

# Transitional Justice & Empowerment


Whose power?  
What is meant?

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# On Entering a Sacred Space

The role of the personal story  
&  
The place I am speaking from



# Empowerment




Sociological empowerment often addresses members of groups that social discrimination processes have excluded from decision-making processes through - for example - discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, or gender.

Empowerment as a methodology is often associated with feminism.

# Empowerment

**Empowerment** refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities.

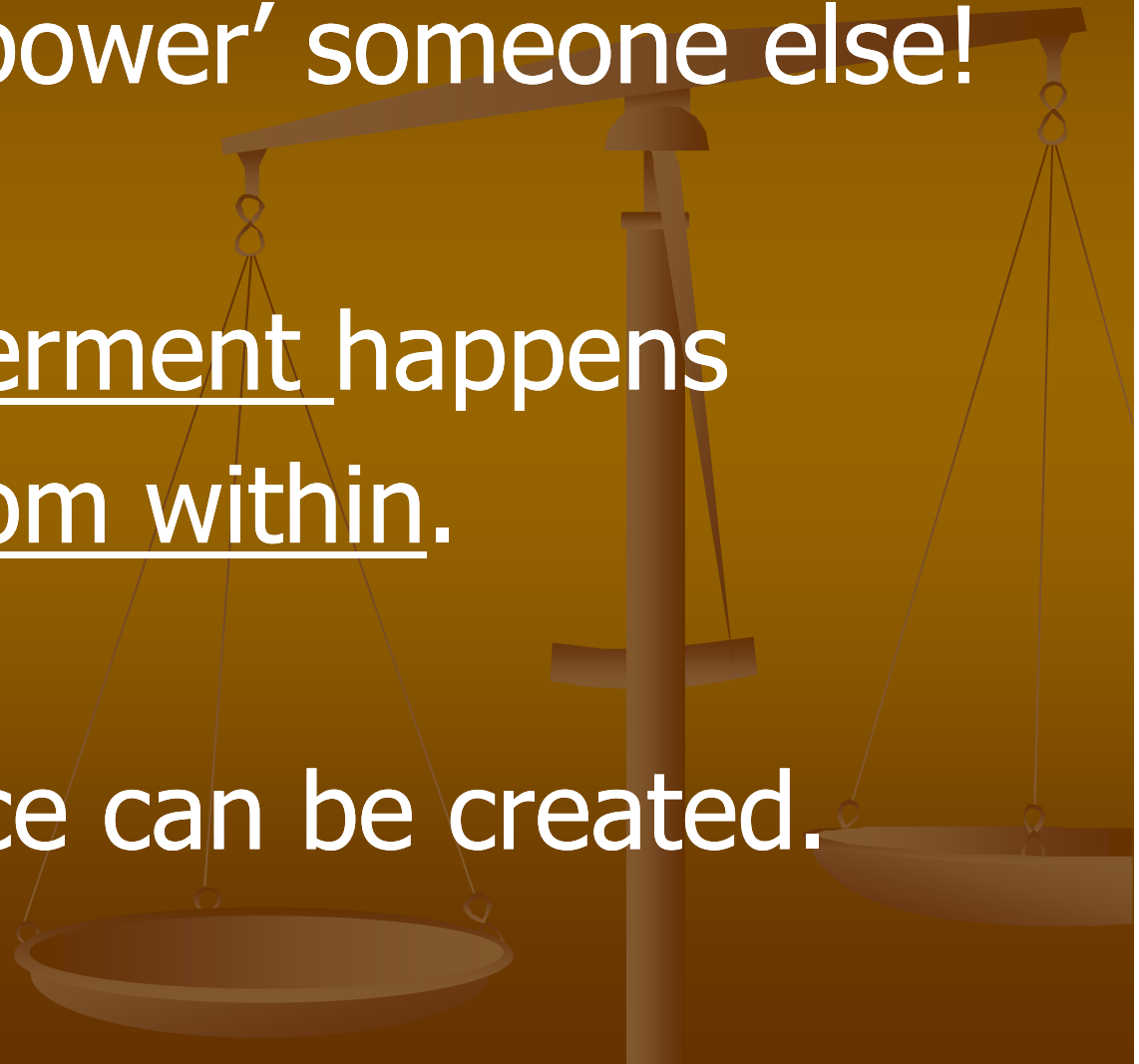


**Power is never given –  
it is always taken**

**I cannot 'empower' someone else!**

Empowerment happens  
from within.

**But a space can be created.**

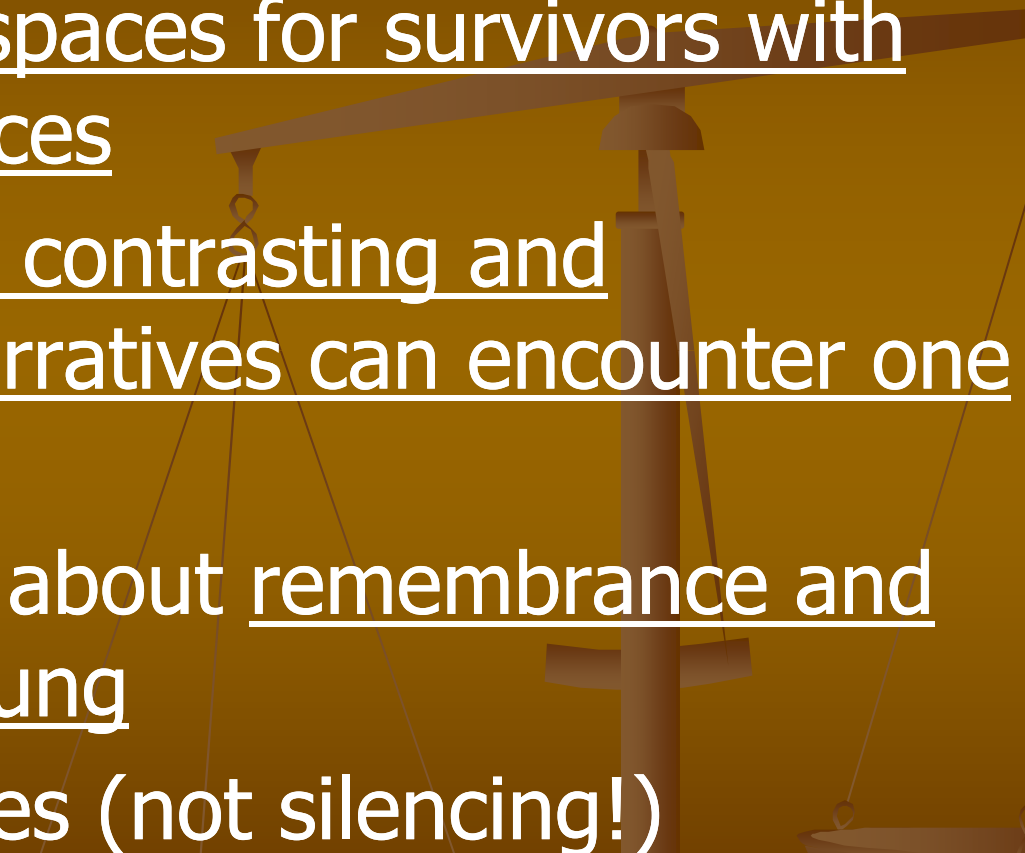


We can perhaps enable the creation of a space

- in which power can be taken,
- in which people can access their own strength and inner resourcefulness in order to
- explore and make sense of what happened to them and find meaning in it,
- seek out the purpose that springs forth from their experience for the future and for their life.



# Four Spaces

- Separate 'safe' spaces for survivors with similar experiences
  - Spaces in which contrasting and contradicting narratives can encounter one another
  - Spaces that are about remembrance and teaching the Young
  - Space for silences (not silencing!)
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# Three Abilities

- **Response-ability**

- 'Can I let your pain happen to me?' (Das)

- **Conflict-ability**

- How do we negotiate, hold tensions, engage, disagree without superficial harmony and without harming each other further?

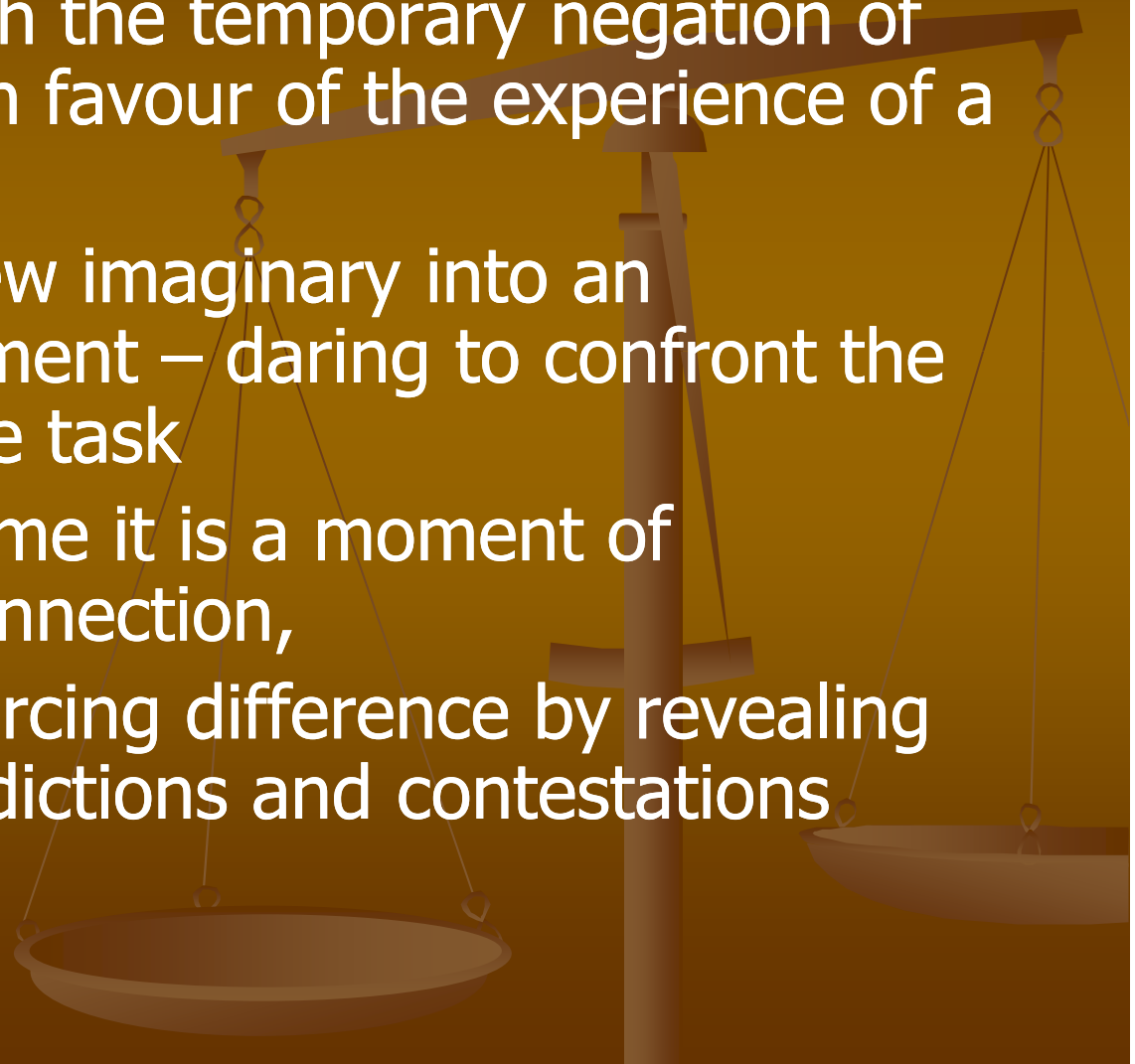
- **Soci-ability**

- Can we 'imagine ourselves in a web of interdependencies that includes our enemies?' (Das/Kleinman)



# Struggling, but Daring to Dance

- Experimenting with the temporary negation of structural reality in favour of the experience of a new encounter
- Translating the new imaginary into an immediate experiment – daring to confront the complexities of the task
- Accept that for some it is a moment of unprecedented connection,
- For others re-enforcing difference by revealing underlying contradictions and contestations



# Respect the limits

## Mindfulness

of the `rawness` of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation,  
using imagination & voice

but also

respecting silence

