

# ACTING FOR THE RULE OF LAW

**A teacher's guide to using Forum Theatre to promote the rule of law, ethics and integrity in secondary schools**



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

**GRACE**

Global Resource for Anti-Corruption Education and Youth Empowerment



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in secondary schools**



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<sup>1</sup> Angelo Miramonti, How to Use Forum Theatre for Community Dialogue – A Facilitator’s Handbook (May 2017).



## FOREWORD

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is pleased to present its teacher's guide to using Forum Theatre to promote the rule of law, ethics and integrity, in secondary schools. This guide, and the series of materials of which it is part, is an example of UNODC's commitment to nurturing the engagement of young people with the subject of the rule of law and with the challenges related to Sustainable Development Goal 16 on promoting peace, justice and strong institutions.

At its special session on challenges and measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation in June 2021, the General Assembly adopted a Political Declaration that places anti-corruption education and training at the core of a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to promote transparency, accountability, integrity and a culture of rejection of corruption as a basis for preventing and countering corruption

Education plays a crucial role in strengthening young people's engagement when it comes to the rule of law, ethics and integrity. Through the development of cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural skills, students and educators can become transformative change-makers in society and can help communities become more sustainable and peaceful.

It is important to recognize the different ways in which students acquire knowledge. To this end, UNODC recognizes Forum Theatre as a valuable educational tool that can help young people in formal and informal settings to better understand and address issues that can undermine the rule of law, ethics and integrity. Forum Theatre plays are an opportunity for both actors and audiences to listen, debate and seek solutions to social issues in a safe, non-judgemental environment.

This guide is comprised of a series of exercises that are designed to help educators prepare and facilitate Forum Theatre sessions that address topics related to crime, justice and the rule of law. It also includes preparatory and customized exercises essential to the development and presentation of Forum Theatre plays with the on-stage participation of audiences.

Forum Theatres can be social laboratories through which people can explore their creativity and dialogue skills as means to build safer, more resilient and sustainable social bonds. Therefore, we hope that this resource will provide educators with essential tools that can nurture the engagement of young people with the subjects of the rule of law, ethics and integrity, using the artistic expression of their emotions and experiences.





## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Promoting the rule of law, ethics and integrity through education

Crime, justice and the rule of law are part of our lives and affect us on a daily basis. People, and especially youth, are ever more concerned about these issues and, in response, UNODC has developed educational resources to support educators to teach on the rule of law and to help students to better understand some of the key issues surrounding the rule of law, crime, ethics and integrity in our societies.

UNODC has joined forces with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) under its *Global Citizenship Education for the Rule of Law: Doing the Right Thing* partnership. This partnership stresses the role of young people as important contributors to the promotion of the rule of law and highlights the role of governments in providing educational support that nurtures positive values and attitudes in future generations. This partnership is aimed at contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Agenda, particularly the goals for education (Goal 4) and for fostering peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16).

### 2. Why theatre?

The GRACE seeks to create a culture of rejection of corruption among children and youth by harnessing the transformational power of education and partnerships. By taking into consideration the ways in which this can be done, the GRACE initiative has sought to cater for different learning needs and preferences, and for the various curricular standards and requirements of Member States at their national and subnational levels. GRACE incorporates traditional classroom materials, such as lesson plans, and works with educators to create tools that can be used outside the classroom, such as games (electronic and non-electronic), comic books and tools that can be used in conjunction with the Model United Nations. Theatre is another way of imparting knowledge while stimulating the active engagement of actors and audiences.

### 3. What is Forum Theatre?

Forum Theatre is one of the age-appropriate educational tools that UNODC recommends to secondary school teachers to help them raise awareness of the rule of law, ethics and integrity among their students. Forum Theatre is a theatrical and pedagogical technique created by the Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal. It is one of the methodologies included in a wider systematization of drama technique that Boal called "Theatre of the Oppressed".

The objective of Forum Theatre is to use drama to explore the mechanisms that lead to the violation of human rights in a given context and use the stage as a safe space for enacting and discussing strategies of change and empowering individuals and communities in the search for their own strategies to address the violations they are experiencing.

The key underlying assumptions of Forum Theatre are:

1. **Human beings think with their entire body** and the entire body has to be involved in the search for alternatives to the unresolved conflicts that their communities are experiencing.
2. **Playing together** and using **imagination** are essential ways to de-mechanize the participants from the “automatic” responses that they usually adopt in reaction to violations (avoidance, violent aggression, etc.). Using imagination to resolve a conflict can help manage the situation and can transform a conflict situation into an opportunity for building other relations between human beings in a broader context. Without imagination, it is impossible to break the cycle of social reproduction of injustice and marginalization.
3. The **oppressed** is someone who experiences a conflict with other people, groups or institutions where **the distribution** of intellectual, legal, economic or symbolic **power is unbalanced**. A conflict situation becomes oppressive when those who benefit from an unbalanced distribution of power use their power to violate the rights of those who have less power or prevent them from fulfilling a legitimate aspiration.
4. The oppressed person is not a passive victim who accepts the denial of their rights. **The oppressed is someone who wants to change their situation, but fails**, because of the imbalance of power embedded in historical, legal and economic structures (e.g. traditional gender roles, laws discriminating certain groups, unequal education or economic opportunities for those living in some areas, etc.).
5. One of the reasons why an oppressed person could fail in the fight for their rights is that **they normalize the imbalance of power and the ideological structures of domination of those who have more power in a given context**. As a consequence, the oppressed person sees these structures and practices as normal, unchangeable and even desirable, and actively participates in reproducing them (for example, discriminatory gender roles). In this case, to transform the situation in which a person is in, the oppressed person needs to, first, change themselves and the way they see their situation. Theatre can be a way to accompany this empowerment.
6. The oppressed have a wealth of **embodied knowledge** (acquired through direct and reiterated experience of the mechanisms of oppression) and theatre can be a way to give value to this knowledge and to share it with the community, building individual and collective motivation and inspiration for change.

Forum Theatre is not based on a preconceived idea of change. The facilitator and the actors do not support a “proposed solution” to the rights violation, instead they present a conflict the community is experiencing and ask the audience, “is this situation real for

you?", "did it happen to some of you?", "do you like it?", "who is suffering the most because of the situation?" and "what could this person do to change their situation?".

After collecting the views of the community, the Forum Theatre facilitator invites the audience to try to improve the situation on stage, replacing the oppressed characters and confronting the oppressive characters in the moment of the play when they think change should start. After each intervention, the facilitator discusses with the audience the consequences of the proposed strategy and how it could be applied in real life.

#### 4. Why use Forum Theatre to promote the rule of law in secondary schools?

Forum Theatre is an effective tool through which issues such as crime prevention, corruption and violent extremism can be addressed with secondary school students. In particular, Forum Theatre is a particularly suitable tool for building a culture of rejection of corruption and respect for the rule of law among young people aged between 13 and 18. This is because:

- It is **accessible and inclusive**. Forum Theatre does not require specific theatre training. It is based on non-competitive games and it uses theatrical skills that everyone uses on a daily basis. It can involve communities of different ages and levels of education in an inclusive and participatory dialogue around strategies of behavioural change to address the conflicts the audience is experiencing. Using this process, every voice is heard and respected equally and every idea of change is tested equally on stage, without preconceptions about what idea will work.
- It is **autobiographical**. Forum Theatre does not impose a script written by an author who is not a student and is not experiencing the challenges faced by the students. Forum Theatre constructs a plot based on real-life situations experienced by students, building on the assumption that they are the experts on their lives and that they have a wealth of collective knowledge about how to deal with criminal issues that derive from their own experiences.
- It is **non-judgemental**. Forum Theatre presents problems from the perspective of the students who experience them (e.g., a student in a rural area drops out and migrates to a city, where they become a gang member and end up in prison) and asks questions about how to improve the situation of the most vulnerable. The actors do not try to convince the audience to adopt a certain course of action. Rather, they challenge the audience to find their own solutions and empower the students to become aware of their rights and to claim them through personal and collective behavioural change, when and how they choose. For example, during a Forum Theatre play on bribery, the facilitator can ask the audience to perform how students, parents and teachers could prevent the act of giving a bribe in exchange for a basic service.
- It is **experiential** rather than intellectual. Every proposed course of action is tested on stage, where the oppressors of the most vulnerable character will try all the possible ways to make the proposed strategy fail and to reproduce social structures of exclusion. By doing this, they will motivate the audience (students, teachers and parents) to identify and access all the resources that are available

to them to claim their rights (informal networks of support, contacts, individual empowerment, access to services, etc.).

- It is **fun and creative**. Forum Theatre is based on non-competitive and theoretical games that value the direct experience of students and does not require specific art skills; all it requires is the use of the creativity that every human being has. The Forum Theatre process leads every student to become an artist and a co-creator of their own play. In the interaction with the audience, the students can experience how the community can creatively transform the experiences of corruption and marginalization into opportunities for empowerment and the promotion of their rights.
- It is **participatory, empowering and inclusive**. Forum Theatre leads students and communities to reflect on their own lives. It does not suggest how to solve the crime-related issues that the students are experiencing. It invites them to look for alternatives to the violation of their rights, to test such strategies on stage and to reflect on how such "embodied ideas" of change could be applied in real life.

## 5. Why this Guide?

The purpose of this Guide is to provide a practical handbook that secondary school teachers can use to design and facilitate Forum Theatre workshops and performances dealing with crime, justice and rule of law issues that involve students, teachers and parents in the search for transformative actions and change.

This Guide has two main parts:

- **Part 1** introduces the Forum Theatre process
- **Part 2** describes the techniques used to guide a group of secondary school students in the development and performance of a Forum Theatre play with an external audience

The main tool for addressing crime-related issues presented in this Guide is the development and public presentation of a Forum Theatre play, as described in section 3 of chapter III of this Guide. Chapters II and III outline the preparatory exercises required to develop and present a Forum Theatre play with the on-stage participation of an external audience (the audience could be other students, teachers, parents, community members, etc.).

The exercises presented in this Guide have been customized as much as possible to facilitate a discussion on crime issues with secondary school students. When teachers do not have enough time to prepare a Forum Theatre play based on crime-related issues, they can use some of preparatory exercises detailed in Chapter II and III as stand-alone activities to discuss the topic in a creative and non-judgmental way. However, for some exercises, it is not possible to customize the content and as such, the exercises are presented as preparatory tools for building trust and non-judgment among the students and for stimulating their creativity before developing a Forum Theatre play, in which crime-related issues can be explored in depth.

## **PART 1.**

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# **THE FORUM THEATRE PROCESS**





## 1.1 The Forum Theatre play

A Forum Theatre play has two parts:

1. At the beginning of a Forum Theatre experience, the play is presented. It ends with at least one character (the oppressed) experiencing the violation of their rights or being denied a legitimate desire (or being defeated)
2. After the play is presented, the facilitator invites anyone with an idea of what the oppressed character should do to come on stage. This person can replace the character they think is the most oppressed by the situation and improvise their idea. After each replacement, the facilitator asks the audience what they think about the alternative proposed by the person who replaced a character, in an ongoing dialogue between the audience, the facilitator and the actors.

## 1.2 The facilitator

The Forum Theatre facilitator's role is to facilitate aesthetic and "embodied" dialogue between the actors and the audience (called the "spect-actors"). During the dialogue with the audience, the facilitator adopts a "maieutic" attitude (translation: "the art of the midwife"). That is, similar to Socrates in Plato's dialogues, the facilitator is not "pregnant" with the "solution" to the problem. Only the community is "pregnant" with the responses to its own problems. The facilitator and the actors can help the community, like the midwife, to give birth to responses to the conflict situation, using theatre as a dialogical space for exploring what to do when confronted with a certain problem.

The facilitator **does not take a position** on the alternative ideas proposed by the "spect-actors" but asks them to try their proposed alternatives on stage, confronting the oppressive characters and then reflecting with the audience on that experience. The role of the facilitator is to ensure that the process between the actors and the audience is a **dialogical and non-judgmental search for alternatives to oppression**. In doing so, the facilitator uses their power to guarantee that the process is not dominated by those who benefit from existing power relations within the community (e.g., old versus young, men versus women, educated versus uneducated, etc.).

Forum Theatre is a way for the audience to **imagine** and **embody** change and test their strategies in a safe, playful and non-judgmental environment. The role of the facilitator is to create a symbolic "container" of "embodied ideas of change", where every voice is heard equally, especially the voices of those who are often not heard in a community (children, people with disability, minorities, women, the illiterate, etc.).

## 1.3 Using Forum Theatre with secondary school students

Forum Theatre can be used with secondary school students to work on a wide range of social issues, such as peer violence, crime prevention, corruption, gender-based violence, violent discipline and the prevention of transmittable diseases. This Guide focuses specifically on crime prevention and the promotion of the rule of law, ethics and integrity.

However, the majority of the exercises detailed in the Guide can be used to work with students on other behavioural change issues.

A standard process of conducting behavioural change activities with students using Forum Theatre follows the steps below. The techniques used in each phase of the process are described in chapter III of this Guide.

### › **The preparation**

A facilitator typically starts their work in a school that has been specifically chosen. The crime-related topic of the play could be chosen by the students or the teachers based on issues that are relevant to their school. In most cases, the facilitator invites between 20 and 25 students, teachers and parents who have direct experience of a certain crime-related issue or have heard about a certain issue and want to learn more, to join a 16-to-24-hour workshop.

### › **Designing the agenda<sup>2</sup>**

The following details a practical way to design a Forum Theatre Workshop agenda:

#### › **Phase I: Building the group, breaking the barriers**

- Get the group to play one or two activation games. Make the games easy and playful and include some degree of physical contact to help the students get to know each other
- Get the group to play one or two games using the body, emotions and words to help the students learn each other's names and interests, and to relax
- Carry out some de-mechanization, rhythm and trust exercises

#### › **Phase II: Developing the Forum Theatre play**

- Get the group to do one or two Image Theatre exercises focused on crime-related issues
- Carry out games or exercises that involve improvisation
- Identify autobiographical stories
- Rehearse these stories in small groups
- Build the characters (their will, ideology and biography)
- Explain the Forum Theatre mechanism (the replacement of the oppressed characters) and introduce the maieutic role of the facilitator and the actors

#### › **Phase III: Performing the play with a public audience**

- The facilitator directs the play and facilitates interaction with the audience

#### › **Phase IV: Debriefing and saying goodbye**

- Carry out the character de-rolling exercise with the actors
- Evaluate the Forum Theatre process, including the workshop and the play
- Carry out the evaluation exercise and invite the students to thank each other and say goodbye

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<sup>2</sup> A sample four-day agenda based on the exercises described in this Guide is presented in Annex II.

## › **The participants**

The participants are often students, teachers and parents who have no previous theatre training. When a facilitator send out invites to a play, they emphasize that no previous theatre experience is required and remind the students that they **are all experts on their own lives**, and that it is their lives, especially the most difficult experiences they are facing, that are the most important contribution to the workshop, not their acting skills.

## › **The warm-up**

The workshop starts with the facilitator conducting warm-up games, so that the participants can get to know each other, and exercises of trust, rhythm and theatre improvisation in order to activate the participants' creativity and imagination.

**The identification of stories.** When the group has reached a good level of integration, the facilitator invites the students to divide themselves into groups of six to eight people and share situations of unresolved conflicts related to the rule of law (e.g. corruption, crime, etc.) and situations happening to them or to people that they care about. The stories should not be chosen on the basis of intellectual interest. They should be situations that really **bother the students**; situations in which they feel frustrated, upset and sad because they have not yet found a way to respond. For example, the stories could focus on the experiences of young people who have been involved in criminal activities, presenting the social conditions that influenced their decision-making and showing the consequences for the young people and their environments.

**The development of the play.** The students choose one story per group to act. It could be a story relating to one student or a blend of stories relating to a number of students. The students should make sure that the story is portrayed in a way that seems relevant to their school or community but without it being the specific story of a single student. The play has to present a story that **could happen to any student** in a similar setting.

**The presentation of the play to the audience.** At the end of the workshop, the entire school and parents and the community are invited to a two-hour Forum Theatre play. At the beginning of the play, the facilitator uses a simple warm-up game involving the actors and the audience to prepare them for the participatory phase that will follow. The story is then presented to the audience and ends with at least one character (the oppressed) experiencing a violation of their rights or being denied a legitimate desire (being defeated).

**The participation of the audience.** After the play is presented, the facilitator asks the audience if they think that situation is real and if they have ever been in a similar position to the person or persons in the play that have suffered unfairly. The audience responds with comments on how true the story is to their lives. They could be asked to share their real-life experiences.

Then the facilitator explains the rules of the game: "Now the story will start again. If you see that someone is suffering unfairly because of the situation and is making a mistake that will lead to them suffering again and again, raise your hand and shout "stop". The actors will freeze and we will listen to your idea".

When an audience member stops the play, the facilitator listens to their idea and invites them to **put their idea into practice**. The audience member that speaks up is invited to come on stage and **replace the oppressed character**, confronting the oppressive character(s) with their alternative strategy. The audience observes the changes introduced by the “spect-actor” and discusses the consequences of the alternative strategy. The play continues with the replacement of other characters at different moments of the story. The facilitator ensures that every idea is **performed and discussed equally**, irrespective of how unrealistic, odd or counterproductive it may seem.

**The conclusion.** After many alternatives have been acted on stage, the facilitator concludes the play by highlighting that, “we may not have found the solution to the problem that we have explored, but we have tested (with our bodies, words and emotions) different alternatives and have discussed the consequences of each alternative. Some of these alternatives may work better in certain situations or with certain people. We have used theatre as a laboratory to explore social transformation and we hope that something of what we experienced here can be taken out there, into the classrooms, the homes and the communities where students come from, and be applied, individually or collectively.” The facilitator concludes, “we hope that this play will help us shout “Stop! I want to change this situation!” when we see the same oppression that we witnessed on stage taking place in society.”

**After the play: de-rolling and feedback.** After the audience has left, the facilitator gathers the actors and invites them to take part in a brief “de-rolling” exercise that allows them to get rid of the ideology and desires of their characters (especially the most oppressive ones) and to relax. Then the facilitator invites the actors to share how they felt during the play, what they noticed in the alternative ideas suggested by the audience and how the play could be improved to facilitate similar processes with other audiences. The actors can also discuss follow-up actions, such as other dates and places where the same play could be performed. Finally, the facilitator invites the actors to take part in an evaluation exercise and share with each other their gratitude for the experience they have had, and to say goodbye.

## 1.4 How to use this guide

The remainder of this Guide is a practical handbook that secondary school teachers can use to:

- Design the agenda of a Forum Theatre workshop
- Facilitate the use of theatrical games and exercises and Image Theatre, and use these processes to reflect on crime-related issues
- Identify students’ autobiographical stories that could become part of a Forum Theatre play
- Facilitate interaction with the audience during a play
- Debrief students after a play

## **PART 2.**

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# **THE TECHNIQUES**







## 2.1 Games and exercises

 You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation.  
Plato 

### 2.1.1 Introductions and creating the group

#### › I like you because...

<b>Type:</b>	Introductions, activation
<b>You need:</b>	One (solid) chair per student
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The students sit on chairs in a circle. The facilitator removes one chair from the circle and has a student stand in the centre. The student in the centre says, "I like you because..." or "the wind is blowing for those who..." or "stand up those who..." and adds something that belongs to them, what they like or dislike, etc.

For example, "I like you because... you have glasses, you are blonde, you have black shoes, you are older than thirty", etc. Any student who has the characteristic (has glasses, is blonde, etc.) stands up and moves quickly to sit on the chair of another student who has vacated their chair for the same reason. The student who is standing in the middle also moves quickly to a vacated chair. The student who is left without a chair resumes the game by saying "I like you because..." and uses another feature.

The facilitator can start with general features like "of the colour of your eyes", "you are younger than me", etc. and then gradually introduce crime-related issues. For example: "I like you because you know at least one student who dropped out to join a gang", "I like you because you want to stop forced begging", "I like you because you have at least one friend who was arrested for drug-related crimes" or "I like you because you want to stop drug dealing in the school". This can help the students open up and have some difficult conversations, while at the same time to recognize that many of them are facing the same problems and challenges or share the same commitments.

This exercise helps the students to get to know each other and discover characteristics and preferences that they have in common. It can also be used to energize the group during different stages of the workshop.

#### › Names as...

<b>Type:</b>	Introductions, learning names
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes (depending on the number of students)

The students stand in a circle. The facilitator invites each student to take one step forward and say their name. After a student has introduced themselves, the facilitator explains that as a welcome ritual for that person (to show them that they are really seen and heard), the entire circle should take a step forward and repeat the name of the student in a number of ways. For example: "as if they are telling a secret to someone", "as if we are singing in the opera", "as if we are feeling very hot", "as if we are chickens looking for food", etc.

After doing this a few times, the facilitator asks the group to come up with their own ideas of how to say their names. Anybody can propose an idea. The students should be encouraged to say the first idea that comes into their heads. It is not important that the proposed ideas make sense. On the contrary, it is important that the facilitator invites the students to "switch off their brains" and to suspend any judgement of themselves and what they are about to say. The facilitator takes the ideas and puts them into practice. For example: "like a spinning washing machine", "like Othello in a fit of jealousy", "like a disappointed lion", etc. The crazier the idea the better for creating a positive atmosphere in the group.

Depending on the culture of the students and the crime-related issues the facilitator wants to discuss, the facilitator can add some characters from the experiences of the students, such as a gang leader, a drug dealer, a student who could not prepare for a test because of shootings in their neighbourhood last night, a little boy begging in the streets and so on. In this way the game is moving closer to the students' crime-related stories, which could be eventually shared to develop a Forum Theatre play.

### › Names in circles

<b>Type:</b>	Learning names
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

**First phase:** the students stand in a circle. The facilitator chooses a student (student A) and explains that they will walk towards the centre of the circle pointing to another student (student B). When student A arrives in front of student B, student A takes the place of student B, student B says their name and walks towards another student (student C). When student B arrives in front of student C, student B takes the place of student C, student C says their name and walks towards another student (student D). The exercise continues in this manner, speeding up as it goes, until all the students have been replaced a few times.

This exercise is useful to learn names without doing the usual round of names. If a student chooses, they can walk towards a person whose name they do not remember and have the person repeat it. This phase can also serve as preparation for other (more competitive) games for learning names.

**Second phase:** the facilitator explains that now, when student A reaches student B, student A says student B's name, and that student B can only start walking if the name is

correct. If student A makes a mistake or does not remember student B's name, student B can try to suggest it using non-verbal language (i.e., gestures) until student A remembers.

This phase has the advantage of being fun and not making students anxious, because it does not force them to remember all the other students' names. A student can choose to walk towards a person whose name they do not remember because they know that they will be helped (with gestures) to remember it.

**Alternative scenario:** The students stand in a circle. The facilitator asks them to do a round of saying names (or proposes the names in circles exercise) and then chooses a student to be the first to introduce themselves. This student enters the circle towards the centre, passing through the circle with an outstretched hand going in the direction of another student who they do not know. When they reach this student, they give them their hand and greet them, saying their name (e.g., "hello, I am Helene"). Then she takes the place of the student whom they have greeted. The greeted student then enters the circle with their arms outstretched and goes to greet another student in the circle whom they do not know, giving their hand and saying their name.

### › Name-shooter

Type:	Learning names
You need:	Nothing
Duration:	20 minutes

The facilitator proposes a version of the names in circles exercise to facilitate the memorisation of names. Then the group stands in a circle and the facilitator chooses a student, the name-shooter, to go to the middle of the circle.

The facilitator explains that the name-shooter has two guns in their hands and will shoot someone with them. The name-shooter turns around in a circle, randomly stops and shoots a person, saying "bang!". The student that is "shot" immediately squats down, while the two people either side of them quickly turn towards one another and say the name of the other person as fast as possible. The first one to say the name of the other wins. The other loses and they go to the centre of circle and become the new name-shooter.

### › I'm Ester and I am E...

Type:	Learning names
You need:	Nothing
Duration:	15 minutes

The students stand in a circle. The facilitator asks a student to begin by saying their name and an adjective starting with the same letter as their name, while making a gesture related to the adjective. For example: "I am Ester, and I am Extravagant".

The student to the right of Ester then say their name and adjective and makes their gesture. Then they repeat, in order from the first student to the last, the name, adjective and gesture of each of the students. Next, the student to their right offers their combination of name, adjective and gesture and repeats those of previous students.

This continues until the whole circle has participated. If anyone forgets a name or an adjective, the other students can give hints using gestures. Once everyone has participated, the facilitator can invite the students to repeat the circle but skipping every two or three people at a time.

This is a non-competitive and engaging name-learning game. It associates names with adjectives and gestures that could be used in other exercises during the workshop.

### › **Zombie**

<b>Type:</b>	Learning names
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The students stand in a circle, one metre apart. One student is chosen to be the zombie. This student starts walking with hands raised like zombie towards another student (student A).

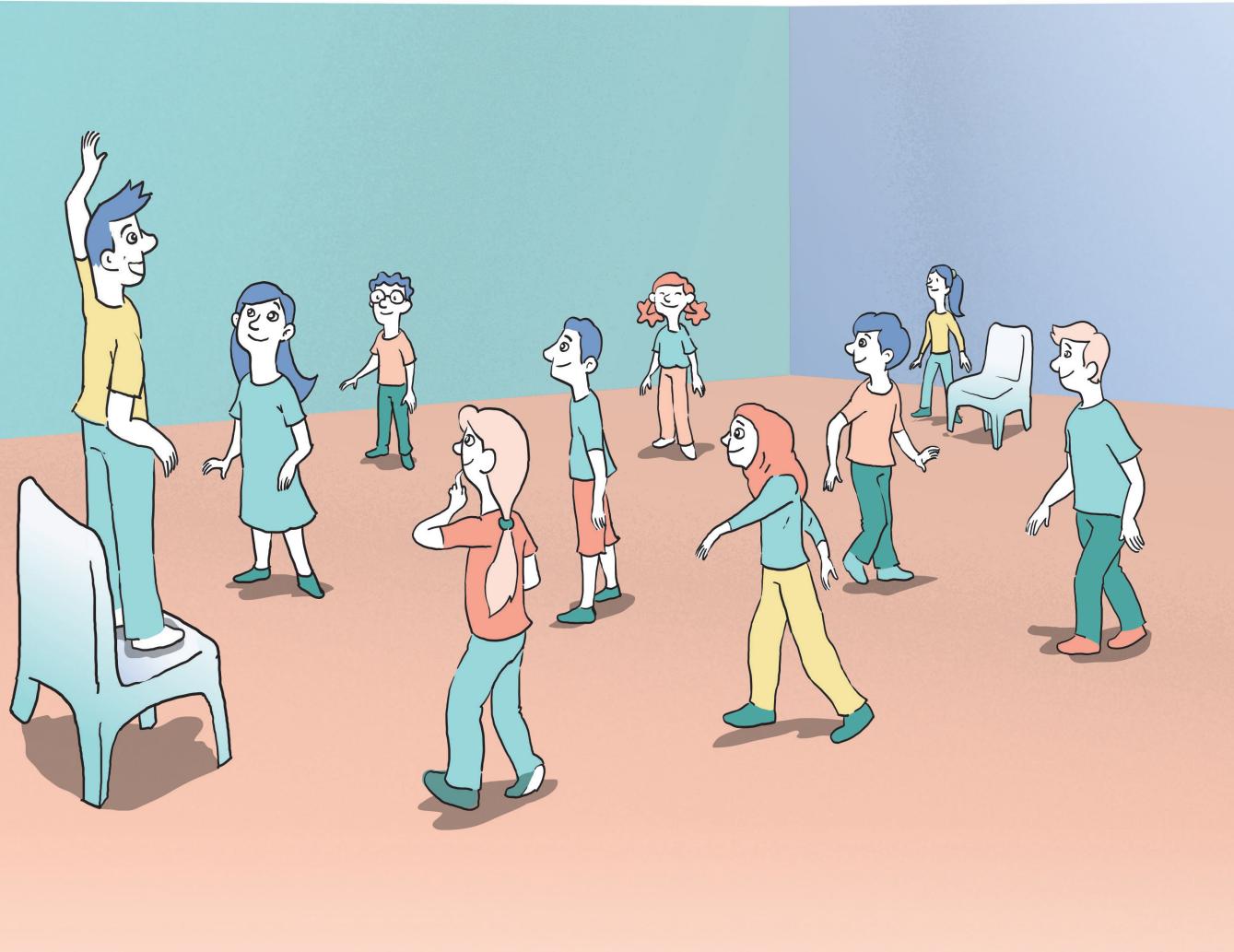
To avoid becoming a zombie, student A must look at another student in the circle (student B), who must say student A's name before the zombie reaches student A. If this happens, student A is saved. If not, the zombie strikes, turning both student A and student B into zombies. Once student B becomes a zombie, they can no longer save other students from becoming zombies (by saying their names) and as a zombie, they must do everything possible to "deceive" the others (e.g., saying the wrong name, pretending to not remember, etc.).

The role of zombie passes from zombie to victim each time a victim is saved as a result of someone saying their name. The zombie cannot change their direction after they have chosen it; if they head towards a zombie, they become a ghost. The game ends when all the students have been turned into zombies or ghosts. This exercise helps the students to remember names and increases concentration.

After the game, the facilitator can ask, "what does this game have to do with crime in real life?". Answers may include, "we have to be very attentive to the eyes of others to understand when they are in danger" or "like in the game, sometimes I'm the only one who can help. When someone is in trouble, we think someone else will help, but sometimes it is only me that can help."

## 2.1.2 Collecting expectations

### › Hyde Park



<b>Type:</b>	Expectations
<b>You need:</b>	Two chairs, two sheets of paper, marker, tape, paper, a pen, slow music
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

The space is confined at either side by a chair. On one chair, the facilitator sticks a sign saying, **“From the workshop I want...”** and on the other chair, they put a sign saying, **“From the workshop I do not want...”**.

The facilitator asks the students to treat the space as if it were a raft in the middle of the ocean. If they all go to one side, the raft will flip over and they will die. To maintain balance, each student must try to fill any empty spaces and move people from areas that are overcrowded (this rule helps students to maintain concentration and encourages them to observe the group as a whole).

The facilitator explains that, when the music begins, the students should start to move around the space. At the same time, they should think about what brought them here today, what their expectations and fears are, and what they expect from the relationships that they will form with the other students.

When a student has an expectation or fear that they want to share with the group, they should stand on one of the chairs and the facilitator will stop the music. The other students will stop and listen and the student standing on the chair will voice their expectation or fear. After listening, the other students will move according to how they feel in relation to the expectation or fear expressed. They will move closer to the chair on which the student is standing if they share the same expectation or fear or will distance themselves from the chair if they do not share that expectation or fear.

The facilitator notes all the expectations and fears expressed by the students and how the group reacts to each one. When each student has found their place, the facilitator starts the music again and the students continue walking and thinking about their expectations and fears until someone again stands on one of the two chairs. The exercise continues in the same manner.

When all or almost all the students have expressed an expectation or fear, the facilitator invites the students to sit in a circle and summarizes their expectations, explaining the objectives of the workshop and highlighting the overlaps and differences between the workshop objectives and the expectations expressed, thus trying to clarify what the students can or cannot expect. At this stage, the students can ask the facilitator questions.

This exercise allows the facilitator to gather the group's expectations of the workshop and their relationships with others. It is very useful for helping the students and the facilitator to understand the expectations and fears of the group and to respond, linking them to the workshop agenda.

### > I want, I don't want

<b>Type:</b>	Expectations
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

The students walk silently around the space, filling the space. The facilitator explains that when someone wants to share with the others what they want or do not want to gain from the workshop, they should stop. When someone stops, everyone else stops as well. Once everyone is frozen, the student who stopped starts to say a sentence beginning with, "**From the workshop I want...**" or "**From the workshop, I don't want...**". The other students then position themselves in relation to the person who spoke, moving closer if they agree with them or moving away if they do not. The facilitator notes what is said and how much each view is shared.

When all or almost all the students have spoken, the facilitator invites the students to stand in a circle and to listen as they quickly recap the expectations that emerged and compare them with the objectives of the workshop. The students can ask questions and formulate any requests that they may have.

## 2.1.3 Activation, conflict and strategy

### › People to People of Quebec

<b>Type:</b>	Creation of the group, de-mechanization
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students are divided into pairs, except for a single student who is asked to stand alone. The pairs distribute themselves throughout the space and the students in the pairs stand opposite one another. The student who is alone loudly names two parts of the body (such as “right ear and left shoulder”). Then all the pairs place the first body part of the first person against the second body part of the second person (e.g., the right ear of one student against the left shoulder of the other) and keep the two parts connected.

Then the single student names two other parts of the body (e.g., the right knee and the forehead), which the two members of each pair must try to put in contact, while also keeping the previously named parts in contact. The single student continues to name new parts of the body until one of the pairs fails to keep all the named parts touching and loses contact. At this point, the pair shouts “people to people!” upon which all the pairs separate and each student (including the one who was alone) runs around the space looking for new partners. One person will not have a new partner and they will become the one who names the parts of the body, and so on.

This game is useful as a means of de-mechanizing the body, rediscovering underused body parts, feeling physical contact, helping students confront the rigidity of others’ bodies and their own, and allowing them to find different strategies to connect the body parts named. It also helps those naming body parts to look at the totality of the body and to de-mechanize their minds by proposing challenging combinations.

A possible variant is to tell the pairs that they cannot speak. Instead they must use non-verbal communication skills while they search for common strategies to connect the named body parts.

### › Two quick games to divide a group into pairs:

- 1. Thumbs-up.** The facilitator asks the students to form a large circle and to extend their right arms in front of them, giving a thumbs-up. At the prompting of the facilitator, the students close their eyes and slowly walk towards the centre of the circle with their arms extended in front of them. Each student tries to hook their thumb over the thumb of another student. When this happens, the pair keep their thumbs locked, open their eyes and remove themselves from the group, finding a place elsewhere in the space.
- 2. The dancing rings.** The facilitator asks the students to arrange themselves in two concentric circles, each containing the same number of people. All the students in the inner circle should face in the same direction (facing the back of the person in front of them) and all the students in the outer circle should face in the opposite direction. The facilitator puts on some cheerful music and the students move or

dance, keeping in their lines and going in a circle, with the inner and outer circle moving in opposite directions (one clockwise, the other one anti-clockwise). When the music stops, the students stop. Those in the inner circle turn to look outward, while those in the outer circle rotate 90 degrees towards the inner circle. The two people facing one another form a pair.

### › Lifeboats



<b>Type:</b>	Activation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students fill the space in silence, walking quickly. The facilitator says, "lifeboats of four" and the students must form groups of four, interlocking their arms and excluding those who would make their number more than four or searching for other people when they are too few.

Then the facilitator says, "go!" and the students let go of one another's hands and again start filling the space silently and quickly. Then the facilitator calls another number, "lifeboats of...", and the students form groups of the number called by the facilitator.

If a group has too many members, they can expel someone. If they have too few, they can go to another group and try to "steal" one or more people from their lifeboat, pulling them out of their current lifeboat.

The facilitator ends the game at the appropriate point. After the game, the facilitator can ask, "what has this game got to do with real life?" and the students can share their experiences related to coordination, protecting each other, etc.

## › Mosquitoes

<b>Type:</b>	Activation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The facilitator chooses two, three or four students to act as mosquitoes. The other students are prey. The mosquitoes and the prey distribute themselves in the space. The goal for the mosquitoes is to touch and paralyse all of the prey, while the prey must try to prevent the entire group being paralyzed by the mosquitos.

Anyone who is touched freezes, standing with their arms in a circle in front of them as if they were embracing someone. To free a frozen person, one of the prey must enter the frozen student's encircled arms and give them a kiss on the cheek. The frozen student then unfreezes and starts running again. If the mosquitos manage to paralyse the entire group, they win; otherwise the prey wins.

**Variant** (in which the students are mosquitos and prey at the same time): the students fill the space, walking around it. At the prompting of the facilitator, each student must try to reach out and touch another person and then another, and so on. A person who is touched for the first time can continue to run but has to keep one arm behind their back and touch the others only with their other arm.

When someone is touched for a second time, they freeze on the spot and holds their arms in front of them to form a circle. Any person who is still free to run can free a frozen student by entering the circle formed by their arms and kissing them on the cheek. At this point, the frozen person will start to run again and can touch others with both arms. The goal is to avoid all of the group becoming paralysed.

**Variant** (more physical, with no kiss): this is a more physically demanding variant. In this variant, a person who is touched a second time must freeze and, instead of making a circle with their arms in front of them, they spread their legs apart. If another student wants to free them, they have to crawl between their legs and come out on the other side, all while trying to avoid being touched by other students.

This is a very active and tiring game, so the facilitator must carefully monitor the energy of the group and stop the game before the students get too tired.

After the game, the facilitator can ask the students about the strategies of resistance that they adopted to avoid the mosquitoes (e.g., liberating others rather than trying to individually avoid the mosquitoes) and how these strategies could teach the group about how to resist as a group in real life when they are confronted with issues such as migrant smuggling, drug dealing, forced marriage or forced recruitment of young people to radical groups.

### › Bomb, shield and talisman

<b>Type:</b>	Activation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	5 minutes

The students stand in circle, close to each other. The facilitator asks each student to identify one person in the group, without telling them. This person is Person Number One. Then the facilitator asks each student to each identify another person, again without letting them know. This person is Person Number Two. Finally, the facilitator asks each student to identify a third person, Person Number Three.

Next the facilitator explains: "your Person Number One is, for you, a bomb that could explode at any moment. So, when I say, "go" you will try to stay as far away from that person as possible. Your Person Number Two is your shield: the only one who can protect you from the explosion of the bomb. You will try at all costs to keep your shield between you and your bomb. Your Person Number Three is your talisman. When the bomb explodes, you want to be as close as possible to your talisman and they will protect you from the bomb."

The facilitator starts the game abruptly, saying: "now, try to stay away from your bomb, close to your talisman and keep the shield between you and the bomb! Ready, go!". The students quickly move around the space, trying to fulfil the three conditions. The facilitator urges them: "where is your bomb? Stay away from them! Where is your talisman?! Stay close to them!".

After about a minute, the facilitator announces that "in 30 seconds the bomb will explode and kill all those who are not safely with their talisman!". The facilitator starts a countdown as the movement of the group becomes increasingly faster. At the end of the countdown, the facilitator shouts "Boom!" and the group freezes. At this point, the facilitator asks the students where their bomb, shield and talisman are, in order to try and understand who has managed to be safe.

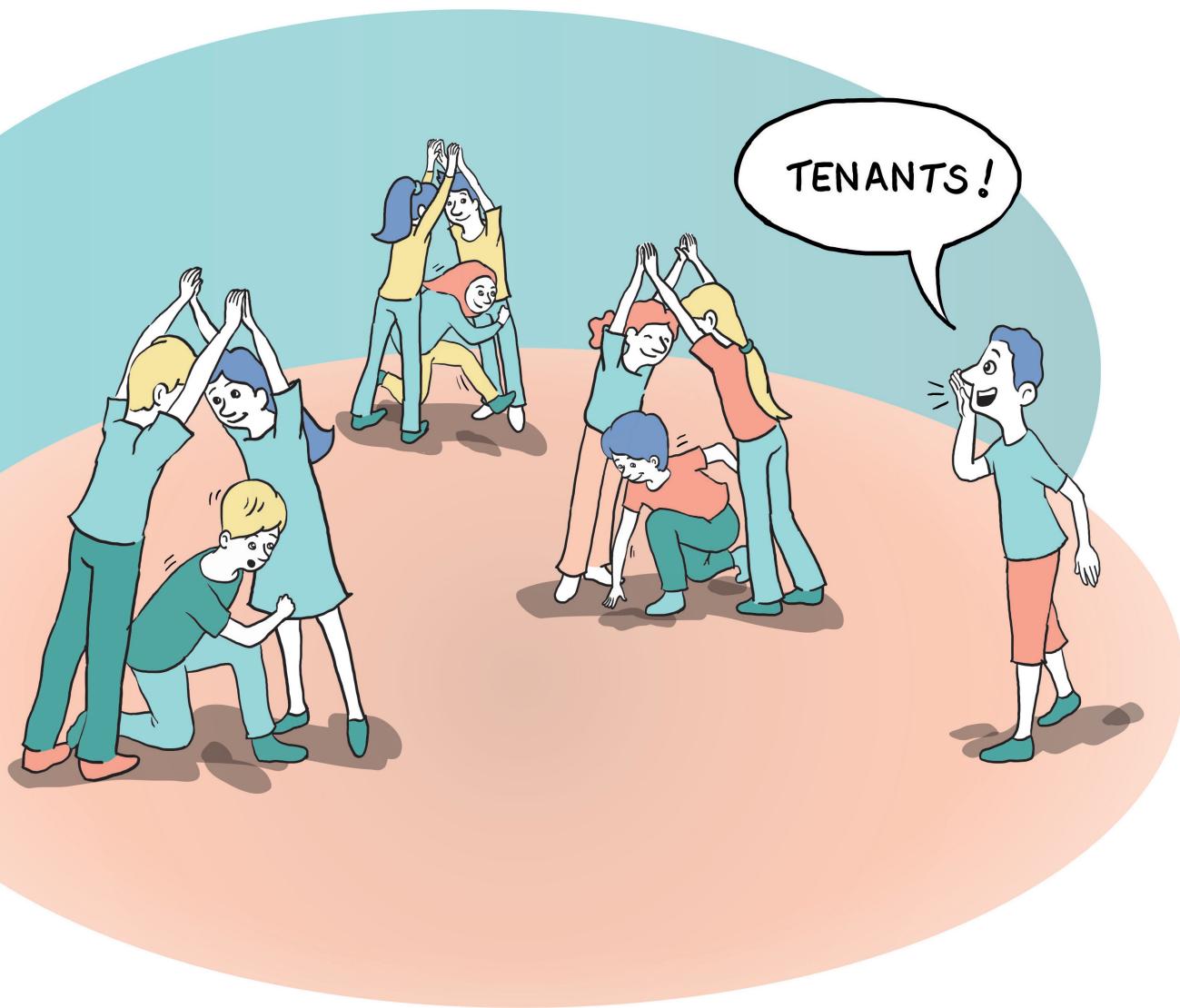
The initial explanation needs to be quick to give a sense of urgency and imminent danger. This is a quick game to activate the group after a pause and should not take more than five minutes, including the instructions.

At the end, the facilitator can ask the students who is a bomb, shield or talisman in their life. For example, depending on the social context, the facilitator could ask: "if I'm a young migrant coming from a rural area and I arrive in the capital city, who is a bomb for me? Who

is the shield I should put between me and my bomb? And who could be my talisman?. If I'm a girl who is being forced by my family to marry someone, who would be my shield? And my talisman? And if I'm an adolescent who is about to join a gang?".

The facilitator can use the game to start a conversation with the students about how they can protect themselves from becoming victims of criminal activities.

### › Houses and tenants



<b>Type:</b>	Activation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The facilitator asks the students to form groups of four, with one student left on their own (student A). The groups distribute themselves throughout the space.

Each group is a house with a tenant. One person is the right wall, the other the left wall, the third the tenant and the fourth is the chair on which the tenant sits. The chair squats and the tenant sits on their knees. The left and right walls positions themselves on either side of the tenant, facing each other with their arms raised in front of them and their hands touching to form a roof above the tenant and chair.

Student A, who is not part of the houses, walks through the “village” and call outs one or more parts of the houses (e.g., “right walls”, “tenants”). The people who are called leave their houses and run around the space, trying to find another house in which they can take the same role. After calling a part of the house, student A also runs around and tries to take a place in a house, so that a new person (student B) is left without a place in a house. After everyone has taken their place in the houses, student B calls another part of the house and runs to find a place, leaving someone else without a place, and so on.

The students decide to confuse the situation completely by calling “Earthquake!”. At this point, everyone must leave their houses and run around trying to find new houses and new roles (e.g., tenants could try to become walls or chairs, etc.).

This is a simple non-competitive game that is very useful for starting a workshop with a new group. It creates an atmosphere of fun and lowers barriers, and introduces the world of theatre to people who are not theatre practitioners. It is not particularly embarrassing, involves limited physical contact and can be played by different age groups and across different cultures.

### › The silly seal

<b>Type:</b>	Activation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students stand in a row along a wall with their sides against the wall. The facilitator explains that they are all “silly seals”. They must walk with stiff legs, toes outward, elbows against their bodies and with forearms that move convulsively by the sides of their bodies. One student stands at the other end of the room and is the seal hunter.

When the facilitator says start, all the silly seals advance, walking with stiff legs and toes outward. They can advance or move laterally, but they cannot go backwards. The seal hunter advances with the same movements and tries to tap as many students as possible (keeping their elbows against their body and moving just their forearms to touch the others) before they pass them and reach the other side of the room. Seals that are tapped become hunters in the next round, joining the first hunter. The last remaining seal wins the game.

### › Sisters

<b>Type:</b>	Activation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students fill the space while walking around it. One student begins to tell a story using words that start with the sound “sist” (system, cystic, etc.).

When they use the word “sisters”, the other students must quickly look for a partner. Each newly formed pair finds a position in which one of the two is completely detached from the ground (e.g., carried by the other person, on the other person’s shoulders, sitting on the other person’s knees or standing on the other person’s feet). The student who says, “sisters” also tries to find a pair. The person who does not find a partner then becomes the storyteller, again using words starting with “sist” and the game continues. The game is repeated for a few rounds.

At the end of the game, the facilitator can ask how this game relates to real life. Possible answers include finding creative ways to have one person lifted from the ground.

### › **Samurai**

<b>Type:</b>	Activation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students stand in a circle facing inward. The facilitator explains that they are now being transported by a time machine that is taking them to Japan and transforming them into samurais. The group now being to exchange samurai “blows”. The facilitator starts miming a blow of a sword to the feet of the person to their right. While making the blow, they shout like a samurai.

The person who receives the blow passes it along to the person on their right, repeating the same action and sound. The blow is passed along around the circle. When the blow returns to the facilitator, they add another level of complexity to the game by introducing another action and sound. Here the facilitator can draw from ideas gained from the students. To accompany the new action, the facilitator can add a new instruction on how the student receiving the action should respond. Here are a few examples:

- When a student receives a blow, they can decide either to pass the same blow to their right or to break the sword over their raised knee, while making an accompanying sound. This action reverses the flow of the blow. So instead of the person to the right continuing with the blow, the person to the left gives a blow to their left.
- When a samurai receives a blow, they make a gesture as if they are deeply absorbed in meditation (again with an accompanying sound). This causes the blow to skip one student in the direction the circle is moving. The blow then continues being passed along as before.
- The samurai who receives the blow pretends to throw an arrow to someone across the circle. The person receiving the arrow must do a dramatic gesture and continue passing the blow to the person on their right.
- The samurai receiving a blow mimes a ritual suicide that causes all the students to change their position within the circle.

When someone makes a mistake, the facilitator explains that Forum Theatre started from mistakes that were made in other theatre techniques, that mistakes can lead to new discoveries and that mistakes can be the entry point for imagination and transformation, so we all need to be attentive to opportunities created by mistakes and to celebrate when a mistake is made.

Therefore, when someone makes a mistake, the facilitator invites the students to celebrate it by raising their hands over the head and shaking them in the direction of the person who made the mistake, making a sound of celebration together. When a person is celebrated for having made a mistake, they will leave the circle, walk to the centre and theatrically pass out making any sound they want. This student remains on the floor until another person makes a mistake and is celebrated by the group. At this point, the new person goes to the centre and passes out and the other person is “resuscitated” and resumes their position in the circle.

To make the game more difficult and increase the number of mistakes, the facilitator can invite the person who “passes out” in the centre of the circle to try to distract the other students. This must be done using sounds or movement, but without touching the other students. For example, the person could yell “kaboom!” or “ha!” and move around on the floor to try to distract the other students and be “resuscitated” as soon as possible.

### › Cat and mouse

<b>Type:</b>	Activation, names, de-mechanization
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

**First phase (activation):** all but two of the students are divided into pairs and are positioned within the workshop space. The pairs should stand side by side with arms interlinked. The two free standing students are the “cat” and the “mouse” for the game.

At the start of the game, the cat tries to catch the mouse, who tries to escape by running around the workshop space. If the cat touches the mouse their roles reverse and the new cat (the former mouse) chases the new mouse.

When the mouse is tired of running, they can switch roles by joining one of the pairs. The person must link arms with one of the students in a pair and then the person on the other side of the pair detaches from the group and become the mouse. They become the new mouse that is chased by the cat.

**Second phase (de-mechanization):** the facilitator explains that when the mouse chooses to switch roles by joining a pair, the person who detaches now becomes the cat. With this, the former cat become the new mouse who is chased by the new cat.

## 2.1.4 Rhythm, coordination, de-mechanization

### › 1-2-3, gesture!

<b>Type:</b>	De-mechanization, rhythm
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	5 minutes

The students are divided in pairs and are assigned the letters A and B. The students count together from one to three, alternating who calls out the next number.

The game plays out as follows: student A shouts “one” and student B responds by calling out “two”. Then student A shouts “three”. At this point, student B starts again from “one” and the sequence repeats again. With each repeated sequence the pace of counting must progressively increase.

The facilitator asks for the number “one” to be replaced by a gesture: the students can either choose their own gesture or the facilitator can suggest one (e.g., a clap). The counting sequence is then repeated by the pairs with the addition of the gesture in place of when “one” would have been counted. Then the facilitator asks the students to replace the number “two” with another gesture and to repeat the counting sequence using the two gestures. The last number is then also replaced with a gesture and incorporated into the sequence.

Once the final “three gesture” sequence has been repeated a few times, the facilitator invites the students to use their gestures to tell a short story. The story plays out as an “action-reaction” or “question-answer” scene that must be coherent (i.e., plays out in a “story line” that can be followed). At the end, the facilitator can ask if some of the pairs want to showcase their story to the rest of the group.

### › Circle of beats

<b>Type:</b>	Rhythm
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing (rhythmic music optional)
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students stand in a circle and perform a series of clapping actions. The first clapping action involves each student clapping their hands once in front of their chest and then opening up their arms and simultaneously clapping the hand of the person to their left and right.

The group repeats this pattern until they have established a uniform rhythm. The facilitator then asks the group to count loudly as they open up their arms to clap with the people next to them (not when they clap in front of their chest).

Next the facilitator adds another level of complexity by asking the students to alternate their actions with the following sequence: every time they have counted down ten beats (e.g., when they reach a count of 10, 20, 30, etc.), they should:

1. Clap in front of the chest
2. Clap while raising one leg and clap below their knee
3. Clap again in front of their chest
4. Clap with their two neighbours, opening up their arms described as above

The group continues counting at the same tempo and inserts the sequence. The facilitator can mix things up by proposing an alternative sequence or by changing the interval at which it is inserted into the clapping action (e.g., when they count 7, 14, 21, etc.).

Once the group has become familiar with the sequence, the facilitator can play rhythmic music and ask the students to continue with the activity while keeping in sync with the pace of the music (especially with the lower part of the body).

### › Rhythmic machine

<b>Type:</b>	Rhythm
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

#### Generic machine

The students stand in a circle. The facilitator asks for a student to step into the centre of the circle and proposes a gesture and a rhythmic sound. The gesture and sound should be easy to repeat and perform sustainably over time.

The facilitator then invites the other students to join in by proposing their own gestures and sounds that relate to or slot in with those of the first student. The students can then start to join in, but should do so without making physical contact with each other. The actions and sounds of the students work together like the gears of a "rhythmic machine".

At this point, the facilitator asks the person who entered the circle first to gradually slow down the pace of the "rhythmic machine". The facilitator can accentuate this request by slowly saying "gra-du-al-ly sl-ow do-wn".

The change in speed is then gradually transferred to the entire group, mimicking a mechanical gear slowing down or a steam engine gradually losing speed. Once the machine has almost stopped, the facilitator asks the same person to gradually accelerate the "rhythmic machine" saying "gra-du-al-ly, ac-ce-le-ra-te".

The machine continues to move until the maximum possible speed is reached, almost to the point of the machine "exploding". At this point, the facilitator asks for the machine to again gradually slow down to the point of almost stopping.

#### Thematic machine

After experiencing the generic machine, the facilitator asks the students to propose a sentence or sound and a gesture in line with a specific theme or issue provided by the facilitator (or requested by the students). These themes can include those such as love,

hate, masculinity, drug trafficking, extortion, school dropout, gang violence, justice system and juvenile justice.

The facilitator can also propose a rhythm machine relating to:

- **A social phenomenon:** the machine of bullying at school, forced marriage, recruitment to a gang or radical group, drug dealing, corruption, etc.
- **A feeling or emotion:** the machine of vengeance, hypocrisy, anger, selfishness, reconciliation, etc.
- **A condition:** the machine of being a male student, a female student, a student from the poorest neighbourhoods, a smuggled migrant, a corrupt policeman, a member of an extremist group, etc.

The process of assembling the machine and altering its tempo progresses as outlined above.

#### Keyboard machine:

While the thematic machine is in flow, the facilitator can identify gestures and phrases that they feel are particularly significant to exploring a certain theme. The facilitator then asks the machine to stop and systematically turns on parts of the machine again by touching the respective students.

When the facilitator “switches” on a student (by touching them), the student starts their gesture and phrase. If they are touched a second time they are “switched off”. The facilitator can “switch on” several of the students in sequence and can play around with which students are “on” or “off”. By doing this, the other students can see and hear gestures and phrases in isolation and in combinations.

Once the group has done this exercise with several of the thematic machines, the facilitator can guide the students in a short debriefing session. During this session, the students are invited to share their thoughts on and experiences of the different aspects of the machines.

The facilitator can ask the students if they found it useful to explore the different themes through the use of their bodies and sound. Example comments could include:

- “there were few gestures proposed for the machine of love and a lot for the one for hate”
- “in the machine of corruption, we only represented the act of asking for a bribe and we did not present the act of offering bribes, which is also happening lot”
- “the machine on youth showed that young people were on their own and not interconnected”
- “the gang machine emphasized a strong connection between gang members and the people of the neighbourhood, while the police machine did not show any interaction with the people living here”

## › Ninja clap

<b>Type:</b>	Activation, rhythm and theatre improvisation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students stand in a circle. The facilitator asks the students to stretch out their arms to their sides, so they are touching the fingertips of their neighbours, thus widening the circle.

The facilitator explains that they have an “energy ball” in their hands and can throw it to another person of their choice. The student who receives the ball must imitate receiving the ball, clapping their hands once with a gesture of excruciating pain.

As the blow of the “energy ball” is received, it is immediately thrown to another student with an aggressive gesture and terrifying battle cry (worthy of a ninja). After a few throws, the facilitator may ask for the ball to be thrown with a certain mood. For example: with a feeling of immense love, cold or boredom, or in the manner of a gang member or a corrupt politician. Abruptly the facilitator asks the students to start throwing the ball again with an aggressive attitude.

## › The Colombian hypnosis

<b>Type:</b>	De-mechanization, trust, power relations
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic and rhythmic music
<b>Duration:</b>	30 minutes

The facilitator invites the students to divide into pairs. Student A is the hypnotist and student B is the hypnotized.

First phase: the hypnotist guides the hypnotized by using the palm of their hand, which should be placed about ten centimetres in front of the face of the hypnotized. When the facilitator starts the music, the hypnotist will lead the hypnotized into the space and, without making sudden movements, experiment with different positions of the body and different fluid movements.

The facilitator invites the hypnotizers to start with slow and fluid movements to allow the hypnotized to follow the hand. Eventually the hypnotizer can try more rapid gestures and more uncomfortable postures, but always making sure that the hypnotized can follow the hand. After three to four minutes, the facilitator reduces the volume of the music and says, “change!”. Students A and B swap roles without speaking and without losing the concentration of the exercise.

Second phase: the facilitator invites the students to form groups of three. Student A is the hypnotist and guides students B and C at the same time using both hands.

Third phase: the students return to their pairs and both students hypnotize each other. There is no longer someone who leads and someone who is led. They both follow and propose fluid movements.

Fourth phase: the facilitator invites the students to form groups of five. There is a hypnotist and four hypnotized students. The hypnotist guides the hypnotized using their hands and their knees. This phase highlights the hypnotizer's awareness of their whole body. The facilitator invites the hypnotizer to make very fluid gestures to make sure all four hypnotized students can follow them.

Fifth phase: all the students return to the circle. A volunteer hypnotist goes in the middle and each student is hypnotized by different part of the hypnotist's body. The facilitator starts the music, the hypnotist begins to move very slowly and the whole group follows them. The hypnotized students keep their faces ten centimetres from the part of the hypnotist's body that they have been allocated.

At the end of the exercise, the students sit in a circle and the facilitator invites the students to share how they felt during the exercise.

Questions the facilitator can ask include:

- How was the experience? How did you feel?
- Did you experience any difficulties? Any discoveries?
- Did you prefer to be the hypnotizer or be hypnotized?
- In which real situations do you feel someone has a similar power over someone else and how do you feel this power is being used?

This is an exercise that focuses on the perception of leading and being led. It can be useful to theatrically explore the dynamics of power and our responsibility towards others when we have power.

### › Straight space, curved space

<b>Type:</b>	De-mechanization
<b>You need:</b>	Masking tape or chalk
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

Before starting, the facilitator divides the space in two parts using masking tape or by using chalk to draw a line.

The students take up positions in the space. The facilitator asks the students to move around the space by walking only with "straight" movements, keeping their body rigid and turning only at right angles, walking slowly or quickly, but always following straight lines. After a few minutes, the facilitator stops the students and asks them to fill the space only with curved movements, following circular trajectories with their entire body.

After a few minutes of practice, the facilitator explains that now half of the space is straight and the other half is curved, and the line on the ground is the border between the two spaces.

The students start walking again, moving in a straight or a curved manner, depending on the area of the space that they are in. When they cross the border between the two spaces, they change abruptly from straight to curved movements and vice versa.

The students are free to spend more time in one space or the other and to feel what happens in their bodies when they move from one space to the other. The facilitator observes how the students are experiencing the exercise. When they think that the students have experienced enough of the two spaces, they stop the exercise.

After the exercise, the facilitator invites the students to sit in a circle and share how they felt during the exercise. Questions the facilitator can ask include:

- How was the experience? How did you feel?
- Did you experience any difficulties? Any discoveries?
- Did you prefer one area over another?
- Do you choose to spend more time in one area or another?
- How did you feel in the two areas?
- Did you experience physical contact? How did you feel about the thought of it and its occurrence?

### › Stop, go, name, jump, arms, legs

<b>Type:</b>	De-mechanization
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The facilitator asks the students to fill the space, trying not to leave any empty areas, moving around it quickly and silently. When the facilitator says, "stop", the students freeze. When the facilitator says, "go" they continue walking.

After practicing this a few times, the facilitator explains that now when they say, "stop", the students should go and when they say, "go", they should freeze. After practicing this a few times, the facilitator explains that now when they say, "ground", the students should jump, and when they say, "jump", they should bow down and touch the ground.

After doing this for a little while, the facilitator explains that now when they say, "name", the students should whisper their name and when they say, "whisper", they should shout their name.

Finally, when the facilitator says, "head", the students should touch their bottom, and when they say, "bottom", they should touch their head.

## › Hercules and Antaeus

<b>Type:</b>	Activation (on conflict and strategies)
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	30 minutes

The facilitator explains that one of the 12 labours of Hercules was to kill the giant Antaeus, who was the son of Gaia, the Mother of Life. Antaeus was invincible until he left a part of his body in contact with the energy of his mother. The facilitator chooses two strong students and explains that these two students are Hercules and the rest of the group are Antaeus.

When the facilitator says start, the two Hercules try to catch the students that are Antaeus and lift them completely off the ground. The students that are Antaeus try to avoid being caught and maintain contact with the ground with at least one part of their body. When a student that is Antaeus is lifted completely off the ground, they becomes part of the Hercules group and try to catch members of the Antaeus group. The last remaining member of the Antaeus group is the winner.

Observation: the members of the Antaeus group tend to flee in a disorderly manner, especially at the beginning of the game, allowing the Hercules group (who often strategize and coordinate to selectively attack lighter students) to gradually acquire more and more strength. The Hercules group easily lift the lighter students, one after the other.

At the beginning of the game, the theoretical strength of the Antaeus group is greater, but the instruction given by the facilitator to avoid being caught and the speed of the explanation (the facilitator should not allow for the Antaeus group to coordinate before the game starts) often leads the Antaeus group not to resist in a coordinated way and by doing so, they become easy prey of and organized and aggressive minority (the Hercules group), which becomes more and more powerful, gaining strength from the tendency of the Antaeus group to flee instead of fighting (in most cases, at the beginning of the exercise the Antaeus group is composed of more than ten students and the Hercules group of two students).

The members of the Antaeus group are "mechanized" to seek individual salvation and rarely think about coordinating resistance or even attacking the Hercules group (who would be rapidly defeated). At the beginning of the game, the Hercules group is very weak but gains strength whenever it catches someone. The Antaeus group has the option of coordinating and protecting each other, making it very difficult for the Hercules group to lift them, or even to capture the Hercules group and lift them, but they very rarely do this.

At the end of the game, the facilitator gives a quick talk on the strategies of resistance and escape used by the Antaeus group (if any), and the ones of attack used by the Hercules group. They also discuss the benefits of cooperation for the oppressed and the effectiveness of fear and the "divide and rule strategy" for the oppressors.

This reviewing technique lends itself to the realization of how a minority of determined and coordinated oppressors can dominate an overwhelming majority of people that are mechanized to seek protection by fleeing in a disorganized way and to not consider active resistance or counter-attack (to engage the Hercules group).

The facilitator may ask the Antaeus students how they felt when they were lifted and became Hercules: did they feel remorse or pleasure when they switched from oppressed to oppressor. This could lead to a reflection on situations in which victims of oppression become employees of their oppressors, drawing benefits and taking vengeance on others who have suffered at the hands of their oppressors.

## 2.1.5 Awareness, listening and observation

### › The jellyfish

<b>Type:</b>	Awareness, de-mechanization
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic music
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The students are divided into pairs and invited to spread out in the space. The students should decide which ones of them is student A and which one is student B.

When the facilitator starts the music, the body of student A becomes like a jellyfish in the sea. Student B touches the jellyfish on a part of its body and the jellyfish responds with elastic and slow movements, like those of a real jellyfish, as if they are in the water being driven by marine currents. The jellyfish slowly returns to its initial position. Then student B touches another part of the body of the jellyfish, who reacts in the same way as before.

When the facilitator says, "change", students A and B swap roles without speaking until the end of the exercise.

### › Blind kittens (the sounds of the forest)

<b>Type:</b>	Sensitization
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

The students are divided into pairs and are invited to spread out in the space, maintaining a distance from each other. The pairs decide who is student A and who is student B. Student A is the mother cat and student B is the blind kitten.

Student A whispers a sound code in the ear of student B. The sound code should be easy to repeat. Student B learns and repeats the code to student A to make sure that they both know the code. Once the code has been memorized, student B closes their eyes and student A keeps theirs open.

When the facilitator say start, student A starts walking slowly in the space, uttering the sound code and telling student B to follow them with their eyes closed. Student B follows the call with closed eyes, keeping a certain distance from student A. If student A is losing student B, student A approaches student B. If student B is following easily, student A can

choose to move further away and call student B from a greater distance or to rapidly move away and call student B from an unexpected point.

All the sound codes will overlap because the pairs will fill the space at the same time. Therefore, it is essential that student A can easily repeat the code and that student B can easily recognize it.

The facilitator becomes a hawk. They walk in the space, learning some of the sound codes and trying to "steal" kittens from their mothers by repeating the sound. At this point, the mother cats try to replicate the sound code as precisely as possible to protect and keep their kittens.

After about five minutes, the facilitator says, "change" and the pairs reverse their roles. Student B teach a new sound code to student A.

### › The facial image

<b>Type:</b>	Sensitization
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic music
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The students spread out in the space. The facilitator explains that when they start the music, the students should slowly fill the space, walking with eyes closed, without speaking and keeping their hands in front of them. They should try to meet someone.

When a student encounters another student, they create a pair and start touching each other's faces without speaking and with eyes closed. They both try to translate what they are feeling with their hands into an image of the face of the other student (nobody knows who the other is). They try to imagine the outline of the face and its parts, creating a mental image of the face based on tactile sensations. Each student can also touch the head of the other.

After a few minutes, the facilitator turns down the music and gently asks the students to open their eyes and look at the face they have been touching and to compare the mental image that have built with the image they see before them, without speaking. After a few minutes, the facilitator invites the pairs to thank each other for the experience, either non-verbally or verbally, or in both ways.

After the exercise, the facilitator leads a short debriefing session in which they ask the students how they felt during the exercise. The facilitator can also ask the students what were the main differences between the mental image they built by touching and the image they saw after opening their eyes.

### › The bear of Poitiers

<b>Type:</b>	Sensitization
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	30 minutes

The students stand in a circle. The facilitator explains that fearsome bears live in the forests of Poitiers, a city in the western France. The forest rangers that work in the forests know that the bears do not eat animals that they have not killed themselves. When the forest rangers are in the woods and hear the sound of a hungry bear approaching, to avoid being eaten, they fall on the ground and pretend to be dead.

The facilitator asks the students to choose a person to be the hungry bear of Poitiers. All the others are forest rangers. The facilitator asks the student who is the bear to leave the room and the forest rangers to fill the space in silence, moving as if they were cutting trees and transporting wood.

At the facilitator's signal, the bear emits a scary roar, announcing its arrival in the space. The forest rangers quickly drop to the ground and pretend to be dead. The bear enters the space and tries to force the forest rangers to reveal that they are actually alive. The bear cannot use physical violence, but they can use any other strategy (making people laugh, whispering or yelling in their ear, making jokes, improvising comic scenes, etc.). If a forest ranger reveals themselves to be alive, they become another bear and try to make the remaining forest rangers reveal that they are alive.

The facilitator can act as referee to decide who has revealed that they are alive, if needed. The last remaining forest ranger is the winner of the game.

After the exercise, the facilitator asks the students to sit in a circle and share how they felt. For example, if they felt fear when surrounded by bears. The facilitator can highlight that when you try to block one sense and detach yourself from the outside world, the other senses become heightened.

**Variant:** when the bear has captured its first forest ranger, both go out of the space and agree on a joint strategy to target someone they want to capture. Then they both emit a scary roar and return to the space and try to implement their strategy. If they manage to capture the third bear, the three bears go out of the space and discuss a new strategy and target, then roar together and come back to the space, and so on.

### › Push-pull each other

<b>Type:</b>	Listening, sensitization
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic and dance music
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students pair up and spread around the space. The facilitator asks each student to put their palms against with the palms of their partner, with their fingers pointing towards the ceiling.

The facilitator asks the students to push against the palms of their partner with as much strength as they can, but without prevailing over the other. When a student feels that their partner is getting weak, they reduce their strength so as to not overpower them. They still try to use the full force of which they are capable, but reducing it when they are about to prevail over the other.

After about a minute, the facilitator asks the students to relax and to hold the wrists of their partner and to pull as strongly as they can, but without prevailing over the other. After about a minute, the facilitator asks the students to relax and to place themselves back to back and to push as powerfully as they can with their legs, again without prevailing over the other.

After about a minute of pushing back to back, the facilitator starts the melodic music and asks the students to move around slowly, following the music, while always maintaining contact with their partner, from the neck to the lower back.

The facilitator can change the music and play more rhythmic or dance music. The students should continue moving and follow the rhythm while remaining back to back.

This exercise represents the maieutic role of the facilitator and the actors towards the audience during a Forum Theatre play. The role of the facilitator and the actors (especially the most oppressive ones) is to push the search for alternatives as far as possible, but not to prevail over the "spect-actors" using the imbalanced power they have, because this would destroy all motivation to change and all desires for transformation in the audience.

If this exercise is proposed before a Forum Theatre performance, the facilitator can use it to explain how the facilitator and the actors can work together to be maieutic towards the audience (the "spect-actors").

### › Count to...

<b>Type:</b>	Non-verbal listening
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

First phase: The students stand in a circle. The facilitator explains that the objective of the game is to try to count from one to a specific number (the number should be at least that of the students in the group).

Every student can count once, but not count twice in a row. The students are not allowed to establish any order or to choose one person who indicates who is next to count. The group should seek to achieve their common goal simply through listening. If two people count together, the group restarts counting from one.

Second phase: when the group is able to reach the number established by the facilitator, the facilitator asks the group to join hands, close their eyes and try to count again, up to the same number.

At the end of the exercise, the facilitator leads a brief debriefing session, asking the students if they were able to listen to each other and feel the entire group during the exercise, and if it was easier to reach the target with their eyes open or closed.

## › Roots and wind

<b>Type:</b>	Sensitization
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The students fill the space and stay in motion. When the facilitator says, "stop", the students pair up with the person closest to them. One person is the roots and the other is the wind. The roots remain still with closed eyes and the winds move around, visiting various roots and simulating wind without speaking, blowing on the faces of the roots, gently touching their head, etc.

Then the facilitator chooses different winds to become animals of the woods and asks them to interact with the roots as these animals (e.g., as birds, monkeys or butterflies). Again, the winds imitate these animals, without speaking, by touching the roots, making noises, etc. After five minutes, the facilitator asks the pairs to change roles, without speaking.

### 2.1.6 Trust

## › Ladies of the Sun King

<b>Type:</b>	Trust, activation, theatrical improvisation
<b>You need:</b>	Baroque or waltz music
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The facilitator assigns each student a number: one, two or three, and explains that, when the music starts, they should walk in the space with the attitude and allure of a French noble lady at the court of the Sun King, Louis XIV. All the ladies were invited to a dance at Versailles and they are now in the hall of mirrors.

When the facilitator starts the music, the students become noble ladies at the court of the Sun King and move silently in the space with fake smiles on their faces, with their left hands holding imaginary handkerchiefs and with their right hands on their waists. When two ladies meet, they greet each other with a reverence worthy of their rank and exchange fake smiles and fake admiration for each other's beauty (only with gestures, remaining in silence). They then continue their journeys.

After a couple of minutes moving around the space, the facilitator reduces the volume of the music and calls one of the three numbers. The ladies with that number slowly and theatrically start fainting, letting their imaginary handkerchiefs fall on the ground, putting the back of their left hands on the foreheads and emitting deep breaths (to warn the others that they are about collapse on the ground). The ladies belonging to the other two groups suddenly become brave knights and rush to support the fainting ladies with their arms, gently lowering them to the ground.

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The task of the knights is not to allow any lady to reach or hit the ground without assistance. When all the fainting ladies are accompanied to the ground by the knights, the facilitator invites the ladies to quickly get up. The music starts again and everyone returns to being a charming and sophisticated lady, filling the space with their imaginary handkerchiefs and fake smiles. The facilitator then calls a different number and these ladies begin to slowly faint.

After about ten minutes of calling numbers, the facilitator can call two groups at the same time, leaving the knights with the impossible task of taking care of two ladies at the same time.

This exercise can be used in workshops where students that already belong to pre-existing groups are meeting for the first time (e.g., in a workshop with different school classes, the groups could be “third year A”, “third year B”, etc.) and instead of being numbers, the groups can be “third year A”, “third year B”, etc., to ensure that each class has to “support” the others.

### › **Blind cars**

<b>Type:</b>	Trust, listening, non-verbal communication
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

The students are divided into pairs and invited to spread out in the space. One of the pair is the driver and the other is the car. The drivers position themselves behind the cars and keeps their eyes open, while the cars keep their eyes closed. The two do not speak during the entire exercise.

The drivers try to establish a tactile non-verbal language with their cars without previously agreeing on the meaning of each physical signal. Instead, the drivers devise signals and see how they are interpreted by the cars, who respond to the signals of the driver with movement. For example: a touch on the head means “go forward”, two touches means “stop”, three touches means “go backward”, a touch on the right shoulder means “turn right”, and so on.

The facilitator asks the students to try to “agree” on a single meaning of a particular physical signal without speaking and to maintain it throughout the exercise. The facilitator asks the drivers not to use constrictive physical signals (e.g., to physically turn the car to make it turn) but to use gentle signals open to interpretation and then to try to build a common language with the cars, who have a certain freedom to interpret the stimulations as they wish. The driver-car pairs fill the space, trying not to collide with other pairs.

After the exercise, the facilitator asks the students to sit in a circle and share their feelings, discoveries and in which role they felt more at ease. The facilitator can also ask the students if they managed to find a common code of communication without verbally agreeing on the signals, and if so, how?

## › Space exploration with closed eyes

<b>Type:</b>	Space discovery, awareness, trust, listening
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic music
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

The students are divided in pairs. The facilitator asks the students to decide who is student A and who is student B. Then the facilitator asks the pairs to scatter as much as possible in the space.

At the beginning, student A is the guide and student B is the blind person. When the music starts, each pair starts exploring the space: student B keeps their eyes closed and is accompanied by student A. The pairs walk around to discover the space. Student A helps student B perceive the space through touch, smell, hearing, etc. The task of the guide is to take care of the blind person and understand their need for protection or their desire for autonomy in their sensorial discovery of the space.

The blind person tries to express their needs and desires without talking, and to experience the discovery of the room as one of freedom. The guide can then choose to propose new sensory experiences (touch, hear, smell, taste, etc.) to the blind person, to direct the blind person to a certain point or object in the room, to pass them objects, to let them hear noise and smell odours or to let them decide how to move and what to discover, while also protecting them from harm.

After eight minutes, the facilitator reduces the volume of the music and says, "change". The pairs swap roles without speaking and without breaking the concentration of the exercise (the facilitator should quickly increase the volume again after saying "change" to avoid any loss of concentration).

It is not necessary that the pairs remain constantly in physical contact. It is the non-verbal language and listening to each other that allows them to find the right balance between protection and freedom of the blind person, and between the responsibility of the guide to propose new experiences and to protect the blind from harm while they try to live their own experiences.

After another eight minutes, the facilitator reduces the volume of the music and says, "thank you" and closes the exercise. Then the facilitator invites the students to sit in a circle and holds a debriefing session.

The facilitator can ask:

- How did it go? How did you feel?
- Was it easy or difficult? How did you feel when you were led? And when you were the guide?
- What sensations did you feel in the two roles? Did you discover something new?
- Did you feel that you were protected too much or too little?
- In what role did you feel most comfortable? Is it better to be blind or to act as the guide?
- Were you able to listen to the other person without speaking? Were you able to establish non-verbal communication with your partner?
- Was the guide able to listen to the blind person's fears and desire for freedom?

- When you were blind, did you feel the need of your guide to protect you or did you feel your guide was distracted?
- How have you experienced the fear of hurting yourself? How have you experienced the responsibility of trying to stop someone else getting hurt?
- What does this exercise have to do with real life? In which situations are we like a blind person? When are we like a guide?

This exercise can be used to facilitate sensorial knowledge of the space in which the group works, bringing into play the senses other than sight.

### › The drunk bottle



<b>Type:</b>	Trust, listening
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic music
<b>Duration:</b>	50 minutes

The facilitator asks the students to form a circle, standing with their feet side by side and remaining rigid like a column, with their arms outstretched besides their bodies.

The facilitator tells the students to make wave movements, keeping their heads and torsos upright and their feet anchored to the ground. The facilitator invites the students to go almost to the point of losing their balance, while remaining rigid and without moving the feet.

When the students have become familiar with this movement, the facilitator asks them to form one or two circles and invites a volunteer to stand in the centre of the circle.

When the facilitator starts the melodic music, the volunteer remains stiff like a pillar, closes their eyes and begins to make wave movements. Once they reach the limit after which they will lose their balance, instead of returning to the central position, they let themselves fall in one direction, leaning on a part of the circle.

The task of the students in the circle is to welcome them, support them and gently push them back into the middle of the circle (not towards another student), until they return to the upright position, from which point the volunteer can let themselves fall towards another part of the circle, trying to experience their freedom to oscillate and to trust the group.

The facilitator invites the students in the circle to listen to the non-verbal "demands" of the person in the centre. In some cases, they may need support and reassurance and the group should make them feel supported using the many hands and bodies that receive them. In other cases, the volunteer may want to experience the fall before being supported and the group should give them space to feel free and go beyond their limits. The task of the group is to listen to the volunteer's desire for freedom or to their fear of falling and hurting themselves and protect the volunteer or accompany them beyond their limits as required.

When a volunteer is being supported by one part of the circle, they may decide not to return to the upright position and to lean sideways on other students in the circle. When the volunteer is satisfied with the experience that they have had, they should stop in the centre in the upright position, open their eyes, melt from their stiffness and return to the circle, without speaking and without interrupting the concentration of the exercise.

At this point, another volunteer can go to the centre of the circle in silence, closing their eyes, becoming stiff like a pillar and letting themselves go. The facilitator invites everyone to try this experience, but makes it clear that it is not compulsory and that the experience of being in the circle and supporting others is equally as important. When all the students who want to go to the middle have had a chance to do so, the facilitator gradually reduces the volume of the music and softly says, "thank you", accompanying the students to the end of the experience.

Then the students sit in circle and the facilitator guides a brief discussion, asking:

- How did it go? How did you feel during the exercise?
- When you were in the middle, were you able to trust the group? Did you feel listened to?
- When you were part of the circle, did you manage to listen to the non-verbal demands of the person in the middle? Did you manage to listen to the needs of other people in the circle who needed help to support the person in the centre?
- Do you feel you were able to welcome as a group the person who stood in the middle? Were you able to listen to each other when you were part of the circle?
- What does this exercise have to do with real life? When are we like the pillar and have to trust others? When do we support each other like we did in this exercise?

### › The blind catcher

<b>Type:</b>	Trust, activation on conflict
<b>You need:</b>	If physical contact with closed eyes could be embarrassing, prepare a rolled-up newspaper for each pair
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The facilitator asks the students to divide into pairs and to stand with arms interlinked. The students should decide who is student A and who is student B. Student A is the guide and keeps their eyes open and student B is the blind person and keeps their eyes closed. The facilitator invites one pair to be a scary two-headed monster: a half-blind, ferocious and cruel monster named the Blind Catcher. The other pairs are the monster's prey.

In the Blind Catcher pair, student A (with open eyes) guides student B (the blind person) around the space by holding their arm. While they are being guided by student A to chase the other pairs, student B holds one of their arms in student A's arm and waives their other arm, trying to touch any part of the other pairs. The other pairs move in the same way and try to escape the Blind Catcher: one is blind and the other is the guide; the two have one arm interlinked and nobody waives their hands.

When the facilitator says start, the Blind Catcher starts the hunt and the other pairs try to escape. When a pair is touched, it becomes the Blind Catcher and the original Blind Catcher becomes the prey and runs away. Only student B of the Blind Catcher pair can touch the other pairs. Student A of this pair only leads student B towards the prey.

If the group is comprised of people from cultures that could find it embarrassing to touch each other with closed eyes, the facilitator can give each pair a rolled-up newspaper to replace the action of physically touching. Each pair wanders around the space just as in the original version and the blind person in all the pairs holds a newspaper. The Blind Catcher catches the prey by hitting anyone in the prey pairs with the newspaper.

After the exercise, the students sit in circle, and the facilitator guides a brief discussion, asking:

- How did it go? How did you feel during the exercise?
- When you were the blind person, were you able to trust and abandon yourself to the group? Did you feel listened to? Did your fears become greater or desires more daring?
- When you were the guide, did you manage to listen to the non-verbal demands of your partner?
- What does this exercise have to do with real life? When are we like the blind person and have to trust a partner? When do we guide like the guides in this exercise?

## › The stairs

<b>Type:</b>	Trust, sensitisation
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic music
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

The facilitator chooses a student who is light and asks them to move to the side of the group. The facilitator then explains that the other students will build stairs with their bodies. These stairs begin with the lowest possible step (a student lying on the ground) and end at the highest possible step (a student on the shoulders or in the arms of the tallest student). The lightweight student will move up and down the stairs.

The facilitator explains that the upper rungs should not be formed by the students' heads, but only by shoulders or arms and hands, because stepping on heads can be very dangerous. Finally, the facilitator explains that the exercise will exclude verbal communication and that it will start when the music starts.

When the facilitator starts the melodic music, the group creates the first steps of the stairs without speaking and the lightweight student climbs the first steps of the stairs, slowly going higher and higher. The other students can move away while the lightweight student is climbing the stairs and leave the part of the stairs that the lightweight student has already passed to quickly go and form a new step, without speaking.

When the lightweight student has returned to the lower steps and then the ground, they return to the group and another student volunteers to climb up the stairs. Without speaking, the volunteer goes to a predetermined spot and the rest of the group creates the stairs in front of them. Then the volunteer starts climbing the stairs.

When the exercise is finished, the facilitator asks the students to sit in circle and share their experiences. They can talk about how they felt the exercise went and whether there were any difficulties or discoveries during the exercise. The facilitator can ask the students to share how they felt when they climbed and how they felt as a group when they supported a climber, if they managed to communicate and coordinate without speaking, if they had any fears or a sense of security from the group, etc.

This game is a metaphor for the work of the group in addressing the inner and social conflicts of individual students. The group does not relieve the student of their challenge, but provides the steps for the student to decide whether they want to raise their awareness and to change an aspect of their life.

If a student does not decide to become aware and to change, the group cannot lift them by force. It can only be present as a group willing to work on the inner and interpersonal conflicts of a single student.

This exercise can be useful with groups that have a history of conflict. People from different groups can experience co-operation in jointly supporting the person who is climbing. If the facilitator has managed to build a positive climate of non-judgement in the workshop, the conflict that divided the groups could be resolved by having tackled a common challenge together.

### › Exploration of the hands with eyes closed

<b>Type:</b>	Nonverbal introductions, sensitization
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic music
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

The students stand in a circle. The facilitator explains that when the music starts, each student should put their hands out in front of their chest, close their eyes and slowly start walking towards the centre of the circle. The students should try to find the hands of another person.

When a student finds the hands of another person, they should explore the hands by touching and moving them and by feeling their temperature, energy, shape, roughness, etc. When the two students feel that they have exchanged enough tactile information and emotions with each other and want to leave to connect with other students, they should find a nonverbal code, using only hands, to say goodbye to each other and leave to look for new hands and a new experience of knowledge through contact (always keeping the eyes closed and without words).

After about ten minutes, the facilitator reduces the volume of the music and says, "now try to find the first hands that you encountered again. When you think you have found them, stay with their owner, with eyes closed. After two to three minutes (depending on the size of the group), the facilitator gradually reduces the volume of music and says, "thank you". The students open their eyes, recognize the person they have exchanged hands with and thank each other verbally.

The facilitator invites the students to sit on the floor in a circle and to share how they felt during the exercise. They might ask:

- "How did it go? How did you feel?"
- "How did you find the hands of the first person you found?"
- "Did you experienced any difficulties while exploring the hands of another person or while someone explored your hands?"
- "What feelings or emotions did you have?"
- "Did you discover something about yourself or the other person?"

Students don't have to share if they don't want to. The only thing that they must do is listen when others are speaking.

## › The flight

<b>Type:</b>	Trust, listening
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic music
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

The students stand in a circle. The facilitator explains that this exercise is an opportunity, for those who wish, to experience free flight.

The facilitator goes to the centre of the circle and explains that those who want to experience free flight will go to the centre of the group, close their eyes, raise their arms, stand on one leg and then let themselves fall forward or backward in the arms of the group. The group will hold them and support them according to the experience that they want (to touch the ceiling, do a forward somersault, do a backward somersault, dance without touching the ground, swim, roll, play dead in the sea, dive upside down, etc.).

When the facilitator starts the melodic music, whoever wants to experience free flight moves into the centre of the circle, closes their eyes and lets the circle support them. Without touching the ground, the person tries to realize their experience with the support of the hands, arms, backs, chests and shoulders of the group.

The person flying experiences trust within the group and the group experiences the giving of this trust and the cooperation that makes it possible for the flyer to safely have their experience.

When a student is satisfied with their experience, they try to reach an upright position, conveying to the group that they want to return to the ground. The group gently manoeuvres them until their feet reach the floor and they open their eyes.

At this point, another volunteer goes into the centre, without speaking, and repeats the exercise. When all the students who want to try this experience have done so, the facilitator reduces the volume of the music, gently says, "thank you" and closes the exercise.

Next the facilitator invites the student to sit in circle and asks:

- How did you feel during the exercise? How was flying? How was being part of the circle that supported the flyers?
- Did you manage to listen to the person who was flying? And when you were flying, did you feel listened to by the group? Did you feel overprotected? Or too exposed?
- When you were flying, did you feel like you were being treated like an object or did you feel that your desires were being listened to?
- When you were in the circle, did you manage to listen to each other and to give a role to each member of the circle? Were you too active? Or did you struggle to find your role?

## 2.1.7 Theatrical improvisation

### › The clown from Amsterdam

<b>Type:</b>	Theatrical improvisation
<b>You need:</b>	Rhythmic music
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students are divided into groups of four or five people. In their groups, the students form lines, with each one looking at the back of the person in front of them. The facilitator explains that in Amsterdam there used to be a group of clowns who stood in the main streets and watched people passing by. When they saw someone walking in a very interesting way, they would start following this person in lines of three or four, imitating the way the person walked. The other people passing would have great fun watching the person unknowingly being followed by a line of clowns.

The facilitator explains that the person at the head of the line is the person passing by and the rest of the line are the clowns. The person at the head of each line should start walking and filling the space in a way that is not typical for them. The other three or four people should follow them, remaining as close as they can and replicate their way of walking. The facilitator can decide to play rhythmic music to accompany the groups when they walk.

After a while, the person playing the passer-by can, without warning, suddenly turn around and look at the other students, who should immediately, without speaking, try to justify their presence, pretending to be busy in various occupations and not to be following the person who turned around. Then the first person in the row starts walking again, in another way that is not typical for them.

After two or three turns, the person playing the passer-by can decide to go to the end of the line and a new person leads the line, inventing a new unusual way of walking while the others follow. This is repeated until all the people in the line have experienced being the passer-by.

The exercise can be tiring and the facilitator should ensure that it doesn't go on for too long. This stops the students getting too tired. The walking part should not last more than seven to eight minutes.

### › How many As are there in an A? (with "I love you" and "I hate you")

<b>Type:</b>	Improvisation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The group stands in a circle. The facilitator asks "in how many different ways can we say A?" and explains that anyone who has an idea of how to say A in a particular way should move to the centre of the circle and say the sound of the letter A, adding a gesture, and then return to their position.

When a student has said A in a certain way, performed the accompanying gesture and returned to their place, all the students should take a step forward together and repeat the sound and the gesture. Then they should take a step back and return to their original positions in the circle. Then another person steps forward and says A in a different way, after which the group repeats it, and so on.

When the letter A has been sufficiently explored, the facilitator invites the students to move on to ways of saying other vowels (E, I, O and U)

After the exercise, the facilitator invites the students to take a step forward and say, "I love you" or "I hate you" in all the ways they can think, even if they are not connected to the gestures that accompany them. For example, they may say, "I hate you" with a gesture of tenderness or "I love you" with a gesture of indifference. When a student has finished speaking, they should remain in the centre of the circle.

At this point, another volunteer can come to the middle of the circle and respond to the student in the middle by saying the opposite of what they have said. For example, if the first student said, "I love you", the second volunteer says, "I hate you" and vice versa, always exploring all the possible ways of saying the phrases and gestures that go with them. Then the two students return to the circle and another student can take a step forward and say, "I love you" or "I hate you" in a manner of their choosing. A second student step forwards and respond with the opposite phrase and so on.

When the facilitator feels that enough intonations and gestures have been explored, they close the exercise.

### › Yes and no

<b>Type:</b>	Improvisation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

This exercise is often used directly after the "I love you, I hate you" exercise, when the improvisation skills of the group are warmed up.

The students stand in a circle. A volunteer comes to the middle of the circle and says either "yes" or "no" in a specific tone with an associated gesture. Then another volunteer comes to the middle of the circle and responds by saying the opposite of what the first volunteer has said.

Then the first volunteer repeats their own word but changes the intonation and gesture. Next the second volunteer replies with their word and a different tone and intonation, and the two people start an improvisation in the middle of the circle, saying only "yes" or "no", changing the tone, touching each other, crying, yelling, whispering, flirting and arguing as they want.

The only rule to respect is the general rule of theatre improvisation: always accept the proposal of the other and get the best out of it (whatever it means in a given context). The facilitator invites the two volunteers to develop an entire scene just with "yes" and "no", with a prologue, a main part, a crisis and an end. When two students have finished their

scene, they return to the circle and another student comes to the centre and says, "yes" or "no" and another volunteer comes to improvise a scene with them.

It is important that the facilitator points out that the stories do not need to have a meaning and invites the students to switch off their self-judgement and just go with the flow, acting without previously planning what they are going to say and do.

### › The abstract emotion

<b>Type:</b>	Improvisation
<b>You need:</b>	A chair
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The students divide into pairs and spread out in the space. The facilitator stands on a chair and explains that they are going to describe a situation and each pair should begin an improvisation based on this situation, but instead of using words, the pairs should use only numbers in a random order.

For example, two students may meet and greet each other, but instead of saying, "how are you? Nice to see you!", they say, "35! (making a gesture of surprise), 92! (hugging each other), 93! 0!", always accompanying the conversation with the body language appropriate to the situation. The facilitator can invent various stories depending on the cultures represented in the workshop.

For example: the facilitator says, "you were in high school together and spent years in the same class, then the other person dropped out and you lost contact. It has been two years since you saw each other. Now you randomly meet in the street and you greet each other." The students start the improvisation, using only numbers and gestures.

After two minutes the facilitator says, "now the other person tells you a secret, that they were involved in some sort of crime, something that upsets you", and the students improvise (only with numbers and gestures).

Next the facilitator says, "now you become very angry with the other person, you cannot stand them anymore, you don't trust them anymore." When the students reach the peak of the conflict (they can have physical contact but without violence), the facilitator says, "now you start recognizing that the other person had their reasons and maybe they did not act maliciously when they did what they did."

After about a minute, the facilitator says, "now they admit that they did not mean to do anything bad and you understand them", and the pairs improvise with numbers and gestures. Then the facilitator says, "she is really the best friend you have ever had", and finally, "you two have a perfect and eternal love."

It is very important for the facilitator to be heard in the chaos that is quickly created. For this reason, the facilitator should facilitate the exercise standing on a chair.

In this exercise, the facilitator leads the students in "emotional gymnastics", in which they experience an entire range of emotions, from friendship to conflict and from hatred to love. All these emotions are experienced without the filter of verbal language that would make the situations very specific. In this way, the emotions that are experienced remain abstract and are not related to a specific context.

## › Improvisation in concentric circles

<b>Type:</b>	Improvisation on conflict
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	45 minutes

The students are divided into two groups of an equal number and form two concentric circles. The inner circle faces outward and the outer circle faces inward. The students in the two circles face each other. The facilitator explains that they are going to describe a conflict situation and that the students should improvise using their voices and bodies.

For example: the facilitator says, "inner circle: you are **a secondary school student** and your parents want you to study engineering, but you never really cared for it. You are ready to do it because your parents want you to do it because you live on the money you receive from your parents. But you are about to finish secondary school and you have recently discovered what you really want in your life: to become a theatre actor. You tell your mother that you do want to go to university but to enrol in the city's most prestigious theatre school instead."

To the outer circle, the facilitator says, "you are **the mother** and you have saved hard to be in a position to pay your child's university fees. You really want to see them graduate from university and you do not want to let them go to the theatre school, which you consider useless. You want them to become an engineer. Then they will be able to do what they want in their spare time. They must first get into the engineering course and graduate, then they can do what they want."

The students start the improvisation. Each one tries to achieve their goal using all possible strategies.

After five minutes, the facilitator stops the improvisation and explains that now the two circles will rotate in opposite directions. The facilitator plays some rhythmic music. The students move in circles and dance. When the facilitator stops the music, the students stop, and the outer circle turns towards the inner circle. In this way, new pairs are created.

The facilitator says to the inner circle, "I have no idea how you did it, but you did it: your mother agreed to give you the money to register at the prestigious theatre school. However, the money is not enough to be admitted. You have to pass an audition with the school's director. The director is called (choose a funny name depending on the context) and they have been the director of the school for 40 years. The director used to be a famous actor and hates young people, in particular spoiled kids who think they have found their true selves in the theatre but are completely devoid of artistic talent. The director has seen so many of these kids and enjoys kicking them out of the audition. The facilitator informs the students in the inner circle that they are still **the student** and they are at the audition. They must pass the audition and impress the director, whatever it takes."

To the outer circle, the facilitator says, "you are **the school director** and you want to kick this student out, unless they really manage to impress you with something. Then to both groups, the facilitator says, "when I say, "go", try to get what you want from your partner." The facilitator starts the exercise and the pairs improvise for three to four minutes.

The exercise can stop after the second scene or it can continue with a third scene. For example: the facilitator can say to the inner circle, "student, I have no idea how you did it, but you were admitted to the school and after five years of studying you are about to graduate. You are the main actor in a three-hour play by an unknown author who committed suicide at the age of 22 (right after completing this play). The play takes place on Saturday night. It is Wednesday and something unexpected has happened to you: you have fallen in love someone who is rich and wants to settle down with someone of their own status. They would like a partner who is an engineer, with a good career in front of them. They like sports cars and fancy parties in exclusive locations." The facilitator tells the people in the inner circle that they want to convince this special person to come see your play and then to go on a date with you.

To the outer circle, the facilitator says, "you are **the rich person** and you are interested in this person, but you want to check if they can give you the status you want. Plus, you hate the idea of seeing this complicated three-hour theatre play from a suicidal author. You actually prefer television and soap operas." The facilitator tells the people in outer circle that when the scene starts, they must try to get what they want from the other person. The pairs improvise for another four to five minutes.

After the exercise, the facilitator invites the students to sit (or stand) in circle and asks who has managed to get something from their partner in the two or three scenes, and if so, what strategies proved most effective and why.

The facilitator also asks who did not manage to get anything. To the partners of those that were unsuccessful, the facilitator asks why they weren't persuaded and if there was something that their partner could have done to convince them, at least in part? Through this discussion the group explores the ideologies, wills and counter-wills of the characters, and which strategies are most effective with them.

This exercise is a useful way for students to learn and practice improvisational skills, in particular with regard to strategies for convincing others to do something. The exercise is also a useful tool for warming up the students before exploring alternative strategies in relation to transforming crime-related situations in a Forum Theatre play situation.

## 2.2 Image Theatre

### › Seven seconds

<b>Type:</b>	Activation, Image Theatre
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The students stand in circle. The facilitator asks the students to walk around the space, filling it silently. When the facilitator names a certain object or situation, the students have **seven seconds** to make a collective statue with their bodies to represent the object or the situation.

The facilitator should choose objects with many connecting parts. For example: the Eiffel Tower, a bicycle, a catapult, an airplane, a machine gun, a grandfather clock, a fountain pen, a locomotive, a windmill, the bag of a secondary school boy or girl or the make-up bag of an elegant lady. They should not be simple objects (like an apple, a chair, etc.) but objects composed of different parts that the students can represent with their bodies.

Situations can include the hall of your school at 8am on a Tuesday, the invisible frontier between two groups of gang members in a poor neighbourhood, a boat full of smuggled migrants or a drug dealer selling drugs in a school or neighbourhood.

After naming the object or the situation, the facilitator counts down from seven to speed up the construction of the statue. When they reach zero, they shout "stop". The facilitator then walks around the collective statue and asks a student who is in an unusual position, "what are you?", and lets them quickly answer. Then the facilitator asks someone else the same question.

This questioning should be very fast so as to not slow down the rhythm of the exercise. After questioning a few students, the facilitator says, "go" and the students unfreeze and continue filling the space in silence, until the facilitator names a new object or situation.

This is a simple non-competitive activation exercise that helps to warm up students' imaginations by getting them to build group images in a very short time without previous planning, and by getting them to access embodied memories of real situations they have experienced at school or in their neighbourhoods.

## › Moulding techniques

<b>Type:</b>	Image theatre
<b>You need:</b>	Melodic music
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

**First part:** the group is divided into pairs that spread out in the space. The facilitator explains that one student is the clay and the other is the sculptor. The sculptor can shape the clay as they wish: they can experiment with various postures because clay is a malleable material, but it is also delicate. The sculptor should try to care for their clay while at the same time having the freedom to experiment with something new.

The facilitator explains that there are three moulding techniques:

1. **To mould the body**, the sculptor moves the body of the clay and the clay remains in that posture
2. **To mould the face**, the sculptor can show the clay the facial expression that they want, and the clay should mirror it
3. **To direct the gaze** of the clay in a specific direction, the sculptor can take an imaginary thread that is attached to the eyes of the clay and pull it in a certain direction. The clay should direct their gaze in this direction.

The facilitator explains that in this exercise it is important that the student just "do", without thinking and without necessarily looking for something that makes sense, for a meaning in what they are doing. It is important that they are guided by instinct and switch off their brains (or at least the logical and self-judgemental parts of them). The facilitator invites the sculptors not to stop and think for a long time before moulding the clay, but to try to discover by moulding. The facilitator asks the sculptors to respect the clay's body and not to put the clay in uncomfortable positions for a long time.

When the music starts, the students should silently get into their roles, whether sculptor or clay, and begin the exercise. The facilitator gives the sculptor between five and eight minutes to experience different images with their clay. After this time, the facilitator reduces the volume of the music and gently says, "change", and the students swap roles, without speaking and without interrupting the concentration of the exercise.

When the facilitator wants to close the exercise, they gradually reduce the volume of the music and gently say, "stop". They ask the statues to keep their positions and ask both the sculptors and the statues to look at the works carved by the others. The statues should look around only with their heads, without abandoning their postures.

**Variant (with stream of consciousness):** the sculptor moulds a statue and when they are satisfied, they nod to the clay who then utters a stream of thoughts. The statue should not try to guess who they are, but just react to the posture in which they have been moulded and utter words that are inspired by how they have been moulded and what they feel at that moment. The sculptor listens and responds to what comes out of the statue. When the facilitator says, "change", the students swap roles without speaking.

After the exercise, the facilitator invites the students to sit in circle and guides a brief discussion of the experience, asking:

- How did it go? How did you feel?
- What challenges did you encounter?
- What did you discover about yourself and your partner?
- Was it better to be the sculptor or the clay?
- When you were the clay, what did you feel the sculptor conveyed, consciously or unconsciously, to you?

Moulding techniques is one of the core exercises of Image Theatre and is a preliminary stage in the construction of characters in Forum Theatre. It is also an exercise used to discover the body of the other; its rigidity, its consistency, etc. It is also useful for the statues to react to the different postures the sculptor is experimenting with, using facial expressions, etc.

## › The primitive image

<b>Type:</b>	Image theatre
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

**First phase:** The students silently fill the space with their eyes open. When the facilitator says, "stop", the students freeze in an image. The image should not be planned in advance; it does not need to have a particular meaning. It is just a spontaneous body response. It is very important for the students to do this exercise without planning what they are going to do. They should just listen to their bodies and switch off the rational part of their brains. Then the facilitator says, "go", and the students continue filling the space in silence.

**Second phase:** After a while, when the facilitator says, "stop" and the students are frozen in their images, the facilitator says, "now, I am going to ask you questions. You should answer as the character that you might be in your posture. Do not think, just answer."

Then the facilitator moves between the statues, chooses one and asks, "who are you?" and "what are you doing?". Then they move to another statue and ask, "what are you thinking about?" or "what do you want in this moment?". They listen to the instinctive response of each statue.

The facilitator can ask questions to as many statues as they wish and should always make sure to maintain a fairly quick rhythm and not to allow words to dominate the gestures and images (because the aim of the exercise is to explore spontaneous body postures and the emotions that these postures can evocate).

Then the facilitator says, "go" and the statues continue filling the space. To prevent the students from thinking about their images while they are walking and to encourage them to create images without planning them, the facilitator can say, "go" and "stop" at very short intervals.

**Third phase:** after asking about the images, the facilitator explains that, "now, instead of saying "stop", I will say a keyword and you should respond with an image connected to this word. Do it without thinking".

The facilitator chooses keywords related to issues related to crime and justice. For example, the facilitator could start with general words, such as family, wedding, holidays, school, work, play, conflict, power, oppression, judgement, male, female, religion, politics, teacher and education. Then they could move on to more crime- and justice-related words, such as smuggling of migrants, corruption, juvenile justice, gang violence, sexual exploitation, forced begging and forced marriage.

The students react to the words with images without thinking. They just do. Then the facilitator approaches some statues and asks again, "who are you?", "what are you doing?", "what are you thinking about?" and "what do you want right now?", and each student replies as the character they feel they are in their posture, again without thinking.

**Fourth stage:** the facilitator asks a statue to perform a monologue of what they are thinking at that moment. Then the facilitator moves to another statue and says, "you continue" and the other statue continues with a different monologue. Next, the facilitator moves to another statue and says, "you continue" and so on.

Then the facilitator asks two statues to start a dialogue. They can approach each other but they should keep their posture and the same "character" that came out of their statue.

They should also always accept the proposals of the other character in the improvisation. The facilitator can add another statue or two to create a three-or-four-character dialogue.

If the facilitator wants, they can say, "stop" and then "now, only this group of students will continue the dialogue and all the others will listen. Go!", and the chosen group starts an improvisation based on the keyword (for example: an improvised dialogue on juvenile justice with four statues representing very different and contradicting aspects of juvenile justice).

At the end of the exercise, the group can reflect together on the images that have emerged from the different words, on the improvised monologues and dialogues, and on how the statues and the dialogues can be used for further exploring oppressive mechanisms embedded in social roles, using Image Theatre or Forum Theatre.

To use the different primitive images to develop a Forum Theatre play, the facilitator can ask the students to remain in the image and to get closer to other images that they feel have something in common with theirs and that resonate the most with their statues, creating families of images. The students in each family can then unfreeze, sit in circle and share the feelings inspired by their postures and identify the common elements that emerged from their primitive images on the same theme (for example: being a student from a poor neighbourhood, drug trafficking, corruption, juvenile justice and forced marriage). Then they can start developing the plot of a Forum Theatre play on this issue.

This is one of the key exercises of Image Theatre. The images are created in a way that reduces the role of the rational, first-think-then-do approach. This exercise emphasizes the immediate bodily reaction of the students to keywords.

### › Complete the image

<b>Type:</b>	Image theatre
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	20 minutes

The facilitator divides the students into pairs and asks them to form a two-person statue that is standing and shaking hands. The students should decide who is student A and who is student B.

When the facilitator prompts them, student A detaches from the statue, leaving student B frozen in the statue. Then student A completes the statue of another student B, following the first idea, without thinking, and freezing in the new statue.

Then student B unfreezes and detaches from student A (who remains frozen) and completes the statue of another student A, without thinking. The two statues do not need to be always in physical contact.

After a number of changes in pairs, the facilitator invites the students to stand in circle and asks a volunteer to come to the centre of the circle and to propose an image. Then the facilitator asks for another volunteer to come and complete the image, as they did in the pairs.

This is an exercise that stimulates the students' ability to react immediately to another person's posture with another posture, without thinking about it, by just observing what spontaneously comes out of the body to complete the other image.

### › The mirrors

<b>Type:</b>	Image Theatre, listening
<b>You need:</b>	Slow music
<b>Duration:</b>	30 minutes

The students are arranged in two rows of equal number, facing each other at a distance of about one metre and a half. One row will be **people** and the other the **reflected images** of the people. The facilitator explains that there is an imaginary mirror across the space that separates the people from their images.

The game takes place in three stages without words. Slow music accompanies the three phases, without interruption. The facilitator explains that the entire exercise at the beginning, so when the exercise starts there is no need to interrupt and explain the phases.

**First phase:** when the music starts, the people start moving slowly and fluidly and the images imitate them in every detail, as if they were images of the people reflected in a mirror. The facilitator asks the people to make simple fluid movements to allow the images to follow them without difficulty and to explore all possible movements (approaching the imaginary mirror until they can touch, taking some distance, etc.).

**Second phase:** the facilitator reduces the volume of the music and gently says, "change" and increases the volume of the music again. Then the people and the images exchange roles, without interrupting the movement and without speaking.

**Third phase:** the facilitator reduces the volume of the music and gently says, "together" and increases the volume again. Then both rows of students become people and images at the same time. They can both propose a movement and follow the proposal of the other, seeking a common harmony in the movements of the pair. After three to four minutes, the facilitator gently says, "thanks" (to close the exercise without breaking the magic of the moment) while they gradually lower the volume of the music.

After the exercise, the facilitator invites the students to sit in a circle and leads a discussion. The facilitator asks open questions, which allows space for the students to elaborate their experiences. The facilitator can ask:

- "How did it go? How did you feel?"
- "What difficulties have you encountered?"
- "Was it easier to be the person or the image?"
- "Were you able listen to each other without words and to find a harmony in the movements?"



## 2.3 Forum Theatre

 *The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.*  
Steve Biko 

### 2.3.1 Techniques for developing and rehearsing a Forum Theatre play

#### › From personal stories to ideas for Forum Theatre plays

<b>Type:</b>	Forum Theatre preparation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	50 minutes

The facilitator asks the students to silently walk around the space and think of a situation of oppression that has affected them personally, that they have witnessed or that has happened to someone they know and care about. It should be situation that has particularly affected them.

The facilitator explains that it is important that this story **can be recognized by others**, that others may have experienced a similar situation and that it may have happened to many people in the audience.

Possible examples include oppressive situations and human rights violations related to accessing justice for young people from poor neighbourhoods, the recruitment of young people by radical groups, forced marriage, gang violence, migrant smuggling, child trafficking for the purpose of forced begging and corruption. When the students have identified their stories, they should stop in a specific part of the space indicated by the facilitator.

The facilitator needs to bear in mind that the conflict situation or human rights violation identified for the Forum Theatre play should have the following characteristics:

- It has to be **engaging for the students** and for the audience. It has to be something that affects the audience "in the stomach" and not just "in the head". It should not be a distant conflict, but an unresolved situation experienced by many in the area where the play will take place
- The **oppressive mechanisms** of the situation must be **clear** and easily recognizable by the audience (something that may have happened to some of the audience)
- It must be **concrete**, not abstract or symbolic
- There must be a **protagonist** who struggles for their rights (the main oppressed character). They must make mistakes and end up defeated by the other characters. They cannot achieve what they want (a legitimate desire or right) but they are not someone who fatalistically accepts their fate from the beginning. They are the type of person who tries to free themselves from oppression, but they fail, for many reasons that are explored in the play

- There is not an **obvious solution** to the conflict
- There is a **crisis**, a moment when the existing power distribution “explodes”, and everything becomes possible
- It is an **unresolved** story. It should not be a conflict that the student had in the past and that has been resolved.

When the majority of the students have identified their stories of conflict and have stopped in the area indicated by the facilitator, the facilitator asks the students to form a circle, leaving some distance between each other.

Then the facilitator explains, “now, I would like you to think about the person that is most oppressed in the situation that you have identified, the one who is suffering the most because of the other characters, and when I say, “go”, I want you to suddenly make a statue that represents how that person feels when they are oppressed in that situation. Do it without thinking. Just respond with your body to the situation.” The facilitator signals the start and the students form statues with their bodies.

Next the facilitator asks each statue to observe the others while they maintain their posture as much as possible, and to approach the other images with which they feel an affinity, the ones that resonate the most with them. In this way, the students create “families of statues”. Depending on the number of students, the facilitator tries to create groups of six to seven actors per family. Each family is the starting point for identifying the plot of the Forum Theatre play.

Then the families of statues sit down, and each student tells their story, taking a maximum of one minute to do so. The group decides which stories resonate the most with all the group or which stories are perceived as the most urgent and then they start improvising.

The person who proposed the story can act as the director and can help the others to understand the main will and ideology of the different characters and what kind of dialogue is required, to assign roles to the actors. Generally, it is more effective if people who are oppressed in reality play the role of the oppressors on stage.

In many situations the oppressed character knows their oppressors very well and can serve the process of individual and collective liberation by faithfully reproducing on stage the key strategies used by the oppressors to maintain their position of (illegitimate) power.

For a story to be explored with Forum Theatre, it is important that **the oppressive mechanism is not too personal** (for such stories it is more effective to use other techniques, such as Theatre of the Oppressed, which are not presented in this Guide). The assumption of Forum Theatre is that every oppressive relationship at the micro level embeds itself in the macro level: the structural oppressions (cultural, economic and legal). Forum Theatre is used to explore situations where the oppressed has some room to make choices and has space to change (at least according to the point of view of the person who proposes the story).

The Forum Theatre play is a rehearsal of reality. The work of the facilitator is to combine different aspects of real stories to create a story that potentially contains many real stories in it and could be recognized as real by the audience, although with different degrees of

identification from one spectator to another.

In addition to the oppressed characters and the oppressors, it is very important that the group identifies characters with intermediate roles (neither directly oppressed by the situation nor oppressors). For example: the best friend of a girl forced to marry or the school friend of a boy who just joined a gang.

The story could initially show these characters as indifferent or disempowered witnesses of the rights violation and could eventually question the audience about what these characters could do to improve the situation. These characters, if appropriately inspired by the strategies enacted by the audience, can become possible allies of the oppressed in real life.

### › Interviewing the characters (the hot seat)

<b>Type:</b>	Building the character
<b>You need:</b>	A chair
<b>Duration:</b>	5-7 minutes per character

After choosing the stories and defining the main characters, following the steps described in the “From personal stories to ideas for Forum Theatre plays” exercise, the groups choose the actors for each character. In Forum Theatre, the essence of a character is:

1. Their **will and counter-will**: what the character wants from others, from themselves and from society in that moment of their life. The other things that they want from themselves and other things that contradict their main will. This could include main and explicit desires and contradictory and only partially conscious desires
2. Their **ideology**: how the character sees their role in society, their normative idea of what is right and wrong and why, how they see the conflict they have and how they justify their choice of strategies to manage the conflict
3. Their **biography**: key aspects of the past of the character that help understand their reasons for doing what they do: the legacy of their family, their culture, how they are trying to make sense of their life and how the current conflict they are experiencing may resonate with past experiences

These three characteristics are gradually defined and “embodied” by the actor, recognizing that some aspects of the will, ideology and biography of their character have something in common or resonate with their own personality and biography. This process follows another key principle of Forum Theatre: to live the character on stage, rather than just to show it.

To facilitate this process of embodiment, the facilitator proposes the following exercise. The students should sit at one side of the room and face an empty chair. The facilitator explains that in turn, each student who has a character in the Forum Theatre play should sit on the chair, facing the other students, who will interview the character. All students, in turn, can ask questions to the character sitting in the chair. For example:

- What's your name?
- How old are you?

- What do you think of those who... (describe the antagonists that the character is facing in the story on stage)?
- What upsets you most about the others?
- What was the happiest moment of your life?
- When was the last time you cried?
- If you could choose your own death, how would it be? Where?

The student sitting on the chair responds as their character would respond (or refuse to respond). If they do not know the answer, they should use their imagination to gradually "build" the will, ideology and biography of their character. After each interview, the other students can comment on what they have created for their character and modify what they believe is unrealistic.

The facilitator makes sure the rhythm of the questions is quite fast and that each character is interviewed for a maximum of six to seven minutes to avoid the exercise becoming tiresome. If there are too many characters, the facilitator can propose an activation game to avoid the students remaining seated for too long.

### › Rehearsal for the deaf

<b>Type:</b>	Forum Theatre rehearsal techniques
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	50 minutes

When the groups have prepared their Forum Theatre story, the facilitator can invite each group to come on stage and rehearse their stories without volume in their voices. The facilitator should ask the actors not to mimic or exaggerate the gestures to compensate for the lack of sound. They should just act the story normally, but without volume in their voices.

At the end of the scene, the facilitator asks the audience, "what did you see?", "where are we?", "who are these characters?" and "what are they doing?". The actors absorb the feedback that they receive and use it to improve their scene.

Ideally, all the main oppressive mechanisms of the Forum Theatre model should be understandable without words. If some significant aspect of the story is not grasped by the audience, it means that the actors need to work more on their nonverbal language so they can explicitly depict the oppressive mechanism as much as possible without words.

### › Various rehearsal techniques

<b>Type:</b>	Rehearsal techniques
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	50 minutes

The facilitator asks the students to rehearse the scene normally, however, now everyone has a terrible cold, or the story happens on an unstable boat, or now they are all in love with each other or they are very emotional, etc.

The facilitator can change the mood of the characters various times while they are acting before they reach the end of the play. The facilitator can also propose a change in setting. For example: "now we rehearse the same story as if we are in a Mexican soap opera, in a western movie, in the Neolithic era, etc.

This is a useful exercise for isolating the oppressive core mechanism of the story (which should always be recognizable in the various versions) within the different settings in which the story could be represented (on a boat, with love, while having a cold, etc.)

## Two games to warm up the audience before a Forum Theatre play

### › 1. Enough is enough! I want to take action!

<b>Type:</b>	Audience warm-up before Forum Theatre play
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The facilitator asks the audience to divide themselves into three groups and in these groups, decide who is number one, two and three. Then they sit on the chairs.

The facilitator explains that when they say, "go", the number ones should stand up and shout altogether: "Enough is enough! I want to take action!" and that they should slowly walk from their chairs to the stage and try to invade the scene. When the number ones shout, the number twos and threes should rise too, and do everything they can to persuade the number ones from going on stage.

For example, they could argue, "even if you stand up and intervene, nothing will change" or "you can't act, you're ridiculous, you better go back to your seat!" or "isn't it better to sit and watch first? Then you can intervene later" or "these are other people's problems, not yours, let them handle them" or "you're making a bad impression, they're all looking at you, come on, sit down! Go back to your chair", and so on.

The number ones should try to answer by presenting good reasons to intervene while slowly walking towards the stage. When a large portion of the number ones has reached the stage, the facilitator quickly asks the number ones what strategies would have convinced them to go back to their chairs. Then the facilitator asks the number twos and threes what strategies they tried to convince the number ones not to take action and invade the stage.

Finally, the facilitator explains that the whole play is meant to be an open and collaborative search for alternatives to the situations represented on stage. To do so, the facilitator and the actors invite the audience to try to change the course of events on the stage. Their actions should be a rehearsal of changes that they could choose to make in their own lives when they are confronted with oppressive situations similar to the ones presented on stage.

The facilitator can conclude by explaining that Forum Theatre is a process to prepare together, through personal and collective awareness and empowerment, to break the

social reproduction of oppressive mechanisms and to transform these events when they occur in real life into opportunities for personal and collective growth.

## > 2. The object of desire

<b>Type:</b>	Improvisation and strategies and warming up the audience before a Forum Theatre play
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The students are divided into pairs and spread out in the space. The facilitator asks the pairs to decide who is student A and who is student B.

Then the facilitator asks student A to identify a body part or character quality of student B that they would like to have as a gift (e.g., their patience, optimism, smile, dark eyes, curly hair, etc.). When the facilitator says, “start”, student A uses all the strategies they can think of to convince student B to give them the part or quality as a gift (e.g., student A could beg, promise favours, seduce, threaten, flatter, etc.).

After five minutes, the facilitator says, “change” and the roles are reversed: student B tries to convince student A to give them one of their parts or qualities.

After another five minutes, the facilitator closes the exercise and leads a brief discussion, asking who has managed to obtain the part or quality that they wanted, and which strategies they used to achieve this. Then the facilitator asks who failed to get what they wanted. Finally, the facilitator can ask those who refused to give their part or quality what would have convinced them to do so.

### 2.3.2 During the play: the role of the facilitator in Forum Theatre

 *If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.*  
Desmond Tutu 

#### Before the Forum Theatre performance:

At the beginning of the performance, the “spect-actors” enter the performance space and take their seats. The facilitator greets the audience, introduces themselves, presents the actors and explains how the performance was prepared, emphasizing that it is based on the life stories of the students (who are often members of the community where the play is performed).

Then the facilitator introduces the objective of the performance: to use theatre as a tool to explore strategies to change oppressive situations that the students and the audience may experience in their daily lives.

The facilitator explains that theatre is a protected space in which it is possible to explore alternatives and test possibilities for change, not through discussions, but by acting out the transformation and experiencing how the characters who enable the oppressive mechanism react in each new situation.

The facilitator also explains that, "we are often convinced that we know what we would do when facing a certain difficult situation, but then when it happens the truth is that we are unable to fight, because the reaction of the antagonists is not what we expected and we discover blockages and weaknesses within ourselves that we are not aware of. It is for this reason that we want to use theatre not to merely talk about what the oppressed person could do to change the situation, but rather to enact our ideas for change, test them and discuss them together."

Then the facilitator facilitates a physical activation game (it should be fun, easy and non-competitive), such as one those presented in this guide ("Enough is enough! I want to take action!", "The object of desire", "People to people of Quebec" or, if the audience is very dynamic, "Houses and tenants").

Dancing is also a very good way to de-mechanize the body and consequently de-mechanize the mind and emotions of the "spect-actors". The important things are movement, fun and a bit of physical contact. This will help the audience break out of the norms of a classical theatre performance, in which viewers do not touch one another and are separated from the actors. The actors usually take part in the game with the audience.

Then the audience sits down, and the facilitator tells them, "you will now see two (or three) scenes. I ask you to observe closely what happens on the stage, because after that we would like to discuss the scenes with you and try to change the story together." The facilitator can also pose questions in advance. They can ask the audience to think about the following questions while watching the scenes:

- Are the situations depicted real?
- Is anyone suffering in the situation because of the other characters?
- What is causing the oppressed to suffer? Why can they not liberate themselves?

The students present all the scenes in sequence, with music, lights and other aesthetic elements, without interruptions. During this phase, the facilitator observes the audience (not the scene) in order to see how they react, who identifies with which characters, who get outraged, who gets bored, etc.

### **After the presentation of the scenes<sup>3</sup>**

The facilitator asks the audience, "what did you see?" and "what happened in the scenes?". They then begin to retrace the story scene by scene with the audience in order to clarify the setting, who the characters are and what they do.

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<sup>3</sup> A simplified description of the facilitator's key steps during the interaction with the audience is presented in Annex I of this Guide.

If necessary, the facilitator can ask the characters to clarify who they are and what their urgent needs are. Through this dialogue, the facilitator clarifies the life experiences of the characters, their most urgent desires, their contradictions (counter-desires) and their ideologies (the cognitive and normative frameworks they use to interpret the world around them, their value systems, etc.).

The actors respond to the facilitator's questions while remaining in character. Instead of looking at themselves from the outside and saying, "my character wants or feels", they say, "I want, or I feel". This dialogue is useful to clarify for the "spect-actors" (even those who did not understand while watching the scenes) who the characters are and what the oppressive core of the story is.

This phase of retelling the story to the audience must be very rhythmic to avoid the audience's energy dropping too low. At the same time, it is important to avoid energy being lost because some people did not understand key aspects of the story. This exercise helps ensure that all the audience members understand who the main characters are and what is happening.

Then the facilitator asks:

- Are these things real? Have they ever happened to you? Have they happened to someone you know? (In this way, they check with the audience if the story is realistic)
- Who is oppressing others in the story (making others suffer unfairly because of their behaviour)? What means or mechanisms are they using to oppress others?
- Is there someone who is trying to fight but ends up defeated? Think about those that are oppressed: did they try to fight back? When and how did they make a mistake that caused them to be oppressed?
- What could the oppressed characters have done differently in order to improve their situation?

If time is short, after a quick re-telling of the story, the facilitator can ask the audience to select the scene on which they want to focus. If there is enough time, the audience will have a chance to replace characters in all the scenes.

Next the facilitator says, "now the story will start again, and it will end the same way as before. Exactly as in real life, if we see an oppressive situation and do not say intervene, if we do not say or do anything, the story will always end in the same way. Stories such as these are like clockwork mechanisms that lead people who suffer to suffer again and again in an endless circle of suffering.

If you want to try to stop this mechanism, when you see that the person suffering is making a mistake that will eventually lead to their defeat, please raise your hand and shout "stop". Then the actors will freeze. The person who raised their hand should tell us what, in their opinion, the person who is suffering should do in the situation in order to liberate themselves. As in real life, if nobody intervenes and stops the mechanism, if we remain passive spectators of oppression, the story ends in the same way: with the defeat of the protagonist."

The play restarts but this time without music, lights, etc. and just with acting. The facilitator attentively watches the audience to see if someone wants to stop the play and propose an idea. If the audience is particularly quiet or hesitant, the facilitator can stimulate interventions by:

- Telling the actors to stop and going to the oppressed person and asking them, "what do you want in this moment?", and prompting the character to say what they want in that moment
- Asking the audience, "what's wrong here? What should this character do differently?"
- In moments of major oppression, the facilitator can shout "stop" and then turn to the audience and ask, "is it everything OK here?"

The facilitator collects several comments from the audience about the dynamics of a scene, without encouraging any particular solution and without implicitly or explicitly judging, approving of or questioning what is said. Then the facilitator encourages, without forcing, someone in the audience to take the place of the character who has been recognized as the oppressed and to try to challenge the oppressive characters with their idea of change.



Such a replacement is a test of the proposed strategy. When the “spect-actor” joins the scene, the facilitators asks them, “from where do you want to start?”. Then the facilitator lets the scene play out and the strategy take shape; they determine when the potential of the idea has been adequately demonstrated and when to stop the replacement performance. When the facilitator thinks that the strategy has delivered its transformative potential, they tell the actors to stop and they freeze.

When secondary school students recognize themselves in the problem presented in the Forum Theatre play, they are normally keen to act as long as they clearly perceive a non-judgmental climate. In most cases, once the facilitator has asked if they think that the story reflects their reality and who they identify as the most oppressed character, the students are keen to put their ideas of change into practice on stage.

After each replacement, the facilitator poses the following questions:

**A. To the “spect-actor” who acted as the replacement:**

“How did it go? Were you able to get what you wanted, to put your idea into practice? What difficulties did you encounter? Were the reactions of the other characters as you expected? Who challenged you the most?”

**B. To the audience:**

“What was the impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change on those who were oppressed in the situation? What reactions did it produce in the oppressors? What is different in this version with regard to those who were previously oppressed?”

**C. To the oppressive characters (optional):**

(Only to those directly challenged by the replacement, at the discretion of the facilitator and making sure that the rhythm of the session does not slow too much and that there is not too much talking)

“How did you feel about the arrival of this new person? Were you challenged? What has changed for you as a result this new strategy?”

**D. To the replaced character (optional):**

“Do you think you would be able to act like the character we just saw? Is it realistic for you to change your behaviour in this way?”

At the end, the facilitator thanks the “spect-actor” and asks the audience to clap them. The “spect-actor” returns to their seat. Another replacement follows. The new “spect-actor” can decide if they want to replace a character at the same point in the story or before or after. Often replacements arise from the discussions that follow previous replacements, so it is important that when the facilitator is asking questions of the audience, they try to identify if there are some audience members who have alternative ideas that could be tested in subsequent substitutions.

If someone envisions a different setting, an earlier situation or the introduction of other characters, this can be improvised. The facilitator should try to provide new characters in order to build new scenes elsewhere, before or after the main scene. For example: if the

oppressed person is envisioned to be seeking help from a trusted professor or peer, then a possible ally for the oppressed person is added to the story.

However, in this situation, the facilitator can point out that, by introducing other characters and places, the story originally represented has become another story: the dynamics between the characters will change as a result of the introduction of new characters (often allies of the oppressed, such as a trusted friend, other people sharing the same oppression, social workers, etc.). The facilitator can ask the audience if this new story is realistic and if it reflects situations in which the audience can recognize themselves. For example: is it realistic that a bullied teenage student would go speak to their teacher?

Once the audience has confirmed that the new story is realistic or could be under certain conditions (for example: the student at risk of being recruited to a gang would seek help only from their most trusted professor and only if there were a safe and confidential space in the school in which to speak), the proponent improvises the new character in the new situation. After a few minutes, the facilitator stops the scene and asks the proponent and the audience what has changed in the new situation.

The facilitator can stop the play intermittently and ask a character how they feel in a certain moment, what they're thinking, what has changed so far, what new element was introduced through the new strategy and if they got anything and if so, what.

The facilitator always checks with the audience that the proposed strategies are realistic and that there are not magical or supernatural solutions that cause the oppressors to magically become good, the oppressed to suddenly have resources, information, motivation and a level of self-esteem that in reality they would rarely have, and the story to end well. Judging the reality of the proposals must always come from the audience; providing this judgement is not part of the role of the facilitator, who only has to probe for it.

An important condition for Forum Theatre is that the struggle depicted in the scene must be a tough one, as tough as it would be in real life. However, the play must also allow for entry points for the audience to try to change the situation. The plot should be as open as possible to opportunities for replacement and at the same time as realistic as possible about the difficulties the protagonists face in real life to improve the situation.

Those who occupy the roles of the oppressed and the oppressors can certainly change behaviour, but this happens neither often nor easily, and theatre has to reproduce the difficulties and contradictions of this process.

After various replacements have taken place, the facilitator should monitor the energy of the audience and students, and when they believe that either or both are tired, end the performance. In most cases, the most effective and innovative strategies to producing change are proposed towards the end, when the audience has "learned by doing" from the first proposed strategies through a collective and cumulative learning process and is more empowered in the common struggle for change.

### **Before closing**

In concluding, the facilitator should explain that the Forum is a process of collective learning and empowerment through which we recognize that our own problem is also a problem for others and that the problems of others are also our own.

The facilitator should also explain that the Forum reaches an open conclusion: we do not find magic solutions but instead begin a process of body-dialogue, putting ourselves in the shoes of the oppressed in order to jointly seek a response to real problems, going beyond the exclusive use of words in the search for transformations to the conflicts we are experiencing.

The facilitator thanks the audience, asking them to clap the actors and themselves, as they were also participants (through listening, speaking and acting). The facilitator concludes by noting that the proposed strategies can be “taken home” by the audience and applied to real-world situations that occur in daily life. In this way, the theatre can achieve two goals: providing beauty and helping the oppressed.

If the audience is composed of less than 30 people, the facilitator can wrap up the experience in a participatory manner with the game “The mountain of hands” (see the section on Forum Theatre evaluation).

### 2.3.3 After the Forum Theatre play: de-rolling exercises

After the play, the facilitator leads a brief session to help the actors to distance themselves from the emotions and ideologies of their characters, especially the most oppressive or submissive ones.

The students stand in a circle and the facilitator invites everyone to tear away from their face the mask of their character, then to remove the skin of their character from their body and then to throw the masks and skin in the middle of the circle, building an invisible pile.

When the students have done this, the facilitator can put on some slow music and invite the students to slowly dance with their eyes closed and to focus on their breathing, acknowledging that the character that they embodied served a process of personal and community liberation from oppression, and letting go of their character and reconnecting with their unique personality.

After few minutes of dancing, the facilitator gradually reduces the volume of the music and gently invites the students to open their eyes. Then the facilitator leads a brief discussion on the process, asking:

- How did you feel during the Forum Theatre play?
- How do you feel about the audience interventions and replacements?
- How was the experience of identifying oppressive stories, acting them out in a scene and asking the audience from your community to try to change the stories?
- Were there any discoveries and difficulties?
- Does anyone have any ideas about how to continue this work with your community? (At this stage the group can plan activities to continue the work with their community).

After the discussion, the facilitator invites the students to evaluate their Forum Theatre experience using one of the exercises presented in the Forum Theatre evaluation section.

## 2.3.4 Forum Theatre workshop evaluation

### › The pile of hands

<b>Type:</b>	Workshop evaluation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	10 minutes

The students stand in a circle. One person puts their hand in the centre of the circle with their palm facing downwards and says a word that represents for them how the day went or how they feel about or felt during the day. They keep their hand in the middle of the circle.

A second person puts their hand over the hand of the first person, palm facing downward, and says another word. They keep their hand in the middle. A third puts their hand above those of the others and says their word, and so on until everyone has placed their hands in the middle and a pile of hands is formed.

At this point, the facilitator invites each student to add a second hand and say another word about the day. When there is a large pile of hands in the middle of the circle, the facilitator asks all students to bring the hands close together and move downwards, making an “oooo!” sound. When the students have almost reached the ground, the group explodes, throwing their hands upwards and shouting “aaaah!”. The workshop ends with this explosion of hands.

### › On the bedside table, in the suitcase, in the trash

<b>Type:</b>	Workshop evaluation
<b>You need:</b>	Three chairs, three sheets of paper, masking tape, markers
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The facilitator sets out three chairs, one next to the other. On each chair, they place three sheets of paper that say:

- On the bedside table
- In the suitcase
- In the trash

The students sit in front of the three chairs. The facilitator asks the students to consider the emotions they felt and thoughts they had during the workshop, from when they joined the group for the first time to the moment that signalled the end of the workshop.

The facilitator asks those who want to share how they felt to stand up, sit on one of the three chairs and speak to the group. They can choose to sit on any of the three chairs. The words on the chairs have the following meanings:

- **On the bedside table:** what I want to take from the workshop and will calmly reflect on in the future
- **In the suitcase:** what I will take home from the workshop now and will be with me tomorrow and in the coming days
- **In the trash:** what I experienced during this workshop that I want to eliminate immediately (or aspects of my life or myself that I want to get rid of)

### › I appreciate... I propose...

<b>Type:</b>	Workshop evaluation
<b>You need:</b>	Nothing
<b>Duration:</b>	15 minutes

The facilitator asks the students to stand in a circle and hold hands. The facilitator says, "I would like to invite you to share how you felt during the workshop. We will stand silently and think about all that has happened today, focusing on what we appreciated about it and on what could have been done better. If we want to share something with the group, we will speak, starting our sentences with "I appreciate" (to share what we appreciated) or "I propose" (to share what could be improved or to make a proposal for the future). When someone starts speaking, the others will listen."

This exercise can be used at the end of the day to allow the students to share their emotions about the process and also to quickly gather feedback on what went well and what can be improved.

### 2.3.5 Precautions for using Forum Theatre with secondary school students

Like all tools, Forum Theatre could become harmful if it is not applied with caution and an awareness of the potential damage it could cause. In particular, when applying this tool to the discussion of crime-related issues with students, the facilitator needs to take the following precautions to ensure that Forum Theatre accompanies positive behavioural change and does not expose students and communities to emotional and physical harm.

#### › 1. Avoid exposing young people to risk and retaliation

Forum theatre enacts real-life stories related to crimes that the students are experiencing in their schools and communities. It is critical that the facilitator ensures that the play is not putting the storyteller at risk of retaliation from criminal groups, peers and family members.

To prevent such a situation, the facilitator should ask the students to share an oppressive story related to a crime that they feel ready to tell others. The group will make sure that the play's story represents crime-related issues that could happen in any school and community, thus avoiding naming and shaming a certain community, school, institution or individual.

As a further preventive measure, at the beginning of the play, the facilitator can point out that the stories presented on stage could have happened in any community and are not a comment on any specific neighbourhood or school.

## › 2. Escalating conflicts, creating mistrust and jeopardizing partnerships

The students' autobiographical stories could portray the involvement of state authorities and security in criminal activity (the police using excessive violence, local state representatives accepting bribes, school authority figures ignoring reports of violence, etc.). Presenting these scenes to school authority figures, local state representatives and law enforcement personnel could make them feel collectively accused and this could lead to mistrust and make future partnerships with them difficult or impossible.

To prevent this situation, the facilitator should avoid any specific naming and shaming in the creation of the story and stress that the play focuses on something that could happen in many contexts. The facilitator can also announce before the play that only some politicians are corrupt, only some police are violent, etc. and that nobody is specifically blamed in the story, but that these characters exist and violate the rights of others, so we have prepared this play to discuss with you which strategies we could use to improve these situations.

If there are people who have the same role of an oppressive character on stage (e.g., a violent police officer, a corrupt politician, etc.) in the audience, the facilitator could invite these people to intervene on stage and share their knowledge and experience of "how an honest politician or police officer could behave when confronted with colleagues who act in this manner".

## › 3. Re-victimizing violence survivors

During the creation of the play, students may share traumatic stories of sexual violence, forced marriage, domestic abuse, etc. This could re-victimize them if the creative process does not take care of their emotions and honours their courage in sharing such painful experiences.

To prevent this situation, the facilitator should firstly show appreciation and deep respect for the courage the student has displayed in sharing their experience and invite the other students to express their respect and appreciation. At a later point, the facilitator can ask the group to express their emotions and empathy.

The facilitator can also ask the storyteller if they want to share their story (after removing all elements that could identify them as the protagonist) with the audience. If the storyteller agrees, the facilitator should ensure that the story is not presented as the story of a specific student, but rather as a story that could happen to any student, removing all specific elements that could identify the storyteller.

In some cases, presenting the story to an external audience and trying to change the story with the audience could be part of a healing process for the survivor, while in others, the

storyteller may not feel ready. The facilitator has to show sensitivity, listen actively and use caution while dealing with these situations.

Furthermore, while working with students on the sharing of personal stories, it is important that the facilitator agrees on a response protocol with the school that could be confidentially offered to a student who discloses personal experiences of violence, abuse and neglect, and who wants to seek professional help. The protocol should include contact details of formal and informal help providers available in and outside of the school (counsellors, etc.).

Finally, it is important to stress that the most important preventive measure a Forum Theatre facilitator should take during the process to prevent physical and emotional harm is to build a climate of empathic listening, non-judgement, mutual support and deep appreciation for the contribution of each student.



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# ANNEXES







## ANNEX I: The role of the facilitator in a Forum Theatre Play

The novice facilitator can use this key-step performance summary while preparing for a Forum Theatre public presentation.

### › At the beginning of the play

The audience enters the space and sits down. The facilitator welcomes the audience, introduces themselves, introduces the actors and explains that the group has prepared a play based on real-life stories of conflicts experienced by the actors. Then the facilitator proposes an easy and fun game to warm up the audience. After the game, the audience sits down and the facilitator invites them to count loudly together, "Three! Two! One! Action!", and the actors present the scenes.

### › During the play

After the scenes, the facilitator asks the audience:

- **"Are these situations real?** Did they happen to any of you? Did they happen to someone you know?" The facilitator listens to contributions from the audience
- **"Who is most oppressed by the situation?"** (or "who is suffering unfairly because of the situation?"). "Did you see a character who is oppressed by the unfair behaviour of the other characters, who tried to fight for their rights but failed?". The audience indicates a character or characters as the most oppressed person or people
- "What could these oppressed characters do to improve their situation?"

After these questions have been asked and answered, the facilitator says, "**now the story will start again** and it will end badly for some characters, with the defeat of the person or persons who are suffering unfairly. So I ask you: **when you think that the person who is most oppressed in the situation is making a mistake that will lead to their defeated, raise your hand or shout "stop"**. The actors will freeze, and we will listen to your idea."

The scene starts again. When someone in the audience stops the play, the facilitator collects a few comments and ideas on the dynamics of the scene, **without encouraging certain solutions and without judging the proposed strategies to improve the situation**. Then the facilitator invites, without forcing, an audience member who appears very motivated to improve the situation on stage to replace the character they have recognized as oppressed and to act out their idea of change. The facilitator says, "show us your idea in practice, confronting the other characters on stage and then we will discuss your idea together."

When a "spect-actor" comes on stage, the facilitator asks them, "**from which moment of the play do you want to start showing us your idea?**". The "spect-actor" replaces a character in a given moment of the play and the facilitator invites the audience to

say, "Three! Two! One! Action!". The improvisation starts and the facilitator allows a few minutes for the strategy of the "spect-actor" to take shape. When the facilitator feels that the "spect-actor" has expressed the full transformative potential of their idea, they stop the play and the actors freeze.

Then the facilitator asks:

- **To the "spect-actor" who has replaced the character:** "How did it go? Were you able to achieve what you wanted? Have you been able to put in practice your idea of change?"
- **To the audience:** "What has this proposal changed in terms of outcomes (positive or negative) for those who were oppressed by the situation? What did this proposal produce in the oppressive characters?"

The facilitator listens to a few verbal reactions to the idea and checks if there are other proposed ideas from other people in the audience. Then the facilitator thanks the "spect-actor", invites the audience to applaud the "spect-actor" and invites them to return to their seat.

At the appropriate point, the facilitator asks the audience if anyone has any other ideas about what one of the oppressed or intermediate characters could do to improve the situation, and the play continues with various replacements of the characters.

#### › **At the end of the play**

Before closing, the facilitator explains that this is an **open conclusion**, that we do not find the solution to the problem, but we start by sharing ideas of change and putting them into practice.

The facilitator stresses that Forum Theatre is a **collective learning process** where each participant recognizes that their problem is also the problem of others and that another person's problem is also their problem.

Then the facilitator invites all the actors to come on stage and asks the audience to applaud them, and then closes the play.



## ANNEX II: A sample four-day Forum Theatre workshop agenda

This is an example of a workshop agenda based entirely on the exercises presented in this Guide that was delivered to secondary school teachers during the piloting phase.

	Type of exercise
<b>&gt; Day 1</b>	
Presentation of the facilitator	
"Names as..." exercise	Introductions and creation of the group
"Names in circles" exercise	Introductions and creation of the group
"I like you because..." exercise	Introductions and creation of the group
"I want, I don't want" exercise	Expectations
The facilitator comments on the participants' expectations and introduces the workshop objectives and agenda	Expectations
<b>Coffee break</b>	
"Samurai (with celebration of mistakes)" exercise	Activation
"Space exploration with closed eyes and verbalization" exercise	Trust
"Circle of beats" exercise	Rhythm
"The drunk bottle and verbalization" exercise	Trust
"The silly seal" exercise	Activation
<b>Lunch break</b>	
"The abstract emotion" exercise	Improvisation
"How many As are there in an A?" exercise and "I love you, I hate you"	Improvisation
"Yes and no" exercise	Improvisation
<b>Coffee break</b>	
Improvisation in concentric circles exercise	Improvisation
"I appreciate, I propose" exercise	Feedback of the day
<b>&gt; Day 2</b>	
"Lifeboats" exercise	Activation
"Names in circles" exercise	Introductions and creation of the group
"Name-shooter" exercise	Introductions and creation of the group
"Exploration of the hands with eyes closed" exercise	Nonverbal introductions

	Type of exercise
<b>Coffee break</b>	
“1-2-3, gesture!” exercise	Activation
“Seven seconds” exercise	Image Theatre
“Moulding techniques and verbalization” exercise	Image Theatre
<b>Lunch break</b>	
“Houses and tenants” exercise	Activation
Identification of the stories divided in three groups	Forum Theatre
Rehearsals in the three groups	Forum Theatre
“The pile of hands” exercise	Feedback of the day
<b>&gt; Day 3</b>	
“Push-pull each other” exercise	Activation
Presentation of the scenes in plenary, with feedback from the facilitator and the other groups	Forum Theatre
The groups meet and incorporate the feedback in their scenes	Forum Theatre
<b>Coffee break</b>	
“Mosquitoes” exercise	Activation
“Interviewing the characters” exercise	Forum Theatre
Presentation of the scenes and final feedback	Forum Theatre
“The role of the facilitator in Forum Theatre” exercise	Forum Theatre
<b>Lunch break</b>	
“The object of desire” exercise	Activation of strategies
Play rehearsals	Forum Theatre
Assignments for tomorrow:	Forum Theatre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring objects and costumes that could identify your character on stage</li> <li>• Study “The role of the facilitator” (see Annex I book II)</li> </ul>	
“I appreciate, I propose” exercise	Feedback from the day
<b>&gt; Day 4</b>	
“Bomb, shield and talisman” exercise	Activation
Rehearsals	Forum Theatre
Public presentation of the play with character replacements	Forum Theatre
<b>Lunch break</b>	
Group photo with costumes	Closure
Written evaluations and the awarding of certificates	Workshop evaluation
“On the bedside table, in the suitcase, in the trash” exercise	Workshop evaluation



## ANNEX III: Examples of Forum Theatre plays developed with secondary school teachers in Peru and Senegal

### › Story 1: Broken Dream (on forced marriage)

Characters:

1. Abdullaye: the father
2. Oumou: the mother
3. Awa: the 17-year-old protagonist
4. Fatou: Awa's best friend (also aged 17)
5. Mustapha: Awa's eldest brother (aged 21)
6. Lamin: Awa's younger brother (aged 15)
7. Aboubacar: the holy man (aged 50)
8. Alioune: the doctor (aged 40)
9. Aïssatou: Alioune's wife (aged 32)

### › Scene 1

The scene opens in the living room of a Senegalese family. Abdullaye, the father, is sitting on a couch. Aboubacar, the holy man, enters the room and greets Abdullaye. After the greetings, the holy man explains to the father that he came because he wants to marry his daughter, Awa.

Aboubacar explains that he already has two wives and since he has become an important and rich person, it is the right moment for him to marry a third wife. Oumou, Awa's mother, enters the room and Abdullaye tells her about Aboubacar's intentions. Oumou protests: Awa is only 17, she is still in high school and she often talks about her dream of becoming a lawyer; if she gets married now, she will never complete high school.

The holy man does not listen to Oumou and only talks to Abdullaye. He tells him that he has brought gifts for him if he accepts his proposal. He takes out of his pocket a document of ownership of an apartment and says that this will be Abdullaye's gift if he agrees to give him his daughter in marriage.

The father is very interested, but he hesitates: Awa has not finished high school and she often talks about going to university. The holy man starts to lose his patience. He takes a set of car keys out of his pocket and tells Abdullaye that he is ready to add a new car to the marriage gifts if Abdullaye agrees to give him Awa in marriage.

Abdullaye is very happy with the gifts and accepts the offer, but Oumou strongly protests. Despite Oumou's protests, Abdullaye states that the decision is his alone and that, when Abdullaye and Oumou got married, Oumou was of the same age as Awa, so it is normal that Awa gets married when she finds a good suitor like Aboubacar.

## › Scene 2

Awa and her best friend Fatou are in the same high school class. They have been spending the day at the beach together and are going home. They talk about their dreams: Awa wants to become a lawyer and Fatou wants to be a high school teacher. They talk about the secondary school exam that they will soon take and about what to do in the summer vacation.

They both reach the door of Awa's house. Fatou says goodbye to Awa and leaves. Awa enters the living room and greets her father and mother. Abdullaye informs her that she will marry the holy man in a week, that her parents are going to make her happy by giving her in marriage to a rich and respected man.

Oumou protests again, but Abdullaye says he is not going to change his mind. He orders Awa to prepare because she is getting married the following week and tells her that she will leave school right after the marriage ceremony. Awa is shocked: she has been brought up to honour and obey her parents, but she does not want to marry a man she does not know and become his third wife. She leaves the room in silence.

## › Scene 3

Two weeks later, Awa got married and went to live with Aboubacar. Abdullaye is sitting in his living room and calls his two sons, Mustapha and Lamin. He tells them that they have a big problem: Awa has been married to Aboubacar for a week and she refuses to have sexual relations with her husband. Aboubacar is getting impatient and threatens to send Awa back to her parents and to take back the wedding gifts: the apartment and the car.

Mustapha shows deep admiration for his father and tells him not to worry, that Lamin and him will take care of the situation. They will go see their sister and force her "to be a good wife". Lamin has some doubts: he wants to obey his father but at the same time he doesn't want to hurt his sister, because he knows she is very unhappy.

Lamin tries to say something to his brother. He does not dare to tell his father that he should never have made Awa marry Aboubacar and that she did not agree to it and it is for this reason that she does not want to have sexual relations with her husband.

However, Mustapha looks at Lamin in a condensing manner, like he considers him a little boy who will one day understand what is at stake. Mustapha tells his younger brother to be quiet, that Awa will soon get used to her new situation, that he is just a boy and that they will both honour their father's will and protect the reputation of their family.

## › Scene 4

It is Awa's last few days of school. She has told her school friends and teaches that she has got married and that she will drop out of school soon. The scene opens in front of Awa's secondary school. Awa tells her best friend Fatou that she has been very sad and depressed in the last two weeks: she doesn't know what to do, she doesn't want to live with her husband, she's desperate and she is thinking about committing suicide or running away to another city and becoming a prostitute to support herself.

Mustapha and Lamin enter the scene. They ask to talk to Awa alone, but Fatou insists that she will not leave. Mustapha says it does not matter, that she can stay because she is not going to see Awa anymore: Awa will drop out of school in two days to "become a good wife". Then Mustapha threaten their sister by saying she is spoiling the good name of their family, the name of those who gave her life and that it is time for her to grow up: she will have sex with her husband without any further delay.

Fatou protests that they cannot force Awa to have non-consensual sex, that this is against the law and they are forcing her to be raped. Lamin timidly tells Awa she should do what her brother is ordering her to do and that he hopes she will soon get used to her new life. But he is not convinced.

Mustapha laughs at Fatou's words: how can a husband rape his wife when he has the right to have sex with his wife when he wants? Mustapha also insults her by saying that she just needs to find a husband to discipline her and that she is a bad example for his sister, but thanks God Awa will never see her again after she has dropped out of school. Mustapha reiterates to Awa that she will do what their father has ordered, otherwise she there will very bad consequences and the name of their family will be spoiled.

## › Scene 5

Alioune is medical doctor working in the emergency room at a hospital in Dakar. On one side of the scene, Awa is laying in a hospital bed motionless, her face is bruised, there are bandages on her chest and an IV drip in her arm. On the other side of the scene, Alioune is pacing the room and nervously talking on the phone with his wife Aïssatou.

Aïssatou is very anxious: prices in Dakar are becoming higher and higher. In the last two months, they have had some unforeseen expenses and they could not pay the mortgage on their apartment. The bank is now threatening to take the apartment; they need to find a way to make money or they will soon have to find a smaller apartment in the outskirts of Dakar. Alioune is also very worried and promises his wife that he will find a way to deal with the bank.

At this moment Aboubacar enters the emergency room. He is very angry and agitated. He asks Alioune, "where is my wife?", "it is you who took my wife?". Alioune asks Aboubacar what his wife's name is and realizes that the Aboubacar is Awa's husband. Alioune is very surprised and asks, "so you are the husband? Is it you who has reduced her to this state?".

He carries on, "she told me she was forced by her husband to have sex, that she resisted, and her husband beat her up and raped her, and then went out for a meeting. She was brought here by the cleaning lady because she was bleeding from her nose and her mouth and she thought she probably had some broken ribs. After visiting and treating Awa, I decided to keep her under observation in the emergency room because she has some fractures and serious injuries. In addition, she said she was raped and I have to report this to the police."

Aboubacar gets even more angry but tries to control himself. He tells Alioune to write in his report that she fell down the stairs at home and orders the doctor to give him back his wife right away. Alioune resists. He says that a man has no right to beat a woman and force her to have sex with him. The holy man reminds Alioune that he is a very rich and respected

person in the community and that everyone needs money to survive in Dakar. Then he offers Alioune two million francs if he will give him back his wife and write in his report that she had a minor accident at home.

Alioune is confused. He asks Aboubacar to wait and goes to another room. Then he starts a monologue: "Years ago I swore the Hippocratic Oath, but I also have to take care of my family. I will lose my apartment if I don't find a way to get money." He remains silent, he hears his wife's voice saying, "you have to find a way", and finally he says out loud, "good luck has come to see me right in my office". He takes the medical report and writes that Awa fell down the stairs at home and signs it.

Alioune goes to the emergency room and gives the report to Aboubacar. Alioune tells Aboubacar to send someone to bring Awa home in two hours. She is currently being treated for her "unfortunate accident" and she will be ready to go home in a couple of hours. Aboubacar is very satisfied and says that Awa has learned that she has to be careful when she goes down the stairs. He gives Alioune an envelope and leaves the scene. Alioune sits down alone, his shift is finished, and he is preparing to go home. He is still stressed and silently stares at the ground. Then suddenly he says, "in the end, it's family business", and throws his white coat on a chair.

## › Scene 6

An hour later, Awa is in the middle of the street, hardly able to stand. It is only a few minutes after they removed her IV drip and told her that she was going back to her husband. She decided to leave the hospital and run away.

She calls Fatou and tells her that this is the last time they will talk and that during her stay in the hospital she has been thinking a lot about everything that has happened to her in the last two weeks. She concludes by saying that her dreams will never come true and that she has only two options if she doesn't want to spend her whole life as the third wife of a man: she can go to another town, become a prostitute and never let her family know where she is, or commit suicide.

She is distressed and very weak and she is not sure of what to do. She is certain that neither Fatou nor her family, who have failed to protect her, will ever hear from her again. She says goodbye to Fatou and hangs up. Fatou runs to the hospital and asks everyone if they saw Awa leave the hospital. Fatou runs into the street in front of the hospital and screams, "Awa! Awa!". Then she falls to her knees in the middle of the street and starts crying. She bows her head on the ground and freezes.

## › Story 2: Ousmane, The Talibé (on forced begging of children)

Characters:

1. Ousmane: the protagonist (10 years old)
2. Malik: the father of Ousmane, living in a rural area
3. Abibatou: the mother of Ousmane
4. Youssouf: Malik's friend and neighbour in a rural area
5. Idrissa: the people trafficker
6. Amadou: the school master at the Quranic school

7. Ibrahim: the older student (talibé) at the Quranic school
8. Aïcha: a woman selling fruit in the street
9. Aminata: a member of the municipality's group to fight forced child begging
10. Souleymane: the municipality social worker in charge of fighting forced child begging

## › Scene 1

The scene opens with Malik looking at the family fields. He lives in a village in the Kolda region of Senegal, which is an arid area at risk of drought. Most the people that live in the region depend on agriculture and live off the land. There is a lack of irrigation infrastructure and very little in the way of alternative industry.

Malik looks at the fields and realizes that the drought has destroyed everything that he has planted. He looks at the small dead plants in the ground and is very concerned. He has no other source of income and he does not know how he is going to support his wife and six children.

Malik walks home a very worried man. On his way, he meets Youssouf, his friend and neighbour. Youssouf realizes Malik is very worried and asks what is wrong. Malik explains he is worried because he does not know how to support his family. Youssouf tells Malik that he does not have this problem anymore: one of his children is working and going to school in Dakar, and sends him money every month, which means that he doesn't have to worry too much about the drought.

Malik is interested to learn more. He would like to send some of his six children to Dakar so they can send back money. Youssouf tells him that it is very easy. He just has to choose which of his six children should go and he will put Malik in touch with Idrissa, a man who manages some cars that regularly go to Dakar. Idrissa will organise the travel for Malik's son.

Malik asks, "but where is my son going to live in Dakar? And what will he do there?". Youssouf replies that Idrissa knows a lot of families there who need help with house chores and that in exchange for help in the house they give the child food, accommodation, time to go to school and some money every month to support their families back in the village".

Malik cannot believe it is so easy to solve all his problems and agrees that in a few days he will send Ousmane, his 10-year-old son, to Idrissa and ask Idrissa to get in touch with his contacts in Dakar and make sure Ousmane is placed in a family and sends money back every month. Youssouf says that it is a done deal and leaves. Malik returns home much happier: he has found the solution to his problem.

## › Scene 2

Malik returns home and talks with his wife, Abibatou. He explains that he has decided that Ousmane will travel with a friend of his friend Youssouf to Dakar. He tells his wife that he

knows Idrissa very well and that he is a respectable gentleman who will place Ousmane with a good family in Dakar, where Ousmane will work and send money back every month. Abibatou tries to protest: in Dakar there are many dangers for children. They will have no way to know if Ousmane needs help. Moreover, Ousmane is in the middle of his school year at primary school and will have to drop out. Malik tells his wife to be quiet, that it is not up to her to make decisions and that he has decided for the good of the family that Ousmane will go to school in Dakar and that he will support his parents, like all children have to.

Abibatou remains silent, as she was instructed to do by her mother when the husband makes decisions.

### › Scene 3

Ousmane travels with Idrissa to Dakar and they arrive at a koranic school (a daara) in the evening. Many children are returning to the school after a day spent begging in the streets.

Amadou, the school master, gives Ousmane clear instructions: every morning he will go out and beg in the streets. He must return in the evening with a thousand francs. He must not bring sugar, bread, candles, etc. He must bring only money. If he does not, he will be beaten up. If someone asks him his name, he will say his name is Oumar. He will never tell his real name to anyone. If someone asks him where he is sleeping at night and for the name of his school master, he will not answer. If he does, he will be severely beaten up.

Then the school master puts Ousmane under the supervision of Ibrahim, a 16-year-old pupil (talibé) who watches the other children and gets slightly better living conditions in the daara. Amadou leaves the school because he does not live there. During the night the children are watched by Ibrahim and other talibés who instruct and coordinate the newcomers.

Amadou warns Ibrahim to watch Ousmane at night and during the next days because he is new and is not yet used to begging. He may run away. Ibrahim tells his master not to worry, that he was like Ousmane before and that "he knows how it works with newcomers".

### › Scene 4

The morning after his arrival, Ousmane is begging on the streets of Dakar. Aïcha, a woman who sells fruit on the street and knows all the talibés of her neighbourhood, realizes there is a new child beggar that morning and she offers him a banana. But Ousmane is too frightened of punishment to approach her and take it.

A few minutes later, Aminata, a member of the municipality's group to fight forced child begging, approaches Aïcha to buy some fruit. Aïcha points out Ousmane and tells Aminata, "he is new, try to find out in which daara he is sleeping." Aminata calls Ousmane over, showing him a hundred francs coin and Ousmane quickly approaches.

Aminata quickly hides behind the fruit stall with Ousmane, so they cannot be seen by the other talibés and asks Ousmane his name. Ousmane is confused. At first, he gives his false name, but he does not remember it well and after a few more questions he reveals that his name is Ousmane, he arrived yesterday from a village in the Kolda region and that he sleeps in a daara three blocks away. Then Ousmane runs away and returns to his group of talibés.

### › Scene 5

Later in the day, Aminata and Souleymane, the municipality social worker, go to visit Ousmane's daara and they ask to see the school master. Ibrahim tries to say that the school master is not there but Aminata, who already knows Amadou, sees him from a window and asks him to come because the municipality's social worker wants to see him.

Souleymane asks Amadou questions about the living conditions of children in his daara. Amadou replies that the children enjoy very good conditions at his school and that parents from all over the country, and even from other countries such as Gambia and Guinea Bissau, entrust him with their children.

Aminata tells Amadou that in the morning she saw Ousmane begging in the streets three blocks away. Amadou replies that Ousmane has just arrived, that he doesn't want to learn the Koran and that morning he escaped to go hang out on the streets. Souleymane tells Ousmane that the municipality is working hard to stop children being forced to beg in the neighbourhood and he is ready to report school masters who force children to beg to the police.

Amadou says that he has no beggars among his students and that he will be the one to report Souleymane to the community as an enemy of Islam for trying to prevent him from teaching the Koran to the young. He asks Souleymane and Aminata to leave his daara because he is preparing for evening prayer. Souleymane and Aminata leave the scene.

As soon as they have left, Amadou grabs Ousmane and viciously beats him with a stick, telling him that the next time he reveals where his daara is, he is going to be killed and nobody will know anything about him. Then Amadou tells Ibrahim that tomorrow Ousmane will beg with Ibrahim, who will make sure that Ousmane doesn't speak to anyone. Amadou and Ibrahim leave the scene and Ousmane remains on the ground.

### › Scene 6

The next morning the group of talibés go out with Ibrahim. Ousmane is traumatized and confused. He can't beg and people give him nothing. As the evening is approaching, Ousmane talks to another talibé, looks at his can and realizes that he has not collected the thousand francs he has to bring back every day. He is frightened of being beaten again.

Ibrahim starts to gather the talibés to return to the daara. Ousmane wanders in the street. He is very confused, does not answer Ibrahim's call and runs away from the talibé group.

Ibrahim gets very angry and tries to catch Ousmane, who suddenly crosses the road to avoid Ibrahim. A car hits him and throws him to the side of the road.

Ibrahim runs away with the other talibés. On the other side of the road, Aminata is passing by and sees Ousmane. She runs to his rescue. Ousmane is on the ground bleeding and has lost consciousness. Aminata falls to her knees and cries. The two characters freeze.

### › Story 3: Selfie from Las Ramblas (on migrant smuggling)

Characters:

1. Moussa: the protagonist (17 years old)
2. Cheikh: Moussa's school mate (17 years old)
3. Salimata: Moussa's mother
4. Sédar: Moussa's father
5. Pape: the people trafficker
6. Police officer
7. Migrant 1 (in the boat)
8. Migrant 2 (in the boat)
9. Migrant 3 (in the boat)
10. Fish seller at the market (next to the beach)
11. A woman who buys fruit at the market

### › Scene 1

Moussa is a 17-year-old boy who is due to sit his high school exam in a week. School has ended and the students are getting ready for the exam. The scene opens early in the morning, Moussa's best friend and school mate Cheikh is sleeping in his bedroom.

Moussa enters Cheikh's room and wakes him up. Cheikh what's to keep sleeping but Moussa tells him that he's not going to take the exam because that he has found a better option than studying, which is useless in a country like Senegal where there are so many educated young people who don't have jobs.

Cheikh asks him about what he is going do and Moussa tells he met someone who will take him to Spain by boat. He is going to leave tomorrow, early in the morning, and he will send Cheikh a selfie from Las Ramblas in Barcelona.

Cheikh tries to convince Moussa to take his exam first and then think about this idea. He tells Moussa that travelling by boat is dangerous. But Moussa says he has made his mind up. He says goodbye to Cheikh and leaves.

### › Scene 2

A few hours later, Moussa is talking to his mother Salimata. Salimata is part of a local tontine, a microfinance scheme, and that week she is due to receive her earnings from its

members. Moussa tells her that he has to pay 500,000 francs to the trafficker to get on the boat. He asks his mother to give him the savings of the tontine.

Salimata is not sure. She wants to say yes to Moussa but she tells him that she had planned to use the money to expand her small business (selling food and soap in the street) and that she was hoping to be able to buy a shop one day.

Moussa insists that this is the opportunity of a lifetime and that it will benefit all the family. Salimata agrees and says, "I have many friends here in the neighbourhood who have their sons in Europe who send money every month. My friends go to religious festivals with brand new clothes, which they buy with the money their sons send from Europe. So I believe that you, Moussa, will be able to send more money from Europe than what I could earn with my small business."

She gives Moussa the money from the tontine. Moussa takes the money and goes to pack his bag, because he has an appointment with the trafficker in a small fishing town 30 kilometres north of Dakar. In the morning, at five o'clock, they will go to the Canary Islands.

### › Scene 3

The scene opens early in the morning at the fish market next to the beach where fishermen are returning with their catch. A woman is buying fish from the fishermen and another one is buying vegetables. Pape arrives and approaches a police officer in charge of patrolling that side of the beach and tells him at when he should go and patrol the other side of the beach. Then he shakes the police officer's hand and gives him a bribe without being seen. The police officer smiles and keeps patrolling.

Moussa enters the scene and greets Pape, giving him the 500,000 francs. Moussa looks at the boat. It is quite big but looks old and badly maintained. Many people are already sitting in the boat, waiting to leave. Moussa was preparing for his maths exam and he quickly calculates how much money a migrant boat is worth and tells Pape, "so this trip is worth over 30 million francs for you!". Pape is nervous and tells Moussa to shut up and sit down. He tells him that he no longer needs a brain, just luck to reach the other side. Ten minutes later the boat leaves.

The boat is overcrowded and there is no water on board. Some people vomit and fights erupt between people over space. In one of these fights Moussa sees that a man pushed is overboard and left behind. During the crossing some women are abused and others have mental health problems. After endless hours at sea, the boat arrives in the vicinity of the Canary Islands. An NGO boat rescues them and takes them to a reception centre on the island.

### › Scene 4

Eight months later, Moussa appears at the front door of his house in Dakar. He has his bag and he is very tired and depressed. His mother is very happy to see him and asks him what happened. Moussa tells her that after several months in the reception centre, the lawyer belonging to the NGO told him that his asylum application would never be accepted

because he was Senegalese and there are no armed conflicts in Senegal. After several months of waiting, he decided to accept a voluntary repatriation.

At that moment Sédar, Moussa's father, enters the room. He sees his son and asks him, "why did you came back?". Then he takes his bag and looks inside: there are only a few clothes. He looks at his son and is very disappointed. He says, "you didn't bring anything from Spain. It cost your mother so much money for you to go. Don't you feel ashamed? Why didn't you stay and send money back?". Moussa remains silent, sitting on a carpet and looking at the ground. His father remains standing and looking at him in anger. The two characters freeze.





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