



# ELIJAH'S PALACE

HANDBOOK

LEADER & GROUP GUIDELINES

## **ELIJAH'S PALACE™**

is part of Quilt - art to mend the world,  
an artwork that invites participation  
and conversation to create a more  
creative, peaceful and equitable world.

To arrange for an exhibition, workshop, reading  
and/or to purchase the book *Elijah's Palace*  
go to [krquilt.com](http://krquilt.com)



## Handbook for Elijah's Palace

Everyone can make authentic art. Art making is a natural and universal human activity. Art comes from the spiritual core of human beings, a place where all are whole. Art making includes all creative activities: written, visual, musical, performance made in any medium. The book *Elijah's Palace* fosters authentic art made from the uniqueness and spiritual wholeness of each person.

This handbook is a guide to facilitating art making, a companion to *Elijah's Palace*. Included are: specific tools with suggestions and hand-outs for the leader and each person, general tools for creating a congenial and non-judgmental atmosphere, suggested format for gatherings, hints and an invitation to stay connected with us as you create your own gatherings.

## The Group

An Elijah's Palace group is a gathering of three to eight people who decide to meet on a regular basis for the support and encouragement of their own and each other's art. Groups meet where there is open space and wherever people are comfortable working: living rooms, family rooms, or studios.

HINT: Our experience of thirty years indicates that the spectrum and quality of art made thrives when people are comfortable to both enter and leave a group. Basic art supplies and play materials are collected and shared by the group.

## The Leader

The leader is the person who convenes a group, opens and closes each meeting, presents the specific tools and maintains a spirit of openness and generosity towards each person and their creativity. No special expertise or experience is required to lead a gathering. The leader is the person who connects with us about books, packets, questions and other special needs.

HINT: Believe that each person is capable of achieving the artistic goal to which they aspire. (This does not mean without effort.)

## Specific Tools

**THE UNIVERSAL** The Universal refers to the timeless place of spirit that dwells everywhere and resides in each of us. The Universal is named and perceived by all in their own way.

**CHARLEY AND MONIKA** Charley is the creative impulse in all of us, born from the Universal and living inside Monika. Monika is the everyday life, the life that gives room for Charley to grow.

**THE DOUBT-CATCHER** The Doubt-Catcher is a vessel for catching all the noises and voices that do not believe we can make the art we wish to create.

**PLAY** Play and playing are the quickest and most direct routes to setting Charley free. They require comfort, safety and materials. A Play is something made spontaneously from assorted materials.

**PRACTICE** Practices are the things we do in behalf of getting our authentic work, work with meaning, made and out into the world.

**PRACTICE SHARKS** The Practice Sharks are the remarks and attitudes of others that discourage, stop and disparage our art making efforts.

**THE LAMPLIGHTER** The Lamplighter is our source of inspiration. There are many different ways of identifying and relating to Lamplighters.

**THE MIND DUSTER** The Mind Duster's job is to find and dissolve the prejudices and biases that keep us both from making authentic work and from appreciating the arts of others.

**THE POUCH** The Pouch is our personal, private container for putting and holding all the goodies that nourish us and our creativity. The pouch needs to be kept as full as possible.

**THE KIT** The Kit, a portable easily inflatable tent, creates a safe and sacred space for making art, for expressing creativity - for others and us.

Tools may be copied as needed.

## General Tools

1. PATIENCE                      People embarking on the discovery and creation of their authentic art benefit from a cooperative atmosphere, non-judgmental attitude, encouragement, the assistance of a coach or teacher, and the company of others on a similar journey. It is far easier for many to accommodate to the ideals of others than to learn about their own. The newly found or recently re-discovered art impulse startles easily and will swiftly run away, stop or pretend. Time, experience and experimenting are necessary for people to understand their art intentions and gain the skills necessary to make the ideas manifest.

HINT: Comments, feedback, helpful criticisms after people have shared are more likely to shut learning down than to give confidence. Phrases such as; “I like ---, I don’t like-----, That’s too large---, Why don’t you---, That reminds me of\_\_\_ ” are more likely to provide insight into the speaker’s preferences and standards than the person who is sharing.

2. MATERIALS                      Many people pay better attention and remember more when they are able to use their hands while listening. Have an assortment of materials available for doodling, playing and writing whenever people are sitting around and talking. We suggest a variety of paper, scissors, pens, pencils, markers and crayons. Collect an assortment of fabric, wool, beans, marbles, stones, shells, or any combination of available and inexpensive natural and found objects to build a valuable storehouse of art making supplies.

HINT: Imagination, playfulness and courage are fed by a variety of textures, sizes and colors. Sparks created by use of an unfamiliar material may become inspiration for the unexpected and the new.

If people bring water-based mediums such as clay, watercolor, or gouache, make sure to protect the floor and furniture. Painter’s drop cloths and shower curtain liners work very well.

3. BUDDYING                      Art making requires full attention. In today's complex world many people arrive filled with other concerns and worries. If these are not put down they will interfere with making art. Buddying is a simple process where people can release whatever concerns they have brought to the gathering and get ready to work.

Pair people up. Allot 2-10 minutes (5 average) for each person to speak while the other person listens silently, giving no reaction. Switch roles. Each speaker has a time to discover and express what is on her/his mind without advice, opinion or criticism.

Practiced over time buddying has proved to be a wonderful way to give and receive support, during art meetings and beyond.

HINT: Buddying is useful to focus one's thoughts about any art topic that is up for discussion. When people have a chance to be heard it is easier to listen and empathize. Sharing in the group is additional support for the group.

4. SCRIBING                      Keeping a book of photographs and scribings creates an invaluable resource for identifying our intentions and discovering visual and written patterns - a personal art lexicon. Many of us forget what we say as soon as we stop talking, or we only remember bits and pieces. Scribing is someone else writing down what we are saying and giving us back the pages. Scribing can also be used for keeping the gist of group conversations, for the leader to keep.

HINT: A book of photographs and scribing kept over a period of time provides an invaluable resource for naming our intentions, and discovering visual and written pattern that we value.

## Gatherings

Every leader and group is encouraged to develop its own style and way of creating. The following are very general guidelines for an art gathering.

A community of safety and camaraderie is being built, take time for the beginning and the ending. The beginning includes introduction and distribution of the specific tool selected by the leader, a check-in by each person using the Monika and Charley page, work with the selected tool, a Buddying and group sharing. The middle and largest part of the meeting is for art making. Playing is a form of art making.

Arrange the space so everyone has a comfortable place for writing, playing, talking and making art.

Materials are always and easily available.

Meetings last between 2-6 hours.

The ending includes: A buddying followed by each person sharing, showing or reading, what happened. Photograph and scribe where needed.

Clean up to be shared by all.

Showing what has been made, reading what has been written, singing, playing, dance are invited but not required. The purpose of listening is to learn what someone is doing, and how their work is being approached. Friendly helpful criticism and feedback are a hinderance. Encouragement and appreciation are welcomed.

The creation of trust and a cooperative spirit take time to develop, especially in a competitive success oriented society. These gatherings are not about being or getting 'better than' anyone else, but are about developing and celebrating the talents present so that each person can take the courage to grow their own gifts in their own ways.

Remember. Many of us enter or return to art-making thinking that someone else knows the 'right way' and has the 'right answers'. While this is rarely true, we do learn many skills and ideas from other people. Putting it all together, mastering our own aptitudes and inclinations is an exciting, up and down process. Leaders and the group are there to provide an environment conducive to discovering and valuing our own 'right' way.

HINT: Some people like to sit on chairs, some on the floor. Others prefer to stand. Some want a table nearby, others do not. Do your best to accommodate the differences. Circles are often experienced as a subtle coercion and we do not recommend them for sitting or speaking. Diversity, differences, variety are key ideas.

The world of the arts is enormous. Looking at books about the arts of other cultures is extremely helpful. Whenever possible see, listen and experience the arts, from here and other places.

## RSVP

Respond. Our wish is to support art making. Your comments, suggestions and questions are important. We would like to hear about your experiences, to learn what works for you and what doesn't. Creating a link between one group and another is beneficial for all our growth. That is how we will change and adapt this handbook so that it serves your art making needs.

For more information, questions or comments  
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## NOTES



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