# Youth Worker 2.0

## DEALING WITH COMPLICATED SITUATIONS

## A GUIDE

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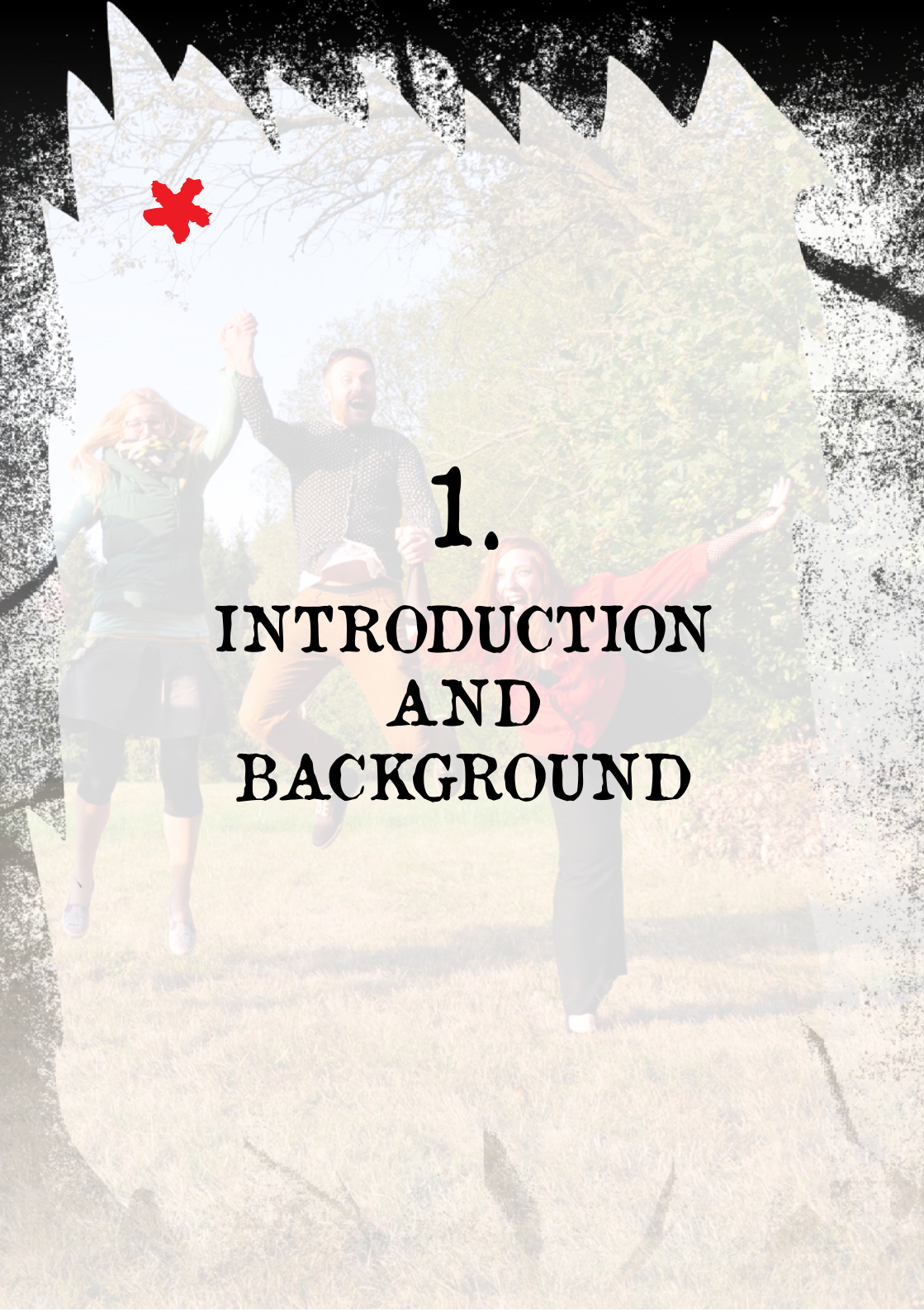

# 1.

# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

# Introduction

**Once upon a time, there was an international youth project** with several situations negatively influencing the group of participants. With this as a starting point, the coordinating organisation INEX-SDA started to observe the needs of leaders and trainers in their network, communicate with possible partner organisations and come up with idea of a series of three training courses. The idea that emerged was to focus on the most frequent issues that come up when working with groups of participants – complicated situations, inclusion, and attitudes in projects. That's how the project Youthworker 2.0 came into life. Its aim: to support the quality of youth work by raising the competences of youth workers in our networks.

The first training course was held from 19th to 26th September 2016 in Chata Doubravka in Horní Sokolvec near Chotěboř, Czech Republic. 24 participants from 6 countries and 5 trainers worked for a week on various topics connected to prevention and solving the complicated situations, that frequently occur during educational projects and activities.

The participants of this training (youth leaders, youth workers, trainers) are now able to:

- deal with complicated situations that appear when working with groups;
- reflect their own approach to the various types of complicated situations;
- apply methods and tools that help maintain motivation and energy during voluntary projects;
- understand what makes their activities high-quality and have a space for sharing their experiences in international contexts.

This booklet is a result of this training and hopefully it will be useful for other leaders and trainers within and outside the Alliance network.

# The network & the partners

**The Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations** is an International Non-Governmental Youth Organisation that represents national organisations which promote intercultural education, understanding and peace through voluntary service. The Alliance, founded in 1982, is presently made up of full, associate and candidate members in 28 countries worldwide.

Each member organisation runs an annual programme of International Voluntary Projects in their own country and exchanges volunteers with each other following the Alliance Quality Charter that stresses on the added value of volunteering, its educational aspect and on following quality standards agreed by members.

The way the Alliance considers participation is reflected in the management of the network. Based on democratic structure, Alliance works on its initiatives through an annual plan of action thanks to voluntary participation of staff and board members, active volunteers of the member organisations to 8 different committees and working groups.
www.alliance-network.eu/alliance-quality-charter-ivs/

**INEX-SDA** is a non-governmental and non-profit organization, established in 1991 that focuses on the field of both volunteering and non-formal learning. Its mission is to initiate and foster an open-minded society and active citizenship by organizing and implementing volunteering projects, educational activities and campaigns not only in the Czech Republic, but elsewhere.

In various regions of the Czech Republic, INEX-SDA organizes international volunteer projects and social integration programs, environmental education and rural development. Besides sending volunteers abroad and coordinating projects in the Czech Republic, the non-profit organization initiates and maintains educational activities (both development and intercultural ones), and campaigns (GLEN, Football for Development), including inclusive volunteering. Moreover, it provides space for the development of volunteer's own activities in the Volunteer Club. INEX-SDA is the main organiser of the YouthWorker 2.0 project.
Website: www.inexsda.cz
Facebook: www.facebook.com/inexsda/

**Legambiente** is an Italian environmental association who bases its activities on scientific environmentalistics. The association is an Alliance and CCIVS (Co-ordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service) member.

The activities come out in different ways: environmental monitoring, awareness campaigns, voluntary ones, workcamps for children, youth, adults and families, lobbying addressing decision makers, drafting of scientific reports and policy papers. Legambiente works with a keen eye on children and youth because the association is aware that this is the way to build a better future.
Website: international.legambiente.it/
Facebook: www.facebook.com/legambiente.onlus

**TransFúzia** is a society in which value of the people, quality of their lives, access to resources and level of control over their lives doesn't depend on their gender identity or expression, sexual orientation or genitalia, and in which the gender policy comes out of respect to diversity and differences. The mission of the organisation is to raise the quality of trans and intersex people in all areas of their lives. The main activities consist of organizing campaigns and awareness-building activities, educational activities, advocacy and dialogue with decision makers, or networking among similar organisations
Website: www.transfuzia.org/
Facebook: www.facebook.com/transfuzia/

**Xchange Scotland** has a number of years experience in delivering international projects for volunteers. It aims to inspire international volunteering around the world and around the corner, as it was set up by young Scottish people in 2007 to help other see the world and develop communities along the way.
The organization sends volunteers to take part in short-term workcamps organized by international partner organisations and also hosts a number of these projects in Scotland each year. It has also been an active sending and hosting organisation for EVS (one of the most active ones in Scotland), with a plenty of volunteers (both as individuals and groups) sent and hosted short and long-term, and brought some of the first EVS volunteers to Glasgow. As well, it regularly sends groups on Youth Exchanges under the Erasmus+ programme and runs non-formal global educational workshops with both young people and adults around the topics of intercultural education, citizenship and participation. Xchange Scotland has worked with schools, youth organisations, resident forums, arts organisations and informal groups across Scotland with their global education work.
Website: www.xchangescotland.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/xchangescotland

**Egyesek Youth Association** is a group of active, passionate and committed youth workers, trainers, coaches and volunteers. Its mission is to inspire, empower and support youth in successfully taking responsibility in their lives and the lives of their communities, which will happen through local, national and international programmes such as trainings, youth exchanges, voluntary camps and community development projects.

The activities are based on non-formal learning methods with a strong emphasis on the personal and professional development of individuals, youth workers, leaders and NGOs. Within the activities, a non-formal international network was established, connecting other non-profit organizations which share the same values. Egyesek Youth Association cooperates with them regarding youth projects and provides a professional support in the field of youth work, coaching or internships.

Egyesek Youth Association has a lot of experience in youth projects, especially in training and exchanges that involve topics such as dance, media and communication. Moreover, as a member of International Synergy Group, personal development trainings are often organized. Egyesek is also a candidate member in Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations and a full member in CCIVS.
Website: www.egyesek.hu
Facebook: www.facebook.com/egyesek
Vimeo: www.vimeo.com/egyesek

**Young Researchers of Serbia (Mladi istraživači Srbije)** is a non-profit, non-governmental organization founded in 1976 whose main aims are environmental protection, environmental education, youth exchange and work with young people as well as promotion of sustainable development, scientific creativity and volunteering.

As an umbrella organization, it gathers 26 clubs and societies from all over Serbia, such as Geographic Exploring Association, Student's Biological Research Society, Ethno Club etc, whose members take active part in the activities, among which you may participate in research camps, eco-schools, campaigns, volunteers' exchanges including both hosting and sending EVS volunteers, trainings, international workcamps and international cooperation.
Websites: www.mis.org.rs
Facebook: www.facebook.com/mladiistrazivacisrbije

# An intro to Erasmus+

The EU Programme "Erasmus+ 2014 – 2020" is built on the achievements of more than 25 years of EU programmes in the fields of education, training and youth, covering both an intra-European as well as an international cooperation dimension and including sport activities. Erasmus+ has thus been explored as the result of the integration of the European Commission's predecessor programmes including the Lifelong Learning Programme, Youth in Action and Erasmus Mundus.

There has been a focus on a wide range of opportunities under Erasmus+ for youth organisations and groups working with young people. There has also been emphasis placed on the various requirements potential participant organisations – including informal groups of young people – should carry out before applying for funding.

An overview of the three main Actions has been presented: Mobility for Young People and Youth Workers (Key Action 1); Strategic partnerships and Capacity building projects (Key Action 2); Shape youth policy - meetings between young people and decision-makers also called "Structured Dialogue" funding (Key Action 3). The latter is providing young people the opportunity to interact with decision-makers on issues that really concern them and to consequently influence the policy decision—making process.

Some key facts and figures of the programme have also been presented through statistical graphics, especially as regards its overall budget (€14.7 billion for seven years, from 2014 to 2020) and the proportion allocated to provide funding for youth projects (10% of the total budget).

The main different types of mobility activities - youth exchanges, volunteering, and youth worker development – have also been introduced with a special reference to the current transnational training course which is funded through the Erasmus+ programme under the KA1 opportunities.

# 2.

# GUIDING IDEAS

# What is non-formal education?

Non-formal education is an organised educational process, that gives young people the possibility to develop their values, skills and competences other than the ones gained in formal education.

Those skills (also called soft skills) include a wide range of competences, such as interpersonal, teamwork, organisational, conflict management, leadership, intercultural awareness, self-confidence, responsibility and problem-solving skills.

To be sure that your organisation provides non-formal education activities it is important to have in mind that there is some quality indicators we advise you take into consideration.

1. The assessed needs of learners and society and the mission and values of the organisation are translated into objectives. For example, if an organisation has inclusion as a value, then they would have objectives which match, such as: ensuring participants with a disability are supported to feel equal and invlolved within the project.
2. The objectives are clearly defined, adjusted to participants needs and co-created with them.
3. The educational methodology selected is suitable for the learning process
4. The necessary learning resources are available
5. Resources are used in a sustaible cost effective and responsible way
6. Educators, trainers, volunteers, facilitators have the necessary competencies and are prepared
7. Communication between all actors is managed effectively
8. Learners influence their learning process
9. Learners understand their learning outcomes and transfer them
10. All actors are involved in continuous evaluation process

Source: 'Quality Assurance of Non-Formal Education. A Framework for Youth Organisations'. Available at: http://www.youthforum.org/publication/quality-assurance-of-non-formal-education-manual-a-framework-for-youth-organisations/

**EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES:**

| FORMAL | NON-FORMAL | INFORMAL |
|---|---|---|
| Usually focused on knowledge | Usually focused on knowledge, skills, attitudes & values | Is accidental, unguided & unconscious |
| Mistakes are punished | Mistakes are welcome as opportunities to learn | Mistakes are welcome as opportunities to learn |
| Teacher as an authority | Youth worker as a mentor | No mentor |
| Happens in schools | Happens anywhere | Happens anywhere |
| Has targets & objectives | Has targets & objectives | No objectives |

**SETTINGS FOR ACTIVITIES:**

| FORMAL | NON-FORMAL | INFORMAL |
|---|---|---|
| Schools – classrooms, sport halls | Community Centres | Streets |
| Universities, auditoriums | Youth Clubs | Festivals, fiestas |
| Companies | Libraries | Shopping centres |
| Exhibition halls | NGO workplaces | Parks and public spaces |

# Communication & feedback

In order to be involved in non-formal education, we need to learn how to communicate effectively. Therefore we have to be aware that people communicate in 2 levels: the emotional and the practical one. For conflict prevention we need to separate them so that we first pay attention to emotions, then we can focus on practicalities.

Two types of communication can be differentiated: asymmetric and symmetric. In asymmetric communication a facilitator sets himself outside from the participants. He is directive and giving instructions to the others. It's often used in formal education. When it comes to symmetric communication, the participants matter and reflect their needs thus they take active part in the learning process. This means that the facilitator is a part of the group - a common feature of non-formal education.

The two types of communication can overlap. We can use both approaches just to be aware of them and know how, when and why we are utilizing them.

Feedback is used when there's a need to change somebody's behavior and/or flow of the situation. In those cases we need to express clearly what we would like them to do differently ("I would be happy if you...") and make an agreement on how to do it next time.

**BASIC PRINCIPLES**

- Right time, right place (ASAP after something happened, when we have enough time and nobody is disturbing us...)
- Speak for yourself

**RECIEVING FEEDBACK**

- Say thank you
- Make sure you understand, ask questions if necessary (but do not defend yourself)
- Do not deny emotions of your partner

**WHAT IS NOT FEEDBACK**

- generalization ("every time, always, never...")
- predictions ("you did it on purpose")
- judging, labelling
- unrequested advice
- irony

During the course there were regular opportunities to offer feedback after each activity to those that delivered it. Suggestions, new ideas, and listening to different opinions generated new learning as a result of this feedback.

# Values in our work

Values are absolutely central to our work as Youth Workers. Values are what guides our decisions, our activities and how we face complicated situations. Youth Work has very different histories in different European countries, but over the past years there has been attempts to try to define the values behind Youth Work and non-formal learning on a European level.

In the training we were divided into small groups to discuss which values are important in our youth work practice. After that, we made a larger group to come to a final consensus. This method to develop group consensus is called Snowball. For more details and other group dialogue tools go to page 19.

When dealing with values we found out that discussions were sometimes emotional and differentiated according to where in Europe the participants came from. In certain circumstances, some participants were able to foresake the values which they felt highly important at the beginning of the discussion in the name of compromise.

Not everybody will all agree on the same values. But within an organisation it is important that workers seek to live up to the values of the organisation and their own personal values.

From this group activity we did on the training course, according to the participants, these are the values most commonly-held:

# Mediation

Mediation is a dynamic, structured and interactive process to try to find out what is behind a conflict, what kind of emotions, fears and sense of injustice are, to come to an agreement between the parts. A mediator is a person that assists and helps to resolve the conflict between the disputing parties by using specialized communication and negotiation techniques.

In mediation, the parts in conflict take their position depending on their needs. The things that can influence the way that people behave in a conflict are:

- the importance of conflict's subject
- the importance of the relationships with your partner
- fears
- assumptions about the future, about what the other will think about them
- sense of injustice
- ability and motivation to solve the conflict

Mediators have to use a wide variety of techniques to guide the process in a constructive direction and to help the parties find an optimal solution. Mediators facilitate the interaction between the parties and promote an open communication between them.

Some of the communication techniques that mediators can use are:

- try to find something they have in common
- find something positive
- show interest
- encourage
- pay attention to emotions
- remind of reality
- be specific
- non-judgmental

The objective of mediation is to come to an agreement but sometimes this is not easy. In this case, is important to keep in mind the technique B.A.T.N.A - the Best Alternative To a Negociated Agreement.

# Team dynamics

**GOALS**

Participants share common goals of the project, which are clearly explained to them at the beginning. These goals should be SMART(ER):

S – Specific
M – Measurable
A – Achievable
R – Realistic
T – Time based
(E – Entertaining)
(R – Reliable/Relevant)

**NORMS**

There are defined norms on which behaviour is accepted within the
group and which is not. It is important to have on mind different culture background of each participant of international projects.

**LEADERSHIP**

Different leadership styles exist depending on:

- personal characteristics
- group
- specific situation

**MOTIVATION**

Keep up the motivation of the participants as well as of the trainers! Make sure participants understand their purpose on the project. Think of some methods to keep motivation up (relaxation methods, awards and others).

**INTERACTION AND COMMUNICATION**

Verbal and non-verbal communication, problem solving, and giving feedback (SEE PAGE

**TEAM ROLES**

Each person in a group has his/her role in a team, which is understood by other members. Members of a team seek out certain roles and they perform most effectively in those that are most natural to them.

According to Meredith Belbin, there are nine following team roles: Plant, Resource Investigator, Co-ordinator, Shaper, Monitor/Evaluator, Team worker, Implementer, Completer/Finisher, Specialist.

## ATMOSPHERE IN THE GROUP

How to create a positive atmosphere in the group? Here are several ideas:

- use teambuilding activities to create a friendly environment and build trust among the participants
- show people you care about them, treat them individually as well as a group
- create opportunities for special shared moments
- be creative, make surprises or long term games (such as the game 'Secret Friend')
- give participants enough free time and show them some relaxation techniques
- create a challenging atmosphere in some occasions, but safely

There are 5 main stages of group development according to Bruce Tuckman: Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing and Adjourning.

| STAGE | ROLE OF LEADER | EXAMPLE |
|---|---|---|
| Forming | Give general explanation and a comfortable setting. Propose social activities, ice breakers, name games. | Participants arrive, and have different expectations of the programme. Trainers provide a setting for them to gather a common understanding of the programme, initiate name games, prepare a social activity |
| Storming | Be aware of potential conflicts, to deal with these conflicts. Listen to both sides and take suggestions from group and propose solutions, conclude conflicts, and reflect upon | Participants share their own experiences and discuss different opinions. Participants begin to define their positions and roles within the group. They may be shy or talkative, active or lazy etc. Trainers and participants give both positive and critical feedback within group situations, which may create potential conflicts. |
| Norming | Make group focused, act equally, support the norms, plan team building games and problem solving ones. | Collectively participants can reflect on feedback and find solutions that support the group to develop their own norms. The method used to solve problem could be Forum Theatre. |
| Performing | Adapt the norms, encourage personal responsibility, gather positive feedback, support the process. | The group works effectively as a team, and solutions to problems or situations are easily found. For example, while using Forum Theatre, participants are able to discuss, communicate and act without support from the trainers. |
| Adjourning | Gather feedback, be prepared for low energy of the group. Try to create motivation and energy for individuals as well as the group. Propose not highly demanding activities, for example relaxing ones. Plan a farewell party/ activity. | Participants feel part of a team, but the end of the project is approaching. This may cause them to have low energy levels, even be less interested in the program. Or they may have higher energy levels because they are looking forward to going home. Last moments of reflection take place and contacts and resources are shared. Finally, the group enjoys a farewell party as a last activity together. |

# Facilitating group dialogue

Youth work often brings together different people with diverse opinions. Group decisions may take a long time and be problematic due to clashes of ideas. That is when the group leader should play the role of the facilitator in order to help to make the decision-process both more effective and successful.

Moreover, facilitation may be applied while exploring the topic in depth, or sharing a wide range of life experiences. For all these purposes various methods of group dialogue facilitation are used.

When selecting an appropriate method, the facilitator should follow these basic rules: there should be a clear understanding of the dialogue goals, the discussion should follow the track of the topic and each participant should be involved in the dialogue.

The facilitator explores the needs of the group beforehand and makes sure that every participant, who wants to speak, will have an opportunity to express themselves..

**METHOD: BAROMETER**

Description of the method: Show group a phrase and divide  a room the way that one side of the room represents full agreement, middle part is a neutral space and the opposite side of the room represents full disagreement. Ask them to express their opinion about the phrase by their position in the room.

Examples in youth work: Choosing a controversial phrase and letting people show their opinion without speaking.

**METHOD: SNOWBALL**

Description of the method: Start with the group split into pairs. Ask the pairs to come up with 3 answers (for example) to the question you are discussing. Once each pair has their 3 answers, they come together with another pair to make a group of 4 (with 6 answers in total). This group then has to decide on which 3 answers to take forward from the 6. The group of 4 then snowballs into a group of 8 and they have to decide on their 3 answers. This process continues until you have a group decision on the 3 answers they most value.

Examples in youth work: Expressing opinions to others and reflecting on them, learn how to compromise.

**METHOD: FISHBOWL**

Description of the method: Have 3 or 4 chairs in the centre of an outer ring of chairs. The outer ring is the 'fishbowl' looking in to the 3 or 4 chairs in the middle. Only those in the middle can talk – the others must listen in silence. Members of the outer ring can tap one of the people in the centre on their shoulder and take their place. Only then can they talk.

Examples in youth work: Quality listening. Making participants heard in the group where everyone wants to speak and be active.

**METHOD: SPEED DATING**

Description of the method: Arrange chairs facing each other (in a line or a circle). Invite participants to sit opposite each other. Invite a question or topic of conversation. After a few minutes, ring a bell (or similar) and participants change places to speak with someone new.

Examples in youth work: Getting to know a wide range of people quickly. Brainstorming a topic.

**METHOD: WORLD CAFE**

Description of the method: Put out some tables. At each table there is a question (usually on a flip chart). Each table also has a 'reporter' to capture the conversation that occurs on a table. Participants are divided into groups and move round the different tables giving their views and responses to the questions.

Examples in youth work: Gathering the opinions of a large group of people. Going deeper into a topic.

**METHOD: SILENT FLOOR**

Description of the method: You place a large roll of paper – or 10 flip charts stuck together on the floor. You choose a topic and you invite participants to write responses, thoughts, ideas, questions or drawings. Participants then move round the paper reading what other wrote and adding to their comments and thoughts.

Examples in youth work: Brainstorming on an idea. Providing a slower pace of 'dialogue'.

# Leadership

**ACTIVITY NAME:** Musem of Leadership.

**GOAL:** Deeper understanding of leadership

**OUTPUT:** Creative way to demonstrate leadership styles

**MATERIALS:** Pens, paper, coloured accesoris, crown, scissors, witch hat,star, wig, post-it notes, crowns, brushes - any arts and crafts material you can think of to help...

**ROLES:** 3 volunteers to be one of 3 statue representing 3 different styles of leadership. 1 guide of the museum who is the facilitator and explains the rules.

The activity starts with preparation the room and explaining characters their roles. Participants are not allowed to come inside the room until they all gather before the entrance, and the facilitator explain the story behind the Museum of Leadership.

Unfortunately, the museum has been robbed, and statues of different styles of leaders got damaged. Participants are then asked to make the statues again according to the written descriptions provided. They may use all the available material.

Then they are divided into 3 groups, each working on creating one statue. It is important that the statues are quiet, do not move or do not act. They simply let participants do it their own way. At this stage, participants decorate the statues with different material based on the character. They may change the position of the statues and they should give their statue an appropriate title.

After that, the facilitator invite all participants to take a look at the statues, and ask them to share ideas in which situations this leadership styles are useful and write them on post-its. There is, then, time to go around the statues while enjoying music and read the papers.

After that, the statues leave the room. The Museum of Leadership is based on the theory of 3 classic leadership styles where the given names embody autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire styles of leaders.

On our training coiurse we did this activity - these were the conclusions of the group about the 3 different classic leadership styles...

**1. 'THE DARK QUEEN' (AUTOCRATIC):**

This leadership style is good for...
- troubled envirovnment
- rescue and emergancy situations
- organisations under big change
- when children don't respect rules
- working with government
- short deadlines with decisions
- problematic groups
- short term programmes

**2. 'LIBERTY WARRIOR' (LAISSEZ-FAIRE):**

This leadership style is good for...
- training for future leaders
- well forming group
- experiences professionals, skill artist
- well established group
- long term EVS
- people who know the info beforehand

**3. 'MS. BRIGHT STAR' (DEMOCRATIC)**

This leadership style is good for...
- group development
- creative workshops to handle difficult situations
- workshops with kids
- democratic decisions
- deep discussions

# 3.

# COMPLICATED SITUATIONS

**The heart of our training course** was about space to explore complicated situations within an international youth work context. We asked participants to come up with examples that they had experienced or heard about. The group then voted on which 6 of these examples they would like to explore more deeply.

Using the forum theatre methodology the 6 groups presented their complicated situation and then explored it further with the rest of the participants. Each group then reflected on and summarised the learnings they had taken from the 6 complicated situations...

# Complicated Situation #1

### TWO YOUNG PARTICIPANTS WITH DIFFERENT LANGUAGE SKILLS ON A YOUTH EXCHANGE

**SITUATION:** This situation occured in the context of a youth exchange between two young participants with different language skills, specifically different English levels. On the one hand, there is a participant with a low English level, shy, not confident with himself and with no experience of going on an exchange before. On the other hand, there is a participant with a good English level, self-confident, with experience in exchanges, but a bit rude. He doesn't show respect and consideration for the participant with the language barrier, and is even sometimes a bit cruel and mocking to the other person.

**SOLUTIONS:** Some of the responses we can try to deal with the situation include working through non-verbal methods, like mute activities or games like pantomime, and taking into account the importance of teambuilding activities. It is also highly important to set up the rules at the beginning, and make clear for all participants how essential it is to respect them.

The trainer's attitude is vital in the way that they must try to encourage the excluded participant, give them positive feedback and tasks they can be responsible for. It is advisable to work in groups, make use of support of other participants of the same nationality in order to make it easier for shy participants to express their ideas and make their participations more active.

teaching languages
YOUTH WORK
YOUTH WORK IN WHICH LEARNING IS ENCOURAGED
SKILL
CHARTERN-
CES
TONGUE
IN FOREIGN
C. AND BASIC
TECHNOLOGY
LEARN

# Complicated Situation #2

**THERE ARE CLASHING ENERGY LEVELS IN A GROUP**

**SITUATION:** There is a youth worker coordinating a workcamp on a music festival dealing with a large international group who is disappointed with the project. One of them came to the leader with concerns that the others weren't doing the same job and that the situation was too unbalanced. The leader had to mediate and find a resolution.

We organised a forum theatre playing the situation around three main characters: the Youth Worker; 2) the Active participant; 3) The Passive participant.

**SOLUTIONS:** During this activity we found, in cooperation with our peers playing simililar situations, some solutions:

1. It is important to involve and ask the participants about the solutions and also include the executive positions for more complex decision-making procedures and respecting the contract (with volunteeers / participants).
2. The leader can act as a mediator.
3. It is important to find a rapid and at least short-term solution to reassure the group that the situation is in hand.
4. It can be useful to foresee some small presents as a positive reinforcement to maximise group productivity.
5. It can be also useful to introduce an immediate reward system.
6. It can be also useul to set up a quick team building activity to re-engage the group.
7. It is vital that the leader/youth worker always tries to empathise with the participants' issues.
8. It can be also important to delegate tasks amongst passive and active participants and reduce the time of difficult/boring tasks.
9. In case of short activities it is important to prioritise tasks and manage time efficiently.
10. It is essential to take care of the well-being of the participants (mentally and physically).
11. Finally... it is worth remembering sharing a cake is always good for the group environment!

# Complicated Situation #3

**DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR FROM A PARTICIPANT DURING A TRAINING COURSE**

**SITUATION:** The trainer and both participants recognized a loss of focus on the topic, confusion within the participants and inefficient use of time. We explored several solutions, including:
1. try to engage and include participants;
2. try to reason with the disturbing person on an emotional level (face-to-face conversation);
3. isolate/ignore the negative behaviour to continue the class with the rest of participants.

**SOLUTIONS:** We agreed that including the disruptive participant, giving them tasks and creating a collaboration with other participants might be the best solution but also the most difficult one to implement. We also decided the trainer possesses the key in this situation.≠

# Complicated Situation #4

**DIFFERENT AGES AND EXPERIENCE IN THE GROUP**

**SITUATION:** There is a young, inexperienced participant in the group for whom it is the first time on an international training course. He is very enthusiastic and keeps asking questions all the time, which is disruptive especially to a participant who is finding the pace too slow. The trainer does not know the best way to deal with the situation in a way to satisfy and encourage both participants.

**SOLUTIONS:** Different levels of satisfaction within a group is usually not primarily based on different ages and experience but the participants' motivation to apply for the training. That is why the selection process of participants is of crucial importance. It should happen in cooperation with the partnering organizations and according to certain criteria. We came to a conclusion that once the situation occurs already, an intensive and longer teambuilding is useful. See page 33 for the chapter on Teambuilding activities.

Other solutions to solve such complicated situations:

- Organize time slots for questions from the less experienced participants.
- Ask more experienced participants what their solution would be for the situation which happened. See page 15 for the section on Mediation.
- Adapt the structure of the programme.
- Make sure that contributions from the more experienced participants fit.

Responses to be avoided:

- To give extra work to the more experienced participants randomly. This will not help their learning process and can create frustration.
- To blame more experienced participants for not being empathetic and co-operative enough is not a solution.
- Certain (personal) issues should not be discussed publicly. For example, the conflicts between the more experienced participant who is angry, and the young participant who is very enthusiastic.

# Complicated Situation #5

**THE VOLUNTEERS ARE TOO TIRED AND THE PROGRAMME IS TOO DEMANDING**

**SITUATION:** Volunteers are working more hours than agreed prior to arrival due to poor planning from the host organisation. There is a pressure on the group leaders as the goals of the project are not being met and the volunteers are unhappy.

The situation between the group leaders and the group is getting intense, some people have health issues because of the hard conditions and everybody asks for more free time. Solutions proposed: bring everyone together to find a solution, express sympathy. Some participants may not be courageous enough to speak up for themselves face to face with the leaders, therefore a group meeting can be more effective than a one-to-one feedback.

Try to rediscover the participants' motivation, bearing in mind the different group development stages. Do not make participants feel bad/guilty for not keeping up with the goals of the project if those were too high. Talk to the local partner/manager.

**SOLUTIONS:** In this situation, the needs of the volunteers are going against the goal of the project. If they get more free time the project will not be finished on time. Therefore, we reached the conclusion that the team leaders cannot solve this problem without talking to the local manager or asking for external help as some compromises need to be settled.

The trainer should always have in mind the goals of the project as well as the needs of the participants. It's not only the responsibility of the leader but also the manager to make a realistic contract and a schedule for the project. It can also help to avoid empty spaces (e.g. waiting for materials or tools) and unnecessary effort. Keep focused on the solution, not the problem.

# Complicated Situation #6

**A GROUP OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE YOUTH EXCHANGE ARE FED UP WITH THE PROGRAMME**

**SITUATION:** Participants are not satisfied as they had a different idea of the project when they applied. They thought they will have more free time, more time to party and fewer workshops to attend. So here we can see where exactly the problem started. In the first step of promoting the Youth Exchange and selecting the participants. Also, they were not well prepared by the partner organisation, whose task was to explain the duties of participants at the exchange and the programme would look like. During a few days of the Youth Exchange, fed up participant were not active in the workshops, they did not respect the rules and they were coming late to the activities. It all shows a bad example to other participants.

**SOLUTIONS:** The youth worker has the key role in this situation. They have to stay calm and to accept that this situation can happen and not everybody can like the programme, although a lot of effort is put in it. We tried to calm down the participants and ask them to share and complain about the situation. Which took a lot of time, but it seemed important for the participants. It was important to ask them what is it that they need on the exchange so that they would like it.

Later on, youth worker asked them to write down three things they like and don't like at the Youth Exchange. The aim of that was to discuss and try to make both sides sacrifice something. During discussions, we explored trying to find out what are participants good at and engage them in this activity. One example of this is giving them more responsibility in activities that they like, such as assisting you in media workshops, including them in handmade/art workshops, giving them freedom to create their evening activities etc.

It is important to acknowledge that this situation can happen and that participants can come with completely opposite expectations. In that case we have to accept that and see how much can we help them stay and include them, adjust to some of their needs (with certain limits, of course), but also if things cannot get better, then we have to accept that they want to go and that it is not something they want. As our work cannot be useful for everyone, but we have to give everyone a try.

# 4.

# TEAM-BUILDING AND RELAXATION ACTIVITIES

# Building the team

Team building is crucial when there is a common goal within a group of people. Introducing team building when working with youths helps create a trusting, motivating and effective environment.

Examples of the team building activities we participated in are as follows:

**PENDULUM**
This activity involves three people whereby one person is in the middle with their eyes closed leaning back and forth in the hope their partners catch them. This is very effective in building trust and helps create the feeling of safety in a group.

**NIGHT OF THE LANTERNS**
Every person has to light a 'candle' and keep it alight until the end of a trip, helping those whose light 'burns out, 'answering questions along the way. This activity makes the participants feel that the others care and therefore helps build relationships.

**ISLAND GAME**
This involves reaching an 'island' with the help of only two 'stones' as a group from different islands. This activity encourages participants to work as a team.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the team building activities throughout the course and we definitely recognised and felt the benefits.

# Energizers

Every morning, after relaxing sessions and before main ones, we had some energizers. Every day, somebody else showed us one.

It is important to clearly explain the rules of the game, to give an example and then to start. After that, there was a short time to give feedback. When and where to play it, with what kind of participants, how to end the game, some "upgrades" etc. are also important things to know before of doing energizer.

Here are few of them, we did at the training course:

**FIND YOUR PAIR**

Every participant gets one piece of paper with a character, animal, movement, etc. There is as many pairs of things as pairs of participants. After the facilitator gives a sign, participants can start moving through space and exchanging papers with other participants. After that, every participant should stop and look at the paper they have in their hand. They have to imitate the character, animal, movement, etc. that is written on their paper. Then they have to find the person with the same imitation as soon as possible. The last pair will be out of game. The game can go on until there is only one pair left.

**COLLAPSING SOLAR SYSTEM**

Participants are standing in the circle. Facilitator asks them to chose two persons from the circle, but not to tell anyone which person they have chose. They have to go around that two persons (the both way, from left and from right). After they have chose, facilitator gives a sign and the game can start.

**FRUIT SALAD**

Participants are standing in the circle. Facilitator gives them name of fruits (the number of fruits (small groups) depends on number of participants). When facilitator say the name of one fruit, everybody who are with that name should mix and change their places. That is how it is going with all of the fruits. It is good for beginning for facilitator to be slower and then faster and faster. Like that participants have to be more and more concentrated.

# Relaxation tips & techniques

The relaxation sessions are light activities that make you calm and concentrated on yourself. In this project we used them as a part of our morning routine, to make us productive and relaxed. These sessions helped us in our waking up period and it made our mornings very colourful. For future projects, putting a relaxing session in for at least some of the mornings could be used in every group to really help prepare for the day ahead.

### THERAPY OF SENSES

The participants go into a room and get comfortable, while they are listening to nature/other calming voices, smell a pleasant aroma in the air, and see multiple candles lit around the room. After getting comfortable they concentrate on their own breathing and just relax. In the process there is a chocolate/fruit tasting, when everyone has to concentrate on the texture and taste itself. The session ends with them massaging each other, so it ends with the last sense, the touching. – This method is good for the mental state and helps to focus.

### YOGA

Yoga is a process that is built up slowly. Starting with breathing exercises, that then get combined with small movements. After that there are some basic Asanas with stretching. This way yoga is good energizer, improves body awareness and physical well-being, relieves stress and improves focus.

### BREATHING MEDITATION

This activity is about concentrating on your breath. Sit with a straight spine and enjoy the silence. It makes people relaxed and helps to empty their mind, so it is really refreshing.

### MANDALA COLOURING

The goal of mandala colouring is to forget about the issues in the forefront of your mind, and to clear your head while actively doing some basic movements.

# 5.

# USEFUL LINKS AND OTHER RESOURCES

# Open Space technology

Interesting way to let participants - Youth workers organize they activities in relaxing way. Save place to express themselves. Based on 'freedom rules' and easy descriptions.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY**

Rules:

- Law of Two Feet: whenever you feel like, use your feet to move somwehere else.
- When it's over it's over.
- Whenever it starts is the right time.
- Whoever comes is the right person.
- Make a report from each group.

Characteristics of Open Space:

- Structured way of free time
- Diverse
- Creative
- Inclusive in terms of participants be a trainers
- Opportunity for showing the participiants's gifts, skills, knowlege, experiences
- Challenging for those leading and for those participaiting as they recieve different leadership styles.
- Building up empathy

# Reflection & evaluation

During the Youthworker 2.0 training course we had the chance to reflect about our learning process, as well as feelings, emotions and impressions, every day after the activities. The reflections were does in groups of 4/5 under the support of one trainer. Some of the evaluation techniques used in this training course have been:

**THUMBS-UP EVALUATION:** The trainers says quotes in relation with the activities and events accursed during the sessions and participants have to express their evaluation doing thumbs up (agree) and down (disagree).

**GRAPH OF THE DAY:** Participants have to draw a graph reflecting how they felt at various stages of the day. Time is along the x-axis, and how they felt along the y-axis. Simple, but effective.

**THE HAND PRINT:** Participants have to draw their hand print in a blank paper and they have to answer different question in each finger. Questions are:

1. Thumbs: the most important thing you have learned.
2. Point finger: something to highlight.
3. Middle finger: something you liked/ didn't like.
4. Ring finger: something you cannot keep out of you mind.
5. Little finger: little moment/thing you like or dislike.

**BLOB TREE:** The trainer give to participants a paper with a tree full of blobs (figures) expressing different emotions. Participants must chose which Blob represent better themselves.

**DIXIT CARDS:** Trainer spread some Dixit cards in a table and the participants have to chose the most representative card for themselves.

**PIE CHART:** The participants have a pie chart. For each slice of the pie there is a topic that participants have to marked depending how much satisfied or in satisfied they feel about it.

**AQUARIUM:** This activity was used as aquarium mid-term evaluation methods. In a flip chart you draw on aquarium separated in different parts with different topics. For each part the participants have to draw a little fish. If they draw the fish in the upper part means 100% of agree or satisfaction and in the lower part means 0% of agree or satisfaction.

# Learning journals and blogging

Alot happens in a day

- the Earth travels 2.5 million km through space
- your fingernails grow 0.0137cm (unless you cut them!)
- 294 billion emails get sent
- you breathe 28800 times
- 371000 babies are born (and 378000 iPhones are sold!)
- you laugh on average about 20 times
- and, apparently, you have as many as 70000 thoughts

How to capture and share what happens - particularly when involved in a youth project? Learning journals are a one way to capture and reflect on what has happened during a day. It's amazing what you can do with a pen, some paper and a bit of encouragement. In this guide, you'll be invited to be a map-maker, a scientist, an artist, a social media star, a teacher, a detective, a comic book writer and even a ghost. All from the comfort of your own journal! There are many different kinds of ways to use journals. It can be a record of your daily thoughts, a travel log, an exercise diary, a Learning Achievement Book (LAB), a place where you jot down your goals or to-do lists. The secret is just to start and find your way by doing.

Another great way to share your reflections with others is through blogging and the different online platforms that are out there. Here are a few considerations on why and how to use visual materials for social media management. Images are very effective and useful to transmit a message clearly, to work about trainings' contents (e.g. elicitation techniques, critical analysis), or to visually recreate a situation during reflection and feedback groups. One photo says more than one hundred words: it's accessible to anyone and can easily overcomes language barriers. It is fundamental to report a training with photographies, images taken from the resources, participants' pictures and photo-collages of several activities. It will help a lot during the preparation of the training, putting into effect the contents and promoting the dissemination of materials.

# Useful guides and inspiration

The Youthpass Guide. Published by SALTO-YOUTH Training and Cooperation Resource Centre in 2009, revised in 2011. Available on-line: bit.ly/YouthpassGuide

Quality Assurance of Non-Formal Education - A Framework for Youth Organisations.
Authors: European Youth Forum Working Group on Non-Formal Education, Pool of Trainers and Facilitators of the European Youth Forum
Available on-line: bit.ly/NFEquality

Quality Youth Work - A common framework for the further development of youth work.
Report from the Expert Group on Youth Work Quality Systems in the EU Member States.
DG Education and Culture, European Commission, 2015
Available on-line: bit.ly/QualityOfYouthWork

Pathways 2.0 towards recognition of non-fromal learning / education and of youth work in Europe. Created in partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe 2011. Available on-line: bit.ly/RecognitionOfNFE

Art for Art's Sake - An Introduction to the Use and Value of Forum Theatre.
Available on-line:bit.ly/TheatreForum

Leadership styles (Changing Minds website).
Available on-line: bit.ly/Leadership_Styles

Feedback and symmetric/assymetric communication.
ŠVEC, Jakub. UMÍME DRUHÉMU SDĚLIT, CO SE NÁM V JEHO CHOVÁNÍ LÍBÍ A CO NELÍBÍ (POSKYTUJEME ZPĚTNOU VAZBU). Projekt Odyssea, 2007.
Available on-line: bit.ly/Svec_ZpetnaVazba

T-Kit 10: Educational Evaluation in Youth Work.
Available on-line: bit.ly/EducationalEvaluation

Mediation.
ŠIŠKOVÁ, Tatjana. Facilitativní mediace: řešení konfliktu prostřednictvím mediátora. Praha: Portál, 2012.

Group dynamics. ŠVEC, Jakub. Týmová práce. 2006.
Available on-line: bit.ly/Svec_TymovaPrace

Group Dynamics Phases (Your Article Library website).
Available on-line: bit.ly/GroupsDynamics

T-Kit 6: Training Essentials by Council of Europe, European Union.
Chapter 4.1.2. Stages of group development.
Available on-line: bit.ly/GroupDynamics_T-kit

Donelson R. Forsyth. Group Dynamics.
Available on-line: bit.ly/Forsyth_GroupDynamics

Learning Journals
Graphic Express. Fantastic guide to using pens and papers creatively.
Authors: Mark E. Taylor, Siiri Taimla, Buzz Bury, Tanel Rannala
Available on-line: bit.ly/1x5ngkB

Learning Out of the Box. SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre.
This card game was created for youth workers, mentors, coaches and trainers. It is intended to be used as a tool addressing the topic of 'learning' in a fun, engaging and inspiring way.
Available on-line: bit.ly/2lDjoaY

Follow the progress of the YouthWorker 2.0 project and get involved in the conversation at - www.facebook.com/YouthworkerTraining

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