



## Imagery and metaphors

Sometimes a conversation loses spirit and colour, because it is so focused on the content that it never steps outside the already known. Refreshment is needed. One can do that by discussing the framework itself, inside which the conversation has stayed so far. A well known and effective way of doing that is looking for different images and metaphors which open new areas for exploration. Images and metaphors will throw new light on the issue.

### Approach

1. Choose a topic that you want to inquire into, for example the midlife crisis, disobedience or poverty alleviation.
2. Ask everybody to give a brief sketch of their view on this topic, 'What is it about and how should we approach it?'
3. Inquire about the effect of bringing in the following metaphors:
  - a. when you compare the topic with music, what kind of music is it?
  - b. present your view upon the topic in the shape of a weather forecast.
  - c. imagine that all who are involved in the topic are animals or plants, what would the situation be like? And what would happen?
  - d. look for a crucial detail in your view and enlarge it as far as you can.
  - e. turn your view into a tragedy, or into a comedy, or fairy tale.
  - f. imagine you are a boss of organized crime, what would your view be upon the topic? Or if you had \$ 600 billion at your disposal?
  - g. use the format of the traditional salvation scheme:
    - the situation we are in is one of misery (in what sense does the topic expose human misery?)
    - that is the result of our own fault (what is our sin?)
    - we will have to repent and sacrifice (what is the sacrifice?)
    - then we will receive salvation? (what is this in relation to the topic?)
4. Which of these metaphors worked best in opening up new perspectives upon the topic?
5. Look back at the brief sketch you started with. What would you like to revise?

