

Fish, photos, and body maps. Visual data collection in social work research

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Introduction

- Brief overview of visual data collection
- Photovoice
- Photo elicitation
- Cartoons
- Body mapping and timelines
- Fishpond metaphor

Exercises to apply
Questions/discussion





Visual data collection “reinforces a belief that people communicate in different ways and can connect differently with ideas if they are presented in a visual format” (Clark et al., 2013: 16).

Move beyond positivist science

Move away from academic ivory tower - break down superior knowledge positions of academics where academic terms and language can create barriers in communication

Tap into local knowledge and wisdom, encourage participation and inclusion, and also co-construction of knowledge

Transformative value

Lead to rich data, bridges illiteracy and does not require high levels of linguistic proficiency

enhances data collection where the focus of research is on sensitive and painful issues

strengthens communication and enhances the researcher-participant relationship

Leavy (2017:14): " ... arts can access that which is otherwise out of reach."

enhances research with hard-to-reach populations (Koen, 2018:15)

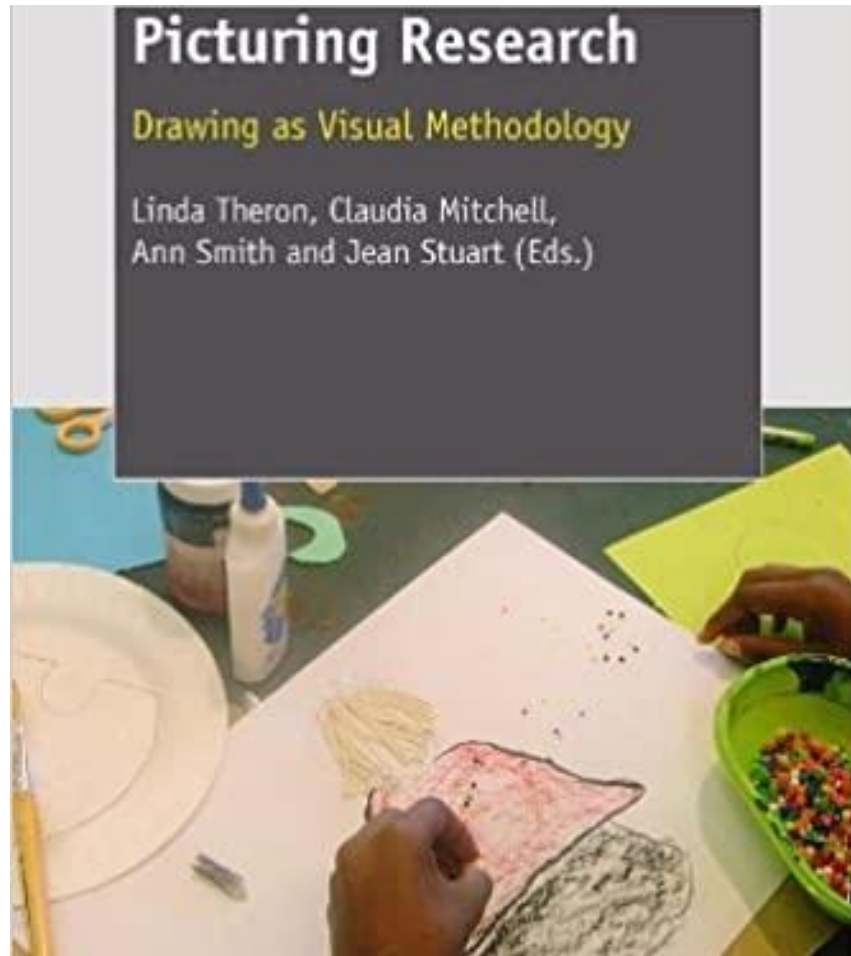
Visual data
collection
techniques/
strategies

Participatory
action and
learning
techniques
(Bozalek)

Participatory
Visual Research
Methodologies
(PVRM)

Hesse-Biber (2017) and
Leavy (2017) write
about arts-based
research (ABR). Eisner
used this term already
in the 1970's.

Terminology



Earlier work - 2011

The visuals can be a

- mode of inquiry,
- mode of representation,
- mode of dissemination, and a
- mode of transformation.

Many possible visual data collection strategies

Art

Dance and movement

Photos

Vignettes

Tree of Life

Social networks, ecomaps, genograms

Collage

Drawings

Cartoons

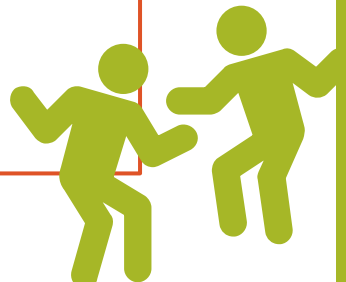
Video

Graffiti

Body maps

Metaphor

Timelines



Photovoice / Autophotography

- Participatory research tool
- Marginalized groups
- Empowering
- Insider perspective
- Give voice
- Illuminates lived experience
- Social change

Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris in the 1990s.

Collier and Collier (1967, 1986) were early users and writers about photographic methods - *Visual anthropology: Photography as a research method* is often used and cited





Photovoice is a tool that allows people to identify local issues and problems and work for solutions, and communicate these through images and photos. It is a participatory action research where participants reflect and document on community needs visually, promote dialogue, and reach policymakers toward village improvement.



RESEARCH PROGRAM ON
**Climate Change,
Agriculture and
Food Security**



Photovoice - procedures

- No universal format or protocol
- With cell phone access it is not necessary to follow the older procedure of giving people disposable or digital cameras. Also, easy to take short videos.
- Value of disposable cameras – take less photos, often with more thought and reflection
- Follow ethics procedures – Permission (i.e., if researcher wants to include photos in a PowerPoint; permission from those on photos)
- Introduce a theme or question for the photo(s)
- Participants can add a caption for their photo

SHOWeD

“Wang and Burris use a specific technique for the participants to discuss each image. They term this technique “SHOWeD,” and it is an acronym of the questions that the participants answer about each question:

- What do you See here?
- What is really Happening here?
- How does this relate to Our lives?
- Why does this situation, concern, or strength Exist?
- What can we Do about it? (Wang 1999)”

Grant, J. 2019. Language and education: Photovoice workshops and the !Xun and Khwe Bushmen, *Critical Arts: A South-North Journal of Cultural & Media Studies*, 33(4/5), pp. 157–173.

“Workshops were facilitated within the Bushmen communities at Platfontein in the Northern Cape of South Africa. The aim was to elicit the views and concerns of participants regarding indigenous language and education to facilitate seminar presentations, and publications, made more powerful through the use of visual images coupled with captions written by participants” (Grant, 2019:157).

The blue shop and the tree



Figure 2. The reason why school “drop-out” rates are so high at Platfontein is because of the “blue shop”. It sells alcohol and people “get drunk” sitting at the tree beside the shop—even the children—it’s like a park for them—somewhere to hang out.

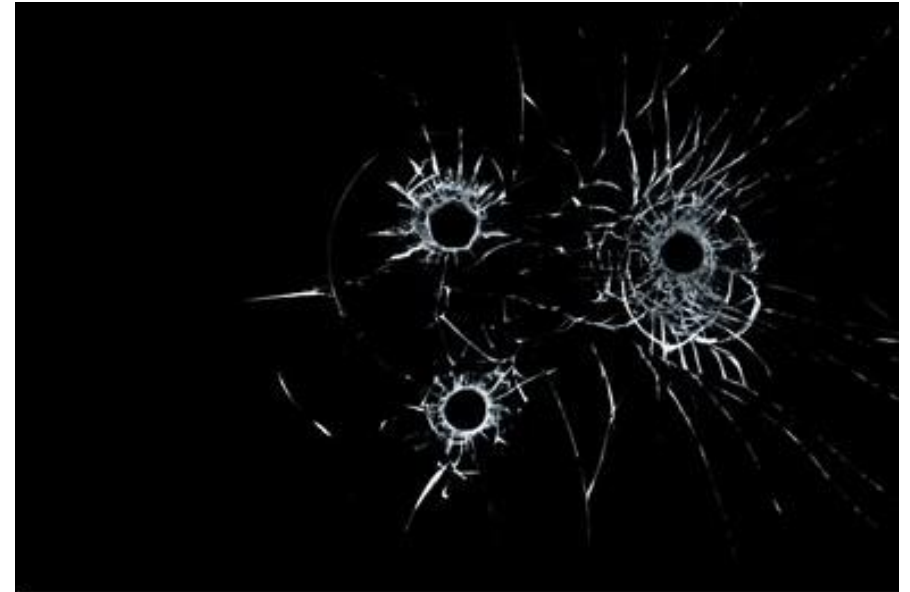
Photo elicitation

- Researcher-produced or prompted or participant produced
- Photos can be the starting point for a discussion

- ❑ Can you explain to me what is in this picture?
- ❑ Where was this picture taken?
- ❑ Can you tell me what comes to mind when you look at this picture?
- ❑ Why did you choose to take this picture?
- ❑ Is there a message that you want others to get, through this photograph and what it means to you?
- ❑ What is that message?

The participants were asked to take three photos within their community that tells a story of gun violence and to bring the photos to the interview.

Experiences of gun violence in a historically violent peri-urban community in Durban: A youth perspective



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VREDESTRAAT



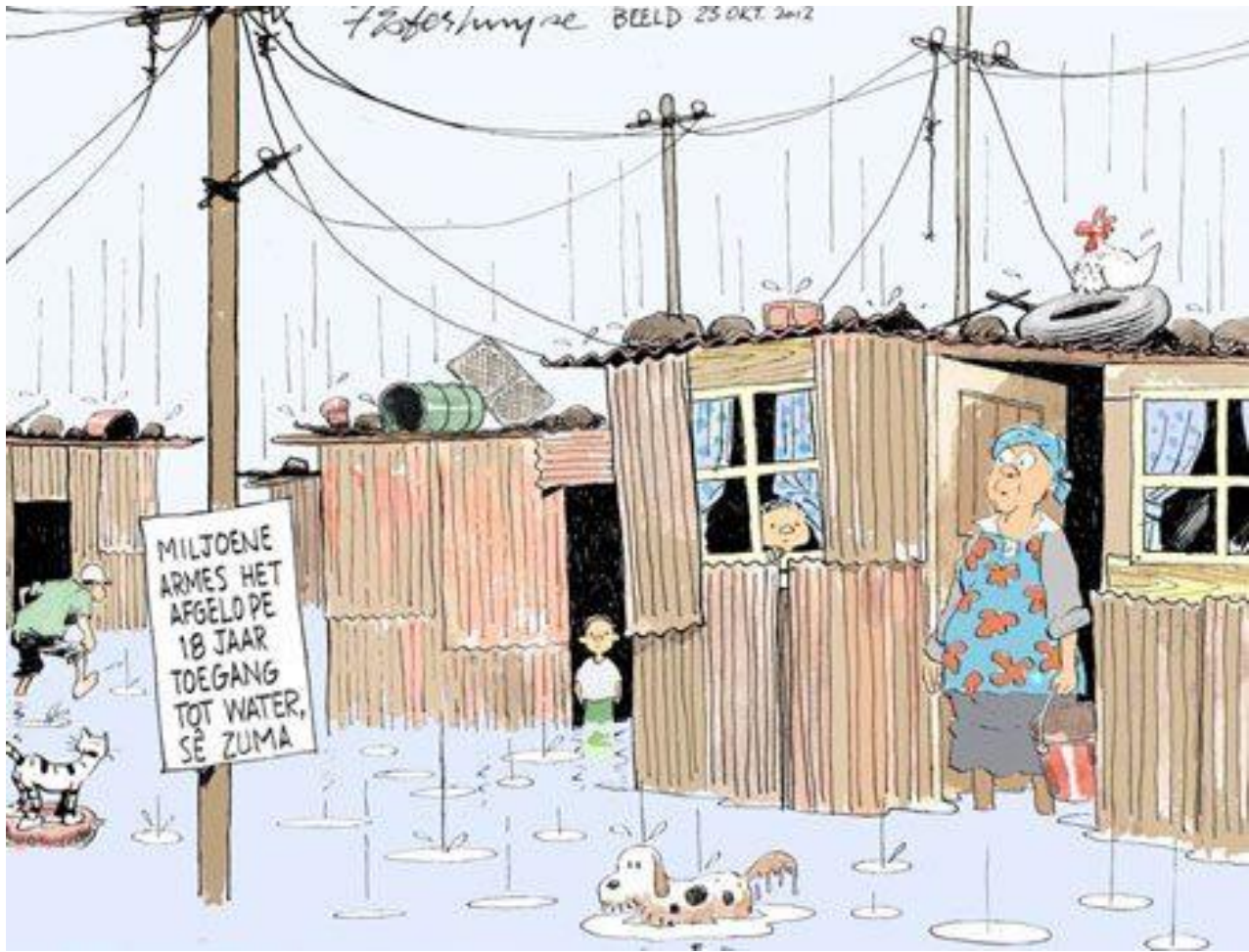
Cartoons, speech bubbles

Cartoons have a sequence, and it can be enriched with speech bubbles

It will take more skill than body maps, but it does not have to be very refined. It can also be stick figures.

Cartoons do not have to be funny; which is a perception people often have of cartoons

7209/wynse BEELD 23 OKT. 2012



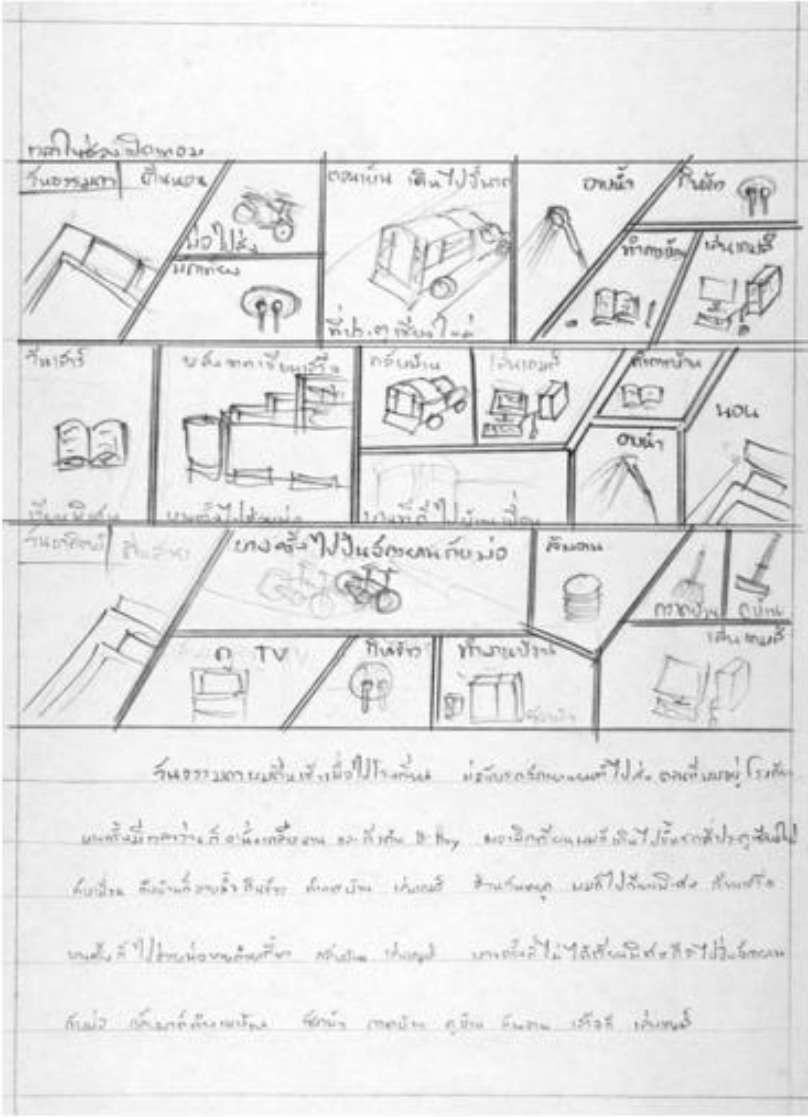
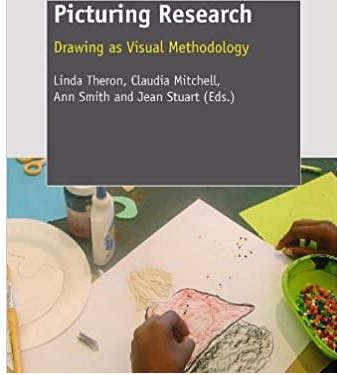


Figure 15.3. Pond's regular day routines.



CHAPTER 15

**WITH PICTURES AND WORDS I CAN SHOW YOU:
CARTOONS PORTRAY RESILIENT MIGRANT
TEENAGERS' JOURNEYS**

Catherine Ann Cameron and Linda Theron

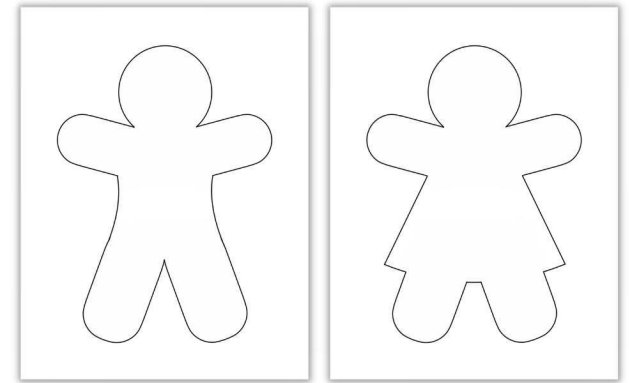
Zitts



Zitts



BODY MAPPING





ROCK PAINTINGS

Background

“Body mapping was first developed by anthropologist MacCormack (1985) in a study about fertility and the body in rural Jamaica, and it was employed to learn how women understand their reproductive systems and internal biologies.”

(MacCormack & Draper 1987; Orchard, 2017:3).

HIV/AIDS body mapping in Uganda early 1990's.

“In the context of HIV/AIDS, body mapping first emerged in Uganda in the early 1990s. At this time many women, in particular, were becoming infected with HIV and in the absence of antiretroviral medications and social supports for women and their families, the National Association of Women Living with HIV and AIDS developed an arts-based approach to respond to their needs. Envisioned as a way for women to share personal histories, memories and discuss the issues of death and succession planning with their children, they began with an outline of their bodies that served as the starting point for the women’s storytelling. This arts-based approach served a vital role in the transmission of cultural and familial knowledge between women and their children, who might never otherwise learn these important things given that so many parents were taken by the virus (Ward [2006](#)).” (Orchard, 2017:3)



In 2002 SA artist J Solomon and J Morgan used the Ugandan approach in the context of HIV to generate stories for renewed health, hope for future (Orchard, 2017:3). The body mapping was done mainly in workshop format.

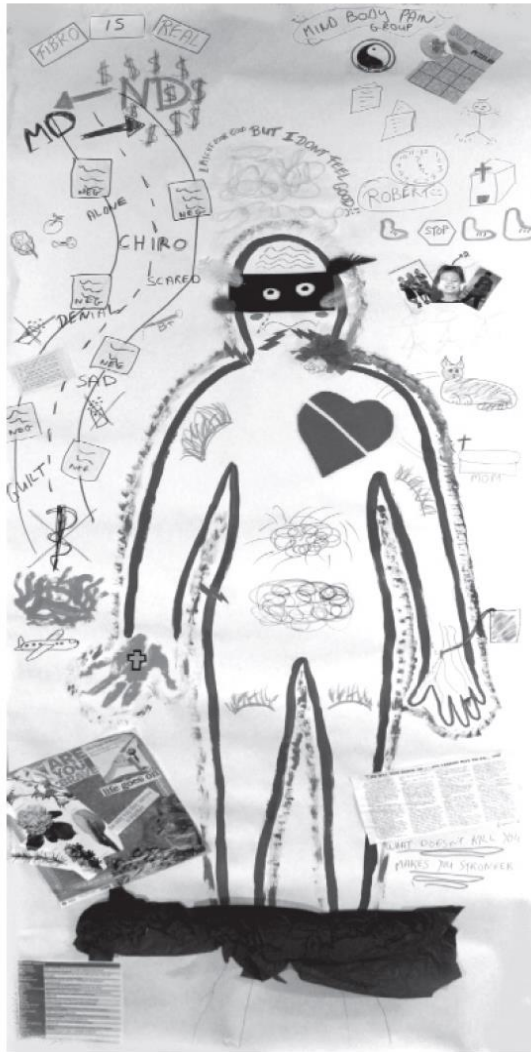


Figure 2: Anna's body map is an example of a multi-media map created with paint, markers, pictures, text, feathers, tissue paper, felt and cotton balls

The art of body mapping: A methodological guide for social work researchers

Michelle Skop Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada

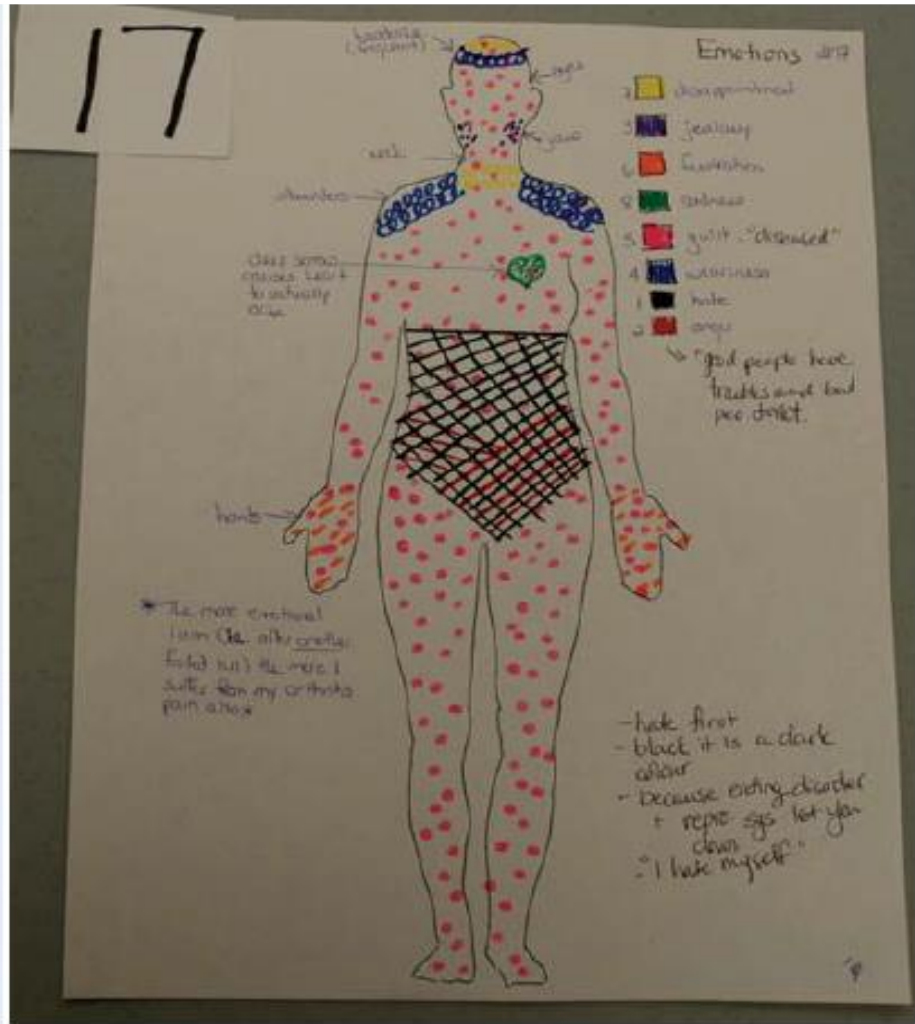


Figure 1 'Body mapping', a technique used to identify and position important and relevant emotions such as anger, sadness and love, on a pre-drawn body outline. In addition, this example shows a figure riddled with spots or holes, reflecting the client's perception of being 'diseased'.

Hughes, E.G., and A.M. Da Silva. 2011.
 "A Pilot Study Assessing Art Therapy as a
 Mental Health Intervention for Subfertile
 Women." *Human Reproduction* 26 (3):
 611-615–615.
 doi:10.1093/humrep/deq385.

With body mapping “... participants are considered knowledgeable, reflexive individuals who can better articulate their complex life journeys when painting and drawing their bodies and social circumstances”

(Gastaldo et al, 2018)

Material needed

- Durable paper. For life-size body maps thin cardboard will work well.
- Markers, pens

Pointers to using body maps

- Pre-mapping discussion – aim of research. Remember to indicate what will be expected of the participant in detail in the informed consent form. Can give some instruction.
- Invitation to draw body map - Not about product (quality of body map) but about the process, content. “Remember it is not important how well you draw”
- Unhurried pace
- Can do mini or full body maps

- Full body maps entail drawing around the outline of the body – careful of re-activation of abuse-trauma when participants lie on the ground. This position can also be problematic for power relations.
- Consider putting big sheets of paper up against a wall and then do the body outline – researcher or preferably a research assistant. Take care with sensitive body areas – leave open for participant to draw afterwards.
- Ask about body map, verbal data collection strategies

- The produced images are discussed with participants and typically no interpretations of such images are made by researchers. Participants talk about the meaning embedded in their body maps.
- Shared analysis if relevant – after transcription, discuss again with participant

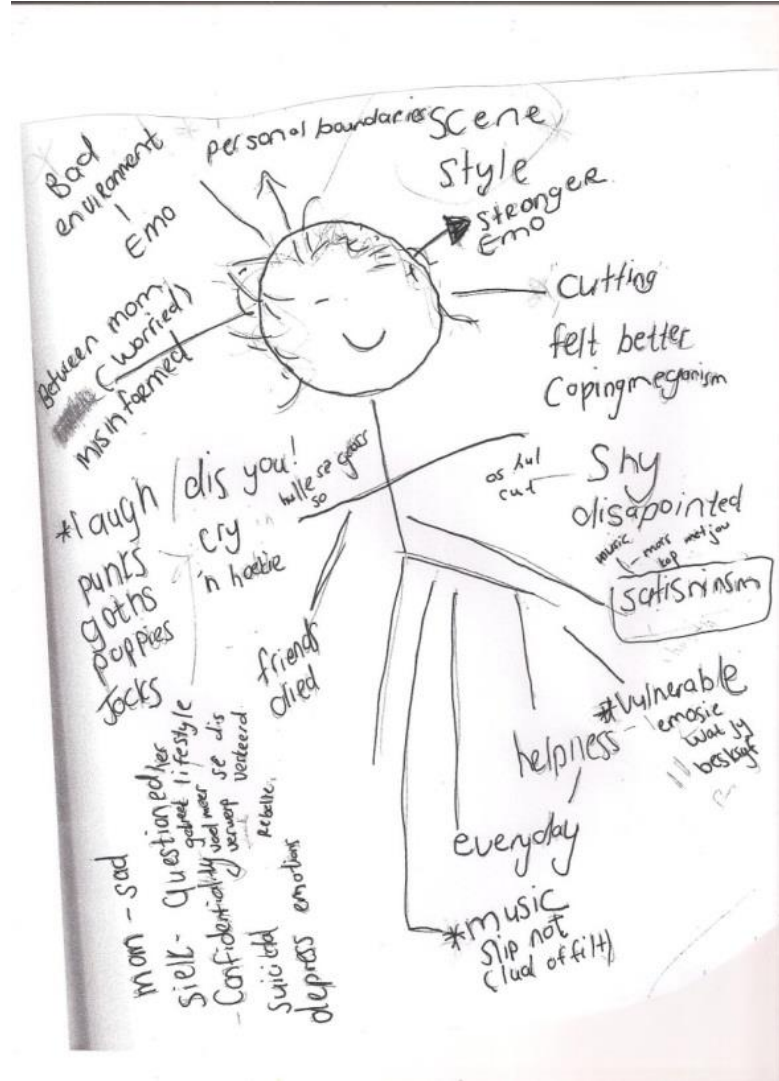
Life experiences represented by tattoos and scars on body maps of sentenced male adolescents in a special Youth Centre

- ❑ First interview – tattoos
- ❑ Second interview – scars
- ❑ Third interview – Overview and discussion of life experiences, an in-depth discussion of one or two scars and tattoos chosen by participant



Exercise (10 minutes)

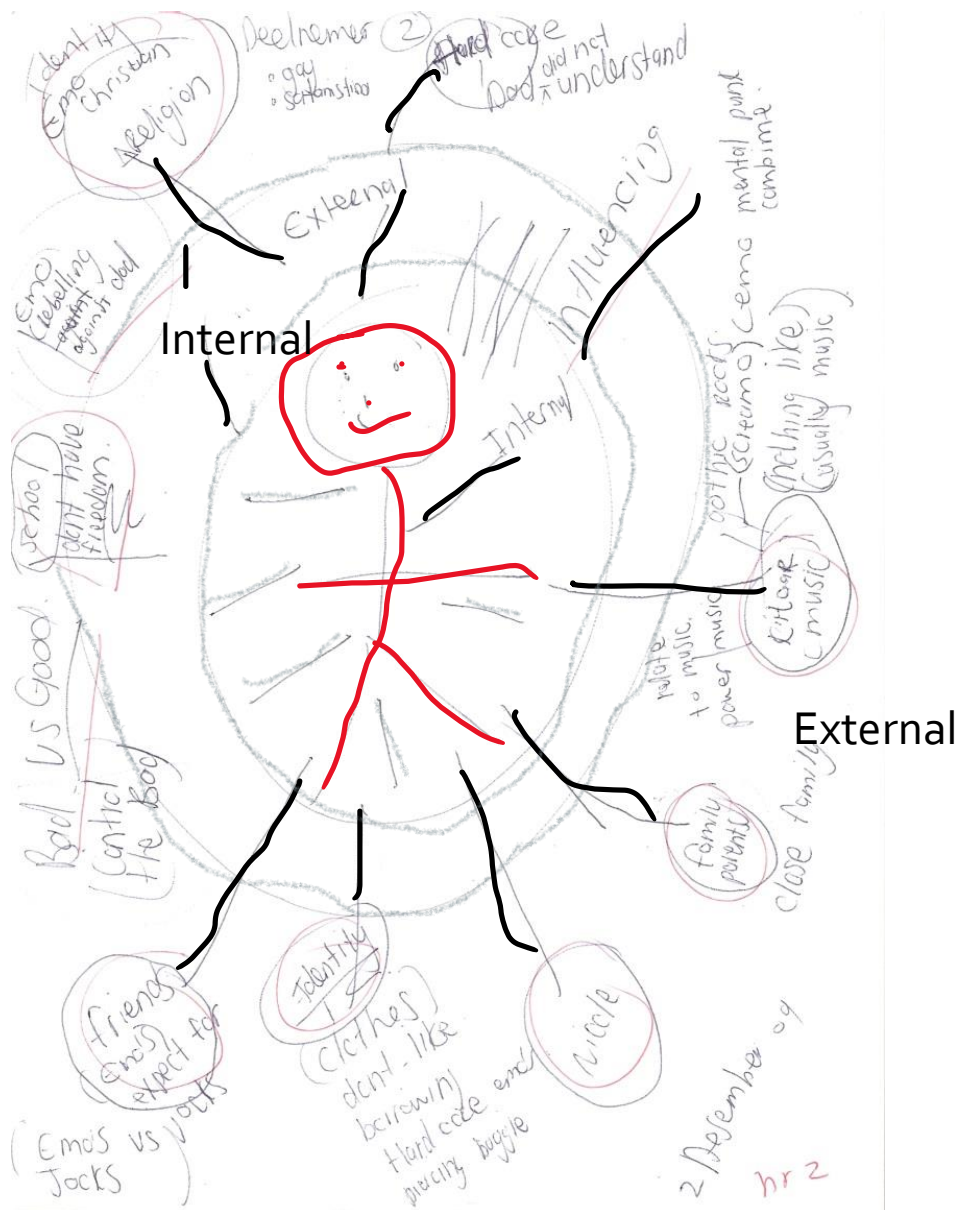
- Pick a scar on your body
- Be aware that this might evoke emotion?
- What thoughts emerge when you look at the scar?
- What emotions emerge when you look at the scar?
- Did you learn anything from the event that caused the scar?



Interview 1:

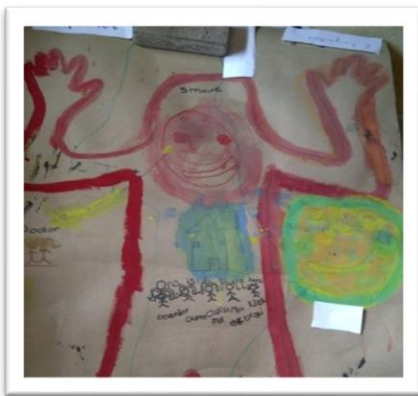
Unstructured interview – How is it for you to be an Emo?

Participants could write on a basic stick figure to expand on the above question



Identifying with the emo subculture

Psychosocial support by community health workers of children living with chronically ill family members





"I was scared that she would die. I feel better now. If someone else is sick I will keep a distance, but with my own family I am emotional".

Timelines/lifelines

- Access life stories
- Memory aid (Pirskanen *et al.*, 2015:62)
- Can use with body maps

Time spans

Intergenerational

Period before birth (also first 1000 days)

Past

Here-and-now

Future

Existential future



Events timeline

Different
timespans timeline

Houses lived in
timeline

Despair to hope
timeline

Timeline for
reactions/effects –
i.e., triggers and
flashbacks

Interest in life
history

The Life and Times of Nelson Mandela



1918 July 18

Born Rolihlahla Mandela at Mvezo in the Transkei

1937

Attends Healdtown, the Wesleyan College at Fort Beaufort

1939

Enrolls at the University College of Fort Hare, in Alice

1940

Expelled

1942

Begins to attend ANC meetings informally

1948

Elected national secretary of the ANCYL

1952

Campaign of civil disobedience
Opens South Africa's first black law firm with Oliver Tambo

1956

One of 156 activists charged with high treason

1961

Goes underground; Umkhonto weSizwe (MK) is formed

1964

Sentenced to life

1982

Sent to Pollsmoor Prison

1990

Released

1993

Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize with President FW de Klerk

1994

Elected by Parliament

1998

Marries Graça Machel

2004

Withdraws from public life

2013 Dec 5

Dies aged 95

Material needed

- Paper
- Colored pencils, markers and pens
- Can add stickers (emotion faces); photos, line drawings of houses etc.

- **Body maps:** Participants will be asked to make a drawing of a body map or will be given a gingerbread type body outline. They will keep this close by and will be asked when relevant to indicate on the body map where in their bodies they experienced certain feelings, thoughts, physical and sensory experiences. This will be done while they are talking about their experiences guided by the time lines and should enhance the discussion.
- **Time lines:** Learners will be asked to draw a line; they could place cut-out pictures or make small drawings of the houses where they have lived to orient themselves to specific events. They can then indicate on the time lines when and where they have been exposed to school violence. They will be encouraged to discuss their experiences, while also writing or making further drawings on the time lines.

Victim empowerment strategy for female partner abuse in the North West: a social work perspective

Timelines: Participants will be asked to write the trends and the frequency of abuse chronologically from the oldest to the most recent events. They can draw houses on the timeline to indicate where they lived during the abuse and who lived with them. In that way they can also point out if they have received any support in the household.

Body maps: Body maps will be used by the researcher as a visual, narrative and participatory methodology to allow individuals to articulate easily their complex life journeys on A4 Gingerbread type body maps. Participants can use body maps in conjunction with the timelines to indicate their experiences of abuse. They will be asked to use the outside of the body map (front and back) to indicate physical abuse. They will use another body map to indicate thoughts, feelings and behaviour and internal body reactions to the abuse.

Gun violence

Birth -----

The gun violence incident-----

After the incident----- today
in 2021.

Name:

Major Events in My Life Time Line

I was born



0

1 yrs.

2 yrs.

3 yrs.

4 yrs.

5 yrs.

6 yrs.

7 yrs.



Click and drag the box borders to move. Click and drag the arrow to move

MY TIMELINE

- Mark significant events that have occurred in your life between the "birth" and the "now" mark. Possible ideas include births of siblings, getting pets, starting school, moving, learning to read or ride a bike, divorce, remarriage, joining a team or club, deaths of relatives, and special holidays and vacations.
- Mark events that you hope will happen in the future.



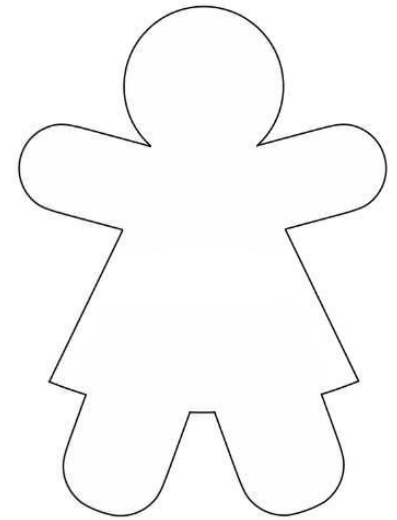
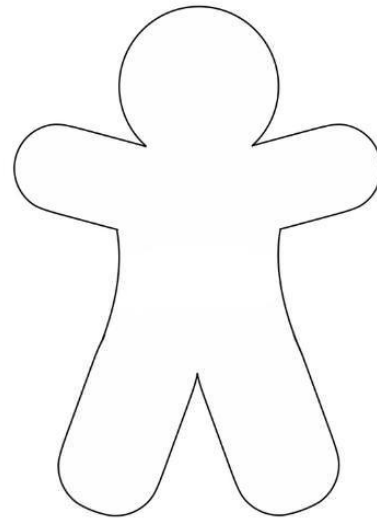
Birth



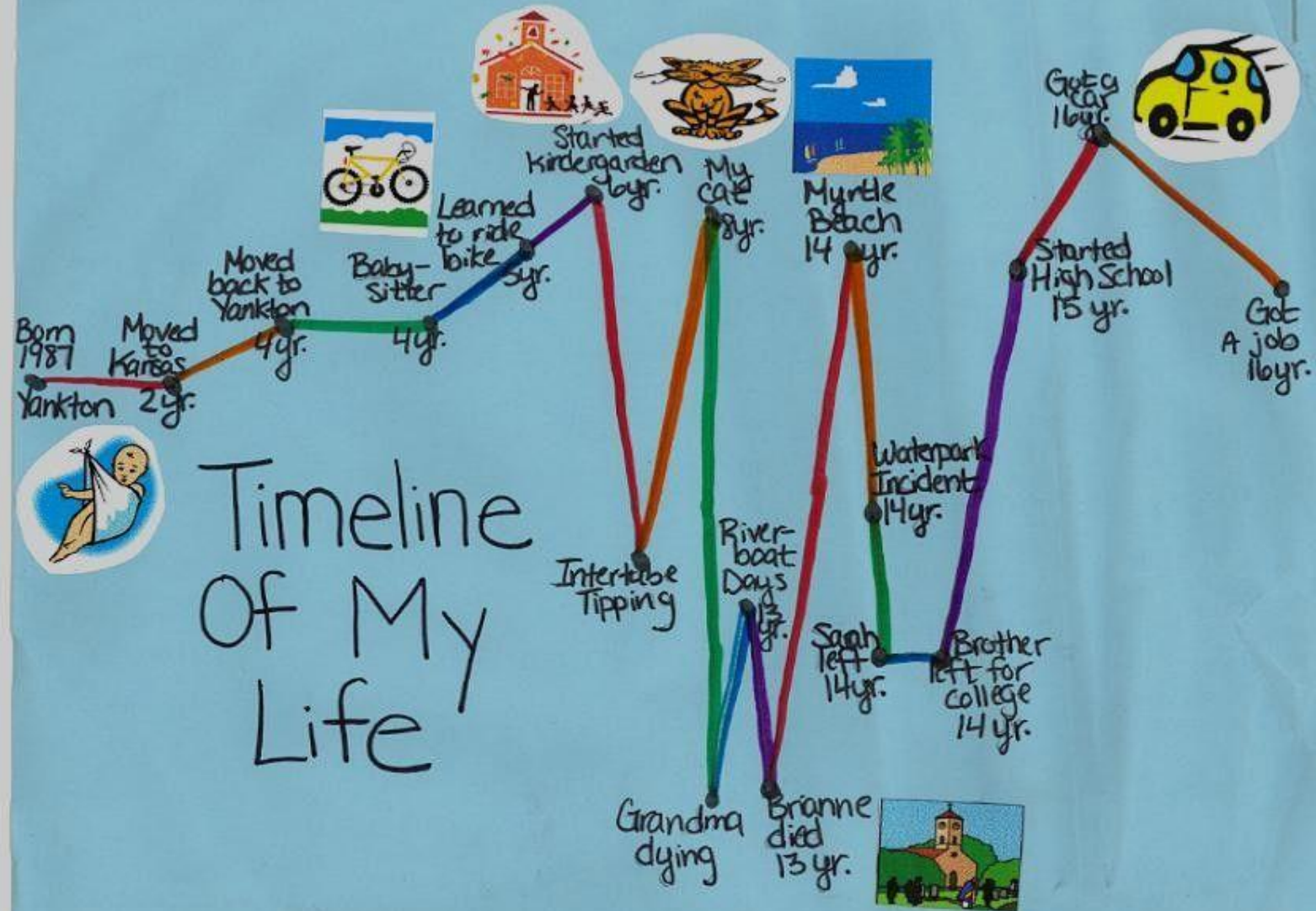
Now



Future

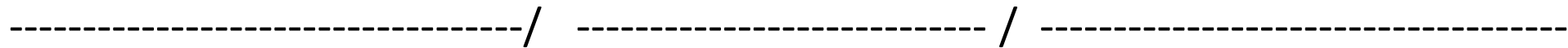


Timeline Of My Life



Migrants

Three timespans (pre-migration, peri-migration and post-migration)



Time in country-of-origin

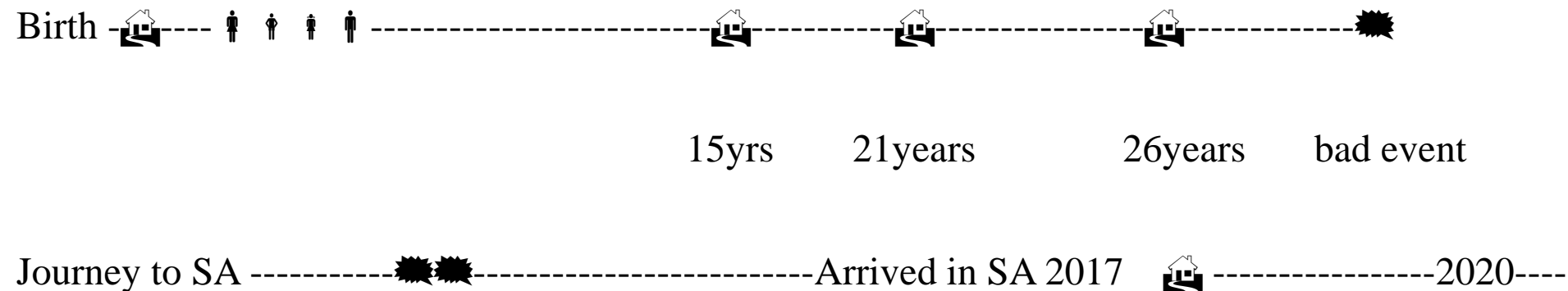
Journey to South Africa

Time in new country

Border crossing

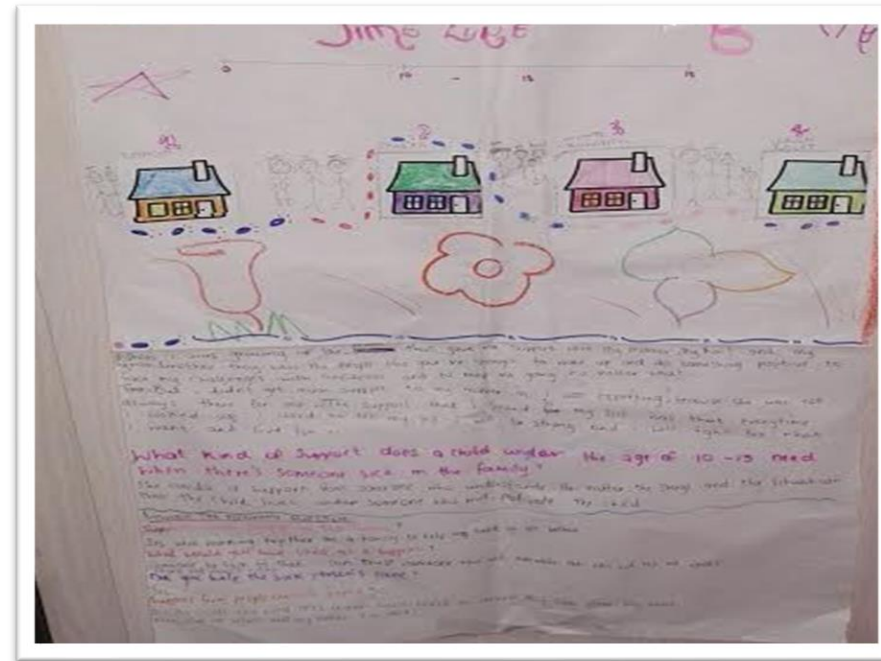
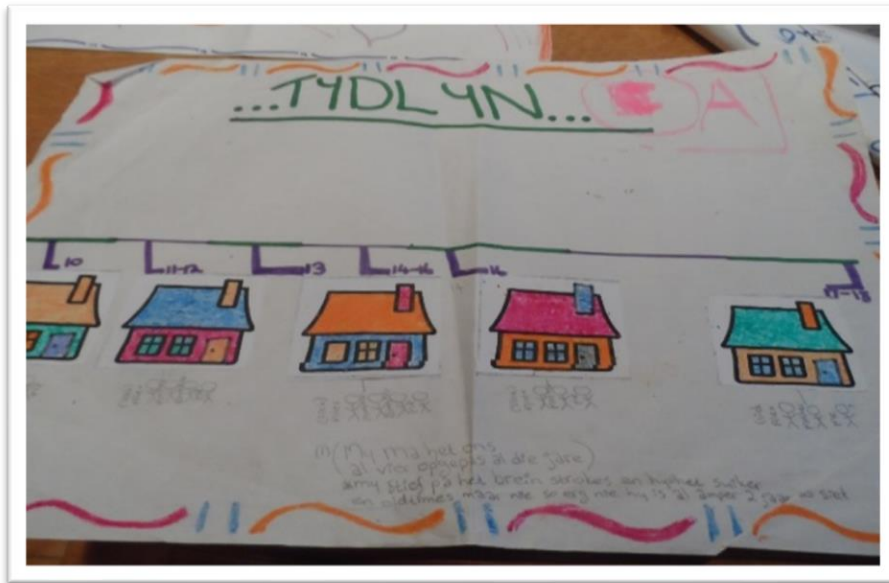
It is helpful to use a lifeline or timeline when thinking back of events in our lives. When we link events to the specific homes where we have lived and the people who lived there, we can put those events more or less in the time order they happened.

This is an illustration of what a lifeline can look like:



Retrospective timeline with adolescents

The session took four hours to complete.



- The group was started off with introductions, an ice-breaker and an explanation of the process. The adolescents were asked to choose their own stationary and seating (at a table or on the floor) and to draw a timeline from as far back as they can remember up to their current age. They could use colours or draw pictures of choice and were asked to write down their experiences of living with a chronically ill family member when they (the participants) were between the ages of 9 and 13 years.
- The following probing questions were used:
 - Where did you live at a certain age, draw the house and draw the family members as well as the chronically ill person?
 - What were your experiences related to living in a home with a chronically ill family member?
 - Did you get support from the people in the home/ outside the home?
 - What would you have liked as support that you did not get during that period?

The adolescents' reactions were observed during the timeline activity; and questions were asked to clarify vague statements or drawings. Minutes were kept and voice recordings were transcribed for analysis. This was followed by a process of clarifying the notes by asking probing questions, examining each timeline drawing and the descriptions written by the adolescents.



Exercise

- Pick a photo in your phone gallery - of a person or an animal known to you
- Choose from the last 10, or if there is nothing suitable go back 10 more.
- Outline in a sentence or two why you chose this photo.
- Draw a basic gingerbread figure. Indicate on the body map what feelings the photo evoke. Indicate where you feel it in your body?
- Draw a basic timeline. Indicate links between the photo and your timeline – intergenerational, your history (pre-birth, your life up to now, future)



FISHBOWL

Fishbowl - metaphor

I have used it in therapeutic work with children and adults, team-building, strategic planning. With group of students we talked about the possibilities of using it in research for data collection

- Encourages engagement
- Helps to externalize the phenomenon under discussion
- Transformative

A student, Ridgway (2013), consequently used the fish bowl metaphor for data collection in a study of adolescent self-injury. Perold, Daniels and Ridgway (2015) presented a lecture on the use of the fish bowl metaphor for visual data collection at the 2015 SAERA conference.

Perold, M., Daniels, D. & Ridgway, M. 2015. Viewing the effects of “cutting” in the lives of young girls: The fish bowl metaphor. 3rd Annual SAERA Conference, Bloemfontein, 27-30 October 2015.

Ridgway, M. 2013. Every scar tells a story: the meaning of adolescent self-injury. Thesis, M Ed Psychology, Stellenbosch University.

The material

Glass bowl (or more than one)

Plastic fish

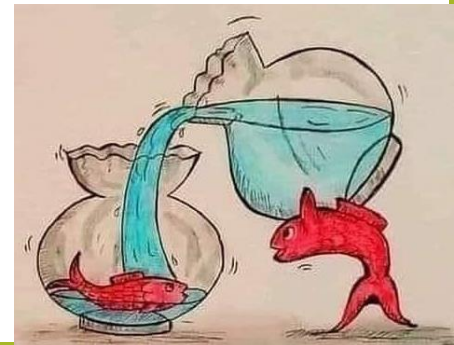
Printer's ink

Bleach



Procedure

- Discuss in general what is needed for the survival of fish in a fishbowl, tank or pond
- Discuss what threatens fish in a fishbowl, tank or pond
- Explain that the fishpond is a metaphor of your research phenomenon – keep close to your aim, objectives and research question



A social work intervention for families affected by stabbing-related violence in resource-poor communities

The fishbowl have been used as a metaphor representing firstly the broader context and secondly the family context (Van der Merwe, 1999).

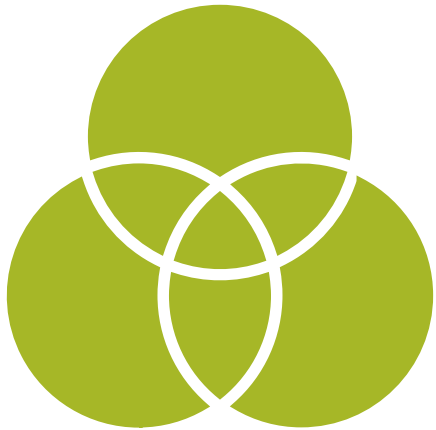
Drops of printer's ink have been used for the effects of stabbing-related violence and

Drops of JIK have been used for possible plans to address stabbing-related violence.

What is analysed

- Record the whole session
- No interpretation
- Ask, probe
- Everything said is included on transcript and analysed thematically

General guidelines



- No names; participant numbers, usually on back of drawing, collage etc.
- Do not interpret; ask and discuss
- Store and keep visual data safe, locked and have a Standard Operating Procedure for storage after research is completed
- Know why you are using it; not just nice to have
- No single approach to use visual strategies for data collection