

Using paintings, pictures and photographs to trigger discussion

A few examples

The MAP Foundation is an arts in health organisation founded by artist Michele Angelo Petrone to promote expression, communication and understanding for people affected by life threatening illness.

An established artist, Michele was diagnosed with cancer aged 30 and he transformed his own cancer experience through artistic expression. His exhibition and book [*The Emotional Cancer Journey*](#) - a series of paintings and words - depicted his journey through illness. This artwork, along with the talks, residencies and workshops, have helped people recognise their own feelings and come to terms with the complex and painful issues relating to serious illness and dying.

I don't know where life will take me. I don't know how the river bends or where the rapids may be. Radiotherapy completed my treatment, but my journey isn't finished. My cancer seems to be gone, but who can be sure? There are no certainties, and from time to time a new pain has panicked myself and my loved ones. My body may be healed now but adjusting to the changes in my life and the recovery of my emotions, my soul, and my spirit, takes longer.



This illness has invaded my life, knocked me off balance and made me feel out of control. I no longer feel the strength and direction I once had, I'm just a passive passenger, being carried whichever way these arms take me. But I still feel a need to direct my life, to feel this life of mine is still mine, so please: "carry me this way".



Or go into a local gallery and find out about the artists' work

I paint not knowing.
I paint to discover.
I paint to record feeling.
I paint to communicate, what I can't say.
I paint to order chaos.
I paint to defy, my inevitable death.
I paint to express, the individual in us all.
I paint in a dream.
I paint to see, if you feel the same.

Nigel Moores



Take trainees to the local Portrait Gallery and for example choose 6 paintings and ask the trainees to individually reflect on what the person in the portrait's story might be. These are from the BP Portrait Awards and that annual exhibition is worth seeing.



The same can be done with postcards or photographs.

- Postcards can also be laid out and each person choose one that expresses how they are feeling
- Use the text and photographs in “A Fortunate Man” to create discussion or bring and tell sessions
- Trainees bring a painting or photo to tell others about themselves