

LIVING PICTURES

Learning Path with group of adult learners with various disabilities facing various social problems. Educators use aspects of digital storytelling (storyboard) combined with theatrical storytelling to help learners to reflect and give insight to their life experience.

	Learning Path LIVING PICTURES
<i>Authors' Name contact</i>	Maria Schejbal and Jolanta Kajmowicz-Sopicka maria@teatrgrodzki.pl and jolanta@teatrgrodzki.pl
<i>Target group</i>	This learning path was successfully tested among a group of adults with various disabilities and facing various social problems. Among these were members of the deaf community, people with cognitive impairment and their families. However, it can be used with any kind of workshop group.
<i>Description of the challenges</i>	<p>There were specific difficult moments during the workshop process. In particular, some participants found it hard to go back to dramatic situations causing their disability in childhood or to other traumatic events from the past. They tried to express these memories and facts through writing and drawing, but finally they did not want to explore them further. However, during the theatrical realization of chosen stories by other participants, some of the workshop participants were deeply moved by discovering that their own life experience had been shared by the other group members.</p> <p>Also, the task of structuring the stories proved to be very complicated for most of the participants. However, the use of the Julie Story technique turned out to be a good solution for this deadlock situation and the workshop was concluded with a statement that the group could create a new performance on the basis of personal stories in the future.</p>
<i>Training Point Or How does this challenge effect motivation and achievement in your group?</i>	<p>This learning path is meant to encourage workshop participants to express themselves and to give insight to their life experience. The use of different creative methods stimulates participants` curiosity, openness and willingness to reveal own identity. It gives voice to those ones who are usually marginalized and not used to being heard.</p> <p>In addition, it helps to develop team work skills (communication and cooperation, decision making and problem solving inside the group).</p>

<p><i>Description of the activities</i></p> <p><i>Suggestions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Break the main activities down into manageable tasks and simple steps</i> 2. <i>Define the expertise required to undertake the activities and tasks</i> 3. <i>Estimate the duration and the time frame of this activity</i> 4. <i>Describe risks and uncertainties that could affect the implementation of activities</i> 5. <i>Describe shortly essential basic human, physical and financial resources to implement this activity</i> 	<p>This learning path shows the process and procedures of using different means of artistic expression in order to enable participants to share their personal stories with others. It combines the elements of both digital and theatrical storytelling methodologies.</p> <p>It is planned for a series of workshops of 2-4 hours each. The group should have at least 12 hours in total at their disposal to complete the task. In the case of our group, 6 two-hour workshop sessions were organized (June-October 2016).</p> <p>The number of participants in the group can be from 6 up to 15 persons.</p> <p>A regular classroom with chairs and tables is sufficient to conduct workshop activities.</p> <p>A projector and screen or other equipment (computer) for screening the digital stories will be needed, and also, a flipchart or a blackboard. Moreover, the trainer should gather a collection of different materials and props (paper, old newspapers, string, fabric, kitchen utensils, toys, plastic sheeting, etc) for the construction of puppets.</p> <p>The implementation of this learning path requires basic understanding of digital storytelling and theatrical creation principles from the trainer, since he/she needs to support participants in their individual work.</p> <p>Workshop process step by step:</p> <p>I. INTRODUCTION TO STORYTELLING</p> <p>The participants are invited to watch one or more examples of digital stories. The resources presented at http://artescommunity.eu/storytelling/ can be helpful. In the case of our workshop, the Icelandic digital story "Finding the voice" was shared with the group. It is a good example of a very personal and moving statement expressed with simplified but original and creative (cartoon style) pictures http://artescommunity.eu/storytelling/findig-the-voice/</p> <p>After watching the digital story with the group, the leader should explain briefly what this kind of storytelling is and how different digital stories can be made.</p>
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II. DRAFTING THE STORIES

The first task for all the participants is to create a simple storyboard of their personal experience. Different techniques can be used: drawings, collage, written description.

To facilitate their work a supporting structure of storyboard – time-frame is proposed. Each participant receives a piece of paper with written instructions: I am at the age of for example 5, then 15, 25, etc., and finally it is me today. What was my life like at different stages in my development? Has something important happened to me? What do I remember from the past? What influenced my life and present situation the most?

This method proved to be useful and inspirational. The participants were independently choosing specific moments of their life which were particularly important for them. A collection of different storyboards were created and we all learned a lot about each other. Many new things came out, some of them truly moving and crucial for understanding each other better.

III. "JULIE STORY" TECHNIQUE

The next phase is about structuring chosen stories more in detail with the use of a group exercise called "Julie Story." Teatr Grodzki was introduced to this method by the trainers from ACTA Community Theatre from Bristol, UK, during the international training in Lanzarote, Spain (1-7 July 2016) organized as part of the MEDART project, co-financed by EC ERASMUS+ program.

"Julie Story" technique engages all the workshop participants in the creation of a story, a meaningful narration in a collaborative way. It can be initiated with a simple question: Who can be our hero? Is it she or he? What`s his/her age? Where does he/she live? etc.

For the benefit of our workshop process the specific personal stories previously drafted were used as a starting point for the group work.

First, the leader reads/analyzes the chosen storyboard and asks the group what they would like to pick from it.

All the chosen elements/facts are written down on the flipchart as a base for further creation. Then, the group builds the story together and the leader's role is to facilitate their creative process through asking subsidiary questions such as: What was his feeling like? Was he there alone or with somebody? What was the time/season/weather of this action? etc. Participants are free to tell a true story or use their imagination. At the end of such a joint creation, the fiction and/or non-fiction story should be elaborated with many threads and tracks for action.

IV. STORIES ON STAGE

Now, the time for working in sub-groups is organised. The participants form the teams with 2-5 members and start working on their own theatrical representation of the story previously elaborated with the help of "Julie Story" technique. It's up to them to choose the way and artistic means for each presentation. They can make and use puppets or any objects available, or simply act out the given plot, using or not using spoken narration.

At the end, all the groups present their "performances" to other participants, one by one.

V. CLOSING THE PROCESS

The last phase of the whole working process is devoted to sharing and discussing feelings, reflections and findings of the common work. Special attention should be given to the persons whose stories have been chosen for exploration. In particular, the leader should make sure if they feel comfortable and not hurt by touching their own personal experience by the group.

Learning Outcomes

- As a result of the implementation of this workshop process, the participants should learn:
- about the basic rules of storytelling – both digital and theatrical;
 - how to structure the story to express its essence and to convey an important message;
 - how to work in a group and reach a compromise;
 - how to deal with difficult feelings and emotions.

<i>Foreseen impact on the direct beneficiaries</i> <i>Foreseen impact on the indirect beneficiaries</i>	The implementation of this learning path proved to be interesting and inspiring for the members of an integration group of adults, described above. Those who participated in the working process became more independent in their thinking, more flexible and open. They managed to overcome shyness and fear of speaking about themselves. Thus their self-esteem and self-appraisal were highly strengthened.
<i>Documentation and web resources useful to implement the scenario</i>	INTRODUCTION TO STORYTELLING AND DRAFTING THE STORIES STRUCTURING THE STORIES AND ACTING THEM OUT