



**MOUVEMENT CONTRE
LE DISCOURS
DE HAINE**

Tutoriel: ORGANIZE A LIVING LIBRARY

What is a living library ?

A living library works as a traditional library

Readers come there to borrow a book for an indertemined period and they bring it back when they are done reading.

But there is a difference : the books from the Living Library are human beings !

The goals :

- Sensitize the public especially young people, and foster a constructive discussion on stereotypes oftenly leading to the discrimination of others.
- Allow the youth's work visibility and questions related to the Human Rights
- Reacting to the actual events in France, Europe or the world.
- Establish a dialog between the different actors of the civil society.

Step 1 Préparation

- 1 To set up a Living Library, you need to **choose a place and frame** where the library will stand. It can be in the frame of a public event in your town, as well as in a school, in a socio-cultural center, during a training on the Human Rights, with international partners...

Tips: Do not hesitate to share informations and your research of partners on social networks

Books themes :
Refugees, Migrant,
Christians, Feminist,
Neighbourhood youth
Muslim,
Homosexual,...

- 2 The second step is to **define the size** of the Library: The number of books and their themes to create a catalog.

Books titles have to be a reference of representative groups frequently victim of stereotypes and discrimination, and to lead people to borrow one of the books in order to begin a discussion between the book and the reader.

- 3 After having gathered the catalog for the Library, **you need to find participants willing to represent a book..**

It can be people who will talk about their personal experiences or people comitted to solidarity actions, to education's development and access to Human rights.

You can use your personal contacts (friends and family) and also get in touch with socio-cultural centers or associations.

Step 1 Preparation

The elements

There are several important elements for the Living Library : the Books, the catalog, the librarian, rules for the organization and the readers. You have to carefully think about every actors and their preparations !

The Books

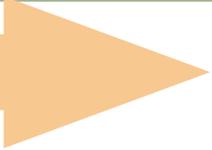
The Books must be convinced by their representative title and be prepared to be a Book by finding some datas or facts. During discussions with the readers, which content is confidential, they are honest and disposed to talk, listen and ready to share their experiences. However the Book can at any time end the conversation if he feels uncomfortable or attacked

The Books can also ask for a break after a complicated talk: it is important for the book and its next reader to be calm and ready to discuss.

The catalog

The catalog is reachable for any reader and contains every prejudice associated with it. It has to be rich enough to offer a real choice to the readers.

Step 1 Preparation



The Librarian

The Librarian's first task is to manage and put in relationship the reader and the Book. He explains to the reader the concept of the Living Library (if he does not know), and shows him to catalog where he can find all the books to borrow.

At the same time, he manages the borrowings, makes sure the Books are returned, and that Books are available.

He must be able to communicate, to be patient and to handle discussion which might be complicated between the Book and its reader.

He is also the guardian of the organization of the Library and has to do something if a Book wants to stop a discussion.

The rules

It is important to find a settlement for the Library and to post it. For example the schedule of opening, the time that readers have with the Books or some rules regarding the conversation. (see right below).

The readers

The readers can visit the Living Library during its opening time and pick up a Book to discuss with.

They have to respect the Library settlement and are curious to gain new informations.

Step 2 The progress

After all the preparation, you can open your Living Library.

- ❖ Reader go to see the librarian who will explain the concept of the Library.
- ❖ Readers can check the catalog and pick up a book they want to talk to.
- ❖ The Librarian writes the name of the Book, the name of its reader and the time of the borrowing (in general 15 minutes after). He also gives a borrowing card to the reader, on which is written the Book's title and the time where he has to give it back.
- ❖ Now, the Book and its reader can quietly discuss for 15 minutes.

⚠ The Librarian keeps an eye on the discussion to make sure everything is going on well without any problem.

- ❖ After 15 minutes, the reader gives back the Book to the librarian. He can borrow another Book, and or go on with his discussion with the former Book if there is no other reader, or complete the assessment card and leave the Library.

Tips for the books:
Each reader will be different and motivated by specific reasons. A good question to start the conversation would be « why did you choose my Book ? » to get some ideas about the reader's motivations.

Step 3 Follow up & Evaluation

At the end of the Living Library or if a reader wants to leave the Library, you can propose to the participants, readers or books, a survey to have their opinions in order to improve the methodology of the Living Library. It is an anonymous survey. Here are some examples of questions for the [readers](#) and the [Books](#):

Where did you hear about the Living Library?

Did you learn something by reading the Book?

How many readers have you met during the Living Library?

Have you ever been a reader of the Living Library?

Did you appreciate the selection of Book and stereotypes in the catalog?

Are you a member of an ONG or an association?

What marked you the most during the reading?

In your opinion, which profit your readers have won by meeting you?

For the next Living Library, which advices would you give?

What was the hardest part in being a Book?