

MORTAL FOOLS

MORTAL FOOLS'
ENSEMBLE YOUNG
COMPANY PRESENTS

MY PEOPLE

MY PEOPLE RESOURCE PACK

FOUR BITTER-SWEET FILM SHORTS WITH
ACCOMPANYING RESOURCE PACK ABOUT
NAVIGATING THE REALITY OF MODERN
WORLD FRIENDSHIP; WHAT IF GROWING
UP MEANS GROWING APART?



The Joicey Trust
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Foundation

Northumberland
County Council

Arts Council
ENGLAND



#FINDYOURPEOPLE

WELCOME TO THE **MY** **PEOPLE** RESOURCE PACK

This resource is to accompany our My People film series and is for anyone working with young people 13yrs+ old, youth workers, theatre practitioners and parents/carers.

Mortal Fools is a theatre, drama and creative learning charity based in the North-East. We are a company of participatory artists and practitioners who co-create compelling, dynamic, socially-relevant and high-quality theatre and creative projects with children and young people.

We work with 1000s of young people every year across the North through co-creating theatre, creative projects and developing digital content and resources to meet the contemporary needs of young people.

You can find out more about Mortal Fools on our website www.mortalfools.org.uk and social media channels (@mortalfoolsuk)



My People is a film series from Mortal Fools' Ensemble Young Company, co-created with young people and professional artists. We wanted to create this resource as a way to enable folks working with young people to dig a little deeper into the film themes and to reflect after watching.

This resource pack is designed for teachers, facilitators, youth workers, community group leaders and parents to support young people explore the themes, stories and characters from the My People films. In this pack you'll find discussion prompts and activities, that you can use in your sessions and work with young people.



MY PEOPLE

My People is a series of four bitter-sweet, poignant film shorts following a group of young people navigating the reality of friendship in the modern world; what if growing up means growing apart?

Mark, Maisie, Izzy, Rhiannon and Abel, all started off as strangers in this world – but somewhere along the way, they became friends. Really good friends; clicked, connected, comfortable and comrades. But recently, things have felt more complicated; friendships are malfunctioning, everything seems different, shifting, changing and there are too many things left unsaid.

Co-created with young people and professional artists, each film story explores the belonging that stems from finding your people. Your people might be folks you're already friends with or they might be people you've just not met yet... You'll know when you find them.

THE FILM SHORTS

**My People #1 – Mark & Maisie's Story:
The Uncertain & Unsaid**

**My People #2 – Izzy & Rhiannon's Story:
Growing Up & Growing Apart**

**My People #3 – Abel's Story:
Feelings & Malfunctioning Friendships**

**My People #4 – The Gathering:
You'll Find Your People**

**The films are available to watch via
Mortal Fools' [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) or via:
www.mortalfools.org.uk/mypeople**



MY PEOPLE FILMS ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION:

- There are four film shorts.
- Each film is 6 – 10 minutes long.
- The films are captioned.
- You can watch the film shorts all together or you can watch them one by one.
- The films are supposed to be watched in order – i.e. #1, #2, #3, #4 and they are connected.
- You will see 8 white young people on screen aged 14-16yrs old.
- The films follow 5 main characters called Mark, Maisie, Izzy, Rhiannon and Abel.
- You will see the characters at school, in their bedrooms, at parties and outside in urban areas, like streets and back gardens.
- The films are about growing up, friendship, evolving relationships, how you feel about yourself, how you feel about others, social expectations, societal pressures and activism.

We also have the option available for a Mortal Fools' Youth Theatre practitioner to facilitate a My People workshop for young people – this is open to any young people's groups and to find out more email: Rachel.Horton@mortalfools.org.uk

USING THIS RESOURCE PACK



For best use of the My People films and this resource pack, we suggest you take the following approach:

- Talk to your group of young people about the My People films and what they are about.
- Go through this activity pack and focus on explaining activities connected to **Film #1 – Mark & Maisie's Story: The Uncertain & Unsaid.**
- Watch **Film #1 – Mark & Maisie's Story: The Uncertain & Unsaid.**
- Collectively discuss Film #1 and complete activities relating to Mark & Maisie's Story.
- Have a break.
- Restart and focus on explaining activities connected to **Film #2 – Izzy & Rhiannon's Story: Growing Up & Growing Apart.**
- Watch **Film #2 – Izzy & Rhiannon's Story: Growing Up & Growing Apart.**
- Collectively discuss Film #2 and complete activities relating to Izzy & Rhiannon's Story.
- Have a break.
- Restart and focus on explaining activities connected to **Film #3 – Abel's Story: Feelings & Malfunctioning Friendships.**
- Watch **Film #3 – Abel's Story: Feelings & Malfunctioning Friendships.**
- Collectively discuss Film #3 and complete activities relating to Abel's Story.
- Have a break.
- Restart and focus on explaining activities connected to **Film #4 – The Gathering: You'll Find Your People.**
- Watch **Film #4 – The Gathering: You'll Find Your People.**
- Collectively discuss Film #4 and complete activities relating to The Gathering.
- Let us know what you thought of My People on your preferred social media channel using **#FindYourPeople**

JUST BEFORE GETTING STARTED:

- We will tell you what resources you need at the beginning of each task, so you can prepare.
- We have phrased the task instructions so you can use them exactly as they are with the young people you engage with, or you can rephrase them to suit your setting.
- For each task, we've shared a "practitioner tip" – this is a handy hint from our Mortal Fools' practitioners to help you run each activity effectively and to achieve the best results.
- The tasks and the films explore themes surrounding mental health, identity, growing-up, the future, friendships, relationships, peer dynamics and making sense of the world. We encourage you to remind any young people you are using this resource with, to only explore what they are comfortable exploring.
- We have listed some mental health support services in a resource you can download [HERE](#) which may be useful to sign-post young people to.
- You can request an easy read, text only and/or large text version of this resource by emailing Rachel.Horton@mortalfools.org.uk
- We are open to any accessibility feedback or recommendations – we are a learning organisation so truly value any insights from lived experience and any suggestions.



MY PEOPLE WARM UP PROMPTS

When starting any Mortal Fools' Youth Theatre sessions, we begin with check ins and prompts; they help everyone to get thinking, warmed up and ready to start sharing their ideas and thoughts.

You can use these prompts to get creative thoughts flowing at the beginning of your session...



Something I found out today was...

Friendship is...

Something I want to say to the world right now is...

Something I know is happening somewhere else in the world right now is...

Something that always makes me feel better is...

In ten years time I will...

The best advice to hear from a friend when I'm having a bad day is...



MY PEOPLE

FILM #1

Mark & Maisie's Story: The Uncertain & Unsaid

Film Theme:
Finding it difficult to start friendships

Across the creative process with our young people, we explored different ways of describing friendship.

- What does friendship mean?
- What does “being friends” mean?
- When you think of friendship, what do you think of?
- How does friendship make you feel?
- How does friendship happen?
- What makes a friend, a “friend” compared to someone you know/ an acquaintance?
- What are the “rules” of friendship?

In Film #1 Ensemble Young Company Member, Maisie chose to describe friendship as being ‘like a match’ and during the creative process she explored how sometimes the match just won’t light, no matter how hard you try.

PRACTITIONER TIP

Be responsive to your group! If you know they prefer to draw or speak about their ideas, you can adapt this task to suit their needs. You might change it to “you have two minutes to tell me your response” and time each person as they get up and share their thoughts.

TASK: FREEWRITING

For this task, we want you to think what you would compare your experience of friendship to and the different parts of friendship you might experience.

What you need:

- Piece of paper
- Comfy quiet space
- Pen or pencil
- Instrumental music to help you think and concentrate

Spend 5 minutes writing your response to the following prompt –

“I think friendship is a bit like...”

Try your best to keep writing for the whole 5 minutes, even if you just write “I can’t think of what to write” – often our brains need time to catch us up and then a new thought will appear.

What next?

We often use freewriting as a starting point when we’re making new work. You might want to use your groups writing to:

- Facilitate a group discussion with your group of young people – sharing your free writing.
- Spend more time revisiting your free writing – taking lines for your writing and developing a short poem.
- Get into pairs and each pair use a line from each other’s free writing to create a dramatic scene.
- Draw an illustration of your version of friendship
- Perform your writing as a short monologue/speech (just like Maisie did!)

MY PEOPLE

FILM #2

Izzy & Rhiannon's Story: Growing Up & Growing Apart

Film Theme:
It's okay to be different

When making My People, we dug deeper into the concept of being different and the influence of peer pressure and friendship group dynamics on your ability to be yourself.

Izzy and Rhiannon's story explores how sometimes you can outwardly change your attitude and opinions to fit in with a group, but this means you aren't being your true self.

TASK: SILHOUETTE

We want you to spend some time thinking about what makes you, you and what you need from your friends to be your true self.

What you need:

- Piece of paper
- Comfy quiet space
- Pen or pencil
- Instrumental music to help you think and concentrate

Draw a silhouette of a person like the one we have drawn here.

You'll have 10 minutes to spend on this task, in that time we'd like you to complete these two tasks:

- **Inside the silhouette** - write all of the things that make you you (eg: interests, passions, personality etc.)
- **Around the silhouette body** - write as many things that you need from your friends to support you to be your true self.
- **Under the feet** - write all the things that you think stop you, from being your true self, can be real things and imagined worries.

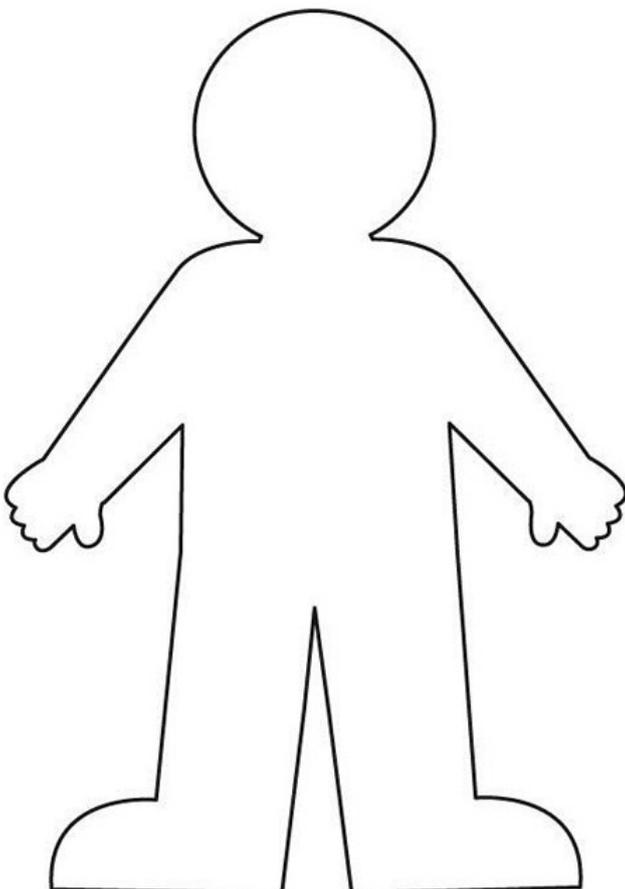
What next?

You could encourage your group to come back together and share their silhouettes, using the prompts:

A time I felt like I could be myself was...

A time I felt like I could be my true self was...

OR...



MY PEOPLE

FILM #2

Izzy & Rhiannon's Story: Growing Up & Growing Apart

The work you have created here can help form the starting point of a character. You could use this character to:

- Create a short scene showing that character doing something they love
- Create a short scene showing that character being supported by a friend to be their true self
- Create a short scene showing that character being challenged by someone about their interests
- Design a protest banner that represents what is important to your character
- Imagine your characters coming together for a dinner party and interacting with each other.

PRACTITIONER TIP

Understand and support your group!
You can often use these tasks as a way of supporting wellbeing in sessions – your participants are giving you a list of things that they need from the people around them to be themselves, use it to your advantage to support them!



MY PEOPLE

FILM #3

Abel's Story: Feelings & Malfunctioning Friendships

Film Theme: Not always being able to say what you're feeling

In this film, Abel describes friendship as being like a computer.

During our devising process, we explored how computers can often look like they are running smoothly but behind the screen there is lots of complicated wiring, systems, processes and coding making it all work – it is much more complicated than it seems.

TASK: FRIENDSHIP IS LIKE A COMPUTER SYSTEM...

We want you to use Abel's computer metaphor to explore your own experiences of friendship.

What you need:

- Piece of paper
- Comfy quiet space
- Pen or pencil
- Instrumental music to help you think and concentrate

You have 10 minutes to spend on this activity, in that time we'd like you to complete the following tasks –

- **Film line prompt: "If it's all connected everything's working fine"** – write a list of as many moments over the last 12 months, when it has felt like a friendship is working fine – smooth, seamless, little effort. An example of this could be laughing together at a shared joke.

Try to dig deeper than the memory – How it felt? What exactly was working? Why did you feel connected?

- **Film line prompt: "We tuck it away behind the screen"** – write a list of times over the last 12 months, that you've hidden things out of sight. An example of this could be feeling too anxious to ask for help or not saying what you wanted to say in a particular moment.

Try to dig deeper than the memory – How did it feel? Do you remember choosing to hide something? Why did you feel unable to say something? What was happening around you?



MY PEOPLE

FILM #3

Abel's Story: Feelings & Malfunctioning Friendships

What next?

Have a group discussion exploring some of the elements expressed in the activities but using the character of Abel.

Question prompts:

Do you empathise with Abel?

What could they have done differently?

Why do you think they felt unable to be honest with their friends?

Why might Abel's friends not have acknowledged his birthday or made an effort?

If you were in Abel's shoes, what would have done or said?

What could Abel do now to make himself feel better?



PRACTITIONER TIP

Only share what you're comfortable sharing!
When asking participants to share ideas around moments of vulnerability, it is important to remind them that you should only share what they are comfortable sharing when explaining the task. If anything upsetting does come out of your discussion – make sure to set time aside to check in with that individual after the task/session.

MY PEOPLE

FILM #4

Every group of friends are made up of unique individuals who bring something different to the group.

Likewise, every group of friends have a certain place that they feel comfortable spending time together in and hang out.

The Gathering: You'll Find Your People

Film Theme:
When 'your people' come together

TASK: GATHERING

We want you to think where you would invite your 'people' to for a gathering of your own and what your ideal gathering might look like.

What you need:

- Piece of paper
- Glue
- Spare magazines
- Scissors
- Comfy quiet space
- Pen or pencil
- Instrumental music to help you think and concentrate

Take 15–20 minutes to pull together a visual collage that represents the ideal gathering with your friends. You might choose words you associate with, images, symbols, colours, patterns – anything and everything is welcome in this collage.

When you're creating your 'Gathering collage', we would like you to consider the following questions:

- **What would you hear at your Gathering?**
(would there be music and chatting or would it be quiet and peaceful?)
- **What would you see at your Gathering?**
(would there be decorations or maybe even a view that you could look out at)
- **What would you smell at your Gathering?**
(would there be a campfire burning or maybe you can smell the fresh air?)
- **What would you smell at your Gathering?**
(would you be eating food at your gathering?)
- **What would you do at your Gathering?**
(would you be eating food at your gathering? Would you have a game planned?)



MY PEOPLE

FILM #4

The Gathering: You'll Find Your People

- **What would attending your Gathering feel like?**
(would it be chilled out? High energy? Fun? Organised...?)
- **Who would you invite to your Gathering?**
(who do you consider to be "your people"?)

What next?

When the time is up and collages are finished – we encourage each member of the group to invite folks to their Gathering and take the room on a guided tour, describing all the different things they have there and why they chose them.

When each person is finished describing their Gathering, open the discussion to the group to share which Gatherings they might like to attend (or not attend) and why?

PRACTITIONER TIP

Senses can really help!

If participants need more guidance on this task, the senses questions can help them build their scene layer by layer. For example, if they describe that they'd be by the sea at their gathering, playing the sound of waves might help them build a stronger mental picture for themselves.



THANK YOU!

Thank you for using our **My People Resource Pack** and giving the tasks a go – these tasks are actually some of the tasks, our young people did together at the beginning of the project to explore the themes connected to friendship.

The creative outputs from these tasks became the foundation of our **My People** films.

Some of the themes and subjects explored in the **My People** films and this resource pack may have been challenging or uncomfortable – that is ok!

We've created this handy resource to sign post young people to, with a list of mental health and wellbeing organisations, support and influencers. You can access that [HERE](#).

Feel free to share any of the collages, silhouettes, writing etc, with us on social media [@mortalfoolsuk](#) or via email info@mortalfools.org.uk

Follow us on:



[@mortalfoolsUK](#)

www.mortalfools.org.uk

Mortal Fools are a multi-award winning, theatre, drama and creative learning charity.

We're growing every year, and we could not do what we do without the generous support of our partners, funders and wider **Mortal Fools'** community. As a charity, we depend on this generous support, and we are always open to donations to help support our work with children and young people across the North.

Follow the link to see the ways you can support us:

www.mortalfools.org.uk/support-us