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UNESCO Chair
on Visual Anticipation
and Futures Literacy
towards Visual Literacy



THE WALL

This is a collective 'game' where all learners add and/or detract virtual 'bricks'. The intention is to build collectively a broader picture, and become aware of its constituent parts and their role. During the process, the learners comprehend how the resulting wall can take different forms depending on their choices and agency.

The title of this tool could very well be "the puzzle", however, the 'wall' has the additional symbolism of a burden and a limit. That corresponds to the limiting nature of all stances and points of view, and prompts discussions on the power and potential of transformation.

The tool **aims** to:

- Bring to the fore the parameter of randomness in history and, in general, in collective phenomena.
- Shed light on the fragile interconnections among the parameters that lead to certain situations and events. Consequently, stress attention to the fact that 'events', 'reality' and 'history' is the random outcome of a constellation of parameters.
- Highlight the role, power and responsibility each individual has as an active citizen.
- Suggest to learners the importance and power of communities in building realities and in bringing change and transformation.
- Train learners to assume the role of an observer and attempt a detached evaluation of events and situations with an aim to sharpen their imagination, observation and agency.
- Train learners to shift from the small picture to the big one, from the micro to the macro scale, and become aware of the sensitive dependence between small-scale changes and far-reaching effects.



How to apply it

Facilitators can use the whiteboard / blackboard as the imaginary wall. They encourage learners to think and share their thoughts, experiences and suggestions.

Learners use post-its to write elements of the topic under discussion (i.e. peace, co-existence, abundance etc.) and stick them on the 'wall'. Elements can include events, stakeholders/actors, values, ideologies, emotions, institutions, prerequisites, side effects etc.

Once all elements are on the wall, the facilitator encourages learners to observe what narratives derive from them and share with their peers. Convergences and divergences between narratives are to be expected and should not be discouraged.

Once all narratives are shared, more steps can enhance the understanding of the topic under examination. Depending on the context, facilitators can ask learners to:

- a) Remove certain values or ideologies and all relevant consequences, and observe what the new reality that emerges looks like.
- b) Reverse emotions with their opposites, spot the parts affected by this change and note what new perceptions come up.
- c) Become outsider observers and evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of each narrative and propose up to 3 ways to address them.
- d) Suggest solution-oriented actions that promote co-existence, sustainability, social justice etc. Each action can become the starting point to repeat part or the whole of this activity and, thus, provide additional opportunities for learners to delve into research, critical analysis and active citizenship mentality.

Suggested combination with other Visual Literacy tools

"The Wall" combines effectively with the "Visuality Iceberg", the "Sensing instead of Making Sense", the "Alternative Futures", and the "Identity Triangle" tools. The subtraction and altering of elements on the 'wall' reframes the concept under examination and, thus, applies to the "Reframing Concepts" tool, as well.

NOTE: This tool was co-developed with Andromachos Dimitrokallis, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/andromachos-dimitrokallis/>

