










# ‘You could be my mother’

## Relationships across history and cultures

 <b>TIME</b>	<p>45-60 min</p>
 <b>No.</b>	<p>Adaptable with any group size</p>
 <b>MATERIALS</b>	<p>Prepare to collect photographs and / or art pictures depicting relationships through history or contemporary cultures and subcultures. You might want to cover romantic relationship, friendship, marriage, all kinds of family models. It might be useful to prepare about background of the pictures you collect before you bring them in the group.</p>
 <b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness raising: what is considered to be ‘normal’ when it comes to loving / intimate relationship was always dependent on the current culture, social norms and expectations.</li> <li>• Helps to foster critical thinking; to understand and accept diversity</li> <li>• Helps to normalize diversity of loving relationships</li> </ul>

 <p><b>INSTRUCTIONS STEP BY STEP</b></p>	<p>Facilitate a discussion based on the pictures in the following way: Make an 'exhibition' of the pictures. Give the following instructions!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk around (silently) in the room and choose the image that evokes the strongest feeling in you! (it can be positive or negative) 2. take the picture and answer the following questions in order: 1. What is the specific element in the picture that caused the feeling in you? 2. What was the feeling IN YOU (not in the character of the picture) that the picture evoked? 3. What beliefs, norms, values can be behind your feeling? - the practice presupposes the knowledge of, so that we can help the separation of emotions and values, the "my positions", the self-reflection with a limited hand in the debrief.</li> </ul>
 <p><b>DISCUSSIONS</b></p>	<p>You can facilitate a discussion on what is 'normal' what is accepted or punished in a given culture and society. You can discuss social norms, the social function of regulation of intimate relationships. You can also cover taboos regarding relationships. Based on the images you might want to discuss with the group how it is seen in your environment and in societies in general loving relationships more in detail to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Sexual orientation</li> <li>• Social and cultural background</li> </ul> <p>In the debrief it is important to explain that the reason why we do this activity in this way is to learn that social and cultural norms are so deeply embedded in our system, our personal thinking that we hardly recognize our own cultural prejudices. We tend to think what we think is 'normal' because we do not 'think' but 'feel' it. Our reactions are most probably emotional reactions although it is about cultural norms and values. This prevents us to accept the 'other' if its different from us. This prevents us to accept diversity. Diversity is something we can learn. Human relations are also culturally organized and disciplined.</p>
	<p>For this task, it is important for the facilitator to know exactly what you want to achieve with the exercise and whether you have enough knowledge of the chosen images.</p>

<p><b>HINTS</b></p>	<p>Another version of this activity can be to collect video fragments from films, theater plays to show different relationship models. Try to make a collection from all kinds of cultures and historical times. You can ask students (or adult participants) to bring images, videos so you make the exhibition together. You can facilitate a discussion on what is 'normal', accepted or punished. You can discuss social norms, the social function of regulation of relationships.</p>
<p> <b>THIS ACTIVITY ONLINE</b></p>	<p>This activity can be done online showing the images and discuss them in plenary or in small groups.</p>
<p> <b>THEORY</b></p>	<p>This activity has been developed by Dora Djamila Mester @ ArsErotica Foundation &amp; In Touch Amsterdam based on the Critical Incident methodology by Margalit Cohen Emerique's. Source: <a href="https://intimacyacrosscultures.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/4-1-EN.pdf">https://intimacyacrosscultures.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/4-1-EN.pdf</a></p>

For this task, it is important for the facilitator to know exactly what you want to achieve with the exercise and whether you are moving at home in the area you choose the images. Accordingly, there is a strong emphasis on image selection: in this case, the goal was to sensitize sexual subcultures to diversity and to map our own boundaries. When no one is pictured in the room, the group comes in at the same time when the pictures are already on the wall. Task: 1. walk around (silently) in the room and choose the image that evokes the strongest feeling in you! (if you ask the one that addresses you best, it runs the task to another - now the goal is to explore and deal with difficult situations, critical incidents) 2. take the picture and answer the following questions in order: 1. what is specific thing in the picture that caused the feeling in you? 2. What was the feeling IN YOU (not in the character of the picture)? 3. What beliefs are behind the feeling behind you? - the practice presupposes the knowledge of Margalit Cohen Emerique's Critical Incident methodology, so that we can help the separation of emotions and values, the "my positions", the self-reflection with a limited hand in the debrief.



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