

ACTIVITY -

TELL ABOUT A PHOTO THAT MAKES YOU HAPPY

This activity helps to stimulate people to tell stories and gives you, the trainer, an idea of their storytelling abilities. This activity is a variation on the letter A activity, and can be used to further illustrate the role of the listener's imagination in sharing stories.

Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• putting participants in touch with a happy feeling by means of a photo• encourage participants (in an approachable way) to tell a short story• familiarise participants with the fact that when someone tells a story to a group of people, each listener interprets what they hear in a different way.• making participants aware that the narrator and the listener both have an active role• foster acquaintance between participants• give you as a trainer some insight into the storytelling skills of the participants
Duration	Depending on the number of participants. Search for picture and time to think about the story approx. 5 min; time per participant approx. 3 min (incl. description of other participant)
Amount of participants	More than 1, preferably more than 3. No clear maximum number, but the more participants, the longer this activity will last.
Requirements	Devices of participants on which they can choose their own photo (mobile phone, laptop, etc.)
Instructions	Do this early in the training. Emphasise that the photo that makes them happy should be one of their own photos. Emphasise that they must not show the photo to others until you ask them to.
Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the participants to choose a picture that makes them happy on a mobile device (usually this will be a phone). Give them 5 minutes to do this.• Ask them not to show that photo to others• Ask one of the participants to tell about the photo (for example: where was it taken and when, who were you with, why does the photo make you happy)• When the participant has finished his/her story, ask another participant to describe the photo as he/she thinks it looks based on what has been said about it• Then ask the first participant to show the photo to the group

- Repeat until everyone has told their story about their photo and everyone has described what they think the photo looks like based on that story.

Then ask the participants what the differences are between what you think the photo looks like and what it actually is. Give them time to come up with their own answer (along the lines of: the story about the photo evokes images in me). Once the answer has been given, you can build a bridge to how everyone can give their own interpretation to a story told which implies that not only the narrator, but also the listener plays an active role in how a story is 'received'.

Hints & Tips

Keep the exercise 'light'. It is intended as a playful introduction to storytelling and the active role of both narrator and listener. If the group is larger than 8 people, you can choose to split the group into pairs. One person starts by telling about the photo, one listener then describes what he/she thinks the photo looks like after which the roles are reversed. Once everyone has done this, bring the group back together and ask the question what causes the differences.

Instead of asking people to choose a photo from their own archives, you can make them choose between photos you provide. Instead of asking them to tell about the situation that made them happy, you can ask them to make up a story, inspired by what they see in the picture. For some people this might be easier than talking about something personal linked to their own photo. For others it might be harder. You could also combine both activities and ask some to use their own picture and others to have a look at yours.