

## **Lego Serious Play – Workshop 30.06.2016 @ Aspex gallery Portsmouth**

The LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® methodology is an innovative process designed to enhance innovation and business performance. Based on research which shows that this kind of hands-on, minds-on learning produces a deeper, more meaningful understanding of the world and its possibilities, the LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® methodology deepens the reflection process and supports an effective dialogue.

The workshop was facilitated by Rebecka Cada , a recent graduate from Kaospilot, a hybrid business and design school based in Denmark which has a focus on a multi-sided education in leadership and entrepreneurship.

The event was held as a informative session and a potential working model in action based learning for the Diocese of Portsmouth in collaboration with The Council for Social Responsibility (CSR) which is an independent charity working across the country, to support social change and community engagement at the local level.

The topic of the session was the local community. In particular the way The Diocese can change its image to become more appealing in the community and increase the impact they have on the community.

The format of the workshop gave freedom of expression for all participants, held together by a framework provided by the facilitator to maximize the output of content and communication between the group. This was achieved in the form of a number of exercises designed to introduce the concept of thinking through making in an easy way, which lead to more complex tasks and more sensitive topics of conversation.

The first task involved selecting a single piece of Lego which participants felt best represented them. Then as a form of introduction while standing in a circle each person placed his or her piece on a table in the middle of the circle and shared with the group their reasoning for selecting it.

This task showed how Lego can easily become very personal when giving a meaning to an inanimate object.

Task two set out to get everyone in the room comfortable with the process of making with Lego. A simple object in the shape of a Liger was presented to the group, then individually we needed to replicate the piece as seen in figure 1.

Following this the group was asked to adapt the tiger into an object that represented how they felt as they arrived at the workshop. The result was an expression of personality, metaphorically

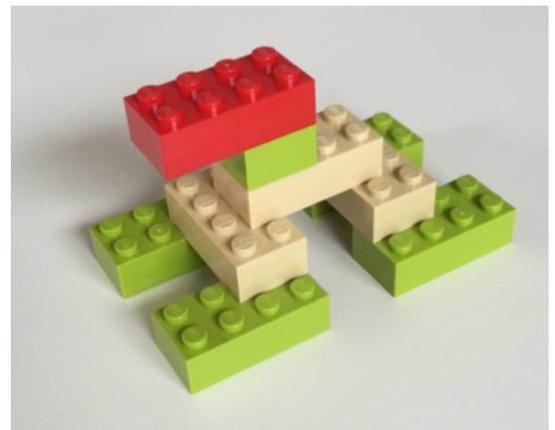


Figure 1

and physically for all to see. Initially this task was difficult when giving too much thought to the question. Aimlessly delving into the large box of Lego and combining a mixture of random pieces together began to elevate the pressure of thinking about an answer. The bricks were dictating the next move and ultimately the final piece (Figure 2) evolved around this progressive and freeing process. What this task achieved, was unlocking the mind block that exists when asked to express a personal emotion to a group of strangers and built a trust within the group as participants began to open up to each other. It gave and insight and context to groups motives.

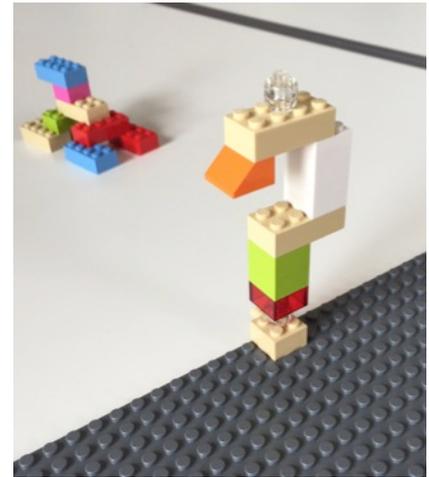


Figure 2

Next the session began to shift towards the main topic of discussion. Each group member was asked to “build your nightmare community” without discussing the object with each other before presenting it to the group at the end of the task. The ways in which each person represented their thoughts were individual and unique, but when explained in discussion, subtle similarities began to appear, highlighting the common mentality between over half of the group. Particularly interesting was how everyone’s opinion and voice was heard through this form of presenting ideas of an otherwise potentially difficult topic to discuss, particularly within a group setting of strangers. The models gave a focal point to the conversation without projecting negativity on an individual. The bricks were the undesired objects.



Figure 3

Following this a further personality task was set, where the group was asked to independently “build the conditions that are required to have fun” the resulting models were all very abstract and conceptual but gave further insight into the groups way of thinking. Once this was complete, each person was designated a name of a person in the group to build a gift for based on their conditions of fun. This instilled a feel good factor within the group as it emphasized the fact that they had been understood when expressing themselves to the group.

A further individual task to model your ideal community was set. By this stage a feeling of comfort to build, express and discuss in an abstract form had fully taken hold of the group and the making came easily. The discussion became more in depth and the feeling of connection between participants could be felt. This lead onto evaluating each persons model, then agreeing the best concepts to implement in a group build of the same community. As the feeling of working as a team was at its peak, levels of communication flowed and the task was very straightforward to perform as a group. The situation could have become possessive and dividing, but the process of continually sharing

thoughts and emotions through abstract making turned it into an enjoyable proud moment for all of us.

The overall outcome of the day proved that the method of making as a way of expressing and thinking helps facilitate the following; A safe environment to provide feedback on creations aiding progression of ideas, frees creativity by focusing on the concept rather than the look of creations, empowers the voiceless by creating an equal level of articulation through objects, eases tensions over dividing ideas and encourages the use of metaphors through physical making.





