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Appreciative Inquiry into passion for learning

Using the principles of Appreciative Inquiry combined with self-reflection, storytelling, visualisation and creative expression



Aims

- To get into contact with your own passion for learning
- To increase awareness of your own learning and strengths as a learner
- To encourage a positive approach towards learning during the activity



Group

- Any



Needs

- Handout "Appreciative Inquiry into passion for learning"
- Material for drawing or creative expression (e.g. pastels, crayons, water-based colours, flipchart paper, clay, play dough, etc.)
- Nice background music



Time

- 90 mins



Step by step

Divide the participants into pairs and give them the handout for this exercise in three steps:

Step 1: Remember your story

First, individually, the participants take a few minutes to remember a moment in their lives when they were **really passionate about learning something** and write it down.

Step 2: Tell your story

Second, they tell the story to their partner in as much detail as possible. Together, they are invited to look deeper into what was experienced in the story, using the questions given in the handout. After this step, they exchange roles: the storyteller becomes the listener and vice versa.

Step 3: Imagine the future

The participants imagine themselves in the future, being passionate about learning during a similar activity (e.g. training course, EVS). The partner helps the visualisation process using the guiding questions from the handout. After some time, they exchange roles again.

Afterwards, both are invited to draw a future image of themselves using the creative material and tools provided (with some nice inspirational music in the background).

When the drawings are finished, they share their images on the 'Wall of Passionate Learning'. The gallery remains throughout the activity and serves as a source of inspiration during the learning process.

Identifying & documenting

Describing outcomes

Introducing Youthpass

Role of facilitator

**Debriefing**

The exercise usually ends with an exhibition, but if there is still time, you may use some of the following debriefing questions:

- How did it feel to talk about your passion?
- Was it easy to remember the stories?
- How did listening to each other's stories affect you as a listener?
- What have you learnt about 'passion for learning'?
- How was it to imagine 'passionate learning' in the future?
- What steps are you willing to take towards that vision?

**Adaption**

- The main part of the method is based on storytelling about personal experiences. Some people might tend to focus only on (negative) experiences of learning from the formal education system. You might have to point out to them that learning does not only happen in schools, but that it is part of everyday life.
- This exercise could also be used in the context of mentor talks with individual volunteers, as well during mentoring sessions for group EVS projects when setting the stage for dealing with learning in EVS.
- Perhaps, with some adapted instructions and questions in the handout, the same method could be used within the youth exchange and youth initiative context as well.

**Tips**

Before using this method, read a bit more about Appreciative Inquiry in order to gain a better understanding of the logic and philosophy behind it. You may also come up with your own personal example of when you were a passionate learner and tell this story to the group to clarify the instructions.



Handouts

Appreciative Inquiry into passion for learning

Step 1: Remember your story

Individually, take a few minutes to remember **a moment in your life when you were really passionate about learning something**, when you were fully engaged and motivated to learn more about it and perhaps even lost the sense of time passing. What happened? Please write it down...

Step 2: Tell your story

Tell this story to your partner in as much detail as possible and together, look deeper into the experience behind the story, using the following questions:

- 1). How did you feel during that event? What were the key emotions?
- 2). What was the colour of your passion?
- 3). What were the consequences of the passion for the learning process?
- 4). How did it affect learning outcomes and results?
- 5). How did it affect people around you?
- 6). If you look at the roots of that passion, what was there in that situation (e.g. environment, topic, approach, other people etc.) that inspired you?
- 7). What was there in yourself that helped you spark that passion for learning?
- 8). What does all this tell you about your strengths as a learner?

Now, swap roles. The storyteller becomes listener and the other way around.

Step 3: Imagine the future

Guide your partner in visualising the future, following the guiding instructions and questions:

Imagine your learning process during this activity (e.g. training course, EVS) as being even more inspiring. How does it look? What is the source of inspiration for you? What is it that awakens passion in you? How do you see yourself in that image? What do you do? If you say something, what do you say? What values do you demonstrate? Now keep that image in a way you would like it to be kept.

When the image is clear in your head, switch roles.

Finally, you are both invited to **draw these images** using the creative materials and tools provided. While doing this, do not think too much and do not judge your artistic skills. Just follow your feelings. Enjoy!



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