



Youth Work under supervision

Non-Formal learning session scenario for youth workers and trainers to reflect on ethics and values in youth work through analysing case studies.

BY:



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Objectives

- to explore principles and values of youth work,
- to reflect on own approach to youth work,
- to discover differences and similarities of approaches within the group of learners.

Settings

- min 8 participants, max 40,
- the group divided into 4 groups within which there are 2 sub-groups - each should have a bit of space to discuss privately,
- indoor/ outdoor/ unrestricted,
- duration depends on the intensity of discussion, may take 90-100 min,
- materials: printed 4 stories and drawn/ printed visualisation of personas given below.

Scenario

1. Explain to the group the purpose of the exercise,
2. Divide them into 4 groups explaining that each group will analyze 1 case study either as defenders or prosecutors,
3. Tell them 4 stories in short,
4. Distribute 4 stories to the 4 groups,
5. Assign the task for defenders sub-groups to prepare defense speech for given persona and for prosecutors sub-groups to prepare an accusation speech for given persona naming what values/ principles of youth work were broken - given them 15 minutes for this phase,
6. Open a trial. Invite prosecutors and defenders of the case 1 to perform their speeches non interrupted. After speeches persecutors and defenders may add arguments answering to arguments presented in the opening speeches. Other participants may add their questions, but let the discussion be no longer than 10-15 minutes. Analyse like that all 4 cases.
7. At the end ask everybody to vote innocent/guilty for all 4 cases and announce results.
8. Debrief: what are your approaches to values and ethics in youth work?



Persona 1

MARC



Story

Mark leads a training course about human rights using the role-play games methodology.

Participants of the training are involved in a role-playing exercise, during which players try to fulfill their objectives to get points. At some point of the game one of the participants – Simon made a game winning action that beforehand was discussed with the Trainer. Rules of the game clearly said that in any time, to assure safety of participants rules of the game can be modified by the trainer. After talking with the participant Mark agreed to slightly modify the rules of the game, but clearly explained the reasons for it right after the action of Simon.

In this moment Tom, one of the participants, ran out of the room crying. He did not understand that the action was done according to the rules of the game and felt cheated. He came back for the debriefing of the exercise but instead of talking about his experience he started to attack Simon calling him “cheater”, “asshole” and “fucker”. Mark tried to stop Tom from the personal attacks, kept explaining the situation over and over again, proving that everything happened according to the rules. The discussion between Tom and the trainer continued after the debriefing. Tom was screaming, shouting and at some point, demonstrated signs of aggression. Tom said that “if it is normal here to break the rules, he doesn’t want to participate anymore”. Mark tries to calm Tom down, but as it seemed not possible Mark decided to send him home. He asked Tom to leave the venue right away. Tom closed himself in the room crying, screaming, because he wanted to stay with the group, even though he said something opposite.

Tom had a bipolar disorder, that he was aware of, but he never mentioned it to the trainer. Mark didn’t get this information in the participant registration form, but some previous behaviors could bring him an idea that Tom requires a special attention. At the end Tom left the project and his learning experience was totally ruined.



Persona 2

MONICA



Story

Monica is running a training course about democracy. Since she was a young girl, she was an activist, truly believing in the need of promoting democratic values. She was joining several social movements, demonstrations she was very active in social media and never hid her points of view on this issue.

During one of the workshops during the training, one of participants – Ralph started to spread a conspiracy theory that democracy is a way to manipulate societies. He was very convincing and presented several semi-scientific evidence. The topic became very interesting for participants and changed the order of discussion. Monica tried to explain to the group that this theory is based on the fake news. She took the discussion very personal and shared her political opinions. She tried to convince Ralph to her opinion, but he rejected all arguments and attempts for the discussion. He claimed that he is presenting scientific evidence that Monica doesn't want to believe because she is already manipulated. At some point Monica could not stand it anymore and she said that she will not tolerate spreading fake news during her training. She said that on her training there is no place for closed minds that are not open for the discussion. She asked Ralph to accept universal values or stay quiet. Ralph left the room feeling offended.



Persona 3

EVAN

Story



The training course is about sensitive topic, especially culturally and in religious context - TC for youth workers on how to convey sex-education for teenagers. During the Training Course we test methods and tools of sex-education and discuss their adaptability, appropriateness and meritorical value. Every participant has their own good or bad experiences from the past, their biases, their cultural background and the religion is not on the table of the project. It is advertised as neutral and scientific.

During the discussion about which age of young people sex-ed should be introduced and if the same contents should be passed to all genders, participants started to have strong opinions about it.

Lines of conflict:

-We should have in mind non-binary self-identification of young people and not divide them into 2 groups of girls and boys, because they won't feel comfortable and should be recognized,

-We should promote identification of young people with their sex, because we should prevent problems with identification that may arise in the future and is proven that it comes together with mental issues, may even lead to suicides of young people.

The trainer (Evan) takes a position here and responds that the second approach is based on assumption that 2 sexes are normal and non-binary people are deviation that can be prevented by education and this is not proven.

The participant (Robert): „But we cannot accept choices of young people, when they are leading to risky behaviors that will be potentially dangerous for them. That's not moral!”

Evan: „This approach is dominant in religious movements and conservatist countries, but we are on neutral TC. Please save your opinions for yourself.”

Robert: „But your liberal approach is also ideological. Based on idea that people can harm themselves because they're free. How is that different from my cultural perspective?”

Evan: „We should close this discussion, because it's not productive.”

Robert finished the TC with sense that his religion is not accepted in the field of youth work and that youth work is ideological.

Persona 4

GERARD



Story

Gerard is a trainer in active citizenship. He is delivering a course about youth policy development on the local level for young activists, where the result should be a draft document of the youth policy for the city. Gerard's task was to explain to participants how youth policy works on the European level and in their country as well as equip them in the competences to formulate policy documents by themselves. As among participants there are representatives of youth wings of different political parties, Gerard tried to be very professional and keep politically neutral. In the last part of the training, when participants started to talk about the content of their policy documents arguments began. It turned out, that young people took their role of "future policy making" very serious and they tried to impose points of view of their parties in the document. The culminative point at the discussion was about promoting possibility of being elected to the school council among youngsters with a migration background. The conservative part of the participants was against this point - they main argument was that this is not fair to put a special effort in promoting the elections among a certain group. "Why migrants should be treated better than us?" they were saying. The rest of the groups was ready to fight for this point as a chance for empowering and giving rights to those groups. The argument got out of control; participants, on both sides, used emotional arguments they heard from other politicians that justified discrimination some social groups. Gerard tried to facilitate the discussion with different moderation techniques, but he did not react on hurt feelings of participants. He addressed the issue of culture of discussion but stay totally neutral when it comes to arguments of participants that offended others. Participants did not reach the agreement and left the workshop without the draft document.

