



STILL IMAGE EXERCISE (Paradigm-breaking methods)

In the still image method, participants create a still image or a frozen picture from a sequence of events that illustrates the emotions, statuses and power dynamics related to a situation. The still image method is one of Augusto Boal's theatre techniques.

In the context of the green transition, health and care participants create two still images in small groups: (1) resistance related to change and (2) the desired future image during change. The exercise encourages participants to examine and structure emotions, roles and interactions in change situations, as well as to verbalise and make sense of the challenges and opportunities brought by change.

What is required:

- Creativity and willingness to present issues visually
- Readiness from the group to try new and abstract approaches

Level of difficulty: 3

Time required: 20-40 minutes, depending on how many images the group creates and modifies.

Materials:

- A flipchart, paper, pens, or digital tools for creating the image
- Frames, if desired

Participants: At least 3 people, but 5-10 is optimal

How to use:

1. Group division: Participants are divided into pairs or groups of three.
2. Illustrating resistance: In small groups, participants first discuss what resistance involves, how it manifests and what reactions are associated with it. Then, these aspects are illustrated using their own bodies.
3. Interpretation and discussion: The still images are examined step by step. The facilitator instructs one group at a time to create a still image and gives the others viewing and interpretation instructions, asking: what does the situation depict, what is happening, who is involved and what is the relationship between the people in the image? The purpose of the discussion is to make conscious and unconscious aspects of the change process visible.
4. Creating the ideal still image: Next, the groups create an ideal still image that represents the desired change situation.
5. Reflection and discussion: The still images are examined step by step. The facilitator instructs one group at a time to create a still image and gives the others viewing and interpretation instructions, repeating the questions: what does the situation depict now,



what is happening, who is involved, what is the relationship between the people in the image and how does it differ from the previous still image illustrating resistance?

6. End of the exercise: The facilitator instructs the groups to discuss what happened or did not happen to their idea of change during the exercise.

When to use:

- For reflecting on change situations and roles, reactions, basic beliefs, expectations and fears related to such situations

Why to use:

- Provides space to structure and make sense of aspects related to change that are not always possible to address or verbalise together in daily work situations
- Concretises abstract concepts and roles

How to document:

- Take photographs or make drawings of the images created by the group
- Take notes of the discussion

The roots of the method can be found here: Theatre director, dramaturg and pedagogue Augusto Boal describes numerous theatre-based methods in his book “Games for Actors and Non-actors” (2005). The still image is one of the methods described. The aim is to illustrate and make sense of emotions through bodily expression and to make roles and social relationships visible. The method is applied as a working approach in drama therapy, psychodrama and sociodrama.

Further information

Boal, A. (2005). *Games for actors and non-actors* (2nd ed.). Routledge.