

## MISTAKES AND TRIUMPH

### Objectives

- Students will enter the world of the play *Clyde's* by Lynn Nottage
- Students will embody the feelings that the characters in *Clyde's* might be experiencing
- Students will explore the ideas of mistakes, triumph, forgiveness, and second chances

### Materials needed

- Large open space that allows for movement

### Activity

Provide the following introduction to the class:

- In the play *Clyde's* by Lynn Nottage, we meet several characters who are in a transitional place in their lives. They recently got out of prison and now they are working at a truck stop making sandwiches while they rebuild their lives and imagine a brighter future. These characters have to find a way to let the mistakes of their past go, to forgive themselves, so they can have a triumphant future.

Step by step instructions for facilitator:

- If you feel comfortable, close your eyes.
- I'm going to read a quote from the play, delivered by the character of Jason.

"...I can't even walk down the street without feeling like everyone's hating on me. I wake up with my chest so tight I can't breathe...I made a mistake. I know. I KNOW!"

- Take on a pose (or a frozen statue) in your body in response to this quote. I'm going to read the quote again and then count down to 10-1.
- Hold this pose. What does it feel like? What does it feel like in the body to make a mistake?
- Go ahead and relax.
- Now let's imagine the opposite. Let's imagine what triumph feels like in the body. In the play, the character of Montellous says,

"...My strength. ...My victory. ...My freedom."

- I'm going to count down again from 10-1 and ask you to take on another pose.
- What does it feel like in the body to triumph over past mistakes?
- This half of the room can relax and look at the poses of the other half.
- Now let's switch. This half of the room can relax and the other half can go back into their poses.

Come together....

Playwright Lynn Nottage says, “Folks aren’t the sum total of the worst thing that they’ve ever done. The people who are in *Clyde’s* are fundamentally good people who have, in their past, done something that might be morally questionable.”

Final thought:

- As you watch the play, think about this idea of making mistakes and forgiveness. Think about that for yourself and for the people in your life. Does everyone deserve a second chance? Does everyone deserve forgiveness?