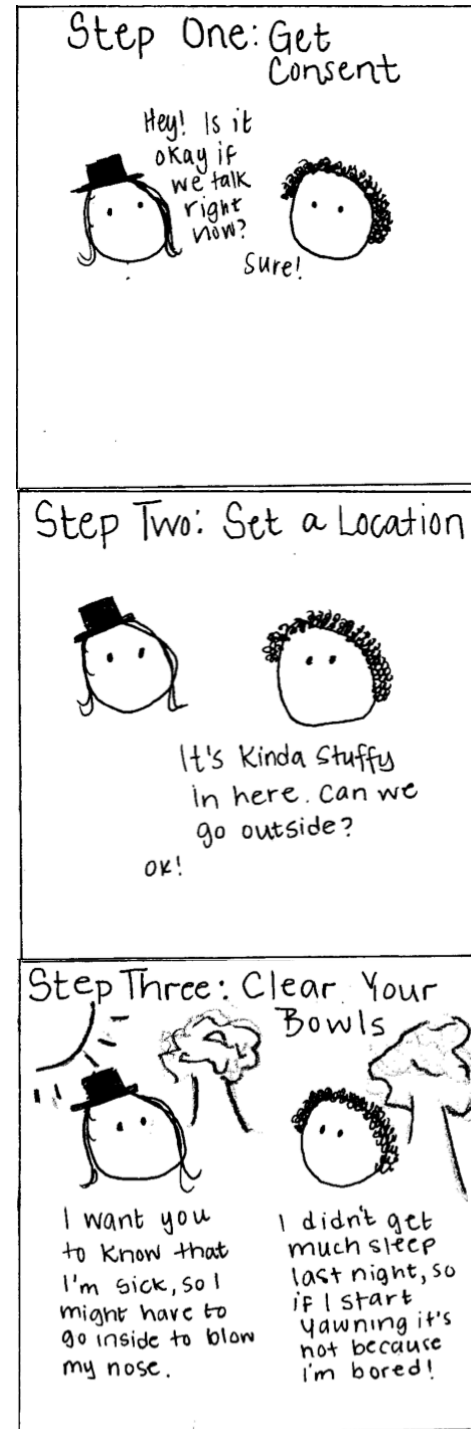


LET'S CHAT

By Gabrielle Smith

Two Women Talking is a performance by Monsoon Bissel and Benaifer Bhadha, in which they have a conversation.

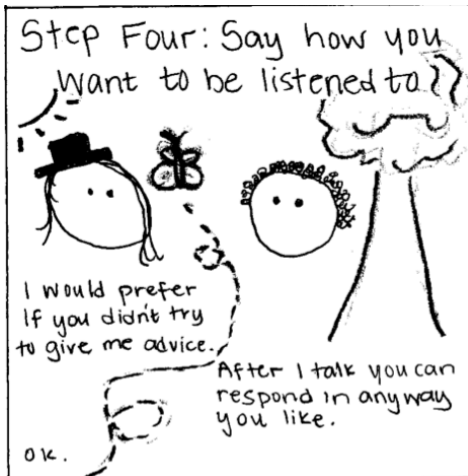
Unscripted, they go back and forth telling stories of their lives. In these conversations, listening is just as important as talking. It is a beautiful performance, and the experience made me reflect upon the importance we can place on the talking and listening that goes on in our everyday lives. I have outlined the steps that Monsoon and Benaifer suggest for a conversation, and encourage you to use them the next time you want to chat!



The conversation won't be productive if both parties aren't ready to listen. So before you start chatting, ask if it's okay!

Agree on a place where you will be comfortable.

Imagine that the words coming out of your mouth are filling a bowl. In order for your words to be received well you must 'clear your bowl.' Simply name all the things that may hinder you from listening.



Isn't it annoying when you're telling someone about your life and they start giving unsolicited advice? Or you really want advice but they don't respond? Avoid this by just letting them know what you want!



We've finally reached the meaty part of the conversation! But it is also the trickiest step. When you are talking, describe feelings and events, instead of stating them, so the listener does not have your judgments clouding what they are hearing.



It was probably a really awesome conversation. Thank each other for being present in the moment and for being such great listeners!