Poster presentations

Culture, Creativity and Innovation in Qualitative Research

001 PP

See me, hear me, heal me: A THEATRE-BASED APPROACH TO ENGAGEMENT, CO-INTENTIONAL DIALOGUE AND MEANING-MAKING

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“Imagine not being able to recognize yourself in the mirror” -see me. “Nobody asked about how it felt when I lost my voice” -hear me. “I will never be the same, even after dozens of surgeries and years of rehabilitation” -heal me. Our interdisciplinary project (seemehearmehealme.com) involves a triadic collaboration of health researchers, patients, and contemporary artists

who are working to enhance public awareness and improve the quality of life of people diagnosed with head and neck cancer. Early in the project, we engaged David Diamond, director of “Theatre for Living” (Vancouver, Canada) to help: 1) foster engagement and sense of group identity, and 2) cultivate reflexive, relational awareness supporting authentic collaborative inquiry. Over the course of the 2-day workshop, team members created a series of physical images which offered a platform for open, co-intentional dialogue, and helped to create a foundation for a respectful, team-based collaborative process. Participants shared: This wasn’t the easiest activity for me but it felt genuine, I have confidence that we truly seek to understand each other; Mind blown; I was struck by the openness the workshop fostered and how it broke down barriers; Overwhelmed by the generosity and openness of the participants. The progressive development of group rapport and trust was palpable. Subsequent meetings, qualitative interviews, workshops, studio visits, and regular e-mail communication have supported ongoing sharing of perspectives and experiences, and generation of multiple meaningful, impactful project outcomes, including upcoming international public exhibitions of *FLUX: Responding to Experiences of Head and Neck Cancer*.