

ACTIVITY 5: THE PLACES WE INHERIT

Overview of the activity

Participants reflect on how heritage influences their identity and life. Using the body – through images, theatre or statues – participants represent a heritage element from their or their parents’ birthplace and link it to their current home.

Objectives

- Establish the relationship between heritage, place, memory and the body.
- Reflect on heritage and how it can be represented.
- Find ways to communicate with the body without the need for words.
- Reflect on how heritage is present in one’s current life and is related to one’s identity.

Duration (in minutes)	Min/max number of participants	Room/space requirements
45 minutes	• Recommended: 15 • Minimum: 2 • Maximum: 25	• A space comfortable enough for participants to move around. Take into account that the floor/ground should be comfortable enough for them to lie down. • This activity can be done indoors or outdoors.

Minimum knowledge requirements of participants**Materials needed**

No requirements

- A device (mobile phone, tablet, camera) to take photos of the results

Preparation

Please read the following extract about Image Theatre from the book, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* by Augusto Boal: 'Dealing with images we should not try to "understand" the meaning of each image, to apprehend its precise meaning, but to feel those images, to let our memories and imaginations wander: the meaning of an image is the image itself. Image is a language. All images also are surfaces and, as such, they reflect what is projected on it. As objects reflect the light that strikes them, hence images in an organised ensemble reflect the emotions of the observer, her ideas, memories, imagination, desires. [. . .] The whole method of Theatre of the Oppressed, and particularly the series of Image Theatre, is based on the multiple mirror of the gaze of others – a number of people looking at the same image, and offering their feelings, what is evoked for them, what their imaginations throw up around that image. This multiple reflection will reveal to the person who made the image its hidden aspects. It is up to the protagonist (the builder of the image) to understand and feel whatever she wants to or is able to take from this process'.

Instructions

1. Ask participants to find a comfortable space in the room/outdoors to close their eyes and to think back to the place they were born. Give them a minute to connect with that place.
2. With their eyes closed, ask participants to represent with their body – using image theatre,

that is, by creating a statue with their body – an element of the heritage of the place they were born in.

3. Once everyone has created their image, ask participants to open their eyes and, while still maintaining their image, to look at the images of the other participants.
4. Now, ask participants to move to the place where their mother was born. If it is the same place, they should stay in the same spot. If not, they should move to the new location by imagining a map on the floor/ground. Each participant should decide on their own location and how 'their map' is located within the space. Once they are in their mother's birthplace, ask them to close their eyes and think about a heritage element that connects them with their mother. With their eyes closed, ask participants to again represent with their body – using image theatre – an element of the heritage of the place their mother was born in.
5. Once everyone has created an image, ask participants to open their eyes and, while still maintaining their image, to look at the images of the other participants.
6. Repeat for: Where your father was born; where a grandfather/grandmother was born; where you live now.
7. The facilitator will take photos of the five images of each participant.
8. Then, share the experience and discuss why they chose those elements.

Learning outcomes / evidence collected

Photos of the five images of each participant

Evaluation

Share these questions:

- *Was it difficult for you to find heritage elements for each place? Why?*
- *Have you limited yourself to material heritage (architecture, landscape, food) or did you choose*

heritage practices? Why?

- *Do you think the body is a good way to represent heritage? How did you feel?*

Teaching tips, stories and experiences during piloting

It may be interesting to encourage participants to think of non-material heritage elements (e.g. a celebration, music, etc.), which makes the activity richer and offers more reflection on the meanings of heritage.