

Appreciating Aesthetics: The effects of beauty

Separating beauty from desire

Three Activities

These activities can be done in pairs with an explorer and a facilitator, and it is usually helpful to have a third person to support the facilitator.

For an explanation of Perceiver, Perceived, Relationship and Context, see our PPRC model: cleanlanguage.co.uk/articles/articles/190/1/Paying-attention-to-what-theyre-paying-attention-to/

Activity A: 20 mins each way

Context: An aesthetically pleasing item brought/chosen by the explorer.

(1) What is aesthetically pleasing about it?

Use Clean Language (CL) to facilitate the explorer to identify and develop their *criteria* (Perceived).

(2) How do you know it is aesthetically pleasing?

Use CL to facilitate the explorer to identify and develop their *signals* (Perceiver).

(3) What's the relationship between you and it, between (1) and (2)?

Use CL to facilitate the explorer to identify and develop a *metaphor for the relationship* between criteria and signals (Perceived and Perceiver).

Notes for facilitator (and observer/supporter):

Write down the explorer's key words for their criteria, signal and relationship.

This activity is *not* about the content or meaning of the object.

The criteria (1) will be about the *exterior form* that makes it aesthetically pleasing.

The signal (2) will be the *interior experience* that registers the aesthetics.

The relationship (3) will be at a higher logical level than (1) and (2).

The explorer may shift attention between Perceived, Perceiver and the Relationship between. The information may not come out in the order requested above — and that's OK. Your job is to sort it into the three categories.

The explorer may need a contrast with something they consider anti-aesthetic (ugly, unappealing) to identify (1) and (2).

Activity B:

Context: A current problematic situation the explorer would like to be different.

(4) All draw two metaphor landscapes:

- One for how it is now
- One for how you would like it to be.

Place the drawings as if they are in an art gallery.

Context: The two metaphor drawings.

(5) Place yourself and facilitator(s) where they need to be in relation to the two drawings.

- When [*criteria* (1) from Activity A], what do you know about those two [point to drawings]?
- When [*signals* (2) from Activity A], what do you know about those two [point to drawings]?
- When [*relationship* (3) from Activity A], what do you know about those two [drawings]?

Use CL to facilitate for the explorer to identify and develop the aesthetic (and anti-aesthetic) in each of the metaphor drawings.

Notes for facilitator:

The desired outcome should be about the explorer's life, *not* about aesthetics.

It is not about judging the quality of the drawings, rather it is for the explorer to identify the aspects of each drawing that are aesthetically pleasing – or not.

Include criteria/signals/relationship from Activity 1.

Foreground the *form* of the drawings (and background the situation they represent).

Separate the aesthetic from the desire.

May need to develop the metaphors in the drawing a little (i.e. elaborate their attributes), but this is not the aim of the activity.

Explorer may view their representations as if going around an art gallery (if this helps adopt the appropriate perspective).

Activity C:

Context: Problematic situation and desired outcome chosen in Activity B.

(6) And when [5], then what happens?

Use CL to facilitate the explorer to discover the *effects* of attending to the aesthetics on their perception of the two metaphor landscapes.

(7) What difference has Activity A and B made?

Facilitate explorer to attend to the effects on *what the metaphor drawings represent*.

And to mature changes.

Notes for facilitator:

Shift attention from the metaphor drawings to the context chosen in Activity B.

Questions similar to these may be appropriate:

- When knowing [aesthetic *criteria*], what happens to [Problematic Situation]?
- When knowing [aesthetic *signals*], what happens to [Problematic Situation]?
- When knowing [aesthetic *relationship*], what happens to [Problematic Situation]?

- When knowing [aesthetic *criteria*], what happens to [Desired Outcome]?
- When knowing [aesthetic *signals*], what happens to [Desired Outcome]?
- When knowing [aesthetic *relationship*], what happens to [Desired Outcome]?

- How could knowing [*criteria/signals/relationship*] assist in transition from [Problematic Situation] to [Desired Outcome]?