Social Inclusion

T-KIT
No.8

Social Inclusion

T-Kit

on

Social Inclusion

Welcome to the T-Kit series

Some of you may have wondered: what does T-Kit mean? We can offer at least two answers. The first is as simple as the full version in English: "Training Kit". The second has more to do with the sound of the word that may easily recall "Ticket", one of the travelling documents we usually need to go on a journey. So, on the cover, the little figure called "Spiffy" holds a train ticket to go on a journey to discover new ideas. In our imagination, this T-Kit is a tool that each of us can use in our work. More specifically, we would like to address youth workers and trainers and offer them theoretical and practical tools to work with and use when training young people.

The T-Kit series has been the result of a one-year collective effort involving people from different cultural, professional and organisational backgrounds. Youth trainers, youth leaders in NGOs and professional writers have worked together in order to create high quality publications which would address the needs of the target group while recognising the diversity of approaches across Europe to each subject.

The T-Kits are a product of the Partnership Agreement on European Youth Worker Training run by the European Commission and the Council of Europe. Besides the T-Kits, the partnership between the two institutions has resulted in other areas of co-operation such as training courses, the magazine "Coyote" and a dynamic internet site.

To find out more about developments in the partnership (new publications, training course announcements, etc.) or to download the electronic version of the T-Kits, visit the Partnership web site: http://www.training-youth.net.

This document does not necessarily express the official view of the European Commission or the Council of Europe, their member states or the organisations co-operating with the institutions.

Contents

Preface by the European Institutions

Inclusion : the perspective of the European Commission

The European Commission and the National YOUTH-Agencies are currently implementing a "Strategy for the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities into the YOUTH- programme". The strategy responds to the challenge that many young people in Europe are deprived from participating in trans-national activities, be it because there are many obstacles or because youth workers and trainers are not sufficiently prepared to assist this target group to participate. The term "young people with fewer opportunities" refers to the obstacles to participation and is not intended to stigmatise this group. These obstacles can be of a socio-economic, cultural or geographical nature or may be the result of a physical or mental disability. By 2003 we want to increase substantially the share of this target group in the YOUTH-programme and consider related projects a high priority. The different actions of the YOUTH programme offer many occasions for young people with fewer opportunities, for example, the short-term projects in the European Voluntary Service (Action 2) and projects created and led by youngsters in the framework of Youth Initiatives (Action 3). Additional funding for projects with this target group has been made available. The inclusion strategy aims at areas such as information, motivation and training; creating networks; co-operation between National YOUTH-Agencies in the field of inclusion; transfer of best practices and experiences; and quality monitoring. In addition, existing training tools (such as SALTO-YOUTH, the YOUTH staff trainings and, last but not least, this T-Kit) are being orientated towards inclusion. The present T-Kit therefore represents an important tool in this overall framework and will certainly contribute to the shaping of an always more inclusive Europe for young people with fewer opportunities.

Pierre MAIRESSE

A strategy of change : the Council of Europe's point of view

If there has been one loser of the three governing ideals of the French revolution – freedom, equality, fraternity – during the 90s of the previous century it is equality. Post-modern society values individualism and difference higher than ever before and the social virtue of solidarity appears like an old fashioned relic of the past. The governing slogan of the Council of Europe's campaign against Racism, Anti-Semitism, Xenophobia and Intolerance "ALL EQUAL – ALL DIFFERENT", which meant to put the principles of equality and difference into a kind of eternal balance and unbreakable inter-relationship, has skipped out of balance and into the direction of inequality and difference. This has happened not only as a kind of temporary failure of delivery of the political system due to an under-financing of the welfare state, but it is on its way to becoming a new legitimacy of power, threatening directly the principles of social cohesion, equity and fairness. The signs of these developments are only too well known: high unemployment rates, a decrease of equality of opportunity in education in many countries, but also marginalisation, social exclusion and discrimination for many young people in the enlarged Europe. And when we speak about the considerable economic, social and political differences within the 45 member states of the Council of Europe, there are whole geographical regions of Europe that appear as marginalised in their entirety.

Youth policy is about inclusion and access. Where inclusion and access are assured, policies function, where this is not the case, they don't. There are many reasons from armed conflicts to political and economic system changes and economic crises which may explain short and medium term unbearable differences within the social situations and the life prospects of young people in Europe, but this is not a reason to leave behind key values of European society such as social justice and equality of opportunity. All it should mean is to concentrate forces and to combat the circumstances, which have created these hostile conditions. However, no solutions will come out of the blue. Next to political and social action young people at local level, in associations and networks, with their friends and peers will have to take their share of the effort needed to live in a better world. This effort means participation and active citizenship, it means to 'occupy' the European space and it means to make one's voice heard and to advocate one's interests. All this has to be learnt. The inter-relation between learning and participation is very strong. The T-Kit on social inclusion is more than just another educational tool; it is one of the foundations for a strategy of change.

Peter LAURITZEN

1. Introduction

1.1 The future of Europe :
young people, inclusion and participation

By
Tom
Croft

> "The European Union needs to become more democratic, more transparent and more efficient. It also has to resolve three basic challenges : how to bring citizens, and primarily the young, closer to the European design and the European institutions…"
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> *Extract from the Declaration of Laeken (EU European Council Summit, Belgium, December 2001)*
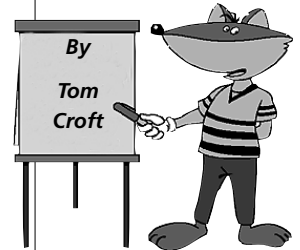
At the dawn of this new millennium, Europe, both the Council of Europe and European Union, and its citizens are travelling rapidly towards a new and critical horizon in their history.

The further enlargement of the European Union, for example, and the enormous political, economic and social changes it will bring in its wake, represent profound challenges for the whole continent.

The citizens of the continent also seem increasingly disillusioned with Europe's political and administrative structures. This sense of disconnectedness has been put forward, for example, as a reason for falling turnout in European elections and "no" votes in national referendums on further European integration. To reverse these feelings and bridge the divide between Europe's institutions and its citizens are also major tasks.

Yet all these challenges represent an immense wealth of opportunities for Europe and its people. We have the opportunity to build together a Europe of peace, based on the respect and defence of human rights and with new forms of democracy that can truly engage Europe's institutions with Europe's citizens.

But what is most striking, as the Laeken Declaration makes clear, is the fact that Europe's young people are central to the success of this vision for a truly united, peaceful and fair Europe. The rise of youth participation up the political agenda reflects significant developments in the thinking and the emphasis given to youth policy and youth work within Europe. The European Union's YOUTH programme, the White Paper on Youth and the training courses run through the Council of Europe's Youth Centres are all examples of this trend.

Young people are then firmly and rightly on the political map of Europe, their role and importance highlighted. But what exactly has all this got to do with social inclusion in youth work? The link becomes clearer when the idea of youth participation is examined more closely.

The notion of participation of young people in society, particularly in the civil and political organisation of society, is developing. Participation in this context means more than mere consultation with young people about changes and initiatives that will affect their lives and shape their futures. We are talking about the participation of young people who are really representing, and representative of, a faithful cross section of European youth. It is this last point that brings us to the crux of the matter.

For society to really benefit from the engagement of young people, all young people must be given the means and the opportunities to take up their right to participate. It is essential that young people with fewer opportunities, indeed with the fewest opportunities, can get involved and make their contribution felt, not least because it is their fundamental right as much as any other young person. But it is not only a matter of the intrinsic ethical value of preventing exclusion or of recognising the richness of diversity. The participation of young people with fewer opportunities is a barometer of the underlying health of our democracies and societies. It is imperative that the voice of the most vulnerable and marginalised young people is heard because their contribution, their perspective and their knowledge is invaluable and unique in the effort to forge a better society for tomorrow, for everyone. Young people who have the most difficult lives and the most uncertain futures can really teach us about the meaning of, and the path towards, a Europe of equality, justice and peace. But these young people must first have the possibility to participate.

Even though the insight and knowledge of people who experience social exclusion directly can help us understand the roots of exclusion, these are complex and difficult experiences to understand. Yet young people in the most difficult situations do tell us that they need opportunities to meet others in an atmosphere of friendship, mutual support and security. They also tell us about the importance of having the possibility to join in with others in the normal pursuits and projects open to young people in society, such as sport, volunteering and cultural activities. It is very much as a result of such an inclusion that young people can go on to discuss and share their views on the issues that concern them. This is true for all young people but especially true for those with the fewest opportunities.

Youth work plays an essential role in reaching and bringing together young people who face exclusion on a daily basis. It is true that there are many other factors in society that can contribute to the social inclusion of young people, not least the abilities and strengths of young people themselves, but for young people with the fewest opportunities youth work and youth organisations can be a principal means of such inclusion.

If youth workers and youth organisations cannot reach out to and include young people with the fewest opportunities in their activities, where else will they benefit from the non-formal learning experiences these activities provide? (See *5 : Non-formal education as a tool for the inclusion of all.*) How else will the most marginalised young people be able to join other young people and adults in the projects that are open to them in our societies? And outside of the formal structures that do not always serve them the best, where will the most vulnerable young people find the encouragement and support to develop their self-esteem and confidence? (See *6.4 : Exploring self-esteem.*) Without such broader inclusion where will the most isolated young people develop the necessary skills and self-belief to take up the challenge of representing others? And what possible future will Europe be missing out on without such inclusion?

How then do youth workers and youth organisations go about being inclusive? This T-Kit aims to provide both conceptual and practical tools and resources from which to begin to explore and approach this question.

1.2 The value and challenge of working inclusively

> Researchers looking at social exclusion were tracking the changes in the lives of a small sample of young people who were not in education, employment or training – one of the key marginalised groups that government is keen to help. The plan was to interview them twice or three times, over a period of 18 months. Unfortunately, despite regular communication and the researchers' best efforts, many of the young people simply 'disappeared'.
>
> *From "Missing ConneXions" : Briton (2002)*

Excluded young people are hard to reach and the more excluded they are the harder it is. Making contact with young people is not enough; we need to engage and work with them. The problem is confounded by the fact that many marginalised young people express suspicion, even hostility, towards the involvement of professionals in their lives.

This is why youth work is so important. Its often voluntary and community-based nature means that youth workers and youth organisations have a better chance than most to make contact and build trusting relationships with young people on the margins of society (see *6.3 : Building trust*).

So what are the benefits to be gained when we as youth workers build on this vocational advantage and work as inclusively as we can?

> Young single mothers bringing up their children in extremely difficult conditions have a wealth of practical and emotional experience and resourcefulness as well as an acute understanding of some of the injustices at the root of society. This knowledge needs to be shared, not just with other single mothers but also with anyone wanting to understand what it is like to raise children alone on an insufficient income while at the same time coping with society's disapproval and moralising. Such personal insights and experiences are difficult to share with others and bringing young people from very different backgrounds together is not always straightforward and trouble-free but with care and commitment the rewards for everyone are immense.

- The first thing we need to recognise is the tremendous knowledge and insight that young people who face exclusion on a daily and long-term basis can bring to youth work, as pointed out in the previous chapter. Their contribution will enrich any youth initiative or project.

- Young people facing persistent exclusion will benefit from new opportunities that could have been previously out of reach. Through being able to know and encounter other young people they will, together, all be challenged and their prejudices, stereotypes and assumptions questioned. Their horizons will become broader, their contacts more diverse. They will have the opportunity together to see patterns of injustice and explore their concerns and questions. Despite the differences in their backgrounds and experiences they will discover their similarities as young people with hopes and aspirations for the future.

- Youth projects and initiatives will benefit too. If locally based, they will be more relevant to their communities. By listening and learning from disadvantaged young people, youth work and those involved in it will gain a deeper and broader understanding of what is really important. By reaching and engaging excluded young people, future initiatives will have a better chance to include them as well; events or projects can be tailored to meet the young people's actual needs and interests, not what adults imagine them to be.

- In terms of its content, the project, and all the people in it and affected by it, gain too. Racism, sexism, poverty, inequality and other forms of discrimination and injustice can be raised not as abstract "-isms" but as real forces affecting real people. Young people can understand the realities of other people's lives better when there is an emotional connection between them. This principle is well understood as an element of global youth work, but it applies just as keenly when the gap between or within communities is across a city, not a continent.

- In this way, and especially if what we learn through working inclusively can be shared outside the world of youth work, society, as a whole, will benefit too.

However, bringing all this about is far from easy. Working in an inclusive way demands change – organisational and individual. By definition, the status quo has failed some young people. To change that, people and organisations have to do things in different ways. They must identify the barriers they have, perhaps unwittingly, erected. Projects must examine their organisational culture, their values and practices, to see where and how they are reaching and engaging some young people but not others. We examine some of those barriers and ways to tackle them in greater detail in *3 : How to reach all*.

In all this it is vital that youth workers know their limitations. Some of the barriers to young people's inclusion are deep-rooted, long lasting and structural in society. Youth workers cannot counter their effects at a stroke, even with good intentions and hard work. Goals have to be realistic and achievable (see the section on SMART objectives in T-Kit 3 on Project Management). Youth projects obviously cannot single-handedly eradicate poverty, unemployment, drug use, racism and xenophobia, educational underachievement, homelessness, abuse and neglect, youth crime or any of the other problems linked with young people's social exclusion. But they can work with young people in informal settings, broadening their opportunities, providing new experiences and challenges, showing their faith in young people and bringing out of them what is best, as described in *5 : Non-formal education as a tool for the inclusion of all*.

For young people facing daily discrimination and exclusion, and trying to cope with the humiliation and the injustice that it brings, sensitive and inclusive youth work based on respect and dignity can be an immense source of strength and personal encouragement. If this is all new to you, some underlying principles and different approaches of this inclusive youth work are described in *6: Inclusive youth work in practice,* and *7: Some particular approaches.*

We must also encourage professionals – teachers, health workers, police and employers – to take young people seriously; to listen to them, not to preach; to enter into proper dialogue with them about their lives; and to accept that young people have a lot to contribute and to teach us. The importance of partnerships in tackling social exclusion and fostering social inclusion is explored in *4: Young people and their context.*

If, however, you are a trainer wishing to raise awareness about the different issues that surround working with young people with fewer opportunities, this T-Kit will give you a series of methods and exercises in *8: Practical part – Exercises.*

Next we will tackle one of the biggest stumbling blocks, that of trying to grasp what inclusion actually is and who those young people with fewer opportunities are, in *2: Definitions.*

2. Definitions

2.1 Difficulties with words

By
Tom
Croft

As youth workers trying to work inclusively we encounter many challenges. One of these is how to find the right words to refer to those young people whose inclusion we want to build our projects around.

Over the years many terms have been challenged and many have been actively dropped, avoided or changed in response to criticism. Some for being obviously derogatory like "dead beat dads" or "the underclass". Others like "the poor", "the handicapped" or "the jobless" have been rejected for being insensitive or inaccurate. For example, in the European Commission's YOUTH programme there has been a conscious shift away from the expression "disadvantaged young people" to the phrase "young people with fewer opportunities" (a term that is itself a little clumsy and liable to change over time) which we have used as much as possible in this T-Kit. (see *6.1 : Ethos*)

Whatever terms we use, we should acknowledge that:

- words are powerful and complex and are quite capable of giving offence – even when the thinking behind them was well intentioned and no harm or disrespect was meant by the speaker;

- words shape the way that we think and respond. Descriptive terms, such as "young offender" or "victim of abuse", for example, often have associations which are not proven or justified but can be hard to shake off, once used;

- and although words are important, we need not get too obsessed with them. If we spend too much time worrying about words we might not get anything useful done.

The problem with language is that there are two forces pulling in opposite directions whenever we work with people who are facing exclusion in their daily lives. We are tugged one way by governments, policy makers, managers, analysts, grant givers and other fund providers. For them we want to target and identify particular groups of young people. We want a label to express young people's particular vulnerability, the severity of the problems they face, the difficulty of improving their situation, the injustice and suffering they experience. We need to do this in order to challenge society with what young people teach us about their situations and their aspirations. We also want to do this clearly and concisely to improve our chances of getting the funds and resources necessary to do what is really important: work with young people.

In our relationships with young people the pressure is from a different direction. We know the absurdity – and dangers – of labelling people. We know that young people are individuals, not a generalised mass. We know that they do not respond well to labels imposed by other people. We are aware of their right to dignity and self-respect. So we feel uncomfortable when describing them in ways that they would not choose to describe themselves. Thus a tension arises when we try to accommodate both groups.

Given that there is no ideal language category for describing socially excluded young people, it makes sense to proceed with care to avoid developing views that are too fixed. It would also be wise to follow some broad principles:

- We should be as accurate as possible, without letting our vocabulary become technical or too difficult to understand. Many disabled people object to words like "suffering" and "wheelchair bound" partly because of their pejorative and patronising overtones, but also because they are simply inaccurate. Wheelchair users are not necessarily bound to their chairs, and, without evidence, it is presumptuous and ill informed to describe anyone as suffering.

- We should listen to what young people want. Would young people of Turkish or Moroccan origin in the Netherlands describe themselves as "medelander" (a term invented by the Dutch Government to suggest that they were quasi-Nederlanders)? If not, should we? Would "young people with fewer opportunities" recognise themselves if they heard that description?
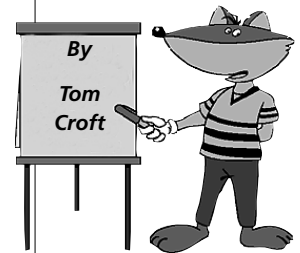
- We should always be aware of the dignity of people we are describing. A simple test - would we ourselves like to be referred to in this way? Would we be happy if this description was applied to someone close to us?

- We should be explicit that a description refer to young people's current situation, not to young people themselves. So if we do call someone "at risk" or "disadvantaged" we refer to their present or recent circumstances that affect their opportunities. It is not a label they will carry forever.

2.2 Who are the young people with fewer opportunities?

"When people don't go out from where they live, when they never leave their block or their estate, a wall develops. They don't see anything outside their estate or their country. That's dangerous. Getting out and about means seeing other people. It gives you the impression of changing the world. The wall which stops us going out and seeing other people must be blown up."

European White Paper on Youth Policy: A Contribution from the Poorest Young People, International Movement ATD Fourth World, 2001

The missing experts

These are the words of a young person speaking about her experiences of exclusion, discrimination and poverty; subjects that are much talked about but not always well understood.

Academics, policy advisors, social workers and even youth workers are sometimes put forward as experts on exclusion. Many of these experts have a valuable secondary knowledge gleaned from years of dedicated research or committed hands on work in the field, and many carry with them a deep conviction fuelled by the injustices they have witnessed. But few have the direct knowledge gained through a lifetime of overcoming exclusion. These are the missing experts in the debate and their expertise is not recognised or utilised enough.

Why does this happen? Partly it is a matter of the difficulty we all have to break free of socially accepted norms and beliefs about authority and knowledge. Educational achievement and professional status are qualities we are used to respecting and there is a lot of sense in this. But the flip side is that we can be easily trapped in these habits. Partly too, it is a problem with society's structures and institutions which are ill equipped and badly designed to reach and engage people who are excluded, a condition sometimes described as "institutional discrimination" and a prime contributor to exclusion itself. Last but not least, it is because, as we shall see later, discrimination, exclusion and insecurity reinforce one another over the long run and make it more and more difficult for people to rise above their day-to-day battle. Without support it is often impossible for people to be in a position to represent themselves or others. The upshot of all this is that society's understanding of exclusion suffers, as does our ability to combat it.

Double jeopardy

In much academic or policy work there is a tendency to focus on identifying and describing vulnerable groups. This categorising can be useful. It is a necessary tool for quantitative research and for statistically evaluating the impact of policies and programmes. The trouble is that, overly used, such an approach can place a rather distorting lens on young people and their situations.

For any list of excluded groups one can ask why are these groups seen as at risk of exclusion and not others? Someone could ask for example, "Where are teenage mothers or rurally isolated youth?" Some groups of young people are often neglected from such lists because they are very specific in nature, for instance young carers (young people who carry the main responsibility for caring for a severely disabled parent or relative). To do justice to all worthy claims would inevitably lead to a list as long as your arm.

Finally, the thing about grouping young people is that they can fall into more than one group at the same time. They may even only identify themselves as belonging to some of those groups or even to none at all. However, the realisation that someone can belong to more than one vulnerable group at the same time can lead us to a deeper understanding of exclusion itself. What, for example does it mean if you belong not only to an ethnic minority but you are also living in long-term poverty? Or if you are young single mother, on a very low income and rurally isolated? If all these groups are at risk of exclusion in our society are you doubly or triply at risk? This idea of "double jeopardy" or "multiple insecurity" is the basis for a more holistic understanding of exclusion, its causes and consequences.

A human rights approach

> "A lack of basic security is the absence of one or more factors that enable individuals and families to assume professional, family and social responsibilities and to enjoy fundamental rights. Such a situation may become more extended and lead to more serious and permanent consequences. Chronic poverty results when the lack of basic security simultaneously affects several aspects of people's lives, when it is prolonged, and when it severely compromises people's chances of regaining their rights and of reassuming their responsibilities in the foreseeable future."
>
> *Definition of persistent poverty adopted by the French Economic and Social Council (1987) and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (1996).*

The definition speaks about persistent poverty but it could just as easily describe long-term exclusion. The reality it points to is the reality facing many marginalised young people in our societies. It highlights three important aspects of people's situations:

- *Multiple insecurities* – The most vulnerable young people are often facing a number of different insecurities in their lives at the same time, for example: unemployment, discrimination and isolation; or inadequate housing, health problems and inconsistent education and training.

- *Persistence* – If such multiple insecurities endure over the long-term they can build up and compound one another, for example: inadequate housing can lead to poor health; discrimination can lead to unemployment or problems at school; family break up to isolation.

- *Erosion of rights and responsibilities* – Eventually people's basic social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights and responsibilities are undermined or under threat wholesale: it is difficult to succeed at school if you face discrimination on a daily basis. Without a basic education how will you find a decent job? Without a decent job how will you afford adequate housing? When your confidence is shattered and people do not understand your situation it is very difficult to join in cultural or civil activities. All these pressures can put intolerable strain on family life. This sort of vicious circle can go round and round, in the end affecting every part of a person's life.

In these kinds of circumstances life becomes a daily struggle to meet responsibilities and enjoy fundamental rights that most of us take for granted and this means exclusion from society and its projects.

Through helping us to understand their experience young people like the ones quoted at the beginning of this section are also telling us about their aspirations. The role of youth work in the fight against exclusion is about providing more opportunities to young people who have few, but not simply as an end in itself. Through these opportunities we can support young people in their efforts to avoid the trap of violence and join them in bringing down the wall.

3. How to reach all

3.1 Obstacles

Young people suffer from a dual image. On the one hand, media and politics often depict them as passive or even potentially criminal, while on the other hand, in commercials and movies they are portrayed as active, powerful, happy and strong. In reality, only very few young persons will be able to identify with either of these groups. Many of the young people with fewer opportunities are under pressure from different sides and different types of difficulties as mentioned in 2.2 above. Simply living their lives under these circumstances takes up a lot of their time and energy, which could mean they have little left for joining your activities, even though they might like to.

This is a barrier youth workers will have to overcome in order to reach *all* young people. At the least the youth worker has the responsibility to offer all young people the possibility to join, and let them make the choice whether to join or not. At the most youth workers can make it their aim to truly reach a certain underrepresented target group. First of all it is important to realise what barriers could (unknowingly) exist which prevent your youth work to be inclusive. For an idealistic youth worker it might be difficult to understand why young people would not take part in fun activities together with others. But for many young people, the first priority will be to take care of themselves and face the challenges in their lives. Youth workers should take into account these needs.

So let us pause and consider what reasons might prevent young people from joining your activities.

By Veronique Crolla

Personal obstacles	Practical obstacles
– lack of self esteem, self confidence	– lack of information
– lack of encouragement	– lack of permission – group pressure against joining
– dislike of being patronised	
– unappealing image of youth work ("only for children and sissies")	– lack of time or energy
	– lack of money
– fear of being discriminated against	– cultural or religious conflicts
– uninteresting activities	– mobility problems

This table is not complete and (hopefully) not all reasons might be applicable to your specific target group, but it gives you some ideas why certain groups might not be inclined to join your activities. Young people might also use a reason to cover up the real reason. For instance, someone whose parents do not allow him to take part might say he considers the activities silly. A lot of barriers can be identified already by simply thinking about who your target group is in advance: a hog roast will not do for youngsters from Jewish or Muslim communities. Young carers will not easily find time to leave the house though they just have to take care of a family member. Disabled or rurally isolated young people also will have specific difficulties joining activities. Religion or culture might make it impossible for young people to join mixed projects.

So young people do not stay away from your activities for no reason. One way to find out why is to ask the young persons themselves. But if you want to get to know your target group really well, you can find out more about them in the neighbourhood they live. Here is a systematic approach to create better links to the young people and their environment.

Step one : Getting to know the environment	Do : take people seriously Don't : promise things you cannot deliver
Step two : Making contact and mapping the territory	Do : show interest Don't : preach
Step three : Registration, interpretation and analysis	Do : gather as much info as possible Don't : speculate
Step four : Formulating project plan and making decisions	Do : be flexible Don't : rush, keep clear objectives

Step one : Go out to the places where you can contact the young persons you are targeting. Get to know their environment and life situation (see *4.1 : Young people in their communities*). Talk informally to the young people about their needs and wishes, and do not forget to gather information as well about the "invisible" young people (those you do not meet on the streets). Listen actively but do not promise things you cannot deliver. Avoid being patronising.

Step two : It is important to build trust between the young people and yourself *(see 6.3 : Building trust).* It is important not to be judgmental or to preach to people when they tell you about past experiences. Show interest in what they are doing, have done and plan to do. Here you can sow the seeds for future participation of the young people in your activities.

Step three : Analyse the information you gather from your contacts with the target group. Check what challenges they face in daily life, what obstacles they are facing in joining in youth activities, what they like and dislike, and so on. This information should give you an idea what types of activities or projects the young people would like, and which would be not appropriate.

Step four : When you then decide to set up projects geared towards the target group, use all the information you gathered and involve the young persons in it from the start, throughout the project or in all activities. Although improvisation skills and flexibility are vital to a project, it is important – especially when dealing with vulnerable young people – to have a plan. This helps to keep your aims and objectives clear and gives you guidelines for your work with the young people. Be transparent in what you are trying to reach – and make sure there is something in it for the young people. More information on setting up a project can be found in the T-Kit on Project Management.

In this process of tailoring your youth work to a specific target group, it is important not to take the whole work load on your shoulders. As we will point out in *4.2 : Setting up partnerships,* it is important to discuss and debate ideas with colleagues (or other actors in the target group's environment) and get them on your side.

3.2 Why young people participate

When trying to reach young people with fewer opportunities it is important to tailor your project to their needs. We need to find the right balance between the young people's interests, their skills and their limits. And secondly, it is important to involve the young people throughout the process in order to give them a sense of ownership.
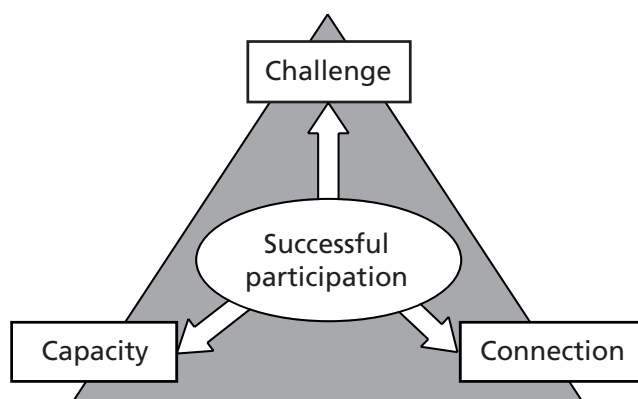
Jans and De Backer (2001) refers to the "three Cs for successful participation"': Challenge, Capacity and Connection.[1] This means that an activity should be challenging for young people, it should entice them to try it and jump on board expanding their borders. The challenge, however, should not look insurmountable as this makes them drop out or, if they should fail, cause frustration and make them think twice before joining in such a project again. On the other hand, the challenge should be high enough so as not to bore the young people or take all sense of achievement – "yes we did it" – out of it. Therefore, the youth worker should know the capacities, the skills of the young people and adapt the project accordingly to obtain a sequence of little achievements and successes. Last but not least, the young people should feel connected to the activity. The activity should be adapted and compatible to the world the young people live in. When you manage to address these three Cs in your project and keep them in balance, the first step towards a successful project has been set.

Another principle in successful youth work with young people with fewer opportunities is to involve the young people from the first moment. The approach should not be to do a project *for* the young people, but rather *with* the young people or even better *by* the young people. The young people you are working with are most likely to be able to tell you what they like and what not, why their friends or family would frown upon an activity and when not. So it is paramount that the activity revolves around the young people, giving them a sense of ownership and responsibility. They should be an equal partner in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the project.

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1. Courtesy of the Flemish Youth Council –JeP. Web: www.vlaamsejeugdraad.be

3

Good practices – A concrete example

In the north of Spain, a new youth centre was opened in one of the poorer areas of the town. Unfortunately, due to lack of funds, the staff was diminished in a year's time and many activities had to be terminated. One day, some of the older young people got into conversation with the remaining youth workers to discuss longer opening hours of the centre. The staff then pointed out they were only two persons and could not manage that. Then, the young people offered their help in organising and supporting activities, and finding people for activities they were not able to lead themselves. The leaders accepted the offer and the project got started. Initially, there were many problems since, although both sides had good intentions, the staff still felt over-responsible and had trouble really giving power to the young people. The young people, on their part, had problems with the scheduled working hours, the punctuality and reliability that youth work demanded. After four months, this caused a serious argument within the centre, and all parties gathered around the table. New agreements were made, responsibilities clearly divided and, to start with, a common project was initiated: the organisation of a street party for the whole neighbourhood, by the youth centre. Everyone was agitated after the meeting, since all of them realised that, if it failed, it would definitely mean the end of the centre. However, while pondering this, they also realised the centre really mattered to them and that they would hate it if it ceased to exist. All young people did their utmost to involve the whole neighbourhood, thereby overcoming fears to ask help from shopkeepers, local government and others around the area. Needless to say, the party became a big success, establishing the youth centre firmly in the neighbourhood and quadrupling the team leading the centre.

When starting an activity or project with young people with fewer opportunities (and probably with any young people), the following checklist could help you assess if your activity is really accessible to all. Again, this list is not complete and might not be applicable to all, but it can be used as a starting point and adapted and amplified along the way.

Checklist before the activity

√ • Get to know your target group, their needs and interests, their cultural backgrounds, their visions of the future, their home situations.

√ • Use different ways and different settings to make your activity known and adapted to the target group (word of mouth; posters in schools, community centres, super markets, snack-bars and on streets; local media).

√ • Have a look at who was present at similar activities in the past (age group, gender, culture or a mix) and analyse why others (friends, brothers/sisters, young people in their neighbourhood) were not.

√ • Tackle all practical barriers (appropriate timing, reduce financial obstacles, accessibility of meeting place, etc.).

√ • Make sure the activity appeals to the target group (or in the worst case, make it look appealing). A few, small extra things (a free drink, free access to the sports hall, a cap or a t-shirt) might win them over to join.

√ • Adapt the youth workers to the target group and subject of the activity taking into account cultural, age, gender or religious considerations.

√ • Make sure other stakeholders (parents, teachers, neighbourhood) are aware of the activity and approve and support it.

√ • Present the activity in a form or method fitting the group and the theme of the activity (peer education, video, research, discussion, etc).

√ • Make sure the activity is challenging enough but not too challenging.

√ • Adapt the activity to the skills of the young people.

√ • Connect the activity to the interests of the young people.

√ • Involve the young people in the development and implementation of the entire activity.

√ • Make sure it is clear for the young people what they can expect, what they will have to do and in which way they will have to do it.

Keep in mind that success is not necessarily repeatable. A project which worked well one year, might not do the trick the next year. There is a constant need to check the obstacles, to find out the needs of your target group, to review your aims and objectives, to scrutinise your position towards the people involved. The joy of working with young people with fewer opportunities is that they are seldom predictable. Youth initiatives are often not just developed successfully but in time they become a continious activity. Young people are motivated and by participating in the project, they find the way back to the labour market. By acquiring some specific professional skills and also life skills they manage to find a job, which is the best way of assuring their inclusion in society.

> **Good practices – A concrete example**
>
> *In many countries, it is difficult to practice a sport because of the lack of grounds and material. Young people are the first concerned by this situation. In addition, in France, a lot of sporting material is often thrown away. In this context, a group of French youngsters had the idea to recover and renovate old material in order to redistribute it abroad. After one year of work on this project within "Youth Initiatives" (YOUTH programme), a workshop for the restoration of sport material was finally born in June 2000 and called "Sport sans frontières". Now, it is a sports NGO, that grew out of a project created and led by a group of youngsters who had the opportunity of implementing their own ideas. To date, around 40 people have been trained in this workshop, and 25 are currently employed.*

3.3 Motivation

> The meeting was all prepared: Steve had stuck up flyers announcing the meeting at all possible spots in town, talked to people about it, motivated friends to come that evening and he had even been interviewed about it on the local radio. The meeting would start at eight, but Steve was present at seven, to put chairs in order, prepare coffee and go through his notes again. Peter arrived at half past seven with ten cakes. He poured the first ten cups and cut up one cake in neat slices, while Steve removed invisible pieces of fluff from his sweater.
>
> At eight o'clock, no one had turned up yet. Steve opened the doors and curiously peeked at the deserted streets. He went back in again, drank a cup of coffee and ate some cake, smiling at Peter. Quarter past, half past. The first thermos of coffee was empty, and still no one had showed up. Nine o'clock. Peter started folding up the chairs again and sat down next to Steve on the table. Steve beamed at him and said: "Well, at least we're two already."

Getting young people motivated can be a difficult and sometimes frustrating task. But with a bit of preparation and the right attitude it is possible to get young people on board your project. Your own energy and enthusiasm are crucial for good results. Remaining positive and being able to say: "Well, at least we're two already" – is one of the key factors for motivation. When you are motivated, you can keep others motivated as well.

In the T-Kit on International Voluntary Service, there is a chapter describing how to keep young people motivated. Motivating young people is described there as a battle for the young people's "E-forces": Energy, Excitement, Enthusiasm and Effort. Young people will only render their E-forces in return for the fulfilment of their needs. Youth workers can offer different things in their projects to address these needs.

• *Social benefits*: young people are looking for fun, social status, recognition, belonging to a group.

• *Pragmatic benefits*: young people want to see the sense of the things they are doing whether this is access to a sports hall during the project, new skills to put on their CV or going abroad as part of the project.

- *Psychological benefits*: young people are constantly looking for themselves and need to find their own way in life. Wanting to distinguish themselves, they need self-esteem (see *6.4 : Exploring self-esteem*).

- *Material benefits*: young people are sometimes very interested in small material benefits, like a t-shirt, a free drink or a small present. This should not be seen as a bribe, but it could be a way to get them on board initially and, once actively participating in the project, they hopefully will see other benefits.

To young people, this psychological analysis likely would not mean much. It is up to the youth worker to translate this in the language of the target group. Instead of promoting "intercultural awareness" in words the youth worker could promote a trip to another country to have a break dance competition. Instead of talking about "gaining organisational skills" the young people might be more attracted by building a new skating ramp.

By actively involving the young people in activities to reach these aims, they will have the chance to deepen their interests and apply and extend the skills they have. By letting them decide what they want and in which way they will achieve it, they will get the ownership of the activity and benefit from the activity even more. The youth worker's task then is to offer a framework, motivate, support and advise if necessary and stand back when the young people can handle it independently. Success often depends on this feeling of responsibility and ownership.

Good practices – A concrete example

In 2001, a small group of mainly young people organised a demonstration against the Dutch government policy concerning the Molucca Islands. Even though the demonstration was not a big one, it got completely out of hand when riot police, in full regalia, confronted the demonstrators. The young people felt provoked by the aggressive image of the police, and the police acted accordingly.

A year later, a new demonstration was announced. This time, the organisers and the police first conferred over the matter and came to an agreement : the police would deploy normal policemen, the riot police would not be present visibly and the organising committee would elect a group of stewards from its own supporters, responsible for keeping the peace during the demonstration. Even though the demonstration was not completely peaceful, the stewards clearly had the crowd under better control than the police ever could have managed.

In order to turn active involvement into a positive experience, a number of conditions should be met.

- **The young people should be taken seriously.** They should be motivated to participate and share their opinion. They should receive clear feedback on their opinions and ideas, to avoid false expectations.

- **Both parties should share responsibility.** Young people should be given a fair share of the responsibility. This will give them a sense of ownership for the project. But the youth workers should not leave the young people to their own devices. They are still responsible for the young people they are working with, for the process and product of the project. This implies that they foresee appropriate training and coaching for the people involved in the project.

- **There should be enough diversity.** The youth worker should make sure there is a possibility for all to get involved *(see 3.1 : Obstacles)*. There should be opportunities adapted to all young people, no matter which background, interests or skills they have. Young people should be stimulated and supported to find the activity matching their interests and capacities.

- **Enough time and money should be dedicated.** Young people with fewer opportunities will not automatically knock on your door to join in your activities. It takes time and effort (which mostly has a price tag attached to it) to actively involve them. The work, staff and finances should be planned accordingly.

- **Experiences should be evaluated and the results effectively used.** Each activity and all those involved should be evaluated. This includes participants, youth workers and other partners linked to the project (could be parents, teachers, football coaches, etc). Suggestions for improvement should be taken into consideration and used for future projects.

- **Activities should not be isolated events.** One youth project will not change the world completely. Even though young people might have had a strong experience in the project, it is important not to lose momentum. A project is only one step on a long road and the youth worker's role is to continue progress on this pathway toward whatever horizon fits the young person (see *4.3 : Different working contexts*).

- **Youth work is not an island.** A youth activity is rarely just a project for the young people. It should have a link to the community as well. Projects with local community involvement tend to bridge the gap between young people and society and often diminish the distrust and suspicion between the two groups. Theatre, for example, can involve parents or teachers to help with costumes, lighting, texts, etc., and the result can be performed for the community at large.

3.4 Attractive activities

> **Good practices – A concrete example**
>
> *"Hip hop session 2001 : des fresques pour dynamiser la ville". This is the name of a youth project, implemented in Brussels under Action 3.1 of the YOUTH programme ("Group Initiatives"). The project was aimed at the creation of a spray paint fresco based on the theme of prevention (e.g. car theft, road safety, protection of the environment) within a legal context. With this object in mind, young people aged between 18 and 25 from two Brussels communities created a hip hop graffiti fresco with the agreement of the community concerned (Auderghem). The aim was to decorate a rundown metro station. Young people were involved at every stage of the project : preparatory meetings, fundraising research (private and public), active participation in the workshop, etc. They are proud of the results of the project and delighted with the official recognition of the graffiti movement as a respectable and attractive discipline. Graffiti is not just simple vandalism : it allows expression of creativity which goes beyond a simple protest. The project has provided an opportunity for young people from different social and economical backgrounds with similar needs of expression to meet and participate in an attractive activity.*

If you want to have young people with fewer opportunities in your youth work activities, one thing is clear and simple: you have to offer them something they find attractive. Often, they feel attracted to active workshops and events that give them a kick and can be seen as an extension of their normal pastimes. It is up to the youth worker to build in non-formal educational experiences within a seemingly pure fun activity. And this hidden agenda does not even have to be explicit to the participants.

When setting up educational experiences the youth workers want to expand the worlds and skills of the young people. However, as mentioned with the three Cs above (challenge, capacity and connection), the activity should indeed take youth out of their usual habits into trying or learning something new. However, if we set expectations too high, they will surely withdraw.

We can compare this with a house in the forest. Usually young people stay at home – in the comfort zone. Youth work tries to take them out of their habits into something new – the adventure zone. It is in the adventure zone that young people can experiment and learn in a safe environment. But if we were to take them too far into the forest, the result would be panic. They would run back home and it would be more difficult in the future to get them out of their house again.

Panic zone:
too high aims, not enough support

Adventure zone: challenging
projects, adapted to capacities

Comfort zone:
daily life and routine
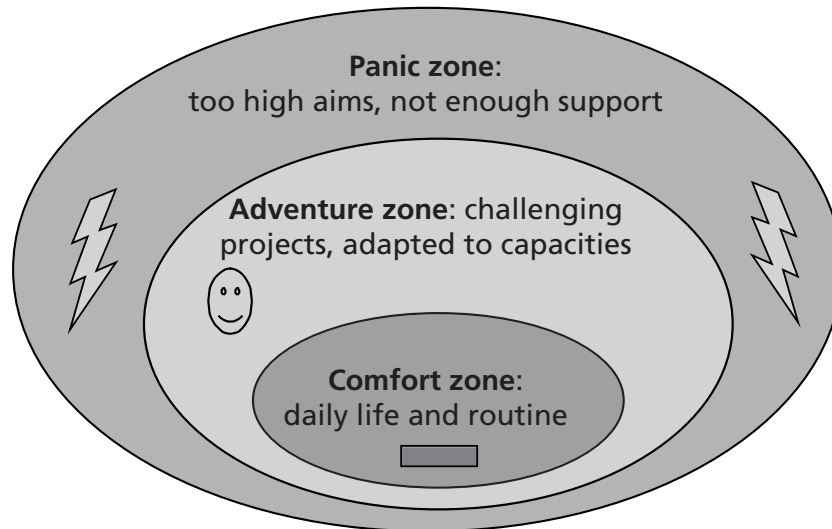
The task of the youth worker is to provide an activity that has this element of adventure (in the sense of pushing the boundaries of what the young people are used to), but they should of course also safeguard the limits of everyone, so that no one gets pushed over a limit they do not want to cross. A good example of this is the so called survival camps where people learn to co-operate, achieve and apply new skills and have to trust each other in order to fulfil all tasks. But also closer to home, these limits can be extended with appealing activities. These could be, for instance, music, sports, street art, theatre and multimedia, or a combination of the above *(see inset: Some challenging activities on p. 25).*

Good practices – A concrete example

A dance teacher had been fascinated for years by the young people skateboarding on one of the main squares in town, intrigued by their music, the movements, the jumps and the speed. Though at that time she was mainly giving belly dancing lessons in a youth centre to girls, she was pondering over a way to get those skateboarders, mainly boys, involved in some sort of performance. She experimented a bit during the belly dancing courses, and found out that it was not strictly restricted to Arabic music. She soon got both the skateboarders and the girls learning belly dancing enthusiastic about a performance combining both groups. Bringing them together gave both groups an opportunity to extend their skills and perform on stage.

This example shows that a good relationship between the youth worker and people working at sports centres, clubs, (dance) schools or other places where young people meet, can be very rewarding. Many activities can be difficult to set up individually, so why not use facilities and knowledge already present?

Some challenging activities

- *Music activities :* Offer young people a rehearsal room, or try to find one together with them if the youth centre cannot supply one. Motivate them to perform at local talent hunts, school parties or local fairs. Help the young people to form a band, to co-operate with other disciplines or to raise money for instruments or travelling.

- *Sports :* Co-operate with sports centres; negotiate with trainers or the local government to get discounts for joining their activities. Martial arts and survival sports are often attractive to young people. Try to find volunteers, people from the neighbourhood, to train with the young people. For outdoor sports like football, roller blading, skateboarding, mountain biking or basketball, the youth worker can negotiate with the local government for space and equipment at an appropriate place. Also, the youth worker can encourage the young people to organise contests or exchanges with similar groups from other neighbourhoods.

- *Street art :* Break dance and street dance are still highly popular and attract many young people. The youth worker can stimulate dance activities by providing rehearsal space, making contact with dance schools and encouraging co-operation with, for instance, more classical dance groups. Other forms of street art that can become interesting and challenging activities, especially in co-operation with the neighbourhood, are activities like juggling or graffiti, or combinations with other disciplines like music (street musicians), sports (skateboarding, roller-blading) or theatre (street theatre, living statues).

- *Theatre :* Theatre gives people a means to be someone else and thus escape their own world for a while; finding, at times, creative solutions for their own problems by being, for a moment, in someone else's shoes. Especially those active forms of theatre which do not require much learning of lines by heart, improvisational theatre or theatre sports for instance, can be used very well with young people. The youth worker can support them to reach the final aim, the performance of the play.

- *Multi media :* Computer, video, radio, photography are all very appealing to young people. These media can be used very well in activities and also have a clear presentational value. The participants can be asked to make a video, homepage, series of interviews or photographs of the neighbourhood, profile their lives or the lives of people close to them, possibly in co-operation with – and sponsored by – the local radio or television station or newspaper. Computer courses – through peer education – and homepages for the youth centre are also a possibility.
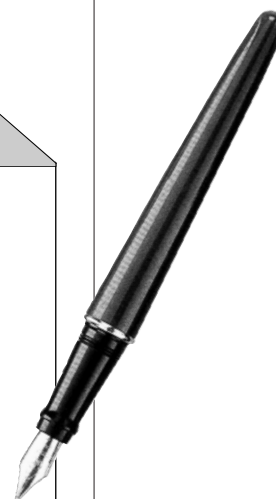
Good practices – A concrete example

In Portugal twelve young people (aged between 19 and 32) applied for a "Group Initiatives" project. The group was formed by one nurse, two policemen, one teacher, one public officer, one carpenter and the others were high school and university students. They decided to create and implement a project whose main goals were to better develop the neighbourhood of a poor rural area with few leisure activities for young people. The activities proposed by the project covered many fields of interests: exhibitions, writing, drawing contests, music shows, flavours and habits from the countries within the Euro area as well as information meetings on the new currency, open-air cinema, the production of a magazine where young people can express their opinions and prove their capacities, traditional games and sports activities. When the project was over, the evaluation was very positive. Local impact through participating in activities, the project also had long-term benefits in that the group of youngsters established partnerships and new contacts, they believe that these activities have contributed to the integration of young people.

4. Young people and their context

4.1 Young people in their communities

Young people do not live on an island. They are embedded in a social structure composed of different people (parents, teachers, trainers, employers, etc.) who all have different expectations and interactions with the young people in question. Though the first priority of youth workers is with the young people, it would be impossible to ignore the influence of the people in their surroundings.

Han Paulides (1997) divides the world of young people into four parts:
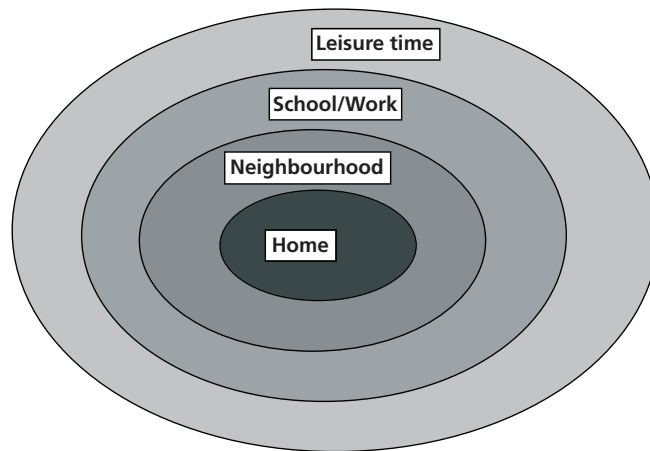
In all four parts, young people get into contact with other people: friends, parents, colleagues, fellow students, neighbours, shopkeepers, policemen, teachers, coaches, etc. All these people have contacts with them and influence their behaviour. Therefore it is important as youth worker to get their support when developing projects with the young people. They are also a valuable source of information for getting to know youth and their world better. It is important to stop and reflect for a while on how best to get these people on your side.

It is not easy for youth workers to position themselves in this spider web of relationships. Youth workers should remain very clear and honest with the young people about the positions they take and will not or cannot take. When talking or co-operating with people surrounding the young people, they should be transparent about they you are doing. This will help enormously in building up a relationship of trust with the young people as well as their environment *(see 6.3: Building trust)*. This element of mutual trust must be the foundation for all other work.

The four different environments of young people, as defined by Paulides, can be approached in different ways and for different reasons. Below you find an overview.
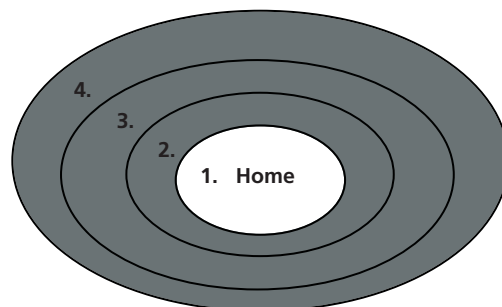
The first part is formed by the people directly surrounding the young people: their family. It is important to have a good connection with this group as the participation of a young person in your activities can depend on the family's approval of your work. A way to reach the parents might be

by organising open door days, home visits or consultancy hours. Take into account that it sometimes takes some perseverance, as the parents might face barriers to interact with you, such as lack of time, language difficulties, disrupted home situations or distrust towards official institutions that might tell them what to do. One way around this is to meet the family in other places such as community centres, talk to people on the street and be around and available. It is important for the parents to know you and to realise what it is you are doing in order to build up a relationship based on trust.

> ### Good practices – A concrete example
>
> *A youth centre once started a discussion with young people about parents, and came to the conclusion that most of the parents always said they only wished their children to be happy, but that this mainly meant that they were ordered to be happy. The young people said their parents did not understand that smoking, wearing tight jeans, staying out all night or dating that boy who had left school without a diploma could make them feel good. A huge discussion followed, since some of the young people could not understand how others could enjoy smoking or wearing weird clothes, but in the end agreed it all depended on your own choices. They then decided to make a play out of this, with the help of the youth worker, and perform it for their parents and others. For some young people the play turned out to be a way to open the dialogue again with their parents in a way other than the usual arguments they had, which were not very constructive, and to come to some mutual understanding.*
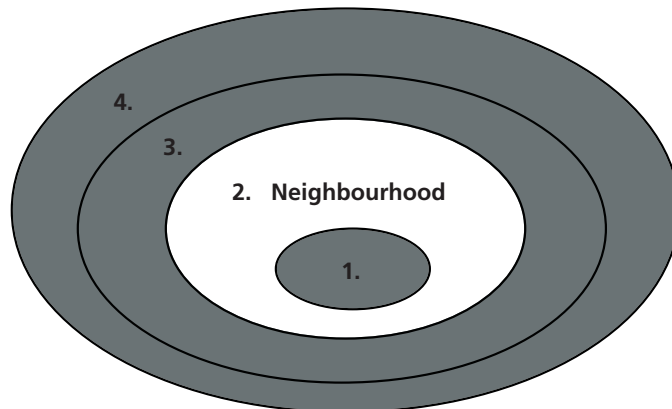
Networking with the people in the neighbourhood of the young people is also important for the success of your youth work. When the relationship is good, they will be more willing to participate when their help is needed, and also come to you when there are problems. So for the sake of the image of your activities, their support is crucial. A way to work on your PR is to involve local radio, television and newspapers as well. The more everyone, not just the young people, know about your activities and feel involved with your work, the better it is for the final result.

> ### Good practices – A concrete example
>
> *In 1999, a summer camp was held in a small village in the Czech Republic. Since this meant quite an invasion of foreign young people in the town, it was necessary to involve people from the community. Young people were invited to join the camp, teachers in the village were asked to translate, the communal kitchen supplied foodand the camp started with a tour through the village, led by the mayor and accompanied by a journalist from the local paper. In the last week, a football match was organised between the young people and the local team. Everyone in the village was aware of the presence of the visitors and became involved in one way or the other. Because of this, the young people were not seen as intruders, but were welcomed as guests.*

Another group in the direct surroundings of your target group are peers – their friends and acquaintances. Peers are important since their judgement of your work can determine the view that their friends have of the activities you are doing. When you manage to convey the message that your activities are fun and they can learn something interesting at the same time, the chances of young people joining your project increase rapidly. Local media can again play an important role in the image building of your activities, so make use of them as well.
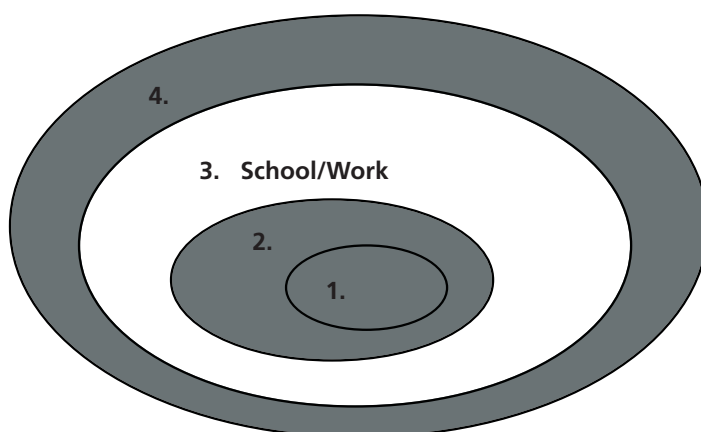
Schools can supply a youth worker with basic information about the neighbourhood, from the number of young persons at the school to the cultural structure, the number of school leavers and the level of education. But you might also consider co-operating with teachers or even employers when setting up non-formal education programmes. An additional advantage of this is that it could be possible to use equipment and space available in the school. A disadvantage, however, might be that the young people are already averse to school and unwilling to spend more time there, so careful preparation and deliberation is necessary.
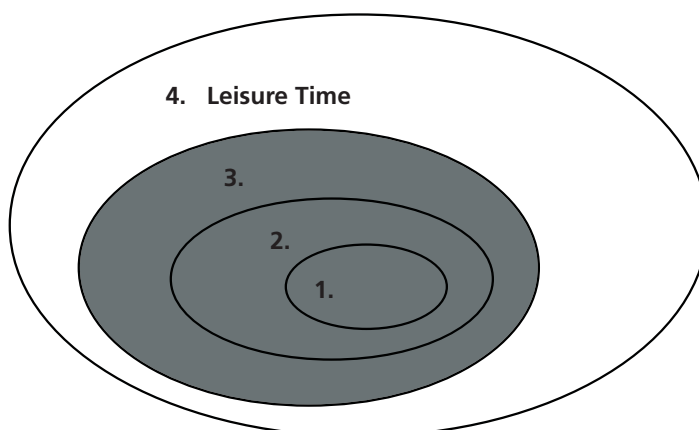
The fourth sector in which young people move is the one of leisure time. Youth work can also be situated in this sphere. Creating links with other people organising leisure time activities can be very useful, allowing the exchange of ideas, experiences and resources pertaining to work with young people with fewer opportunities. We will discuss this further in *4.2 : Setting up partnerships*.

4

Good practices – A concrete example

The voluntary club "smile" began its works in 2001. It is a non-formal group of young people working together in a small town in South-East Poland. Most of the participants were high school students the idea of developing a "Group Initiatives" came up when a new director for the local cultural centre was nominated. Bialobrzegi, the town where the project was developed, does not offer many possibilities for young people or for adults. There is no cinema, no swimming pool, no parks, and no place apart from discos or pubs where children could spend their time after school. There is also no place for children from problematic families to find shelter and do their homework, therefore they started to think of how they can change this situation and asked the director of the local cultural centre for help. She offered them space to realise their own projects, they were divided into 5 groups working on 5 main topics: science, journalism, renovation, management and European issues. The main aim of this project was to integrate youth and local community as well as to create a special place where young people could spend their free time. Young volunteers also wanted to take care of youngsters with difficult family situations and help them with homework, leisure time and activities such as dancing, computer workshops, paintings, drawings, etc. The activities prepared within the project: group planning (all members were involved in the planning process), workshop for volunteers (how to work with children), workshops for children run by volunteers (foreign languages, painting, dancing, etc.) with the participation of local authorities, local youth workers and retired teachers in the project.

Important to keep in mind is the fact that it is not possible to build a good relationship in one meeting with these different sectors surrounding the young people, but it requires a long-term investment of time, effort and resources. All opportunities should be used to build up this network of trust to move together toward common or similar aims. This is the basis for future co-operation.

4.2 Setting up partnerships

As mentioned in the previous section: Young people in their communities, it is advised that the youth workers do not see young people as isolated. Like the notion that young people do not live on islands, youth workers do not either. They do not work alone with the young people in question. So why not work in partnership with other professionals and volunteers who work directly or indirectly with the same target group? This co-operation may take place at the grass roots level while organising some timely activities, for example negotiating with the city hall for access to a municipal community centre for workshops or getting the authorisation to organise a festival in the town centre. These examples may be the beginning of co-operation that will perhaps grow and become a long lasting partnership.

Working together with others does not only multiply efforts and resources towards similar aims, but it will also generate a more holistic and strengthened approach to work with the target group. It is important to share views and experiences with other professionals dealing with similar issues (for example creating opportunities for those that always seem to fall out of the boat) and it boosts motivation to continue to put your efforts into a common cause.

But real partnerships are more than brief, scheduled co-operations. It requires some thinking to find out what the different partners in the partnership are striving for and where your fields of work could be complementary and working towards the same goals. The process of setting up and maintaining working partnerships needs time, effort and resources. But this investment is well worth it, offering the rewards of increased motivation, insight into different working practices and the sharing of ideas.

So with whom would you team up? Youth workers may have their own professional contacts or may get to know others (street workers, teachers, social workers, the police) through their daily work who work with the same young people. These people are working with the same target group (for example, young people with fewer opportunities) in different fields of their lives and at different

By Benoît Mida-Briot
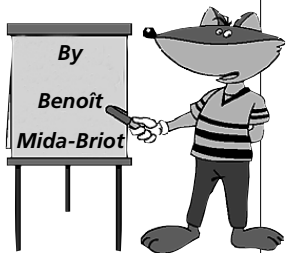
moments. Often meetings or seminars around societal topics related to youth are a good place to meet different actors working on these topics (inclusion, drugs prevention, AIDS education, etc.). You might find the right contacts for co-operation opportunities when setting up activities, but these synergies may also turn into longer-term partnerships between organisations.

Especially when working with young people with fewer opportunities, it is important to create partnerships between organisations that reach the target group in different fields of their lives, because the impact of youth work might be continued in the class room or in other projects.

> There are some requirements before you can set up working partnerships:
>
> • The partners should share common aims in their work or they should at least be compatible with each other;
>
> • The target group (young persons with fewer opportunities) should be at the centre of the interventions (as we will argue in *6.1: Ethos*). This could be, for example, to empower the young people or to coach them through further steps on their pathways in life or towards social inclusion;
>
> • There should be the will of the different partners and their hierarchies to join in such a partnership – and time and resources should be freed to work on this co-operation;
>
> • The different actors should have some common educational principles, or their differences should be reconcilable;
>
> • The working spirit or organisational culture should be compatible or there should be strong motivation to open up and adapt to each other's working culture;
>
> • Last but not least, there should be efficient communication channels and moments to discuss, plan, implement and evaluate the partnership.

The direct beneficiary of these synergies will be the target group, and also the organisations involved in the partnership. Discovering different ways of working together and complementing each other will clearly benefit both.

IRDA+E: guidelines for setting-up partnerships

If you have never worked together in the kind of partnership described above, we would like to provide you with a step-by-step approach which can help youth workers willing to go beyond simple co-operations towards the conception and the implementation of long lasting partnerships. These guidelines might seem a bit formal and abstract, but they have a logical structure that you can adapt to your needs.

The prerequisite to starting a partnership is of course that you have found one or more organisations or professionals that are interested in working together. In the ideal case they should fulfil the requirements mentioned above, but do not get bogged down in these details. Then the real partnership management can start. Here are some tips and questions to ask at each of the five stages.
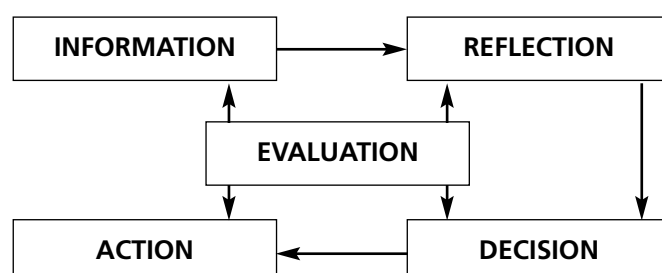
1. The information stage

When jumping into a partnership you need to gather information on why you want to co-operate with other organisations or professionals. You can make an inventory of your organisation's motivation for it, the concrete needs and the resources available to invest in the partnership. Make a list of the following key elements (and of course your partners could do the same).

Questions

- What are you (and your colleagues) looking for in the partnership?
- What is the position and recommendations of your board or hierarchy regarding such a partnership?
- What are the expected benefits from the co-operation? For the target group? For the organisation?
- What are the prior experiences in networking in your organisation? What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What are the available resources (human, time, place, material, budget)?
- Who is working with the young people with fewer opportunities and in what way?
- Are there external factors that are pushing you towards partnerships or keeping you from establishing them (funding, politics, etc.)?
- Will the partnership be balanced (equal contributions, equal benefits, equal involvement)?

2. The reflection stage

After you and your partner organisations have gathered this information, you need to compare with each other and consider different possibilities of co-operation. All partners should work towards a common view of the potential of working together on only well-defined issues. During negotiations you should move towards a framework for future shared action. This could be written out, creating a common document on which a decision for co-operation could be based. Some questions that should be addressed in this document are the following.

Questions

- What are the common aims?
- What format will the partnership take (informal, common projects, working groups, information sharing)?
- What common activities could be implemented and what steps would be necessary to do so?
- What evaluation criteria could be used to assess the partnership and with what frequency and format should it be used to monitor and evaluate the partnership?
- What is the timetable of the partnership (how long, how often, deadlines, etc.)?
- How will the tasks be divided (who does what)?
- What are the commitments from the different parties (also in resources)?
- How best to have the staff of the organisation get to know each other better?
- What are the training needs? Do you foresee training the people involved using seminars, training, job shadowing, meetings, etc.?
- What communication strategy could be set-up (how will the partners communicate with each other, on which matters and how will they keep each other informed)?
- Who will co-ordinate and monitor the partnership implementation?
- What is the budget projection (incomes and expenditures)?

> **Some tips**
>
> • The benefits for the partners should be highlighted.
> • The framework should be precise but also allow for some flexibility.
> • Concrete and visible results should be targeted for each step. This keeps the partners' motivation high.
> • Target realistic aims and work.

3. The decision stage

The youth worker and the individual people around the table in the reflection stage are in most cases not the only people involved in the partnership decision making process (this being expected when it involves human and financial commitments). In the ideal case, the organisations of all partners should be involved in the whole process of setting up the partnership, but if this is not the case, there will be a moment when an official decision on the concrete partnership must be taken. Depending on the structures of the different organisations involved, this will be a more or less formal procedure. Some youth workers might have the freedom to decide on such partnership agreements themselves, whereas in other organisations it might have to pass the whole hierarchy (which of course also has consequences for your time management). If you need a formal document, here are some questions that might help you draft it.

> **Proposal(s) to submit to the decision level(s)**
>
> • Describe the common action to be implemented : the aims, action plan(s) and stages.
>
> • Include the key items developed above such as timetable, division of roles and tasks, resources, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation.
>
> • A section should be precise regarding the length of the present partnership agreement as well as provisions concerning the process for possible modifications. Consider, for example, how partners could withdraw from the agreement and what would happen in such cases.
>
> **Tips**
>
> • Be precise enough when presenting the working proposals to the decision level(s) but avoid getting into too much detail. Even though the partnership agreement should be precise, it should also build in some flexibility in case there is a need for changes.
>
> • Find out what your hierarchy's concerns are and develop the partnership (or at least the partnership agreement) accordingly. For example, show the foreseen multiplying effect if this is important for one of the partners, or if gender balance is paramount in working with the target group, show how you deal with it during your co-operation.
>
> • Aim to maximise support from your and your partner's colleagues. Be transparent and communicative about the progress you make in the partnership.
>
> • Make sure you commit adequate resources to the partnership. Once the agreement is made, it might be difficult to change this, if not specified at the beginning. It is always better to ask for more in the beginning and cut down the human and financial contributions if objections arise (of course you should then also adapt the scope of the partnership to the new amount of resources).

4. The action stage

When all partners have the green light to embark on this partnership together, the real work can start. Most of what lies ahead of you is already planned during the reflection stage, so it seems to be as simple as doing what is planned. However, here are some tips to keep you on track.

> **Tips**
>
> - Divide the work in smaller stages so that you can tick off the different tasks as you go along. It boosts motivation to have regular, quick and visible results.
> - These results should then be communicated to the partners involved and the colleagues or hierarchies in the different organisations, to keep them updated and involved in the process.
> - The action stage will highlight the partners' capacities to work together and to turn the partnership agreement into concrete and successful action. The good practices generated by the partnership should be recorded for future purposes.
> - On-going monitoring should be used to correct any unsatisfactory developments. Have regular meetings or reflections on whether you are going where you decided you wanted to go.

5. Evaluation

Evaluation is not a stage in itself, but it should be part of all of the previous stages. Monitoring the quality of your partnership is needed throughout the different stages (information, reflection, decision and action). Evaluation criteria should be defined at the beginning of the co-operation and should be respected as stated in the partnership agreement. At the end of the action stage a final evaluation should be foreseen, involving all stakeholders (the target group, the partners, local authorities, institutions, etc.). The achievements and the quality of the work realised should be highlighted and the results of this partnership may lead to new perspectives of co-operation, maybe expanding the partnership or involving more partners.

> **Some suggestions for what to evaluate during each stage**
>
> - *Information stage:* Is my information reliable? Do I need more information? Where shall I get it?
> - *Reflection stage:* Does the common reflection implemented fit each group's motivations? Are the draft proposals for the partnership clear and flexible enough? Are all the elements present?.
> - *Decision stage:* Are the partners' expectations respected in the draft proposals? Are the aims and the action plans realistic and achievable? Is the overall decision process satisfactory? Have we agreed on monitoring and co-ordinating mechanisms? Does the partnership agreement reflect what has been agreed?
> - *Action stage:* Are the resources for monitoring and co-ordination adapted to the tasks? Does the work being implemented benefit all staffs within the partners' organisations? How do the target group and other colleagues react to the new co-operation? Are they informed enough and on your side? How is the communication flow? Are there any practices that you would like to repeat or improve? Does everyone respect the partnership agreement?
> - *Evaluation stage:* Do we have adaptable evaluation tools? Does the project progress as expected and why? Is it possible for all the actors of the partnership to express their opinion on the work carried on? Does the project empower them to do so? Has the partnership achieved what was foreseen? What are the best ways to spread the results of this experience and improve further co-operation?

4

Further tips when setting up a partnership

- Be clear on what you want and do not want the partnership to be from the beginning.

- Work on good relations between the partners from the beginning. Have some team building activities (going for a drink, excursion together, visiting each others' organisations, work or home, etc). Remember, you are working with people and not with organisations.

- Find a common way to manage all the information and reflection steps with the persons you work with.

- Do not be overly optimistic or unrealistic concerning your aims and your actions to achieve them. Be pragmatic. You can always enlarge an initial co-operation to a broader and stronger partnership.

- Bear in mind to always try to balance the tasks and responsibilities of the partners in all stages. Avoid one partner taking more responsibility than the others.

- Be prepared to face the different working styles and organisational cultures of your partners. (You can find more on intercultural matters in the T-Kit on Intercultural Learning.)

Good practices – A concrete example

An experience of partnership in training

In 2000, a pilot project was implemented between two street work organisations, one from France and one from The Netherlands, within the framework of the European YOUTH programme. French street workers went to job shadow their Dutch colleagues in successful projects in The Netherlands. The French National YOUTH Agency found the project promising and signed a partnership agreement on training with the French street work organisation CNLAPS. Together they organised a training course on European exchanges for twenty resource street workers, which led to several exchanges with young people with fewer opportunities. They hosted an international study visit, reflecting on street work in the different countries represented. Similarly, they organised a street worker conference about the YOUTH programme. Many new contacts and projects were established between street workers from different countries. As a result, the YOUTH programme is more and more used by professionals working with young people with fewer opportunities, a priority target group for the National YOUTH Agency, and on the other hand street workers found another tool to use in their work: the European YOUTH programme. The partnership was a success and both partners started discussing a new partnership agreement for the following year.

CNLAPS: www.cnlaps.asso.fr ; contact@cnlaps.asso.fr

French National Agency of the YOUTH programme: www.injep.fr ; jpe@injep.fr

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4.3 Different working contexts
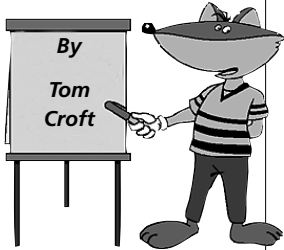
Whether you create partnerships or not (as mentioned in the section above), there is a great diversity of roles and capacities youth workers can take on. People working with young people with fewer opportunities may also be operating within a range of different working contexts. Such contexts can range from long-term commitments to short-term involvement. At either end there are advantages and disadvantages but they can compliment one another. As youth workers trying to work inclusively we need to be aware of where we are situated and what will be the consequences of the style of work we choose.

At either end of this range of working contexts are:

Short-term interventions	Long-term commitments
Often aimed at specific young people whose problems or situation has come to the notice of relevant authorities	Often community based and locally run and staffed (youth clubs, long running community initiatives or schemes, local volunteers or professionals who have lived and worked in the area for many years, etc.)
Undertaken by social sector professionals (social workers, school councillors or mentors, probation officers, etc.)	Usually non-professional or voluntary in nature
Commonly the result of a crisis in a young person's life	Open to all young people but sometimes targeted at young people with fewer opportunities
When the crisis is resolved support may end abruptly	Non-compulsory, freedom of choice for young people involved
A young person may have little choice over the intervention	Strong likelihood of being "owned" by the young people who participate
Although often necessary and important, interventions and those associated with them can cause young people to be hostile or suspicious	Offer opportunities and support to young people over the long-term
	Are often built on strong relationships based on mutual trust and respect between staff and young people

Building successful working relationships at the grass roots level is never easy and care and attention must always be taken to ensure that such co-operation is always mutually beneficial for all parties and has the interests of the young people concerned at heart (see previous sections in *4: Young people and their context*).

5. Non-formal education as a tool for the inclusion of all

By

Benoît

Mida-Briot

Human beings never stop learning and developing. We all learn different things in different moments and different spheres of our lives. We learn a lot during our schooling, but we should not neglect all the learning opportunities outside of this academic learning environment. All learning experiences in life contribute to people's personal growth and lead to a better understanding of the environment in which they live, which in turn empowers people to fully participate in society.

The formal education system (schools, universities, vocational training) aims at providing young people a basic knowledge to be used for their social integration into society. Unfortunately in many cases, the formal education system fails to provide all young people with their learning needs due to various reasons. Therefore, other sources of personal development should be available. Non-formal education may be one of them, especially – but not solely – for young people with fewer opportunities. This chapter will explore the different ways of learning, compare them and consider why and how non-formal education could be a "second chance" for our target group.
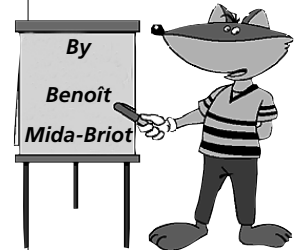
5.1 Non-formal versus formal education and vocational training

In Europe, most of the people have gone through some form of schooling in their lives. This formal school education is commonly based on a "vertical" relationship between the pupil / student and the teacher: the holder of the knowledge (the teacher) and the receiver (the learner). The teacher mostly delivers knowledge to the student in the form of courses and curricula. At the end of the learning pathway a written document certifies the knowledge acquired by the learner according to official criteria. These certificates and diplomas are often necessary as keys to open doors into the labour market and society. Academic diplomas mostly refer to theoretical knowledge.

Vocational training brings more practical contents in addition to general knowledge. It gives the learner a practical qualification that can be used directly in the labour market. Usually, traineeships are part of vocational training. The trainees learn a trade at the lowest beginner level within the working reality with the support of a mentor. At the end of the learning process there is also a certification. Vocational training is often shorter than formal studies and targets a quick acquisition of operational working skills. The relationship between the teacher and the learner still remains vertical, with the teacher passing down skills to the learner.

Non-formal education, on the contrary, can be summarized as "learning by doing". The learning methodology lies in the interaction between the learners and the concrete situations they are experiencing. There are usually no teachers or lecturers providing the knowledge ex-cathedra, but the learners and facilitators construct the knowledge and skills together, in a horizontal relationship. The educator or facilitator may be more or less active in the setting up of learning experiences for the benefit of the learner. This is what happens in youth work. It is possible to maximise non-formal education benefits for young people through the use of different methodologies such as peer education, project work, mobility projects, and more. The learners are at the centre of their own learning process and the youth workers support them in it. Unfortunately, at present there is not much certification of the competencies acquired by non-formal learners yet.

Sometimes there is confusion between non-formal and informal learning. We consider informal learning to be spontaneous, as it happens in everyday life; whereas non-formal learning is planned and thought through by a facilitator, trainer or youth worker who also provides support during the entire learning process.

	Formal Education: Academic Studies	Formal Education: Vocational Training	Non-Formal Education
Learning methods implemented	Courses where main vertical relationship takes place between the holder of the knowledge and the learners.	Vertical relationship as in academic studies. Courses may alternate with practices. Mentoring may be used during practices.	Interactive relationship between the learners and their environment "learning by doing". Peer education and mentoring are often used.
Contents	Mainly general. Defined by educational authorities.	Targeted to operational skills. Defined by educational authorities.	Chosen by the learner. No definition except concrete experience acquisition.
Certification	Usually provided at the end of the course and conditioned to success in evaluation of knowledge. Set up according to criteria defined by educational authorities.	Usually provided at the end of the training and conditioned to success in evaluation of knowledge and practice. Set up according to criteria defined by educational authorities.	No certification at this time, however it can be taken into account for university studies (e.g. Finland).
Length	Usually: from 6 to 18 years old: primary & secondary education; above 18 years old: up to 10 years of studies (university)	Usually short: starting in some countries at the age of 14 years old and during up to 4 years during secondary education; 2 or 3 years after university studies.	Life-long learning
Strong points	Obligatory for all (usually up to 16 years old) in order to provide a basic knowledge. Often almost free in the public sector. Certification through official academic diplomas.	Short and providing operational skills that can be used directly in the labour market. Certification through vocational training diplomas.	Accessible to all at any moment of life. "Second chance" for young people with fewer opportunities.
Weak points	Academic diplomas may remain general and further specific studies or trainings need to take place. Not adapted to all. No Europe-wide recognition (difficulties with transferring the value of the diplomas abroad).	Often not chosen by the young people but imposed by "default" during studies. Labour market needs may change making the qualification useless. No Europe-wide recognition (difficulties with transferring the value of the qualification abroad).	No formal recognition.

5.2 Youth work with young people with fewer opportunities

> **Good practices – A concrete example**
>
> *Djilali grew up in a "difficult" district of Toulouse, South of France, around young people with fewer opportunities. Discrimination, violence, drug-addiction, school failure, relational problems with parents, the police force and with the community, these are all common problems well known and experienced by the young people of the city. Djilali wished to be invested in community life and to develop an interesting activity. In the framework of "Youth Initiatives", he created a "Sports and Leisure" association which allowed the young people of the city to carry out a project. He then mobilised 7 young people to create a theatre play called "Les ombres de la cité", which would concern the problems experienced by youngsters living in disadvantaged areas. From conception to realisation, in order for the team manages to run this ambitious project, ten theatre performances in the schools, colleges and other reception facilities were implemented around France. This project, carried through to a successful end thanks to Djilali and his team and it has aroused public interest and started vocational trainings. The most assiduous actors follow training sessions to become teachers, today, all are implied in community life.*

Even though formal education institutions in Europe have made efforts to improve the balance between theory and practice at school since the second half of the twentieth century, the differences outlined above still remain largely intact. Some initiatives were taken to tailor the ways of teaching to the learner's needs and expectations, like Philippe Meirieu's concept of "differentiated learning approaches", but they remain limited. Hence, many young people leave the formal education system without having finished their studies or having acquired a qualification.

Young people who have left school early or who are in precarious situations in society could benefit from non-formal education as a second chance that could have a strong impact in their lives. This educational approach needs to bethought through, prepared and implemented with the active participation of the young people themselves. Moreover, its use must be coherent within the young people's lives; their prior history has to be taken into account, and afterwards the results should lead to a further step on their ways to social inclusion.

Non-formal education could empower young people with fewer opportunities to set-up their own projects, step by step (as we will see in *6.2 : Step-by-step approach*), where they are at the centre of educational activity, feel concerned, have personal interests, find strong motivation, get self-confidence and as a result develop their capacities and skills by doing. However, non-formal education only works if correctly implemented and monitored. It does not happen overnight but requires time to get to know each other, to build up a trust-based relationship (see *6.3 : Building trust*), using tailor-made methods. It might even be useful to network with people who know or have worked with the young person before (see *4.1 : Young people in their communities* and *4.2 : Setting up partnerships*).

Another interesting aspect of the use of non-formal education with the target group is that the beneficiaries may be multipliers afterwards, becoming "more experienced peers" towards their friends, and hence motivate and support them in a horizontal way. This is the so-called peer education, which values young people sharing their experiences and providing support to others in similar experiences (see *7.1 : Peer education*).

Non-formal education could be a tool for the inclusion of all, especially those who did not find their luck in the formal education system. But youth workers or social workers should be aware that their action is to be implemented as a stage of a holistic pathway and should not therefore be an objective in itself. It also supposes that the beneficiaries have their basic needs fulfilled. It is difficult to start working with young people on their personal development if at the same time they do not have a roof over their head or anything to eat.

5

Tailor-make your approach to your target group using the step-by-step approach (see *6.2 : Step-by-step approach*) and plan concrete and positive results (even very small) at every step, in order to generate a dynamic of motivation. A feeling of achievement also stimulates self-confidence and self-esteem.

When you mix all these ingredients and start your intervention at the right moment of the young people pathways, it will then become a strong educational tool for the young person's personal development. This alternative education may be a real second chance for young people with fewer opportunities to find their way back into society.

Good practices – A concrete example

M., 24 years old, was unemployed. He dropped out of school when 16. He came from a broken family and was in regular contact with the police for drugs offences. A social work association picked him off the streets and suggested he apply for a short-term European Voluntary Service, which he did. The project was approved and M went abroad for 4 months working on alternative tourist trips with adolescents. In the project, M. learned many new things, not only to do with the practical management of the trips, but also how to communicate in a different language, spend time and work with sometimes difficult adolescents, etc. After his four months he decided to start vocational training to work in the tourist sector.

In this case M. used a specific programme of non-formal education to get back on track in his life. With the support of social workers (in both countries) M managed to take up responsibilities again and to feel useful in society. The practical skills he learnt (setting up tents, cooking etc) are however not the main outcomes. The big plus for M going on an EVS project was to relate to people and try out new experiences, which in the end led to a new vocation in his life, the tourism sector. The interesting thing is that the positive experience in a non-formal setting gave him the appetite and motivation to go back to the formal education system to get a qualification. So there is plenty of hope and work for youth workers.

6. Inclusive youth work in practice

6.1 Ethos

When working with young people with fewer opportunities the youth worker consciously or unconsciously adheres to certain moral guidelines, a so-called ethos. It is important to be conscious about your ethos in youth work and its consequences. This section does not intend to tell youth workers which moral guidelines are better or worse, as there are probably as many concepts of ethos as there are organisations working in the educational field. However it is important as a youth worker to have a similar ethos to their colleagues', partners' or employers' ethos. If there is a discrepancy between the moral guidelines for youth work between different actors in the same field, this could make working together properly impossible.

We consider ethos in two areas: ethos linked to philosophy and ethos linked to the work with the target group.

By Benoît Mida-Briot

Ethos linked to philosophy

According to Begnino Caceres, two tendencies appear in community and youth work (community work endeavours to enable people to participate in society).

The first approach sees community and youth workers as actors who should include their target audiences as much as possible in society. They do not intend to change society, but instead promote that people adapt to it. Community and youth workers have a role in social regulation.

The second concept of community and youth work sees itself as a tool for transforming society. It lies in people's ability to interact with their environment and transform it. Community workers' actions are aimed at a long-term transformation of the people's minds and hence their capacity to participate in society and also to improve it. In this approach community and youth workers do not aim to integrate people into society they contribute to social transformation of society.

The moral approach, of course, has consequences for the way you work with young people.

Ethos linked to the work with young people with fewer opportunities

Youth workers should be conscious of the ethos on which their educational actions are based. They may have important roles like providing support and mentoring to the young persons they work with. This support should remain punctual and avoid creating dependency-based relationships, as these create obstacles to young people's empowerment and personal autonomy instead of enhancing them. Youth workers should aim to become superfluous once they have coached the young persons to achieve independence. Youth workers can provide young people different opportunities that hopefully inspire and boost the young people's empowerment and active participation in society.

Some questions to ask yourself

- **My values:** what are my conceptions of society? Is youth work the right place to be coherent with my values?

- **My motivations for working with the target group:** do I want to integrate youth into society or do I want to create spaces for enabling them to participate in public discussion?

- **My role as a youth worker:** do my motivations and actions match my employer's policy and the young persons' needs? Do I have influence on young people that goes beyond my task? How can I manage this?

- **How to avoid creating dependency-based relationships with the target group:** am I able to limit my involvement with the young persons? Am I too emotionally committed? Do I network sufficiently?

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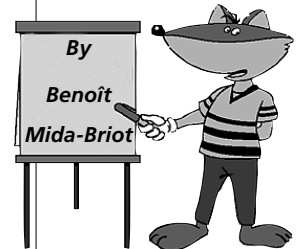
One important aim of youth work with young people having fewer opportunities can be to become unnecessary, when young persons become autonomous and socially included enough not to need youth workers anymore.

6.2 Step-by-step approach

As mentioned in *4.3 : Different working contexts*, there are different ways to work with young people with fewer opportunities. One can aim to give a little push to these young persons' lives by using brief challenges, or you could aim to coach the young person towards more permanent change. In the latter case it is important to become familiar with the young people's stories. Youth workers should get to know the mechanisms that have led the young people to become socially excluded; they should understand their present and hopefully construct a better future with them. Youth workers may realise at this stage that short-term youth work has its limits regarding the needs of young people with fewer opportunities. Change needs longer-term guidance.

You cannot push young people to suddenly change their lives. They also need to be ready and open for change, which demands a step-by-step approach. At different moments in their lives, you can do different things to get them moving toward integration into society. Getting to know their stories, working on a trust-based relationship, involving them in the choice of their future are essential before you can start steering them towards better horizons. It is paramount to adapt your approach and activities to their pathways, providing tailor-made programmes that take into account their expectations and possibilities. You can start with little challenges and build on that, reaching, step-by-step, where you want to go.

How to build a step-by-step approach ?

Different essential ingredients are needed to work efficiently with the target group in the context of youth work. These will be mentioned in this section and explored in the next sections of *6 : Inclusive youth work in practice*.

As a principle, any work with young people with fewer opportunities should be built on trust and not be forced upon them. As outlined in *6.3 : Building trust*, this can take weeks or months. However it is a key to many doors in the work with them and well worth working on and waiting for.

Youth work should be based on the young people's expectations and needs. If they do not have any specific wishes or do not know what they want, the youth worker can help them find out where they want to go in life. The youth worker can do this by proposing a variety of activities that the young people may feel attracted to and thus help them detect their centres of interest.

Once specific aims have emerged, the youth worker and the young people may be able to reflect together on possible ways to reach these aims. The contractual approach (see *7.2*) could be one of the ways to go about this.

Furthermore, it may be necessary to restart a socialising process: the young persons may need to learn to communicate and co-operate again with others. It may be useful to take them through experiences out of their daily environment, to make them function again outside their old habits. International projects could be an opportunity for certain young people to change their lives. It goes without saying that people who are not used to such international experiences need a fair amount of preparation, continued support throughout the entire project and, of course, active involvement (see more on this in the T-Kit on International Voluntary Service).

Good practices – A concrete example

S, 19 years old, was involved in petty crime and this brought him in repeated contact with the juvenile delinquency department of justice. They asked an organisation that works with young people with fewer opportunities, using mainly circus arts and sailing activities, to work with S, and so they did. After a while, this organisation offered S an opportunity to go on a short-term European Voluntary Service (EVS) project abroad. S was tempted by the idea to go abroad, but to do so required a trial period of one month, in which S would need to prepare for the project abroad. One month later, after some difficult periods, S was ready to go and a meeting was held to establish a "contract of objectives" before going abroad on a sailing project. The first four months abroad were not easy due to language problems but because of strong on-going support of his mentors, he stuck it out. What is more, S applied for a two-month extension. He was very much appreciated by the project and later presented a photography exhibition of his work aboard during a festival. After he finished his EVS he went back home for holidays but soon he moved permanently to the country where he did his EVS to start a new life.

A brief analysis of S's case

S successfully used, with the support of his mentors, a non-formal educational opportunity (see 5: Non-formal education as a tool for the inclusion of all). We see that a step-by-step methodology had been implemented, tailored to S's expectations, and most at all, depended on his strong adherence and active involvement. The youth worker (short-term EVS) had proposed the first step in this project but the choice was made freely by S. He had been considered from the beginning someone responsible, that is, someone able to make a choice.

The second step set up a trial period, meaning that before entering the "nice" part of the project (going abroad), S had to confirm his choice. After a satisfactory evaluation of his preparation period, the next, "exciting" step was discussed and lead to a contract of objectives stating the parties' rights and duties, describing further steps to take and foreseeing regular evaluation meetings.

During the stay abroad, strong support was provided by the EVS mentors enabling S to have a successful experience, which also allowed for moments to stand back and reflect about what steps to implement after the EVS project. As a final step his work was acknowledged through his exhibition during the festival, increasing his self-confidence and self-esteem (see 6.4: Exploring self-esteem) and developed his project management skills.

The EVS offer came at the right moment in S's life, where he was willing to take up a challenge and get actively involved in this project. Prior to this project, he was looking for situations in which he could improve himself and get a second chance. Because of the partnership between the juvenile delinquency department and the organisations, S was able to benefit from a European mobility project. This tool had been tailored to his needs and expectations into a relevant personal development tool. S significantly improved his self-confidence and self-esteem and gradually took on, in a step-by-step approach, more and more responsibilities.

6

6.3 Building trust

Trust men and they will be true to you ; treat them greatly, and they will show themselves great.
Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 - 1882)

Love all, trust a few. Do wrong to none. *William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616)*

The significance we attach to the concept of trust is exemplified by the adjective so often attached to it – sacred. Trust, and our need for the security and reassurance it offers, is central to our sense of self and our relationships. We expect – and want – to trust our family, our friends, our teachers and our leaders. With that trust comes certainty, predictability and safety. Without it, life is at best uncertain, at worst a dangerous place where the safest survival technique is to trust no one, relying instead on self-interest.

"Don't trust a word he says", "She's not to be trusted": there are few more damning remarks to make of another person. From the pages of literature, through to the divorce courts, from the tearful teenager whose supposed best friend has just blurted out something she promised to keep secret, to the pensioner cheated out of his life savings by an unscrupulous advisor, betrayal and its consequence – the destruction of trust – is recognised as one of the most damaging of all the cruelties one human being can visit upon another.

Trusting someone means making yourself vulnerable – and if you have already experienced rejection or betrayal, as many young people have, why would you risk making yourself vulnerable again? Young people who have been emotionally or physically abused in the past – particularly when that abuse has been at the hands of those whom the young person has every reason to believe they could trust – may find it easier and safer not to trust anybody again. Some may take personal responsibility for what has happened to them. They may come to believe themselves somehow unworthy and undeserving of anyone's attention, care and love. The consequent self-hatred and lack of self-esteem can blight lives and future relationships forever. Similarly, young people who have been belittled or criticised in a hostile manner by a teacher or another authority figure may find it difficult to believe that their experiences in a similar situation might be more positive.

In any work on a personal level across a range of professions, much emphasis is placed on the need to build trust. Just as the teacher and the social worker needs to build a trusting relationship with young people, so too does the youth worker. All of them, in their different ways, may need to recognise and try to tackle deep-rooted problems that may take years to resolve, if indeed they ever can be resolved. At the same time, anyone working in this sensitive territory should be alert to the potential consequences once the floodgates of emotion and trust are opened, since some people who have experienced such damaging events may have nursed for years a longing to unburden themselves. Once they start to trust someone, there is always the possibility that they may, at least initially, become dependent upon the object of their trust and confidence. This is why specialist help and ways to access it should always be considered.

So what are the qualities needed to start to build trust? There are four key areas where, often by your own behaviour, you can demonstrate to the young person that the world is not necessarily permanently chaotic, and that trust, when invested in the right people, can offer safety and comfort.

- **Mean what you say:** "Hear the words, but watch the actions." If you say you are available according to an agreed timetable, be available. If you promise not to pass on a confidence entrusted to you by a young person, respect that promise.

- **Take responsibility:** People who can be trusted take responsibility for their actions. Show that you recognise that everyone makes mistakes: admit to your own shortcomings, and avoid offloading the blame on to someone else. It is all too easy to attribute failures and difficulties to someone else, often a nameless "they" who may so easily engender a feeling of powerlessness and apathy. Demonstrate how, even in the smallest way, you can take responsibility for your own destiny. Part of taking responsibility, just as with self-esteem, involves learning to take account of other people's interests. Working on trust will often involve presenting young people with the experience of both trusting someone else and having someone trust them, then exploring the different emotions – vulnerability, fear, discomfort, empowerment, confidence, for example – they may have felt. See section 2 for practical ways to explore this.

- **Show understanding:** When you believe that another person to a greater or lesser extent understands your situation and why you feel as you do, it is easier to trust them. Empathy and compassion, shown sincerely, unpatronisingly and consistently, can help to persuade a young person that you are trying to see the world through their eyes. However, as mentioned in the section on self-esteem, the reality of their lives must be acknowledged: you cannot fully understand their precise feelings – what is important is that you try.

- **Create a safe space:** We tend to trust those with whom we feel safe. For some young people, particularly for those with fewer opportunities, the lack of security is a crucial factor in their unwillingness to trust. When life constantly lets you down and time and again your hopes are betrayed, it is not surprising if every encounter is greeted with suspicion. Through empathy and non-judgemental exchanges, the youth worker can help create an environment that feels safe, and where the young person can start to relax and let down their guard to some extent. No-one would pretend this will happen overnight – that would be naïve – but the experience, however brief, can at least provide a taste of what it feels like not to constantly assume the world and people in it are not to be trusted. This is why so many of the exercises aimed at building trust concentrate on the safe surrender, to some extent, of one's own control, entrusting one's personal and emotional security to another in a carefully managed situation *(see activities in 8 : Practical part – Exercises)*.

It would be a foolish person indeed who would pretend that the interventions of youth workers, however skilled and for however long, could transform lives for so long blighted by mistrust and insecurity. At the very least, however, the youth worker working with young people with fewer opportunities can try to provide an accepting setting where even for a few hours a feeling of safety and security can be experienced. In an uncertain world, they can also try to ensure that they themselves behave as someone worthy of another's trust.

6.4 Exploring self-esteem

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.

If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.

If children live with tolerance, they learn to be patient.

If children live with encouragement, they learn to be confident.

If children live with praise, they learn to appreciate.

If children live with approval, they learn to love themselves.

If children live with acceptance, they learn to find love in the world.

Dorothy L. Nolte

6

Increasing self-esteem is probably one of the most talked about outcomes of youth work. Its value is rarely questioned and helping to "raise self-esteem" is a familiar goal of much of the activity undertaken by youth workers. Nowhere is this truer than when working with young people with fewer opportunities. Low self-esteem is often perceived to have a causal link with a wide range of social ills. Yet the evidence to support these causal links is divided and we should recognise the complexity of this issue.

In the first instance, what exactly does this term, which we all believe we understand, mean? A simplistic definition might be: "Self-esteem is feeling good about one's self." Using this definition might also describe such characteristics as conceit, egotism, arrogance, narcissism, or a sense of superiority (Baumeister, 1996), characteristics one might wish positively to discourage.

A better definition is one that recognises a more stable sense of self-esteem where feelings of self-worth, power, and capabilities are positive and relatively constant in the face of fluctuating life events. Branden (1994) describes self-esteem as "the disposition to experience one's self as competent to cope with the challenges of life and as deserving of happiness." Other definitions refer to having the ability to be accountable for one's own actions and behave responsibly towards others. Achieving this richer level of self-esteem rests upon a sense of personal efficacy (self-efficacy) and a sense of personal worth (self-respect). This better explains why a young person largely excluded from society might struggle to have a sense of worth and efficacy in a world that so consistently undermines confidence, creates obstacles to achievement and is largely hostile. We referred earlier to the multiple insecurities a young person with fewer opportunities might experience, arising from a combination of disadvantageous factors anyone outside that setting might struggle to fully appreciate (see *2.2 : Who are the young people with fewer opportunities?*).

Self-esteem comes from within, but a key element in its development is the personal construction of self-worth resulting from interactions with others and with the environment. Young people with fewer opportunities have, by definition, fewer opportunities to experience those interactions that engender confidence, generate positive feedback and provide a sense of personal worth. This is not to suggest of course that low self-esteem is restricted to a certain type of person – poverty of experience, of achievement, of affection is common across all society – but our concern in this T-Kit is young people with fewer opportunities.

Youth workers often refer to the satisfaction they feel when watching a young person grow in self-confidence and in so doing increasing their self-esteem. However, we should be cautious about leaping to conclusions. The transformation that they witness will be the result of a wide range of experiences for the young person and, not least, the qualities of the individual young person. This is not to devalue the worth of a session or project in a safe and non-threatening environment that enables a young person – perhaps for the first time – to experience a real sense of achievement and justifiable pride in what they have done. It is rather to acknowledge the reality of a life that within seconds – perhaps just by stepping outside – can revert to the familiar daily struggles and frustrations. What is important is that the youth worker recognises their contribution to the complex jigsaw puzzle that makes up an individual's self-esteem. We must also trust the evidence of our own eyes.[2]

Baumeister (1993) refers to a critical element of healthy self-esteem as having realistic, clear self-concepts. Here clearly the youth worker has a role to play in helping the young person frame their view of themselves and the world they inhabit within meaningful and challenging but realistic limits.

Branden describes self-esteem in terms of the "confidence in the efficacy of our mind, in our ability to think. By extension, it is confidence in our ability to learn, make appropriate choices and decisions, and respond effectively to change. It is also the experience that success, achievement, fulfilment – happiness – are right and natural for us. The survival-value of such confidence is obvious; so is the danger when it is missing." The ways in which youth work, particularly with young people with fewer opportunities, can encourage that confidence to develop is integrally bound up with the creation and building of trust, which the next section explores.

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2. There are different views in research about how exactly self-esteem and the effects thereof should be interpreted in youth work. For a recent, critical look at this issue see an article by PJ White in the *Young People Now* magazine (issue 162, October 2002), published by the National Youth Agency in the UK.
Web: http://www.nya.org.uk

- Unconditional self-acceptance
- Sense of capability
- Sense of purpose
- Appropriate assertiveness
- Experience of fulfilment
- Sense of responsibility and accountability
- Sense of safety and security
- Sense of belonging
- Sense of integrity

7. Some particular approaches

7.1 Peer education

By Veronique Crolla

Everybody knows the story of the father who, on a nice day, after exchanging meaningful looks with his wife, asks his twelve-year-old son to accompany him for a walk and 'a little chat'. The father then awkwardly starts up an artificial conversation about girls that might be in the son's class and then changes his attitude and solemnly announces that it is time his son got to know the facts of life. At which the boy, genuinely bored, replies that he knows "everything 'bout f...... already" from his schoolmates, their magazines and the jokes and can he please go home and play football again.

In a way, the exchange of information about sexual education – whether it is completely realistic and truthful or not – between the boy and his schoolmates, is peer education. Kirstie Lilley (2001) distinguishes three kinds of peer education:

- Informal peer education, as mentioned in the story, when young people simply pass on information about subjects that matter to them, without being trained or told to do so;

- Formal peer education, in which young people are simply told to pass a certain message on without having much influence on the contents themselves;

- And a third type of peer education, which will be discussed here, in which the young people receive training to develop a programme themselves to pass on a certain message to their peers.

Peer education is beneficial for all parties involved. The peer educators gain self-confidence, self-esteem and a number of skills (see *6.4 : Exploring self-esteem*). Their peers receive valuable information in an enjoyable way from someone they know and trust, and they might get stimulated to become a peer educator themselves. For youth work and the youth worker, it presents a way of passing on knowledge to a bigger group of young people who can, in their turn, address a larger group again.

6

Good practices – A concrete example

In Estonia, a group of 23 young people having met each other during high school days or during their 1st year of university, have implemented several peer education projects. Most of these projects concerned drug prevention, children's rights, social skills and education. In 2002, emphasis was shifted to social skills and children's rights development programmes. The main target groups were orphanage children and other children in need. Under the "Group Initiatives" (Action 3) of the YOUTH programme it was planned to organise social skills training for 20 orphanage children and youngsters between the ages of 9-17. The aim of the projects was to prevent drug abuse among children in orphanages, to develop their social skills and to teach and motivate them to carry out their own projects. First they compiled material (appropriate leaflets, CD-ROMs) for these trainings. In all their activities they always included the direct target group in the preparation work as they themselves felt comfortable in the main part of the projects, which increased effectiveness. Once all the preparation was completed the trainings then started in September 2002.

Peer education – why does it work?

- Young people are more likely to accept information from other young people than from adults. In particular, young people who grew up with a disadvantaged background have often been disappointed by adults from their surroundings and could be suspicious to them.
- Young people are more likely to tell each other honestly what they feel or think than to an older person, since they are afraid of being judged on what they say.
- Often, it is easier to ask questions and discuss subjects with peers.
- Young people identify more with people from their own age and the information from peers might come across as more reliable.
- The peer educators know what language to use to address their peers.
- The peer educators can choose their own way of discussing the topics and decide upon which subjects to use, which will increase their sense of ownership.

Most of the time, it does not work to walk into a group of young people and ask them something like "Hey, you wanna be a peer educator?" It could, however, very well be the follow-up from an activity a group of young persons has been involved in. During the evaluation, a useful question to ask is what they would do differently themselves if they were to lead the workshop, project or activity. During the activity, the youth worker could already encourage the young people to think of solutions and take initiative, provided it remains within reach of the young people.

There are several manuals for starting up peer education projects, which you can find in the bibliography. However, since most peer education programmes focus on potential peer educators who are already familiar with youth work, and on young people who attend workshops by peer educators in a formal setting, it will be useful to look at some extra considerations when dealing with peer educators and peers with a disadvantaged background.

Mentoring the process of peer education

The mentoring of young people with fewer opportunities who would like to become peer educators should be done carefully as not to destroy the trust (see *6.3 : Building trust*). Some of these young people may have more difficulty in planning and may be more inclined to give up when things don't work out. So, more than with young people who are bursting with self-confidence and self-esteem, you'll need to stimulate and motivate them time and time again (see also *6.4 : Exploring self-esteem*). This also means being on time yourself and planning meetings with the young people. Unpredictability of the youth worker will, as Ascher (1988) remarks, "serve to destroy relationships and to harden mistrust". Apart from the support, you will have to invest extra time as well in adapting the methodology in order to make it manageable for the young people. Even though they will be the ones who will primarily work on the contents of what they are going to teach to their peers, the information should first be made understandable for them as well. And if this involves too much reading, studying or school-like tasks, it is bound to make them feel uncomfortable and quit, thereby ruining your carefully built-up relationship. Also, if the information is not clear to the peer educators, it might be passed on incomplete or incorrect, which will of course get you in trouble again.

Paramount is that the young people devise, develop and deliver the programme themselves. However, a clear structure should be provided for by the youth worker, which can be filled in by the peer educators. It can help to keep the meetings, both the preparation ones as well as the workshops, as rounded-off chunks. Each part should cover one subject that is matched with the young people's capacities but at the same time challenging enough not to become boring and the aims not set too high. When organising the preparation meetings and the peer education workshops themselves, keep the barriers young persons might be facing in mind as well (see *3.1 : Obstacles*).

With the right preparation and support, peer education can definitely yield results which standard youth work would be unable to reach. Also, exchanging information on peer education and the support of peer educators with other youth workers can be very useful (see *4.2 : Setting up partnerships*). In this case young peer educators from different organisations and backgrounds can meet and tell each other about their experiences, helping educate each other.

Good practices – A concrete example

The Care 2 Share (Brighton, UK) peer education programme offers a range of learning outcomes for young people aged 16 to 25 of mixed abilities. It brings together tutors – most of whom are interested in going into youth work or teaching – with 'tutees' – young people who have become disengaged from formal education for various reasons.

Peer tutors take part in a peer education-training programme, including a residential. They support one or more tutees in working towards agreed learning goals in the areas of basic literacy, numeracy and key skills. The project encourages all young people to identify their own progression routes and supports them in moving on to more formal learning or employment. In 2002-03 the project aims to support half of its learners to achieve accreditation. Paid staff monitor the portfolio development of both tutors and tutees.

Both tutors and tutees run a snack bar at the youth centre where C2S is based, learning project management, budgetary and money-handling skills, shopping, customer service and catering skills. The young people take a high level of responsibility for the project – they designed the snack bar refurbishment and the centre's ICT suite, are responsible for their own budgeting and accounting, and hold regular team meetings to assess the project's development.

7.2 The contractual approach

The contractual approach is an additional methodology that youth workers may use for working with young people with fewer opportunities. The youth worker and the young person set objectives for positive change (behaviour at school or in the youth club, reducing drugs use, job search, etc.) and together develop concrete steps and guidelines of how to achieve these goals. This set of good intentions is agreed upon and adhered to, as if it were a contract (it could be even signed by both parties). The contract is constantly monitored and evaluated at regular intervals (or when breached) by both the young person and the youth worker.

By Benoît Mida-Briot

This contractual approach is based on an increased commitment between the youth worker and the young person, and on mutual trust. Both are equal partners in the development of the contract and take responsibility towards the tasks to be achieved with related rights and duties. It can be used in the frame of a specific project or in daily life, in a one-to-one setting or with groups.

The following describes this so-called contract pedagogy in a one-to-one setting, in which the youth worker has already known the young person in question for some time.
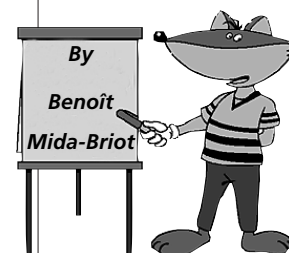
The contractual approach is a tool based on:

- A trustful relationship between the youth worker and the young person;

- Targeting the gradual acquisition of experiences based on successes and not failures;

- An agreement for the implementation of a project tailored to the young person's needs, expectations, capacities;

- A commitment of the partners to fulfil the common objectives to reach;

- Precise roles, tasks, rights and duties for each partner;

- Considering the young person as a responsible interlocutor able to make choices, conclude a partnership, respect an agreement and act consistently.

The contractual approach is a tool and not an objective in itself.

7

When to use the contractual approach?

The right moment for implementing this tool depends on the young people you are working with and on the situation they are in. It is up to the youth workers to judge if a young person is ready for such a challenge. The young people should have shown interest in a specific project or in changing certain things in their lives: they should be in the position to commit themselves for a while. When presenting the challenge of a contract to the young persons, it should not sound too formal or too patronising. A contract actually provides a safe framework with a clear division of responsibilities (both for the youth worker as for the young person) for achieving set goals.

What should be the contents of a contract?

The contents should be identified and agreed upon together with the young person. Mostly the contract is built up around a concrete project that is limited in time. The contract could impart certain new responsibilities to the young person and specify the support the youth worker promises to give. It is important to remain realistic of what can be achieved. The contract should be tailor-made to each young person and based on individual work with him or her. Do not let the setting-up of the contract turn into an obstacle for the young person.

> **Dos and don'ts**
>
> - The young person must participate in defining the contract: realistic goals should be targeted.
> - The overall goals should be broken down into smaller intermediate objectives to enable regular small successes on the road to the main goal.
> - Encourage the young person to be as concrete and as pragmatic as possible when defining aims and different intermediate stages.
> - Define clear aims, stages, roles and tasks, partners' rights and duties, but avoid getting bogged down in too many details.
> - Do not forget to agree on a precise timetable including formal and/or informal evaluation periods.
> - Bear in mind that the contract will be the on-going reference point during the implementation of the young person's project.
> - Amend or change the contract when necessary but avoid changing the contents too frequently: the contract's reliability would be affected.
> - Include an item on what should happen in case a partner does not fulfil or breaches the contract.
> - Try not to be too formal when choosing the form of the contract (document).

The youth worker's role when following up the contract implementation

Youth workers have a specific role beyond a simple contract partner. They should strengthen the communication flow with the young person to detect as early as possible any problems. It may occur that the young people do not dare or want to admit that they face difficulties. The youth worker should be present to encourage and help, to support and empower people solving a problem or facing a difficult situation. This is in line with educational work that is based on successes rather than on failures.

How to face a breach of contract

Youth workers must be prepared to face unexpected developments when using the contractual approach with the target group. If the young person wishes to abandon the contract, the youth worker should first of all try to analyse the reasons why the young person wants to drop out of the project, and see if anything can be done to address these reasons. One option could be to suspend the contract for a period. If the young person still feels uncomfortable with the situation, a change of contract can be proposed. It is only as a last resort that the contract should be cancelled. In all cases, the interest of the young person should be central.

When breaching the contract:

- React immediately and tell the young person that you have noticed a breach.
- Take time to discuss the matter with the young person.
- Do not close your eyes to breaches to avoid confrontation. This may jeopardise the value of the contract and your role with the young person.
- When discussing the breach of contract be careful not to judge or place blame, but take the constructive road of communication.
- Try to leave doors open for further work to take place: extend a deadline, give a second chance, offer more support, etc.
- If you decide to continue the work with the same young person with a new contract, for example, ensure that you will be able to manage it (in some cases it may not be possible and it is better to recognize it).
- Avoid sanctions, but foresee procedures of what to do in case of breaches of contract.

The final evaluation of the contract and what comes after

At the end of the contract period the final evaluation should make an inventory of the achievements realised and those not fulfilled in the contract. This moment should not become too formal, but should show some kind of recognition of the young person's achievements (for example certificates, a gift, new responsibilities or privileges, etc.) This will strengthen their self-confidence and self-esteem.

The work is not finished after the contract has ended. Before the end of the project, it is also important to think about the further stages after the contract. These are aimed at continuing the young person's self-development. The ideal outcome of the contractual approach would be to not need contracts anymore, but that the young persons find their own way in life without the help of a youth worker. But this will not happen over night. The youth worker should gradually decrease their involvement with the young person after the project has been realised in order to avoid creating dependency-based relations (as mentioned in *6.1 : Ethos*).

7.3 Conflict management

Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage. The human spirit is to grow strong by conflict.
William Ellery Channing

"Conflict: a battle, contest of opposing forces, discord, antagonism existing between primitive desires and instincts and moral, religious, or ethical ideals." *Webster's Dictionary*

The characters that make up the word conflict in Chinese are danger and opportunity. If conflict is an inescapable part of life, then young people, whatever their background, need to be given the chance to discover and develop ways to find the opportunity as well as the dangers in the conflicts in their lives. In any conflict, there is the potential for growth and positive change. Yet for many people, the experience or understanding of conflict is only negative, associated with violence and destruction.

Conflict is not necessarily destructive if handled properly. It can become a valuable tool in building up skills and personal strengths: when acknowledged and explored in a safe environment, it can provide powerful coping and management techniques, building on the premise that everyone – and their feelings – deserve respect. Viewed in this light, the management of conflict can be seen as inextricably bound up in the earlier topics covered: self-esteem and trust.

Unfairness, injustice and lack of basic resources tend to provoke violence, particularly where bitter experience has suggested no alternative. But violence creates legacies of hurt, bitterness, vengefulness and destruction – it diminishes the violent as well as the victim.

Conflict occurs when two or more people oppose one another because their needs, wants, goals or values are different. Conflict is almost always accompanied by feelings of anger, frustration, hurt, anxiety, or fear. It is caused by a wide range of factors: a clash of values, ideologies or goals; an inability to appreciate another's perspective; a struggle over limited resources; in retaliation for another's action. Glasser (1984) identifies as common to all human beings the physiological need to survive, along with four psychological needs: for belonging, for power, for freedom and for fun. It is the way in which we seek to fulfil those needs that can lead to conflict, especially where one party believes its psychological (and in extreme cases, its physiological) needs are being threatened by another. Of course, much of our behaviour is a consequence of the reinforcement of earlier experiences: we see what works. If the person who shouts loudly and pushes to the front of the queue instantly gets attention, why bother with a more tempered approach?

Conflict can be managed by developing and using skills such as effective communicating, problem solving, and negotiating with a focus on interests. When we negotiate with a focus on our interests – the things needed or desired by all individuals involved in the dispute – rather than our positions, where we focus on blame, fault, and liability for what happened in the past, we have a better chance of working with, rather than against, each other to discuss and resolve issues.

The aim of exploring how to manage conflict is to understand the sources of conflict and allow powerful emotions to flourish into a sense of empowerment, more positive human relationships and an enhanced sense of personal worth. Once the fear of personal danger and the unknown is removed, people can start to see that, appropriately handled, conflict can be constructive. As a volunteer on a conflict management course observed: "I've realised something about conflict I never thought of before … I'd hate to live in a world with no conflict. Nothing would ever happen! I like conflict. It means people are alive. I used to hate it and be scared of it, but now I'm not. It's a funny thing to realise you don't want to live in a perfect world."

The youth workers' role in this journey of discovery is to be open, non-judgemental, accepting and positive, and careful trustees of young people's growing vulnerability and openness. They should help the participants to recognise that confronting conflict is daring, exciting and challenging. It takes great courage to be a mediator: conflicts release overwhelming personal energies and it takes guts to step in when the situation is ablaze.

What skilful youth workers can offer those with whom they work is the opportunity to rehearse, mainly through the exploration of communication and co-operation, alternative approaches to provocative situations. It is hard to attack someone for whom you have respect and with whom you have been through many experiences where mutual co-operation and trust have been the keys to success. As was discussed in the earlier sections, learning to value yourself is also about valuing others.

What must also be remembered is that the youth worker not only explores conflict management as a tool for young people, but also as a learning opportunity to ensure their own personal safety. They, like the young people with whom they work, need to understand when flight is more appropriate than fight – that is, when a situation is about to escalate, despite their best endeavours, into a conflagration.

When tackling conflict management:

• Create boundaries for the work by setting time limits for the work. It is not wrong for participants to leave a session with unresolved feelings. But it is important to respect how they feel and allow them the time to reflect on what has occurred within a structured environment. Time for winding-down is important. Creating boundaries is about developing a sense and environment of safety, where everyone understands and agrees to the rules or guidelines.

• Expect the unexpected and be aware that there will be a range of responses to any work you undertake.

• Use active listening (listening for content, meaning, and feelings to aid understanding of the problem), and then summarize or paraphrase what you believe you heard, for example, "What I think I heard you say was… Is that right?", reframing the issue by reinterpreting a statement or comment into a problem-solving frame.

• Do not blame yourself if a participant becomes angry or upset. The way in which each participant engages with the activity is certainly your responsibility as facilitator, but it is also the responsibility of the young person.

• Do not take things personally. Verbal abuse or dismissal can be an expression of how the young person is feeling about themselves and the work, not necessarily about you. Bear in mind that this may be the first time that the young person has been allowed to express anger in such a way, without sanctions or censure. Where possible, try to get participants to focus on problems, not people.

• Do not offer solutions; offer the space for participants to reach their own.

• And finally, know your limits. Never put yourself and those you work with in personal danger. If things start to get out of hand, take a break or even stop the session. If necessary, seek help.

8. Practical part – Exercices

In this practical part you will find many exercises and methods to work on the issues described in the texts above.

However, exercises are only tools, and as with every tool they can be used in good and bad ways, just as a syringe can cure people or infect them with a deadly disease. So it is up to you to use these exercises responsibly. Always start with defining your aims and then check if one of these exercises could help you reach the aim, and not the other way around: doing an exercise and then noticing it had the opposite effect.

Exercises should always be adapted to your target group (some of these exercises are for youth workers, others for young people). So it is important to get to know your group first, how well they know each other, what experience they have had already in training, what comes before and what comes after, etc., and choose and adapt your methods accordingly. Check the T-Kit on Training Essentials for more trainer considerations.

Remember: an exercise cannot solve all problems!

The exercises are sorted in different categories:

- *8.1 : Young people with fewer opportunities* – deals with awareness raising on who the young people with fewer opportunities are, how they are seen by society and what kind of pressures they face.

- *8.2 : Feeling social exclusion* – provides different exercises to feel what it is to be excluded and it also provides some methods to deal with some forms of exclusion.

- *8.3 : Building trust and self-esteem* – suggests different approaches to build a relationship based on trust between the youth worker and the young people or in groups of young people. It also lists some methods to improve self-esteem.

- *8.4 : Conflict management* – shows how you can deal with conflicts, how you can understand them better and what to do in case they happen.

- *8.5 : Setting up partnerships* – lists some practical exercises that give you an idea what it takes to set up partnerships and co-operate with different people.

- *8.6 : Peer education* –gives methods to investigate how peer education works and why it works.

8

8.1 Young people with fewer opportunities

LEMONS

Aim:

This is an icebreaker that introduces the idea of individual differences. It can be used at the start of a session around stereotyping, differences and equality of opportunities.

Resources needed:

Enough lemons for everybody in the group

A carrier bag

Group size:

Various

Time needed:

30 minutes

Step-by-step description:

1. Give each group member a lemon.

2. Ask everyone to look closely at their fruit, examine it for distinctive marks and feel the skin.

3. Encourage people to personalise their lemon by giving it a name.

4. Allow five minutes to do this and then collect all the lemons into the carrier bag. Shake the bag to mix the fruits.

5. Spread all the lemons out on the floor in front of the group.

6. In turn, ask each young person to come forward and collect his or her lemon.

7. If there is an argument over whose it is, try to adjudicate, but if they still cannot agree, place the lemon to one side as unidentified. If this happens, you should be left with two at the end to reunite, but will find that most people (amazingly!) can successfully claim their fruit.

Reflection and evaluation:

Once all the young people have been reunited with their lemons you can facilitate a discussion. How sure are they that they claimed the right fruit? How can they tell? Encourage them to look at the parallels between this exercise and differentiating between people. Examine the stereotypes: are all lemons the same colour? Are they all the same shape?

Compare this to the stereotypes that exist between people of different cultures, races and gender. What does this mean to the group?

Your evaluation of this process and the issues that emerge will help you develop further sessions around differences and equality of opportunities.

CONSEQUENCES

Most people are familiar with this game in some form, so it is a good way of starting a group without too much explanation. The results are very clear too, so it is an effective way to start a debate and helps to provoke discussion about how young people are seen by adults in the community.

Resources needed:

Flipchart paper

Pens

Group size:

Six members per group

Time needed:

30 minutes

Step-by-step description:

1. Ask the group to form a circle facing each other. Hand out a sheet of paper to one member of the group and give them a pen. If you are working with more than a group of six young people you may want to hand out two sheets of paper so that everyone gets a turn.

2. Explain that you want them to draw the head of a typical young woman or young man, or if you are working on certain topics such as drug use for instance, you can ask them to draw a typical drug addict. Draw attention to the need for detail, for example, hairstyles, hats, makeup, etc.

3. When they finish ask the participants to fold the paper so that their drawing cannot be seen and pass it to the person on their right.

4. Continue passing the paper and adding to the portrait until you have completed head, body, arms, legs and feet.

5. Present the picture to the group. Do people have similar ideas of what a typical young person, drug addict, etc. looks like? What are the differences? Where do they get their images and information? How accurate are they?

Reflection and evaluation:

Facilitate a discussion around stereotypes and how these affect people's views and opinions. Discuss how stereotypes are internalised from the images we see in the media as well as in our own experiences.

8

STATEMENT GAME –
YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

Aim:

This game discusses difficult subjects in a challenging way. It encourages people to look at subjects critically, listen to different arguments and form their own opinion.

Resources needed:

Hat or bowl

Small sheets of paper

Pens

Rope

Flipchart/blackboard

Group size:

Various

Time needed:

60 minutes

Step by step description:

1. Divide the room into two parts using the rope, marking one part yes, or agree, and one no or disagree.

2. Hand out a piece of paper to all participants and ask them to write down a statement about young people with fewer opportunities or any related subject you are dealing with. Give some examples yourself and make clear you will discuss these statements afterwards, so that they should be as clear as possible. Avoid softening words like rather or a bit and put the statements in an affirmative way (for example, drug addicts are criminals, instead of drug addicts are not criminals).

3. Collect all statements in a hat or bowl, take the first one out and read it out aloud. If possible, write it down on a flipchart so people can refer to it when they have forgotten the full statement. Give the participants a minute to think, and ask them to take sides. Remaining in the middle is not allowed; it's either yes or no. Then, the discussion can start. People should try to convince the people on the other side that theirs is the right side. If the discussion does not start spontaneously, ask one of the persons why they are standing on that side. If there is no discussion at all since everyone is on one side already, adjust the statement a bit or go on to the next statement. Try to keep discussions limited to approximately five minutes, unless (all) people are really engaged.

4. After all statements have been discussed (or when the energy level is going down), stop the game and collect the group again. Discuss (some of) the questions as part of the reflection and evaluation section.

Reflection and evaluation:

- Should emotional arguments be allowed in discussions?

- Did everyone participate?

- Did you ever cross to the other side?

- Did you ever cross to the other side because of what someone from your own side said?

- Did you manage to clearly formulate your opinion?

- Have you ever crossed to the other side just because you were (almost) alone on your side?

- Have you tried to act as devils advocate?

- Have you managed to persuade people to come to your side?

Some further tips:

This method has been used very often in workshops, meetings and board meetings for discussing themes. Sometimes statements were delivered by the participants themselves, sometimes by already prepared statements. In order to avoid only one or two persons speaking all the time, a talking stick can be introduced, or a new rule added stating that, after having said something, you were only allowed to reply directly to something someone said and then step back, leave the floor to someone else from your side.

With a group of rather experienced arguers it is fun to see that some people start to function as devil's advocates, mostly standing on their own on one side trying to persuade people to come to their side, using arguments that sound perfectly reasonable, even though not theirs. You as a facilitator could play this role to get the discussion going.

JIGSAW OF HUMAN RIGHTS

"Human rights are like a jigsaw; if one piece is missing, the jigsaw is incomplete. This is the same for people living in poverty; take one of our rights away and you threaten them all. You can't give people their rights bit by bit and expect them to improve things for themselves bit by bit too" – Young member of ATD Fourth World

Aim:

This group activity can act as an energizer but its main role is to increase awareness of the scope and indivisibility of human rights.

Resources needed:

Card/cardboard (or ply board); about 1 to 1,5 meters

Paint

Markers

Cutter (or fretsaw)

Group size:

Up to 30

Time needed:

Approximately 30 minutes

Step by step description:

Preparation:

1. Paint one side of the cardboard (or wood) in a different colour than the other.

2. Make a drawing or painting of a person or a group of people on one side. Draw jigsaw pieces (5 or 6) over the painting and cut up the painting.

3. Turn all pieces around and write one article (simplified if necessary) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on each piece.

The exercise:

4. When the participants enter the room, give each of them a piece of the puzzle. Some might receive two or more, depending on the group size. Explain that all of them have received one (or more) human right, but that you need all of them to be a complete person.

5. Ask the participants one by one to read out what is on their piece and explain (or ask someone to explain).

6. When all pieces are read, invite the participants to make a whole person out of these articles by turning the pieces around and putting all pieces together to complete the jigsaw.

7. When the jigsaw is finished, discuss why human rights are important, and what they mean in practice.

Reflection and evaluation:

Did you understand the human right on your piece?

What do you think it means to you in practice?

Do you think human rights are important? Why or why not?

Have you ever had the feeling your rights were being violated?

If one right is violated or is inaccessible for an individual, what would be the effect on the individual's other rights?

Over the long-term, what would be the consequences of living without one or some of your human rights being met?

What is the relationship between our human rights and our human dignity?

Some further tips:

When using this exercise to start a training course, you might also give each of the participants one piece at the end of the day, so that, on the next day of the course, everyone can start putting the jigsaw together again. People will remember what they were working on and, additionally, you can see if everyone is present.

At the end of the activity you could give each participant a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (to keep if possible) and ask them to take a few minutes to read the preamble, or alternatively, ask someone who is willing to read out the preamble to the group and the first three articles which together establish the link between human rights and human dignity.

PRECONCEPTIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

Aims:

A funny exercise for a group of trainees at the beginning of a training course, it generates much laughter and relaxation at the end of the first day for example. The purpose is to give a glimpse of different conceptions of youth social exclusion through playing and moreover to give a taste for getting to know each other's language through theatre methods. This exercise will surely be followed by informal discussions, especially if implemented as an evening game after dinner.

Resources needed:

A big room arranged with a scene

Papers and pens

Group size:

10-40

Time needed:

Approximately 2 hours (1 hour for preparation / 1 hour in plenary)

NB: This exercise should be realised in a relaxing context, at the end of a day for example, or after dinner.

Step by step description:

1. First, the facilitator explains that the exercise will deal with light theatre methods. People not feeling comfortable being actors will contribute without acting. National groups should be formed (up to four participants per country), the groups will be allowed 1 hour to prepare short sketches on youth social exclusion according to their cultures and using their languages. Humour is of course welcomed. In the second part of the exercise, the sketches will be presented to the remaining groups (arrange a place with some kind of stage).

2. The facilitator should clearly explain the following rules:

   • If there are people not comfortable with theatre methods they may participate in setting up the sketches and later on act as narrators-translators when the sketches are presented by the actors.

   • Each national group will act its sketch in its own language. It is very important that the actors clearly write out their dialogue (one paper per actor stating what they will say).

   • The sketches should be short (no more than one minute using simple dialogue). No props or materials should be used.

   • Each group should use one or two people not acting to narrate the dialogues using the training working language.

3. The groups prepare their sketches separately during one hour. During this time the facilitator can arrange a stage where the performances will take place.

4. Once all the groups are ready, the facilitator explains the following rules: the sketches will be played one after the other; it will be presented by the actors with a translation; when each actor has finished a phrase, the narrator-translator will translate it immediately using the training working language in order to ensure that the participants understand the sketch; short sentences should be used to facilitate the "translation task.

5. When the sketch is finished, the facilitator may allow a moment for the actors to explain their performance if needed. It should not be too long.

6. The actors remain on the stage and the facilitator asks for volunteers in the public, one standing behind each actor as a shadow.

7. The sketch is performed once more with the shadows. The actors should articulate when speaking and show the written phrases to their shadows when telling their phrases. The sketch is translated one more time.

8. The sketch is performed a third time, the shadows becoming the actors and vice-versa. The shadow should help the new actor with pronunciation when performing the sketch (without being too formal, just playing). The sketch is not translated any more.

9. The sketch may be performed a fourth time without any shadow.

10. All the sketches should be performed.

Reflection and evaluation:

There is no need for formal evaluation. This is a relaxing game intended to give a taste for the words of each other's languages.

8

HUMAN NEEDS JIGSAW

Aim:

This exercise will help people realise that what they see as important might be different for others, and also cause them to reflect on the fact that we all share the same fundamental human rights.

Resources needed:

One big sheet of paper for every participant

Markers

Scissors

Group size:

Various

Time needed:

1 hour

Step by step description:

1. Give all participants a piece of paper and let them draw the outline of themselves. (When the paper is big enough, they might also lie down on the paper and let someone else draw them). Cut out all drawings. Let the participants then divide their drawings into a jigsaw of six parts.

2. Make a list, with all participants, of things that might be important to them, for instance, food, friends, shelter, love, education, a stable income, good health, good environment, religion, nice family, having ideals, freedom of speech, possibility to travel, peace, not being discriminated against, etc., until you have a list of at least 25-30 items.

3. Ask all participants to pick out six rights from this list, that they consider important for themselves at this moment. They can write each one on the jigsaw pieces they made from their drawing.

4. When everyone has written down one right in one of their jigsaw pieces, they can cut up the drawings.

5. Ask one volunteer to show their jigsaw and present it to the group, explaining why they have chosen these six rights. Let the volunteer name the selected rights one by one, and ask the rest of the group, when a right is named that they have selected as well, to take out that piece and put it in front of them.

6. After the volunteer is finished, ask the rest of the group if anyone had selected the same rights, or if anyone had any rights in common. Take care that you do not start a discussion whether needs someone has chosen are sensible or not; the choice is purely individual and cannot be discussed.

7. Ask some other volunteers to share their selection of important things with the group (preferably someone who had nothing or only one or two in common with the first volunteer) and repeat step 6.

8. Discuss with the group how it is that people can perceive their needs differently? Ask them if they see any needs/rights (newly offered or from the list already made) that are absolutely fundamental for every human being. Make a list of these and compare them with the simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Reflection and evaluation:

Did many of your needs overlap with those of other persons?

Did you understand why others chose other things to be more important for them?

How did you choose your needs?

Do you think your list has changed from the list you would have made five years ago, or will change from a future list?

Are there needs/rights that must be respected for everyone without exception? Why is this if we can perceive our needs differently?

Some further tips:

You can also vary this exercise by giving people role-cards; a 90-year-old grandmother, a refugee seeking asylum, a boy in a wheelchair, a businessman, a student on a low income, a homeless girl, a professional football player, a child growing up in an Indian orphanage, a farmer from Venezuela, etc. Then ask the participant to empathise with the person on their role card and guess which rights are important to them.

8

CREATING A CHARACTER

Aim:

Young people becoming aware of the effect of youth culture on a specific issue and how a particular issue can be perceived by and affect other members of society.

Resources needed:

Cassette of current chart music and cassette player

Flipchart, stand and pens

Group size:

At least 10

Time needed:

1 hour

Step-by-step description:

1. Icebreaker so group can relax and get to know each other's names. (5 minutes)

2. Play the current chart/popular music tape in the background to encourage a going out atmosphere. Draw an outline of a person (non-gender specific) on the flipchart. Ask the participants to close their eyes and absorb the music while you are doing this. Explain what will happen for the rest of the session, specifying that you will be creating and exploring the issue using a character.

3. Ask everyone to close their eyes. Begin the story: "Imagine, it's Saturday night, it's eight o'clock, a young person is getting ready to go out. They have just got out of the shower and they are getting dressed. They are really looking forward to this evening." Then ask questions to make them think about the character. Questions could include: What is their name? Where are they going? What are they wearing? How old are they? Who are they going out with? Where do they live? What do they do? And so on. Be careful to leave details to their imagination. Ask them to open their eyes. Ask them to shout out answers to the questions and fill in the details on the picture and any other information should be written down the side of the flipchart. (10 minutes)

4. Now that you have built the character, continue with the story by placing the character in an emergency situation around your issue. For example, if your issue is drugs, the character may go to a nightclub and be offered a drug; if your issue is sexual health, the character may be going to a party to meet a new partner. Leave this open-ended and ask the group to complete the story by calling out what happened. Agree on the story. (5 minutes)

5. Now get each person in the group to imagine they know their character and ask them to say who they are and what their relationship is (for example, I am X's mother – I'm X's friend – I'm X's dog – I'm X's next door neighbour) and what their feelings/views of X are (for example, I'm X's tutor. They are very likeable and lively. I've been worried about them lately, etc.). (10 minutes)

6. Ask the group to form a conscience alley. Participants form a double row facing each other. The tutor takes role of X and walks through, facing each in turn. In their roles, each gives advice or comments to X on the situation. (10 minutes)

7. Afterwards de-role group – ask them, as themselves, to comment on X's behaviour. Identify the moment How could things have turned out differently? What were the risks/pressures? (10 minutes)

Reflection and evaluation:

Get them to review the character and situation: Was it realistic? Which bits are true or false? What about stereotypes? What should education for young people around this issue include to give a realistic reflection of youth culture? (5 minutes)

8.2 Feeling social exclusion

OUTSIDERS

Aim:

An interactive exercise exploring the effects of exclusive grouping on an individual while exploring how we react to experiences of rejection and what it feels like to belong to a group.

Resources needed:

None

Group size:

Minimum of 12

Time needed:

10 minutes

Step-by-step description:

1. Ask someone to volunteer to leave the room. The remainder of the group divide themselves into groups according to some agreed criterion – for example, hairstyle, eye colour, type of clothing, height or accent. (3 minutes)

2. The outsider is called in and guesses which group they belong to. They must state why they believe that group is their group. If the reason is wrong they may not join, even when they have picked the correct group. (4 minutes)

3. Continue with a new volunteer, giving as many participants as possible an opportunity to go outside, subject to time.

Reflection and evaluation:

How do we behave when we belong to a group? Is it easy to reject outsiders? Is it enjoyable? Do we empathise with the outsider or do we enjoy our power? (3 minutes)

Some further tips:

This exercise focuses on the feelings and experience of being rejected rather than on communication. It can be used to focus a discussion on prejudice and how we react to belonging or not belonging. It could be developed into a study of personal experiences.

BREAKING THE CODE

Aim:

This small group exercise involves one member of each group carefully observing the behaviour of the others. It aims to examine body language, to develop observation skills and to explore the effect of group behaviour on an individual.

Resources needed:

None

Group size:

Variable

Time needed:

25 minutes

Step-by-step description:

1. Divide the participants into groups of four or five. One person from each group leaves the room. The others think of something physical they will all do when having a discussion (or performing some other agreed activity) in front of the person who is at present outside the room. (3 minutes)

2. The outsider re-enters the room and starts a careful observation of the group, who are following the agreed strategy. When the outsider feels they have broken the code, they start to use the code themselves and interact with the rest of the group. If they are correct, the group will accept them as one of their own; if they are mistaken, the group will continue to ignore them. The outsider will then have to continue observing until they get the correct code and gain acceptance by the group. (5 minutes)

3 Another group member can now have a turn. The group can make the code more difficult and sophisticated every time they repeat the exercise. (10 minutes)

Reflection and evaluation:

How did the outsider feel? What did they discover when trying to crack the code? How did the group members feel during the exercise? How does this process relate to what happens in everyday interaction? Do the participants have any observations and comments on body language in general? (7 minutes)

Some further tips:

This exercise could be used to explore the use of verbal codes in a closed group, to see how a group can develop exclusive uses of language. An example of a verbal code might be all sentences spoken have to begin with a word starting with 'w'. The group could combine a verbal code with a physical code. An example of a physical code might be all group members must make eye contact with the appointed group leader before they speak to any other member.

This exercise could be taken beyond communication to explore other aspects of closed groups. How do gangs operate in terms of language, body language, behaviour, values, fashion and so on? What is it like to try to gain entry to a closed group? What messages do closed groups give outsiders? Why do people need closed groups?

HANDICAP RACE [3]

Aim:

To make people realise what it is like to have certain limitations.

Resources needed:

Paper
Pens
Felt tip pens
Paint
Blindfold
Rope
Pendulum
Earplugs
Balloons
Birthday candles

Group size:

5-40 people

Time needed:

2 hours

Step by step description:

1. If necessary, divide the group into smaller groups of about five to eight persons.

2. Explain to the group that they should accomplish several tasks in one hour. Some tasks are group tasks and should be done by the whole group, none excluded. Others are permanent tasks, like a balloon that may never touch the ground but should all the time be kept in motion, or a pendulum that should remain swinging. Examples of group tasks may be:

• Paint a group portrait.

• The pendulum must keep on swinging.

• Pass through an obstacle run (climbing through a hoop, over a chair, under a table, etc).

• Make a song about the training.

• Pass a stick every ten seconds.

• By the end, everyone should have a clowns face (grease paint or masks).

• Ask participants to fold paper boats.

• Keep a birthday candle burning (one has to be lit with the other).

• The balloon may never touch the ground.

3. In addition to that, some people in the group become disabled. They are blindfolded, get earplugs, two persons get tied together, someone is only allowed to speak in another language other than the common language, someone is not allowed to say yes or no, someone is not allowed to speak at all, someone cannot use his right arm, etc. Explain again that all tasks should be performed in one hour, and that you are not allowed to obstruct other groups.

————

3. Courtesy of Katholieke Jeugdraad, Chirojeugd Vlaanderen, Belgium

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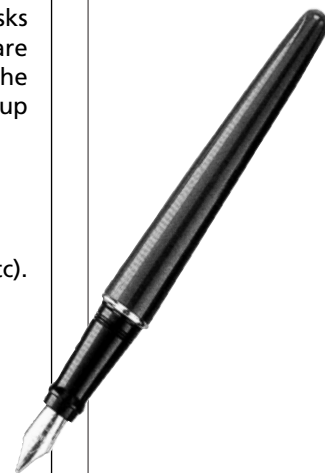
4. Despite all these handicaps, the group should still perform all tasks. There should be an observer with every group to see if all rules are obeyed and all tasks are performed by the whole group.

5. After one hour the groups present the results of their work and discuss how hard or easy it was to accomplish them.

Reflection and evaluation:

• How did it feel to be without any disabilities?

• What was it like to be disabled?

• Did you function as a group?

• Did the group support the ones who had certain disabilities?

• Did being disabled mean that these people also did not take initiative?

• In what other ways can you be disabled?

Source: Adaptation from "Underdog", Intercultureel Spelenboek, Centrum van Informatieve spelen, Leuven, Belgium, who adapted it from the original: "Het recht van de sterkste", Soort zoekt andere Soort, Katholieke Jeugdraad, Chirojeugd Vlaanderen 1992.

THE RIVER [4]

Aim:

To remind adults of the pressures that young people may be facing.

Resources needed:

A blindfold

Masking tape

Several pieces of newspaper Index cards

Newsprint

Markers

Group size:

6-30

Time needed:

20 to 25 minutes

Step by step description:

1. Prepare index cards with suggested character roles (as provided immediately below). Depending on the size of your group, use as many or few of the characters as appropriate. Be sure that one person gets the Young Person role.

2. Explain that too often, as adults, we forget what it is like to be a teenager with competing pressures and influences in our lives. This exercise is an effective way to understand some of the pressures that teens face. Set up the river, laying out two long pieces of masking tape to form it. Ball up several pieces of newspaper and scatter them throughout the river to form barriers. Be creative, calling them alligators, lava, white water, etc. Ask for volunteers for the role-play. Select up to ten volunteers and distribute an index card with a character role to each participant. Give volunteers about two minutes to think about their roles. Explain that there are many conflicting influences in the lives of youth, today more than ever. These influences may affect the decisions that young people make, including decisions about sexuality. Ask all of the volunteers to come up to the front of the room and stand on either side of the river. Ask the Young Person to come forward and blindfold him or her. Explain that the various characters must guide the Young Person down the river, helping her or him avoid the danger spots (alligators, lava, white water, etc.). Give the other characters about 10 minutes to guide the Young Person down the river. Conclude the activity using the discussion points.

Reflection and evaluation:

• What did you think of this exercise?

• Was it realistic?

• Why or why not?

• How did it feel to be the Young Person?

• Were you faced with similar pressures and influences when you were a teen? How do these influences affect a teen's ability to make decisions?

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4. Courtesy of Advocates for Youth, Washington, DC, *http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/lessonplans/river.htm*

8
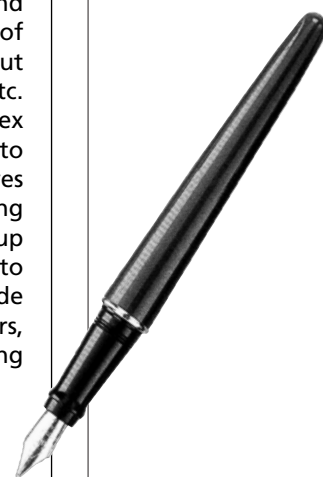
Index cards for The river

Young Person
Listen to all those who are trying to guide you down the river.

Parent/Foster Parent
You know best. Tell the Young Person what to do, keeping his or her best interests in mind. Use phrases like, "When I was your age …" Feel free to be creative in your role!

Grandparent
You know best. Tell the Young Person what to do, keeping his/her best interests in mind. Use phrases like, "When I was your age…" Feel free to be creative in your role!

Minister (religious leader)
You are the moral guide for the Young Person. Feel free to be creative in your role!

Friend
You are the good friend. You truly care about the Young Person. Feel free to be creative in your role!

Teacher
Stress the importance of school. Give guidance where you see fit. Feel free to be creative in your role!

Social worker
Give advice to the Young Person concerning issues such as drug use, sex, family, school, etc. Feel free to be creative in your role!

Media
Think of all the influences in the media (TV, movies, magazines, etc.) Some examples of media messages may include sex, violence, money, etc. Feel free to be creative in your role!

Friend
You are the bad friend. You are a bad influence on the Young Person. Feel free to be creative in your role!

Health care provider
Give advice to the Young Person regarding his or her health and general well being. Some examples: talking about smoking, sex, nutrition, weight. Feel free to be creative in your role!

DON'T LAUGH AT ME !

This activity can be used in a group setting, but works best in a one-on-one situation where young people have more time to think through the issues raised.

Aim :

To reflect on how it feels to be laughed at and build empathy for other young people who may be in that situation. It also encourages young people to consider strategies for coping with bullying and to identify who could offer them support.

Resources needed :

A copy of the DON'T LAUGH AT ME ! sheet for each young person.

Pens

Group size :

Any, but ideally one-on-one

Time needed :

1 hour

Step-by-step description :

1. Introduce the idea that laughter can be used to make people feel uncomfortable and stupid as well as a way of expressing how happy we are. Explain that this is the difference between laughing at someone and with them.

2. Hand out the worksheet and ask the young person to consider how they feel if someone laughs at them. This could be a gang at school, or a parent or sibling. Encourage them to share the experience and write down on the sheet how it made them feel.

3. Discuss what the young person could do if this happened again. For example, walk away and tell a trusted adult or friend. Spend time doing this and then ask the young person to use the storyboard on the sheet to show what they could do in each situation.

Reflection and evaluation :

Review what they have drawn. Is this a solution that is going to resolve the issue or cause more trouble ? Ask them to consider what they would do if the person being laughed at were someone they did not like ? Would their response be different ? Agree on safe people to approach for support if this should happen to them.

8

DON'T LAUGH AT ME !

How does it feel when people laugh at you ? ....

....

If I was being laughed at I could…

If someone else was being laughed at I could…

IMAGE THEATRE

(see also box on Boal below)

Aim:

In image theatre, small groups create still photographs or tableaux of real situations that a member or members of the group have experienced. It allows the exploration of feelings and possible resolutions in a safe environment.

Resources needed:

None

Group size:

Any

Time needed:

Variable

Step-by-step description:

1. Explain the background to Boal's work and how his form of theatre allows everyone a "voice" – which does not necessarily mean they have to speak.

2. Ask the group to think about an issue – for example, bullying, isolation, discrimination– which they feel strongly about and which they could illustrate with a specific example. Then ask someone to volunteer to use their incident or experience and become the sculptor, indicating how many people they would need to represent this. Ask for volunteers to become a living sculpture.

3. The sculptor moulds each person into a character in their scene. They can do this by demonstrating the pose and asking the person to copy. If participants are comfortable, the sculptor can adjust facial expressions and physically move limbs into the desired position. Ensure no one is likely to be injured!

4. When the picture is complete the sculptor asks the frozen characters to come to life one at a time and each one to speak their thoughts out loud. These are called 'thought tracks.

5. You can follow each discussion of the image by asking members of the group to sculpt a possible solution to the situation.

6. Let each person in the group have a turn at being the sculptor if they wish and time permits.

Reflection and evaluation:

Ask each tableau member how it felt to be moulded into a character or into portraying a specific emotion. Ask the observers what they felt about the representation. Was it realistic? If solutions were followed up, were they realistic? Finally, ask the original volunteer whose issue had been explored what they had gained or learned from creating the tableau. Work of this nature, depending on the subject matter, can arouse strong emotions and so must be treated with great sensitivity. Always ensure the session allows sufficient time for a wind down activity to restore equilibrium.

8

Some notes on Augusto Boal and the Theatre of the Oppressed

"While some people make theatre, we all are theatre."

Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal developed the Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) during the 1950s and 1960s. He wanted to transform the monologue of traditional performance into a dialogue between audience and stage. Boal experimented with many kinds of interactive theatre, believing that dialogue is the common, healthy dynamic between all humans, that all human beings desire and are capable of dialogue, and that when a dialogue becomes a monologue, oppression ensues.

Inevitably, when someone shows us an image or tells us a story about their experiences, we may invest that story and those characters with the colours of our own experiences.

Image theatre uses the human body as a tool of representing feelings, ideas, and relationships. Through sculpting others or using your own body to demonstrate a body position, you can create anything from one-person to large-group image sculptures that reflect the sculptor's impression of a situation or oppression. You can use image theatre with groups who are familiar and confident with dramatic techniques and those who have little or no experience. No one has to learn lines or perform, but the technique often helps people explore their own feelings and experiences in a non-threatening environment. It can also be a lot of fun !

For example, with a group of young people you might start to explore the theme of social exclusion. Two volunteers are invited to create a frozen picture or tableau, each holding a position in relation to one another - for example one could be a confident member of society, the other a person who perceives themselves or is perceived by the others as an outsider. Other group members can contribute additional images to add to the picture - for example bystanders, passers-by, or friends of either person in the picture – by inserting themselves into the tableau. The group leader taps each person in the tableau one by one on the shoulder and asks them to speak one or more of their thoughts aloud. It can be very illuminating to release members of the tableau individually for a short while and allow them to examine the picture created before they take up their place again.

This exercise can be developed in a number of ways. The original tableau could be held in front of the rest of the group, who are asked to decide on a location for the encounter, and who each person could be – name, age, occupation/role and so on. They are asked to think of other situations that may have led up to this particular encounter. When they have thought of enough different situations, they are divided into groups, each with the task of creating a tableau for one of the scenes, in order, leading up to the final tableau.

Following this, the whole group returns to the original tableau. Those not involved in the tableau are asked to move the situation towards some kind of resolution. They do this by replacing any character by tapping that person on the shoulder, taking their place and assuming a new position, perhaps speaking a new thought or spoken line.

These exercises generate a great deal of discussion, which will need to be sensitively handled by the leader.

Another feature of Boal's work is Forum Theatre. In essence, this is a form of dramatic exploration that, in a subversive way, provokes understanding and learning, devising

possible coping strategies to assist a group or individual in investigating possible solutions to particular oppressions or challenges. As Boal describes it, Forum lets people "explore other personas, other ways which give me more power in a situation. It is to learn another kind of behaviour if it will help me out of my oppression." Forum does not compel, it does not say this is what you must do, but it does say maybe you could try this or that, but it's up to you to decide in the end.

Forum scenes are usually presented as short scenes, which may well involve bringing to life the frozen images or tableaux already explored. Initially, the audience watches the whole scene, facilitated by a joker. The joker then tells the audience that the sketch will be performed again except this time if anyone in the audience wants to suggest a different action or change to the script to bring about a better solution they must shout "STOP!" The audience member can then exchange places with the actor and try out their idea themselves or tell them how they want the scene to change. If the audience is reluctant to halt the action, the joker may do so and then invite the audience to suggest possible solutions.

Forum theatre not only empowers audiences and makes them part of the action, but it also illustrates that there are always alternatives and choices to make, which can change outcomes.

Further reading:

Boal, Augusto. *The Theatre of the Oppressed*. New York: Urizen Books, 1979. Republished by Routledge Press in New York/London, 1982.

Boal, Augusto, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. New York: Routledge Press, 1992.

Boal, Augusto, *The Rainbow of Desire. Selected Articles by Augusto Boal*, New York: Routledge Press, 1995.

8

CHANGING THE OUTCOME

Aim:

Tableau work in small groups focusing on changing the position of the powerless in a given situation, aiming to explore the experience of feeling powerless, to express it visually and to try out alternatives and see their effect. This approach is based loosely on the work of Augusto Boal (see explanatory note on Boal above).

Resources needed:

None

Group size:

Variable, in groups of three

Time needed:

50 minutes

Step-by-step description:

1. Ask participants to think individually of one incident in which they felt powerless and unable to do anything about it. It could be a situation that they tried but failed to change, or one in which they would have liked to achieve a different outcome. (5 minutes)

2. In groups of three, each person in turn silently sculpts the rest of the group into three tableaux that depict the beginning, the middle and the end of the situation. It is necessary to tell people who they are only if they are confused about what they are representing in the tableau. (10 minutes)

3. When all the groups have produced the set of tableaux for each of their members, they choose one of the stories to work on. Run the sequence of tableaux again for the chosen story, this time incorporating one spoken thought for each of the characters – that is, one thought in each tableau. The thoughts should be spoken in a predetermined order.

4. Working on the same story, extend the tableaux and thoughts into three short scenes – no more that a minute for each one. Each person turns his or her thought into a sentence, combining it with some appropriate physical action. (5 minutes)

5. Come back to the whole group and see the work from each subgroup. Choose one of the subgroups to use in a demonstration. Take a tableau that has an easily identifiable oppressor, and an oppressed person with whom we can feel sympathy. Ask the rest of the participants to suggest how the powerless person might act to alter the situation. Try out these suggestions, with the participant who has the new idea going into the piece and playing the person whose actions they want to change. Continue this process with each of the stories, either as one group or with two of the groups joining together and serving as an audience for each other. (15 minutes)

Reflection and evaluation:

What is the effect of different actions on the outcome? How does the exercise relate to the lives of participants? What can they take away with them from this work? (5 minutes)

Some further tips:

It is important that the group works on creative alternatives to the powerless response, rather than merely criticising it. A group will often be able to see solutions that the individual does not see.

POSTCARDS

A practical exercise in small groups to explore issues of social injustice and action.

Aim :

This exercise aims to explore, through visual imagery, specific examples of social injustice and to explore possible and appropriate action.

Resources needed :

Postcards, from overleaf examples given or your own devising

Group size :

Various small groups of three to five

Time needed :

40 minutes

Step-by-step description :

1. Give each small group member a postcard. You can copy and cut the examples below, or you can devise your own. (See the notes.) Ask each group to come up with a series of tableaux representing the card's message. With each image they should create a sound-effect that they feel sums up its core emotion or feeling. (15 minutes)

2. The groups share their tableaux. The audience for each tableau give accounts of what they think might be written on the card. Only then do the demonstrating group read out their card. (15 minutes)

3. Some groups might feel that they did not quite capture the essence of their card, or that their tableau was misinterpreted. These groups could go back and, taking on board suggestions from the audience, try to improve or change their work. (Extra time needs to be allocated for this.)

Reflection and evaluation :

How do the groups feel about the issues raised by the cards ? What action would they take if they were in similar circumstances ? Are there similar things happening today ? If so, what action are people taking ? If participants were to sum up each card in one sentence, what would it be ? (10 minutes)

Some further tips :

It is important for the facilitator to choose cards that cover a subject matter appropriate to the group. The group could develop this work and produce their own postcards or posters.
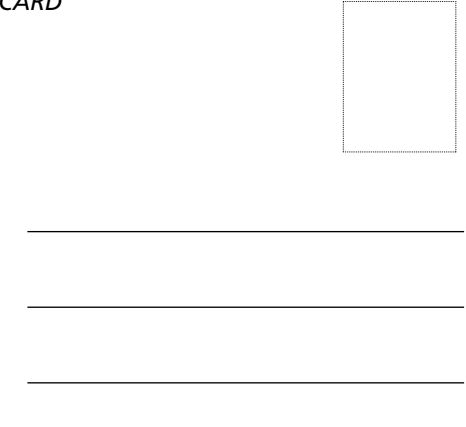
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Postcards : three examples

POSTCARD

When I give food to the poor,
they call me a saint.

When I ask why the poor have no
food, they call me a communist.

– Dom Helder Camara, from Brazil
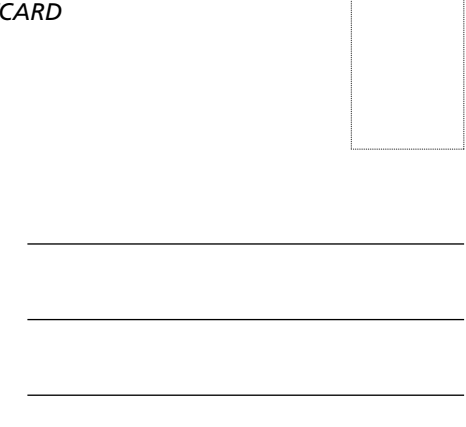
POSTCARD

We are guilty of many errors and
many faults, but our worst crime
is abandoning the children,
neglecting the fountain of life.

Many of the things we need can wait.
The children cannot. Right now is the
time their bones are being formed,
their blood is being made and their
senses are being developed. To them
we cannot answer 'Tomorrow'.
Their name is 'Today'.
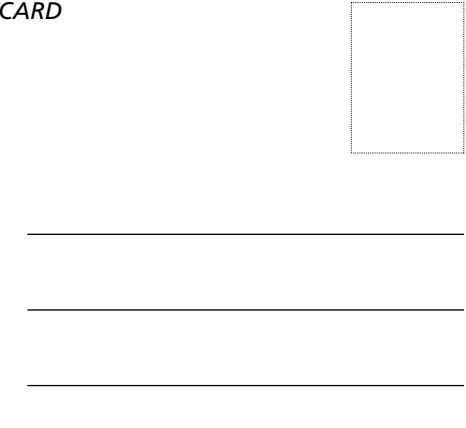
– Gabriela Mistral,
   Nobel Prize-winning poet from Chile

POSTCARD

First they came for the Jews and I did
not speak out – because I was not a
Jew. Then they came for the commu-
nists and I did not speak out – because
I was not a communist. Then they
came for the trade unionists and I did
not speak out – because I was not a
trade unionist. Then they came for me
– and there was no one left to speak
out for me.

– Martin Niemöller, victim of the Nazis

8.3 Building trust and self-esteem

Note

The following games are about building group trust, awareness, co-operation and confidence, and demand extreme concentration. They should be introduced and facilitated with the utmost care, so that participants are fully aware of what they are about. The safety of participants must be paramount.

WIND IN THE WILLOWS

Step-by-step description:

1. Gather round in a tight circle. One person volunteers to go in the middle. They close their eyes and allow themselves to fall, keeping their body straight, and the others catch and support them. (Supporters hold hands up in front and stand with one leg slightly in front of the other with knees bent.)

2. Initially the group should have their hands close to the middle so that the person need not feel they are falling far. As confidence grows, the people in the group can move away a little.

3. Take turns and give everyone the opportunity to have a go.

4. Take care that there are plenty of people able to hold someone up, especially if there is a heavier person in the middle.

RUNNING BLINDFOLD

Step-by-step description:

1. Stand all the participants at one end of the room.

2. One person volunteers to be blindfold and stands at the other end of the room. They run to the end where the group are standing.

3. The group must be prepared to catch the running person gently.

4. They should stand in a half-moon shape, and shout stop before the runner reaches the end of the room, and begin to slow down.

5. Encourage people to run as fast as they can until the group shouts "stop", and to trust that the group will really make sure they don't hit the wall.

8

PUT YOURSELF IN OUR HANDS

Aim:

This works well with small groups of young people who you have worked with before. It is a good way to start a session that will look at positive relationships, friendships and building trust. The aim is to allow members of the group to experience being the trusted and the trusting. It encourages them to consider how their own actions affects others and how that feels in reverse.

Resources needed:

Good knowledge of the area so you can identify a space that provides a kind of obstacle course for the young people to navigate

A scarf to use as a blindfold

Group size:

Up to twelve

Time needed:

Variable, depending on numbers taking part

Step-by-step description:

1. Ask the young people to nominate a volunteer: it can be good to lead this part if you feel that someone may be pressured into doing it. Explain to them that the point of this activity is to encourage them to trust each other and to take responsibility for their own actions and others' safety. Tell them that if they feel really uncomfortable at any point in the exercise they should say, and the group will stop.

2. Ask the volunteer to step forward and blindfold them. Make sure that they cannot see and ask them to describe how that feels.

3. Lead the young person, with their eyes still covered, to the area that you have identified for the session. Choose another member of the group to lead the volunteer. Explain that the role of the rest of the group is to support the young person who has the blindfold on. Facilitate as the young people negotiate the course that you have chosen. Ask them to reflect on their feelings, particularly if the young person leading loses concentration or is careless in their directions. Then reverse the process.

4. Alternatively you could ask the group to work in pairs and go through the exercise, taking it in turns to lead and be led.

Reflection and evaluation:

Ask the group for feedback when everyone has had a turn. How did it feel to be dependent on someone? Was it better to be led or the leader? Did it make a difference if you could choose your partner? How did it feel if they gave you bad information? This can take as long as you want depending on the area that you choose for navigation.

GET KNOTTED!

Aim:

This team game is a good way to start a session around trust and friendship and encourages young people to start to work together to achieve a group goal.

Resources needed:

–

Group size:

Eight or more

Time needed:

20 minutes

Step-by-step description:

1. Ask the group to make a circle, standing next to each other but not so close that they are touching.

2. Tell the young people to join hands with two other members of the circle, but not with anyone standing next to them. This is a lot harder than it seems!

3. Allow about 10 minutes for everyone to be included, making sure that no one is cheating and everyone is holding onto two other people.

4. When everybody is in place ask the group to stop, hold the pose and look about them to see what shape the group has formed.

5. Then set the young people the task of untying themselves and reforming the circle – without breaking hands!

6. You should end up with the whole group back in a circle, though not necessarily all facing the same way!

Reflection and evaluation:

Although this is intended as a warm-up, it may be useful to ask the group how they found the experience. Was it comfortable? How did they feel about getting so close to other people? You might use this as an introduction to a discussion about the issue of personal space and cultural variations.

8

SELF-ESTEEM – THE IMPORTANCE OF FEELING VALUED

Aim :

It is important for young people's self-esteem to feel valued by the people they care about, and by themselves. A lack of this can lead to frustration and aggressive behaviour. This workshop is devised as an introduction to building self esteem.

Resources needed :

Copies of the worksheet FEELING VALUED

Pens

Group size :

Variable

Time needed :

Minimum 1 hour

Step-by-step description :

1. Start by introducing the idea of self-esteem and feeling good about yourself. Hand out the worksheet and some pens. If you know that the young person finds reading and writing difficult, read the sheet out and use pictures or write their answers down yourself.

2. Support the young people as they think about the issues raised on the sheet. If they say they cannot think of anything to write, suggest they think about the last time that someone made them feel happy or loved. You can then ask prompt questions to try and expand and reflect on this.

Reflection and evaluation :

Once they have completed the sheet, review what has been written with the young person. In particular ask them to reflect on what they have written in the final section. For example, the young person may write that they feel valued when their mum praises them and a way to achieve this could be "to walk away when my brother starts a fight rather than hitting him which upsets my mum". Devise an action plan together to achieve some of these goals. Review agreements made regularly to celebrate achievements and set new goals.

8

FEELING VALUED worksheet

| THIS IS ME | Last time I left valued was when

....

It made me feel

.... |

People who make me feel good about myself are

....

because ....

I show them I am happy by ....

Things that make me feel good about myself are

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

Things I can do to help achieve this are

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

EVERYBODY HAS SKILLS – MEASURING PERSONALITIES

Aim:

An exercise to be used twice as part of a longer training course, once in the beginning, once in the end. The aim of the exercise is to make people aware of their own skills, and also of what they are not able to do (yet).

Resources needed:

Long strip of paper (5-10 metres) with a scale on it from 1 to 10

Group size:

6-30

Time needed:

Twice 20 minutes plus evaluation time (especially after the second run)

Step by step description:

1. Explain to the participants that the scale is to show your personal abilities and that all participants are supposed to judge honestly for themselves if they still need to gain these abilities (1) or if they think they already have them perfectly in order (10). Also, explain that the exercise will be repeated at the end of the training to see if there are any changes, either because people acquired skills or discovered they had skills they did not know about yet. Also make clear no one will be judged on where they are going to stand, that the exercise is mainly for them.

2. Put a statement to the group and ask people to take places; if they agree completely with it, they should go to 10, if they feel that it does not apply to them at all, to 1. Or they can find a place in between.

3. Ask a few people in the group to explain their positions, but do not force anyone to say something if they do not feel like it.

4. Repeat the exercise with several other statements

5. At the end of the training, repeat the method and ask people if anything has changed for them since the first time.

Examples of statements:

- I am very good at co-operating
- I am a natural leader
- I am good at giving feedback
- I am good at receiving feedback
- I am good at helping people
- I am innovative and always coming up with new ideas
- I have lots of patience
- I am good at talking in front of a group
- I am good at planning
- I have a good sense of humour

Reflection and evaluation:

Were there many changes in your positions the second time in comparison to the first time?

Did you gain certain qualities/skills?

Were there subjects on which you underestimated yourself?

Were there subjects on which you overestimated yourself?

Did you learn more about yourself or others?

Was it difficult for you to step down a bit (if you had to)?

8.4 Conflict management

LETTER TO AN ALIEN: CONFLICT IS…?

Aim:

A large group exercise exploring the meaning of the word conflict, aiming to clarify what we mean by conflict; to discover the range of responses within the group and to work towards a group definition of conflict.

Resources needed:

Large sheet of paper

Pens

Group size:

12-20

Time needed:

35 minutes

Step-by-step description:

1. Divide a large sheet of paper into columns, each headed by a letter of the alphabet. For the purposes of this exercise choose letters A to H.

2. Ask participants individually to brainstorm conflict words. Each should try to provide at least one word for each letter (for example: A-anger, B-broken). A nominated scribe can write down the words as they are called out, or each individual participant can simply add them to the chart. There is no debate or questioning at this stage about why certain words have been chosen. (5 minutes)

3. Once the chart is completed (it is good to have a strict time limit), people can ask each other questions about their chosen words – what certain words mean, how they are connected with conflict, and so forth. But no judgments are to be passed. (3 minutes)

4. Participants split into pairs or groups of three and select a letter from the chart. (It is best if each pair or group has a different letter). They then draft a short communication to an extraterrestrial alien who has never heard of conflict, explaining what it is. Each group should use the words listed under their letter. The communications are then shared with the whole group. (10 minutes)

5. Mixing participants into new groups of four or five, ask each group to create a brief definition of conflict in the form of a slogan. These could all start with "Conflict is…". Then let each group try to think of an imaginative way to present their definition. They could use tableaux, involving everyone in the presentation. Extra time will be needed if a presentation is to be prepared. (10 minutes)

Reflection and evaluation:

Back in the whole group, participants are invited to reflect individually on their experience of interaction between group members. How did the group draft its letter to the alien? How did the group agree upon its definition? Were they surprised by anyone else's definition? Was it easy to get to a slogan on conflict? There are other questions that might be asked. Have they learnt anything about conflict from this exercise? Are they clearer now? Do they feel that any crucial aspect has been missed out? (7 minutes)

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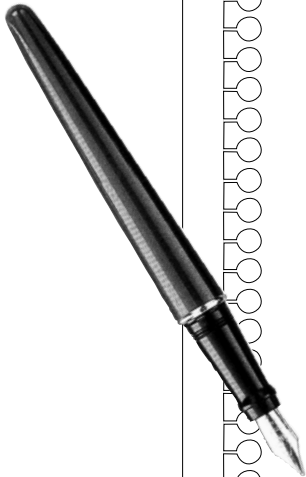
NAME THAT FEELING !

Aim :

This activity encourages young people to identify how they feel in different circumstances and encourages them to consider solutions that will not lead to tension and aggression. It is designed to support young people in defining their feelings and analyse problems and potential ways of dealing with them.

Resources needed :

A copy of the NAME THAT FEELING ! sheet, folded into a concertina so that only the first scenario shows.

Group size :

Any

Time needed :

1 hour

Step-by-step description

1. Begin the session by talking about the wide range of emotions that we all feel. Introduce the idea that sometimes these feelings either get in the way of how we deal with a situation or are not identified correctly. This can cause the problems to remain unresolved or become larger, and we feel less able to deal with them. Ask the young people to think about a time when a problem got worse because of something they did or did not do. What feelings do they remember ?

2. Hand out the NAME THAT FEELING ! sheet, folded up so that only the first scenario can be seen.

3. Ask the group to read the situation to themselves and consider the questions posed at the top of the sheet. If you know this will be a difficult task for your group, read each scenario to the young people.

Reflection and evaluation :

Facilitate a group feedback for each of the situations. Does the group see the problem in the same way ? Do they agree which feelings might arise ? How easy is it to think through some ideas for solutions ?

Encourage the group to think about some examples of their own to share and work through together.

NAME THAT FEELING !

For each of the situations below think about the following :

What is the problem ?

What is the feeling ?

What can be done ?

1. Your friend always has more pocket money than you do. It is not fair ! Your mum is so mean ; she says you should do some jobs around the house if you want more cash !

2. Your dad has left home to live with his new girlfriend. He said you could stay at weekends but now his girlfriend is saying that there is not enough room for you.

3. Someone at school is calling your brother names in the playground and threatening to break his electric wheelchair.

4. Your mate won an art competition at school. You are really fed up and think it must have been a fix. You know yours was better !

5. Your accent is different to the rest of your class. One girl keeps teasing you about this and making everyone laugh at you. When you try and answer back she just mimics you and everyone laughs more.

6. The class is kept in after school for something you did. Now everyone is telling you to own up or else.

ANGER AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Aim:

The following session is an introduction to anger management and coping with aggressive situations. This is a complex and specialised area, but this training gives a basic understanding and guidelines on how to work with young people in potentially difficult situations.

Resources needed:

Two A4 sheets of card pinned to opposite sides of the wall marked ANGRY and NOT ANGRY

Flipchart paper

Marker pens

Copies of anger role-play cards

Group size:

8-12

Time needed:

3 hours 10 minutes

Step-by-step description:

That makes me so angry! (20 minutes)

1. This warm-up game opens the training session by recognising that anger is an emotion that we all feel. Everyone gets angry if a situation triggers a certain feeling or thought. This can be a direct response to what has happened or a reaction due to a previous experience. The volunteers will begin to reflect on the difference in personal triggers by reviewing the answers shared within the group.

2. Explain to the group that you are going to read out a series of situations that may or may not make them feel angry. Introduce the two sides of the room with the ANGRY and NOT ANGRY cards and ask the volunteers to move towards the area that most represents their feelings.

3. Encourage the group to be honest with their reactions. Reinforce the point that anger is an emotion as valid as any other, and that we all have a right to feel anger at certain situations.

4. As the activity progresses, review the process with the group. Why does a certain situation provoke anger? Are there commonalties? For example, do the majority of the group become angered by rudeness or disrespect?

Recognising the signs (30 minutes)

1. Divide the group into two groups and ask for a note taker and spokesperson to be nominated from each group.

2. The task is for each group to list ten physical symptoms that are recognisable as the body's expression of anger.

Prompt points:
- Red face
- Sweaty palms
- Pointing finger
- Invading personal space
- Shouting/swearing

3. Invite the two groups to join together and each spokesperson to share the points that have been made within their group. Encourage the group to discuss the symptoms listed. How easy was it to contribute to the list? Are these feelings familiar to the group? Ask the group to consider how easy it will be to recognise the signs of anger in young people.

Resolving conflict (20 minutes)

1. Introduce the idea that to resolve conflict in a potentially difficult situation you need to:

- *Recognise the signs* – step back from the young person and make sure you are not invading their space. Try and position yourself nearer the door and do not allow yourself to be blocked in.

- *Listen* – listen carefully to what is being said and try not to butt in with your own opinions or recollections.

- *Reflect* – reflect back what the young person is saying to show that you understand. Clarify facts and ask additional questions to diffuse anger and encourage the young person to explain what is wrong.

- *Resolve* – Agree to a specific solution or action with the young person. It may not change the situation much but it will make them feel that something is being done. It also helps the young person to take control of the situation and the solution themselves.

If these fail you need to move yourself to the safest place.

Make sure that your volunteers are quite clear that you are not asking them to place themselves in danger or physically tackle aggressive young people. This session is about recognising the signs and trying to diffuse the situation and, if all else fails, getting away. Additionally you can stress that as volunteers they have not given up their human rights to be safe and protected – if they are in a situation that is escalating out of control make sure people know the number for the local police and the project manager on duty.

In practice (1 hour 30 minutes)

1. Introduce the idea of working through potentially difficult situations using role-play. The aim of this is to build confidence and have an opportunity to put into practice new skills in a safe environment.

2. Divide your volunteers into groups of four. Two will be volunteer youth workers and two will become young people they are trying to engage. Hand out a similar paragraph to each group.

3. Allow 30 minutes for the role-play to develop, encouraging the young people to give the volunteer youth workers as hard a time as possible!

4. When you can see that they have nearly exhausted the role-play, ask the volunteers to come out of character and in the smaller groups work through the following questions.
    - What is making the young person angry?
    - Is it direct or indirect anger?
    - Is it possible to resolve the conflict?
    - Write up an action plan to diffuse the situation.

5. Finally ask the group to come together again to share their action plans. Question and support the groups in challenging each other.

Prompt points:
- How easy was it to maintain your position?
- Could you empathise with the young person's point of view?
- How frustrated did you feel?
- Did you manage to agree on a conflict resolution?

Staying safe (30 minutes)

1. Remaining in the large group, devise safety guidelines for managing angry/aggressive behaviour.

Prompt points:
- Listen to what the young person is saying.
- Look carefully at body language.
- Assess danger to yourself and others using the project.
- Act – resolve the situation or move away.

8

THAT MAKES ME SO ANGRY !

Someone jumps in front of you in a queue.	You lose your house keys.
You are made late by someone delaying you.	Somebody is rude about your family.
You overhear someone criticising your work.	The phone keeps ringing but when you answer no one is there.
You are stuck in a traffic jam and you need to get home.	A group of teenagers block your path in town.
You are short-changed in a shop.	A friend keeps borrowing money and never returning it.
You see someone being unkind to an animal in the street.	You accidentally bump into someone in a crowded room, apologise, and they swear at you.
You express your opinion and someone laughs and tells you not to be ridiculous.	You read a newspaper article about an assault on a young child.
The football team you support loses.	You are accused of something you have not done.
You get caught out telling a lie.	Something you buy is faulty, you return to the shop but they won't give you your money back.
You do not win the lottery by one number !	You are asleep and are woken by loud music from next door.
Someone keeps asking you to do something you do not want to do.	You go to make a call and realise your mobile is out of credit.

ANGER ROLE PLAY CARDS

Samantha has been barred from your club for two weeks for starting a fight. Tonight she turns up and demands that you let her in.

Zak and Isaac are playing pool. Zak pots the black by mistake and starts shouting at Isaac for nudging him.

Cerys is crying in the toilet. Tanya has started going out with her ex-boyfriend. When you ask if she is okay Cerys tells you to **** off and mind your own business !

You discover Jake outside on the steps of the project drinking cans of lager. You remind him that the club rules are no alcohol and ask him to move off the premises. He replies shouting : "It's a free country isn't it ? I can sit here if I like !"

8.5 Setting up partnerships

PAPER TOWERS

Aim:

This initial team building activity encourages partnership working and teamwork.

Resources needed:

Newspapers

Sticky tape

A watch

Group size:

Various

Time needed:

15 minutes for the activity

10 minutes reflection

Step-by-step description:

1. Divide the young people into groups of no more than six.

2. Explain that you want them to plan and then construct paper towers. The object is to build the highest tower without it collapsing.

3. Explain that each member of the group should contribute to the planning stage and that no building can take place without the whole group's approval.

4. Hand out newspaper and sticky tape.

5. Give the groups 15 minutes to build their towers.

6. Stand well back!

Reflection and evaluation:

At the end of the 15 minutes, invite the groups one at a time to consider how well they co-operated, whether anybody was excluded from the exercise (and why and how they felt about it) and how they achieved consensus.

When all the groups have responded, encourage the whole group to examine all the towers. Ask the group with the highest tower to explain how they achieved this.

If time allows, get the whole group to reflect on what they might have achieved single-handedly.

*BUILDING BRIDGES ***

Aim:

This is an exercise in which participants experience how it is to co-operate and negotiate, and to see for themselves which role they take in these processes. Next to that, they learn what it is like to communicate indirectly with another group without knowing much about them.

Resources:

All sorts of waste material
Cardboard
Glue
Scissors
Rulers

Group size:

10-20

Time:

2-3 hours

Step by step:

1. Divide the group in two. Explain that they are the inhabitants of towns that are separated by a huge river. After years of discussion, you have decided to build a bridge to cross the river; one town will make one half, the other the second half. There is a problem however, since it is almost impossible to communicate with each other. Only one person will be able to speak with one person from the other group to discuss the design of the bridge on two intervals. This spokesperson will be elected within the group.

2. Each group then goes to a different room, from which it is impossible to see or hear the other group. In the room they will find all sorts of materials to build the bridge. The only thing they know about the design of the bridge is that it should cross the river, which – in scale – is one meter, and that the bridge, once connected, should support a toy car. They will have to work out with the other group how wide or high the bridge should be. The group then has half an hour to elect their spokesperson, divide tasks and get started. After half an hour, the spokesperson can speak in private to the spokesperson of the other group for ten minutes. They are only allowed to speak, not exchange designs. After that, the group again has half an hour to hear the report of the spokesperson, work on the bridge and adjust the design if necessary. Then, there is again ten minutes time for deliberation between the spokespersons in another room. After that, the last half hour of work starts.

3. Then, the two groups are supposed to get together again and present their part of the bridge, and the bridge is tested.

4. After the test with the toy car, the groups discuss co-operation, both within their group and with the other group, and how tasks were divided.

Reflection and evaluation:

- How did you organise the work?
- Did everyone have a say in it?
- How was the negotiator elected?
- Was everybody involved in the work?
- How did the negotiations work out?
- Did you stick to the original design or was it changed? Why?
- Were there any conflicts within the group?
- Did you notice any problems in communicating with the other group?
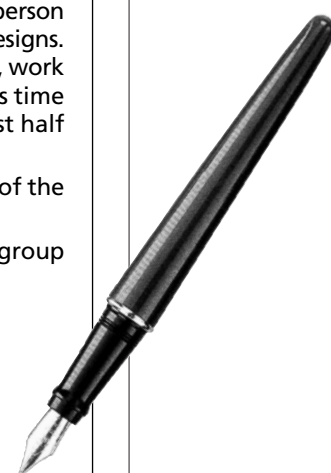
* *Source: Adapted from "The Bridge", Intercultureel Spelenboek, Centrum Informatieve Spelen, Leuven, Belgium*

8

WHO IS THERE?

Aim:

An exercise in generating dynamics of self-organisation for a group at the beginning of a training session. The purpose is to empower the participants to picture the diversity of people working with youth in general and young people with fewer opportunities in a precise area. Thanks to the general picture gathered by the end, the participants should be able to detect opportunities for joint work or partnerships. This exercise introduces the concept of setting up partnerships. It may be used as an introduction for further work on how to set up partnerships and the reasons for doing it.

Resources needed:

Be in or next to a city
Paper and pens or, alternatively, a tape recorder
City maps and phone cards or access to phones

Group size:

10-40

Time needed:

Approximately 5 hours (1 hour the first day / 4 hours the following day)

This exercise should be implemented in a city (if the place where the training takes place is not located inside or near a city then count additional time for transport).

Step by step description:

1. First, the facilitator explains that the workshop is the starting point for understanding the diversity of people working within the range of youth in an urban area. Active enquiries shall be done and need to be prepared in small groups. A special focus should be put on persons working with young people with fewer opportunities.

2. Set up small groups of 5 to 8 people. Provide maps of the city and assign each small group a geographical area.

3. Allow 1 hour on the first day the to prepare the investigation to take place on the following day. Ensure the participants have access to phones.

4. The next day allow 3 hours for completing the investigation and preparing the feedback in plenary (participants should not focus too much on the feedback supports but rather on how they present the results of their enquiries quickly and efficiently).

5. Allow 1 hour for the feedback in plenary. Make the group insist on the concrete added value that the different persons/structures involved in youth work in the city may bring to a further partnership for fighting the exclusion of young people.

Reflection and evaluation:

Group preparation:

- How did we cope with self-organisation?
- Did we achieve our goal?

  Plenary:

- Are the people you have interviewed aware of what the others are doing? What kind of relationships do they have?
- Are there any coordination structures, platforms, networks?
- Do you think that you could as youth workers or youth organisations make such surveys for a city hall?
- How would you go about setting up other partnerships?

Some further tips:

Using a role-playing game: the facilitators are the mayor and the city hall team in charge of social affairs, education and youth.

- Launching the exercise: inform the participants that "they have been mandated, as youth workers, by the city hall to realise a survey on who is working in the field of youth in general and especially with young people with fewer opportunities. This is aimed at having an overview of the possible partnerships to set up a policy for contributing to social inclusion of youth."

- Feedback in plenary: the role-playing game continues. "The mayor and the city hall team receive the different groups together. Each small group presents alternatively the results to the local authorities. The representative of the mayor and the assessors may sometimes play politicians insisting on targeted political objectives or asking about how a small group would raise money for the purposes of establishing a policy for contributing to the social inclusion of youth."

When using this role game it is important to stress afterwards the dangers of not having clear objectives and ethos when being asked to be part of a partnership (the survey for the city hall) and the risks when dealing with politicians. This may lead to a discussion on what a partnership is and how to build it.

8

8.6 Peer education

PEER EDUCATION – SCHOOL OF FREEDOM

Aim:

An exercise for a group of people who have been involved in workshops before and are therefore more or less experienced participants. The purpose of the exercise is to turn consumers of workshops into active facilitators of workshops, and to give them the self-confidence needed for facilitation.

Resources needed:

Two sheets of paper per person; one with the heading "What I've got to offer", and one with "What I'd like to learn"

Pens

Felt pens

Group size:

10-40

Time needed:

Approximately 3 hours

This workshop is a starting point for many workshops, given by the participants themselves, and so, in fact, it could lead to one or more working days.

Step by step:

1. First, the facilitator explains that this workshop is the start of a whole range of new workshops, to be given by the participants themselves. He will explain that, in order to give a good workshop, it is not enough to have a good topic, but it should also be presented and run in an involving and interesting way. Also, he stresses that everyone has certain qualities, hobbies or talents people might not know about, and that there might be more people interested in this than they might first think.

2. Then, the participants are given a crash course in workshop facilitating. This should be a very brief explanation, mainly mentioning the build up of a workshop using lively presentation, different methods (theoretical and practical), graphical aids (pictures, cartoons) and actively involving the participants through discussion, role-play or theatre. If possible, plan an ideal workshop before the School of Freedom exercise and let participants take notes on the structure, methods used and presentation techniques.

3. Hand out the sheets and explain their purpose. On the one saying "What I've got to offer", participants can fill in what talents, hobbies or skills they have. Point out that this can be everything, from street dance to writing song texts, from civil disobedience to making postcards and from basic Chinese to Reiki. On the second paper, "What I'd like to learn", participants can mention what they would like to know more about. Also these can range from learning to bake bread to knowing more about religions and from playing football to writing slogans for banners. All participants are given 15 minutes to write down one to three subjects on both papers. In the meantime, the facilitator also fills in the forms and prepares two signs, supply and demand, and puts these on the wall. When people are finished filling in the sheets, they can put them on the wall under the respective signs.

4. Everyone is given 15 minutes to take a closer look at what the others have to offer and what is being asked for. At the offer side, people can put a cross or a dot with a felt tip pen if they would like to be part of that workshop. At the demand side, people who feel they could give a requested workshop, can write their name next to it. Those who are also interested in that subject can simply put a cross or a dot next to it again.

5. The group than takes a look at which subjects are most popular and elects a number of them, depending on the time available. In general, most workshops will take two to three hours, but this can be adapted. Ideally, everyone in the group should have one workshop to prepare, though sometimes this will be practically impossible.

6. The group is then divided into smaller preparation groups of four to seven people. This can be done at random; being part of the preparation group does not mean you have to facilitate or even attend the workshop. However, there should be at least one person whose subject was elected present in every group. It should be clear to the groups how many people approximately the workshop will be given to, and how much time is available.

7. The preparation groups take a closer look at the elected subjects in their group. What could be good ways to present the subject? What energizers, role playing, discussion techniques could be used? How much time should be used for theory and how much for the practical part? How to involve all people attending the workshop? Within the group, they create structure and content for the workshop(s) selected. The facilitator regularly looks in on the groups and advises and helps out.

8. All groups reunite again and present the structure and content for the workshops they have developed.

9. With a small group of volunteers, the workshops are scheduled into the larger schedule. Different workshops can be given simultaneously.

Reflection and evaluation:

Individual part:

• Was it hard to think of subjects you know something about or wanted to know something about?

• Were you surprised by the reactions of others, both their offer and demand and their reactions to yours?

Preparation groups:

• Was it hard to make up the structure for the workshops in the preparation groups?

• Did everyone participate? If not, why?

• Were there conflicts on how the workshop should be given?

Plenary:

• What did you think of the presentation of the structure of the workshops by the other groups?

• How do you rate your group presentation?

• Do you feel confident enough with this structure to give a workshop?

Some further tips:

This exercise has been used on international summer camps to serve a double purpose; on the one hand, to make the camp more attractive to everyone by democratically deciding what workshops will be offered, and on the other hand involving everyone in the organisation of the camp by giving them responsibility for a workshop. Also, the workshop is a good method to discover what knowledge is present within the group and realise that sometimes it is not necessary to hire professionals to do the job for you.

This method can be used as a practice for peer education on more serious topics. Once young people have learned that it can be fun to stand in front of a group and think of different ways to pass on knowledge of one's favourite topics, trivial as it may seem, they will gain self-confidence from it.

In the summer camp setting, it was possible to have three-hour workshops prepared and given, with two or more workshops given simultaneously giving people a chance to choose which they would like to go to. When there is less time available, it could also be adapted to half an hour or one hour workshops, possibly even facilitated by two or three people who are interested in or have knowledge about the same topic. Also for those who still feel awkward with the idea of having to lead a workshop on their own, this might be a good alternative.

More info: loesje@loesje.org

8

SNAKES AND LADDERS

Aim:

A game to explore obstacles and catalysts one might encounter when starting a project, for example, on peer education, but it is also useful for an exchange or other activities. This exercise could also be used as a follow-up exercise after the group has had a discussion or more theoretical workshop on starting a project, or as an evaluation exercise.

Resources needed:

Pens

Felt tip pens

A big sheet of paper

Paper

Markers

Coloured cardboard

Dice

Glue

Group size:

Four to thirty to create the game

Since it will be hard to discuss with the whole group if you are thirty people, you might break up into smaller groups and create several games, or split the game up into different parts

Eight to thirty for playing it

Time needed:

Creating the game: 2- 3 hours

Playing the game: 1 hour

Step by step description:

1. Prepare a snakes-and-ladders board and several snakes and ladders.

2. Explain that the aim of this exercise is to create a board game in which it is clear what are the stages of a project, and what problems or stimulants you might encounter.

3. First, set a starting point and a final goal in the first and last square. Most people will not have any problems defining that, but do not forget that the actual activity is only half of the project and that the evaluation part should also be added somehow.

4. Then, discuss the different stages of the project from start to end, including preparation, activity and evaluation. Split up the group into smaller groups if necessary. What are the things you should think about during all these stages? What obstacles do you expect? What events might be a catalyst for the whole project? And to what extent? Or, if the exercise is used as an evaluation, how did you experience the different stages and what have you encountered? List all subjects you should think about and put them in chronological order and arrange the obstacles and catalysts in order of importance. Take a look at the list and see if everyone agrees and understands all the points mentioned.

5. Then, select several of the events, catalysts and obstacles (you probably will not be able to use all, since the game would get too large and boring to play) and place them on the board. The events fill the squares in chronological order, the catalysts become ladders (the more positive influence it might have on the project, the longer the ladder gets, but do not make the jumps too illogical), and the barriers become snakes, dragging you down one or more squares.

6. Add conditions for using the snakes and ladders, so people first need to answer a question or perform a task connected to the place in the project cycle they are at that moment, which, in case of a ladder, must be answered or performed satisfactorily or creatively (group can be judge) to use the ladder, or, in case of the snake, forces a person down the snake if answered or performed unsatisfactorily.

7. Before starting the game, everyone makes a pawn out of their coloured cardboard to represent them. The game is played according to the normal rules; the number of points you throw with the dice is the number of squares you may move; ladders take you up, snakes down. The aim is to reach the last square first. You might add new rules like adding task squares which oblige the player to perform a task concerning his or her project before being allowed to move on, and giving points for the performance of these tasks. You may add rules about more than one person on a square (group tasks?) or invent other rules with the group.

Reflection and evaluation:

• How does the game reflect reality?

• Was the final goal for you the activity itself or the evaluation?

• Did you manage to think of barriers and catalysts? Was it hard to think of creative solutions for the tasks?

• Did you manage to reach a consensus on which events, catalysts and obstacles needed to be included in the game?

• Did everyone participate in the discussions?

• Did you feel like people were listening to what you were saying?

Some further tips:

The game has been played at a multilateral summer meeting as a part of a national presentation. The theme of the meeting had been integrated into a national version of the game. The whole game was chalked onto the playground, and the people were life-size pawns. Actually, it was extended during the game as people from other countries started to add things; we soon turned it into a rule that people who had finished the game could add another obstacle or catalyst to the board.

8

9. Further reading

Reports

Ascher, Carol, *The Mentoring of Disadvantaged Youth*, ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, New York, 1988

Available online at www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed306326.html (29-9-2002)

An article on mentoring young people with fewer opportunities, with special attention to their background, trust and expectations

Britton, L et al., *Missing ConneXions: The career dynamics and welfare needs of black and minority ethnic young people at the margins*, London, Policy Press, 2002

Despouy, Leandro, *The Realization of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Final Report on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty*, Geneva, Commission on Human Rights, Economic and Social Committee, United Nations, 1996

A ground-breaking report based on the experiences of people living in persistent poverty on all continents. The report calls for a holistic understanding of poverty and a human rights approach towards its eradication (can be downloaded at www.unhchr.ch)

World Association of School as an Instrument for Peace (EIP), *Step-by-Step to long-term voluntary service*, Paris, EIP, 2002

This is a booklet published in 2002 presenting the activities of the Step-by-Step network that offers young people with fewer opportunities quality and tailor-made projects in the frame of the short-term European Voluntary Service. Available in English and French (eurotraining@compuserve.com).

European Commission – Youth Unit, *The strategy for Inclusion in the YOUTH programme,*. Brussels, European Commission – Youth Unit, 2001

This is a document developed by the European working group on Inclusion and presented by the European Commission to the National Agencies of the YOUTH programme in June 2001. It provides a European framework and common approach to include young people with fewer opportunities in the YOUTH programme. Available in English, French and German (youth@cec.eu.int)

European Youth Forum, *Get In! Report on Youth Convention on Social Exclusion and Employment*, Brussels, European Youth forum, 2000

Features the voices of a number of young people with direct experience of exclusion who have been reached and engaged through youth work. This report clearly makes the link between, social integration, youth participation and a broader social inclusion based on sensitive youth work at the grass roots level (can be downloaded at www.youthforum.org).

The Youth National Institute (INJEP), *The European YOUTH programme : an educational tool for street workers. Final Report*, Marly le Roi, INJEP, 2001.

This event gathered 120 street workers and experts on "Social Inclusion" projects, young people with fewer opportunities and project officers from YOUTH National Agencies in October 2001. The final report includes recommendations from the street workers for the use of the YOUTH programme with the target group and a Declaration of Intention from the street workers. Version available in English and French (dupuis@injep.fr)

Netherlands Institute for Care and Welfare (NIZW), *Guidebook for EVS short-term projects : from puzzled to jigsaw puzzle*, Utrecht, NIZW, 2000.

This is a manual for short-term EVS-projects written by the Dutch National Agency of the YOUTH Programme, for youth workers working with socially disadvantaged young people. (europa@nizw.nl)

Wodon, Quentin, *Attacking extreme poverty – learning from the experience of the International Movement ATD Fourth World*, Washington, World Bank (Technical Paper N° WTP502), 2001.

This report consists of a collection of essays on extreme poverty. The first part of the report deals with what it means to live in extreme poverty, how to reach the very poor, through programmes, and interventions, and how to make private, and public institutions more responsive to their aspirations. The second part analyses the relationship between extreme poverty, and human rights. Emphasis is placed on the contribution of the International Movement ATD Fourth World, and its founder Joseph Wresinski, to the understanding of the very poor, and what is needed for attacking extreme poverty (can be downloaded at www-wds.worldbank.org).

Books

Baumeister, R., *Self-esteem : The puzzle of low self-regard*. New York, Plenum Press, 1993.

Baumeister, R. et al. *Relation of Threatened Egotism to Violence and Aggression : The Dark Side of High Self-Esteem, In Psychological Review*, February 1996.

Branden, N, *Six Pillars of Self-Esteem*, New York, Bantam Books, 1994.

Caceres, Benigno, *Histoire de l'éducation populaire*, Paris, Seuil, 1997.

The history of Community Education: Benigno Caceres details important stages of community education in this book (in French).

Glasser, W., *Control Theory*. New York, Harper & Row, 1984.

Holman, Bob, *Kids at the Door Revisited*, Lyme Regis, Russell House Publications, 2000.

This book evaluates the significance of a long-term community youth project from the perspective of the young people who were involved in it. The project began in the 1970s in a housing estate and was carried out in partnership with local youths living there, many of whom where living in long-term poverty. This is a fascinating study that highlights the value and merits of long-term and locally owned initiatives for reaching and engaging young people with fewer opportunities.

Jans, Marc & De Backer, Kurt, *Youth (-work) and Social Participation – Elements for a practical theory*. Brussels, Flemish Youth Council – JeP!, 2002.

Research report on social participation in Belgium, dealing with young people, youth work and all stakeholders (also available from www.jep.be)

Lilley, Kirstie, *Words to the Wise : successful peer education with young people*. Somerset, Youth Work Press, 2001.

Practical guide on establishing peer education projects including resource packs to be used by the youth worker.

National YOUTH Agencies (NYA), *The active involvement of young people in developing safer communities*, Leicester, NYA, 2002.

A guide on how to get young people actively involved in programmes that focus on developing safer neighbourhoods (also available on the internet: www.nya.org.uk/active-involve-YP.htm)

Paulides, Han & Ten Thije, Nan, *Bemoei je ermee !* Utrecht, De tijdstroom, 1997.

Background information on establishing youth work in a neighbourhood, the process of gaining trust, the role of the youth worker and the importance of including all stakeholders in the work, not only the young people. Only available in Dutch.

Smith, Mark & Maclister-Brew, Josephine, *Youth work and informal education*, Somerset, Youth Work Press, 2001.

Historical background on youth work and non-formal education.

Websites

Differentiated learning approaches – www.offratel.nc/magui/PEDADIF.HTM (29-9-02).
The article in French "Pédagogie différenciée ou apprentissages différenciés" is written by Philippe Meirieu, an authority in the field. It describes different realities of learning approaches in the framework of school as it is today. Emphasis is put on the pro and cons of the different methods. Interesting and objective brief article with several links upon key words.

Envol network – www.envol.de
This organisation provides short term European Voluntary Service opportunities for young people with fewer opportunities, and has published different training resources online.

Generation Youth Issues – www.generationyouthissues.fsnet.co.uk
Generation was formed in Glasgow in 1996 in opposition to the restraints that are increasingly being placed on young people in all areas of their lives. The group is made up of teachers, youth workers and other professionals dealing with young people. Their website has critical articles on different importance issues in youth work and education today.

Informal Education – www.infed.org
Discussion of current problems defining youth and youth work. Explore key thinkers, theories and themes in informal education and lifelong learning.

Jeugd en Participatie – www.jep.be
Training methods and background information on involving young people in youth work. Unfortunately only in Dutch, but containing useful information for those who master the language.

SALTO-YOUTH – www.salto-youth.net
SALTO-YOUTH stands for Support for Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities within the YOUTH programme and provides resources for training in the youth field on priority topics such as inclusion, EuroMed co-operation and anti-racism.

Youth Include – www.youthinclude.org
A European website for people working in the field of social inclusion, full of good practice, links, facts and figures, etc.

Youth Work Links and Ideas – www.youthwork.com
A website with lots of practical ideas and training methods for working with young people and numerous articles and links to subjects dealing with certain fields of youth work like crisis intervention, after-school programmes and safety in youth work.

10. About the authors

Tom Croft (author) is a full-time volunteer with the International Movement ATD Fourth World, a human rights NGO dedicated to the fight against poverty. Based at their international youth centre in Champeaux just outside Paris, he works with young people from many different backgrounds and nationalities in order to promote active youth participation directed towards the most excluded.
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Notes

Social Inclusion

T-KIT No.8

In 1998, The Council of Europe and the European Commission decided to take common action in the field of European Youth Worker Training, and therefore initiated a Partnership Agreement. The aim of the Agreement, which is laid down in several covenants, is "to promote active European citizenship and civil society by giving impetus to the training of youth leaders and youth workers working within a European dimension".

The co-operation between the two institutions covers a wide spectrum of activities and publications, as well as developing tools for further networking.

Three main components govern the partnership : a training offer (long term training for trainers and training on European Citizenship), publications (both paper and electronic versions of training materials and magazine) and networking tools (trainers pool and exchange possibilities). The ultimate goal is to raise standards in youth worker training at a European level and define quality criteria for such training.

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