



YOUR STORY MATTERS

Experiential Training for Workplace Transformation

Offers the teaching community a unique opportunity and a fundamental principle for professional growth - to collectively and critically reflect on their teaching practice.

- ✓boost creativity
- ✓improve communication
- ✓challenge oppression
- ✓advance collaboration
- ✓re-define leadership

The information is useless without the power to act.

Developed by

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Overview

YOUR STORY MATTERS offers the teaching community a unique opportunity and a fundamental principle for professional growth – to collectively and critically reflect on their teaching practice.

The training merges critical pedagogy and experiential learning. It will greatly contribute to the quality of teachers' professional growth as it addresses the realistic challenges and relationships faced in schools and aims to equip teachers with the tools to actively promote positive change.

Using theatre-based methodology, the training advances teaching careers in three components:

- ✓ allows educators to have a dialogue about themes vital to them,
- ✓ presents an opportunity to explore choices and consequences by role-playing and creating images and scenes, and
- ✓ allows teachers to rehearse best practices for real life.

In professional conduct, teachers experience high stake situations. After an unsuccessful encounter with a student or an unproductive exchange with a colleague, they regret: "If only I..." However, they cannot take it back. Yet, in a safe training environment, we have the opportunity to pause to reflect, and rewind to practice new approaches. We learn by doing, not by being told. Information is useless without the power to act upon it.

Experiential Training is unique, as it:

- ✓ is story-based and works in the context of participants' own stories, experiences, and observations
- ✓ is holistic – the training engages both brain hemispheres, varied learning styles, and emotional intelligence
- ✓ gives participants a rare opportunity to share their challenges and conflicts as a springboard for uncovering the possible solutions and opportunities for change
- ✓ encourages participants to actively rehearse how to implement best practices for positive change in classroom and school community using theatre-based exercises, images, and scenes; a UNESCO recognized tool for social change
- ✓ utilizes role-playing - to gain insight from multiple perspectives
- ✓ provides for the integration of insights into teaching practice

YOUR STORY MATTERS offers the following workshops:

- ✓ *Aligning Teaching Philosophy with Teaching Practice*
- ✓ *Diversity and Anti-Oppression Training*
- ✓ *Creative Collaboration*

The training is conducted in fun and caring environment.

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Find Your Balance

Aligning Teaching Philosophy with Teaching Practice

Objective:

The greatest satisfaction and wellbeing in our life comes from achieving balance.

The objective of this workshop is to help educators find the balance between what they would like their practice to be and what it currently is. Our convictions play a tremendously important role in how we conduct ourselves, engage with others, and carry out our vision going forward. It is important that what we feel and what we do are in unison. We might have a strong conviction, but the workplace environment, circumstances, or our own thoughts prevent us from acting upon it and fulfilling our vision.

Guiding Questions:

Who do I want to be as an educator? How do I act upon my convictions?

During the workshop, participants will:

- ✓ Engage with other participants in theatre-based strategies and conduct hands-on creative work in small groups
- ✓ Share their workplace stories and experiences
- ✓ Role-play to access understanding of multiple perspectives and practice possible solutions
- ✓ Create images, a strategy of Theatre of the Oppressed, a UNESCO recognized tool for social change
- ✓ Use varied modes of expression and creative arts to identify and express their roles as educators

By the end of the training, participants will have:

- ✓ Created strategies for reflective teaching practice
- ✓ Identified their challenges, blocks and inhibitors
- ✓ Learned strategies for integration into the workplace environment
- ✓ Developed an agency to act upon their conviction
- ✓ Revitalized their creativity
- ✓ Renewed their ability to imagine possibilities
- ✓ Rehearsed best practices for positive change
- ✓ Re-energized their collaboration skills
- ✓ Refreshed active listening and emotional intelligence



Diversity and Anti-Oppression Training

Objective:

For teachers to be able to promote social change and work toward inclusive and equitable classroom and school environments, they first need to see themselves as agents of change.

In addition to critically reflecting on their teaching practice, teachers will be encouraged to contemplate how to improve communication with students, colleagues, and other constituents, and advance their conflict resolution approaches. They will heighten their awareness of personal biases and inequities as well as discriminatory situations that are taking place in their workplace and in the society at large.

Guiding Questions:

How does diversity affect me? What is my personal / professional bias?

During the workshop, participants will:

- ✓ Engage with other participants in theatre-based strategies and conduct hands-on creative work
- ✓ Share their stories and experiences of challenges, oppression, and biases
- ✓ Role-play real-life situations to understand different perspectives
- ✓ Create images and scenes to rehearse positive change
- ✓ Reflect on their teaching practice individual and collectively
- ✓ Work using varied modes of expression (such as verbal, physical, visual) and creative arts
- ✓ Examine the range of oppression: from systemic oppression through to power hierarchy inequalities to internalized oppression and behavioural inhibitions

By the end of the training, participants will have:

- ✓ Learned to identify inequality and power hierarchy in relationships and communication
- ✓ Recognized their own biases and how they manifest in their practice
- ✓ Improved conflict resolution skills
- ✓ Revitalized their creativity
- ✓ Renewed their ability to imagine possibilities
- ✓ Seen colleagues in new perspectives
- ✓ Rehearsed best practices for positive change
- ✓ Refreshed active listening skills



Creative Collaboration

Objective:

Constantly changing dynamics of human relationships within a group of staff commands an acute awareness and an active participation in co-creating the dynamics. This training will bring your staff together to problem-solve, to take on a creative challenge, and to identify the fundamentals of collaborative process.

Guiding Questions:

What is my collaborative style? How do I respond to an unpredictable situation?

During the training, participants will:

- ✓ Solve creative problems in small groups
- ✓ Role-play to identify and practice multiple communication styles
- ✓ Share their stories and experiences
- ✓ Practice active listening
- ✓ Utilize varied modes of expression and creative arts
- ✓ Uncover group dynamics, power hierarchy, and decision-making process
- ✓ Learn strategies for maintaining group cohesion

By the end of the training, participants will have:

- ✓ Reflected on their own role within the group dynamics and collaboration
- ✓ Identified challenges in working with others
- ✓ Learned the steps of constructive feedback and supportive communication
- ✓ Revitalized their creativity
- ✓ Renewed their ability to imagine possibilities
- ✓ Seen colleagues in new perspectives
- ✓ Learned strategies for integration into the workplace environment
- ✓ Refreshed active listening skills





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Pavla Uppal, M.A.

Pavla is a theatre artist and experiential learning consultant. She is passionate about stories and encourages the human agency for active art-making as an expression of civic engagement and as a tool for learning and professional and personal growth. Pavla envisions more balanced, creative, and open-minded working people. Her practice is based in participant-centered philosophy and critical pedagogy. She graduated with the MA in Applied Theatre degree in New York City and Bachelor of Education from OISE in Toronto. In her work in the Czech Republic, Canada, USA, and Malaysia, she has been delivering theatre-based training to professionals in education and community-building.

"I believe that people are ultimately the experts on their own lives, and have the knowledge and skill set for self-help and improvement. They need a stimulating, illuminating, and safe learning environment to arrive at their own "aha" moments and they need a training structure to integrate the insights into their work practice."

Links to theoretical underpinnings of methodology and practical resources:

[Theatre of the Oppressed - international organization](#)

[Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed](#)

[Pavla's web site](#)

"Theatre is a language through which human beings can engage in active dialogue on what is important to them. It allows individuals create a safe space that they may inhabit in groups and use to explore the interactions which make up their lives. It is a lab for problem solving, for seeking options, and for practicing solutions."

Augusto Boal, creator and practitioner of the Theatre of the Oppressed system

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Training Format Options:

3hour workshop:

Introduction
Ice-breakers / lead-in strategies and exercises
The core work: story-telling and Image Theatre models
Reflection and integration to workplace

Full day training:

Introduction
Ice-breakers / lead-in strategies and exercises
The core work: story-telling, Image and Forum Theatre models
Reflection and integration to workplace

In addition to the structure of the 3 hour workshop, during the full day training more in-depth examination is achieved and participants get a chance to further practice the strategies for positive change and integration.

Material

At the end of a training session, participants will obtain a material, which will include:

- ✓ the outline and description of used strategies,
- ✓ points and questions for developing their own reflective praxis,
- ✓ suggestions how to implement the training's benefit to their work, and
- ✓ follow up exercises.

The maximum number of participants for one session is 25.



***"It is a miracle that the curiosity survived formal schooling."* Albert Einstein**

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