

SELF- REVELATION AND SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISES

By Symbolic Drawings

- Exercise 1. Lights and Shadows
 Exercise 2. Caricature Drawing
 Exercise 3. Symbolic Sketches
 Exercise 4. My Tree

NOTES ON HOW TO CONDUCT THESE EXERCISES

1. *These exercises are not to be used at random for fun, or just as time-fillers. They are tools and instruments towards "self-revelation" and "self-discovery".*
2. *When an exercise is attempted, make sure that there is ample time for processing its results.*
3. *Be judicious in the use of confrontation. It is dangerous.*
4. *No direct questions or discussions should be had on any personal material shared.*
5. *Only clarifications may be asked from the one making the sharing.*
6. *No one should be given feedback unless explicitly, he asks for it.*
7. *Participants should feel absolutely free to share only what they feel confident to share.*
8. *In case someone in the group is revealing or disclosing personal and confidential material, the moderator- if he thinks it proper- may stop him from doing so.*
9. *Deep and confidential sharing can be done only when the group is mature, receptive, empathetic and discreet enough to keep confidentiality.*
10. *If the moderator has a "hunch" that someone has some serious personal problem, he should not tackle the problem in public. If he feels qualified to handle it, he may call the person concerned for a one-to-one sharing and counseling session. If he does not feel competent, he may refer that person to a professional.*

USES OF THESE EXERCISES:

- ✓ *For awareness sessions.*
- ✓ *For self-discovery.*
- ✓ *For group building.*
- ✓ *To improve one's self-image.*
- ✓ *For communication workshops.*
- ✓ *As a means of "self-expression".*
- ✓ *To help participants verbalize ideas, feelings and experiences which they have not yet been unable to express conceptually.*
- ✓ *For growth sessions.*

- ✓ For one to one counseling situations.
- ✓ To uncover latent fears, apprehensions, negative feelings, biases. .

Exercise 1

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

Note for the Moderator: *This exercise is meant mainly for "self-revelation". It has, however, a good potential for "self-discovery". Through symbolical figures of themselves and their chiaroscuros of dark and bright shadows, the participants may project an image of themselves beyond their ordinary self-awareness.*

Group Size: Groups not exceeding 10 or 12 members. If the number of participants is large, divide them into smaller groups. Secure good moderators the groups.

Requirements:

Drawing paper - foolscaps size sheets.
Pencils, ball-pens and color felt-pens..

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1. Mini-introductory Input:

- Life is a mixture of lights and shadows... of good and evil.., of positive and negative qualities ... plus and minus assets..
- The brighter the light, the darker, by contrast, the shadows will be.
- Good "qualities necessarily imply "deficiencies" as well...
- "High" peaks loom over "low" valleys...
- All of us are a mixture of lights and shadows... Let's explore!

2. Personal Work.

Drawig Your Symbolical Image thorough Lights and Shadows

Note: *We offer two models to draw this symbolical self-image. Choose the one you think best for your group.*

1st Model: "Geometrical Figure"

- ✓ Draw a geometrical figure that symbolizes you: e.g. a circle, a triangle, a rhombus, etc.
- ✓ Divide this figure into different sectors or parts that symbolize your areas of "lights" and "shadows", strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ Color this figure and its different sectors with different shades and intensity of color-patterns, blots, lights and shadows that express best your assets and liabilities.

2nd Model: "Silhouette" of Yourself

- ✓ Draw a human silhouette that's you!
- ✓ Use dark ink to give that figure variegated shades or light and shadows... brightness and darkness... for different parts. The bright and black shades will symbolize your strengths and weaknesses diffused all over you.
- ✓ You may use colors too. Color your silhouette in such a way that the different hues and tints express your overall view about your "self"... about the bright and dark spots in your life...

3. Sharing - Interaction - Reflection:

Sharing:

The participants will show and explain their light-and-shadow figures to the group representing the "dark" and "bright" side of theirs. They will elaborate on the symbolic meaning of the different shapes, patterns, color schemes, hues, and also the manner in which they have located them. Etc

Clarifications may be asked by the group members. *Questions or discussion will not be allowed.*

Interaction:

Once the sharing is over, interaction will follow. Encourage the participants to interact thus, leading them to further self-revelation and discovery.

Reflection and mini-input:

After the sharing and interaction are over, the moderator may offer his observations on the group processes and summarize the insights arrived at by the group.

Participants may ask for feedback from the group or the moderator. *No one will be given feedback unless he asks for it.*

Individual participants may relate to the group the "self-discoveries" they made through this exercise.

Personal Prayer

Give time for personal reflection, prayer and interiorization.

Group Shared Prayer.

End the exercise with a short group-prayer in which all are enjoined to pray for one

Exercise 2

CARICATURE DRAWING

Note for the Moderator:

- ✓ This exercise is based on caricature drawing. By nature, it's a projective method
- ✓ The participants are told to draw cartoon strips of themselves.
- ✓ Through them, unawares, they may express and magnify their self-perceptions, their unexpressed longings and repressed frustrations.

- ✓ We offer in these jottings three models of caricatures.
 - **Model one** intends educating from the participants **the** image they have of themselves: i.e. their "self-image".
 - **Model two** tries to bring out their "Ideal-self", i.e. what they long for, what they would like to be.
 - **Model three:** seeks to bring to the open what they actually "like", and what they "dislike" in themselves, in other words, what parts of themselves they "accepted" or "rejected"
- ✓ While conducting this exercise you may ask the participants to draw one of these three models, or two, or the three of them. All depends on what you have in mind while offering the exercise.
- ✓ This exercise has a great potential both for self-revelation and self-discovery. The participants are likely to manifest a lot of themselves.
- ✓ Use this exercise carefully. If need be, you may take up later on in private, with those concerned, some of the points that might have surfaced during the sharing

Group Size:

The group should not exceed 8 members. If the number of participants is large, divide them into smaller groups. In that case, good moderators are required for the small groups

Requirements:

Drawing paper or foolscap papers for all.
Color pencils, or crayons, or color felt pens.

1. Introductory Explanation

- ✓ Explain to the participants what a caricature is: namely, a drawing which, although true to life, exaggerates both the positive and the negative traits of a person.
- ✓ They will be requested to draw a caricature of themselves following your instructions.
- ✓ They should not worry about the artistic value of their drawings. The important point will be the symbolic and representative value of their drawings.

2. Personal Work Drawing

Draw your caricatures according to the instructions given to you.

Model One:

Draw a Caricature of Yourself as You See Yourself, here and now as a person. Your qualities and abilities, your strengths and weakness, your personal character and physique

F.I. If you are clever, you may draw yourself with a big head or big brains... If you are jealous, you may paint your face green... Use profusely, both drawings and colors as symbolically representing yourself.

Model Two:

Draw a Caricature of what sort of person You would like to Be,

F.i. If you would like to be kind, draw an expanding heart... Use profusely, both drawings and coloring as symbolically representing yourself.

Model Three:

Draw a Caricature that expresses what You Like and What You Dislike In You.

F.i. Small legs if you dislike your lack of sporting abilities Use profusely, both drawings and coloring as symbolically representing yourself.

3. Group Sharing - Interaction - Reflection:

- **Sharing:** Participants will show their caricatures to the group and explain the meaning of their drawings, colors, shapes, shades, figures, etc.
Personal questions, interpretations and discussions on the materials shared not allowed.
- **Interaction – further clarifications - will be encouraged.**
Through an empathetic interaction, the participants will be helped and encouraged to disclose even more of themselves to the group.
- **Reflection:** After the sharing and interaction are over, the moderator may offer his remarks and reflections on the group processes and on the group findings.
- **Feed-back:** Participants may ask for feedback from the group or from the moderator. *No one will be given feedback unless he asks for it.*
- **Insights:** The participants may be requested to candidly share with the group the “self-discoveries” and insights they gained through this exercise.
- **Interiorization:** Some time could be spent in personal reflection.

4. Closing shared group-prayer:

- The participants may be requested to pray for one another
- If anyone would like to be prayed upon, let him ask the group for it..

APPENDIX: VARIATIONS:

You may ask the participants to draw a caricature of themselves:

1. As they think others see them.
2. As they would like others see them.
3. Expressing what others "like" or "dislike" in them.
4. Expressing what they feel some significant people think of them: F.i. their parents, their friends, teachers, superiors etc.
5. Expressing what God feels about them.

Exercise 3

SYMBOLIC SKETCHES

Note for the Moderator:

- ✓ The participants will be instructed to prepare a drawing that "symbolizes" what they are, what they feel, their strengths, their weaknesses, their desires, their longings, their successes, their failures, etc.
- ✓ Tell them that the "artistic" value of their drawings does not matter. The all-important thing is the representative and self-revealing value the drawings have.
- ✓ Let them know beforehand that the drawings will be shown to the group. However, caution them that they will be free to comment of their drawings only what they may wish to share.
- ✓ This method has a great "projective" value. The drawings may disclose a lot of the participants' true selves.
- ✓ At the sharing session, be careful not to push the participants to disclose more than what they would wish to reveal.
- ✓ If while listening to their sharing, you have a "hunch" that someone has a sort of a deep emotional or personal problem, don't prod. You may meet him privately, some time later.

Requirements:

Drawing materials for all. Drawing paper or blank sheets, felt -pens, crayons, color pencils, etc.

Group Size:

For the sharing and processing time, the group should not exceed 8 or 10 persons. If their number is larger, divide them into smaller groups; however, secure good moderators for the groups.

1. Personal Work. Symbolic Drawing of Self

Instructions to the Participants:

- Draw a scene or a landscape with all sorts of animals, persona, objects of nature, manufactured objects, etc that symbolically represent what you are, what you feel, what you like and dislike, what you love and hate, your successes and failures, your strengths and weaknesses, your desires, your longings, etc. In short, the drawing should symbolize what you are and what and how you feel!
- Use lines and or designs, colors and shades, color patterns, color schemes, color combinations, super-impositions, etc. to symbolically represent yourself,
- Later on, when you explain your drawings, you should be able to account for the meaning of your designs, colors, and patterns, etc. . Everything you draw should have some a meaning for you.
- Take your time to complete your drawings.

2. Group Work. Sharing - Interaction - Reflection: (Processing time)

Sharing:

- Make it very clear to all that while doing the sharing, they are free to share only what they wish to share and reply only to the clarifications they would like to reply.

- One participant after another will share his drawing. He will explain to the group the meaning of his drawing and the significance each detail has for him.
- Ask for a volunteer to start the ball rolling.
- The group members may ask for clarifications. No discussions, evaluations or analysis of the material shared will be allowed.
- Clarifications may be asked .Group members may also request the one doing the sharing to explain some other details of his drawing. The moderator may stop the questioning, if discretion demands it.

Interaction:

- Encourage interaction.

Feed-back

- When all finished their sharing, anyone may ask for feedback from the moderator or from the group.. *No one will be given feedback unless he asks for it.*

Insights: The participants may be requested to candidly share with the group the “self-discoveries” and insights they gained through this exercise.

Reflection

- The moderator may now offer his own observations and comments on the group processes and on the insights gained by the group members..

Interiorization:

- Some time could be spent in personal reflection

Group Prayer.

- Close the event with a shared group-prayer in which all are enjoined to pray for one

Exercise 4

MY TREE

Note for the moderator:

- ✓ This exercise is based symbolic power of the tree
- ✓ The participants are told that their lives can be compared to a tree with its three main components, **roots, trunk and branches.**
- ✓ The exercise is rich in self-revelation and self-discovery
- ✓ It is a simple exercise and can be gone through in a relatively short time. It is suitable for all and sundry.

Requirements:

Writing material for all.

Drawing materials: foolscaps, crayons, felt color pens, color pencils, etc.

Group Size:

For the sharing part of it, groups no bigger than 12 each. If their number is larger, divide them into smaller groups; however, secure good moderators for the groups.

1. Mini-Input Suggested ideas

- Our growth - in fact our life itself - can be compared to a tree.
- A tree has three main parts: roots, trunk and branches.
- The roots sustain the tree, nourish it, and give it consistency and stability. Through the inward and hidden roots the tree grows.
- The trunk characterizes the tree, gives it its name, puts it on the botanical map of the world, raises it up skyward. The trunk aspires ever to reach higher Through the trunk the tree grows upwards.
- The branches give foliage, flowers, and fruits. They spread fragrance and beauty around. They make the tree move outwards, to others. Through the branches the tree has something to offer to man, bird and beast. Through the branches the tree grows outwards
- **We, too, have roots:** a family, a culture, an education, the society we are born in, religious affiliation, faith, nation, region, language, etc. **Through our hidden and inward roots we keep alive and growing.**
- **We have a trunk** namely, ourselves, our character, our qualities of mind and heart, our external appearance, our strength, our senses, our dignity, our personal endowments, **Through our trunk we grow upwards**
- **We have branches,** namely, our good deeds, our acts of kindness, our social relationship, our service, our sense of community, our reaching out to others, our human solidarity, we shelter the homeless, feed the hungry, clothe the naked and dry the tears of the sorrowing. **Through the branches we grow outwards**

2. Drawing Your Tree:

Instructions for the Participants:

- You will draw a tree, "your tree: "**Your roots, trunk and branches.**
- Think of your life. Who are you? What are you? Your characteristics, your qualities, strengths and weaknesses. How did you come to be??
- Take drawing materials and symbolically and figuratively, draw the tree that you are. Let each bit of your drawing have a symbolic value.
 - **Think of your roots and draw them:** Your family, religious influences, social class, education, your faith, life experiences, etc. Then draw the roots of your tree. Let each part of your drawing have a symbolic significance.
 - **Think of your trunk and draw it.** Your body, your physical appearance, your health, strength, all physical abilities, intelligence, sharpness of your senses, exploits successes, sports, etc.
 - **Next think of your branches and draw them.** You're going out to others, your social relationships, your deeds, your concern for others, your friendships, your acts of service and kindness, etc

Let each bit of your drawing have some symbolic significance

Instructions for the Moderator:

After all finish drawing their tree, give them the following instructions:

- Now, go over your drawings and add to them some explanatory "captions" such as:
 - ✓ This root is my dad,

- ✓ That other root signifies my religious experiences, etc..
- ✓ This rough surface of my trunk is my temper.
- ✓ That bird sitting on a branch is my best friend. Etc..

3. Group Work : Sharing - Reflection - Interaction:

Sharing:

One after the other, the participants will share their tree with the members of their group and explain to them the symbolic meaning of its different parts..

Group members may ask for clarifications.

No discussions will be allowed on the materials shared.

Interaction

After sharing and clarifications, positive interaction and strokes will be encouraged.

Feed-back.

Anyone may seek feedback from the moderator or the group. *No one will be given feedback unless he asks for it.*

Reflection:

The moderator may offer some reflections on the processes of the group and his observations. He may comment on some of the following points:

Influence of our "roots" in the shaping of our trunks and our branches; namely, on who we are and on how we relate to others.

Life is a continuous growth, and so to keep growing, we have to go deeper and deeper into the soil and nourish and strengthen our root, namely, our relationship with God, with our family, with people, with ourselves.

In all growth processes the roots; the "growing inwards" is the most important factor. It's unwise to try to grow upwards and outwards, when our roots are weak. Unless our roots grow deeper and stronger, we shall crash! The whole tree of our life will topple over.

Interiorization

Give the participants time for personal reflection and prayer.

Closing Group Shared Prayer:

Close down the exercise with a shared group prayer in which all are enjoined to pray for one another.