

ETHIX

A cand game for educators to reflect on real-life ethical dilemmas.

Challenge your values, debate with peers, and explore the grey zones of youth work and education!









What is Ethix?

Ethix is a thought-provoking card game for educators, youth workers, and facilitators. Step into real-world scenarios. Debate challenging ethical dilemmas. Test your values—and your voice. 90 dilemma cards and 18 persuasion styles guide you through difficult decisions youth professionals face every day from group dynamics and safety to inclusion, power, and responsibility.

Designed for:

- Trainers & facilitators in non-formal education
- Youth workers, educators, and social practitioners
- Team-building, ethics training, or reflection spaces.

What's inside?

- 90 Ethical Dilemma Cards
- 18 Persuasion Style Cards
- Rulebook + Debrief Guide
 - Reflection Add-ons.

Developed by Vera Goriunova & Mateusz Górecki with valuable contributions from colleagues across Europe as part of the project "Roll for Initiative". Graphic design by Svetlana Golubkina. Project No. 2023-3-FR02-KA210-YOU-00017581.

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Instruction

Ethix is an engaging and reflective educational game designed specifically for educators, youth workers, and professionals working with young people which invites participants to debate on various dilemmas we, as educators, might face in our everyday work. It focuses on exploring the gray areas of professional ethics through a dialogue and friendly debate.

Participants are challenged to take a stance on real-life ethical dilemmas commonly encountered in educational or youth work settings as well as develop their argumentation and negotiation skills. The goal is not necessarily to "win," but to practice critical thinking, empathy, and ethical reasoning while gaining insight into diverse perspectives.

We want to offer a few options of how the cards could be used, choose the one which fits your goals! Or, feel free to explore your own way of using them — there's no one right approach. Or, feel free to explore your own way of using them — there's no one right approach.

Version #1

Materials

- a deck of cards with ethical dilemmas
- a timer
- Role cards: debater A, debater B, 'judge' cards, a moderator card.

Setup

- 1. Shuffle the Ethical Dilemma cards.
- 2. Take the number of role cards equal to the number of players. (Make sure, there's ALWAYS a moderator card, debater A, debater B. The rest are 'judges'.
- 3. Shuffle the Role cards. Each player receives 1 Role card. They can show them to other players.



Gameflow (Per round)

Draw the Dilemma card: The moderator draws a dilemma card from the deck and reads the card aloud.

Preparation: Players with DEBATER cards identify themselves and have 60 seconds to think of their arguments.

Debate: Players have 4 minutes in total to justify their position and bring convincing arguments. The moderator ensures respectful discussion and tracks the time.

Voting: The Judges vote on the most persuasive argument (A or B). The moderator also votes.

Scoring: the player who got the majority of votes - gets 1 point for this round.

Shared reflection: Now you can have a small discussion on the dilemma present with all the members in the group, if some thoughts/opinions/ experiences emerged (max. 5 minutes).

Participants move to the next round! For the next round they can choose to draw the role cards by themselves, pick them randomly again or just 'shift' the roles clockwise.

The game is played for 3-5 rounds, making sure each person was a debater at least once. After that - participants are invited for a short reflection on the experience (see debriefing questions).

Winning (Optional):

The player with the most tokens at the end wins, or just enjoys the dialogue for its learning value!

Version #2

Materials

- a deck of cards with ethical dilemmas
- a timer
- Role cards: debater A, debater B, 'judge' cards, a moderator card
- persuasion style cards

Setup

- 1. Shuffle the Ethical Dilemma cards.
- 2. Take the number of role cards equal to the number of players. (Make sure, there's ALWAYS a moderator card, debater A, debater B card. The rest are 'judges'.
- 3. Shuffle the Role cards. Each player receives 1 Role card. They can show them to other players.
- 4. Players with debater A ,debater B role pick 1 persuasion style card from the deck. They must stick to the style which they have drawn while making their argument. They can keep those cards secret.



Gameflow (Per round)

Draw the Dilemma card: The moderator draws a dilemma card from the deck and reads the card aloud.

Preparation: Players with Debater A, debater B cards identify themselves and have 60 seconds to think of their arguments taking in account the persuasion style which they have drawn previously.

Debate: Players have 4 minutes in total to justify their position and bring convincing arguments. The moderator ensures respectful discussion and tracks the time.

Voting: The Judges vote on the most persuasive argument (Debater A, Debater B). The moderator also votes.

Scoring: the player who got the majority of votes – gets 1 point for this round.

If participants wish - they could reveal their Role cards for this round.

For the next round they can choose to draw the role cards by themselves, pick them randomly again or just 'shift' the roles clockwise.

The game is played for 3-5 rounds, making sure each person was a debater at least once. After that - participants are invited for a short reflection on the experience (see debriefing questions).

Winning (Optional):

The player with the most tokens at the end wins, or just enjoys the dialogue for its learning value!

Version #3

Feel free to use the cards as a tool for reflection, dialogue, or group facilitation. Simply draw a dilemma card and invite participants to share their initial reactions, personal experiences, or ethical perspectives. You can explore the scenarios in pairs, small groups as a whole group discussion or any other way you find suitable for your needs!



Debriefing question after the game

Suggested total time: 20-30 minutes.

You can run this reflection as a full group discussion, in pairs/trios, or with individual journaling followed by sharing. You do not have to ask all the questions, choose the ones which you feel are the most relevant to the experience which happened.

WHAT? (What happened?)

- What stood out to you most during the game?
- What kinds of dilemmas were hardest to take a stance on? Why?
- Which persuasion style did you enjoy or struggle with the most?
- * Did you ever feel conflicted between what you believe and what you have to argue? In which way?
- What did you notice about how others debated or communicated their views?
- Did anyone change their mind including you?

SO WHAT? (What does it mean?)

- What does your stance on these dilemmas reveal about your values as an educator/youth worker?
- What did you learn about how ethical decisions are made in your role?
- How do different communication styles impact dialogue or influence in a professional setting?
- How did power dynamics, personal bias, or cultural background show up in the debate?
- How did it feel to defend a position you didn't fully agree with (if that happened)?
- What connections did you make between the dilemmas and your real-life experience?

NOW WHAT? (What will you do with this?)

- How might this game change how you approach ethical challenges in your work?
- What can you do to stay ethically grounded when under pressure?
- How will you use these communication styles in real training/facilitation scenarios?
- What kind of support or reflection do you need to make ethical decisions more confidently?
- If you could replay a moment from your real-life practice, what would you do differently?
- What conversations from the game would you like to continue beyond today?
- If you could take one insight from this game and carry it into your next youth project or training, what would it be?

Thematic tags of cards Thematic tags of cards Trainer Wellbeing Safety Professional Boundaries Inclusion & Identity Group Dynamics Power & Responsibility Funding & Integrity Facilitation Ethics









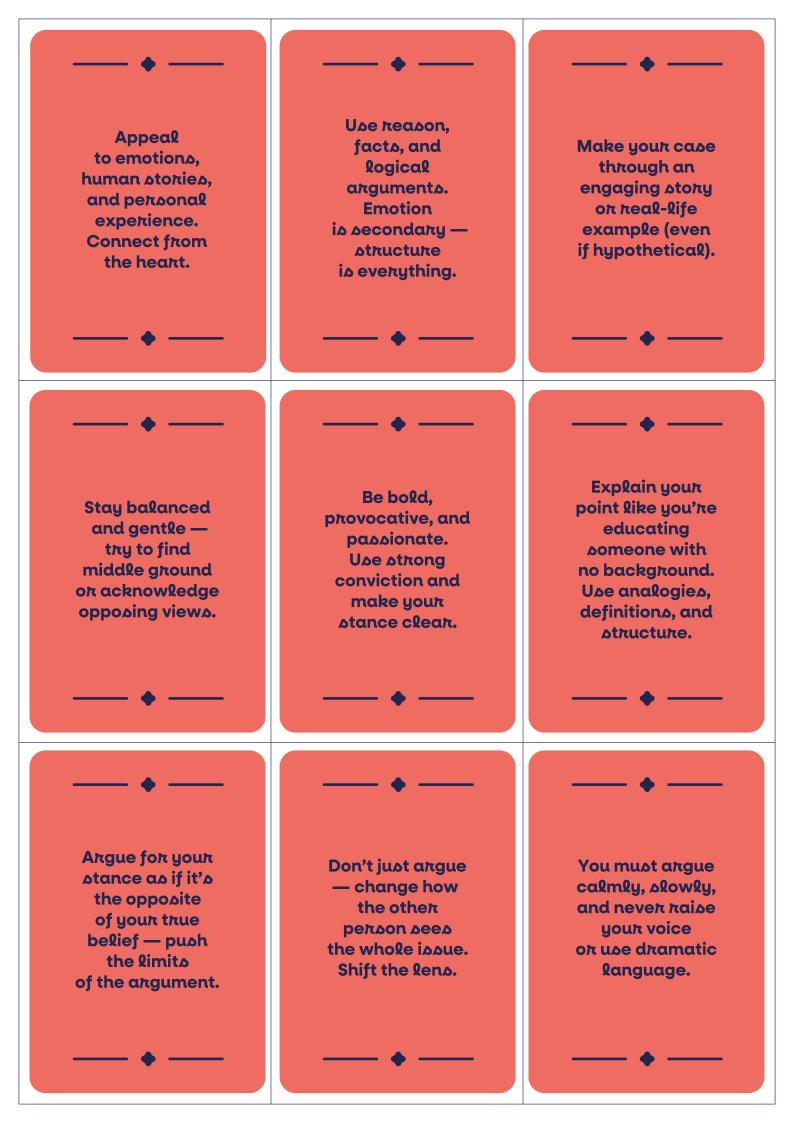




















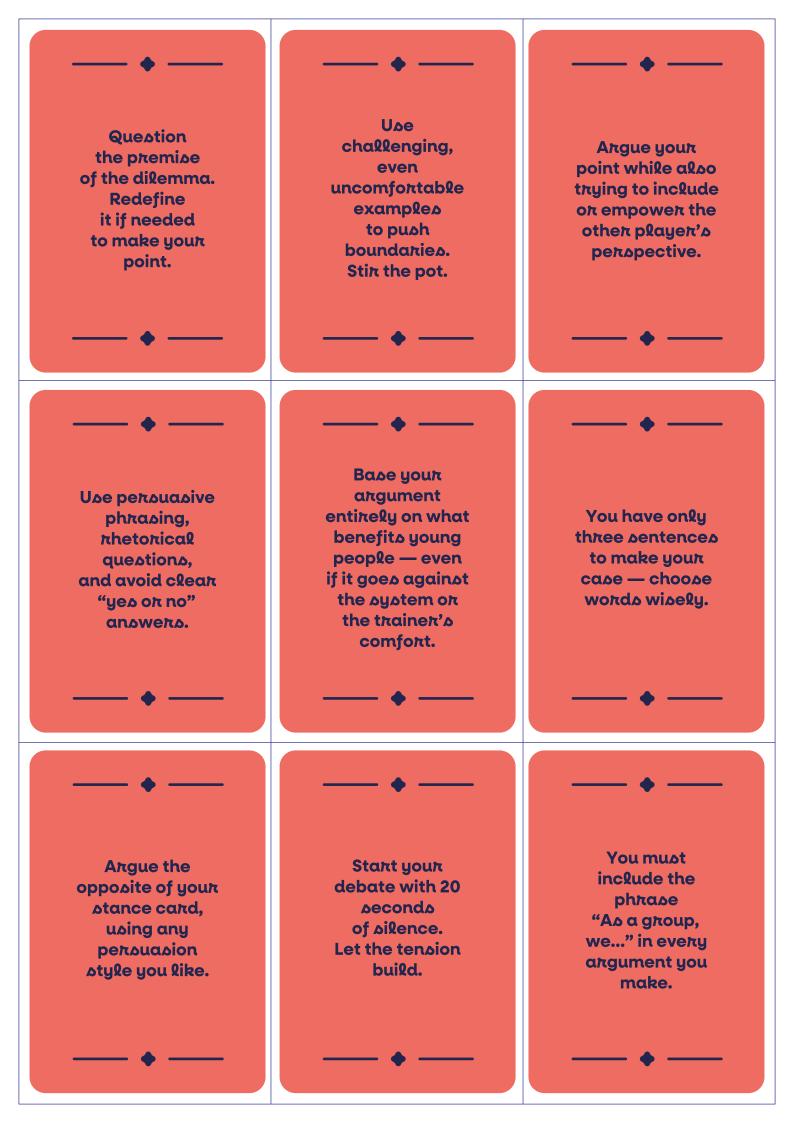












A participant confides in you about illegal activity. What do you do?

A

Report it, prioritising safety and legal responsibility. (B)

Keep it confidential to maintain trust and rapport.



You discover a co-facilitator is using outdated, biased materials. What do you do?

(A)

Intervene to protect the quality of the session. (B)

Let it pass to avoid conflict and maintain team harmony.



A participant gives you an expensive gift as a sign of gratitude. What do you do?

(A)

Decline the gift to maintain professional boundaries. B

Accept it as a sincere gesture of gratitude.



You notice that a participant posts disturbing content on social media which includes hate speech. What do you do?

(A)

Address it and potentially report it to authorities.

(B)

Respect their private expression outside the training.



You overhear your co-trainer making a discriminatory remark during private conversations with participants over funch.

What do you do?

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Confront them directly to challenge unacceptable behavior.

(B)

Don't pay attention on it as a part of personal opinion.



A co-trainer makes a questionable safety decision during a trip. What do you do?

(A)

Call it out publicly to protect participants.

(B)

Address it later to avoid undermining them in front of the group.



A participant
opens up about mental
health struggles
but refuses help.
What do you do?

(A)

Reach out for help to ensure their safety. (B)

Respect their autonomy and decision to decline support.



You're offered
a well-paid contract with
an organization whose
values you question.
What do you do?

(A)

Accept it it's a job and you can still do good work. $^{\mathbb{B}}$

Decline to stay aligned with your own values.



A young person often attends your sessions but shows signs of self-harm. They ask you not to tell anyone.

What do you do?

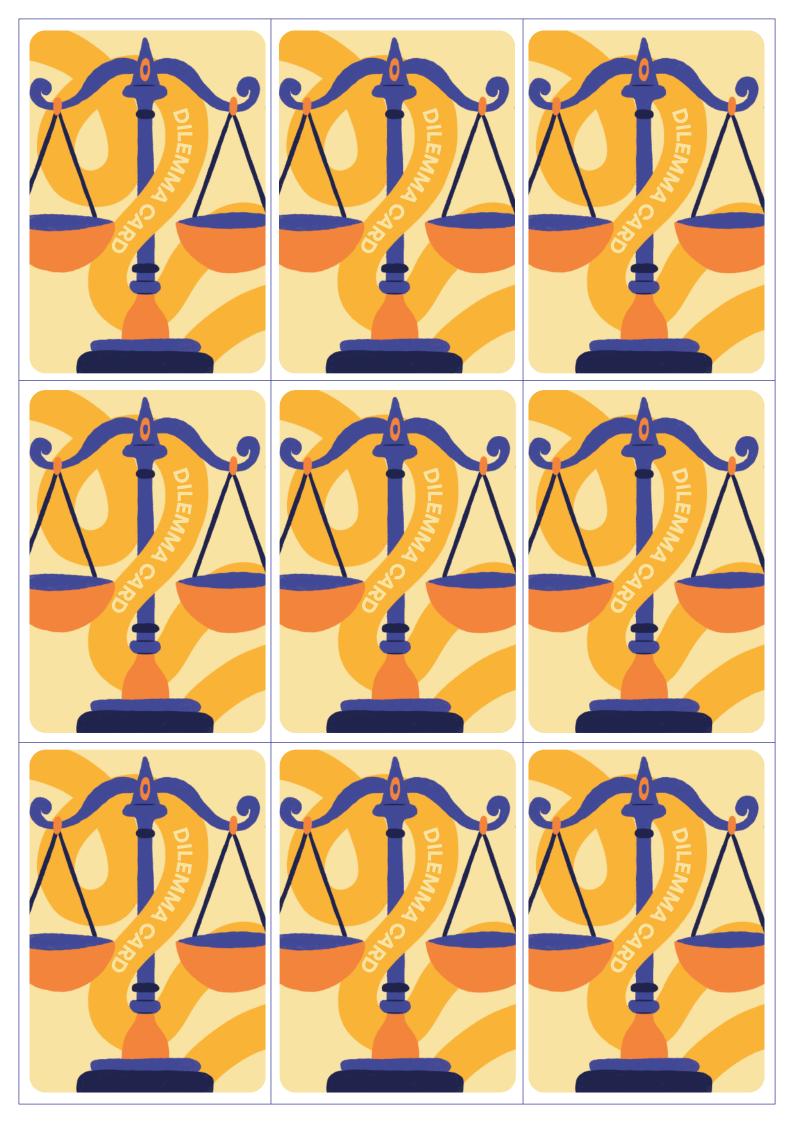
(A)

Break confidentiality to protect their wellbeing.

B

Honor their request and keep it confidential.





You're running a training about leadership. One participant dominates every discussion, leaving no space for quieter peers. What do you do?

Step in to ensure equal participation.

Let the group dynamics play out naturally.







A youth group organizes a protest on a controversial issue. They ask your public support as their mentor. What do you do?

Join them publicly to show solidarity and empower their civic engagement.

Stay neutral to protect your professional boundaries and avoid potential risks.



You hear a participant making casual sexist on homophobic jokes. What do you do?

Confront them directly to set clear boundaries against discriminatory behavior.

Address it privately later to avoid shaming and keep the group harmonious.







A young person asks to connect with you on social media (your private account). Your organization has no policy about it. What do you do?

Accept the request to build trust and openness.

Decline it to maintain clear personalprofessional boundaries.



You suspect one young person is being bullied by others in the group chat, but they deny it when asked. What do you do?



Intervene anyway to prevent harm, even without confirmation.



Respect their denial and keep observing.



You learn a participant

has no safe place to sleep,

and your project can't

officially provide housing.

What do you do?

During a project, a participant tells you they're questioning their gender identity. They don't want to share a room with others. What do you do?



Give them a private room, even though the budget doesn't cover it.

Follow standard rooming policy to ensure fairness across participants.







During an international youth exchange, a participant drinks alcohol despite a strict no-alcohol policy on the project. What do you do?

Enforce consequences immediately to maintain group discipline.

Handle it informally to avoid escalation.









(A) Let them stay

unofficially in

the youth center

to keep them

safe.





Follow the rules

and help them

find support

through official

channels.

A co-trainer regularly μαροπρα αθαμ or mockery towards participants. What do you do?

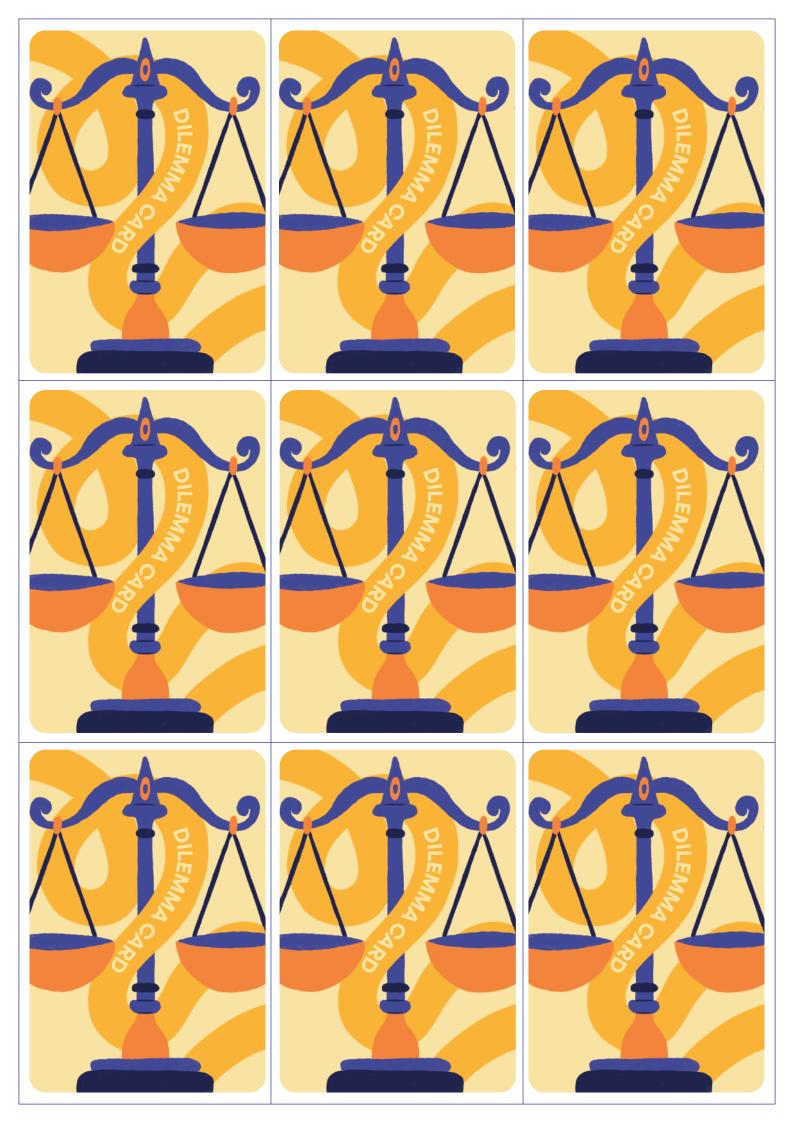
Call it out during the session to protect participants immediately.

Talk to them privately to avoid conflict and preserve team dynamics.









You're offered additional funding, but the donor wants your program to exclude politically sensitive topics. What do you do?

(A)

Accept the funding to continue your work, adapting content slightly.

Refuse the funding, to avoid compromising on open dialogue and critical thinking.



You notice a strong emotional bond forming between two young participants in your project, one of whom is undertage. What do you do?

(A)

Step in to monitor and potentially separate them to ensure safety.

Stay back unless you see clear signs of inappropriate behavior.



You run a workshop on activism. A participant starts advocating for extreme or harmful ideologies. What do you do?

(A)

Allow open expression to promote dialogue and understanding.

Shut it down to protect the group and uphold values of safety.



A young person wants to use your workshop space to organize a controversial event. What do you do?

(A)

Let them use the space to support freedom of expression.

Decline to avoid potential backlash or harm.



You're running a project in a marginalized community. The majority of your facilitators are outsiders of the community yet very experienced professionals. What do you do?

Pause the project until local voices are included.

Continue with the current team for efficiency and expertise.



A young peason reveals they are undocumented and terrified of being discovered. Your program requires an ID and usage of personal data. What do you do?

(A)

Make an exception to protect their safety.

(B)

Stick to the rules to avoid legal complications.







One participant constantly seeks your approval, emotionally leaning on you. What do you do?

Set firm boundaries to protect your energy and role.

Offer continued support to encourage their growth.



A participant continues to show flixtatious attention toward another participant, despite being told the interest isn't mutual. This person is still respectful and engaged in your sessions. What do you do?

(A) Address it directly to uphold boundaries.

Monitor quietly to avoid embarrassing anyone prematurely.

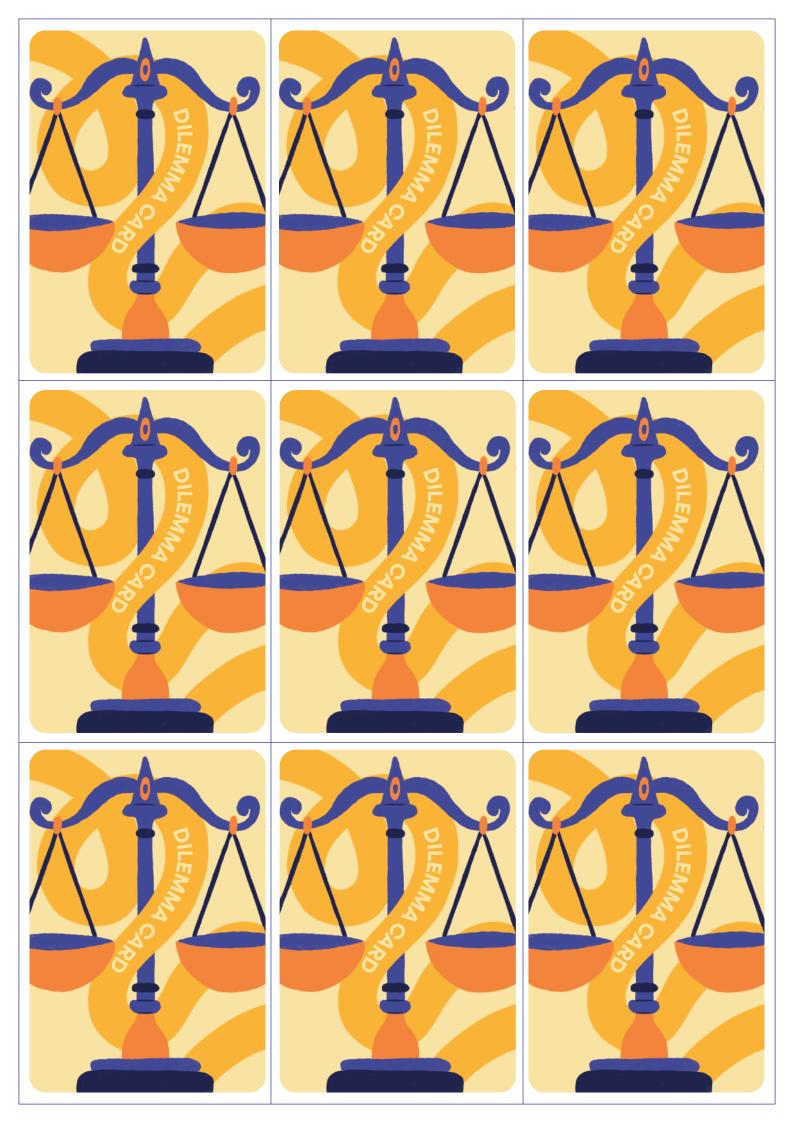


You observe that the most vulnerable youth often avoid speaking up during sessions. What do you do?

Adapt activities to be more inclusive.

Stick to your plan to maintain consistency for all.





Your co-trainer allows subtle favoritism toward a group of young people.
They justify it as "relationship building".
What do you do?

(A)

Discuss it with them privately after the session.

B

Ignore it to avoid unnecessary tension in the team.





One participant refuses to work in a mixed-gender group for cultural or religious reasons.
What do you do?

(A)

Accommodate their request out of respect.

B

Insist on inclusion as a learning principle.



You witness a participant mocking someone else's accent. It seems subtle.
What do you do?

A

Address it publicly to challenge bias.

B

Ignore it and hope the group addresses the issue.







A participant is constantly disengaged and disruptive, affecting the learning atmosphere.
What do you do?

A

Ask them to leave the project to protect the group.

B

Keep trying to engage them to support their growth.







A 'popular' participant in the group undermines your authority and changes session flow.

What do you do?

Confront them openly to set clear boundaries and reassert your role.

(B)

Embrace their influence, letting them co-lead to boost group engagement.



You realize a partner NGO is misusing Erasmus+ funds (e.g., inflated costs, fake invoices).
What do you do?

(A)

Report it despite potential damage to future partnerships. (R)

Stay silent to protect collaborations and avoid conflict.







A participant openly expresses anti-EU or nationalist views during a project about European values.
What do you do?

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Allow space for debate to encourage dialogue. ®

Set clear boundaries to maintain the project's core educational values.







A nomantic nelationship develops between a trainer and a participant. Other participants notice.
What do you do?

A

Intervene to uphold professional ethics. B

Ignore it unless it disrupts group dynamics.



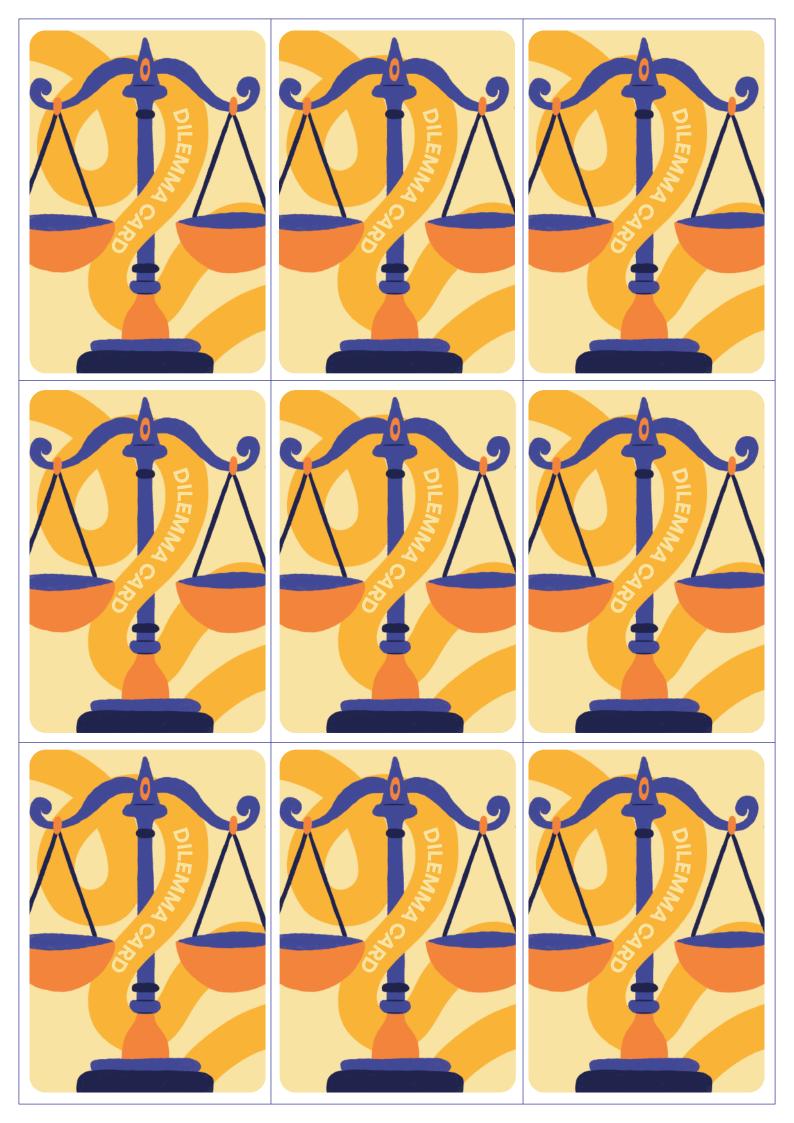
One of your activities unintentionally triggers a participant with past trauma.
What do you do?

(A)

Adapt or stop the activity to avoid further harm. B

Continue as planned to honor the learning process and group flow.





The sending organization didn't prepare their participants at all for an international learning mobility. Participants're lost, culturally shocked, and disoriented. Do you confront the partner mid-project?

Confront them mid-project for accountability.

Focus on supporting participants without confrontation.







Participants are sticking to their own national groups, and some others feel left out. What do you do?

Talk about it openly to help everyone feel included.

Let the group connect in their own way without pushing them.



You planned an outdook experiential activity, but the weather turns danaerous. What do you do?

Cancel or adjust for safety.

Proceed with precautions to preserve the learning experience.







You discover that a co-trainer actively promotes alcohol during the evening socialising time. It's unofficial but happening daily. What do you do?

Step in to stop it and keep things aligned with the project's values.

Allow it, trusting adults to make their own choices outside of sessions.







One partner consistently brings underqualified participants who act inneaponaibly but they do great dissemination and follow-up activities. What do you do?



End the partnership to keep the project's standards.

Continue working together for the sake of outreach and results.







You're pressured to over-report your project's impact in a final report. What do you do?

(A)

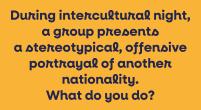
Stick to honest reporting, even if it disappoints the funder.

Slightly exaggerate the results to secure future opportunities.









Intervene publicly to address stereotypes immediately.

Let it pass and follow up privately to avoid embarrassing them







You're expected to use English as the main language, but several participants barely understand it. What do you do?

Adjust your facilitation style to include them better.

Expect participants to adapt as English is the working language.

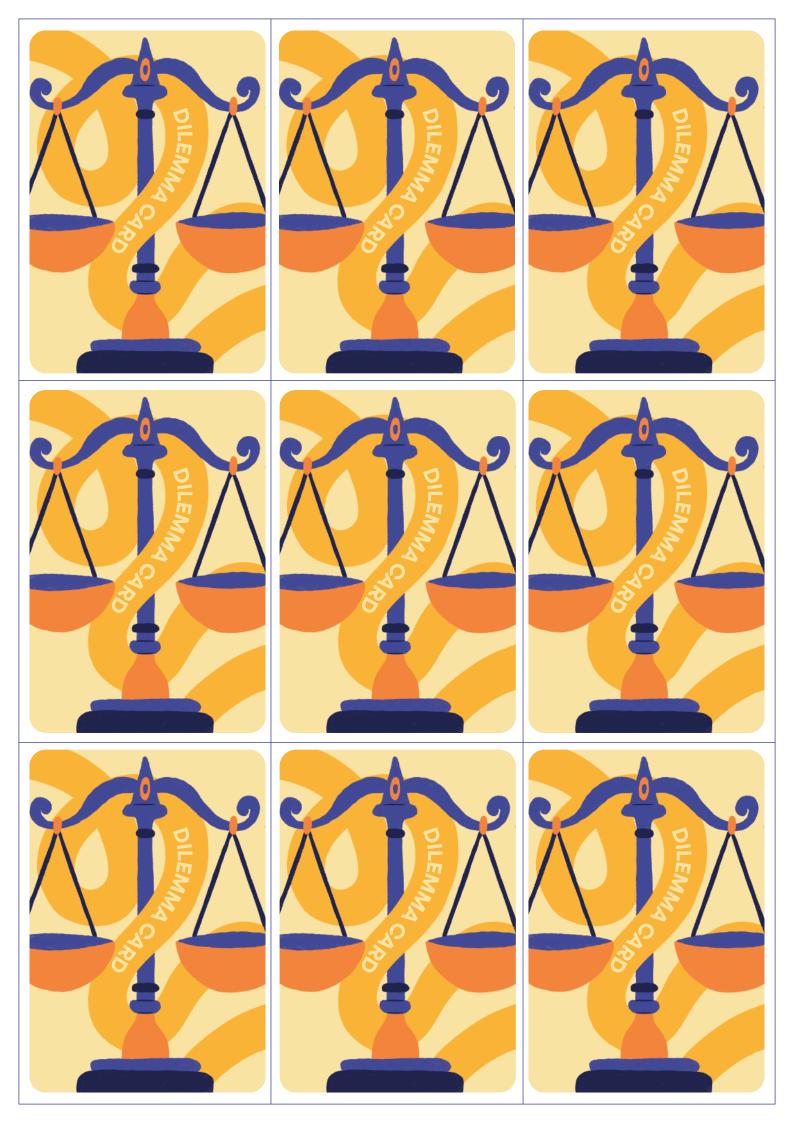


A participant is often late and blames "cultural differences." What do you do?

Enforce the schedule to ensure fairness and structure.

Be flexible to respect cultural and personal context.





You're organizing a training course but only a few participants truly fit the profile. If you don't fill all spots, you'll lose part of the funding. What do you do?

(A)

Accept last-minute. less committed participants to secure funding.

Stick to quality and run it with only the committed ones, even if funding is reduced.







credits for dilemma: Wolfgang Sieberth

Your fellow co-trainer had sex with one of the participants of the training course. What do you do?

Confront the trainer immediately during the team meeting.

(B)

Wait and address the issue after the training ends.



Participants reject

the structured activities you

planned and want to do things

their own way. At the same time

you wonky they won't meet the

project's learning objectives.

What do you do?

You want to try a new experiential method during your training, but you've never used it before and aren't sure how it will unfold. What do you do?

Go for it trying new methods is part of learning.

(B)

Avoid using untested methods to ensure a safe and effective session.







Your sessions often challenge comfort zones to spark growth through experiential learning. Lately, participants ask for more emotional safety and trigger warnings — some even withdraw from intense activities. What do you do?



Adapt and provide more emotional safety to support well-being



Stay with your approach to preserve the depth of learning.







Step in and guide them back to ensure learning goals are met.



Let them take the lead, valuing ownership over strict outcomes.







A participant in your training sees themselves as highly experienced. They often arrive late, skip sessions, or appear disengaged despite multiple private conversations. What do you do?



Ask them to leave to protect the group dynamic and learning environment.

Continue encouraging their participation, hoping they will eventually re-engage.







credito for dilemma: Natalia Skorik

As a trainer. I believe that...



It's fine to avoid sensitive topics to keep peace and preserve group comfort.



It's better to address sensitive topics respectfully to challenge ignorance and foster deeper learning









As a trainer. I believe that...



...it's okay to give more attention to participants who are struggling they need the extra support.

...equal attention to all is the fairest approach and ensures a balanced learning environment.



As a trainer. I believe that...



...a trainer should never reveal their own vulnerabilities it maintains professionalism and boundaries.

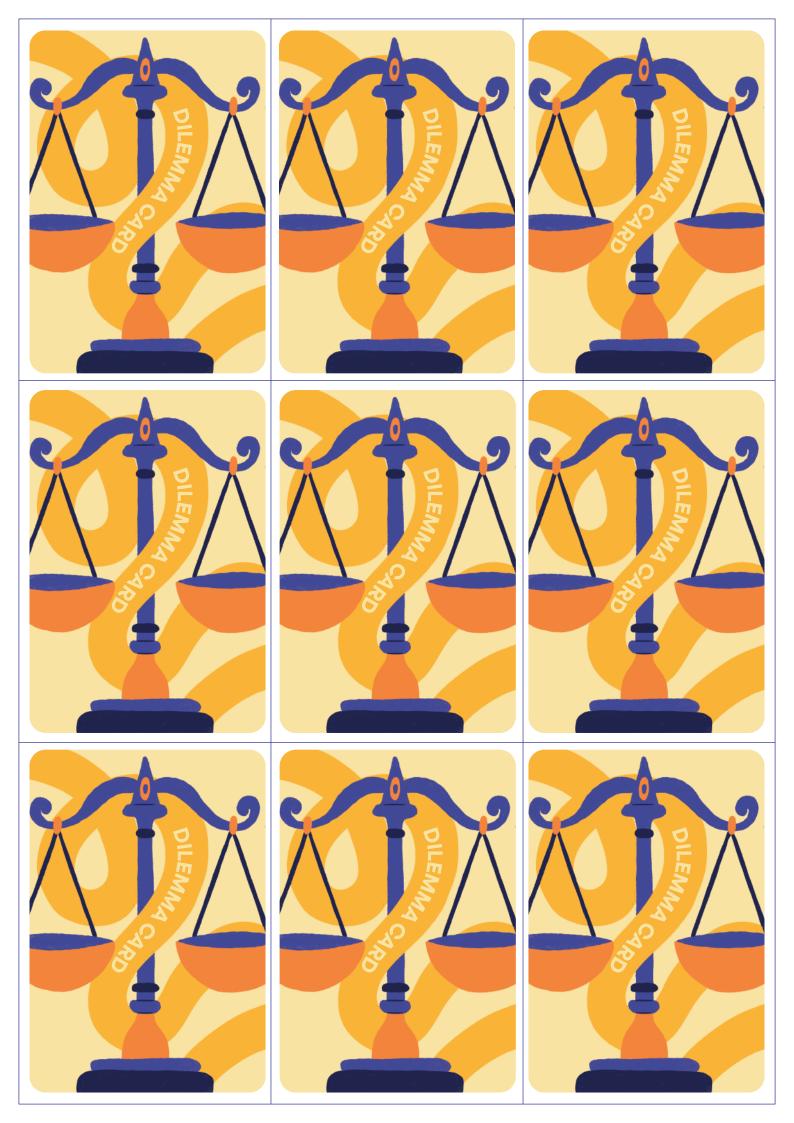


...personal sharing builds authenticity and trust with participants.









You've received an anonymous complaint about inappropriate trainer behavior towards a participant. There's no proof. What do you do?

(A)

Investigate quietly to protect everyone involved.

Address it openly to show transparency and accountability.







Your co-trainer uses an activity that unintentionally promotes cultural stereotypes. What do you do?

Give immediate feedback during the session to counter the message.

Wait and speak with them privately to maintain team integrity.





You're leading a session on

human rights, and

a participant expresses

extreme views against

minority groups.

What do you do?



A participant consistently flints with you despite your boundaries. It's affecting your focus. What do you do?

Confront them directly to protect your role and focus.



Try to ignore it and hope it stops without confrontation.





A participant discloses they're taking medication

for a mental health condition

but asks you not to inform

anyone. Later, they have

a visible crisis. What do you do?



A participant comes out as LGBTQ+ during the project. Another group from a conservative background starts isolating them. What do you do?

Address the issue openly to stand for inclusion.

(B)

Handle it carefully behind the scenes to avoid conflict.







to challenge views respectfully.



Shut it down firmly to protect the group's safety and values.





Participants ask for fewer

atructured pessions and

more free time.

The program becomes

unbalanced.

What do you do?





confidentiality to ensure safety.



Respect their privacy to maintain trust.









Intervene during the session to set an example.

Wait to discuss it privately to avoid public







embarrassment.



to the plan for consistency and reaching objectives.



Adapt to participant needs even if learning objectives shift.

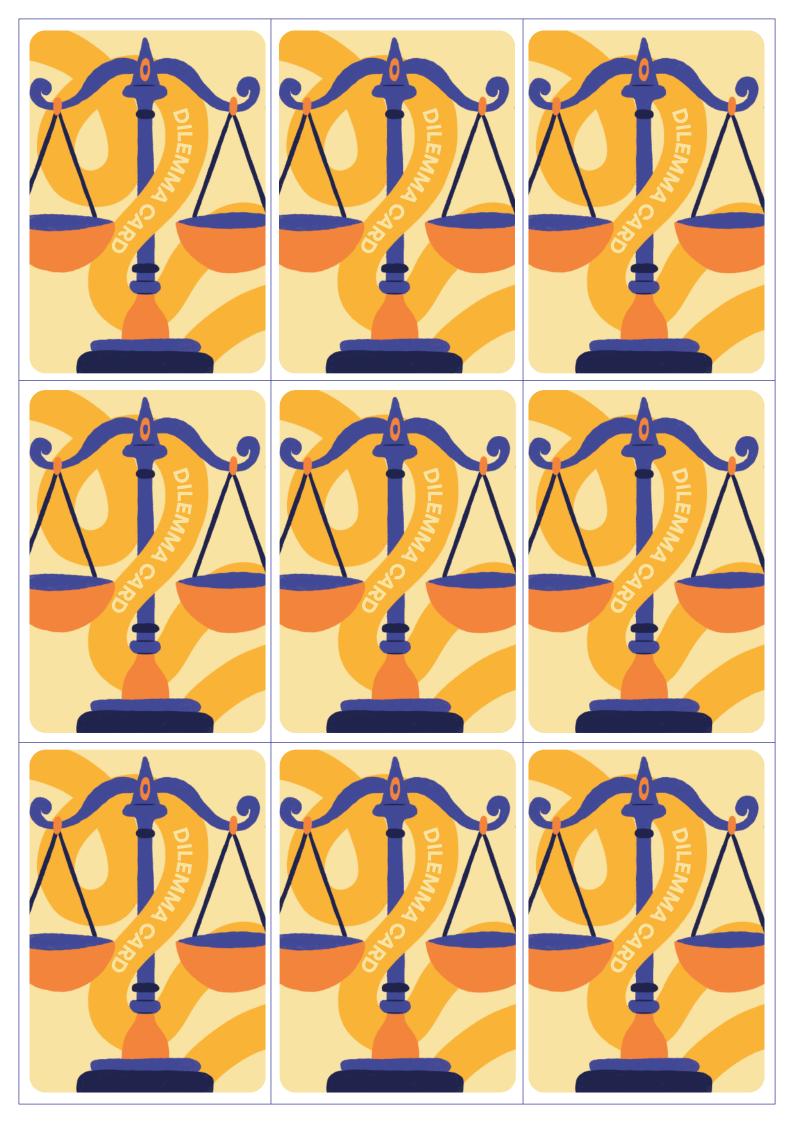


A participant is homesick and says they want to leave. Their organization insists they must stay. What do you do?

Support their wish to go home.

Encourage them to stay for their growth.





During a training session, you realize your activity is culturally irrelevant or misunderstood. What do you do?

Adapt or stop the activity to remain relevant.



Continue to maintain the session's intent.



You receive feedback that

your facilitation style feels

too "process oriented"

and unrelatable.

What do you do?

Adapt your approach to be more engaging.



Explain your methods and stand by them.



Adapt your approach to be more relatable and inclusive.



Clarify your approach and continue as planned.





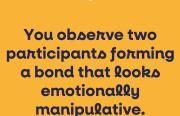
You receive feedback that

your facilitation style feels

too "direct and repult oriented" and unrelatable.

What do you do?





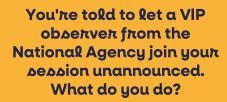
What do you do?

Intervene to prevent harm.



Wait and observe to avoid assumptions.





(A)

Adapt the session to impress them.

Carry on as normal to preserve authenticity.



You know a fellow trainer is underqualified and is delivering incorrect or misleading content. What do you do?

Challenge them immediately to ensure quality.

Wait until after the training to avoid disrupting the flow.



A participant with a disability is being "helped" by peens in a way that feels patronizing. What do you do?

Intervene, even if it's awkward.

Let it go to avoid embarrassment.







You're overworked, underpaid, and emotionally drained mid-project. What do you do?

(A)

Speak up and ask for support.

Push through to stay professional.



You're working with a participant who doesn't follow any group rules due to "creative freedom". What do you do?

(A)

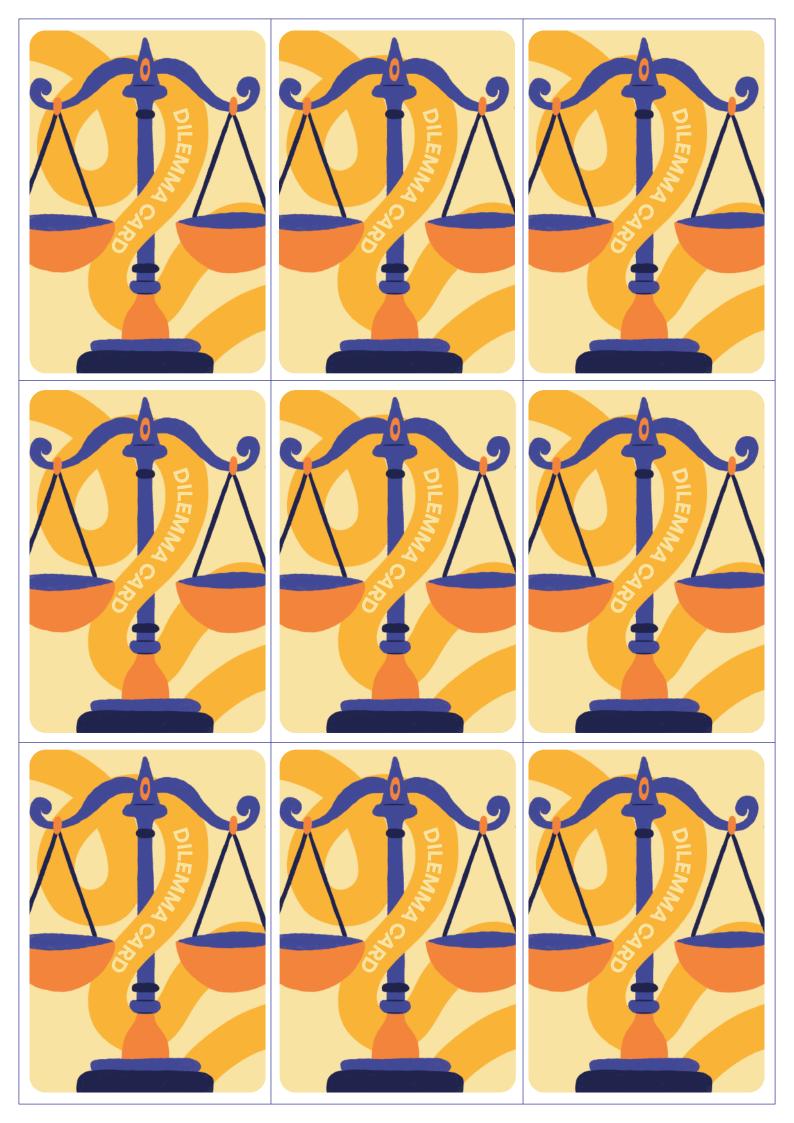
Enforce the rules to maintain structure and fairness.

Allow flexibility to support self-expression and autonomy.









A funding report requires participant quotes, but only a few participants filled in an evaluation questionnaire. What do you do?

Write some quotes yourself to meet expectations and deadlines.

Use only real feedback, even if it means submitting a weaker report.







You know one team member is romantically involved with a participant. It hasn't disrupted anything—yet. What do you do?

Address it to protect professional boundaries.

Stay out of it unless it starts affecting the group dynamic.







You're facilitating a session on identity, and a participant refuses to engage due to political trauma. What do you do?

Respect their choice and allow them to step back.



Encourage participation to support growth through discomfort.







You are organising a training course funded by Erasmus+ Programme and you need to decide if you want to charge a participation fee from participants. What do you do?

Charge a fee to boost commitment and cover extra costs.

Keep it free to ensure equal access for all participants.







credits for dilemma: Yasir Syed

You notice that other organizations receive similar or larger funding despite delivering lower-quality projects. What do you do?



Maintain your high standards. even if it feels underappreciated.

Lower the bar slightly to stay competitive and secure funding.







credits for dilemma: Yasir Syed

A participant, who is a minor, shakes their intention to join a violent extremist / radical group. What do you do?

(A)

Intervene and inform authorities to protect them and others.

Avoid formal action and try to guide them through dialogue and trust-building.







credits for dilemma: Eduard Oganyan

Street art challenges rules and should not be restricted by any legal boundaries. What do you do?

Support legal frameworks to maintain public order and respect shared spaces.

Defend artistic freedom street art should remain unregulated to stay authentic.







credits for dilemma: Eduard Oganyan

One participant refuses to join activities, preferring to just observe and discuss. Their choice starts affecting others some feel judged, some withdraw, and group dynamics shift. What do you do?

Respect their choice and keep participation voluntary to honor individual needs.

Ask for full engagement to maintain group safety and collective learning







credits for dilemma: Eduard Oganyan

You're both the trainer and coordinator in a project. As a trainer, you want to offer a safe, open space. As a coordinator, you must enfonce nules like neimbursement procedures. What do you do?

Prioritize structure and enforce the rules, even if it limits the learning atmosphere.

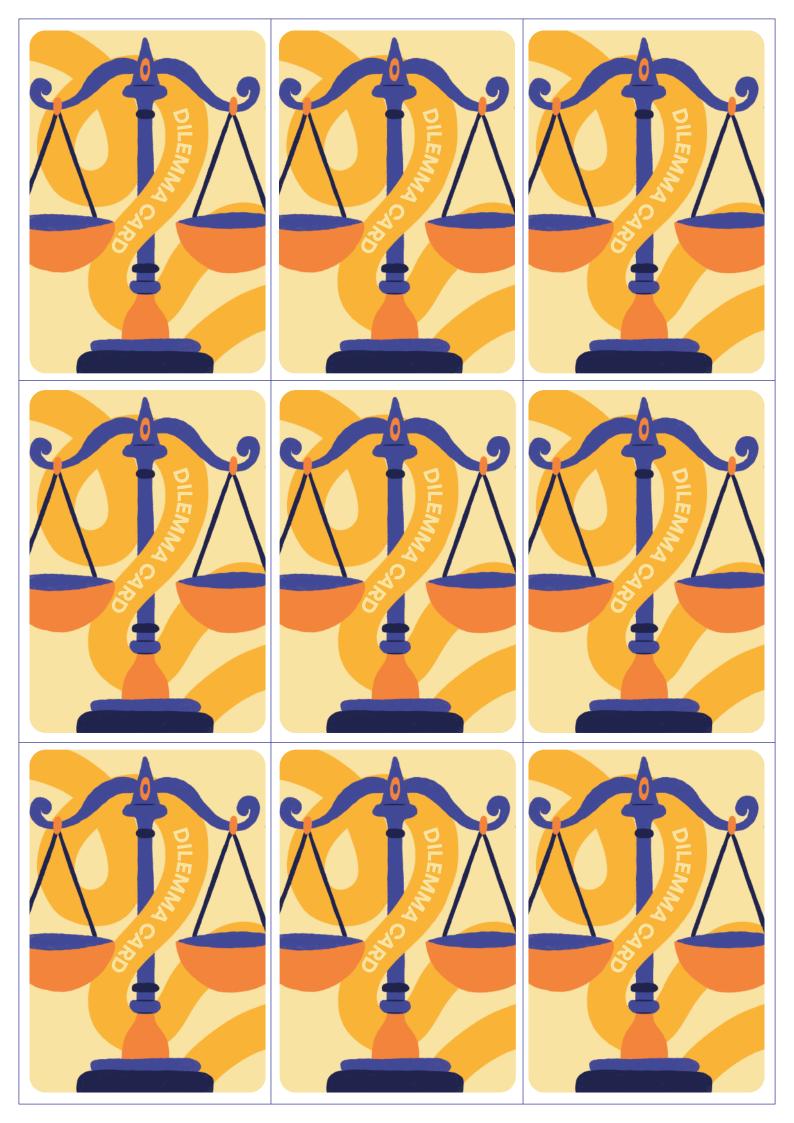
Loosen the rules to protect the safe space, even if it compromises coordination tasks







credits for dilemma: Wolfgang Sieberth



As a trainer, I believe that...

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...if participants aren't engaged, it's one them.



...if they're disengaged, it's on us to adapt and meet them where they are.



...it's okay to cancel a session if I'm feeling overwhelmed — wellbeing matters.



...professionalism means showing up and pushing through, no matter what.



...we should only speak from identities we personally hold, to avoid misrepresentation.



...educators sometimes need to represent perspectives they don't embody to foster inclusive dialogue.





As a trainer.

I believe that...

As a trainer.

I believe that...







A participant wears a

provocative T-shirt with a violent

message targeting a specific nationality. Some laugh it off due to current political tensions:

others are offended and feel it's

hate speech. What do you do?

As a trainer.

I believe that...



As a trainer, I believe that...



...emotional techniques are powerful tools to deepen learning and engagement.



...using emotion to influence participants crosses the line into manipulation, not education.



...games and roleplays are valuable tools — even if they cause discomfort, they can lead to growth.



...respecting
emotional
boundaries
means avoiding
activities that
might make
participants
uncomfortable.



Address it openly with the group to unpack the boundaries between political expression and hate speech.



Handle it privately, acknowledging the political context while avoiding further polarization in the group.









A participant repeatedly seeks deep conversations with you during breaks.

At first, you welcomed it — but now it's cutting more and more into your personal time.

What do you do?



Set clear boundaries to protect your energy and personal space.



Continue the conversations to support the participant's learning and curiosity.







You notice that a participant've been recording parts of the training sessions without informing anyone. What do you do?



Address it openly with the group to reinforce consent and privacy norms.



Handle it privately to avoid public shaming and preserve trust.



As a trainer, I believe that...



...my identity
is private —
what matters
most is the work
I deliver.



...being open about who I am helps participants feel seen and represented.



