

DOING ETHNOGRAPHY AS A CO-RESEARCHER

STEP 1

1. DESIGNING THE ETHNOGRAPHY

- Get involved in how the ethnography is going to be done.
- Meet with your team to talk about it and think of questions that you will ask to learn about people's lives.
- Say if you don't understand anything.
- Ask for support if you need it.
- Take your time to think of questions.
- You can ask people to slow down.
- There are no wrong or silly questions!

STEP 2

2. PLANNING THE ACTIVITIES

- Meet with your team to plan how and when you will do your ethnography.
- Who do the team need to contact?
- How will you get there? If it is online, how will you connect?
- How to make sure everyone is happy with the team being there?
- What do you need to do to prepare?

STEP 3

3. DOING THE ETHNOGRAPHY

- Spend time with people.
- Ask questions.
- Join in with activities.
- Pay attention to the place and things in it.
- Work with your co-researcher.
- It can be helpful to take notes.
- Ask your co-researcher for support if you need it.

STEP 4

4. DEBRIEF

- Meet with your team after to talk about how it went and what you learnt.
- What was interesting or unusual?
- How did you feel about it?
- Do you want to add new questions for next time or change any questions?
- Your team is there to support you: share any problems and ask questions.

THESE TWO STEPS CAN BE REPEATED UNTIL YOU ACHIEVE THE DESIRED RESULTS

SOME QUESTIONS THAT YOU CAN ASK:

- How are you today?
- What have you been doing today?
- Did you like it?
- What did you like or dislike about it?



STEP 1
1. DESIGNING THE ETHNOGRAPHY

- Involve your co-researcher/-s at all stages of the process.
- Share information about the project, its aims and stages.
- Meet with your co-researcher/-s to talk about the ethnography and to co-design questions to ask.
- Help them feel comfortable to discuss the project, ask questions and give feedback.
- Make it clear their experience and perspective are valuable.
- Ask about any accessibility or support requirements while being mindful of privacy.
- Allow plenty of time for discussion and questions.
- Make information and processes accessible.

STEP 2
2. PLANNING THE ACTIVITIES

- Meet to plan the ethnography
- Recap what the project is about at the beginning of each meeting.
- Ask questions. Don't make assumptions about what people can and cannot do.
- Don't make assumptions about what equipment people have or can use (eg printers, mobile phones, computers, audio recorders).
- Think about practical stuff (travel and/or technology) and any support, training or materials your co-researcher might need.
- Arrange to talk afterwards.

STEP 3
3. DOING THE ETHNOGRAPHY

- Work as a team.
- Be supportive; eg offer to take notes on behalf of your co-researcher when they are asking questions.
- Be mindful of your relationship (think about the time you take to ask questions and if they have the same opportunities).
- Pay attention to how you act and make changes if you are dominating the situation.
- Make notes about what you are thinking, doing and feeling.

STEP 4
4. DEBRIEF

- Meet to talk about how it went and what you learnt.
- Revisit the design: are the questions working? What else could you ask?
- Encourage people to share any thoughts, issues and ask questions.

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TIPS AND TRAINING MINI ETHNOGRAPHY

TIPS ON MAKING INFORMATION AND PROCESSES ACCESSIBLE:

- Don't assume people remember what the project is about when you meet. Offer short reminders.
- Don't assume what people understand. Briefly explain how the project is designed (who funds it, how many parts there are, if more than one, what is their purpose).
- Ask your co-researcher what support they need and what would make things more understandable.
- Make sure easy read documents are available.
- Avoid jargon. If unavoidable, explain what you mean in lay terms.
- Explain all acronyms.
- Regularly sense check to make sure words used are understood.
- Plan shorter and more frequent meetings.
- Explore how people like to work and what makes them feel comfortable and confident.
- Be flexible, people's lives can have other things that may change their plans.
- Regularly talk with co-researchers to find out how they feel the project is going.
- People often learn through practice. Invite your co-researcher to do a mini-ethnography (see training mini-ethnography).

TRAINING MINI-ETHNOGRAPHY

Arrange 3 online meetings each lasting 10-20 minutes for the co-researcher to talk to you (or another team member) about a topic. Think about it as hanging out with them. Here are two topics to choose from:



1: LIVING WITH PETS

What is it like to live with pets? In the meetings watch and chat with the person. Ask about the pet and their owner, how they are and what they have been up to. You could watch the owner play with their pet or feed them. Arrange the meetings to see the pet.



2: WORKING FROM HOME

What is it like to work from home? Look at where the person works and ask questions. Ask questions about what it's like to work at home. Ask them to show you around.

Remember to take notes. Your notes are your data! Write or type notes or record them on your phone. You can take notes during the meetings or write them after. How much or how little you write is up to you. Note down anything you think is important, unexpected, or interesting. After the three meetings talk to the researcher about what you found out about the topic and how you found doing the mini-ethnography.

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CO-RESEARCHER'S GUIDE TO ETHNOGRAPHY

WHAT IS ETHNOGRAPHY?

Ethnography is a type of research. When you do ethnography you spend time with people to learn about their lives. You might see someone for a few hours or longer or see them several times for a shorter amount of time. Ethnography helps us find out about people's lives using the skills lots of us already have: watching, listening, talking to people and thinking about this.

YOU CAN CHOOSE TO DO ALL OR SOME OF THESE THINGS WHEN YOU ARE DOING ETHNOGRAPHY:

- Ask people questions
- Look at what is happening around them and around you
- Join in their activities
- Pay attention to the place
 - » Noticing sounds, smells, what sort of things are there.
- Pay attention to the people
 - » Noticing how people talk to each other (and you), how they feel and what they say



When doing ethnography it can be a good idea to make notes. You can make them at the time, or afterwards. You can write down notes or record your thoughts if that is easier.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:



- You don't need research skills. Your experience and thoughts are valuable and important.



- Spending time with new people can be awkward but it will get easier as time goes on.



- It's okay to ask your co-researcher about words you don't know or things you don't understand.



- It's okay to just hang out.
- If you ask people questions, think how you would feel if you were asked these questions.



- Things might not always go to plan. It's okay to change questions, the time you're hanging out, or do something different than planned.



- If people don't want you spend time with you it's fine. Leave and check if they are happy for you to return a few days later.



- If you are worried about anything to do with the ethnography speak with your co-researcher and then the project lead if are still worried.