Who Goes with Whom?

Two, three, many

Part 2 is about relationships.

On this worksheet, more and more protagonists (shapes, figures) come into play, one after another. Again and again the question arises: *How do the relationships change when another shape appears? Which relationships do you notice?*

You will need: four sheets of A4 paper and about 30 small shapes. You can cut these shapes from black construction paper. Or cut them from ordinary paper and colour them as dark as you can with a very soft pencil. The shapes can be roundish/oval or irregular, roughly the size of a coin. Since you'll keep moving them around, leave them loose at first and don't glue them down.

Time: about 20–30 minutes.

1 **Two shapes.**

Put two shapes on the first sheet – anywhere.

Do they seem to you like a couple, like two neighbours, like two strangers – or something else entirely?

Move one of the two shapes.

How does their relationship change when you move it?

2 **Three shapes.**

Put three shapes on the second sheet. Decide for yourself where. When you're happy with the arrangement, pause and let the composition work on you.

What relationships do the shapes have with one another?

Now move just one of the three shapes.

Can you influence who belongs with whom this way?

Try out several positions.

3 **A gathering.**

Put ten shapes on the third sheet. Spread them out without deciding in advance what should come of it. Then look.

Do you see individual shapes, or are groups beginning to form? If you notice groups: what makes them?

Move single shapes.

Can a single shape leave a group? Can it join another one? Can its new position create a new group?

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A crowd.

On the fourth sheet, keep adding more and more shapes, one by one. Pause now and then.

What changes with each additional shape? When do you still notice individual shapes? Is there a moment when many single ones turn into something new – a group, a crowd, perhaps a pattern, even an area?

You don't have to discover anything in particular.

If you get stuck … Start with two shapes that almost touch. Only add the third once you sense whom it belongs to. More questions that help: Picture Conversation 12.

Finally, a question for yourself:
What did you have to change for single shapes to become a group?

Your picture conversation

Talking about pictures is something you can learn. Write down your answers in your own words – just for you, no one has to read them. Over time you'll find words for what you see.

Why this exercise

Every additional shape is a new event – and changes the situation on the whole sheet. Sometimes shapes begin to act as a pair or a group. Sometimes a shape stays on its own. As more and more are added, something can appear that we no longer see as single shapes, but as a crowd, a pattern or an area. Along the way you may have a surprising experience: *You don't have to change a shape to change its effect. Sometimes it's enough to put it somewhere else.*

Picture Conversations is a series of 13 exercises – you'll find the worksheets at ekke-scholz.de/en/picture-conversations.
New exercises and thoughts from the studio: **ekke-scholz.de/en/newsletter**

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