

PRACTICAL GUIDE

TRAINING, MEDIATION & LISTENING UNIT

BUILDING CARE IN FESTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Why a listening unit at a festival?

Souk Rassek is an awareness-raising framework grounded in a strong conviction: the prevention of gender-based violence relies as much on training as on mediation. In festive environments, where emotions circulate quickly and certain topics may feel difficult to address directly, the listening unit becomes a key space. A space for protection, awareness-raising, and the transmission of caring practices.

The listening unit makes it possible to support a festival as a whole. It welcomes people who have experienced gender-based violence, as well as those who feel anxious, unsafe, or simply out of place. It also serves as an anchor point, reminding us that mental health and care are fully part of the cultural experience.

1. Training: an essential foundation

Training before taking action

Kindness cannot be improvised. It is built, developed, and shared.

At Souk Rassek, everyone involved in the listening unit undergoes prior training, whether clinical psychologists, legal professionals, sociologists, or volunteers, most of whom are psychology students.

This training takes place:

in advance of the event, with the festival teams,
on site, during the event, to adjust postures to lived realities.

2. Mediation tools: raising awareness differently

Why is mediation essential?

Addressing gender-based violence at a festival can seem complex. Mediation tools make it possible to ease the gravity of the topic without minimizing the issues, and to open spaces for discussion where a direct, confrontational approach might shut down conversation.

Mediation makes awareness-raising:

- more accessible,
- more embodied,
- more engaging,
- more enjoyable for the audience.

It transforms a sensitive topic into a collective experience of reflection and empathy.

Concrete example: Souk Rassek 2023

During the first edition of Souk Rassek in 2023, we chose to combine theatre and awareness-raising.

An actor specialized in forum theatre was invited to embody the central character of Souk Rassek. This character moved throughout the site, interacted with the audience, staged situations, asked questions, and encouraged people to reflect differently on the dynamics of gender-based violence.

This initiative made it possible to:

- generate strong enthusiasm around Souk Rassek,
- make the topic visible without being moralizing,
- actively engage the audience,
- spark spontaneous and meaningful discussions.

Playful games and identification: rethinking awareness-raising

This approach was complemented by a playful game designed to strengthen empathy and the ability to identify with situations of gender-based violence.

Through the game, the audience was invited to project themselves, reflect collectively, and engage in dialogue around situations that, approached differently, might have seemed too heavy or uncomfortable.

These tools demonstrated how mediation can free speech, even in a festive context, and foster rich, sincere, and sometimes unexpected discussions.

Art therapy as an extension

In the following years, art therapy workshops further enriched the framework. They brought a more concrete and sensory dimension to the reflection, allowing participants to express their feelings through the body, movement, writing, or creative practices.

These workshops made it possible to:

- address gender-based violence beyond verbal discussion,
- create spaces for gentle transformation,
- connect awareness-raising, emotion, and creation.

Diversifying tools to reach wider audiences

The diversity of mediation tools is a strength. Forum theatre, games, artistic workshops, visual materials, and body-based experiences make it possible to reach different audiences with varied sensibilities and levels of engagement.

This diversity makes awareness-raising more dynamic and more equitable. It allows for respect of individual rhythms and creates bridges between information, emotion, and reflection.