

Forum theaters in Zaporizhzhia by TYSHA CO: piloting new formats of psychoeducational activities

August 30, 2024

Forum theaters are a type of theatrical-psychological game that involves close interaction between the characters and the audience in the hall, — explains Viktoria Chernova, a psychologist at the NGO "TYSHA" and a forum theater moderator.

How do they work? The actors on stage present a short scene that depicts a social issue. After that, the discussion begins. Together with the audience, the moderator analyzes the actions of the characters and searches for solutions to the situation. All of this is acted out on stage.

Thanks to its interactive format, forum theater not only imparts knowledge but also creates an emotional connection with the issue, enhancing its understanding. As participants observe the changes in a situation they help to modify, they gain a better understanding of the consequences of their actions and internalize new behavior models more deeply.

At the end of the event, a summary is provided, allowing the group to consolidate the results of their collective work and draw important conclusions.



5 offline forum theaters were held in Zaporizhzhia in August 2024, for 97 participants from 4 communities: **Zaporizhzhia, Melitopol, Pologiv, and Berdyansk hromadas.**

97

participants

42

average age

37%

internally displaced persons

8%

returned from abroad

55%

city residents

28%

teachers

11%

self-employed/entrepreneurs

10%

social workers



Some participant feedback

"More such events are needed :) especially in educational institutions and working groups. Thank you very much for the free entrance fee. Because I would have missed it and not learned that such a format and the situations discussed exist! I recognized many situations from my personal life and feel more confident."

"It is useful to understand that you can always find support from a psychologist if you wish. Not everyone understands this."

"Even though I was familiar with the material of the topic, it was instrumental in considering specific situations and analyzing all options for their solutions. I am especially grateful for the pleasant and encouraging atmosphere for communication and reflection."

Forum theaters organized by the TYSHA CO with the support of the Mukwege Foundation, serve as a powerful prevention tool against domestic violence.

The experiences that women-audience members share with the actors on stage will stay with them, making them less likely to allow such violence to occur again in real life.