










Sexuality across history and cultures

 TIME	<p>45-60 min</p>
 NO.	<p>Adaptable with any group size</p>
 MATERIALS	<p>Prepare to collect photographs and / or art pictures depicting sexual practices through history or contemporary cultures and subcultures. It might be useful to prepare about background of the pictures you collect before you bring them in the group.</p>
 OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising: what is considered to be 'normal' when it comes to sexuality was always dependent on the current culture, social norms and expectations. • Helps to foster critical thinking; to understand and accept diversity • Helps to normalize diversity of sexual practices
 INSTRUCTIONS STEP BY STEP	<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"> • Walk around (silently) in the room and choose the image that evokes the strongest feeling in you! (it can be positive or negative) <p>2. take the picture and answer the following questions in order: 1. What is the specific element in the picture that caused the feeling</p>

	<p>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.</p>
 <p>DISCUSSION</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 and sexual relationships. You can also cover taboos regarding sexuality. Based on the images you might want to discuss with the group how it is seen in your environment and in societies in general sexuality more in detail to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heterosexual practices • Non-heterosexual practices • Gender • Age • Sexual subcultures • Sexual practices from non-Western cultures <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 sexuality is culturally organized and disciplined.</p>
 <p>TIPS</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. If you don't feel confident enough to talk about sexuality you might want to invite an external educator.</p> <p>Another version of this activity can be to ask participants to bring examples of different sexual practices from contemporary cultures, subcultures, for from history. Try to make a collection from all kinds of cultures and historical times. You can facilitate a discussion on what is</p>

	<p>'normal', accepted or punished. You can discuss social norms, the social function of regulation of relationships.</p> <p>You have to be prepared that personal involvement of participants can make the discussion very sensitive. You might want to ask a colleague of yours to co-facilitate. Pay attention that everyone uses 'I statements', participants don't judge each other. Gender identity and sexuality for most of the people is very fragile and sensitive, facilitators should be aware of this. Any of the images can trigger former traumas which might make participants very vulnerable. It can be useful to remind participants again of the Safety rules and make sure everyone can keep their boundaries. It is very important to hold the space and keep it safe for participants.</p> <p>If you don't feel confident or prepared enough on the cultural history of sexuality you would rather skip this activity.</p>
 <p>THIS ACTIVITY ONLINE</p>	<p>This activity can be done online showing the images and discuss them in plenary or in small groups.</p>
 <p>THEORY</p>	<p>This activity has been developed by Dora Djamila Mester @ ArsErotica Foundation & In Touch Amsterdam based on the Critical Incident methodology by Margalit Cohen Emerique's.</p> <p>Source: https://doramester.com/2013/10/it-has-nothing-to-do-with-nature-sex-and-culture/</p>



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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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