



SUNFLOWER CLUB

CREATIVITY + COMMUNITY



≈ WELCOME TO ≈ SUNFLOWER CLUB



ABOUT SUNFLOWER CLUB

Sunflower Club is a decentralized network of creative community gatherings founded in 2022 by James McCrae in Austin TX.

The purpose of the event is to provide a forum in which people can gather and share their creative expression in whatever medium they choose, from poetry to music to dance to storytelling. The following event template is an open-source manual for hosting a Sunflower Club in your own community.



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ABOUT SUNFLOWER CLUB

We believe in the democratization of creativity. Making art should not be reserved for a privileged class of professional artists. It is human nature to create. The force that animates our bodies is a living expression of source creation. **Our motto: it's not about being good at creativity. It's about creativity being good for you.**

You don't have to be blessed with amazing talent. You just need the courage to excavate the deepest parts of your soul and express whatever you find. When an emotion is suppressed, it will fester beneath the surface and eventually manifest as sickness. The same thing happens with creativity. Making art of any kind is a healing modality that releases toxins and stuck energy. Sunflower Club is an open forum for people to express their innate creativity. All modes of expression are welcome, from poetry to music to dance to storytelling.

Our pillars:

- **Everyone is welcome.**

Sunflower Club is an inclusive and welcoming environment for all types of people, art, and levels of creative experience.

- **It's not a competition.**

We aren't trying to be the best. We're trying to express ourselves with authenticity and openness. Everyone is equal.

- **Creativity is healing.**

We believe in transmuting trauma through creative expression. Art is medicine, both for ourselves and the world.

HOW TO HOST **SUNFLOWER CLUB**

If you choose to host a Sunflower Club in your community, you are responsible for setting up and promoting the gathering, finding a venue, and facilitating the event. The benefit of hosting Sunflower Club rather than starting an open mic night from scratch is the brand name recognition, the established format, and access to the wider Sunflower Club network to support your event. If you plan to host Sunflower Club, please email James McCrae (james@re-creation.studio) for assistance in promoting your event.

You are also free to use all Sunflower Club assets, including logos, graphics, and photography. [You can access all branding elements here.](#)

Finding a venue

The event space is an important factor that sets the tone for the gathering. The venue should be welcoming, comfortable, and accessible. The original venue in Austin is a cozy meditation room inside a yoga studio. The room features sacred art and artifacts. A mixture of creative and spiritual vibes is ideal.

Sunflower Club may be hosted in both public and private venues. Examples of public venues include yoga studios, cafes, bars, nightclubs, wellness centers, temples, or even outdoor spaces such as parks. It can also be part of a larger event, such as a festival or conference. A private venue, such as a house or apartment, is also an option for smaller, more intimate gatherings.

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Sunflower Club format

Following is a step-by-step guide on how to structure a Sunflower Club event.

1. Welcome people / gather names

As people arrive, welcome them. Make them feel at home. Attendees do not necessarily need to share or perform. Many may come simply to listen. As people arrive, ask if they wish to share. If they do, write their name on a small piece of paper. Collect these small pieces of paper in some sort of container (hat, jar, bowl, etc.). Later, this collection of names will be used to generate, at random, the order in which people share.

2. Tune in

When people gather in one space, they are bringing along with them different levels of energy and emotion from their day. It's important to kick things off by attuning the group's energy and attention together. This is done through "tuning in," a method used in many yoga classes (specifically Kundalini) and other sacred practices. Tuning in can be accomplished in many ways, such as meditation, chanting, breathing, or singing. The method for tuning in at the original Sunflower Club in Austin is as follows:

1. One minute of silence
2. Breaking the silence with a group "OM" initiated by the host
3. Together, the group says "I love you" out loud five times in a row
4. The group sings the nursery rhyme "Row row row your boat" together one time

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The purpose of this specific tune in is to make the group feel silly, safe, and playful. It's essential to cultivate a space in which guests feel comfortable expressing the deepest, most vulnerable parts of themselves. A Sunflower Club host may either use this specific tune in method, modify it, or create a different method unique to their community.

3. Introduction / featured guest

After tuning in, the host is welcome to share any thoughts or reflections. For example, they might explain the purpose of the event, how everyone is welcome, and how creativity can be used as a healing modality. **“It’s not about being good at creativity, it’s about creativity being good for you.”**

If such an option is available, Sunflower Club can include a featured guest (that is, someone who is notable or more advanced in their creative development). If a featured guest is included, the host will introduce them to the group and allow them to share first. The duration of the share is up to the guest, but a good rule of thumb would be 10-20 minutes.

4. Open mic

The order in which attendees share is determined at random by pulling names from the container. The host, if they desire to share, should perform first, setting the tone for the event. The host will announce how guests should introduce themselves. For example, at the Austin event, before sharing their piece, each guest shares three facts about themselves:

HOW TO HOST **SUNFLOWER CLUB**

1. Their name
2. Where they are originally from
3. A favorite thing (e.g., favorite color, favorite animal, favorite musical artist, etc.)

The first two (name and origin) remain fixed from event to event, while the third (a favorite thing) is alternated for each event, determined by the host. A Sunflower Club host is free to use this specific introduction or modify it for their community.

After the host introduces the format and (if they desire) shares a piece, they will draw a name to see who will perform next. After the first guest shares, they will pull another name to see who goes next, and so forth. The event will continue either until everyone who wishes to share has done so, or until the allotted time for the event has ended. Depending on the number of people in attendance, the host may want to put a time constraint on each share, such as five minutes.

At the end of the event, the host will say a few remarks and thank everyone for attending. Occasionally, at the original Austin event, we will end with a group song or even a kirtan singing circle. If such an option is available to you, this is a special way to close out the night.



HOW TO HOST **SUNFLOWER CLUB**

Pricing

The admission fee for Sunflower Club is determined on a case-by-case basis. Ideally the event is free in order to maximize attendance and accessibility. But the venue might require a fee to host the event, which is fine. The cost of admission should remain affordable. An admission fee may also be implemented as a fundraiser for a charitable cause.

Content

Sunflower Club is a content-friendly environment. That is, taking photos and videos is welcome and encouraged. By sharing content from the event on social media, we are extending the reach of our creative medicine and helping to spread awareness of both Sunflower Club and the talent of each guest. Feel free to tag either @re.creationstudio or @wordsarevibrations.

The host (or a designated content person) is encouraged to take videos and photos during the performances, and provide the content to each performer. If a guest does not feel comfortable being filmed, they are welcome to opt out.

Have fun!

Sunflower Club is a place where creativity meets community and healing is experienced through expression. Remember to have fun and hold a safe, welcoming space. If you have any questions, reach out to James McCrae at james@re-creation.studio.

ABOUT SUNFLOWER CLUB

Why Sunflowers?

"We're all golden sunflowers inside." – Allen Ginsberg

The premise of the name is that the sunflower is a symbol which represents art, poetry, and creativity. In nature, sunflowers will turn their faces to feel the warmth of the sun. Artists, writers, and poets do this too. We turn our faces to beauty, to art, and to love wherever we can find it.

Sunflower references appear frequently in art and poetry, from Vincent van Gogh's expressive sunflower paintings to Allen Ginsberg's epic Sunflower Sutra poem. In fact, Ginsberg discovered his identity as a poet when he experienced an auditory hallucination of William Blake reciting his poem "Ah! Sunflower" in his Columbia University dorm room.

We use the sunflower symbol to carry on this artistic tradition and remind us to find the warmth of the sun regardless of circumstances.



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here comes the sun