



Creative Learning for Life

AN ERASMUS+ PROJECT

Compendium

Creative teaching and training methods
in Life-Skills development



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Introduction

Creative Teaching is an educational approach that includes innovative strategies, techniques, and methods to engage students actively and to enhance their learning experience. This approach differs fundamentally from more traditional teaching methods by focusing on creativity, both in how content is delivered and in how students are involved in the learning process. The main psychological theory of learning of the **Creative Teaching** method is **Constructivism**: a theory of learning where learners construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiences and reflection on those experiences. It emphasizes active, student-centered, and contextualised learning through exploration, collaboration, and reflection. Key Elements of Constructivism in Creative Teaching method are

1. **Active Learning:** Learners are active participants in their own learning process. They engage with materials, explore concepts, and construct knowledge through hands-on experiences and problem-solving. In Creative teaching, students are encouraged to engage in activities such as experiments, and collaborative tasks that require them to apply concepts creatively, thus actively constructing their own understanding.
2. **Learning as a Social Process:** Learning is seen as a social process where interaction with others plays a crucial role. Collaboration, discussion, and social interaction help learners refine their understanding and knowledge. Creative Teaching often involves group work, peer discussions, and collaborative activities, emphasizing the role of social interaction in learning.
3. **Learning Through Exploration and Discovery:** Learners discover knowledge through exploration and inquiry, often in contexts that are meaningful and relevant to them. The process of discovery helps them to internalize concepts more effectively. In Creative Teaching, teachers encourage students to explore topics of interest, ask questions, and engage in inquiry-based learning. This could include activities like problem-based learning and creative challenges.
4. **Student-Centered Learning:** The learner is at the center of the learning process. The teacher's role is that of a facilitator or guide, helping students navigate their own learning journey rather than directly imparting knowledge. In Creative Teaching, the teacher acts as a facilitator, providing the tools, resources, and guidance necessary for students to explore and learn creatively. This approach supports student autonomy and ownership of learning.
5. **Contextualized Learning:** Learning is most effective when it is contextualized in real-world situations. Learners construct knowledge by relating new information to their existing knowledge and real-life experiences. Creative Teaching often involves connecting lessons to real-world applications, making learning more relevant and meaningful. This might include using real-life problems, case studies, or simulations that require students to apply what they have learned.
6. **Emphasis on Process over Product:** The process of learning—how students arrive at an answer or conclusion—is considered as important as the final product or outcome. Reflecting on the learning process helps students deepen their understanding. In Creative teaching, teachers focus on encouraging exploration, creativity, and experimentation. Success is not only measured by the correct answer or final product but also by the student's learning journey, creativity, and critical thinking.

The constructivism approach shapes Creative Teaching through:

1. **Empowering Students:** Constructivism empowers students to take charge of their own learning, making them more independent, confident, and motivated learners.
2. **Emphasizing Reflection:** Constructivist approaches encourage reflection on experiences, helping students to make sense of what they learn and how they learn it.
3. **Supporting Diverse Learners:** Creative teaching, guided by constructivism, allows for differentiated instruction, addressing the diverse needs, interests, and abilities of students.

What is Creative Teaching?

Creative Teaching aims to make education a more dynamic, engaging, and effective process, encouraging students to think in a more creative way, work collaboratively, and take an active role and ownership of their own learning process and learning outcomes. Creative Teaching is characterized by:

Innovative Instructional Strategies: Creative Teaching involves using a variety of instructional strategies that include problem-solving activities, role-playing, and the integration of arts and technology. The objective of Creative Teaching is to make the learning process of the student more dynamic and more interactive.

Student-Centered Learning: Creative Teaching emphasizes the experiences of the student at the center of the learning process. It often involves differentiated instruction tailored to meet the diverse needs, interests, and abilities of students, allowing them to take ownership of their learning process and learning outcomes.

Encouraging Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving: Creative Teaching encourages students to think critically and develop problem-solving skills. Creative Teaching often presents students with challenges or scenarios that require them to think and to respond creatively and find solutions for the presented challenges.

Fostering enjoying the process of Learning: By offering Creative Teaching workshops teaching and training situations will become more relevant to students' lives. Creative Teaching encourage the joy of learning. It makes the learning process and learning experiences enjoyable, sparking curiosity and a desire to explore new ideas and new solutions.

Creating a Positive Learning Environment: A creative approach to teaching often leads to a more dynamic and enjoyable classroom atmosphere. This positive environment fosters the joy of learning and encourages students to be curious, to ask questions, and to engage deeply with the content, the learning process and the learning outcomes.

Collaboration and Communication: Creative Teaching often involves collaborative activities where students work together, share ideas, and learn from each other. This emphasize and enhance the development of communication and teamwork skills.

Assessment Through Creative Means: Instead of relying on traditional assessments, evaluation, tests and quizzes, Creative Teaching may also involve assessments like portfolios, creative projects, reflections, presentations, or peer assessments, which allow students to demonstrate their understanding in various ways.

Learning becomes Relevant and Meaningful: Creative Teaching connects lessons to real-life situations, making learning more relevant and meaningful for students. When students see the practical application of what they are learning, they are more motivated and prepared to invest in their education.

Improves Retention and Understanding: When students are engaged and can relate to the content of learning, they are more likely to retain information and understand it more deeply. Creative Teaching helps solidify concepts by presenting them in multiple and creative ways, making it easier for students to grasp the meaning and message of the content and this may be easier to remember.

Building up Confidence and Motivation: Creative Teaching also encourages students to take risks, to explore new ideas, and to express themselves in various ways, which contribute to build up their confidence. When students feel confident in their abilities, they are more motivated to explore, to succeed and failure may be easier considered as opportunity for learning.

Preparing Students for the Future: In today's rapidly changing world, creativity and adaptability are crucial skills for student. Creative Teaching prepares students to think critically, innovate, and adapt to new situations. It makes them better equipped for future challenges in their personal and professional lives.

Why is Creative Teaching Important for life skills development?

Creative teaching plays a vital role in Life Skill development, equipping students with essential abilities that go beyond the academic knowledge and are crucial for success in everyday life. Creative teaching encourages students to think critically and approach challenges from multiple perspectives. By engaging in activities that require innovative thinking and problem-solving, students develop the ability to tackle real-life situations effectively, finding creative solutions to complex problems. Creative Teaching often involves creative experiences, discussions, reflections and presentations. These activities help students develop strong communication skills, including the ability to articulate the learning experiences clearly, listen actively, and being engaged in meaningful dialogues and skills which are essential in both personal and professional relationships. In a rapidly changing world, the ability to adapt to new situations is crucial. Creative Teaching experiences exposes students to diverse learning experiences and encourages them to be open-minded and flexible in their thinking. This adaptability is key in handling life's uncertainties and changes.



Through group work and cooperative learning activities, Creative Teaching workshops helps students learn how to work effectively with others. They gain experience in teamwork, understanding different perspectives, and negotiating roles and responsibilities and skills which are invaluable in professional and private life. Creative Teaching empowers students to take initiative and to make decisions. By providing opportunities for making choices in learning activities, and real-world problem-solving scenarios, students learn how to evaluate options, make informed decisions, and take responsibility and ownership of their actions.

Creative Teaching often involves exploring emotions, personal experiences, and diverse perspectives through art, theatre, music, painting dancing and role-playing. This helps students develop emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, empathy, and the ability to understand and manage their own emotions and those of others. Creative Teaching allows students to express themselves in unique and meaningful ways, whether through writing, art, music, or other forms of creative expression. This freedom of expression builds confidence and helps students develop a strong sense of identity and self-worth, which is crucial for personal growth and resilience. By engaging in activities that require analysis, evaluation, and reflection.

Creative Teaching helps students develop critical thinking skills. These skills are essential for making informed decisions, solving problems, and reflecting on personal experiences and growth throughout life. Creative Teaching often emphasizes the process of learning, experimentation, and embracing mistakes as opportunities for growth. This approach fosters a growth mindset, where students learn to value effort, resilience, and persistence, which are key attitudes for lifelong learning and personal development. Many of the Life Skills developed through Creative Teaching, such as Problem Solving, making decision, Coping with

Stress and Coping with Emotions, Effective Communication, Empathy, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Personal Relationships and positive Self-Awareness are also highly valued in the workforce. By integrating these Life Skills in professional Education and Training, Creative Teaching better prepares students for future careers and the nowadays demands of the being a valuable employee for employers.

Creative teaching appeals to a more self-directed learning, which require that students manage their time, set goals, and take responsibility for their own learning process and learning outcomes. The nurtures of independence and self-discipline are essential skills for success in both personal and professional life.



Advantages of Creative Teaching compared with traditional way of teaching

Creative Teaching methods offer several advantages over traditional teaching methods. While traditional teaching often focuses on memorizing, lecture-based instruction, and standardised testing, creative teaching introduces a more dynamic, student-Centered approach. Traditional teaching methods have their place, especially in delivering structured and standardized content. Creative Teaching offers significant advantages in terms of engagement, understanding, skill development, and preparing students for the complexities of the modern world.

Below you will find an overview of key advantages of Creative Teaching compared to Traditional Teaching:

Increased Student Engagement	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT engages students through interactive, hands-on activities, projects, and collaborative learning. This approach captures students' interest and keeps them actively involved in the learning process.	TT often relies on lectures, note-taking, and passive listening, which can lead to disengagement, especially for students who do not thrive in a lecture-based environment.
Enhanced Understanding and Retention	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT helps students understand and retain information better by presenting content in varied and meaningful ways, such as through real-world applications, storytelling, and creative projects.	TT focuses on memorization and repetition, which may result in short-term retention but not deep understanding or long-term memory.

Developing Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT encourages students to think critically, analyse problems, and develop innovative solutions. It often involves open-ended questions, challenges, and scenarios that require creative thinking.	TT tends to emphasize right or wrong answers, with less focus on developing students' ability to think independently or solve problems creatively.
Appealing to Diversity of Learning preferences	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT adapts to different learning preferences by using a variety of instructional methods, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetics activities. This inclusivity helps ensure that all students can learn effectively according to their preference and needs.	TT often relies on a one-size-fits-all approach, typically favouring auditory and visual learners while neglecting other learning preferences.
Enhancing Collaboration and Communication	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT often involves group work, discussions, and peer interactions, helping students develop teamwork and communication skills. These are essential life skills that are also highly valued in the workplace.	TT usually centres on individual work and competition, with limited opportunities for students to collaborate or communicate with one another.
Fostering Creativity and Innovation	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT encourages students to express themselves creatively and think outside the box. This approach nurtures innovation and helps students develop original ideas.	TT typically follows a structured curriculum with less room for creativity, focusing on delivering content and meeting specific academic standards.
Supporting Emotional and Social Development	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT supports the emotional and social development of students by incorporating activities that involve empathy, reflection, and self-expression. It helps build emotional intelligence and social skills.	TT often emphasizes cognitive development and academic achievement, with less attention to the emotional and social aspects of learning.
Encouraging a Growth Mindset	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT promotes a growth mindset by valuing effort, experimentation, and the learning process itself. It encourages students to view challenges as opportunities to grow and learn.	TT may promote a fixed mindset by focusing on grades, standardised test scores, and the idea that intelligence is static.
Relevance to Real-World Applications	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT connects learning to real-world situations, making education more relevant and meaningful. Students can see the practical applications of what they learn, which enhances motivation and engagement.	TT often focuses on abstract concepts and theoretical knowledge, which may seem disconnected from students' everyday lives and future careers.
Personalised and Differentiated Instruction	
Creative Teaching (CT)	Traditional Teaching (TT)
CT allows for more personalised and differentiated instruction, addressing the unique needs, interests, and abilities of each student. This approach helps all students reach their potential.	TT generally follows a standardised approach, which may not accommodate individual differences in learning preferences, paces, or interests.

Challenges of Implementing Creative Teaching into Education and Training

While Creative Teaching can be highly effective and offers a number of benefits, it also may include several challenges for teachers and trainers. These challenges may come from the demands of the approach of Creative Teaching itself, as well as from external factors such as lacking competences of teachers to teach and train in a Creative way, institutional constraints and/or student dynamics. Addressing these challenges requires a supportive educational environment, professional development opportunities, and a willingness to adapt and innovate

Below you will find an overview of some challenges of implementing Creative Teaching in education and training.

Time-Intensive Planning: Creative Teaching often requires significant time and effort to plan engaging lessons, develop innovative materials, and design activities that cater to diverse learning styles. Teachers may struggle to find the time needed to create and implement these lessons, especially if they are also managing large classes, administrative duties, or multiple subjects.

Lack of Resources: Implementing Creative Teaching methods may require resources such as materials for hands-on activities, or access to different learning environments (e.g., outdoor spaces, labs). Limited budgets or lack of access to these resources can hinder teachers' ability to carry out creative lessons effectively.

Institutional Constraints: Schools often prioritize standardized testing and adherence to a set curriculum, which can limit the flexibility needed for creative teaching. Teachers may feel pressured to "teach to the test" rather than focusing on creative approaches, which can stifle innovation and reduce the effectiveness of creative teaching methods.

Classroom Management: Creative Teaching often involves more dynamic and interactive activities, which can sometimes lead to challenges in managing the classroom, particularly with large or diverse groups of students. Teachers may find it difficult to maintain order and ensure that all students are participating and staying on task, especially in more chaotic or unstructured activities.

Assessment Difficulties: Assessing students' performance in a Creative Teaching environment can be more complex, as traditional tests may not fully capture the learning outcomes. Teachers may need to develop new assessment methods which can be time-consuming and may not be as easily standardized.

Resistance to Change: Both students and teachers may be resistant to new methods of teaching and learning, preferring the familiarity and predictability of traditional approaches. Overcoming this resistance requires time, effort, and sometimes professional development to help teachers gain confidence in using creative techniques and to help students adjust to more active and participatory learning.

Diverse Student Needs: Creative Teaching aims to appeal to diverse learning preferences and abilities but doing so effectively in a single classroom can be challenging, especially with a wide range of student needs, including those with learning disabilities or varying levels of prior knowledge. Teachers may struggle to create activities that are inclusive and accessible to all students, potentially leading to some students feeling left out or overwhelmed.

Inadequate Professional Development: Teachers may not have received adequate training in Creative Teaching methods during their education or professional development. This lack of training can make it difficult to implement creative strategies effectively.

Without proper support and training, teachers may feel unprepared to use creative approaches, leading to ineffective implementation and frustration.

Balancing Creativity with Curriculum Goals: While Creative Teaching is beneficial, it must still align with curriculum standards and learning objectives. Finding the right balance between creativity and meeting required educational outcomes can be challenging. Teachers may find it a challenge to integrate creative activities without sacrificing the depth of content that must be covered within a limited timeframe.

Overcoming Personal Inhibition: Some teachers may feel self-conscious or uncertain about using cre-

ative teaching methods, particularly if they are used to more traditional approaches. They might worry about losing control of the class or the perceived effectiveness of creative activities. This personal inhibition can limit the willingness to experiment with new methods, reducing the potential benefits of Creative Teaching.

Consistency and Sustainability: Maintaining creativity in teaching consistently throughout the school year can be exhausting, especially without adequate support or resources. Teachers may find it challenging to sustain creative energy and innovation over time. Burnout or a return to more traditional methods might occur if teachers do not receive ongoing support and encouragement.



List of exercises

List of exercises	Life skills									
	Problem Solving	Critical Thinking	Effective Communication	Decision Making	Creative Thinking	Interpersonal Relationships	Self-Awareness	Empathy	Coping with Stress	Coping with Emotions
1. Non-verbal sound training						●	●	●	●	●
2. Action and reaction						●	●			
3. The speech						●	●			
4. The vocal canon						●	●			
5. The royal throne	●		●	●					●	
6. Object Creation	●		●	●	●					
7. Shootout				●			●		●	●
8. Tableau	●		●	●	●					
9. Zip Zag Boing			●	●				●	●	
10. Free creation	●		●	●	●					
11. The telegram			●				●			
12. The sculptor					●	●	●	●		
13. Is it me, perhaps?			●				●	●		
14. The photo	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		
15. Art in touch	●	●					●			
16. We ART Emotions						●	●	●	●	●
17. Warm up and body awakening			●				●	●	●	●
18. The golden thread	●			●		●		●	●	
19. The tamer				●		●	●			
20. Here and now				●			●	●	●	●
21. Painting Words	●									
22. Seeing Magic	●									
23. More seeing without fog	●									
24. Fantasy language									●	
25. Throwing balls									●	
26. Walking with the eye									●	
27. Cope with resistance								●		
28. What is empathy								●		

List of exercises	Life skills									
	Problem Solving	Critical Thinking	Effective Communication	Decision Making	Creative Thinking	Interpersonal Relationships	Self-Awareness	Empathy	Coping with Stress	Coping with Emotions
29. Making Rapport								●		
30. Empathy vs Sympathy								●		
31. Helping with empathy								●		
32. The creative proces					●					
33. Optimizing creative thinking					●					
34. Your creative power					●					
35. Making associations					●					
36. Book title					●					



Non-verbal sound training



LIFE SKILLS involved

01, 02, 03, 04, 05

- 01. Coping With Emotions
- 02. Coping With Stress
- 03. Empathy
- 04. Self-Awareness
- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

- 06. Problem Solving
- 07. Critical Thinking
- 08. Effective Communication
- 09. Decision Making
- 10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students are stimulated to the mutual listening as the basis of interpersonal relationships and non-verbal body language as a means of profound and unconventional communication
2. The students are able to approach a different way of understanding the relationship through a path that puts them at ease
3. Students learn to increase the perception of interpersonal relationships
4. Students are able to develop mutual interest within the group through fine, deeper listening



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Group exercise.

Through a warm-up activity, students will be encouraged to listen and perceive the relationship through sound; listening to the sound that is produced by the group and sharing their own sound within the group.

The exercise involves vocalizations that the students will make while walking in the space and using their hands to cover parts of their ears; they are asked to reproduce a specific sound, for example a vowel, or to sing a song they know, while placing their hands on the sides of their face, just in front of their ears and just behind, alternately, to see how the perception of the sound changes. For example, by placing your hands in front of your ears, the sound emitted by your vocal cords can be perceived as it is heard by the others.

Each student will then be encouraged to focus on sound as a relationship; listening as the basis of interpersonal relationship and non-verbal body language as a means.



TIME

15 minutes

Non-verbal sound training



GROUP REFLECTION

All the students meet in a single sharing circle to think together about the exercise they have just had, what they experienced and what they felt.

Reflection on what it means to increase the perception of interpersonal relationships through the non-verbal language of the body and the auditory language of sound.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- What insights/considerations emerged?
- What was learned about self and others?
- What did you notice in the group context as each one made their own sound?
- How did your perception of sounds change?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing interpersonal relationship skills?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?





Action and reaction

LIFE SKILLS involved

04, 05

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

1. Students strengthen their individual and collective perception regarding the effectiveness of non-conventional and non-verbal communication as a tool for interpersonal relationships
2. Students are stimulated to reciprocal action
3. Students develop mutual empathy, absence of judgment and self-awareness as rules of the exercise in managing relations



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Exercise in groups and in pairs

Through the guidance of the teacher, the students will be stimulated on a path where the interpersonal relationship is expressed through the validity of bodily communication and its consequent action.

An effective interpersonal relationship is also and above all based on the need to understand the message we receive and, consequently, to formulate a response that is appropriate to what is perceived, and which can in turn be understood.

Preparation of the environment: Students are invited to walk freely in the surrounding space. The environment should be spacious and silent to encourage concentration and perception of others.

Eye contact: During their walk, each student should pay attention to making eye contact with another classmate. This gaze represents the first point of interpersonal connection.

Encounter and initial position: When two students meet and make eye contact, they stop in front of each other. The distance between them should be sufficient to allow a safe and natural physical interaction.

Verbal silence: The participants must remain in complete verbal silence throughout the exercise. This verbal silence will help both to formulate an action to communicate a message. The focus should be on body language and non-verbal emotional exchange.

Proposing a physical action: One of the two students proposes a physical action that stems from the emotion hidden behind non-verbal communication (a smile or a facial expression, or a gesture, a body posture, etc.). The action should be a spontaneous and authentic expression, arising from the perception of the moment and the eye contact.



Action and reaction

Response from the other student: The partner receiving the action must respond with another physical action, representing their interpretation of the message received. The response should be appropriate and understandable, not through words, but in sync with the emotion and body language of the other person.

Repetition of the exercise: The exercise is repeated for several rounds, so that each student has the opportunity to interact with several classmates, developing awareness both in action and in response to that of others.



TIME

30 minutes



GROUP REFLECTION

All the students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about what they experienced and what they felt through the exercise, what emotions emerged and how bodily actions were interpreted. Students can reflect together on how the body has been used to communicate, how emotions have been translated into physical actions, and how verbal silence has facilitated interpersonal connection.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

It will be interesting to delve deeper into the concept of self-awareness within the relationship with others, proposing a common reflection around the questions:

- What did you feel during the exercise?
- Were you uncomfortable at times? If so, why?
- Did you feel embarrassed? If so, why?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing interpersonal relationship skills?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



The speech

LIFE SKILLS involved

01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 08

01. Coping With Emotions

02. Coping With Stress

03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

06. Problem Solving

07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

09. Decision Making

10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students are able to work on the expressive value of body language as a tool of communication and interpersonal relationship
2. The students are able to stimulate others
3. The students are stimulated to improvisation, listening to creative input
4. The students reinforce the concept according to which verbal language is accessory to non-verbal language



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Group exercise.

The exercise is easy to read and absorb. It is much appreciated by students because it focuses entirely on performance rather than result.

Students, in turn, are asked to improvise a monologue in an invented language, focusing on how to interact and connect with others, despite the language barrier. The emphasis is on creating clear, meaningful communication through non-verbal expression and emotional connection.

Character Creation:

- Students must imagine themselves as an important character (e.g., a leader, a diplomat, a teacher) who needs to communicate something important to a specific audience (e.g., citizens, a team, or a group of followers).
- Students must consider how their character would want to connect with their audience emotionally and intellectually, even without speaking a shared language.

Language Creation:

- Students will create and use an invented language, a sort of “grammelot” (a gibberish or nonsense language)—but the focus here is on the interpersonal aspect of communication, rather than linguistic accuracy.
- The sounds, gestures, and emotions students convey through the language must create a sense of clarity in their message, enabling them to connect with their audience emotionally despite the language barrier.

Audience Engagement:

- The most crucial part of this exercise is how well students can interact with their audience. It’s not about what is said, but how the character connects with others.
- The student must use body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, and energy to build a relationship with

The speech



the audience. The effectiveness of their communication is based on the audience's ability to feel the intent of the message, even if they don't understand the words, and respond with a congruent action.

Preparation Time:

- Students are given a couple of minutes to think about their character, their emotional state, and how they can engage their audience. This moment of reflection helps them plan the relationship they want to establish with the group, focusing on how their character will use interpersonal connection to get their point across.

Monologue Performance:

- Each student will perform their monologue for 2–3 minutes, using their invented language. The performance should highlight their ability to build rapport and engage with the audience, with emphasis on body language, gestures, and the emotional tone of their communication.
- The success of the performance will depend on the student's ability to create a strong interpersonal connection, making the audience feel involved and understood.

Interaction and Connection:

- As this is a workshop about interpersonal relationships, the interaction between the performer and the audience is key. Students should use eye contact, posture, and emotional energy to create a connection.
- Even though the language itself is incomprehensible, the student should be able to transmit their character's intent—whether it's urgency, authority, empathy, or joy—through relational dynamics.



TIME

20 minutes.



GROUP REFLECTION

All the students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about what they experienced and what they felt through the exercise.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

Verbal language conveys content (which in this case is not comprehensible since the language is invented) but, through nonverbal communication, interaction is regulated, interpersonal relationships are defined, influence can be exerted on others.

- What are the sensations as a spectator, what are the sensations as an actor?
- What are the feelings experienced when doing the exercise?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing interpersonal relationship skills?

The speech



- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

It is important to adopt a positive, encouraging attitude, commenting on and highlighting some relevant details regarding everyone's performance, but always in a total absence of judgement.





The vocal canon

LIFE SKILLS involved

01, 02, 03, 04, 05

- 01. Coping With Emotions
- 02. Coping With Stress
- 03. Empathy
- 04. Self-Awareness
- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

- 06. Problem Solving
- 07. Critical Thinking
- 08. Effective Communication
- 09. Decision Making
- 10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. Students are able to listen and observe others
2. Students develop awareness of themselves in relation to others and are able to modulate their voices and expressiveness in respect to the others
3. Students are able to build a positive environment together
4. Students are able to respect the rules, and the codes established collectively



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Group exercise.

The students will be taught a song with simple and easily assimilated lyrics and with a canonical melodic structure that will easily allow you to have a notable result if you rely on simple rules to enjoy the exercise. The trainer tries to teach a traditional Jewish song whose lyrics are as follows:

LOY EL SEGOY

EL GOY EELHEM

LO LOY THE MEDU

OD MIHAMA



All this is inextricably linked to effective communication and a fluid and attentive interpersonal relationship. In fact, each student will have to resort to group relationships and listening to others in order to harmonize the voices, emotions and different experiences that come from the participants in the experiment.



The vocal canon



TIME

20 minutes



GROUP REFLECTION

All the students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about what they have experienced and what they have felt through the exercise.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

Reflection on the concept of self-awareness in relation to another perceived during the exercise, encouraging a debate on the following issues:

- What were the most obvious difficulties in the exercise?
- Is listening to others difficult? Why?
- Was it easy or difficult to put yourself and your ideas and considerations in harmony with other people and their contributions? Why?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of interpersonal relationships?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

The vocal canon instrument is easy to understand and gives self-esteem and well-being to the group; when a group sings well and harmoniously, it is because it recognizes itself, recognizes the internal rules of communication and, therefore, it is a perfect example of a healthy and constructive interpersonal relationship with artistic pedagogy tools.

The royal throne



LIFE SKILLS involved

02, 06, 08, 09

- 01. Coping With Emotions
- 02. Coping With Stress**
- 03. Empathy
- 04. Self-Awareness
- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

- 06. Problem Solving**
- 07. Critical Thinking
- 08. Effective Communication**
- 09. Decision Making**
- 10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students experience the courage to decide in a potentially risky situation (they become aware that zero risk does not exist)
2. The students experience the spontaneous decision-making process
3. The students consider the context and potential consequences of their actions when making decisions
4. The students feel comfortable, establish a positive climate and prepare themselves physically and emotionally to get involved



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Group exercise.

All the students sit on chairs distributed evenly in random spots around the room and facing different directions. One of them, named by the teacher, stands up and walks to the point furthest from where he or she is standing. That student is now the king or queen. All other mates are subjects of the kingdom. The game begins when the king or queen begins to walk towards his/her throne.

The subjects must prevent him/her from sitting on the throne by sitting before him/ her. When a subject sits in the monarch's place, his or her old chair now becomes the new destination of the king or queen. This is repeated as the subjects continue to steal the monarch's throne.

The game ends when the monarch succeeds in sitting in a free chair.

The game can be repeated as many times as desired – until each student has played the role of the monarch or until the group loses interest.

Rules:

- The monarch must never run or walk quickly. They should always walk at a slow pace, appropriate for someone of their social standing. (Royals never need to rush because the whole world revolves around them and a king or queen should embody this awareness in their posture and movements.)
- The subjects cannot run either, but they can walk a little faster than the king. (They will inevitably run away, but the no-running rule helps maintain control.)
- When a subject gets up, they cannot sit back down; they must move to another seat.
- The trainer may say "freeze" and when they do, everyone must immediately stop where they are. This is especially useful for livelier groups and allows for control, allowing the exercise to be stopped at any time if it feels like it is becoming too chaotic...

The royal throne



MATERIALS

a chair for each member of the group



TIME

15/30 minutes



GROUP REFLECTION

All the students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about the exercise just completed, what they have experienced and what they have felt. The teacher could guide them to reflect on key aspects of decision-making. Questions like “How did you feel about making quick, strategic decisions?” or “What was the impact of your decisions on the group’s outcome?” could be used to tie the activity to the broader concepts of decision-making.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- How did you feel during the exercise?
- What made you get up or not from your chair?
- What motivated your strategy of movement or immobility?
- Did you take the context into account or not (before deciding how to act)?
- Did you find a parallel in the game and in real life with respect to your way of acting and making decisions?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of decision making?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?

The royal throne



NOTES

The game can get quite chaotic, but this chaos is very useful. In it, the stronger characters who try to control the group will have their voices stifled and the more reserved students will find a freedom in which they can make their own decisions.

The decision-making process in this exercise is personal and based on the actions of the other players. Often decisions have to be changed at the last minute due to the unpredictable dynamics that can develop.

The slower the monarch walks, the more interesting the game becomes as his lack of speed contrasts with the more frenetic movement of the subjects.

The purpose of the exercise is not to have a “winner” in terms of who sits first on the throne. What matters are the decision-making processes that emerge during the interaction between the monarch and the subjects, which will be discussed in the reflection. The real value of the exercise is in how all participants deal with the constantly changing circumstances. Every move, every decision that is made by the students — both the monarch and the subjects — reflects the processes of assessment, risk management and response that are fundamental to decision making. The “freeze” command can also provide an opportunity to stop and reflect on how individual and collective choices are influencing the final outcome. The challenge is to learn to make thoughtful decisions while being constantly influenced by external forces, as it happens in the real world.

Object Creation



LIFE SKILLS involved

06, 08, 09, 10

- 01. Coping With Emotions
- 02. Coping With Stress
- 03. Empathy
- 04. Self-Awareness
- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

- 06. Problem Solving
- 07. Critical Thinking
- 08. Effective Communication
- 09. Decision Making
- 10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students explore personal physical expression
2. The students can experience spontaneous decision-making in pairs and as part of a group



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Couple and group exercise

This is a physical theater exercise that requires students to work together in pairs or groups to create various shapes and objects using their bodies. The teacher provides them with instructions that they should follow.

1. Working in couples

Students are divided into pairs.

Each pair is asked to create different objects such as:

- A fork and a knife
- A pair of eyes
- A flower in a vase
- Sausages in a pan
- The teeth of a vampire
- etc

It is important to illustrate the initial prompts: show them what a fork might look like, both standing and lying down. After creating some objects, you should change the context, asking them, for example, to create a knife and fork in a fancy restaurant, an abandoned house, or a fast-food restaurant. What are the qualities of these places? The "pair of eyes" prompt is a useful starting point because the eyes are, as they say, the window to the soul. Ask them to present the eyes with different emotional states: happy, sad, angry, etc.

Encourage them to use their eyes, faces, and bodies to illustrate the following objects in different states:

A flower in a vase:

- in a broken vase
- 3 years later

Object Creation



Sausages in a pan:

- On a hot flame
- Stew
- On fire

Ask students to present one or two of the most interesting images.

2. Small groups

Divide the class into groups of three or four students and, in the same style as the previous exercise, ask them to make the following pieces of furniture for the house:

- Coffee table
- Kitchen Table
- Chair
- Armchair
- Sofa

Now ask them to consider the furniture in more detail as you offer them the following challenges:

- Reading lamp
- Fridge
- Tv
- Toaster

There is movement related to all of these objects so the groups should be able to animate them. For example:

- The fridge door can open, and what is inside?
- The TV works, and has many different channels... news, comedy, drama...
- The reading lamp has an on/off switch – is it a button or a small chord that needs to be pulled? How does the light bulb change when it is turned on/off?
- Put some toast in the toaster and wait for it to pop up.

Again, present some of the more interesting ones.

3. Entire Group

Explain to the entire group that they need to collaborate to make letters of the alphabet by lying on the floor. They must create one large letter at a time, on your command. It is easier for them if the letters are uppercase, rather than lowercase. It also helps if you tell them that the letters must be formed so that you can read them clearly from where you are standing.

Some of the easier letters are O, H, W, X and T whereas some more challenging ones are A, S, and R.

After a few letters you can make it competitive by adding a time limit. Then challenge them to break their previous record.

Next, challenge them to do it silently and with nobody directing. In reality, they are often quicker at forming the letters when there is no discussion. Point this out to them.

Object Creation



4. Around the House

This is an extension of exercise 3.

The students must collaborate to make the various rooms in a house so that each room contains its most iconic furniture, i.e. the bathroom has a shower, sink and toilet (that makes a nice sound when it flushes), the kitchen has a sink, washing machine, etc.

Remind them that working in silence is often more efficient.

After practicing with different rooms, tell them that they must create each room on command as you show a 'guest' around your new 'house'. It is preferable if this 'guest' is another facilitator and not a student.

Begin outside the house and comment on the elaborate front door. Then take them down the 'hall' (which the students can create) to the first room.

In each room, interact with the objects through your conversation with your 'guest'. In the kitchen, ask them if they want a drink; in the sitting room, show them the high quality of your huge TV by giving them the remote control, and so on.



TIME

15/30 min or more



GROUP REFLECTION

All the students meet in a single-sharing circle to discuss together the experience they have just had.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of decision making?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?

Shootout



LIFE SKILLS involved

01, 02, 04, 09

01. Coping With Emotions

02. Coping With Stress

03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

06. Problem Solving

07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

09. Decision Making

10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students feel comfortable, establish a positive climate and prepare themselves physically and emotionally to get involved
2. The students experience spontaneous decision making in emergency or urgent situations.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Group exercise.

Students are asked to form a circle. The leader calls out the name of one of them. That person must immediately duck, and the two people on either side of that person must shoot each other with mimed guns. The slowest to shoot "dies." The person whose name was called then calls out the name of the next person. When four or five people remain, someone other than the players calls out the next name.

When only two players remain, they stand facing each other in the center of the circle and move five paces away from each other while the group counts the numbers.

At five, they turn and shoot: the fastest wins, and the slowest dies a terrible, melodramatic death.

Rules:

- The shooters must make loud pistol noises or shout BANG! The actual noise is not important but from a practical point of view it is essential that the winner be clear.
- If the person whose name has been called is too slow to duck and they are shot by the people beside them, they must die.
- You cannot call out the name of a person beside you as it gives an unfair advantage.

Shootout



TIME

15/30 minutes



GROUP REFLECTION

The group of students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about their experience and what they have felt.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of decision making?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



LIFE SKILLS involved

06, 08, 09, 10

- 01. Coping With Emotions
- 02. Coping With Stress
- 03. Empathy
- 04. Self-Awareness
- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

- 06. Problem Solving**
- 07. Critical Thinking
- 08. Effective Communication**
- 09. Decision Making**
- 10. Creative Thinking**



OBJECTIVES

1. Students are able to reflect on the impact of their decisions before moving on to the next step
2. The students are able to create a short, original theatrical scene by making decisions
3. The students can experience decision making in couples



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

This is a creative exercise with the aim of creating brief theatrical scenes in a short period of time by making decisions. There are six steps:

1. physical brainstorming:

Ask students to sit in a semi-circle, creating an ad-hoc performance space, preferably facing a wall. Place a chair 'on-stage' and ask people, one by one, to create a location/show an activity by sitting in the chair and doing an action. For example:

- Using a remote control (a sitting room/watching television)
- Eating popcorn (cinema/watching a movie)
- Gripping a steering wheel (a car/driving)

Allow everyone to participate at least once.

2. Initial Tableaux:

- Divide students into pairs and give them the following instructions:

They must tell a story by creating three frozen images and, in an extension of Step 1, the story must be based around one or two chairs. The images should present the start of the story, a dramatic event and finally, the resolution. Allow them to include an extra image if necessary. They should present their work to the group after completing each of the following steps.

- They have 5 minutes to prepare their three images, after which they present their work to the rest of the group. They should have enough ideas for stories after the Preparatory Exercise (which served to generate ideas for this exercise). If they still need ideas, here are some suggestions:

- A death in a restaurant.
- A bank robbery.
- A surprise meeting in a park.



To illustrate this exercise, here is a possible story based on a suggested location:

Suggestion: a bank robbery

- **Image 1:** The bank manager stands behind his desk, indicating the chair which the just-arrived client should sit in.
- **Image 2:** The bank manager is sitting at his desk with a shocked expression as he looks down the barrel of the (mimed) gun that the client/bank robber is pointing at him. The robber is standing.
- **Image 3:** The manager, still sitting, speaks urgently on his phone as the robber escapes, running.

The story could end here, but we would like to know what happens to the robber. Does he manage to escape with the money? Is there a car-chase? What was his motivation for robbing the bank? Was it greed, hunger or to pay the hospital bills of a beloved relative, for example? The story will evolve in the next stage.

3. Adding images:

Ask the students to develop their story by adding two or three extra images to add more depth and information to the story. They can be added at any point, as required.

For example:

- **Image 1:** The bank manager stands behind his desk, indicating to the just-arrived client the chair where he should sit.
- **Image 2:** The bank manager is sitting at his desk with a shocked expression as he looks down the barrel of the (mimed) gun that the client/bank robber is pointing at him. The robber is standing.
- **Image 3:** Both characters are standing, robber with pointed gun and bank manager opening a safe.
- **Image 4:** The manager, sitting, speaks urgently on his phone as the robber escapes, running.
- **Image 5:** Outside the manager's office/bank the robber stands with his hands in the air in front of a security guard who is pointing a gun at him.

This story is going smoothly - I am developing it as I write this explanation, but at times it can be necessary to alter some elements and add new characters.

4. Add dialogue to the images:

Ask the students to return to their scenes and add dialogue to their frozen images. Each character should have 1 line, possibly two. Our bank robbery might look like this:

- **Image 1:** The bank manager stands behind his desk, indicating to the just-arrived client the chair where he should sit.
Robber: Good morning, I am here to apply for a loan.
Manager: Good morning, please sit down.
- **Image 2:** The bank manager is sitting at his desk with a shocked expression as he looks down the barrel of the (mimed) gun that the client/bank robber is pointing at him. The robber is standing.
Manager: Good God, man! What are you doing?
Robber: Like I said, I'm here to apply for a loan. Would you like to accept my application?
I would give the robber leeway with movement here, allowing him to cock the gun after delivering his line, if so desired. Also, I could not resist adding dialogue with an obviously clichéd tone which adds style and genre.
- **Image 3:** Both characters are standing, robber with pointed gun and bank manager opening a safe.



- Robber: Quickly, I haven't got all day.
Manager: I'm sorry. I'm going as fast as I can.
- **Image 4:** The manager, sitting, speaks urgently on his phone as the robber escapes, running.
Manager: Call security, there's a robber in the building!
Robber: Haha! You'll never catch me!
 - **Image 5:** Outside the manager's office (or the bank) the robber stands with his hands in the air in front of a security guard who is pointing a gun at him.
 Guard: Stop right there!
 Robber: Please don't shoot! I have children.

The robber's line is crude but in the context of these frozen images, it is perfectly acceptable. I chose it as giving a 'bad character' an emotional weakness makes them more rounded, less two-dimensional and ultimately leads to more interesting theatre. In fact, this line would be improved in the following steps and the story elaborated upon. For example, does the security guard let the robber go because he wanted the money to pay for his sick child's hospital bills?

5. Add the emotions related to this text:

This can often be the easiest part, as the ideas and dialogue have all come from the students themselves meaning they have an innate understanding of the material they are creating, and thus accessing these emotions is less of a challenge. Encourage them to expand and elaborate the dialogue. Have the students practice a few times with the new layer of emotions and then they can present their scenes to the rest of the group.

6. Add movement:

This step also takes care of itself as often the students are already moving and creating flowing scenes without the need for direction. In fact, if you work in reverse and tell the students from the start that there must be lots of action, it can often have the opposite effect as they feel under pressure to create material and thus become blocked. If, on the other hand, you restrict them by telling them not to move during the creative process, they will start doing it instinctively. It will probably be necessary after watching these last two presentations to add more dialogue and possibly more action as well.



MATERIALS

a chair for each student; Tables or desks depending on your needs.



TIME

15/30 min or more



GROUP REFLECTION

All the students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about their experience and what they have felt.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of decision making?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

There is great flexibility with this exercise. It can be used to make short scenes including as many of the step indicated as necessary or can even be applied to a larger piece, being used on a scene-by-scene basis.

It is structured, linear and methodical which makes for a safe environment in which personal creativity is explored in stages and where decisions are made one by one. This allows students to reflect on the impact of the decisions they have made and their impact on the work before moving on to the next step.

Potential problems:

There must be a clear conflict in the story, preferably in the second image: no memorable stories are lacking in conflict of some sort. Here is an example of a poor series of images:

Image 1: A happy couple arrives in a restaurant.

Image 2: The couple order food.

Image 3: The food arrives.

In this story there is no conflict, and the passage of time is non-existent. In fact, the story has not even started yet. To fix work like this, explain the importance of conflict in the story to the students and ask them to add extra images after Image 3 to allow the story to develop.

It can be problematic if the students want to include different locations in the three images as they could be creating multiple scenes. If necessary, you can explain that other locations could be used in a second round of this exercise. In fact, this would be the elaboration of the exercise (as I mentioned earlier) to accommodate a longer story.

Zip Zag Boing



LIFE SKILLS involved

02, 03, 08, 09

01. Coping With Emotions

02. Coping With Stress

03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

06. Problem Solving

07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

09. Decision Making

10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students can experience spontaneous decision making
2. The students can experience the pros and cons of instinctive decision-making
3. The students are able to establish a playful climate and prepare themselves physically and emotionally to get involved



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Group exercise.

This exercise is an "icebreaker" in which people are asked to stand in a circle and the leader explains to the students that in his hands there is a **positive energy** that he wants to share with everyone. To do this, he has the command **Zip** that allows him to transmit the energy to those who are to his right or left.

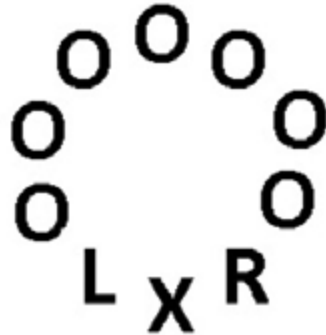
To pass the energy, not only must you say "**Zip**", but also seek eye contact with the other person and make a gesture with your hands together so that it is clear that you are **passing the energy**. The person who received the positive energy will pass it to the person to his right or left.

After a few rounds of Zip, the group is ready for the command **Zap**. With this command, whoever is holding the energy can also transfer it to others, people other than those on the left or right, without forgetting eye contact and the gesture with the hand. With **Zip** and **Zap** you will see the energy flow throughout the room.

After a few rounds, you can enter the command **Boing**. With **Boing**, the person holding the energy can decide to bounce it back to the person who just gave it to them. In doing so, they must also raise their hands in a gesture of surrender and bend slightly backwards from the waist with a bouncing motion, as if to deflect an invisible energy. Once you understand the rules and introduce these gestures, start playing using these three actions which, in summary, are:

- you can point to people immediately to your left or right by saying **ZIP**
- you can point to anyone other than those to your left or right by saying **ZAP**
- if someone hits you, you can only return the gesture by saying **BOING**

Zip Zag Boing



X = me

L/R = People I can say zip to

O = People I can say zap to

The game has to be fast; you don't have to think too much about who is sending you the energy or who you are sending it to.

Rules:

If you want to give energy back to the person who gave it to you:

- A "zip" can only be answered with a "zip."
- A "zap" can only be answered with a "boing."
- Players must speak clearly and loudly and also look people directly in the eye while transmitting energy.

Once the exercise has been going on for a while, you may notice the energy going down. Now it's time to add the rule of elimination: when the stakes are high, the adrenaline quickly rises, raising the energy again.

Elimination criteria:

- Saying "zip" instead of "zap" or vice versa.
- Reacting to a zap with a zap or zip or reacting with a boing to a zip.
- Being too slow in transmitting energy (try a three second limit, then reduce it to one).
- Hesitating and saying "uhm", "er", "uh" before transmitting energy.
- Starting a gesture but changing your mind to pass the energy to someone else.
- If there is uncertainty about who should receive the energy: this often means that the person transmitting the energy was not clear to who was transmitting it because they were not pointing clearly or looking at the receiver (or a combination of both). In this case the person transmitting the energy should be eliminated.

When a player is eliminated, they are invited to sit down but remain in the circle as a spectator. This happens for two reasons:

- The energy of the group and the exercise is supported and maintained.
- It prevents the creation of fragmented groups that chat in another part of the room where the exercise is taking place

The game ends when three people remain standing, effectively leaving three winners, because with three people you cannot use either "zap" or "boing".

Zip Zag Boing



MATERIALS

If group members have limited mobility (for example, they cannot sit on the floor), chairs are needed. If even one person needs a chair, it is best to ask everyone to use it to avoid highlighting the issue of personal physical limitations.



TIME

15/30 minutes



GROUP REFLECTION

The group of students meet in a sharing circle to think together about the exercise, what they experienced and what they felt.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of Life Skill?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

The simplicity of this exercise can make it seem trivial or superficial. However, exercises with simple structures are excellent for creating a playful atmosphere that in turn facilitates relaxation and openness, fostering a better learning environment in which decision-making becomes a less stressful undertaking. This is because we do not need to use our rational brain to strategize; the decision-making process here becomes instinctive, allowing us to go with the flow of the exercise.

Free creation



LIFE SKILLS involved

06, 08, 09, 10

- 01. Coping With Emotions
- 02. Coping With Stress
- 03. Empathy
- 04. Self-Awareness
- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

- 06. Problem Solving
- 07. Critical Thinking
- 08. Effective Communication
- 09. Decision Making
- 10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students are able to create short, original theatrical scenes by making decisions
2. The students are able to deal with multiple stimuli and problems simultaneously in making decisions
3. The students can experience decision making in small groups



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Small group exercise

Form groups of four or five students.

They must create a story in three short scenes that should last about two to three minutes in total. The stories are based on creative restrictions supplied by the facilitator. The groups will have about 10 minutes to prepare them after which they will present their work to the group.

The first step in any creative process is choosing the theme (i.e. lost love, corruption, etc.). In this case, we will help the students by giving them creative restrictions which skips this step and allows them to begin creating work without having to intellectualize it too much.

Here are some ideas for creative restrictions. Give each group two or three:

- They must choose a director (this person can also perform if necessary)
- A person reveals their true identity
- A change of location
- 1 person must be a different object in each scene (this can be a different person in each scene)
- A valuable object is found/lost
- Two people fall in love
- An admission of love (is it reciprocated?)
- A profession:
 - o Doctor
 - o Policeman
 - o Teacher
 - o Student
 - o Lawyer

Free creation



- A location:
 - On the moon
 - An airplane without fuel
 - A secret military base
 - A Michelin restaurant kitchen
- A line of text:
 - I am your real father/mother.
 - Come with me if you want to live.
 - Sir, it's the president's office; it's an emergency.
 - Do it now or are we all going to die.

Give them five to ten minutes to prepare and then they can present their work to the group.



MATERIALS

A chair for every person in the group. Small tables or desks as required.



TIME

15/30 minutes or more



GROUP REFLECTION

The working groups meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about the exercise they have just had, what they have experienced and what they have felt.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of decision making?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?

Free creation



NOTES

The creative process of this exercise differs from the almost regimented structure of the Tableaux exercise. This creates a very different decision-making environment in which students must deal with multiple stimuli and problems simultaneously, while also navigating the decisions of other students. The restrictions are chosen to help the creation of dramatic works, thus giving students a hand. For them, it is a challenge.



The telegram



LIFE SKILLS involved

01, 04, 08

01. Coping With Emotions

- 02. Coping With Stress
- 03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

- 06. Problem Solving

- 07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

- 09. Decision Making

- 10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students get used to be aware of their feelings
2. The students are willing/able to express them



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Group exercise.

During the activity, students are invited to stand in a circle.

The teacher greets the students and asks some questions, asking them to respond not with words, but with a vowel sound (for example, the teacher chooses the sound “a”). Everyone will be able to modulate the sound to transfer with their voice, through the identified letter, their emotional state with respect to the question.

The teacher is the first to answer the question, to provide the example.

Example questions:

1. How has your day been so far?
2. How was your week?
3. A free question inspired by the period/situation, and can change every week/day



MATERIALS

chairs to be arranged in a circle

The telegram



TIME

40 minutes



GROUP REFLECTION

All the students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about the experience, what they have experienced and what they have felt.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- What does this experience activate?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of self-awareness?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

As a variation in a progression of days, teachers can suggest one or more words instead of vowels. The word must be a neutral, long and multisyllabic noun (since it offers the possibility of better modulating the sound and tone that you want to convey. Examples: “apricot”, “rainbow”, “seesaw”, “cholesterol”, etc. (do not use verbs or adjectives).

The sculptor



LIFE SKILLS involved

02, 06, 08, 09

- 01. Coping With Emotions
- 02. Coping With Stress
- 03. Empathy**
- 04. Self-Awareness**
- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship**
- 06. Problem Solving
- 07. Critical Thinking
- 08. Effective Communication
- 09. Decision Making
- 10. Creative Thinking**



OBJECTIVES

1. The students learn to be aware of their comfort or discomfort
2. The students increase the ability to remain positive in an uncomfortable situation
3. The students learn to address the “wait and see” attitude.
4. The students can reflect on their way of tackling a challenge
5. The students learn to express personal trust towards others
6. The students support their ideas, opinions, solutions
7. The students learn to address other people’s image of them
8. The students are able to take responsibility for the other person



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Exercise in pairs – basic version



The exercise is carried out in pairs (A and B), or in threes (A, B, C) if the number of students is odd. It is good practice for the trainer not to participate.

The teacher asks the pairs to decide who A and B are. He explains that the members of group A will be the sculptors who will model and give shape to the bodies of the group B’s members. Students of the latter group will be the statues who will have the task of maintaining the shape and position that the sculptors make them assume.

Sculptors are free to experiment but are asked to be kind to their “sculptures”.

Conversely, the statues are invited to feel like a material and to become aware of their sensations as they are modeled. If a position is difficult to maintain, it is allowed to move, to make your sculpture understand that that material is not ready to accept that twist/position/shape.

The teacher states that everyone will have about 3 minutes available (the time of a song) and that at the end the sculptors and statues will exchange roles.

The sculptor



After the explanation, the couples distribute themselves in the space and take positions; the teacher makes sure that each couple has decided who is A and who is B and says who will start as the statue. He gives a few seconds and, starting the music, invites the sculptors to begin.

The music will mark the time of the exercise and allow students to relax, overcome anxiety and gain inspiration.



MATERIALS

music



TIME

5/10 minutes.

Let students explore what positions their partner can take, let them experiment with the movement of their partners' bodies.

VERSION WITH TITLE

Same as Phase 1, except before swapping roles, all sculptures are asked to say a title for their artwork.

There is usually a different approach to the exercise between those who are unexpectedly asked to name their sculptures, and those who work already knowing the task.

VERSION WITH CHOSEN THEME

Students are invited to inspire their work by a generic theme, such as "emotions". Finally, before exchanging roles, all the students-sculptors are invited to look at each other's works, as if they were in an exhibition.

They exchange ideas about what the statue represents and eventually suggest a title. The discussion must be based on: "What is it?" and not on an "Okay/not okay" judgment. The answers are of the type "I think it represents...", "it conveys the idea that...".

In the end, the students-sculptors can speak up and say whether or not the others understood the meaning of their statue.

VARIANT: THE PUPPET





The sculptor

A variant (downgrade or upgrade, depending on the group) is the puppet.

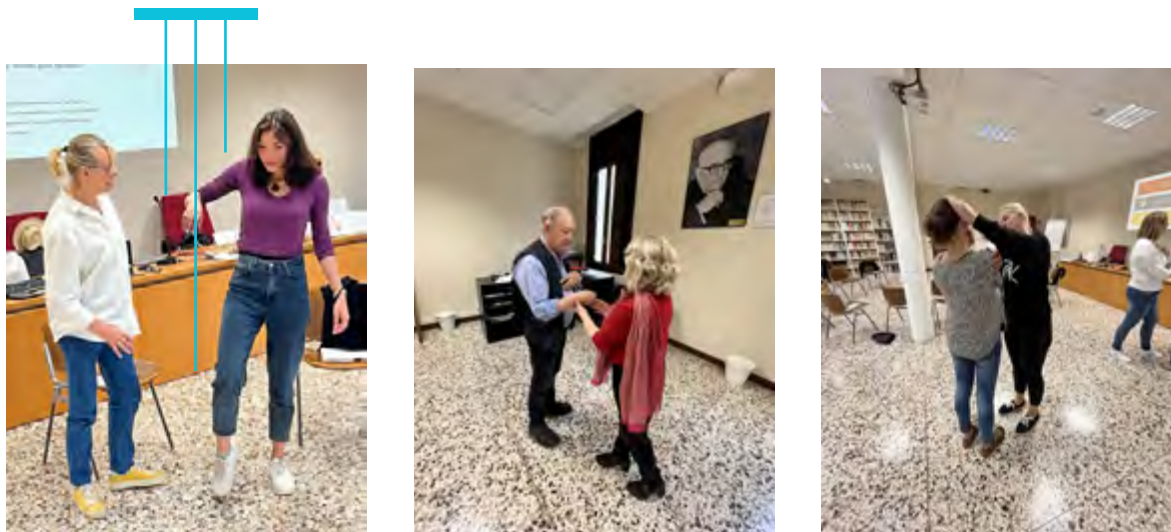
DESCRIPTION: In pairs, A touches B with his index finger on one of the joints of B's body; joints are the points on the body where a puppet has its strings.

After touching the joint, A holds up a dummy wire connected to that joint. It is possible that B does not lift or move the body part as A would like, which means that A has touched the wrong side of the joint, or even the wrong joint.

Then they switch roles so that A becomes the puppet.

You can do the exercise without music and get feedback on the differences.

This option could be useful for those situations in which children do not appreciate or tolerate physical contact (for example students with autism).



GROUP REFLECTION

The students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about the experience they have just had, what they experienced and what they felt.

POINTS OF REFLECTION - BASIC VERSION:

- How did you feel as a sculptor and as a statue?
- Did you prefer to give shape or be shape? And why?
- Were you aware of the image your sculptor was creating?
- Did you close your eyes when he was shaping you? Why?
- Were you able to wait and see what would happen next?

POINTS OF REFLECTION - VERSION WITH TITLE:

- Tell me something about being asked to decide on a title. Was it easy? Fast?
- Are you satisfied with the title you gave?

The sculptor



- Is it different to work knowing a topic in advance compared to having to decide on the spot after the fact?
- Are you usually quick to make decisions?
- Have you sometimes given instructions to your partner with words or tried to work without speaking?

POINTS OF REFLECTION – VERSION WITH CHOSEN THEME:

- Did you take a few seconds to design your statue, or did you work improvising?
- What are the pros and cons of the two ways of working (planning vs improvising)?
- Are you a planner or not?
- Were you inspired by your feelings or external factors?
- How did you respond to your colleagues' comments

GENERAL POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of self-awareness?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

In the variations of this exercise, a discussion can develop where students can give each other's feedback on what they have created. This can be delicate for teenagers who are sensitive to potential teasing or negative judgment. It is therefore important and strictly necessary to create a safe and judgment-free environment, emphasizing the fact that it is not about judging whether a work is good or bad, well done or badly done, but simply discussing what it represents with the aim of finding an appropriate title.

The exercise also involves physical contact, so preparation is necessary (for example by carrying out an icebreaker exercise first).

For students with short attention spans or social anxiety, it could be helpful to shorten the duration of the exercise, for example, by using 2-minute intervals for each role, or even less. In addition, students with anxiety can be paired with classmates with whom they feel comfortable and trust. The teacher should evaluate the specific situation from time to time, knowing their students, and adjusting and helping create a more comfortable and manageable environment for everyone.



Is it me, perhaps?

LIFE SKILLS involved

01, 03, 04, 08

01. Coping With Emotions

02. Coping With Stress

03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

06. Problem Solving

07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

09. Decision Making

10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students are able to deal with their personal image
2. The students learn to face the fact that others may have a different image of them
3. The student learn to accept that they are not in total control of the image they project to others
4. The students are able to impersonate and represent someone else by taking on their characteristics



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Exercise in pairs within a group

The students split to form two groups, A and B. Then each of them writes their name on a folded note which they give to the teacher. The teacher keeps the cards of group A separate from those of group B.

An area of the room is delimited.

Group B is invited to sit inside the area, while group A will sit outside, in front of or around this area. At this point each member of group A is invited to draw one of the cards with the names of group B and will keep it secret.



MATERIALS

white cards and pens, chairs



TIME

Instructions + writing names on cards: 10 min



Is it me, perhaps?

PHASE 1

The teacher invites the students of group A to look very carefully at the person whose name is on the card they have drawn.

The teacher invites the students of group B to start walking inside the area; it can also invite them to try different speeds, to run, to stop and look outside, to slow down and speed up.

It is possible to use some music at a low volume. The important thing is that the voice of the teacher who provide instructions and suggestions is not drowned out.



MATERIALS

chairs, music



TIME

3/4 minutes (the time of a song)

PHASE 2

After about 3 minutes, or when the music is finished, group B sits down, and group A enters the area. Each member of A starts walking impersonating the classmates of the other group whose name was on the previously drawn card. The members of group B will watch them walk and, if they see themselves in one of them, they will reach their partner and ask in a low voice in their ear: "Is it me, perhaps?"

If B guesses right the match, the couple moves away from the scene and sits outside the delimited area; otherwise, A says nothing, continues walking, B goes back and tries again.



TIME

5 minutes

Once phase 2 is completed, the roles are exchanged, and the process begins again.

Is it me, perhaps?



GROUP REFLECTION

At the end of the whole activity, feedback is reported.

The students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about the experience they have just had, what they experienced and what they felt.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- How did it feel to impersonate someone else?
- How did it feel to be impersonated by someone else?
- Did you recognize yourself? If so, in what? If not, why?
- Was the image you think you conveyed to others returned to you in the way you thought?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of self-awareness?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

This exercise requires a safe and no judgmental environment, as it can be delicate for teenagers who are still forming their own identity. (The impersonation doesn't have to be caricatural, but realistic).

This activity is possible with a minimum of 10 people. It is best to have an even number of students.

Not all pairings occur through pure recognition. It is quite common for the last couple, or the last two couples, to recognize each other only by exclusion or to simply have to say who they are.



The photo



LIFE SKILLS involved

03, 04, 05, 06, 08,
09, 10

01. Coping With Emotions

02. Coping With Stress

03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

06. Problem Solving

07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

09. Decision Making

10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students are able to deal with their own image
2. The students learn to connect to the others in a quick, non-linguistic way
3. The students increase the ability to see the whole situation
4. The students are able to respond quickly and effectively to a challenge being aware of their role



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Group exercise.

The teacher explains that he/she will take a photo of the entire group, giving a theme, a title or a phrase, so that the students can represent a coherent image. In fact, the group is asked to create a relevant scene involving all the students.

- The activity is playful, it gives energy to the group.
- The exercise can be done with new groups.
- It can be an opening or closing exercise.

The sentences can be very simple: "It's not my fault!"; "The boss wants to talk to you"; or detailed: "Full moon with fog, a sleepy policeman and a murder"

The students are gathered on one side of the room. The teacher says the theme/phrase and will count to 10. The students will run across the room, trying to connect or be related to others through an action or playing a certain character, and trying to be different from others.

Once they reach number 10, the group stops, and the teacher takes a real photo or pretends to take one. "Click!"

Immediately afterwards, a second word or sentence is offered to the group.

The exercise must be performed 3 or 4 times in a row.



TIME

introduction/explanation = less than 5 minutes; execution for 3 or 4 photos = 5 to 10 minutes



VARIANT:

Immediately after taking the photo, the teacher can ask some students to decide on the next sentence or theme.



GROUP REFLECTION

The students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about the experience they have just had, what they experienced and what they felt.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

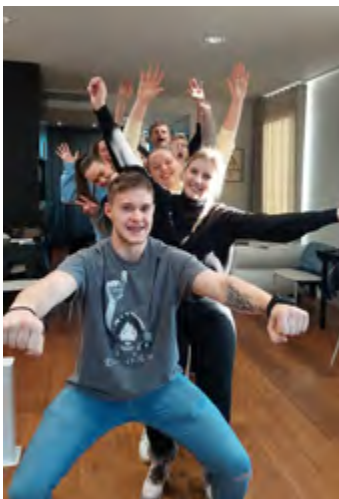
- Were you able to relate to others in forming the image?
- Were you able to connect with someone else physically and consistently with the proposed theme?
- Did you feel collaboration with others, or did you feel like you were working alone?
- How did you react to those who came after you?
- Were you able to get an idea of the general picture?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of self-awareness?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

If the group is very large, or young, or with little experience, the teacher starts by creating subgroups of 4, increasing the number of students very quickly.

It is very important to maintain a playful atmosphere.



example: "roller coaster"

Art in touch



LIFE SKILLS involved

04, 06, 07

- 01. Coping With Emotions
- 02. Coping With Stress
- 03. Empathy
- 04. Self-Awareness**
- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

- 06. Problem Solving**
- 07. Critical Thinking**
- 08. Effective Communication
- 09. Decision Making
- 10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students are able to develop ideas by gathering information
2. The students are able to explore various possible options before taking any action
3. The students are able to verify and check information
4. The students are able to compare different ideas when thinking about a topic



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The request is to create a sculptural self-portrait of one's own face.

Preparation of the environment:

- a calm and silence room exclusively designated for the activity is required; there must be no loitering and/or accidental passage of other figures who are not participating in the activity.
- quiet and serene atmosphere, with the possibility of darkening and soft lighting
- ambient and relaxing background music to aid concentration (very low volume)
- temperate/air-conditioned environment, suitable for staying with comfortable workstations.
- tables with comfortable spaces for movement (about 70/80 cm)
- to facilitate concentration on individual work, if possible, position each participant alternately, not one facing the other on the sides of the table
- a wooden or cardboard or plastic board of about 30X30 cm (support for the clay)
- a clay portion initially covered with a sheet of paper
- a small bowl with water for each student
- 2/3 sheets of absorbent paper for each student
- gown or apron to avoid getting dirty (optional, an old personal garment can be used)
- mask or scarf to cover the eyes
- workspace organized with all the materials at hand



RECOMMENDATIONS

- A) taking care of the environmental space and the individual workstation to encourage concentration on oneself
- B) providing a few clear instructions
- C) having students remain silent during the activity
- D) making sure that students keep their eyes closed. If they are tired, they can turn their face to the ceiling and open their eyes to rest, but do not look at their work, or that of others. It is not a competition.
- E) Creating a safe and non-judgmental atmosphere:
 - specify that it is not a test of skill or aesthetics but a proprioceptive research experience on non-visual tactile physical perception. This experience aims to explore the research mechanisms that we implement: it is an investigation into critical thinking. In the exploration of our own face, we collect information to then develop our idea of it. In exploring clay, we explore the different possibilities of action.
 - ensure that non-judgmental communication is maintained, avoiding comments of aesthetic value such as: "beautiful", "ugly", "good" but instead use terms such as "interesting" and ask what we physically felt.
 - between breaks always cover the artifact with a sheet/cloth so as not to let the other participants see the artifacts and not trigger judgments (students are asked to be the custodians of their work and to be respectful of the work/experience of others)
 - If students want to get up, they can cover the artifact with a sheet, raise their hand and they will be accompanied outside to rest without disturbing the others
 - explain that all the works will be discovered simultaneously by focusing on: 1 physical/tactile experience, 2 sensations, 3 emotions, 4 memories, 5 analysis process training critical thinking



The activity is offered into 2 phases



Art in touch

PHASE 1

Individual exercise

The activity is explained to the students and all the recommendations are given. The setting is prepared with low-volume music and soft lighting.

The students are blindfolded with a scarf or a mask to cover their eyes.

- First step: tactile exploration of their own face with their hands and fingers (5 minutes) – (Students develop their ideas by gathering information about their face)
- Second step: exploration of the clay (5 minutes) – (Students explore the possible options before taking any action).
- Third step: students are asked to produce the sculpture of their face by modeling the clay and organizing the various parts of the face (60/70 minutes) – (Students carry out actions that are then adjusted in a continuous process of checking and verifying the information in their possession).

Break: before turning on the light, cover the artifacts with a cloth or a sheet of paper, wash your hands and take a break.



MATERIALS

Clay; clay modelling stand; small bowl of water for each person; eye mask or scarf; roll of paper towels; gown if required; music.



TIME

60/70 minutes

Art in touch



PHASE 2

Observation and discussion: students are asked to discover their own artifacts and observe them (5 minutes) before the group discussion.



GROUP REFLECTION

Each student is invited to make considerations on how the experience was, how they experienced the process of creating the work, how they collected and organized the information, how they used it for the production of their artifact, etc. (the different experiences and ideas are compared).

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- When you modelled the clay, did you verify the correspondence of the information you had collected during the exploration phase of the face?
- When you observed the result of your artifact, did you recognize yourself? If so, in what? If not, why?
- Are you really you?
- Do you have an objective vision?
- When we think about a topic, are we able to compare different ideas, different points of view?
- Hindering the sight, which is the sense we use most to gather information, can allow us to challenge automatic ways of seeking information. Did this push you to activate other senses and broaden your perspective in your search for information?
- Can you feel the depth of parts of your face through touch?
- Can you see your profile? And the back of your face?
- Ask yourself: "Do I have a complete vision?"
- What is missing?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of critical thinking?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?

Summarize the conclusions that emerged in the group



TIME

observations and considerations (45/50 minutes)

Art in touch



NOTES

It is important to create a safe and judgment-free setting to avoid any possible unsolicited or inappropriate comments about the results produced. Emphasize that this is not performance or aesthetic work!

For students who may not feel comfortable with being blindfolded or feel anxiety about such an immersive process, you can offer some options:

- No blindfold: allow them to close their eyes without a blindfold or to focus on a fixed point a little higher in the room. Be sure to explain that the goal is to “see” through the sense of touch, not sight.
- Lightly Covered Eyes: offer the option to cover only the top half of the eyes with a soft cloth or a very thin scarf, giving them a sense of openness and control. This can still enhance the tactile experience while making it less overwhelming.
- Gradual Blindfolding: suggest starting with short intervals, such as just a minute or two at the beginning and gradually increasing the duration if they feel comfortable.

The teacher should evaluate the specific situation from time to time, knowing their students, and adjusting and helping create a more comfortable and manageable environment for everyone.



We ART Emotions

LIFE SKILLS involved

01, 02, 03, 04, 05

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

1. The students are able to recognize and to represent postures and attitudes of emotions
2. The students are able to analyze the colors of emotions
3. The students can listen to themselves and represent the emotion with an artistic gesture
4. The students are able to recognize where emotions arise and how they move in and out of their body and represent it
5. The students are able to analyze, reflect and meditate on what they feel, also comparing themselves with the group



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Total estimated time: about 2.5 hours

The activity is offered into 4 phases:

PHASE 1

Group exercise

During the first phase, participants are invited to reflect on a single emotion with the aim of understanding the movement and posture of the body. Two ways are proposed to do this:

- the search for words or sayings that describe the emotion.
- the reflection on how the body reacts and behaves when it feels that emotion, also through a search for exemplary images and representative postures.

This activity involves comparison between participants. Once the position to represent has been chosen together, participants recreate the outline on the 2m x 1m poster.

The procedure is simple: one participant will lie down, and the others will trace the contour lines, first with a pencil and then with brushes and black tempera to define it.



MATERIALS

2m x 1m poster - pencils - brush and black tempera



TIME

40 minutes



PHASE 2

Individual exercise

In the second phase, the teacher/trainer conducts a quick demonstration of pastel coloring: single colors, overlapping colors, fading technique by spreading the color with the hands and the help of oil, etc.

The participants are then invited to sit in front of their sheet of paper and listen to their own self imagining the emotion they are working on.

What gestures and what colors represent the emotion? Are they jerky or fluid gestures? Do the signs remain divided or blurred?

They are then asked to create chromatic and gestural effects on the sheet with pastels.

At the end of the work, the participants are led to reflect on what they felt when recalling the emotion and what they felt when working with color and gestures.



MATERIALS

oil pastels, paper, seed oil (for shading)



TIME

40 minutes



PHASE 3

Group exercise

In this phase, the participants must reflect in group on the source of the emotion: "Where does it come from?" "How does it move inside us or outside our body?" "What shape does the emotion have?"

Once the answer has been identified, the participants will cut and glue their artistic work from the second step onto the shape drawn during the first step, creating a single work of art that will represent the emotion they have worked on.

This work, hung in the classroom, will help the participants during the work of sharing and reflection and, by remaining hung, it can become a reminder for all those times they feel emotions emerge within themselves.



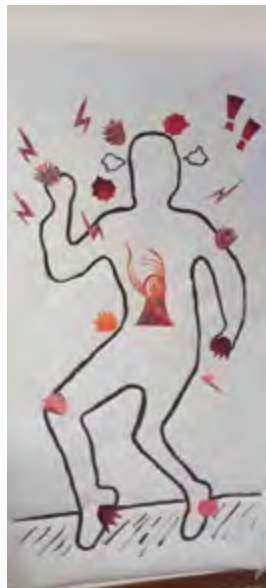
MATERIALS

scissors and glue



TIME

40 minutes





PHASE 4



GROUP REFLECTION

The working groups meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about the experience, what they have experienced and what they have felt.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- Looking at the posters, do you recognize the emotions represented?
- Feeling an emotion, do you feel you can recognize it better after this path?
- Would you be able to recognize these emotions in others?
- Have you ever seen someone assume these postures?
- Do you recognize yourself in the choices of the other classmates? If not, what differences do you feel?
- What sensations do you feel when recalling and bringing to mind your emotion?
- What did you feel while you were painting the sheet? Was it easy to compare yourself with the group?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of coping with emotions?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



TIME

Approximately 30 minutes, but the time may vary depending on how many groups have to share and depending on the discussions that emerge.



NOTES

The path can be structured according to the teacher's needs. You can decide to work on a single emotion, or the class can be divided into subgroups so that multiple emotions are analyzed at the same time. The phases can be divided into different moments/days, as long as the sequential order of the presented steps is maintained.



Warm up and body awakening

LIFE SKILLS involved

01, 02, 03, 04, 08

01. Coping With Emotions

02. Coping With Stress

03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

06. Problem Solving

07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

09. Decision Making

10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students can experience a practical warm up through the body, physical activation, fun and play to awaken the expressive abilities of their body as a communication tool
2. The students learn to express themselves in total safety and well-being in a peaceful and inclusive working climate



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The body is the engine of movement; like a car engine it must be turned on and warmed up. Similarly, in a circle, the students will be encouraged to warm up their bodies to awaken the expressive parts of an active body, the arms, legs, chest, back, neck, head... in short, the body as a communication tool. The exercises will be easy to perform and will allow students to follow them based only on listening and observing their partner. Likewise, the teacher must be able to communicate the movements, instructions and the exercise in its entirety in a clear and effective manner.

Circumduction movements: - head, arms, joints, chest, legs

Stretching: general muscle tissue with different rhythms

Breath awakening: jumps with breathing and sound

Exercise with eyes closed: the sphere around the body, explore every latitude, density, breadth of one's bodily movement, trying to awaken it and dissolve all bodily tensions.



TIME

15/20 minutes

Warm up and body awakening



GROUP REFLECTION

The students meet in a sharing circle to reflect together on the experience they have just had.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

- In che modo questa esperienza contribuisce ad aumentare la competenza della comunicazione efficace?
- In che modo questa esperienza può essere preziosa nella vita quotidiana?
- Cosa puoi fare con l'esperienza nella pratica delle Life Skills?



NOTES

- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of effective communication?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



The golden thread

LIFE SKILLS involved

02, 03, 05, 06, 08

01. Coping With Emotions

02. Coping With Stress

03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

06. Problem Solving

07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

09. Decision Making

10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. Students are able to connect and communicate effectively with others
2. Students are able to experience active listening and concentration
3. Students are able to use nonverbal communication to develop interaction between group members and pursue a common goal



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The group of students stand in a circle with their gaze turned inside the circle.

Without using verbal communication, they are asked to pretend to grasp - with thumb and forefinger - an invisible golden thread placed on the ground in front of their feet.

Without a real starting signal, they slowly lift it above their heads and bring it back to the ground.

The focus of the exercise must always be on taking care that all hands are always aligned and moving at the same time. If several hands are too far apart or on multiple levels, the thread breaks, and the group members must start again from the beginning.

The teacher must check the harmony of the movements and possibly interrupt the group.



TIME

15 minutes



The golden thread



GROUP REFLECTION

The students meet in a sharing circle to think and reflect together about the experience they have just had.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

The exercise allows students to experience how important the connection with other members of a group is. It is possible to detect weak signals and micro-communications that can have great importance in the group climate.

- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of effective communication?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

The exercise can be carried out (it is recommended to do so) both at the beginning and at the end of a series of exercises or a training session, to observe the growth of attention and connection capacity within the classroom group.

Slowness is essential for the success of the exercise and to give the group time to develop their collective intelligence and learn to communicate without using language.

Once the exercise has been explained, the teacher leaves the circle and does not participate in the game. This is an important element because, precisely because of their role, they could be taken as a guide to follow in the movements.



The tamer

LIFE SKILLS involved

04, 05, 08

01. Coping With Emotions

02. Coping With Stress

03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

06. Problem Solving

07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

09. Decision Making

10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. Students are encouraged to communicate effectively within the group
2. Students bring awareness to their emotions, sensations and thoughts throughout the exercise
3. Students develop sensitivity towards clear and concise communication



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The tamer's exercise is a simple and effective tool for working on communication.

One student is appointed as the tamer. All the other students are the lions who will be asked to line up in a row. The group of lions will be directed by the tamer who, imagining he is holding a whip in his hands, with simple gestures, will have to indicate to the group which movements they will have to perform.

Tamer Commands:

- The imaginary whip goes right – the lions avoid it by going left
- The imaginary whip goes left – the lions avoid it by going right
- The imaginary whip vibrates upwards – the lions avoid it by ducking together
- The imaginary whip vibrates downwards – the lions avoid it by leaping upwards together

In turn, each student is invited to try out the role of the tamer.

Based on the experience and level of response of the group, new commands and new actions can be invented that the group of lions will have to perform at the command given by the whip. For example, "If the whip is swung in the air, all the lions will roar", etc.



TIME

10 minutes



GROUP REFLECTION

The students meet in a single-sharing circle to think together about the experience they have just had.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

This is a simple exercise that allows students to see the importance of non-verbal communication and that leverages a complex process such as the effectiveness of the gesture, thanks to which the students experience the need for effective communication.

There will be different ways of acting the non-verbal command (there are those who are more restrained, those who are more decisive and determined) and this may have different impacts on communication (The way in which the gesture is interpreted and acted can have a different effectiveness).

- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of effective communication?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with the experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

The image of the tamer and the lions is just an example to have an evocative support and a “character to play” within the game, but it is not the focus of the exercise.

The characters can be replaced with anything: pirate captain and crew, policeman and drivers, orchestra conductor and musicians, fisherman and fish, a stone thrown into the pond with frogs jumping away, a gust of wind that moves the clouds, ect. You can adapt the exercise to the group to which it is proposed.

The important things to keep in mind are:

- whoever proposes the action (tamer, pirate, wind...) focuses on giving clear signals to the rest of the group so that they cannot be misunderstood and so that for each action the group can respond with the corresponding reaction that was explained before. This role also touches on the concepts of emotional management in showing off, exposing oneself, being alone in front of a group, taking responsibility for guiding others in the game.
- whoever receives the action (lions, pirates, clouds...) focuses on reacting to an external stimulus in an appropriate and correct manner according to the rules set at the beginning. We work on concentration, listening, the ability to react quickly to an input, managing tension and body movement. All this always within the game that releases large amounts of energy and fun.



Here and now

LIFE SKILLS involved

01, 02, 04, 08

01. Coping With Emotions

02. Coping With Stress

03. Empathy

04. Self-Awareness

05. Building Interpersonal Relationship

06. Problem Solving

07. Critical Thinking

08. Effective Communication

09. Decision Making

10. Creative Thinking



OBJECTIVES

1. The students can experience the present moment to create presence and well-being
2. The students are able to recognize and manage situations of embarrassment and shame
3. The students can increase self-esteem
4. The students are able to recognize and effectively communicate the signals that arrive from their own and others' bodies
5. The students can bring awareness to the difference between being occupied and preoccupied



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

1. The group of students is split into two subgroups who will take turns playing the role of actors and that of spectators. The actors have to stand in front of the spectators without doing or saying anything for a minute, and the spectators watch.
2. At the end, the triangle of awareness (thoughts, emotions, sensations) is used to understand how the experience was. The actors will say how they felt being under everyone's gaze, the spectators will say what they saw or noticed in their standing mates (non-verbal communication)
3. The two groups alternate roles so that all students have the same complete experience.
4. A second round is carried out by providing a simple additional action to perform (count in mind the chairs or tiles in the room), also in this case the two groups alternate roles. At the end we analyze again what has changed and how it feels.
5. After the experience, the key to understanding is provided: a small scheme based on 4 words is written on the blackboard: preoccupation - occupation - action - emotion.



MATERIALS

Flipchart or whiteboard, sheets, pens and markers.



TIME

30 minutes

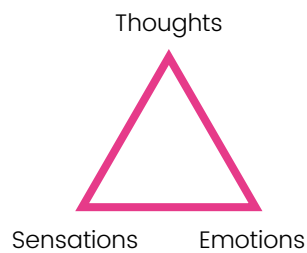


GROUP REFLECTION

The students meet in a single-sharing circle to think and reflect together about the experience they have had.

POINTS OF REFLECTION:

Try to verbalize the whole experience using the triangle of awareness:



- What thoughts, physical sensations and emotions did you experience and felt?
- How do they connect to each other? Was there coherence or not?
- Were you aware of what you communicated with your body language to those who were watching you from the outside?
- What insights emerged?
- What was learned about self and others?
- How does this experience contribute to increasing competence of effective communication?
- How can this experience be valuable in daily life?
- What can you do with this experience in practicing Life Skills?



NOTES

- The teacher must respect the times and monitor that the moment of standing in silence lasts exactly one minute for each group.
- The teacher takes care not to trigger the discussion and debriefing before completing all the steps of the activity.
- **PRE-OCCUPATION** (first phase): dealing with a problem before it has occurred generates anxieties (anticipatory anxiety), negative and judgmental thoughts and does not allow us to remain present in the here and now: our mind takes us out of our body. Emotionality follows the mind, and our non-verbal communication expresses embarrassment, shame and discomfort.
- **OCCUPATION** (second phase): by inserting a simple and even banal element such as counting chairs or tiles into the game, you experience how the experience of standing in front of others changes completely. This element engages our mind to concentrate in the present moment, to live the experience and not to detach from what is happening in this moment and in this space.
- **ACTION:** it is what allows us to be connected with the here and now, to be present, to enjoy what we are doing and to communicate the emotions we feel in an effective and truthful way. This “mental approach” can be applied in any personal or professional context.
- **EMOTION:** During the debriefing, the teacher must continually refer to the physical sensations that the students had felt and help them connect them to their emotions and how these signals were seen and interpreted by the others, creating a dense and profound communication network that develops only through the body.

Connecting the right words to your feelings helps to formalize the skills developed in this experience also at the level of verbal communication.

Painting Words



LIFE SKILLS involved

06

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

- Students are aware of their contribution to the problem-solving of a group assignment.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

General

As a problem, students are given a group assignment to solve. There are a number of empty miniature canvas paintings next to each other on the table. The idea is to put a character (letter or number) on each individual Canvas panel. On the Canvas panels, placed next to each other, a word, some words or a short sentence/slogan can then be read. From now on in this document, this is also referred to as 'a combination of characters'. The desired 'combination of signs' is given in advance by the facilitator or devised by the group. A number of game rules are written on a flipchart or an A4 paper that have to do with who, when may write a character on an empty Canvas panel. These ground rules create a challenge/problem for the group.

Rules of play

Before or during the activity, the rules of the game can be adapted. This can make the activity more or less challenging. In addition, the group size and the available materials also require possible adjustments to the game rules. An example of game rules with a group of 9 students and the availability of the following materials:

- 3 different colored markers
- 10 blank Canvas panels (10 cm by 10 cm or 15 cm by 10 cm) on small miniature wooden easels
- 'rope puller/strip Zieher'
 - https://www.neuland.com/en-us/products/strippenzieher?srsItd=AfmBOopPIQFHx6hg5PhW0dQ7N_niL6aVoT8iqo4ycpih0e8xNTFLINed
 - <https://ideen-kollektiv.de/it/collections/alle-produkte/products/kreiselzeichner?variant=44806234898699>

- * The combination of characters to appear on the blank canvas panels is: CL4LIFENOW
- * 1 empty canvas panel per character. Each participant puts 1 character on an empty canvas panel with their date of birth at the bottom left
- * Moving from the first letter C to the last letter W in the word CL4LIFENOW, the consecutive intervening characters are drawn by students with consecutive birth month numbers. If students are born in the same birth month, the student with the lowest birth month number draws first.
Lowest birth month=1 = January
Highest birth month= 12 = December
- * The number 4 in the word CL4LIFENOW is drawn by 9 students working with the 'Rope Puller/Stippen Zieher' (see materials)
- *Silence during the activity
- *2 characters next to each other on separate canvas panels have a different colour

Painting Words



MATERIALS

Materials

- 3 different coloured markers
- blank Canvas panels (10 cm by 10 cm or 15 cm by 10 cm) on small miniature wooden easels
- 'rope puller/strip Zieher' (www.neuland.com , ideen-kollektiv.de)



TIME

30 to 45 minutes



POINTS OF REFLECTION

- What was your contribution to solving the problem?
- What actions of yours helped solve the problem?
- What actions of yours hindered solving the problem?
- In what way?



NOTES

Combination of characters

*The series of little paintings next to each other that together form a word, a few words or a short sentence/slogan can be put somewhere (temporarily) after the activity. They can also be photographed. In this way, a tangible memento can be created for the group (students) that reminds them of fun, cooperation, learning, empowerment and inspiration, for example.

*The facilitator can choose whether to come up with a 'combination of signs' himself or let the group do so. If the facilitator allows 'the combination of signs' to be thought up by the group itself, an extra challenge is created for the group. If the facilitator thinks up 'the combination of signs' in advance for the group, he can think about what kind of impact he / she wants to make with his choice. (e.g. we help each other, or we no longer gossip)

Seeing the magic problem without the fog of assumptions



LIFE SKILLS involved

06

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

1. The student is aware of the importance of thinking about identifying a problem. (What exactly is the problem?)
2. The student is aware that observing attentively provides more information about what the problem is.
3. The student is aware that when observing attentively, it is important to focus on actual observations and put aside own assumptions/interpretations for a moment.
4. The student is aware that when solving a problem, it can help to think about multiple possible solutions and discuss them.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The description of the activity consists of 4 sections:

- 1) General
- 2) Guideline/inspiration for the manner of presentation by the facilitator during the performance of the magic trick
- 3) Technical actions done by the facilitator during the performance of the magic trick by the first 3 students
- 4) Enabling student observations that lead to an understanding of how the facilitator is able to know which card the student has chosen (technical actions the facilitator does during the performance of magic trick in the 4th student)

General

The facilitator has 3 students choose a card at random. The students think about their card. Meanwhile, the facilitator reads each student's (subtle) body language. He then says which card each student has chosen. Amazement and pleasure are mostly the emotions this evokes in the students. The facilitator then has the students think about the question: 'In what way is what I have seen possible?'

At first, answers like, 'I don't know, he can read body language very well and a few think of a magic trick.' usually come up at first. The facilitator explains that everyone can develop their own method of solving problems. To solve this problem ('In what way is what I have seen possible?'), 3 general problem-solving elements can be used. They are described on a flap that the facilitator shows:

- 1) Identify the problem
- 2) Make a clear distinction between what you observe and your assumptions
- 3) Think about possible solutions, exchange and questioning those possibilities

Seeing the magic problem without the fog of assumptions



The facilitator makes the students think and exchange. The facilitator helps the students a little bit on their way:

1) Identify the problem

What is the right problem question? How is it possible for the facilitator to read the student's body language and then know which card he has chosen? Or How is it possible for the facilitator to know which card the student has in his hands?

2) Make a clear distinction between what you observe and your assumptions

3) Think about possible solutions, exchanging and questioning those possibilities

At one point, during the group exchange, the facilitator asks: Do I now know which card you have chosen because I really read your body language or is it I or other magic trick? The facilitator has a 4th student choose a card and invites all students to put aside for a moment all their thoughts about how it is possible that the facilitator knows which card the student holds. Instead, he asks students to look very intently at the facilitator's hands, cards and eyes. When choosing the card, the facilitator performs the same actions as before, but now slightly slower. As a result, more and more students start seeing things that had previously escaped their conscious attention. The facilitator has the students discuss their new observations with each other. Slowly it becomes clear to everyone that this is a magic trick and how it works. When still needed, the facilitator explains how the magic trick works.

Guideline/inspiration for the manner of presentation by the facilitator during the performance of the magic trick:

An example of a presentation, to give a mood:

Facilitator: [smile] I would like to let you experience a fun experiment [start shuffling cards, looking at the students]. Which of you thinks you can put on a poker face? Poker players try to make sure another person cannot read their body language. But that is very difficult because your body language is always speaking. Even very subtle ones. Blinking your eyes, breathing differently, facial muscles tightening or relaxing. A lot of body language happens sub-consciously. You often don't even notice it. And it is an art to be able to read another person's body language, so you know whether they are showing the truth or lying. Who wants to try a poker face? [smile]. Paul. Have you seen your card. Okay [look Paul slightly more penetratingly in the eyes, smile]. Saying nothing, I'm trying to read your poker face. You have a red or a black card [suppose Paul picked a 7 of hearts]. Aah I saw you blink [name something of body language you actually see] at red. I think a red card. Aah now I see you smiling. Yes you have a red card. [be in the moment play with what you see, you can also sometimes come up with very subtle signals] [While continuing to name body signals in a light-hearted playful way go on, picture card or a number card, a number card, 2 to 5 or 6t/m10] 6 to 10, 6,7,8,9,10. Yes at 7 I saw..... I think you picked a seven. Hearts 7. Is it right? Yes nice [you smile and are a bit relieved, you did think it was a heart 7 but weren't sure]. [You also manage to name the other 2 students' cards by body language] [smile a little after, enjoying the experience together yourself,] [Then you say] . I want to ask you to solve a problem together: 'In what way is what you have seen possible? '

Technical actions the facilitator does while performing the magic trick with the first 3 students

- Shuffle a pile of cards (technique: overhand shuffle) [<https://www.magicianmasterclass.com/post/how-to-overhand-shuffle>]
- In between shuffles, briefly tilt the pile of cards in such a way that you can briefly see the bottom card
- Continue shuffling until the bottom card is on top. Then stop shuffling
- Riffle past the cards and have a student say stop. Make sure the top card is on the spot where the student says stop and give him the card you saw (technique: Slip force) [<https://youtu.be/f8K-GchloeA?si=Lfp7IRK6FHNtHJ8v>] of [<https://www.magicianmasterclass.com/post/slip-force-card-trick>] Tip: While performing the slip force, turn your head away from the cards. As if to show I can't see the card where you say stop.
- Remember the card you forced on the student with the slip force
- Repeat the above actions twice more.
- The situation now is that three students each have a card in their hands.

Seeing the magic problem without the fog of assumptions



What did you see?

I'll show it again. Now look a bit longer at the bottom card

There are students who are going to notice this.

Shuffle the bottom card upwards.

There are students who are going to notice this.

Do the slip force a little longer

There are students who are going to notice this.

At some point, more and more students are starting to realise. 'Aah he shuffles the cards. In between, he takes a quick look at the bottom card. This bottom card he shuffles upwards. He riffs along the cards and brings the top card (which was first the bottom card he has seen) to where I say stop. Then he gives me that card'



MATERIALS

a stock of playing cards



TIME

30 minutes



POINTS OF REFLECTION

- In what way is what you have seen possible?
- What is the right problem question? How is it possible for the facilitator to read the student's body language and then know which card he has chosen? Or How is it possible for the facilitator to know which card the student has in his hands? Why is that the right problem question?
- What do you observe when paying attention to hands, cards and eyes, while I have a 4th student choose a card ?
- What are possible solutions to the question? How is it possible for the facilitator to know which card the student has in his hands?



More seeing without fog of assumptions

LIFE SKILLS involved

06

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

1. The student is aware that when observing attentively, it is important to focus on actual observations and put aside their own assumptions/interpretations for a moment.
2. The student is aware that actual observation can have an effect on assumptions and interpretations.
3. The student is aware that distinguishing between factual perception and assumptions/interpretations can help in solving a problem.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The trainer puts a vertical line in the middle of a flipchart paper. The trainer says he/she will walk out the door in a moment and then come back in playing a role. The students are asked to pay close attention to what they hear and see in the meantime.

When the trainer enters again, he/she looks down and staggers through the room to a chair or table. The trainer grabs that chair or table, exhales, relaxes and takes out his/her phone. The trainer plays that he calls someone and has a short 30- to 60-second conversation. (For example, letting someone know that an appointment can go ahead at a certain time) During the phone call, the trainer looks clear out of his eyes and speaks in a clear voice.

The trainer then asks the students. What did you see and hear. Call out. The trainer writes down what the students say on the flipchart paper. All actual observations he writes to the left of the vertical line. All assumptions/interpretations he writes to the right of the vertical line. When everything is on paper, the trainer asks. What is the difference between what is to the left of the line and to the right of the line? The trainer concludes with the students that on the left are actual observations and on the right are assumptions/interpretations.

Experience shows that students within this activity often initially come up with assumptions. For example, it is said that trainer who came in from a role was drunk. What the trainer is actually playing is that he has a balance disorder. This also explains why the trainer in his role does walk shakily, but does have a clear, adequate phone conversation without 'double tongue'

Using the reflection questions (see points of reflection), the trainer lets the students discover what is going on.

More seeing without fog of assumptions



MATERIALS

flipchart with paper and pens



TIME

10 a 15 minutes



POINT OF REFLECTION

- What are factual observations and what are assumptions/interpretations?
- What helps to describe factual observations and omit assumptions/interpretations?
- From his role, was the trainer drunk or did he have a balance disorder?
- Based on which observation do you think of drunkenness?
- Based on what perception do you think of balance disorder?
- How can separating actual perceptions from assumptions/interpretations help in problem solving?



NOTES

The work form 'more seeing without fog of assumptions' is a good complement to the work form 'seeing without fog of assumptions.' 'More seeing without fog of assumptions can provide extra awareness and depth.

Daring to express your fantasy language



LIFE SKILLS involved

02

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

1. Students are more aware of what are triggers for tension building.
2. Students are more aware of how tension is building experienced in feelings, body, thoughts and behavior.
3. Students are more aware of how the presence of tension can be accepted and/or reduced.
4. Students are more aware of how can the presence of tension be accepted and/or reduced?
5. Students are more aware of recognizing triggers, tension build-up and tension control in everyday life



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The trainer explains that he likes to invite the students to a new exercise/experience in which the aim is to do 3 things:

- 1)having fun with each other
- 2)being busy recognizing tension signals in ourselves
- 3)engaging in controlling/reducing our own tension

What is the exercise?

Talking and possibly singing in a fantasy language.

Imagine going on holiday to a country where a language is spoken that you have never heard before. What does it sound like in your imagination? 'Palio kato niamo tilo foe wa. pjello tjaak tjok. That's what it sounds like in my fantasy right now. With everyone, fantasy language sounds different. You can only get it right here because your fantasy language is fine. Everyone has their own unique fantasy language.

Before we supposedly go to the imaginative abroad, let's stay in the Netherlands and greet each other in our own way in Dutch. [the trainer looks at the students in the circle and greets in Dutch or other mother language] 'Hoi , hallo, heej'The trainer invites students. Everyone talks through each other and greets. Nice. Now we are going on a journey and have arrived in an imaginary foreign country where everyone speaks their own unique fantasy language which is fine.

What does me greeting sound like now? The trainer greets in his fantasy language and invites students. Depending on how much challenge is needed to allow students to experience discomfort/tension on which to reflect, expansion of fantasy language is possible with, for example:

- 1 sentence
- a short conversation
- singing
- solo speech or solo singing for the rest of the group
- talking or singing while crawling (Dutch people greet each other by shaking hands, Eskimo' greet each other by

Daring to express your fantasy language



kissing their nose, In imaginative foreign countries people greet each other by getting on their knees and crawling around each other without touching
-

The trainer always demonstrates. Invites students to join in. Allows interaction, fun and laughter between students. The trainer also signals when students do not (dare to) respond to the game he offers. This is fine.

Trainer emphasizes that everything is fine. Also discomfort, not daring, not wanting to participate. Participation is also not obligatory. Students may also just watch and listen or shut themselves off. Indeed, the intention is precisely to create a (slight) degree of discomfort, fear, closing off, withdrawal. The trainer can always stop the exercise in between and discuss this in the group as very natural human emotions/feelings. The trainer can connect signals he has observed and ask reflective questions such as, for example

What did you feel/think/experience in your body while doing?

At what place in your body do you feel discomfort?

What is happening there in your body?

Are your thoughts helping or hindering what you want but are afraid to do?

How high is your tension right now?

What can help reduce your tension/feeling of discomfort right now? (See tension control tips earlier in this document)

What would it be like if you didn't try to reduce your feeling of discomfort/tension but just let it be present?

Would you like this or this..... despite feeling tension/discomfort? What might help?

Would you like to try that out? Etc

Through questions, students are invited to make themselves more aware of:

What are triggers for tension building?

How is tension building experienced in feelings, body, thoughts and behavior?

How can the presence of tension be accepted and/or reduced?

Recognizing triggers, tension build-up and tension control in everyday life?

If it becomes too tense for people, the exercise can also be stopped, and people can be given some reflective questions in pairs.



TIME

Variable between 30 minutes and 90 minutes



POINTS OF REFLECTION

The reflection questions are already incorporated in the description of the activity. Here is also a list of points of reflection.

- What did you feel/think/experience in your body while doing?

Daring to express your fantasy language



- At what place in your body do you feel discomfort?
- What is happening there in your body?
- Are your thoughts helping or hindering what you want but are afraid to do?
- How high is your tension right now?
- What can help reduce your tension/feeling of discomfort right now? (See tension control tips earlier in this document)
- What would it be like if you didn't try to reduce your feeling of discomfort/tension but just let it be present?
- Would you like this or this..... despite feeling tension/discomfort? What might help?
- Would you like to try that out? Etc..



NOTES

The degree to which students dare to express during the experience of fantasy talking/singing varies. All levels of expression are fine. This can also be said to students. The point is to take people a little out of their comfort zone. Discomfort is desirable, panic is not. In the zone of discomfort, tension signals arise that can be made conscious and to which tension control/ tension acceptance can be applied.

By making the experience more or less challenging in the moment, the degree of safety and discomfort can be influenced.

Throwing (stress) balls



LIFE SKILLS involved

02

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

1. Participants are aware of how to recognize tension building in themselves.
2. Participants are aware of how to control their own tension.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Participants and trainer stand in a circle. The trainer throws a ball to a participant, who in turn throws the ball to another participant.

The trainer puts the participants on edge a bit by explaining that the aim is to avoid the ball hitting the ground by throwing and catching it purposefully. The trainer also explains that you have to make eye contact with another participant before you can throw the ball.

The trainer brings some more balls into play. The trainer also brings squeaky dog toys into play.

The trainer stops playing for a moment and gives feedback in a light-hearted way when a participant fails to catch a ball. The trainer names what he actually observes and what his impression is (E.g. I see your mouth fall open and your eyes get bigger. You seem startled)

All sorts of reactions from participants are possible. The trainer normalizes all these reactions by saying they are all natural reactions. This is to maintain safety. (This is normal, I am allowed to be in this group with my reaction)

After stopping the game briefly a few times in between and briefly naming participants' reactions to missing the ball, the trainer adds a game element. If a participant does not catch a ball, the participant does not immediately pick up the missed ball but first feels what his reaction to missing the ball is and shares this non-verbal reaction without words with the other participants. Then the participant picks up the missed ball and throws it again to another participant.

Reflection: The trainer asks a reflection question in the large group or has participants exchange briefly about this in pairs.

'What did you notice when there were moments when you were building tension during the exercise?'

The trainer draws a circle on the flipchart. In the circle, the trainer puts a cross so that there are four compartments in the circle. In the individual compartments, the trainer puts the following texts:

- thoughts
- feelings/emotions
- physical reactions
- tendency to fight, flee or freeze

At the bottom of the circle, the trainer draws a downward arrow under which the text : 'behavior'.

Throwing (stress) balls



Using the circle, the trainer checks whether there have been any tension signals that have not yet been mentioned but still want to be shared.

Balls are thrown again. The challenge can be increased by:

- bringing additional balls into play
- throwing 3 or 4 different coloured balls. When catching a certain colour ball, the participant makes a pre-arranged sound or movement.

Reflection:

Tension recognition:

- What did you notice now that there were moments when you were building tension?
- The same as last time?
- Differences from last time?

Tension control:

(In pairs)

- What did you do to be able to go on despite the potentially tense moments during the exercise?
- In your daily life, how do you ensure that your tension is reduced when things get (too) tense? Are you willing and able to give 1 example?

The trainer writes on the flipchart:

TBMP

T: Thinking/imagination (helping and hindering thoughts/imagination)

B: Breathing

Breathe through, 4 counts inhale, 4 counts hold breath, 4 counts exhale

M: Muscle tension:

Reduce muscle tension by shaking, stretching and/or stretching the body

P: Posture:

Knees slightly bent, feet feeling.



MATERIALS

- 10 tennis balls
- 5 squeaky dog toys



TIME

Variable, 45 minutes or a little bit more



POINTS OF REFLECTION

The reflection questions are already incorporated in the description of the activity. Here is also a list of points of reflection.

Throwing (stress) balls



- 'What did you notice that there were moments when you were building tension during the exercise?
- Using the circle, the trainer checks whether there have been any tension signals that have not yet been mentioned but still want to be shared.
- Tension recognition:
- What did you notice now that there were moments when you were building tension?
- The same as last time?
- Differences from last time?
- Tension control:
- What did you do to be able to go on despite the potential tense moments during the exercise?
- In your daily life, how do you ensure that your tension is reduced when things get (too) tense? Are you willing and able to give 1 example?
- TBMP
- T:Thinking/imagination (helping and hindering thoughts/imagination)
- B: Breathing
- Breathe through, 4 counts inhale, 4 counts hold breath, 4 counts exhale
- M:Muscle tension:
- Reduce muscle tension by shaking, stretching and/or stretching the body
- P:Posture:
- Knees slightly bent, feet feeling.
- Are there any tips on tension control that fit for you or that you would like to try out? If so, which ones?



NOTES

During coaching, the trainer keeps an eye on 3 aspects:

1) Sufficient challenge (participants try to complete the task. You notice that it requires commitment and concentration from them. Sometimes they fail, but not too often. You can provide more challenge by bringing more balls into play or by giving an extra task when throwing/catching the ball in the form of a movement or sound the participant makes)

2) Dosed fun (dosed fun can be seen in that participants laugh with each other and also still stay engaged with the task. If there is too much fun, participants may laugh a lot with each other but no longer take the task seriously. More fun can be brought in by the trainer by making jokes, adding alienating game elements such as squeaky toy animals for dogs or adding imagination where tennis balls, for example, are represented as meatballs being thrown over. An excess of fun can be dampened by, as a trainer, drawing participants' attention, quieter, more serious and emphasizing the challenge of the task more)

3) Sufficient safety (participants unhull themselves, keep participating) Participants are asked to share their reaction when missing the ball because

-it makes the exercise livelier with more interaction

-participants can playfully become aware of their internal reaction to the 'stress of failure'



Walking with the eye

LIFE SKILLS involved

02

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

1. The student is more aware of tension signals in his body
2. The student is more aware of how to control/reduce tension in the body



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The trainer has introduced the exercise. He stands with the students in a circle and explains the idea: Look around you, make eye contact and form a pair with 1 person while both staying at your own place in the circle. Keeping eye contact as a pair, walk very slowly closer together. If you don't want the other one to get even closer. Say stop. Both of you then stop walking but look at each other for another 10 seconds. While maintaining eye contact from the first moment that you move very slowly closer to each other, you are aware of two points of attention:

- 1) Tension signals you notice in yourself (tension recognition)
- 2) What are you doing to reduce tension? (tension control)



MATERIALS

Steel-toed shoes or smelly flowers that allow people to keep each other at bay



TIME

10 minutes



Walking with the eye



POINTS OF REFLECTION

In pairs, exchange with each other what happened with regard to the 2 focal points from the exercise.

- 1) Tension recognition...
- 2) Tension control....



NOTES

This is a short activity that lends itself well within a workshop on coping with stress preceded by the activity 'throwing balls' and followed up by the activity 'daring to express your fantasy language'.

Cope with resistance



LIFE SKILLS involved

03

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

1. The student understands the concept of empathy and its importance in personal and professional relationships.
2. The student explores different perspectives and experiences to develop empathy.
3. The student practices empathetic communication skills through interactive exercises.
4. The student reflects on personal experiences and identifies ways to cultivate empathy in daily life.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The participants stand in two rows facing each other and make pairs. One row extends his right index finger forward, the other row his left index finger. These fingers touch each other. The most important rule for this exercise is that the fingers must always maintain contact and that both people are responsible for this.

There is no speaking during this exercise.

The assignment is then that one row wants the other row back towards the wall, but the other row does not want to go there.



TIME

20 minutes

Cope with resistance



POINTS OF REFLECTION

- In the debriefing we reflect on what the participants experienced during the exercise and what insights this provided.
- During reflection on the exercise, the trainer considers the link with empathy. Empathy is about connecting without showing dominance. It's about moving along without losing sight of the importance of the content.



NOTES

There is a good chance that one row will mainly push with the index finger and that the other row will push back. Light forms of violence or certain seduction techniques may then be used to move the other person towards the wall. The resistance then generally only increases.

Often a second round is necessary after the trainer has once again emphasized that both people are responsible for keeping the pointers in contact.

Subsequently, participants often see the opportunity to move backward instead of forward and to 'take the other along' instead of pushing forward.

What is empathy?



LIFE SKILLS involved

03

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
| 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship | 10. Creative Thinking |



OBJECTIVES

1. The student understands the concept of empathy and its importance in personal and professional relationships.
2. The student explores different perspectives and experiences to develop empathy.
3. The student practices empathetic communication skills through interactive exercises.
4. The student reflects on personal experiences and identifies ways to cultivate empathy in daily life.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

In subgroups:

- Each subgroup with a flipchart sheet:
- Discuss the topic with each other
- Fill the flipchart sheet
- Change flipchart sheets after 5 minutes
- Put question marks by what you don't understand or where you disagree
- Add a curl to what you agree with

Topics are:

- What is empathy?
- How do you express empathy?
- What should you be careful about when giving empathy?



MATERIALS

Flipchart sheets and markers

What is empathy?



TIME

35 minutes



POINTS OF REFLECTION

- In the debriefing we reflect on what the participants experienced during the exercise and what insights this provided.
- During reflection on the exercise, the trainer considers the link with empathy



NOTES

Once the three subgroups have been to all three flip chart sheets, discuss the results with the entire group. When reading the flip chart about what you need to be careful with, you consider the danger of sentences such as 'I understand that.....' or 'I can imagine that.....'.

Making Rapport



LIFE SKILLS involved

03

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
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OBJECTIVES

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3. The student practices empathetic communication skills through interactive exercises.
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DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

A recalls a memory of an intense, impressive event (positive or negative) in the past (but does not have to say anything about it) and feels again how he felt at that time
 A expresses that feeling with his body, facial expression and breathing
 B looks at A and mirrors his 'appearance'
 C helps B and fine-tunes it further so that he has exactly the same body position
 C also observes A and sees what happens to him when B reflects
 B tells how he feels and what is going through his mind
 A tells what happened to him when mirroring
 C shares his observations
 Change roles



TIME

30 minutes

Making Rapport



POINTS OF REFLECTION

- In the debriefing we reflect on what the participants experienced during the exercise and what insights this provided.
- During reflection on the exercise, the trainer considers the link with empathy.



NOTES

Trainer walks around, helps and clarifies when necessary.

Empathy vs Sympathy



LIFE SKILLS involved

03

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
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OBJECTIVES

1. The student understands the concept of empathy and its importance in personal and professional relationships.
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4. The student reflects on personal experiences and identifies ways to cultivate empathy in daily life.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Show the video on this topic and discuss it in plenary.
[How empathy works - and sympathy can't \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



MATERIALS

Laptop/ beamer/ Wi-Fi



TIME

25 minutes

Empathy vs Sympathy



POINTS OF REFLECTION

Reflection on the insights provided and making a connection with the personal (working) situation.



NOTES

This is an important part of the workshop. People often confuse empathy with sympathy, but it is really different.

Helping with empathy



LIFE SKILLS involved

03

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
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OBJECTIVES

1. The student understands the concept of empathy and its importance in personal and professional relationships.
2. The student explores different perspectives and experiences to develop empathy.
3. The student practices empathetic communication skills through interactive exercises.
4. The student reflects on personal experiences and identifies ways to cultivate empathy in daily life.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

We practice showing empathy and helping the other person deal with the difficult situation.

Step 1:

- Listening, summarizing, asking questions
- Give space and show understanding
- Reflect on feelings
- Do not trivialize or contradict

Step 2:

- Give a positive summary
- State the wish behind the complaint

Step 3:

- Encourage the other person to act
- 'What do you need?'
- 'How are you going to handle it?'

Helping with empathy



MATERIALS

Flipchart/ markers



TIME

40 minutes



POINTS OF REFLECTION

Can you use this exercise in your (work)practice?



NOTES

Collect a number of frequently heard complaints at work/school and write them down on a flipchart sheet.

Practice with the group how to go through the steps:

- Show empathy by reflecting
- Identify the need
- Generate action.

The creative process



LIFE SKILLS involved

10

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
| 04. Self-Awareness | 09. Decision Making |
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OBJECTIVES

1. The student understands the principles and stages of creative thinking.
2. The student knows techniques for overcoming creative blocks and fostering a mindset of innovation.
3. The student acknowledges the importance of mindfulness, play, and collaboration in nurturing creativity.
4. The student is skilled in strategies for refining and implementing creative ideas effectively.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

We work with subgroups of approximately 6 people. Each subgroup goes through the creative process. It is very important that they come up with a useful but above all inspiring starting question (see handout and PPT). They then use two different creative techniques to come up with as many ideas as possible (see handout and PPT). The subgroup uses the COCD box for convergence (see again the handout and PPT). And finally, the group comes up with a plan to make the best idea a reality.



MATERIALS

Hand-outs, memo's, flipchart, PPT



TIME

50 minutes

The creative process



POINTS OF REFLECTION

Can you use this exercise in your (work)practice?



NOTES

The framework of the methodology (walking through the different steps in a structured manner) provides guidance and is helpful in increasing creativity. The creative techniques presented are only tools! This exercise is not about performing the creative techniques as best as possible, it is just about opening the brain and stimulating it to come up with as many ideas as possible. No idea is crazy or strange. See also the idea killers in the PPT.

Optimizing creative thinking



LIFE SKILLS involved

10

- 01. Coping With Emotions
- 02. Coping With Stress
- 03. Empathy
- 04. Self-Awareness
- 05. Building Interpersonal Relationship
- 06. Problem Solving
- 07. Critical Thinking
- 08. Effective Communication
- 09. Decision Making
- 10. Creative Thinking**



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DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The participants stand in a circle. They throw a ball to each other. Everyone gets the ball once. The participants remember who gave them the ball and who they threw it to. The group repeats this pattern, but with the task of passing the ball around faster and faster.'



Optimizing creative thinking



MATERIALS

Small ball



TIME

20 minutes



POINT OF REFLECTION

- In the debriefing we reflect on what the participants experienced during the exercise and what insights this provided?
- During reflection on the exercise, the trainer considers the link with creative thinking. Creative thinking is about being open to each other, building on each other's ideas and jointly creating an open and positive atmosphere. It is then that innovative ideas emerge.



NOTES

Participants often initially throw more hastily (and then often make more mistakes). At some point, smarter solutions will come along. For example, by standing in order and handing over the ball. Or let the ball roll from one hand to the other. The quickest solution is often for the participants to hold their hands above each other like a funnel and let the ball fall through.

Your creative power



LIFE SKILLS involved

10

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
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1. The student understands the principles and stages of creative thinking.
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4. The student is skilled in strategies for refining and implementing creative ideas effectively.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The trainer explains the creative process. This consists of 4 phases: A good starting question, divergence, convergence and activation (see the PPT). The participants then complete a small test (see material). Based on this test, the participants estimate in which phase their talents will come into their own.



MATERIALS

Test



TIME

30 minutes

Your creative power



POINTS OF REFLECTION

Reflection on the insights provided and making a connection with the creative process.



NOTES

This test obviously only provides an indication. In the remainder of the workshop, we will work with subgroups. When dividing the subgroups, you can ensure that there is a good mix of talents in each subgroup.

Making associations



LIFE SKILLS involved

10

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
| 03. Empathy | 08. Effective Communication |
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OBJECTIVES

1. The student understands the principles and stages of creative thinking.
2. The student knows techniques for overcoming creative blocks and fostering a mindset of innovation.
3. The student acknowledges the importance of mindfulness, play, and collaboration in nurturing creativity.
4. The student is skilled in strategies for refining and implementing creative ideas effectively.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The group stands in a circle. For example, the trainer calls a noun 'sofa'. The participant next to the trainer then says the first word that comes to mind, and we go around the circle several times.



TIME

20 minutes



POINTS OF REFLECTION

- In the debriefing we reflect on what the participants experienced during the exercise and what insights this provided?

Making associations



- In the reflection we reflect on what is happening in the minds of the participants. The trick is not to think too much and just say the word that comes to mind first. Not easy for everyone. Some participants would like to give a 'good' or 'funny' association, but such a goal actually limits you. Due to the tension, participants sometimes also associate on an earlier word instead of the last word that was said. The aim of the exercise is to open the associative power of the brain and to consider which limiting beliefs can prevent this.



NOTES

The trainer actively participates.

Book title



LIFE SKILLS involved

10

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 01. Coping With Emotions | 06. Problem Solving |
| 02. Coping With Stress | 07. Critical Thinking |
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OBJECTIVES

1. The student understands the principles and stages of creative thinking.
2. The student knows techniques for overcoming creative blocks and fostering a mindset of innovation.
3. The student acknowledges the importance of mindfulness, play, and collaboration in nurturing creativity.
4. The student is skilled in strategies for refining and implementing creative ideas effectively.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

There are many different inspirational photos on a table. The group is divided into pairs. Each pair chooses a photo that moves them. Based on that photo, they come up with a story about which a book could be written. The assignment is to ultimately think of a book title and a subtitle.



MATERIALS

Large set of inspirational photos/ Flipchart



TIME

35 minutes



GROUP REFLECTION

In the debriefing we reflect on what the participants experienced during the exercise and what insights this provided?



NOTES

This exercise shows the participants how big their imagination is and how fun it is to work on it together. It's amazing how many stories emerge based on just a photo.

Appendix 1

This appendix refers to exercise 34: 'The Creative Process'.

Anyone can embrace opportunities, but this requires something important on one's part: the ability to see the potential in every situation. This requires a creative and open mindset. It means postponing judgement, thinking in terms of possibilities and constantly looking for alternatives.

How do you postpone judgement?

- Keep your options open
- Avoid premature judgements, explore, and ask questions
- Embrace unique ideas!

The basis of creative thinking lies in applying creative skills and techniques that stimulate a deviation from the established patterns in your mind. Remember, always use warm-up exercises before launching into a creative thinking process. It is essential to brainstorm with different groups, choose a location that gives a good feeling and maintain an ideal group size of four to eight participants.

Basic creative skills to break the established patterns and models in your mind and discover surprising ideas:

- Creative Observation
- Association
- Visualisation

The creative process is characterised by four phases:

- Initial question
- Divergence
- Convergence
- Activation

1. INITIAL QUESTION:

The starting phase of the creative process is to formulate a good initial question, which is fundamental to guiding the entire conception process. A good initial question should be:

- Positive: it is important that the question is formulated optimistically. This approach stimulates a constructive mindset and encourages the search for solutions rather than focusing on problems or limitations.
- Powerful: A good question must have the ability to inspire and motivate. It must have an impact and generate enthusiasm.
- Ambitious: The most effective questions often involve a long-term vision or a significant challenge. These questions prompt the search for creative and innovative answers, rather than immediate and simple solutions.
- Simple and direct: Using simple and direct language, free of jargon, makes the question accessible to everyone. Avoiding technical or complicated terms ensures that the message is clear and that everyone can understand and contribute to the brainstorm.

It can start with phrases such as:

- "How can we...?" → This formulation invites collaboration and the search for practical solutions. It is an openness to action that encourages creative thinking.
- "Generate 10 ways to..." → This approach is oriented towards idea generation and creates a specific task, which stimulates brainstorming.
- "Wouldn't it be great if...?" → This question explores ideal scenarios, encouraging visualisation of desired outcomes and activating positive thinking.

2. DIVERGENCE:

This phase is based on the idea that you can relate different concepts in your mind to generate new ideas. To do this, you can adopt an extremely simple technique: you use 'coincidence hits', i.e. information that is not directly related to the problem you are facing, but that can inspire you to think differently.

This selection of information is purely random; let chance decide!

- Start by choosing a word or concept from a random page of the book (e.g., turn to page 26 of the first book you find and take the second word you find)
- Find an image in another room. This image will act as a source of inspiration.
- Once you have chosen the word and found the image, write down a list of associations that come to mind regarding these elements. Don't worry if the ideas seem distant or unrelated to your initial problem; the important thing is to let the thoughts flow.
- Take the associations generated and try to reconnect them to the question you started with. Try to see what new connections or ideas may emerge from this process.

The aim of this phase is to trigger a divergent search for ideas, encouraging creativity and leading to new solutions through association play.

When people start brainstorming or generating ideas, they normally draw on already existing thoughts and ideas that belong to their habitual mental schema. These patterns are the established ways in which we tend to think and solve problems, which can limit creativity.

Participants should 'eliminate' or 'overcome' existing preconceptions or thoughts in their minds, so that they can explore new and different ideas, instead of getting stuck in their mental habits. The aim is to enable them to explore more creative and innovative terrain, without being constrained by their habitual thought patterns.

IDEA KILLERS

Idea killers' are phrases or attitudes that often emerge during creative processes and can hinder innovation and brainstorming. These expressions can manifest as resistance to change, scepticism, perceived limitations or fear of failure, and can have a significant impact on a person or group's ability to generate new and constructive ideas. Here are some examples of the main idea killers:

- "YES, BUT..." (= No!)
- "It already exists!"
- "We don't have time for this..."
- "It's not for us..."
- "Can't be done!"
- "Too expensive!"
- "We have no way to do it!"
- "Let's remain realistic..."
- "We need more research..."
- "There's no point!"
- "Don't make mistakes!"
- "I am NOT creative..."
- "It's not my responsibility..."
- "It's too big a change..."
- "The veterans won't use it..."
- "We've done this before..."
- "We're too small for this..."
- "We can also do without it..."
- "It doesn't work here!"
- "Since when are you an expert???"
- "Just act normal..."
- "Keep in mind that..."
- Etc.

These idea killers create a barrier to creativity and innovative thinking. They can generate an environment in which people feel judged or limited, which can lead to a reduced willingness to share ideas and experiment. In a collaborative context, this can compromise the quality of the solutions found.

Being aware of idea killers is the first step to avoid them. Creating an environment where ideas can be welcomed, explored and developed makes the creative process freer and more productive, paving the way for innovative and original solutions.

3. CONVERGENCE:

A lot of good ideas can be generated after a divergence phase, but how do you evaluate and select the best ones?

Key selection tips: stay focused on the goal, think optimistically, show courage, trust your intuition and prioritize ideas that energize you.

The COCD-Box is a technique developed by Mark Reason for the Center for Development of Creative Thinking in 1977. It is a 2x2 matrix useful for organizing, classifying and evaluating the ideas that emerge in brainstorming sessions and for making a selection of potential solutions according to different criteria.



Yellow Quadrant (HOW?):
original idea but not (yet) feasible

Red Quadrant (WOW!):
An innovative and exciting idea

Blue Quadrant (NOW!):
Easy to implement idea with low risk

Another method to converge is to have each participant select their three favorite ideas, the 'love babies', the ones that really excite them. A good explanation of your choices is crucial!

4. ACTIVATION

Once the ideas have been selected, it is time to develop them through implementation plans.

Tips for Activation:

- Align your logic and emotions
- Assess the reactions of both supporters and critics
- Develop convincing arguments
- Determine your next steps
- Decide what to do and what not to do
- Communicate with enthusiasm

Appendix 2

This appendix refers to exercise 34: “Your Creative Power”.

“Your creative power” test: where does your strength lie?

Circle the word that best describes you, considering the four qualities (horizontally). Think about your behaviour at school or at work.

1	Passionate	Confident	Analytical	Flexible
2	Playful	Persuasive	Persistent	Supportive
3	Convincing	Competitive	Selective	Controlled
4	Refreshing	Resourceful	Respectful	Understanding
5	Enthusiastic	Direct	Comparative	Insightful
6	Constructive	Positive	Methodical	Patient
7	Spontaneous	Adventurous	Systematic	Sociable
8	Optimistic	Self-assured	Orderly	Receptive
9	Enthusiastic	Daring	Detailed	Diplomatic
10	Inspiring	Independent	Idealistic	Trusting
11	Demonstrative	Decisive	Thoughtful	Dry humor
12	Innovative	Resourceful	Musical	Mediating
13	Talkative	Tenacious	Reflective	Connecting
14	Lively	Leader	Loyal	Good listener
15	Popular	Productive	Perfectionist	Sympathetic
 Total Type 1 Total Type 2 Total Type 3 total Type 4

See your highest score and discover your profile!

Type 1: IDEATOR (yellow)

—> One's strength lies most in stage 2 of the creative process (divergence phase)

Type 2: IMPLEMENTER (red)

—> One's strength lies mostly in phases 2 and 4 of the creative process (divergence phase and activation phase)

Type 3: DEVELOPER (blue)

—> One's strength lies mostly in phases 3 and 4 of the creative process (convergence phase and activation phase)

Type 4: FACILITATOR (green)

—> One's strength lies somewhat in all phases of the creative process

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Creative Learning for Life

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