

1. Getting away – working with the new material

After four intensive days of learning, rehearsing and performing a change of working rhythm was needed. The group spent the whole morning in a beautiful rocky valley, experimenting with thin plastic foil. They worked in pairs and their task was to build and animate the figure of a bird. They were supposed to use just the foil and the objects found in the valley – sticks, leaves, stones. The reason behind introducing this new material was to give participants a chance to reflect on their work with paper from a new perspective. They could discover theatrical potential hidden in different objects and materials and test their animation capacity. It was also a way to relax after the presentation on the previous day which required a real effort and involved a lot of emotions.

2. Looking at ourselves – group games

A few different exercises were proposed on the last day of the course to evaluate the experience and view it from different perspectives.

“Fortunately-unfortunately”. Participants sit in a circle and in turn speak one sentence, alternately beginning with the words, "fortunately" or "unfortunately." In this way they attempt to describe a given situation (in this case - the training). The activity forces the discipline of short, clear statements. It requires creativity, reflexes, memory of what has been said, and searching for new aspects of the situation being discussed. Swapping concentration between the two opposing points of view helps to maintain a balance between excessive optimism and excessive pessimism.

“The body”. Participants work together to ‘create’ a living organism – “body of the group”. They have a moment to reflect on what part of the body they feel they are at that moment. Creating the body should start spontaneously - one of the volunteers assumes a pose characterising the chosen body-part’s function, then explains to the others what’s happening. In this particular case, the trainer gave an example and began action by choosing a place for herself. I am a head. My task was to structure and implement the workshop program. In other words, metaphorically speaking, as the workshop leader I had you all on me. The next people take their positions, trying to respect the proportions and shape of the created body. When everyone has their place, the leader asks them to describe briefly how they feel. This activity helps participants to discover their own uniqueness and individual place in the group. It also has a valuable cognitive component - it helps participants identify, define and reveal the emotions (positive and negative) associated with being in a group. This applies also to the broader context of social functioning in different situations and contexts (in a family environment, at work).

“The town”. Together, the group "builds" a city in which each participant will determine their own place, focusing on the near future and on possibilities to practically use their workshop experience. Again, the trainer starts the action and marks out the first place in this imaginary town. Next, the others place themselves in the space and explain why they decided to become a mosque, a cave, a hotel or any other building/spot in the town. Through this exercise, every participant has the opportunity to reflect on the usefulness of the workshop program and its further application. It is also an occasion to share interests, plans and dreams with the rest of the group.

3. Summing-up the whole process – “Path” technique

The trainer invites the group to a symbolic journey through the workshop program implemented during the course. The goal is to refresh memories and reveal the whole process of group work, the most important and successful experiences, and key moments. She lays out

a path, using multi-coloured scarves, and placing them on the floor as symbolic representations of techniques and activities introduced each day, one by one. Parallel to creating the path, she speaks about her feelings and reflections connected with successive stages of the process and its individual moments. Next, the participants are invited to walk through the path, one by one, and share their feedback on each working day.

The path technique is a very good way to repeat the experience and knowledge which the group has gained during the implementation of the workshop. It helps to express thoughts and confront own view with the perspective of the others. Use of scarves (or other objects) is a practical way of helping participants to visualize individual phases of the process.

Learning outcomes/results

The last phase of the working process was focused on an in-depth analysis of the course experience. Its main goal was to give participants time and space for sharing, reflecting, asking questions and discussing any positive or problematic issues raised by the course activities.

As a result of the implementation of this module, the participants learned:

- how to use various creative techniques meant for reflection on the process at personal and group level,
- how to conclude common workshop experience.