

What is Picturetelling

Picturetelling is a creative method used to work with groups. The name is a composition of the words Picture and Storytelling. The name strengthens the intention of PT, which is to explore by means of explaining, communicating and telling a story based on a picture.

Picturetelling is based on the Language Technique. Language is a well-established method used to work with groups and was originally developed to help people communicate in a group. The advantage of this method lies within the picture taking over the role of a mediator. The picture is part of the description and not the person him or herself. This enables the narrator to talk about personal issues without feeling exposed.

What is new about PT?

PT takes one step further. The first step is identical to Language. A person chooses a picture, which helps him to answer a question. The additional second step used in PT broadens the perspective; on the backside of the card there is yet another picture which cannot be chosen voluntarily. Nevertheless this second picture has to be used to answer the following second question. What seems impossible prior to the task - which is to draw personal information from a randomly picked picture - turns out to be very enriching and easier than expected. It forces the person to deal with him or herself in a much more intense way and the perspective is broadened merely by having to elaborate on an unforeseen picture. PT therefore represents a powerful tool to open one's mind to a new point of view.

How does PT work?

The question "what would I like to achieve this summer" can serve as an example. In a first step, a picture is chosen and associations evoked by the picture are stated. In a second step, a second question is raised, such as "What could help me to achieve this goal?" The card is flipped and the person in question tries to answer with the help of this card. This way, focus is deliberately set on the solution or the available resources. PT represents a resource and solution oriented tool for a variety of settings.

With what kind of work can I use this method?

Picturetelling can be applied for supervision, coaching, therapy, team building or groups in general. The list of possibilities is non-exhaustive. Find new areas and settings to apply. It is helpful in any situation where one's horizon needs broadening. PT can be used in school as well.

Instruktionen

First sequence:

- ! Lay out the cards in a circular array on the ground or on a table so that everyone can walk around and take a look at them.
- ! Pose the question that is to be answered with the help of the cards and have all of the group members choose a card but not yet pick it up.
- ! As soon as everyone has chosen a card, the cards can be picked up. If two persons chose the same card you can make a copy of the card or the persons share the same one and sit next to each other.
- ! Give everyone some time to think about what they would like to say. Collect the remaining cards during this time.
- ! After this, the group starts exchanging their thoughts and associations. Every person answers the question with the help of his or her card. If you have enough time at your disposal or if it is only a small group of people, every group member can also add their own associations regarding the other person's cards.

Second sequence:

- ! The choice of cards does not take place; the group is promptly posed the second question.
- ! Again, provide enough time to find their associations to the second picture. Encourage the group to try. Sceptical reactions are common; going along with the method however shows results in very little time. If someone is struggling with his card, you can offer another card to this person. Try to avoid this if possible and if you have to choose a card for this person and don't let them choose it themselves.
- ! The following exchange is the same as in sequence one.
- ! Emphasize the value of all the contributions; the openness and the willingness to be speak freely in front of the group.

Possible combinations to approach problems

- ! What would I like to achieve this year? What will help me to achieve this goal?
- ! What is my role in the team? What are my strengths?
- ! What would I like to achieve in this seminar? What could keep me from achieving it?
- ! What are my strengths? What do I need help with?
- ! How do I feel in this team? What would help me to feel better?

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