Report International Conference and Launch of Stories that Move Toolbox against discrimination (Berlin, 28-29 June 2018)





anne frank house



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Introduction by Ronald Leopold

The creation of *Stories that Move*, a toolbox against antisemitism and other forms of discrimination, is a welcome reminder of what can be achieved when people unite to challenge the growth of intolerance in our societies. Conceived, developed and tested by individuals and groups across Europe from a wide range of skills, ages, languages and backgrounds, *Stories that Move* uses personal stories to help educators and empower young people to address the many forms of discrimination that are now part of daily life everywhere.

The launch event in Berlin in June 2018 brought together educators, policymakers and young people – all with a common cause. These included the nine European partners essential to the development of the tool and the institutions that made their work possible, Erasmus+ and the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (Foundation EVZ). There was a stirring keynote speech from Nicole Romain of the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency and we were honoured that State Secretary Juliane Seifert of the German federal government's Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth officially launched the project. However, it was especially encouraging to hear the youngest contributors address the event, determined to make a difference. Their engagement, creativity and openness underpin the whole Stories that *Move* project and reflect the core of the online tool, in which the stories of young people are integral to each section, with 27 interviews offering honest personal insights from a range of countries.



Stories that Move

The *Stories that Move* online toolbox was initiated five years ago by educators keen to harness the benefits of the internet to teaching and learning about discrimination, driven by the ongoing challenge to strengthen democratic values and counter antisemitism, antigypsyism and racism in our societies. What has emerged is a free, multilingual, online package, with dynamic, visually appealing materials backed up by sound pedagogical guidance for educators.

It is the fruit of international cooperation between the Anne Frank House (the Netherlands), the Anne Frank Zentrum (Germany), Eagerly Internet (the Netherlands), erinnern.at (Austria), the International School of Amsterdam (the Netherlands), MART (Ukraine), the Milan Simecka Foundation (Slovakia), the Pedagogical University of Cracow (Poland) and the Zachor Foundation (Hungary).

The launch was the centrepiece of a two-day expert conference, where 60 educators who have worked with the toolbox gathered to share their experiences – to focus on the opportunities that online and blended learning offer in teaching about prejudice and discrimination, and to build on insights gained by teachers who had tested modules, both during the development and in the first phase of implementation.

The intention is to forge a sustainable network of educators who will continue to work together, and attract policymakers from educational institutions and governmental organisations to consider strategies for sustainable international cooperation in developing and implementing educational tools.

Above all, *Stories that Move* aims to inspire schools to create space for complex and sensitive conversations, and release the voices and agency of young people.

I would like to express a big thank you to all the partners, funders and educators who worked with the tool in development and to the young people who entrusted us with their stories and engaged with the project. All the partners would also like to give special thanks to the Jewish Museum Berlin for hosting the event.

[↔] Ronald Leopold, Executive Director Anne Frank House © Cris Toala Olivares

[←] Stories that Move won the 2018 Comenius EduMedia Medal for excellent teaching materials in June. Marnix Marsman and Sven Dinslage of Eagerly Internet are applauded for their role in creating the online tool.



Launching Stories that Move – 28 June 2018

I Ed Greene, Director of the International School of Amsterdam.



The formal launch of *Stories that Move* was generously hosted by the Jewish Museum Berlin. Representatives of international organisations and educational institutions were given a brief pre-launch overview of the project and addressed by Sonja Böhme of the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ), one of the main funders; Ed Greene, the director of the International School of Amsterdam (ISA), talked about the school's involvement in developing and testing the online tool, and Karen Polak, the project's international coordinator, highlighted the close cooperation of the nine partners and some of the major outcomes.

At the launch itself, the audience included educators attending the international conference, many early adopters of *Stories that Move*, "Living library books" and students from ISA. Nicole Romain of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights held a keynote talk and Juliane Seifert, the state secretary for the federal German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, pushed the symbolic button to launch the multi-lingual website.



Sonja Böhme Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ)

The Foundation EVZ has supported the *Stories that Move* project since 2014, when the first preparatory meeting took place in Berlin with 65 educators from 14 countries. That expert meeting was part of the research exploring whether an effective and sustainable online format could be developed to provide educators with tools to address antisemitism and other forms of discrimination.

Sonja Böhme: "I remember I was sceptical when the *Stories that Move* project manager, Karen Polak, first shared her ideas. Could such a tool work in different countries, in different languages and contexts? What convinced us most was that the tool brings different forms of discrimination to the attention of young people and encourages them to reflect on these issues in a way that is close to their lives and inclusive. Young people are more connected with the wider world than their parents' and teachers' generation are.

I Karen Polak, International project coordinator for Stories that Move, Anne Frank House Amsterdam.



Stories that Move

In supporting *Stories that Move*, we want to encourage young people to critically examine the issues of diversity and discrimination, and to reflect on their own positions and decision-making options. We want to show them that hostility to minorities is not especially or only a problem in their own town or country – but (sadly) a wider phenomenon – linked to a shared European history."

The Foundation EVZ supports various programmes to strengthen civil society in the fight against discrimination and antisemitism, she said, focusing on building coalitions between social majorities and minorities, and training key professionals. It funds country-specific projects in the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia and Ukraine.

Addressing the challenges four years later in 2018 at the launch event for *Stories that Move* she said: "Profound political, social and economic transformation processes are taking place in Europe and elsewhere, and confidence in democracy is dwindling. The rise of political extremism or rightwing populism ties in with forms of racism that have deep roots in Europe, such as antisemitism and antigypsyism, and discrimination against LGBT+ and Muslims. Hate crimes against Roma, Jews and refugees, threats to their organisations and institutions, and increasingly hateful attacks over social media have become common in many countries. But it is not only those on the extremes who stir up hostility to minorities and strangers; such prejudices also exist in the social middle."

She added: "Two things stand out in *Stories that Move*: the central role given to young people, and the quality and the continuity of cooperation between the international project partners."

She highlighted the contributions made by all nine partners, in all seven countries, especially those of Karen Polak of the Anne Frank House Amsterdam, who has led the project from the very beginning, and individually from Juliane Wetzel from the Centre of Research against Antisemitism and Monique Eckmann, both members of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which supported the project in a variety of ways, providing advice and expertise¹. "I would like to thank them all for what has been achieved."

¹ See: https://www.storiesthatmove.org/ en/for-educators/expert-voices/

Stories that Move

The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) keeps track of what is happening across the European Union when it comes to discrimination – collecting data for policymakers to act on. The agency carries out large-scale surveys, providing comparable figures from all EU member states on the perceptions and experiences of discrimination against Jews, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people (LGBT+), Roma and other minorities.

Invited to address the launch of the *Stories that Move* toolbox against discrimination, Nicole Romain of FRA's fundamental rights promotion department was blunt about the worsening climate across Europe. "Antisemitism, racism and discrimination are still present, and increasingly so, in Europe nowadays, affecting the lives of many people everywhere, challenging all of us to think critically about diversity and discrimination, and to reflect on own positions and choices in these matters," she said. "There are many campaigns on social media and in

the mainstream media. But unfortunately there are also increasing levels of discrimination, hate speech and what legal experts call 'bias-motivated crimes' against various population groups and ethnic minorities."

In 2012, FRA carried out the first ever survey on antisemitism in eight EU member states: Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. It revealed worrying levels of discrimination, she said, particularly in employment and education, with widespread fear of victimisation and rising concern about online antisemitism. Some 76% of respondents felt antisemitism had increased in their country over the past five years, and 57% had heard or seen someone claim the Holocaust was a myth or had been exaggerated in the 12 months before the survey. An online survey across all 27 EU member states and Croatia in 2012 among 93,000 adults who identified as LGBT+ found almost half (47%) said they had felt personally discriminated against or harassed on the grounds of sexual orientation in the previous year. The figures were higher for lesbians (55%), for 18 to 24-year-olds (57%), and for people on low incomes (52%). Yet, only 20% of the most violent incidents experienced in the past five years had been reported to police, and only 6% of serious cases of harassment - largely because



the respondents thought nothing would be done. Based on estimates for 2010 from the Pew Research Center, around 20 million Muslims live in the EU, about 4% of the total population, she said. They face discrimination in a range of settings – particularly when looking for work or trying to access services. First and last name, skin colour and religious symbols may trigger discriminatory treatment and harassment.

The first EU Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS) was conducted 10 years ago. EU-MIDIS II, now completed, shows that little progress has been made. Nearly one in three Muslims surveyed indicated they suffered discrimination when looking for a job, hampering meaningful participation in society. One in four say that harassment over ethnic or immigrant background was common, but only one in 100 had reported it.

It is FRA's job to collect the data showing what is happening on the ground, she said.

"There is universal agreement within the human rights world that there is a crisis around communicating what people's rights are. How do we influence policy- and decision-makers? How do we engage with, and empower, rights-holders? How do we mobilise activism? How do we push back against fake news?" she said.

The "right messenger" is needed to communicate human rights issues and show the means of counteracting the rising discrimination levels in key areas of life revealed by FRA data. There is also a need to simplify, to listen, and to give a face and voice to rights-holders. In classrooms and universities, the *Stories that Move* toolbox against discrimination does precisely that, she said. "The FRA wants messengers, but we were previously missing one as effective and attractive as *Stories that Move*."





Juliane Seifert State Secretary at the Federal German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

"I am very pleased to speak to such an international and young audience. As you can imagine, this is not always the case for politicians. You are from so many countries all over Europe. It is good to see that European cooperation in civil society is still vibrant and alive, particularly because in nearly all our countries democracy and democratic values are being challenged by discrimination, segregation, exclusion and hatred. We see it in civil society in daily life, and even in our parliaments; expressions, comments and assertions that were unimaginable some years ago have become acceptable.

It is good to remember that in all our countries there are not only people attacking democracy and diversity; in all our countries there are also many people defending them - and they are still the majority! As politicians we have to support them. We have to strengthen our democracy by strengthening people and initiatives fighting against discrimination and for diversity and tolerance.

When I explored how Stories that Move had come into being, I was impressed! Impressed because young people from all over Europe were at the centre of this process. But what impressed me most was that so many young people were willing to share their own very personal experiences, in order to raise awareness and to highlight 'you are not alone'.

It is not only in Germany that some people still face the constant threat of discrimination over the colour of their skin, their religious beliefs, their ethnic or family background, or their sexual identity. Those who are targeted are often children and young people. They are especially vulnerable because they are just developing their personality and identity. This identity can be strengthened by discovering that 'I am not alone'.

Stories that Move does not only empower young people threatened by discrimination, it also provides the means to prevent them discriminating against others – by showing that diversity can be a strength of society.

Stories that Move

The German federal government's "Live Democracy!" programme promotes 300 local Partnerships for Democracy and 16 Democracy Centres across Germany, and supports numerous NGOs. One of the organisations that receive funding is the Anne Frank Centre in Berlin, a key partner in the online toolbox, and an important and trusted partner for my ministry in its work against antisemitism and other forms of discrimination.

Our major aims are to help establish best practice examples, to strengthen existing networks and to establish new networks, not only at national but also at European level. This requires good teaching materials that educators can easily use and approaches that reach young people. Stories that Move has created both, making a major contribution to educational work against discrimination, intolerance and hatred.

I am happy to acknowledge the importance of young people speaking out and sharing their stories, by symbolically 'pushing the button' to launch a short trailer showing the diversity of the young people involved in this project."





and prejudices through storytelling

In the "Living library" 10 people from different countries and backgrounds each shared a personal story with a small group, revealing an everyday experience of discrimination. The "books" included Albina, Nued, Márk and Daniel, who were all part of the youth conference in 2013 that laid the foundation for the Stories that *Move* toolbox. They talked candidly about anti-gay prejudice, racism, antigypsyism and antisemitism, and what they want to do about it. Other books were experts who feature in Stories that Move advising educators on key issues the tool addresses.

The basic idea of the Living library format is that someone shares a story that can help listeners think about how to challenge stereotypes and prejudices, and that such openness can lead to greater acceptance and social cohesion.



Albina was first interviewed in 2006 when she took part in a youth meeting on discrimination in Berlin. Seven years later she was asked to mentor the German participants in *Stories that Move*, and she continues to contribute to the project.

"I was born in 1990 in post-Soviet Union Uzbekistan, to Muslim-Jewish-Christian parents. I have a grandmother who wears a hijab and is very religious and also a Jewish grandmother who fled from the Nazis. So it's a slightly difficult combination – tradition, democracy, love and hate combined. For my family it was very important that we grow up being open about things. I came to Germany when I was 11. I kind of lost my identity and dived into a new identity. I started with *Stories that Move* when I was 15."

Albina, now 28, moved to Berlin to study communication design and came out to her parents three years ago. "It wasn't easy. But we are on a good track now," she said. Her story was about how three weeks previously, while travelling across Berlin for a spa break with her girlfriend, they had been challenged twice in the street, first by three teenage boys who just jeered, and later the same day by two little girls playing outside some migrant-refugee housing.

As the two friends passed, holding hands, a little voice had piped up: "Lesbian, you're a lesbian."

Shocked, because the children were only about eight or nine, Albina had crouched down by them and said: "Yes, we are lesbians. Do you have a question?" One answered, "I have a question, uh-huh. How can you love a woman?" Questions and answers about love poured to and fro. "You love your mum, don't you? And your brother?" "Yeah, but you can't have children ..." "We can adopt. Or we can –" (Albina grinned. "I looked at these two beautiful little creatures," she said, "and thought maybe I should not explain more".) "I love her and I will marry her." The children had looked at them with big eyes, she said, little girls perhaps from a conservative migrant background. "They touched my heart and I don't even know their names. How to explain that it's OK to be different? I was surprised that I could answer so fast. I felt connected to them because I'm from a migrant background, too. I was also surprised that I was so calm. Because they were so young."

"Kids are curious. They ask questions to test you. How can we change education, society? It touched me. I was willing to talk to them, and I was not offended. Their age played a big role." Answering questions in her Living Library group, Albina said her parents didn't talk to her for several months after she came out, and why. Homosexuality is rejected in their Uzbek culture; people have it "beaten out of them" or they are forced to marry. "They were afraid for me. Afraid even to share the fear." Her father looks "different," she said, he is discriminated against still, even after so many years. "This [being different] is a big huge scary thing for them, because they experience this every day."



Nued was interviewed for *Stories that Move* five years ago as an alienated black German teenager. Though born in Stuttgart and raised in Frankfurt, he didn't feel German or at home in Germany. "I can't imagine introducing myself as German," he said on his video, "because I'd immediately be asked, where are your parents from?" They were originally from Ethiopia and the teenage Nued felt their religion and culture was something he wanted to pass on to his own children. Nowadays Nued is 23, living in Mainz, playing in a band, working in a hospital, and the children he wants to reach out to are boys and girls like him, struggling with their identity in smaller German towns and cities, far from multicultural Berlin. He feels *Stories that Move* helped him define who he is.

"At the time I was struggling a lot with things personally. I wasn't myself. Now I am happier and living feels lighter. I have found things that I like to do, and found my peace. It's an interesting process. The *Stories that Move* team helped me to define my identity. It was an important part of my development."

To Albina, who mentored him during the 2013 conference in Berlin, he put it more strongly: "That meeting changed my life." Startled at how the *Stories that Move* videos have taken off ("It was very personal, and a bit weird"), Nued would now like to make a follow-up video. "I think I have developed in a positive way for me and I want to share this. Let people see the difference. What this project can do for people." His message would be: "Don't agree with something if you feel it is not right. Don't do something just because other people, whether friends, parents or community, want it."



Márk is a Hungarian from Bag, a village north-east of Budapest. Four years ago his girlfriend's father found a photo of him on her phone and rejected him, because Márk is Roma. "He told her he doesn't like the colour of my skin." He refuses to meet Márk and has never spoken to him, but Márk believes, "If you really love someone you don't let her go without a struggle."

In the *Stories that Move* videos made when he was 17, Márk looked forward to them moving in together after they both finish university and get jobs. He recently finished high school, only the third person in his Roma settlement to do so – and the first at the right age – and he wants to continue working with *Stories that Move* as the local Roma education charity expands its teaching to

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include adults, many of whom cannot read or write and face discrimination and social disadvantage as a result.

Zözi Lencz, a 14-year-old fellow Hungarian from the International School of Amsterdam, which helped develop the *Stories that Move* tool, felt "a deep sense of shock and disbelief" as Márk's story unfolded. "I am Hungarian and I have rarely heard of such discrimination," he said.

By contrast, Barbara Lášticová of the Slovak Academy of Sciences was profoundly depressed to discover that in four years Márk's girlfriend's parents hadn't budged. "The only difference is that they are not actively protesting, just ignoring. In a way, it would be naïve to expect anything else." She had used Márk's video in schools, encouraging classes to find a solution. "And the kids generated such good solutions to the problem. They talked about trust, about communication, saying if the father loves his daughter truly and he sees she's in love and she's truly happy he should do what's best for her, and the mother should be involved. "So I asked about the mother, but Márk said she's just doing what the husband tells her to. So for me it was really a reality check."



Daniel is a Hungarian with a Christian father and a Jewish mother, neither of them religious, and his Living library book story was about dealing with society's assumptions about identity. His tale centred on an incident at his Jewish primary school when he was eight. He had described himself to a teacher as half Christian, half Jewish, and she had said: "That's not how it works, you can't be both." Surrounded by the teacher and classmates telling him that according to religious law and custom he had to choose, he got distressed, shouted at them all, "You can't tell me who I am", and ran out crying.

The conclusion he offered his listeners was that no one is too young to have their voice heard or to express their identity, and that the identity we each create for ourselves may not only be attacked by people with bad or harmful intentions but also by ones wanting to help.

"It taught me that in order to be able to stand behind ideas, situations and people later as an adult, with clear thoughts and heart, I must first truly identify with myself."

Trinabh Banerjee, a 15 year old student at the International School of Amsterdam:

"Talking about the discrimination Jewish people face in his home country because they chose to wear a kippah, a symbol of Jewish faith, Daniel raised a point that I believe encapsulates a lot of what **Stories that Move** is: 'If we are forced to hide who we are, if we are forced to put the kippah away because of discrimination, then we don't live in a good society'. That stuck with me. If we cannot value another person for who they are, then we have failed to make society work."

Gernot Haupt, an Austrian teacher, commented afterwards: "I'm old, I'm going to retire soon and the more I see of the crisis in Europe nowadays the more pessimistic I get, but hearing Daniel the optimism returns. Because of his energy, insight and reflection about his experience of discrimination, and how he puts it into action." Daniel said: "I remember coming back from the youth conference feeling I have to get active. I have to be engaged. If I want to get things done, I have to do it."





Monique Eckmann is professor emerita at the School for Social Work, University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland, in Geneva. She has published widely on intergroup conflicts and identities, and intercultural education, memory and dialogue. She was a member of the Swiss delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) from 2004 to 2018. She has been a key contributor to Stories that Move, and features in clips for educators on discussing racism in schools. Her Living library story was set 20 or so years ago in Austrian Burgenland, a region near the Hungarian border with a terrible history during the Nazi era, when all the Jews and Roma were either deported or killed. It is still scarred by hate crimes against Roma today. She was attending an international seminar on challenging racism, and students and teachers from 10 European countries were introducing themselves, highlighting minority identities - being black, disabled, female or migrant.

"When it was my turn to present myself I felt – as always – ambivalent: do I tell them I'm a Jew or not? Because, as a white European with a Swiss passport and a good position in society as a university teacher, I felt I belong to a dominant majority. Of course, I am also part of minorities: as a woman, being divorced etc. But dealing with racism, I felt uneasy about saying I am a Jew, perhaps because I did not want to appear as part of a victim group, or blame others for antisemitism." So she didn't say it.

But someone else did, saying: "I am white, British, a teacher and a woman. And here in Burgenland I want to emphasise that I am also a Jew. I never say this, because I don't feel very connected to a Jewish community. But in this place, where all Jewish life has been wiped out, I have to state that there are still Jews here today." Monique was profoundly affected. "I realised she was right, and that here, in this place, it was important to say 'I am a Jew'." Because all around them, despite the persecutions of the past, Roma and Sinti, Hungarians, Croats and Slovenians were back – but not the Jews. A once flourishing community was completely missing. "I realised Jews and antisemitism were invisible, silenced, even in our group dealing with racism, and that I had to learn to bring it up. I had to define myself in a more complex way."

The incident had marked her whole teaching career, she said, and it had a similar impact on at least one member of her Living library audience.

Rania Khan, 15, was one of the ISA students who had tested the *Stories that Move* tool. Addressing the packed hall at the launch later, she said:

"I don't say this often, but there are parts of me that I can't hide – that I am of Indian descent, I have black hair, my last name is Khan. Although I don't identify with the religion, all my family actually are Muslim.



Every day in one of the most liberal schools that I could possibly imagine I hear numerous things that aren't exactly offensive, but they are sometimes hurtful.

It is part of myself that I have sort of suppressed. Monique's story allowed me to remember that it is OK if I get a little bit affected when people make those jokes and it is probably better that I start standing up to them. Because I have fallen into a sort of complacency. And that's the kind of experience that *Stories that Move* allows me and other people to have – and that's what I really appreciate about the toolbox."

Lutz van Dijk is a German-Dutch historian and pedagogue. He has written award-winning books for young adults. In 2001 he co-founded Homes for Kids in South Africa (Hokisa), which cares for children living with HIV/AIDS. He is Stories that *Move*'s expert on creating safe spaces, and appears in the clips talking about openness, sexual diversity and telling the story of Stefan Kosinski, a gay teenager during the Nazi occupation of Poland.

Lutz's Living library story started in 1977, during his first gay pride march ("though they weren't called 'pride' then"). On a busy shopping street in Hamburg some old men shouted, "You perverts should be back in the concentration camps!" It was a revelation. "I didn't know that homosexuals were also persecuted and even murdered by the Nazis," he told his listeners.

Later, as a young gay teacher in Hamburg, he decided he wanted to write a book for teenagers to explain in a personal story what it had meant to be homosexual in the Nazi era. "At the time there was almost no documentation. The very few personal stories I could find were extremely sad ones of hiding and betrayal, persecution, torture and death. Nothing that might help teenagers learning about homosexuality for the first time."

Then he found a love letter, written by a Polish youth to a young Austrian soldier in the Wehrmacht. Stefan Kosinski was arrested and tortured in 1942 as a result of sending that letter, but Lutz discovered he was still alive and willing to talk to him. They met in a small flat in Warsaw.

"I remember he had prepared some sandwiches for us, but he could not stop talking until the middle of the night. It was as if a heavy burden had been lifted from his shoulders – and maybe his heart. For the first

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time ever, he felt he could tell the love story of his life." That story, finally told to a stranger a lifetime later, became a book, Damned Strong Love, and in his 70s Stefan even went on reading tours in the US. "I am proud of him that he came out as an old man," said Lutz.

He has continued Stefan's tours, talking to young lesbians and gays in Poland ("once again growing up in a climate of discrimination," he points out) about a man he felt was his brother in the struggle for human rights for all. The story was finally translated into Polish in 2017.

I Lutz and Stefan Kosinski aged 71 in Amsterdam, January 1996. © Lutz van Dijk, Netherlands





International School of Amsterdam

Four students from the International School of Amsterdam were invited to make closing statements. During the conference Rania from Bangladesh, Zözi from Hungary, Trinabh from the Netherlands and Leilani from the US led a social media campaign. They launched it with the tweet "tomorrow we change the world".

As Rania said from the podium in Berlin: "In a world where discrimination is pervasive, inescapable, and rooted in the entire history of humanity's existence, the next generation must be equipped to take on injustices wherever they may be found."

These four students participated in workshops at the Anne Frank House, and provided feedback and ideas during different phases of the development of the toolbox. The project has made a deep impression on the students. Leilani said: "Through these experiences, I have learned that we all deal with discrimination and intolerance each and every day, granted to varying extents. No one is immune." Trinabh added: "I consider myself well-informed. Every day, I read the news stories of people who have faced discrimination, prejudice or racism as a result of a multitude of factors. Despite this,

1 Mateusz Trojanski moderates the closing remarks. Guests: Trinabh, Leilani, Rania and Zozi.

there is only so much information one can receive from a news story. And as I reflected personally, I began to realise the importance of personal stories. It's not every day that someone who has faced discrimination comes up to you and shares their story with you, face to face."

Since the conference they have launched a creativity, activity and service (CAS) club at the school with the goal of creating a larger team of students to develop a series of parent workshops to reach out to other schools in the Netherlands and to continue to act as ambassadors for the Stories that Move project.

↓ Leilani and Rania





Conference **Stories that Move** 28-29 June 2018

During a two-day conference 60 educators, who had worked with Stories that Move in various phases of the project's development over two years, shared their experiences and considered how they might contribute to the next phase of disseminating the toolbox in mainstream education and in non-formal education (including museums) in their respective countries.

A first round of workshops looked at the five learning paths. A second round dealt with important aspects of the methodology: the visible thinking routines that are integrated in the online tool and the importance of creating a safe space for learners to discuss the complex and sensitive issues of identity, stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination.

Workshops on the



Learning path 1, Seeing & being, introduces learners to diversity as a natural part of the world around them by exploring their own identity. In the three tracks (lessons), learners explore how they make assumptions; they look at the multiple identities everyone has; and they home in on what is visible and what not, and what people choose to reveal about themselves or not. Learners also explore the role played by prejudices.

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In the workshop, participants were asked to seat themselves "east to west" by country of birth, from Ukraine to Scotland, via Turkey, Poland and the Netherlands. This immediately made visible the diversity of backgrounds in the group.

The next activity highlighted the diversity of classroom audiences that educators are working with. Everyone was asked to think of a learner who had stuck in their mind after using this learning path, and to pick three identifying features. A wide range of social influences emerged, including wealth or poverty, absent parents, dysfunctional family dynamics, children being raised by grandparents, and unemployment. Educators also identified learners as being from a minority or majority group, immigrant background, or having refugee status. More personal features included dysgraphia, sexual identity, learning style and individual characteristics such as being competitive or athletic. "A leader will influence the group's dynamic," said a teacher from Poland.

Opening up

In small groups, participants discussed what had worked particularly well in the tool and some of the challenges they had encountered. The first exercise in the tool, in which an image is expanded step by step to finally reveal a photograph of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, "works by itself," as one teacher said. Having the space to participate and talk and share, rather than traditional lecture-based learning, was particularly appreciated in Poland. Teachers from smaller towns and rural areas mentioned that using stories of young people from other countries had engaged their learners. The personal videos helped learners to open up. Ukrainian educators said the stories of other young people allowed their learners to connect, and helped link learning about the Holocaust to the experiences of young people today.

I Michal Romanowski



"Stories that Move is not about topics that are new to my students, but it presents the issues in a way that was almost revolutionary for them. First of all, it was an opportunity to 'meet' young people from other countries they would not otherwise encounter personally. Their voices and experiences are a completely different narrative than traditional lessons. This is an encounter with someone's personal story – you cannot be indifferent! My students were totally focused in a very new way. They remembered the names of the people in the tool and had long discussions about their statements."

Michal Romanowski, Poland

Safe space

In track 2, learners are asked to share rather personal information. A "safe space" has to be created to ensure all learners can trust that they will be treated respectfully, both in what they share and what they might not want to share. Educators found that creating a safe space was sometimes hampered by time. Limited lesson time is a recurring challenge that educators meet in a variety of ways. However, they agreed that the materials and techniques in Stories that Move could be used in existing classes such as Social Learning (Germany), Individuals & Societies (IB programme) and that they were also well suited to English language teaching. They were also well suited to English language teaching and media literacy, and to encouraging self-expression and presentations in all subjects. Cross-curricular approaches needed to be explored, educators felt. Some schools are now planning to introduce the tool in different year groups and subjects as part of a framework for ongoing work.



Facing



Learning path 2, Facing discrimination, helps learners explore the process of discrimination, using specific incidents involving five young people for a deeper look at the terms antigypsyism, antisemitism, discrimination against LGBT+, discrimination against Muslims and racism. They work with a "Discrimination machine" that reveals the effect of grouping and judging people. In the final track, they weigh five everyday situations and discuss why we don't always agree on the significance of actions or events.

Stories that Move

The workshop participants were educators in formal and informal education (including museums) and teacher trainers; their learners ranged in age from 12 to 25. They liked that the tool encouraged learners to share their own stories, or those of friends, and that it moved them from being bystanders to active involvement – helping them to see their own prejudices and stereotypes.

Most educators felt the tool could be adapted to the country's curriculum and that there was potential to use it in a variety of subjects, facilitated by the readymade teaching materials. They felt introducing young people from a range of countries allowed learners to encounter new experiences and face their own fears. One participant described an awkward moment when pupils failed to understand that the stories were real and some laughed.

"They asked me, 'Are they real people?' Yes, I said. They said, 'Ha, ha. Why aren't they shy to share such private stories?' I said, 'They are open, they have something to say. We have to hear them and think about what they are saying.' It encouraged them to share their own stories and be supportive. My aim was to develop tolerance in my students. Hopefully it worked."

Olga Kovalchuk, Ukraine

Some educators had sought particular connections with the stories. One Slovak educator said she had adapted the story of Márk, a Hungarian Roma ("We pretend he's a Slovak boy"). Another linked the stories to the Holocaust. Learners, too, made historical connections.

"I try to establish a connection to the countries the group comes from, so the discussion does not head into 'oh yes, that's the country where such things happen and our country is better'. I adjust the discussion but not the tool itself."

Nataliia Tkachenko, educator, International Youth Meeting Centre in Oświęcim/Auschwitz



I Nataliia Tkachenko



Learning path 3, Life stories, explores discrimination through the stories of 10 people chosen to contribute to intercultural historical learning. The focus is not on a particular period, though the Nazi era plays an important role for many of the 10. Learners initially pick a story "blind" on the basis of just an image and a tag line. Then as a group they decide which story to look into in more detail. They gain skills to work with historical sources, gain insight into racism, antisemitism and discrimination against Roma and LGBT+ in different periods, and learn how to prepare a presentation for the larger group. **Stories that Move**

The workshop consisted of Austrian, Polish, Dutch and Hungarian educators from formal and non-formal education. Between them they used this part of *Stories that Move* for a wide range of lessons and age groups, from primary school to university students and trainee teachers, including:

• School groups and youth exchanges visiting Auschwitz: elements of the tool were used to summarise the visit and show a broader context;

• English language classes in an unprivileged high school in Hungary: the stories triggered open discussions, but also revealed unconscious prejudices;

• Trainee plumbers in an Austrian vocational college ("They are mostly boys, half have a migration background. Sometimes this causes a problem because they form groups. Tradition and religion are big issues." Claudia Jank, Austria)

• Trainee scout instructors in Poland – not a very diverse ethnic group, but diverse political views emerged.



1 Johann "Rukeli" Trollmann in 1931. © Manuel Trollmann, Germany



Karina Meeuwse from the Netherlands, teaching at a secondary school, found that her learners were initially resistant to the learning path ("We know this already") but eventually very touched by the life stories. She had used Stories that Move in religious studies, as it didn't fit the history syllabus.

"Personal stories help destroy stereotypes. Even though they are themselves discriminated against, many topics are taboo, like homosexuality. Because they don't know a lot about homosexuality, or about immigrants, they go the same way – stereotyping other people. That's why Stories that Move can be very good in the settlement. To show them they are not the only ones being discriminated against and get a more complex and global perspective."

Eszter Halász, teaching children and teenagers in a Roma settlement in Hungary

An Austrian university teacher said he had not used the whole track for his learners, but he had picked out the story of the Sinto boxer Johann "Rukeli" Trollmann, to highlight historical antigypsyism. What really worked, educators reported, was the "life afterwards" aspect. Learners realised stories did not stop in 1945. They were also particularly interested in the tale of Stefan Kosinski, who fell in love with an Austrian soldier in occupied Poland.

"I was surprised by their personal engagement with the voices from the past; the greatest impression on them all (including the boys!) was made by Stefan Kosinski. They were so involved, so focused, choosing words so carefully! Many of them said that their opinion had changed about things that had previously seemed obvious and clear to them, that they had learned something about themselves and others."

Michal Romanowski, Poland

It was felt particularly important that the tool allowed learners to choose for themselves which story they wanted to study.

Mastering the media



Learning path 4, Mastering the media, helps learners look more closely at their daily feed of information, from friends and social networks to TV, newspapers, films and adverts. They analyse their personal media usage and assess the credibility of their information sources. They explore commercial use of stereotypes, past and present; and they look at propaganda techniques, using images and the see-think-wonder routine.

Stefan Kosinski aged 23 in Poland, 1948.

Stories that Move

This workshop focused on issues that educators expected to encounter in their own countries, which included the UK, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine.

Of the five forms of discrimination covered in Stories that Move, the weight given to different forms varied from country to country.

A Polish teacher felt sexism was the big issue in her country, two Austrian teachers agreed – but added racism, and a Slovakian educator emphasised the issues around Roma and immigrant populations.

Working with adverts can illustrate that there has been change, but not as much as we think, and not enough. This was reflected on in discussion about a racist soap advert from the 19th century. Looking at such images can help learners "decode" modern messages.

"Working with historic ads gives some kind of continuity. When you decode these adverts, you can say this is blatant. This is in your face, easy to see. But there are things that are not so easy to see. This is what can change. To say it opens eyes is a strong word, but you can learn to see things differently".

Michael Hinterberger, Austria

For the final track, the Media & manipulation, participants discussed the challenges in teaching about propaganda and fake news, mentioning visual literacy, the decoding of messages and group identification.

"Young people are in a bubble of national propaganda. We teach, we analyse fake news, but they believe, because it is too widespread."

"To see behind, we have to have tools. On Facebook, I see a homophobic post by a friend. What do I do? I have to decide."

"Discrimination is often not about discrimination itself but about belonging to a group. People don't want to hurt other people. They just do it because they want to belong. There is a price in not participating."

Taking



The focus in Learning path 5, Taking action, is helping learners to consider how human rights are relevant to their lives, and to reflect on taking action and what is required. They first listen to two people who took action after an antisemitic attack on a synagogue in Copenhagen in 2015, and explore social engagement. Then they work with one of three cases taken to the European Court of Human Rights, and finally they listen to five young people who took action and, working in small groups on one example, they consider their own action plan.



← 19th-century French advert for soap.

I Michael Hinterberger



Stories that Move

The workshop revealed that participants were working with a very broad spectrum of ages and backgrounds, in formal and informal education, ranging from socially unprivileged learners who have experienced discrimination, to learners who are privileged and have no idea how to take action beyond "have a cake sale". Backgrounds included:

• Ethnic minority or refugee families, with experience of discrimination and victimisation;

- Migrant communities, hostile
- to and irritated by Jews;

• Ghanaian-German learners with experience of "strange" comments, sensitive about prejudice and keen to learn about racism, discrimination; • Israeli-German learners with varied experiences of discrimination, but poor concentration and little experience of taking action.

Educators talked about the challenges of discussing homosexuality within some cultures, particularly faith groups; the complexities of uniting a diverse classroom to find common ground for taking action; and variations in how much "scaffolding" learners need.

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Scaffolding refers to a variety of instructional techniques used to move learners progressively toward stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process.



Some of their best experiences using the tool included feedback about real action taken, such as learners who subsequently attended a gay pride event.

"I was working on a transgender story with Crimean Tartars, who are quite religious. Afterwards these guys went to Kiev Pride. It was maybe a little victory ..."

Mariia Sulialina, Ukraine

In Liverpool, an international group of students was inspired by Stories that Move to interview visitors at the city's International Slavery Museum. They created their own mini exhibition, which they put online.

"We found people willing to be vulnerable and share with us. Not knowing anything about us, they shared about their family, and times where they felt outcast or small. It was incredibly humbling ... I was reminded that I, too, despite being young, a woman and a person of colour, can bring others along in the fight to make equality a reality for all."

Jillian Chang, US

↔ Jillian Chang, bottom, left
↓ Mariia Sulialina, standing





"Thinking is pretty much invisible. Mostly, thinking happens under the hood, within the marvellous engine of our mind-brain."

David Perkins, Making Thinking Visible (2003)

This workshop was lead by Claire Bown, an experienced museum educator. The core idea behind Visible Thinking (VT) is to make learners' thinking visible to themselves, each other and the teacher through a variety of simple techniques and routines. This workshop explored how educators can enhance pupils' curiosity and understanding by slowing down observation through two key routines:

- See-Think-Wonder
- 5 x 2 and Step Inside

Combining these with other learning techniques helps educators structure and guide respectful group discussions around images or objects illustrating a variety of topics.

Stories that Move

← 'Terrorist': Reyhan by Khosrow Hassanzadeh, Acrylic paint on canvas, 2004 © Collection Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam.

The workshops offered two practical demonstrations. The first explored the thinking routine See-Think-Wonder and focused on "slow-looking". Participants were asked to look closely at an apparently everyday photograph of two people in a living room and describe what they saw. They were then asked what they thought was going on. An interesting discussion ensued with participants offering theories and interpretations for the "story" behind the image. Finally, they were asked what lingering questions they might still have. Thinking was made "visible" by listing the group's observations, suggestions and questions under three headings (See, Think, Wonder) on a whiteboard.

Swen Rudolph, a professional photographer, illustrated perfectly how what we see is influenced by who we are, when he observed that to him the living room looked "staged", because of the lighting. At this point it was revealed that the image was indeed a staged work by the artist Jeff Wall.

The second exercise built on the same tools and skills to discuss a more enigmatic image using the 5×2 and Step Inside routines.

5 x 2 again invites participants to slow down and make careful observations and descriptions, but the simple act of repeating the exercise requires participants to push beyond obvious descriptions and see details they hadn't noticed the first time around. Step Inside involves working in smaller groups after an image has been fully described (to avoid jumping to hasty interpretations), to explore different perspectives and challenge subconscious assumptions. The final reveal of the title of the painting, 'Terrorist' by the Iranian artist Khosrow Hassanzadeh, and information about who the woman actually was (his sister) highlighted the weight – and bias or blinkering effect – of social expectations and context on what we see or think we see.

Questions were asked about when background information should be given. "Young people want to know information about the photo," said Nataliia Tkachenko, an educator from Poland. Claire Bown said that information should be inserted into the discussion in small amounts. "We only remember 25% of what we hear. Think about what you can add (and when) that will make people think or lead the discussion further. Experiment with adding information at different stages of the discussion and see what happens."



The workshops demonstrated that VT routines are easy to use, remember, teach and learn, and can be used at any level or age, in large or small groups, and across a range of subjects. They are sociable and inclusive, and no prior knowledge is required. By paraphrasing learners' answers, educators can show that they have listened while at the same time boosting language acquisition. The workshops provided educators with insight into how they might adapt VT for use in their classes, as well as the different environments or contexts in which the routines can be applied.







Personal stories can be a very effective way to explore perceptions and experiences of discrimination. However, using personal stories requires that learners feel safe and supported to express their opinions and emotions. The Safe space workshop was led by the German-Dutch educator Lutz van Dijk, a widely translated author of novels for young adults including the South African coming-of-age story Themba, and by Peter Dral, the Slovak expert on the *Stories that Move* team. The focus was on helping educators to create such "safe spaces" and exploring techniques to work with sensitive issues in a variety of learning environments.

The workshop started by discussing a simple phrase, "I understand you", moving from the different linguistic nuances (cognitive meaning, empathy, perception) in the 10 countries represented at the workshops to the various contexts in which the words are used. This exposed a number of issues teachers face with their learners, from the presence or absence of social networks, levels of discretion, experience of discrimination, appropriate language and respect, judgment and assumptions, mutual agreement, and praise and jokes, to learners who

Stories that Move

↔ Lutz van Dijk

may have experienced war or physical danger. Refugees, poverty and stereotypes (particularly antisemitic and anti-Roma) were among topics most frequently raised in the workshop, as was the point that on certain issues, such as gay marriage or being transgender, educators are sometimes less comfortable with open discussion than their learners. Lutz emphasised that "safe spaces and respect only work if you are a respectful teacher yourself". Creating a respectful learning environment is an essential starting point for dealing with personal experiences, emotions and identity. A safe place needs to be a safe space for everybody and teachers should set the proper tone. As Dral noted, using personal stories requires training in the sensitivities involved, including the possibility that learners may themselves have experienced something similar.

The workshop shared examples and reflected how different the relationship between learner and educator can be when educators emphasise positive qualities and express appreciation for difference. An educator who says to a learner, "I know you are a good person..." changes something, because learners may not be used to that; a critical rather than an empathetic approach is often more familiar.

"If a safe space is created and you are able to disclose something personal, you will see that young people will almost always respond with equal kindness and openness," Van Dijk told participants. "And if a young person challenges you as a teacher, make use of it. Respond to it. Don't say 'that's wrong'. Ask why they said it, and if anyone else has an opinion. Never be offended if they maybe don't respond positively first time round."

During the workshops, several educators revealed special moments they had experienced using *Stories that Move*, when a learner felt safe enough to reveal something they'd never discussed before. These included in Spain a pupil who had previously never even told her closest friends that her parents were immigrants; in the Netherlands a learner who stayed behind to confide she was gay; and in Austria the adult students working with the story of the Roma boy Márk who stopped to consider how they, as parents, would respond if their daughter brought home a Roma boyfriend. Barbara Lášticová, a researcher at the Slovak Academy of Sciences working on prejudice reduction in schools, remarked on the trust, openness and sense of "safe place" that the *Stories that Move* conference had itself created.

"Academic conferences are very stimulating intellectually, but people are competing. Here, there was no competition. Nothing was wrong," she said. "Everything you said was OK. That was such a nice experience. And everyone was equal. At the launch, the students spoke and the government minister. There were no wise men and stupid kids. This is what I value very much about this whole tool, it gives a voice to people who aren't given a voice."

Summing up, Dral said creating a safe space was not about declaring somewhere "safe" or doing some one-off activity but rather a continuous process of building mutual trust. "Open expression of views combined with authentic respect of others plays a central role here. To establish a balance between the two is different for each group and for that reason there are no ready-made recipes."

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How to create safe space One of the ways to start creating safe space is to introduce it as a topic for discussion or brainstorming. You do not have to use the term safe space. Instead, you can address it with an open question, such as "What do we need to be able to discuss things openly?" or "What is not acceptable when we talk about various issues in our group?" First and foremost, the question or subject must be understandable to the group of learners. They can, for instance, write down key words associated with safe space or describe a situation when they shared something personal and felt accepted. Discussing the issue of trust and acceptance is already a step to building trust and acceptance; both are elements of safe space.

For more on the concept of safe space watch the video with Lutz van Dijk on https://www.storiesthatmove.org/en/ for-educators/expert-voices/





New methods and new insights – educators' perspectives

During the conference several educators were interviewed about their experiences in working with *Stories that Move*. They spoke of the way it influenced their teaching, giving them a new methodology to work with that also gave them new insights into their students' lives. They also shared how the learners had responded and discussed some specific contexts in which the learning paths were used. Although the wealth of the material in the tool sometimes seems daunting, one educator responded quite succinctly:

"It is clear we have not yet found all there is in **Stories that Move**. We need more time and more practice ."

Karina Meeuwse, a high school teacher in the Netherlands

↦ Türkân Kanbiçak

↔ Katarína Petrisková

Stories that Move has been used in a wide range of classroom settings, including history, social sciences and language teaching, and in formal and non-formal education. Online learning is still relatively new in many schools and the blended learning format needs getting used to. But Katarína Petrisková, a secondary school teacher in Slovakia, approaches such challenges in a down-to-earth way:

"We didn't have to sit in a special room. I could use the Stories that Move methods, stories, and some of the videos in the regular room with them. It wasn't difficult. Everything was there."

Türkân Kanbiçak, a former secondary school teacher in Germany:

"I used **Stories that Move** in my ethics classes, but I also recommended it to language teachers. I think it is one of our important challenges for the future to bring people together, not divide them."



Stories that Move



1 Friederieke Haller

↓ Gernot Haupt



Simple answers

Friederieke Haller, a vocational teacher in Austria, used the story of the Hungarian photographer and Ravensbrück survivor Ágnes Barta to engage a group of young photography students. They weren't interested in history, but they connected with a fellow photographer.

"The young want simple answers. We have to open their eyes and let in opinions from other people. We must go outside our own 'gardens' and into other countries."

Katarína Petrisková, from Slovakia, also reflected on the connection between past and present but in reverse:

"Stories that Move is closer to my students, more modern, involving kids their own age, not something distant in history. They can't say 'oh, that was then'."

Gernot Haupt, from Austria, started his lesson with the story of Márk, a Roma boy in contemporary Hungary, and linked it back to Johann Trollmann, a persecuted and eventually murdered Sinto boxer in Nazi Germany.

"I like the videos of the young people, because students are touched to hear another young person of their own age with experiences of discrimination. On the one hand they are outraged, and on the other they feel solidarity. I have worked with survivor testimony and this is the same."

Empathy

Being able to identify with the stories of other young people is recognised as a key element of the toolbox.

Nataliia Tkachenko, an educator at the International Youth Meeting Centre in Auschwitz:

"Sometimes you see that learners are saying the right things, but they do not feel it. I noticed it was easier for them to take the young people on **Stories that Move** into their sphere of empathy. This was a good sign." Speaking of the historical stories in learning path 3 she added:

"Stories that Move on the one hand allows us to narrow down into individual perspectives, but on the other hand the scope of the life stories is so wide that we can really see the context broader than just Auschwitz, so it allows me to broaden the picture of the time."

Personal stories

Maria Sulialina, from Ukraine, was a participant in the very first *Stories that Move* youth conference in 2013, during the research for the online tool, and is now an educator, working in non-formal education.

"When we are talking about everything, we are talking about nothing. But a real story about a real person – that can change your mind."

Eszter Halász, works in adult education within Roma communities in Hungary:

"I really believe personal stories help in education. My experience is that when someone is antisemitic or racist they have never met a Jew or a Gypsy."

Methods and more

Michal Romanowski is a secondary school teacher in a rural area of Poland:

"We have lots of lesson plans and text books for students and teachers. But we didn't have anything like this that makes students look into themselves and share their opinions, and that makes this sharing part of the educational process. It not only enriched us as a group but also made us better people."

Marta Simó is a researcher in Holocaust education at the University of Barcelona. She has worked with *Stories that Move* in three secondary schools: a state school with lots of immigrant pupils (and not much civic education), a private school and a homogeneous Catalan school. All three produced different results, but all three want do it again; four other schools have asked her to show them the tool, to see how they can use it. She's also in talks with the Catalan government and an organisation dealing with commemoration.



1 Marta Simó

"I love the tool. It is a whole change of methodology. It will allow teachers in my country to teach differently. They already want to, because they are very much in favour of opening up and discussing. But a tool makes it easier, because it is already prepared and you don't have to think about it. Teachers often don't have much time."

Ingrid Alexovics is an English language teacher in Hungary. She tested *Stories that Move* successfully in her previous school and is now taking it to a bi-lingual school.

"It is a nice way to get to know students. Building on **Stories that Move**, I have a vision. I'll hopefully have several projects running, maybe getting them to write a blog. Maybe make their own videos. If they can work together, they can improve each other's English."

Stories that Move

Working for change

Nataliia Tkachenko, from the International Youth Meeting Centre in Auschwitz:

"It is very important to talk about discrimination with young people. It is more and more relevant. Sometimes you ask yourself, are we really influencing anything much? I think at least we are trying. Even if we change just one mind, it may bear fruit somewhere in future, and that's worth it."

Olga Kovalchuk is an English language teacher in the Ukraine working with 15 to 17-yearolds. She found the Stories that Move tool by googling "teaching about discrimination".

"No one is born with tolerance. It has to be learned. It's not about countries. it's about people. Stories that Move is very fair and unbiased."

Barbara Lášticová, a university researcher in Slovakia:

"We are trying to change prejudice in the majority, but we can also empower the minority students. I think **Stories that Move** is a wonderful tool. It shows, OK you are not alone. You can solve it like this and this. You can change it. You can take action."

In conclusion

The project team wishes to thank all the educators from all round Europe who tested the tool and provided feedback, generously sharing their experiences, insights and expertise. We have been greatly encouraged and we hope this new community of formal and informal educators will build and grow, online and off, and carry on helping us to develop and improve the tool. Anyone willing to share specific lessons they have created using the materials is welcome to do so on the Stories that Move blog (see: https://www.storiesthatmove.org/en/updates/

Credits

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↓ Barbara Lášticová



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35

Nued I was born here, but I don't feel accepted.



Sometimes I hide my necklace, because although you should be yourself – you shouldn't be naive.





I am who I am. I can change myself, but part of me doesn't change.



Posters to order

This set of six posters can be ordered free of charge at info@storiesthatmove.org (size, 5 x A3 and 1 x A2)

