Visit to a Cultural Space

Lugar Específico - entre Arte e Educação



N° of pax 5-20

2-3 hours

indoors | outdoors

Cultural Mediation | Drawing | Writing

PURPOSE

COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE OF A CULTURAL SPACE

- Body awareness
- Art expression
- Co creation of meaning and collective understanding

MATERIALS

- 1 A2 (flipchart paper)
- colors (crayons, markers, pastel oils, etc)
- 1 A4 paper/ participant + 1 per group
- 1 pen/ participant

PREPARATION

- Choose a cultural space (designed for visitors to learn something in it): museum, art center, cultural center, library, botanical garden,.

INTRO

Cultural spaces have been considered important for mental health. When we witness art or something outside of us that is attractive we can disconnect from the intense inner struggles, and be one with the moment and the space/object. Moreover when we visit a cultural space we can feel that something that was arranged in a certain order, which in itself brings relief and peace, communicates metaphorically that putting order in chaos is possible, bringing even subconscious inspiration and hope that whatever is bothering us inside can be organized.

When we experience something with a group we can feel united through the experience, we can enlarge our individual perspective with the sharing of the others and we can get to know each other more - which can bring us closer together.

VISIT TO A CULTURAL SPACE

STEPS

1. Intro - *"Where are we?"* - The facilitator welcomes the participants to the place and asks if anyone has been there before, if anyone knows something about it. Then shares the purpose of the visit, and to inspire and create some mystery around the visit, he/she can say *"there is something about this place that will be revealed to you and you only during your visit"*.

2. Body - *"How does your body feel in space?"* - Our body is a sensor and quickly understands how we feel in a place. Walk around the place focusing your attention on your body sensations and define the meeting point 1 and time to gather. - The groups gather at meeting point 1 and start all simultaneously sharing their body sensations with no words through flowing movements, postures, walks, etc. Then the facilitator calls participants 1 by 1 and the others stop to watch. **/ Art expression** - *"What is attractive to you?"*- The participants receive 1 paper and pen and walk through the space making stops near what calls their attention for a while and define a 2nd meeting point and time to gather. - Then they choose one of those spots and represent it on paper somehow without words and/or take a picture of it. - Then they gather and one by one present the draw and explain what was attractive in it to them and then compare it to the photo (if there is one). **/ Words and Meanings** - *"What words and ideas come to your mind?"* - The participants will do a last walk focusing their attention on the words and ideas that are formed in their minds while they walk around and then will meet at the 3rd meeting point.- At that point, there is a flipchart paper. Without talking to each other, everyone is invited to write the words they found in the shape of a visual poem. Everyone stands up and reads what is in the poem. Then the participants form small groups 3-4 and inspired by the visual poem they wrote they dialogue and take key notes about the meaning of the cultural space experience. From the conversation notes they try to write one sentence that can summarize it all, like a quote. Then each group shares with the big group their sentence and some of the key notes behind it.



REFLECTION

- How did you feel during each part of the activity?
- What did you learn about yourself, others and the cultural space?
- How do you think this activity can contribute to individual/group resilience building?

COMMENTS

- Since 2018 doctors in Canada prescribe up to 50 Museum visits/year/patient for stress and mental health related diseases, like burnout or anxiety. In 2021, following the WHO recommendation of Canada's good practice, Belgium doctors started to prescribe visits to museums for stress diseases related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Intuition is the intelligence that can better indicate to us about what we should or not do, where we should or not go, who we should or not be. It communicates through our BODY SENSATIONS, from which we are usually disconnected or which we leave behind for the sake of overvaluing mental intelligence. Therefore any body awareness practice is essential for mental health.

- What attracts you and the words that come to your mind in any present moment is not random, we are constantly projecting what is inside us and reading reality through the filter of what's going on inside and wants our attention. Dedicating attention to it can not only connect us with what's going on but allow us to work on the relationship with ourselves.