floating can deliver their body weight well.

The orientation for the person who is floating is that they don't need to hear anything that is being said, that they just concentrate on their breathing and can feel this contact from the water and connect
with this place of surrender of their own body and recognize this connection with the water and nature around them.

The person who is standing receives guidance on how to support the body of the person who is floating, with the aim of initially just receiving the weight of the other person's body, while at the same time they are also invited to breathe, entering into connection with the moment, with their own body and also with that of the person they are supporting.

As time goes by, observing and feeling the group's surrender, we add new orientations and movements, bringing references and adjustments, so that the pair feels more comfortable and connected. After 2 or 3 minutes of this first part, which is a moment in a place of feeling, handing over the weight of the person who is floating and receiving the weight of the person who is supporting them, we invite the pair to make small movements, where the person who is supporting them only indicates directions to the person who is floating by moving their hands. The idea is to generate a dialog only through feeling, without the need to use words. The person who is floating is carried along by these small movements, in a gesture of trust and surrender with their partner. In a third moment of the dynamic, we invite people to start moving slowly in the area of the water that we are occupying, always taking care with the people passing by so as not to hit their feet or the heads of those who are floating, and then this is a very peaceful walk, a slow movement for the person who is floating and feeling this relationship of sliding through the water and at the same time continuing to surrender and deepen this surrender of the weight in the hands of those who are supporting them. Then we suggest that, while we're still moving, the hand that's on the lower back moves upwards and the person who's supporting increases the speed of movement, the pair walks around, always breathing, enjoying the moment and then we do the reverse movement, slowing down the speed of movement, one of the hands that's close to the head moves back to the lower back, supports again, breathes and little by little the person who's supporting leaves and helps the person who's floating to organize their body again with their feet on the ground. To finish, we give the pairs some time to wake up from this moment and they can verbally exchange how the experience was for them and for each other. Finally, we switch roles, whoever was floating will now be the person who will support them and then we switch, whoever was supporting them will float, whoever was floating and whoever was supporting them will float.

After this moment of swapping between pairs, we invite the whole group to talk about what each person's experience was like, what it's like to be in each of the roles.
Voices from the Field

This activity is usually done at the end of the trip. It can be done in various formats, but the one we most often like to do is on the boat, while sailing, so we can enjoy the sound of the boat’s engine.

In a circle, with the group lying on the ground with their heads close together (with their heads on the inside of the circle). At this point in the journey, this position seeks not only to take advantage of this place of connection and strengthening of the group, which by the end of the journey already feels closer and more intimate, but also helps with the sound that will be created by the group. With their heads closer together, they can hear each other better, despite the noise of the navigation.

We begin with a moment of breathing and body awareness, inviting the participants to evoke memories of the trip that are present in their minds. These memories can range from significant events to more everyday moments, such as field trips or specific interactions with other members of the group. The aim is not to detail each experience, but to bring up images that recall what the group experienced. At this point, a variety of things come to mind, such as the memory of a food, the name of a fish or even the impact of a speech by a community leader or a more emotional moment that happened in the field. These voices come and go, blending together and rescuing what we effectively call the voices of the countryside - which are the actors we find in the communities, but also their own perceptions, experiences and references of what was strongest for each one.

As everyone shares their memories, a variety of voices intertwine, including those of the members of the communities visited, as well as the individual perceptions of each participant. These voices blend together, memories are shared, each person's memory helping to shine a light on the other's, so that the group creates an imaginary mosaic. At this point we bring up the reference that this is a common support of the group, the experience is a collective support that comes from a more abstract and imaginary place but which is as consistent as the very support of the floor of the boat we are sailing on, so we invite people to start dialoguing with these qualities of support, sometimes pushing a part of the body to feel this support and noticing the body change position or move from there, or bringing a small slip of a part of the body on the floor, all this on a path of building a trajectory until the group sits down. It's not a moment that lasts long, but it brings this moment of sharing, of non-choreographed movement, which sometimes brings a dose of uncertainty and even a little shame or embarrassment, but which happens collectively. Little by little, the group realizes that within this mosaic, still in motion, they are sitting down or even standing up
When we have more time, we allow the group to share their final impressions more freely, where everyone can bring whatever they feel. Longer testimonies, usually full of feelings, are common. But if we feel that the group needs it, we include a direction or a guiding question.