

2.4. IMAGE THEATRE

(see notes on Boal on page 91)



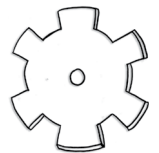
Aim

In image theatre, small groups create still photographs or tableaux of real situations (in this case of social exclusion) that a member or members of the group have experienced. It allows the exploration of feelings and empowering possible resolutions in a safe environment.

 Time needed Variable	 Resources needed None	 Group size Any
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Step-by-step description

1. Explain the background to Boal's work and how his form of theatre allows everyone a "voice" – which does not necessarily mean they have to speak.
2. Ask the group to think about an issue – for example, bullying, isolation, discrimination – that they feel strongly about and that they could illustrate with a specific example. Then ask someone to volunteer to use their experience to be the "sculptor", indicating how many people they would need to represent this. Ask for volunteers to become a living sculpture.
3. The sculptor moulds each person into a character in their scene. They can do this by demonstrating a pose and asking the person to copy it. If participants are comfortable, the sculptor can adjust facial expressions and physically move limbs into the desired position. Ensure no one is likely to be injured!
4. When the picture is complete the sculptor asks the frozen characters to come to life one at a time and each one to speak their thoughts out loud. These are called "thought tracks".
5. You can follow each discussion of the image by asking members of the group to sculpt a possible solution to the situation.
6. Let each person in the group have a turn at being the sculptor if they wish and if time permits.



Reflection and evaluation

Ask each tableau member how it felt to be moulded into a character or into portraying a specific emotion. Ask the observers what they felt about the representation. Was it realistic? If solutions were followed up, were they realistic? Finally, ask the original volunteer whose issue was explored what they had gained or learned from creating the tableau. Work of this nature, depending on the subject matter, can arouse strong emotions and so must be treated with great sensitivity. Always ensure the session allows sufficient time for a wind-down activity to restore equilibrium.