

THE LONG RETURN INSTITUTE



Make Something Together

A hands-on workshop for small community pages, zines, invitations, and useful things worth sharing

A first page is enough · 60–90 minutes · No newsroom required

This is a place to begin

We will make something useful together—using the materials, time, and people we have.

Make one small thing. Share it respectfully.
Invite a response.

What could your page do?

Community publishing can be as small and welcoming as you want.

Bring people together

Invite people to share, learn, make, visit, or help.

Notice good work

Thank elders, organizers, artists, teachers, neighbors, or volunteers.

Pass something along

Share an approved story, helpful resource, or practical reminder.

You do not need a newsroom

You are making space for sharing, connection, and participation.

What it can be

A one-page note, a handmade zine, a flyer, a shared story, or a small community update.

What it is not

Official notice without authorization, permission to publish private material, or a substitute for reliable safety and service details.

Choose a shape that fits your people

The best format is the one they can receive and you can realistically make.

One page / flyer

Print, text, email, post as an image, or read aloud.

Folded zine

Draw, paste, print and fold. Share one copy or several.

Small update

Three notices or stories when you have them. No schedule required.

Here is one simple page

All details are fictional—this is a shape, not a real event announcement.

Our Corner

A community note · practice example

Thank you

Neighbors shared seedlings and practical advice.

Try together

Bring a drawing or idea to the next friendly gathering.

Reply

Ask the volunteer how to contribute.

Start with people, not technology

Think about an actual small group, not “everyone.”

Who would you like to connect with—and why?

Activity 1 · Choose your purpose

One sentence is all you need.

“I want to share _____ with _____ so they can
_____.”

5 MINUTES

What do people already want to share?

Listening and asking make better material than starting with a blank template.

Try asking

“What should more people know?”

“What good thing happened?”

“What would you like to make together?”

Collect a little

One person's thank-you

One idea or invitation

One helpful detail or place to learn more

Activity 2 · Three things

Choose your page content.

Write three headings. You only need one to finish today.

6 MINUTES

Ask before you share someone else's story

A small publication can be informal and still be respectful.

Questions to ask

May I share this?

May I use your name, image, or words?

Where may I share it?

How would you like credit?

Things to keep private

Protected cultural knowledge, private family conversations, sensitive records, children's information, and anything whose sharing limits are unclear.

Check the details that could change someone's plans

A useful notice needs reliable next-step information.

For a gathering

Who is organizing? Date and time?
Time zone? Where? Who can attend?
Where to confirm?

For services or urgent needs

Use the current responsible source. Do not guess eligibility, deadlines, medical instructions, or emergency conditions.

When in doubt, label what you know

You can share a personal idea without pretending it is a verified announcement.

I know

What you saw, made, or experienced—accurately described as your own account.

Someone shared

Credit the person or flyer, and say what still needs confirmation.

Check first

Dates, contacts, safety, eligibility, cultural permission or disputed claims.

Activity 3 · Ask a partner

Try one respectful confirmation question.

“Who could confirm this detail before I share it?”

4 MINUTES

Make the page easy to read

Clarity and care do more work than decorative effects.

Do

- Big readable title
- One idea per section
- Enough breathing room
- Clear contrast and simple type

Avoid

- Tiny text
- Pale words on pale colors
- Three competing headlines
- A whole flyer squeezed into a phone screenshot

A reliable one-page recipe

You only need a few recognizable parts.

1**A title**

What is this?

2**A short welcome**

Why am I sharing it?

3**1–3 small items**

What matters?

4**A way to respond**

What happens next?

Make time · Your first rough page

Paper, Word, or the local browser page maker all work.

Put a title and one useful or joyful thing on the page.

15–20 MINUTES

Could someone use or enjoy it without your explanation?

One kind reader can catch more than ten extra rules.

Ask your partner

What do you understand?
What draws your eye first?
What is unclear or missing?
What could you do next?

Ask yourself

Did I get permission?
Do dates and contacts need checking?
Is it readable on a phone or on paper?
Can people ask for a correction?

An improvement can be subtractive or additive

You do not need to rebuild a whole page to fix one problem.

Take away

- A repeated sentence
- A confusing category
- Tiny or decorative text
- A detail the reader does not need yet

Add

- A useful heading
- Who a notice is for
- A missing next step
- A permission or source note

Share where your people already are

You do not have to create a new channel.

Hand-to-hand

At a gathering, in a classroom, between family members, or on a community table with permission.

Phone-friendly

Send readable text or a PDF, not a tiny photo of a crowded page.

Online if useful

Email, group message, or a public site if you are ready to maintain it.

One page is enough—even if you never make a second

Publishing does not have to become a permanent obligation.

Keep one copy. Welcome replies. Fix important mistakes. Make more only when you want.

Show & share · Celebrate the start

Invite, never require, a first showing.

“I made this for _____. I hope it helps people
_____.”

5-10 MINUTES

What happens after today?

A small, specific sharing plan is better than a grand promise.

Choose one action

- Print one copy.
- Send to a trusted friend.
- Invite a contribution.
- Ask someone what they think.

Before sending

- Permission checked?
- Helpful details checked?
- Readable?
- Safe response route?

Keep these tools and make them your own

Every piece can start with a blank sheet of paper.

Beginner routes

- Seven-step guide
- First Page Maker
- Printable worksheet
- Editable one-page Word template

When you are ready

- Existing newsletter workspace
- Source-and-permission record
- Completed fictional sample
- Community briefing guide

institute.thelongreturn.org/community-publishing

Ideas behind this workshop

An original educational synthesis; not copied pages or artwork.

DIY making

Bill Brent & Joe Biel, *Make a Zine!*; Mark Todd & Esther Pearl Watson, *Whatcha Mean, What's a Zine?*

People, listening & communication

Kivi Leroux Miller, *The Nonprofit Marketing Guide* (2nd ed.).

Self-publishing & community

Michalis Pichler (ed.), *Publishing Manifestos*; Laura Winkiel, *Modernism, Race, and Manifestos*.

Plain-language process design

How Each Process Works (29 September 2026), supplied governance companion.