Interactive teaching methods for non-actors – drama for developing supervisors

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In our courses for university teachers and supervisors we have tried different forms of drama and interpretations to illustrate and understand complex issues in our context of teaching and learning. Engaging in performance can bring forward questions, experiences and issues that sometimes are difficult to express in words. With an inspiration in Augusto Boal’s work around forum theatre, we have developed a special method of illustrating and solving complex problems in human relations, and in our context of teaching and learning – a method that we also use successfully for developing our supervisors in our 2 weeks course Postgraduate supervision in practice.

Boal developed a form of theatre from traditional monologues at stage into a form based on a dialogue between audience and stage. In our model, all course participants are engaged in a role play or a form of forum theatre. The choice of activity is based on the specified learning outcomes for each course. Common themes are gender, diversity, and balance of power. Our model becomes an extraordinary tool for transforming difficult questions and issues to a training ground for action and understanding of human behaviour in our specific environment as an University. We also become actively engaged with our participants, developing relationships and trust, and having a very good time. We want to discuss and share our model, the games and exercises, with the participants in a 60 minutes Showcase/workshop.