



Dominique Bénard

# Lifeskills



Approches coopératives

# Table of contents

Foreword	4
I. Interpersonal communication	7
1. The mysterious object	8
2. The crazy sentence	10
3. Shadow conversations	13
4. Talking with your body	16
5. Architects and carpenters	20
6. Public presentation and speaking	28
II. Co-operation and teamwork	35
7. The crazy comic stripe	36
8. The big egg drop	39
9. Our Code of Conduct	44
III. Advocacy skills	49
10. Citizens	50
IV. Negotiation and refusal skills	56
11. How to assert yourself	57
12. How to refuse	62
V. Problem solving and decision making	67
13. Resolve a problem or conflict	68
14. The decision making wheel	73
VI. Critical thinking and creativity	79
15. Unleashing our creativity	80
16. The box	87
17. A curious story about animals	91
18. Thinking outside the box	94
VII. Self-awareness and goal setting	98
19. The cubes	99
20. One step after the other	102

21. Self-diagnosis and personal goals	104
VIII.Managing emotions	110
22. The Emotion Bench	111
23. Out of control	114
24. The message of emotions	117

# Foreword

Life skills" are the psychosocial skills needed to adopt appropriate and positive behavior that enable individuals to respond effectively to the demands and challenges of daily life.

They are often sorted into three broad categories:

- a. **Communication and interpersonal skills:** active listening, empathy; negotiation and refusal skills; cooperation and teamwork skills, etc.
- b. **Critical thinking and decision-making skills:** ability to analyze societal attitudes, values and norms; problem solving, etc.
- c. **Coping and self-management skills:** self-awareness; emotional and stress management, etc.

Life skills are not systematically taught at school, yet they are essential for successful social and professional integration.

They are not learned through lessons but through experience, activities and games.

*"... The challenges that children and young people regularly face are many, and require more than learning literacy and numeracy. This is why the 164 nations involved in the Education for All programme have included "Skills for Life" as a basic educational need for all young people. Throughout the world, Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) is adopted as a means of empowering young people in difficult situations. Life skills-based education refers to an interactive process of teaching and training that enables learners to acquire knowledge and develop attitudes and skills that reinforce the adoption of healthy behaviours".*

(Source: UNICEF, <http://www.unicef.org/lifeskills/>)

## Instructions for the facilitator

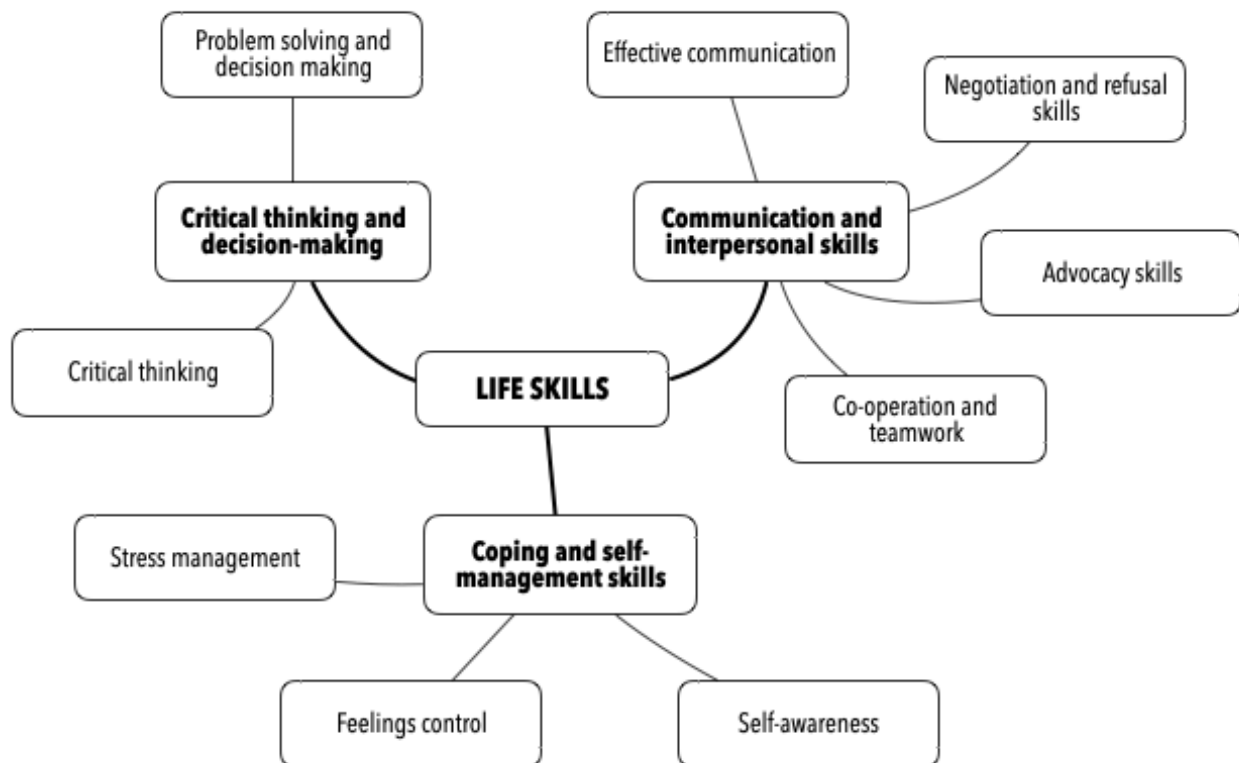
Life skills are learned through action, by living a group experience, a collective project.

The different categories of competences proposed here are not strictly distinct from each other. Many of the life skills are used in practice simultaneously. For example, decision-making often involves mastering critical reasoning. Finally, it is the interaction between the different skills that produces effective behavior.

On the following pages you will find 24 exercises covering the three major life skills categories shown on the concept map on the following page.

The instructions for these exercises are very simple:

- Exercises last 30 to 90 minutes. They can be aimed at children aged 8 to 12 or adolescents aged 12 to 18. They are very playful and generally drag the interest of the participants.
- An exercise on communication or teamwork is not enough for young people to acquire the corresponding skills, but it can enable them to identify some elements of success that they can then consolidate and deepen in daily life.
- You can use a life skills exercise regularly at each session with your group of children or young people, encouraging them to apply the discoveries they have made in their daily lives and in the work of the group.
- The facilitator should not try to teach a class, but should offer the children or young people to cooperate together to live an experience fully, then dialogue with them to help them learn from it.



# I. Interpersonal communication

---



The ability to communicate **effectively** is the most important of all life skills. Communication is the act of transferring information from one place to another, using speech, writing, images, etc., in order to communicate orally or by body language (gestures and expressions, tone of voice, etc).

# 1. The mysterious object

---

*Hearing someone say something and actually listening to what is said are two completely different things.*



## Goal

Demonstrate good listening skills and the ability to remember what you have heard.

## Target group

Children from 8 to 12 years old

## Participants

4 to 20

## Time

30 à 45 minutes



## Resources

None

## Introduction

Explain the objectives of the session and add: *"Getting someone to say something and actually listening to what is said are two completely different things. Sometimes it's hard to pay attention to what's said. You stretch out your voice but you can't remember the words, and when you're in class, it can be difficult. This game allows you to practice good listening skills and memorization of what is said."*

## Activity

- Ask two members of the group to secretly choose an object in the room and then have a conversation about the object without naming it. The rest of the group should listen and try to identify the mystery object.
- When the group has identified the object, ask two other members to choose a new object and start a new conversation about it.

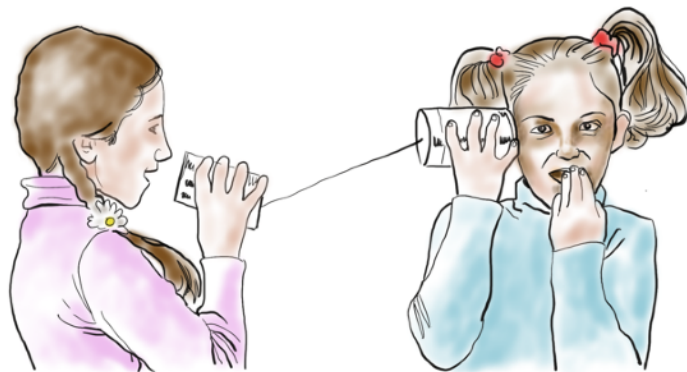
## Discussion

- Start a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - What needs to be done to find out what the conversation is about?
  - Can being attentive to gestures and body language help?
  - When is it important to listen to others?
  - Why should we listen carefully to others when they speak?

## 2. The crazy sentence

---

*Sometimes the details are not essential but other times they are the most important part of the information given.*



### Goal

Develop active listening skills

### Target group

Children and from 8 to 18 years old

### Participants

2 to 20

### Duration

30 to 60 minutes

### Resources

- Paper, pencils
- 2 chairs

## Introduction

Explain the objectives of the session and add: "Listening to all the details can be very important when we are trying to solve a problem or follow complicated instructions. Sometimes the details are not essential, but other times they are the most important part of the information given. Being able to listen carefully to every word a person says is not an easy task. Often we have to "listen" with our eyes and observe body language, facial expressions and eye movements in order to capture all the information we need. The more we pay attention to details, the better we hear and understand what is being said.

## Activity

- Before the game, make up a dozen sentences that are complete and correct but sound "crazy".
- Write each sentence on a small piece of paper. Examples of crazy sentences: *"The blue cow flies over the train"; "On Christmas Day, the bands of jackdaw are stuck to the ceiling"; "The little man with a brown overcoat was swallowing his soup in the street"; "The red-nosed policeman jumped into the pool"*.
- Place two chairs face to face in front of the participants.
- Invite two volunteers to sit on the chairs. Give each of them a piece of paper with a crazy sentence.
- The two volunteers must engage in a 3-minute conversation on a given topic, for example, "sports", "movies", "vacations", etc. and place the crazy sentence they received in the conversation.
- When the conversation is over ask the audience to identify the crazy sentences.

- Name the winners to engage in a new conversation with two more crazy sentences and repeat the exercise several times.

## Discussion

Initiate a discussion with the following questions:

- What was needed to detect the crazy sentence?
- When do you use your best listening skills?
- When is it important for you to show good listening skills?

### 3. Shadow conversations

---

*In interpersonal communication, we communicate through speech (verbal expression) but also with our whole body (non-verbal expression). Being attentive to non-verbal expression allows us to better understand what our interlocutor wants to say and the problems he or she may have in communicating.*



#### Goal

Become more aware of the relationship between verbal expression and body language.

#### Target Group

Children and teenagers from 8 to 16 years old

#### Number

6 to 30 participants

## Duration

60 minutes

## Resources

- Projector
- Large sheets of white paper
- Markers

## Introduction

- Explain the objectives of the session and then ask participants if they have ever seen their shadow on a wall or sidewalk when talking with friends.
- Explain that you are going to offer them an exercise where they will be asked to pay attention to their shadow when they are engaged in conversation with others.

## Activity

- Turn on the projector to illuminate the white sheets of paper on the wall.
- Ask for two volunteers and invite them to hold a short but lively discussion on a given topic in front of the sheets of paper. For example, *"Why didn't you call me last night? I was waiting for you to call!"* - *"Excuse me, I completely forgot! I'm sorry, I'm sorry..."*
- Encourage participants to express a variety of feelings such as joy, sadness, surprise, anger, etc. not only through their words but also through their actions.

- Abruptly stop the actors and ask them to stop in the posture they took during their discussion.
- Ask other volunteers to draw their silhouette on the paper with a marker in the position they are in and add "bubbles" to note the conversation that has just taken place.
- Place more sheets of paper on the wall, repeat the exercise with two other players and a different conversation and draw their silhouette again with bubbles to record their conversation.
- The sheets of paper with the shadow conversations are displayed on the walls of the room.

## Discussion

- Ask participants to describe the body language used during the various conversations and then ask, "*Does this body language accurately represent the conversation that did or did not take place and why?*".
- Ask participants how body language can be interpreted and how this knowledge can be useful in identifying and better understanding the feelings of others during an interaction.

## 4. Talking with your body

---

*Non-verbal communication, the one in which we engage with our bodies and gestures, is frequently linked to the emotions that animate us.*



### Goal

- Identify different emotions by observing body language (non-verbal communication)
- Be more aware of one's own feelings and those of others through understanding non-verbal expressions.

### Target group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

### Number

4 to 20 participants



## Duration

60 minutes

## Resources

- Sheets of paper and pencils
- Flipchart and markers

## Introduction

Explain the objectives of the session and then add: *"Non-verbal communication, the communication in which we engage with our bodies and gestures, is frequently linked to the emotions that arouse in us. In this exercise the goal is to express and communicate a feeling through non-verbal language. It is a way of learning to recognize the emotions felt by our interlocutors and ourselves during a conversation in order to be able to understand each other and communicate well".*

## Activity

- Tell participants: *"Have you noticed that in the French language there are expressions that refer to a way of feeling a feeling or emotion through one's body, such as 'triste à pleurer'? Can we try together to find other expressions of this type? Give me your ideas and I'll write them on the board."*
- Write down on the board the expressions that the group finds and that you agree with. For example: trembling with fear, being red with anger, being enraged, boiling with indignation, being swollen with hope, etc.
- When you feel that the participants have found enough expression (at least 7 or 8), copy the expressions on sheets of paper and ask the participants to form teams of 4 to 6 members.

- Give each team a piece of paper with an expression on it and tell them not to show it to the other groups.
- Explain that each team will now prepare a small skit to represent the expression they have received, such as a skit in which one of the characters experiences a situation that makes him or her "shake with fear."
- Each team has 5 minutes to prepare their skit, then they will perform it in front of the group to see if anyone can find the expression that expresses the emotion they are portraying.
- After five minutes, each team, in turn, plays its skit. The first one who finds the expression expressing the emotion represented receives a point.

## Discussion

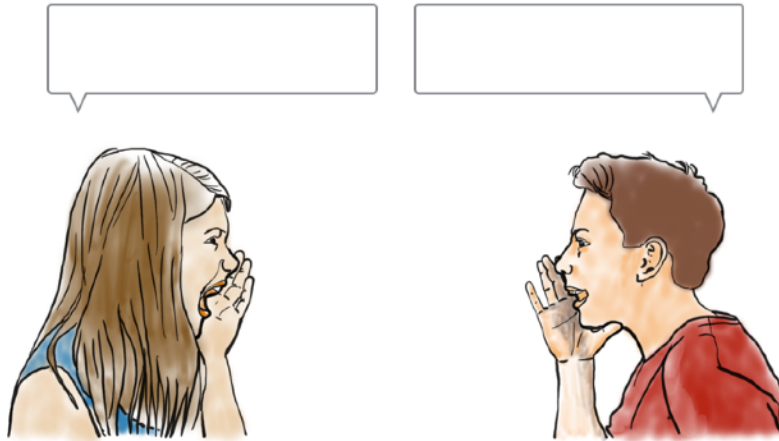
- Start a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - Was the emotion well represented by the actors?
  - How could the emotion have been expressed in another way without speaking?
  - Has anyone in the group experienced this emotion before? When and why? (do not insist if no one wants to answer)
  - Why is it important to be aware of one's own body language and that of others during a conversation? ( If someone is feeling sad or angry, our behaviour towards them should be sensitive to their emotions; being sensitive to the feelings of others helps us to communicate well).
  - Have you encountered cases where someone has said something to you orally while their body language expressed the opposite?
  - Can you give examples of cases where people have misinterpreted other people's feelings? What was the consequence?

- Conclude by explaining the following:
  - For good communication, oral language and body language must say the same thing.
  - Good communication is necessary to facilitate understanding between people, to avoid arguments and settle conflicts, to strengthen friendship and group cohesion.

## 5. Architects and carpenters

---

*Good communication requires the establishment of a feedback loop.*



### Goal

The purpose of this exercise is to show that the lack of positive feedback in communication can cause many problems and frustration.

### Target group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

### Number

4 to 25 participants

### Duration

30 minutes

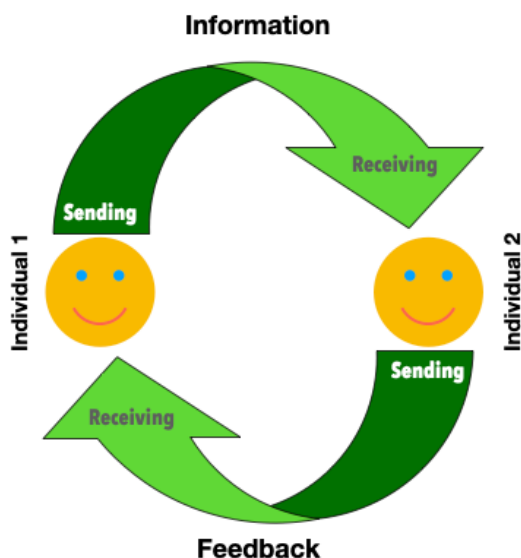
## Resources

- Dominoes sets and envelopes domino diagrams 1 and 2
- Fact sheet "Principles of communication".

## Introduction

- Explain the objectives of the session and then add: "Communicating effectively allows us to :
  - Better receive and exchange information
  - Define and understand goals
  - Building harmonious relationships
  - Promote self-confidence
- However, confusion and errors in the message must be avoided, so any good communication requires a feedback loop:
  - Person A sends a message to person B;
  - Person B receives this message more or less clearly because noises may interfere with listening, or the person has other concerns and does not listen well, or does not understand the vocabulary used by person A, or person A does not clearly respond because he or she is moved or angry.
- The positive feedback loop plays a critical role in communication (see diagram below).
- So, to check whether he or she has understood, person B sends person A "feedback" which can be either positive - expressing what he or she has understood and asking for clarification of what he or she has not understood (this reinforces communication and leads to more

exchanges) - or negative: he or she reacts emotionally, with anger or irritation, which may lead to an equally emotional reaction from person A and may also slow down communication.



## Activity

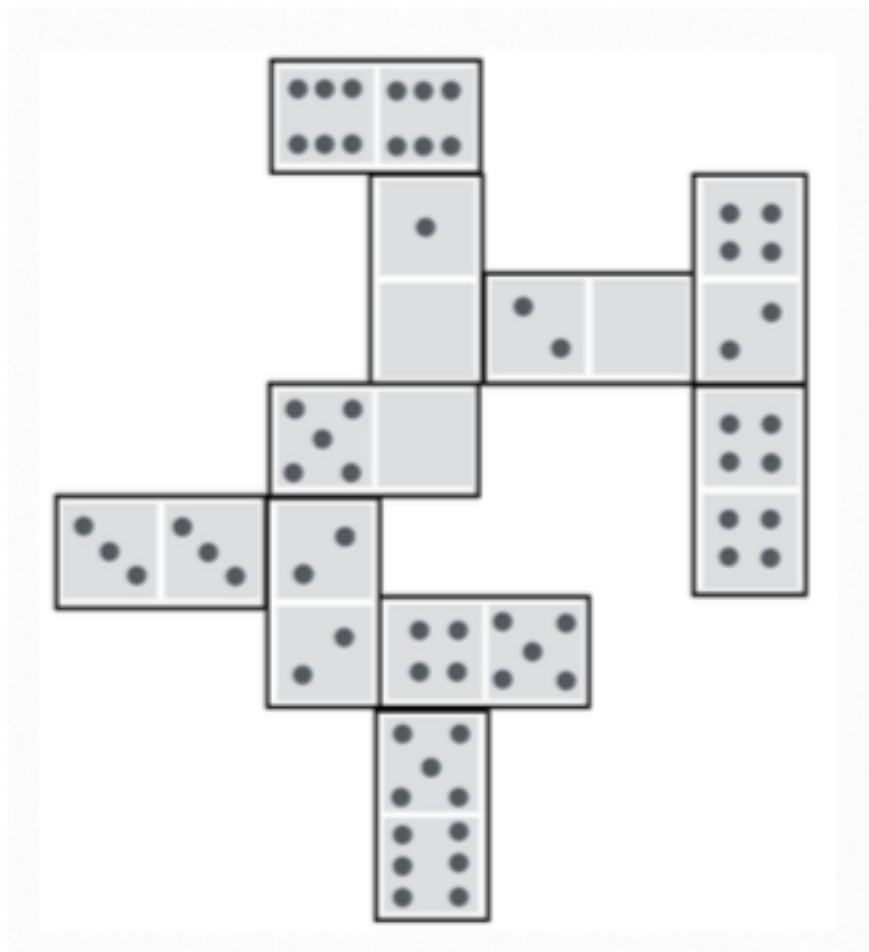
- Divide participants into groups of 4 to 5 people. Each group should be organized into two pairs of participants. If the total number of participants is odd, "pairs" of 3 people can be accepted.
- Explain that in each group, one pair will have the role of "describing" the "architects" and the other pair will have the role of "producing" the "carpenters".
- Ask participants in each group to choose their role: architect or carpenter.
- Distribute the envelopes containing the domino diagrams to the architects and the dominoes to the carpenters, and explain that the carpenters will have to reproduce with the dominoes a diagram presented by the architects.
- The exercise will be done in two parts:

- The carpenters cannot see the diagram. They will have to reproduce it based on the verbal instructions given to them by the architects. Carpenters are not allowed to ask questions or offer feedback. They have 5 minutes to complete this task. When the 5 minutes have elapsed, the diagram is compared with the carpenters' results.
- The same exercise is repeated, but this time the teams change roles and diagrams. The difference with this second attempt is that the carpenters can now ask questions, clarify unclear points and offer feedback. After 5 minutes, we stop and observe the work done.

## Discussion

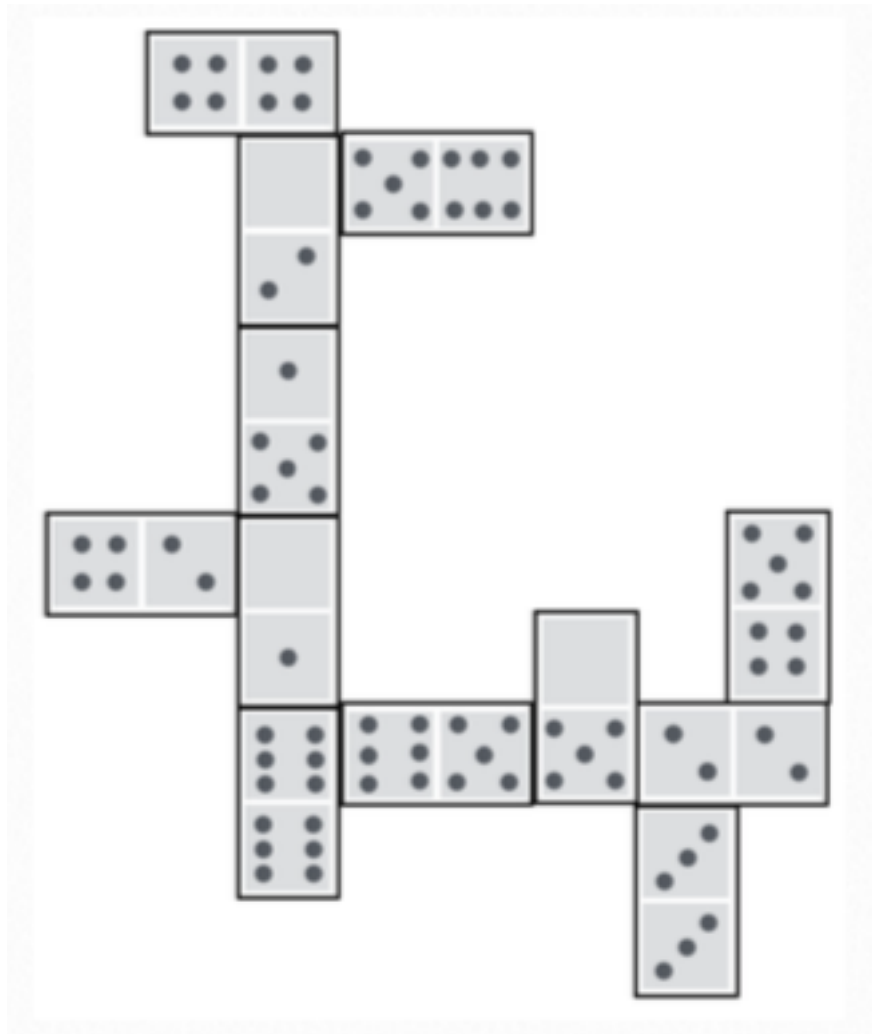
- Start the discussion with the following questions:
  - Were the results better the second time?
  - Why was it better the second time?
  - How can you apply this to everyday situations?
- In conclusion, explain the diagram of the feedback loop and its crucial importance for communication.
- Distribute and explain the handout - Communication Principle.

# Worksheet - Domino Diagram 1





## Worksheet - Domino Diagram 2



# Fact Sheet - Communication Principles

## What helps communication

- Speak in the first person (I, me).
- If there is a problem, admit that it probably comes from both sides (me and the other).
- Think positively (taking things on the right side instead of exaggerating the difficulties).
- Seek to understand other people's points of view.
- Strive to create a situation that is acceptable to everyone.
- Be willing to compromise.
- Be genuine, honest and open.

## What Hinders Communication

- Have a defensive attitude.
- Talking too much and not listening or listening poorly.
- Blaming others.
- Judging others.
- Making assumptions instead of considering the facts.
- Disrespecting the other person.

## **Some tips for good communication**

- Organize your thoughts and ideas before you speak.
- Don't interrupt others when they speak.
- Listen carefully - take notes, if you need to, to help you remember everything. Ask questions for clarification.
- Rephrase what the other person said to get feedback and make sure you understand.
- Stay open-minded about other people's ideas.

## 6. Public presentation and speaking

---

*Knowing how to present and express oneself in public is an important part of social, professional and civic life.*



### Goal

Develop the ability to present and express oneself in public.

### Target group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

### Number

4 to 25 participants

### Duration

60 minutes

## Resources

- Worksheets "Presentation Topics" and "Observation".
- Handouts - Preparing and giving a presentation; mastering one's gestures.
- Flipchart and markers.

## Introduction

- Introduce the objectives of the session and then explain that in life it is essential to know how to present and express oneself in order to be understood and recognized by others.
- Invite participants to form one or more teams of 4 to 6 members.

## Activity

- Ask for one volunteer in each team for a communication exercise.
- Give each team a communication case
- Explain to the volunteers (communicators) of each team that they will have to prepare and play the communication case with the help of their team.
- Give each team 10 minutes to help their communicator prepare the case.
- After 10 minutes, ask the communicator(s) to leave the room.
- Distribute the observation sheet to all participants and explain how to use it.
- Explain that during the presentation of their "communicator", each team should observe them carefully and then, with the help of the secretary, record comments on the observation sheet.

- Bring in the "communicators".
- Ask the "communicators" to make their presentation in turn, each of them having 5 minutes.
- Ask each team to share their observations. If they are too negative, emphasize the positive aspects of the different presentations.
- Note the observations on the flipchart.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion based on the following questions:
  - What was your main difficulty in preparing and presenting the presentation?
  - How could these difficulties be overcome?
- Summarize the conditions for success in preparing and presenting a presentation using the "Preparing and giving a presentation" and "Mastering your posture and gestures" sheets.

## Worksheet - Speaking Topics

---

(1) With friends, you have created a soccer team. You have made an appointment with the mayor of your community so that he can provide you with a space in your neighbourhood for a small soccer field. During the interview, you need to demonstrate your motivation, skills and interest in the project to persuade him to help you.

---

(2) Together with your friends, you have prepared a project to raise awareness about environmental problems and the importance of not littering everywhere. You have planned a big clean-up and garbage collection operation in your neighborhood. You went to see the Director of the Departmental Directorate of the Environment to ask for his assistance. You must persuade him of the importance of your project and the need to put wheelbarrows and shovels at your disposal.

---

(3) Together with some students from your class you have decided to put on a play and perform it on the school feast. You have made an appointment with the rector of the school to persuade him to provide you with technical and financial support. You need a rehearsal room and you also want to rent costumes and build props. You have to persuade the director of the motivation and seriousness of your team, of the skills you have gathered and of the interest of this project for the young people and for the school.

---

## Worksheet - observation

To be observed	Notes
<b>Posture and non-verbal language</b>	
How does he/she stand?	
What does he/she do with his/her hands?	
Where does he/she look?	
Does he/she smile?	
Does he or she have any special facial expressions?	
Is he/she tense or relaxed?	
<b>Verbal language</b>	
"Is his voice loud and understandable enough?"	
"Does he/she use clear, easy-to-understand language?"	
"Does he/she use polite language that attracts sympathy or does he/she use rough and coarse language?"	
"Is his presentation easy to follow? Or are we "losing track"?"	
"Is its tone punchy, dynamic or do you tend to fall asleep listening to it?"	
"Is he/she persuasive?"	



## Factsheet - How to prepare and deliver a speech

<b>1. Before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make a plan (the 3 essential ideas)</li><li>• Write the introductory sentence (drawing attention)</li><li>• Write the last sentence (it remains in the listener's memory)</li></ul>
<b>2. 10 minutes before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relax: take a deep breath and unwind</li><li>• Reread your notes</li><li>• Feeling good about yourself and "seeing" success (visualizing an experience where you have won and finding the pleasant sensation of success: confidence, humor, competence, well-being).</li></ul>
<b>3. During</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• balanced posture; use open gestures (hands and arms open)</li><li>• Remain natural: a touch of humor and a smile make you feel at ease and create a climate of trust.</li><li>• Looking: keep a circular gaze (look at everyone in the audience)</li><li>• Keeping a smiling face</li><li>• Keep your notes in hand to look over them if you need them.</li><li>• Speak: slowly and distinctly. Maintain an audible, modulated and stimulating voice (the audience should feel you are enthusiastic)</li></ul>

## Factsheet - Master your posture and gestures

<b>A. Sitting or standing</b>	<p>The most important thing is to be comfortable. However:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sitting posture means that you take the time to listen</li><li>• Standing means you want to be listened to.</li></ul>
<b>B. The parasitic gestures</b>	<p>They are uncontrolled, repetitive gestures that show an inner tension, nervousness. These gestures are an obstacle to communication because they bring nothing more to the understanding of the message and slow down the attention of the public.</p>
<b>C. The best posture</b>	<p>It is the one that best allows you to be at your ease.</p>
<b>D. Illustration, demonstration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The description of an action, a know-how, the mime</li><li>• Announcing the opening of a debate or inviting questions, arms open and palms up</li><li>• Calling for calm or advising people to be quiet and listen with arms open and palms down.</li></ul>

# II. Co-operation and teamwork

---



Cooperating with others in a group, agreeing on common rules, assigning roles, setting goals and establishing an action plan are skills that are just as essential for contributing to the operation of a company, developing a volunteer association or participating in civic life.

## 7. The crazy comic stripe

---

*If people are not able to communicate their ideas and make decisions together, many problems can occur.*



### Goal

Exchange ideas with others and make decisions together

### Target group

Children from 8 to 12 years old

### Number

3 to 20 participants

### Duration

60 minutes

## Resources

Paper and pencils, erasers. Markers of different colors or colored pencils.

## Introduction

Creating something as a group is not easy. Of course, many people can brainstorm and come up with interesting ideas. But if people can't communicate their ideas well and make decisions together, many problems can arise.

## Activity

- Divide the group into small teams of 3 to 5 members.
- Distribute sheets of paper and drawing materials to each group.
- Explain that each group is asked to create a comic strip, with each person in the group having to fill in a box in the comic strip. So if there are 4 people in the group, the cartoon should have 4 boxes.
- The group has to decide which story they are going to represent and who is going to draw what.
- When the group has made its decision, each member of the group will draw the box for which he or she is responsible by turning their backs on the other members and not looking at what they are doing.
- After 20 minutes, the comic should be finished and all the squares should be glued together.

## Discussion

- Start a discussion based on the following questions:
  - Was communication important in this activity?
  - What different communication skills are needed for this activity?
  - What was the most difficult part of the activity for you?
  - Did your comic strip run smoothly? Why yes, why no?
  - When you are involved in group work, do you want things to go your way or do you also accept contributions from others?
  - Why is it important to make decisions with others?
  - What does it take to make decisions with others?
  - When in your life is it important to communicate clearly with others to make decisions with them?

## 8. The big egg drop

---

*How to get the most out of teamwork?*



### Goal

- Explain the advantages and disadvantages of teamwork ;
- Find ways to increase the advantages and reduce the disadvantages.

### Target Group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

### Number

7 to 20 participants

### Duration

60 minutes

## Resources

- Flipchart and markers
- By team: scissors, a roll of tape, a few sheets of cardboard, paper, rubber bands, paper clips, markers of different colors and ... a raw egg.
- Information sheet

## Introduction

Explain the following : *Teamwork has many advantages but also disadvantages. This exercise helps to identify them in order to find out how to make the most of the advantages and reduce the disadvantages as much as possible.*

## Activity

- Invite participants to group themselves into teams of 4 to 6 members.
- Ask for three volunteers to form a panel of observers and judges.
- Explain that each team is a different company that builds protective packaging and that the teams will compete to see who can make the best advertisement and build the most attractive and strongest packaging.
- Distribute each team with its equipment.
- Explain that the competitors have just 30 minutes to :
  - Build a packaging model capable of protecting an egg from falling from a height of three meters;
  - Make an advertisement in the form of an af- sheet, a song or a play to praise the merits of the packaging.
  - Add that the packaging must look attractive to consumers.



- The winning team will be the one that will have built a packaging capable of protecting the egg and realized the most convincing advertising announcement.
- Give the start signal and count down the time.
- Encourage the jury to observe the behaviour of the participants in each team and to avoid any cheating :
  - Do the participants designate a coordinator? A leader? Do they obey the leader?
  - Do they organize a division of tasks (some build the packaging while others prepare the publicity year)?
  - Do they pool all their ideas to make a plan before they start, or do they act completely anarchic and spontaneous?
  - Are there disagreements and disputes between them?
- At the end of the time allotted, ask each team to take turns presenting their advertisement.
- Arrange to test the packages by dropping them from a height of 3 m (from the top of a second floor or ladder).
- The jury decides on the winning team (a "prize" may be given in the form of a candy packet).

## Discussion

- Start the discussion by asking the following questions:
  - Are all teams satisfied with the work they have done?
  - What were the main difficulties encountered?
  - What are the disadvantages of teamwork?

- What are the advantages of teamwork?
- Note the conclusions on the flipchart.
- Invite jury members to supplement the answers with their own observations.
- Post the sheet with the advantages of teamwork and the sheet with the disadvantages of teamwork opposite each other on the wall.
- Ask participants to indicate how the advantages of teamwork could be maximized and the disadvantages could be reduced to increase the effectiveness of teamwork.
- Record participants' ideas on a third flipchart sheet.
- The table on the next page gives you an idea of the conclusions you should reach.

## Factsheet - Improving teamwork

Advantages	Disadvantages	Improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share ideas, find solutions more quickly, be more creative (put together several brains).</li> <li>• Helping each other: pooling strengths to compensate for individual weaknesses.</li> <li>• Build a sense of friendship, belonging, collective commitment to do one's best and achieve common goals.</li> <li>• The team can be a learning environment where each member will learn something from the others. Members who are more experienced in certain areas can play a mentoring role vis-à-vis other less experienced members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teams can be the place of conflicts (confrontation of different characters, power struggles).</li> <li>• Some members may be marginalized because they do not have skills to share or because they are less articulate or have weaker personalities.</li> <li>• Some members may simply follow passively and benefit from the work of others without contributing anything.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone must have a clear role and must know how they will contribute to the team.</li> <li>• A leader should be elected to facilitate cooperation and decision making. His or her role is to help everyone contribute to the work of the team and to regulate the operation by arbitrating possible disagreements or conflicts.</li> <li>• One must establish clear rules of operation, a code of conduct, a rulebook to establish what not to do and thus avoid conflicts and resolve problems.</li> <li>• There is a need to regularly evaluate the work of the team to improve and find solutions to problems.</li> </ul>

## 9. Our Code of Conduct

---

*A code of conduct is very useful to avoid problems and also to know what to do when problems arise.*



### Goal

Establish a code of conduct based on shared values.

### Target group

Children and Adolescents from 8 to 18 years old

### Number

5 to 20 participants

### Duration

45 to 90 minutes

## Resources

- Flipchart and markers
- Sheets of paper and pencils
- A large sheet of poster paper for each team
- Worksheet - Values to be Discussed

## Introduction

Explain the following: *A rule or code defines what group members can and cannot do, their rights and duties. At the state level, rules are called laws. They are decided and changed by the parliament where the representatives elected by the people sit. Companies and associations have statutes and internal regulations. At the level of a smaller group, such as a team, there is a code of conduct. A code of conduct is very useful to avoid problems and also to know what to do when problems arise.*

## Activity

Invite participants to form teams of 4 to 6 members.

- Explain the purpose of the activity.
- Distribute the "Our Values" worksheet to each team and instruct them that *"One team member reads the 22 values that are proposed. The team will discuss and choose the six values that they feel are most important. Since there is a blank line, the team can add another value that they think is important. You have 15 minutes to do this work."*
- Circulate from one team to another to encourage and help participants without doing the work for them.

- At the end of the time allotted, invite each team to preview the values they have chosen and explain why. Others are allowed to ask questions of clarification but cannot say if it is right or wrong.
- Ask participants to name problems that may be encountered in the life of a team.
- Write the most important points proposed by the group on the flipchart, for example:
  - Relationship problems between members, jealousy, cheating...
  - Someone who is not doing the job he promised to do...
  - Disagreement about decisions to be made...
  - Lack of honesty and respect between members, etc.
- Give each team one of these categories of problems and ask team members to choose a rule to define how to behave to avoid these types of problems by respecting the values previously chosen by the team.
- Explain that the rule must be written in simple and direct language to be understood by all.
- Give a concrete example to illustrate the task: *"Everyone in the team respects each other. We listen to each other and we don't argue"*.
- Each team has 10 minutes to write its rule in large print on a large poster-size sheet.
- At the end of this time, ask each team to present the rule they have written and explain its importance.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - Did you have difficulty choosing the 6 priority values? Which ones and why?
  - Are you satisfied with the proposed rules? Are they sufficiently clear and understandable?
  - Are they sufficient to allow a group to function well, avoid disputes and make decisions together?
  - Do you have any other ideas for rules that you think are important for a group?

## Conclusion

- Conclude by specifying that when a group has adopted a code of conduct, each team member must commit to abide by the code of conduct agreed upon together.
- The code of conduct is not decided once and for all. If after some time of experience, it becomes apparent that a rule is not good, it can be discussed together to change it.
- We can also add new rules to the code of conduct because we have realized that they are missing.

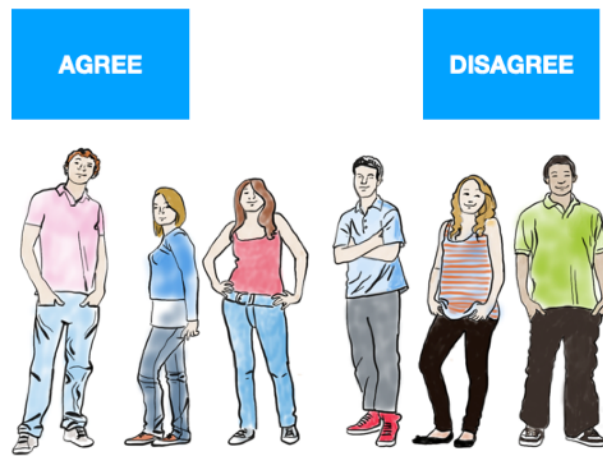
## Worksheet - Our Values

Nº	Values	Choices
1	Taking initiative and moving forward	
2	Be honest	
3	Taking one's part in the common work	
4	Boys and girls are equal and have the same rights	
5	Serving the community	
6	To be free	
7	Seeking Happiness	
8	Accumulating assets and becoming rich	
9	Helping others	
10	Be tolerant and accept differences	
11	Compete with others and win	
12	Respect common rules and decisions	
13	Sharing with others	
14	Being loyal to the group	
15	Acquire new knowledge	
16	Obedying leaders	
17	Standing up for what is fair and equitable	
19	Respecting community property	
20	To have only one word and to deserve trust	
21	Don't waste things	
22	Enjoying the good things in life	
23		



# III. Advocacy skills

---



Advocacy skills are those that enable you to make your point and influence decisions that will be made.

Forming an opinion and being able to persuade others of the rightness of one's point of view is an essential part of democratic debate and responsible citizenship.

# 10. Citizens

---



## Goal

- Practice and develop listening, discussion and persuasion skills.
- Encourage cooperation and open-mindedness.
- Experiment with representative debate processes.

## Target group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

## Number

10 to 30 participants

## Duration

60 minutes

## Resources

- A large room or open space with a long wall (the wall should be long enough for participants to line up side by side along the wall in a single line).
- Two large "Agree" and "Disagree" signs hung at both ends of the wall.
- Two chairs in the center of the space. Sheets of paper (A4) and colored markers to prepare the panels.
- Rolls of tape.
- Notepad.

## Introduction

Explain to participants the objectives of the session.

## Activity

- Point out the two panels at each end of the wall and explain that you are going to read a statement aloud that participants will have to agree or disagree with.
- Read one statement from the "Statements to be evaluated" handout.
- Explain that participants should stand along the wall between the two panels in a place that indicates the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement:
  - If they completely agree with the statement, they should stand at the end near the "Agree" sign;
  - If they strongly disagree with the statement, they should stand at the other end of the wall near the "Disagree" sign.

- Otherwise, they should stand somewhere between the two points depending on whether they rather agree or rather disagree.
- When participants have placed themselves in a line along the wall between the two panels, invite the two who are in the most extreme positions, near the "Agree" and "Disagree" panels, to come to the chairs in the middle of the room. Everyone else should now stand around the chairs, placing themselves near the person with whom they most agree, or occupy a position in the middle if they are undecided.
- Give both participants sitting in the chairs one minute to express why they agree or disagree with the statement. No one should help or interrupt them. Everyone should listen silently.
- When the minute is up, invite the other participants to gather behind the speaker with whom they agree (now they can no longer remain undecided). So there is one group of those who are "For" the statement and another group of those who are "Against" the statement.
- Give the two groups 5 minutes to meet separately and prepare arguments together to strengthen their position, and then choose a new speaker to present their arguments.
- At the end of the 5 minutes, call back the two groups and invite the new speakers to occupy the two chairs with their "supporters" around them.
- Give each speaker three minutes to present their arguments. At the end of the time, the supporters of one and the other can change positions and join the opposite group if the arguments of the opposite group have been convincing.

## Discussion

- Start the discussion by asking the following questions:
  - Who changed their mind during the discussion? What arguments convinced them?

- Do some think they were influenced by something other than the arguments put forward, for example, by group pressure, emotional language, or a sense of rivalry?
- As for those who did not change their opinions during the debate, what was their goal in the discussions? Can they imagine an argument that would have caused them to change their opinion?
- Why do people hold different opinions? What could be done about this in a democratic society?
- Should all opinions be tolerated in a democracy?
- How does it feel to be represented in political life at the local and national levels? Or in an organization or association?
- What human rights were involved in this activity?

## Tips for the facilitator

- The first part of this activity, in which participants stand along a line to express their opinions, should take no more than two or three minutes. The goal is just to establish participants' "starting positions" and for them to see where they stand in relation to others.
- The purpose of this activity is as much to practice communication and persuasive skills as it is to reflect on the issues themselves. Therefore, participants should be encouraged to think not only about the content and presentation of their own opinions, but also about the type or form of argument that will be most persuasive to the opposing group. Their goal is to attract as many people as possible to their "party". They can use the pause between "speeches" to consider the position of the opposition and think of ways to weaken it.
- You may have other topics to discuss than those suggested below, which could be used as a basis for discussion as well. The important thing is to choose a statement that will provoke controversy within the opposition.
- Note that it takes at least 30 minutes to discuss a statement by practicing the suggested steps. If you want to use more affirmations, you will need to allow more time for the exercise.

## Worksheet - Affirmations to evaluate

- We have a moral obligation to use our right to vote in elections.
- We must obey all laws, even those that are unjust.
- The only people who have any power in a democracy are the politicians.
- The people have the leaders they deserve.
- It is the responsibility of the citizens to control the daily activity of the government.
- Freedom of speech means you can say what you want.
- Non-democratic parties should be banned.
- Extremists should not be allowed to speak in public.
- Voting should be mandatory.

# IV. Negotiation and refusal skills

---



One of the essential life skills is the ability to resist pressure. Assertiveness means being able to defend one's rights or those of others in a calm and positive way, without falling into aggression or passive acceptance of what is not right. People who are capable of asserting themselves can make their point of view heard without hurting others or themselves being hurt. By asserting themselves, they can resist pressure from others, defend their point of view and negotiate to reach an agreement.

Children and youth who have developed refusal skills are more likely to make positive choices and not engage in risky behaviours.



# 11. How to assert yourself

---

*Reacting aggressively or passively to a situation of injustice is a lack of self-confidence. It is important to note that in asserting yourself you must always respect the thoughts, feelings and beliefs of other people.*



## Goal

Discovering the paths to assertiveness

## Target group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

## Number

3 to 20 participants

## Duration

30 to 60 minutes

## Resources

Worksheet - problem or conflict situations.

## Introduction

- Explain the objectives of the session.
- Explain the three ways to respond to a difficult situation :
  - **"Doormat mode" (passivity)**: one agrees to comply with the wishes or orders of others. We accept without blinking an eye what others want to do to please them and be loved by them. Many people adopt this attitude because they need to be loved by others. They give more weight to other people's rights, wishes and feelings than to their own. This leads them to do things they don't really want to do in the hopes of pleasing others. They let others take responsibility, control and make decisions for them. This can lead to giving up rights or losing self-confidence.
  - **"Hedgehog mode" (aggressiveness)**: one refuses to consider the views or feelings of others, one imposes one's point of view. One is permanently on the defensive, one "shows his teeth". Aggressive attitudes encourage other people to respond passively or aggressively in turn.
  - **"Assertive mode"**: one takes into consideration one's rights, wishes, desires and needs as well as those of others. One expresses one's own wishes, thoughts and feelings openly and encourages others to do the same. Listens to others' points of view and responds appropriately by either agreeing or disagreeing. You are able to express your appreciation for what others have done well; you are able to admit your faults and apologize. You remain calm and in control of yourself. We behave as equals to others.

- Give an example: you are on the bus and you see a boy shoving an old lady to get to a seat before her and sit down. There are three possible attitudes:
  - Doormat: you say nothing and look away.
  - Hedgehog: you start shouting at the youngster, calling him a savage for not being able to respect an old lady.
  - Assertiveness: you calmly explain to the young person that this old lady could be his grandmother and that she probably has trouble standing in the bus. You politely ask the young person to give the old lady her seat.

## Activity

- Ask participants to form groups of three. Give each trio a case study that presents a problem or conflict situation.
- Ask members of each trio to come up with three possible responses to the situation: the passive response, the aggressive response, and the assertive response. When pooling, one trio will play the passive response, the second will play the aggressive response, and the third will play the assertive response.
- Give the trios 5 minutes to prepare.
- Then ask each trio in turn to play their case by representing the 3 possible responses: passive, aggressive and assertive.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion based on the following questions:
  - Did the different trios adequately represent the three possible attitudes?

- What negative consequences might aggressive behavior have on our relationships with others?
- What distinguishes assertive behavior from passive behavior?
- What is the difference between assertive and aggressive behavior?
- Why is assertive behaviour the only behaviour that improves communication?

## Worksheet - Problematic and Conflictual Situations

Matthew is trying to do your homework at home; his sister wants to listen to music and has turned the sound up. Mathieu can't work with all the noise; he gets up from his desk and talks to his sister .

Ahmed sees a big guy bothering a kid and making him fall on the floor. He interferes and lifts up the little one; the tall one then turns towards him and threatens her, calling her by all names. How will Ahmed react?

Stephan is the tallest in the class, he is a brawler, he likes to threaten others and force them to do what he wants. He noticed that Simon came to school with a new jacket. He waits for him on the way out and threatens to hit him if Simon doesn't give him his jacket. How will Simon respond?

Henry invites Elisabeth to accompany him to the supermarket. In the store, he shows her how to steal a DVD el hiding it under her clothes and invites her to do the same. What will Elisabeth answer?

At school, every day Noah sees the same boy mocking a girl and scaring her in the playground. The boy has never bothered Noah but is very careful to stay out of sight of the teachers when he is bothering the girl. Every day it is the same thing, the boy approaches the girl, follows her and insults or makes fun of her until she starts to cry. Then he starts laughing and walks away saying it was just a joke.

# 12. How to refuse

---

*How to withstand pressure*



## Goal

Learn how not to be manipulated and how to say "no".

## Target group

Adolescents from 12 to 18 years old

## Number

3 to 20 participants

## Duration

30 to 60 minutes

## Resources

None

## Introduction

- Explain the objectives of the session and then ask youth to name choices they make on a daily basis. Write the list on the board, for example:
  - Be friendly or ignore others.
  - Respect or break collective rules.
  - Finish school work before going to play.
  - Tell the truth or lie.
  - Listen to the teacher or talk to a neighbor during class.
- Ask youth to recall a time when a classmate asked them to do something they really didn't want to do because it could cause a problem for themselves or someone else. For example:
  - Mocking or threatening another classmate;
  - Smoking a cigarette;
  - Sniffing chemicals;
  - Stealing something;
  - Cheating;
  - Drinking alcohol;
  - Breaking school rules
  - Doing dangerous things with your bike or skateboard;

- Lying to your parents...
- Explain to youth that one way to keep them safe and out of trouble is to learn refusal skills. If they feel uncomfortable with a request they are being made, they need to take time to think about what could happen if they agree to do what the other person asks them to do.
- Show how to be assertive in front of someone who wants us to do something that would cause a problem. For example, if someone wants to fight, you can stand up in front of the other person, look them in the eye, put your hands on your hips and say in a firm voice, "I'm not going to fight with you". Ask all the youth to stand up and demonstrate this. Explain that this type of behaviour can be helpful in some situations, but that there are other ways to refuse, such as :
  - Say "No" or "No, thank you" and repeat it several times if necessary.
  - Clearly identify the behaviour in question: "This is harassment... (or it's cheating, it's drugs, it's against the rules, I don't do that)" .
  - Saying "Let's talk about something else"...
  - Asking questions: "What are you asking me to do?"; "Why do you want me to do this?"; "What's your problem?"...
  - Giving reasons: "I don't want to get into trouble"; "I don't see things the same way you do"; "If I do this, I'll have a bad feeling"..."
  - Using humour or irony: "You're joking, smoking/drinking alcohol is not good for your health"... ; "Of course, that's all I have to do, and then I'd be sick!"...
  - Suggest to do something else : "Let's go for a ride on a bicycle..." ; "Let's play a game of soccer instead..." ;



- Explain that you want to maintain good relations : "If you decide to do something more useful, let me know..." ; "I'm going home, come if you want to play a video game..."
- Conclude by explaining that if all this doesn't work, all you have to do is ignore the other person and walk away.

## Activity

- Ask for a volunteer to role-play (in using role-playing with young children, the adult facilitator should be the one who plays the role of the bad behaviour. Make sure the children understand that you are pretending and that you do not want a child to behave the same way).
- Invite the volunteer to come to you in front of the group. Give the following explanation: *"We are going to do a role-play. We're going to pretend. This doesn't mean I want you to smoke cigarettes. I am another child and you are my friend. I invited you to come play with me, but at the last minute my mom needs to go shopping. I'm offering you a cigarette. Think about what you're going to say or do. Okay?"*
- To the volunteer: *"Hi, I'm glad you could come. My mom went shopping, I found her pack of cigarettes. Why don't we smoke them? She'll never know. Just look..."* (pretend to light a cigarette and smoke it.) *"Do you want one?"*
- If the volunteer answers *"No!"*, ask *"Why?"* Answers might be: *"Because it's not healthy..."*; *"Because tobacco is a drug..."*; If the volunteer answers *"Okay, give me one..."*, ask the group: *"Is this a good choice?"*. Usually the students answer *"no"*. If they say *"yes"*, ask a child who feels differently to come face to face with the group and explain his or her choice. Congratulate him or her and have the group applaud him or her.
- Announce that a second role-play will be done and add: *"What if a friend offers to take money from the teacher's drawer? Theft is not only against school rules, it is also against the law. I need a volunteer."*

- Bring the volunteer in front of the group and say, *"We're friends and we're alone in the classroom while the other students and the teacher are on the playground."*
- Address the volunteer: *"Hey, did you see Madame Durand put her wallet in her drawer? I noticed that she had forgotten to lock it. You take it and we'll share, okay? She'll never know who did it."*
- Encourage the volunteer to propose an answer. For example: *"Stealing can cause a lot of problems..."; "I don't steal!"; "If I did that, I would feel guilty..."*.
- Congratulate the volunteer and have the group applaud him or her.
- Introduce a new situation to the children: *"A new kid comes into the class. He has used and dirty clothes. What is going to happen? I need a volunteer"*.
- Bring the volunteer in front of the group and then, playing the role of another child, say, *"You've seen how the new kid is dressed. He's all dirty, it's a shame. We're not going to play with him, okay?"*
- Encourage the volunteer to offer a response. For example: *"I think he's nice and I'm going to play with him. It's not fair to leave kids out because they're not dressed nice."*
- Congratulate the volunteer on his or her spirit of good fellowship and invite everyone to applaud the volunteer.
- Invite the children to create other role-playing games involving choices such as: saying *"no"* to alcohol, drinking, cheating, harassment, slander, etc. Involving children in role-playing gives them the opportunity to practice choosing positive responses and to be applauded by their peers for doing what is right for them and their peers.

# V. Problem solving and decision making

---



In everyday life, we constantly encounter problems that we have to solve. But before choosing a solution and making a decision, it is best to imagine the various possible solutions in order to choose the one that is really the best adapted and that will be the most effective.

# 13. Resolve a problem or conflict

---

*Every day we face problems big and small. We often come into conflict and argue with family members or friends. Problems and conflicts cannot be avoided, but we must learn how to solve them.*



## Goal

Develop the skills needed to solve problems.

## Target group

Children and Adolescents from 8 to 18 years old

## Number

3 to 20 participants

## Duration

30 to 60 minutes

## Resources

- Handout: The Five Steps to Problem Solving.
- Worksheet: Role-Playing Cases.

## Introduction

Give the following explanation: *"Each one of us has to solve problems and make decisions large and small every day. For example: 'My brother or sister borrows things from me and usually forgets to return them...' Such problems annoy and bother us because we don't know what to do about them. The purpose of this activity is to experiment and learn a method of problem solving".*

## Activity

- Explain that you are going to read a problem: "Paul lent his best friend a book that was very important to him because it was a gift from his parents. When the friend returns the book, it is torn and soiled. How will Paul react?"
- Ask for two volunteers to play this situation, each taking one of the two roles.
- The volunteers play for a minute or two without being able to find a solution.
- Distribute the "6 Steps to Solving a Problem" handout to participants. Read and explain the content of the sheet. Ask if everything is clear and respond to any requests for clarification.
- Explain that the same situation from the loaned and damaged book will now be played again, but with the help of a third volunteer who will help apply the 6 steps to solve a problem. Ask for this third volunteer.

- Propose that the two actors redo the role-play with the participation of the third volunteer. Help the third volunteer to give advice by following the problem solving method.
- Now propose to all participants to form trios to experiment with the problem solving method. Explain that in each trio, two members will play the roles of the characters involved in the problem while the third member will try to help them by following the 6-step process to solve a problem.
- Distribute the list of role-plays and ask the trios to choose one. If some trios choose the same one, it doesn't matter.
- Start the role-plays. Switch from one team to the other to give advice and get participants back on track if they make mistakes.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - What problems/conflicts did you face and what solutions did you reach?
  - What difficulties did you encounter in applying the method? How did you overcome them?
  - Was the 6-step method helpful in solving the problems you had? How was it useful?
  - Do you think you can use this method to solve everyday problems?

# Factsheet - The Five Steps to Problem Solving

## A. Identify the needs

*What is your need or desire?*

Each person involved in the problem or conflict must answer this question, without blaming or accusing the other person.

## B. Define the problem

*Where do you think the problem lies?*

A response must be found that takes into account the needs of both people involved, without assigning blame.

The people involved must agree on the definition of the problem.

## C. Imagine lots of possible solutions

*What are all the possible solutions to solve this problem?*

Make a list of all possible solutions without commenting, judging or criticizing. The goal is to imagine as many solutions as possible, even the craziest ones.

## D. Evaluate the solutions

*Which solution would you be best satisfied with?*

Each person involved in the problem or conflict should go through the list of possible solutions and indicate which ones they find acceptable or unacceptable.

## E. Choose the best solution

*Do you both agree with this solution? Is the problem solved?*

Make sure that both parties involved agree and recognize the efforts made to find a solution.

## Worksheet - Role-playing Cases

Beatrice found out that a boy in her class, Victor, has put a picture of his best friend, Elisa, on Facebook that makes her look ridiculous in a really mean way. She decides to meet with the boy to get him to remove the picture.

Sarah wants to enroll in a technical high school to become an electrician, but her mother doesn't agree and wants her to learn a trade that is more suitable for girls, like hairdressing. How can Sarah persuade her mother to change her mind?

Martin has joined a basketball team, but he is disgusted because one of the members, who is rather shy and not very talented, is the team's scapegoat. Everyone laughs at him, especially Henry, the team captain. Martin wonders if he should talk to the coach, Mr. Morris, but first he wants to try to fix the problem with Henry.

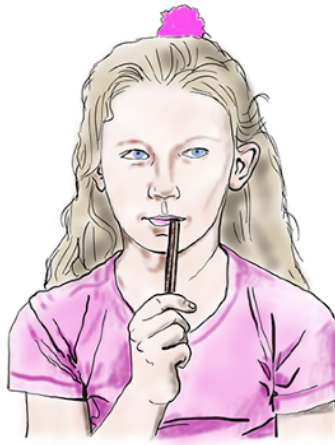
Roland has borrowed the bike of his best friend, Ahmed. But he had an accident with it and the bike is seriously damaged. Since Roland brought his bike back in bad condition, Ahmed refuses to talk to him. How can we help Roland to reconcile with him?



# 14. The decision making wheel

---

*When we encounter a problem, we can wait and do nothing, and then react when the crisis comes. But it is important to understand that doing nothing is already a choice that will necessarily have consequences. We can also not wait and take the initiative: consider the different possible choices, measure the consequences and decide to take action. This second attitude - acting instead of waiting and reacting when it is too late - offers a much better chance of success.*



## Goal

Learn how to build a decision making strategy

## Target group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

## Number

5 to 20 participants

## Duration

35 to 45 minutes

## Resources

- Worksheet - The Decision-Making Wheel
- Flipchart
- Markers

## Introduction

- Initiate a discussion on decision-making strategies: *"Have you ever made choices that resulted in consequences you didn't want?"*.
- Invite youth to share their experiences, then explain, *"How do we decide whether or not to do something? How do we make a choice or a decision? If we want to avoid negative consequences, we need to improve our decision-making strategies. That's what I suggest you learn to do today."*

## Activity

- Distribute the handout - *the Decision-Making Wheel* - and explain the 9 steps of the decision-making process.
- Read the following scenario: *"In high school, it's recess. Everyone is in the yard, including the teachers. You have to go to the bathroom. As you go, you walk past your class and see that there is someone in the classroom. You stop to look around out of curiosity. You then see one of your best friends going through a student's school bag to get something out of it. You quickly make your way down the hallway to avoid being seen. At the next class, just before the bell announces the end of class, the student whose bag your friend has searched goes to see the teacher. Right after*

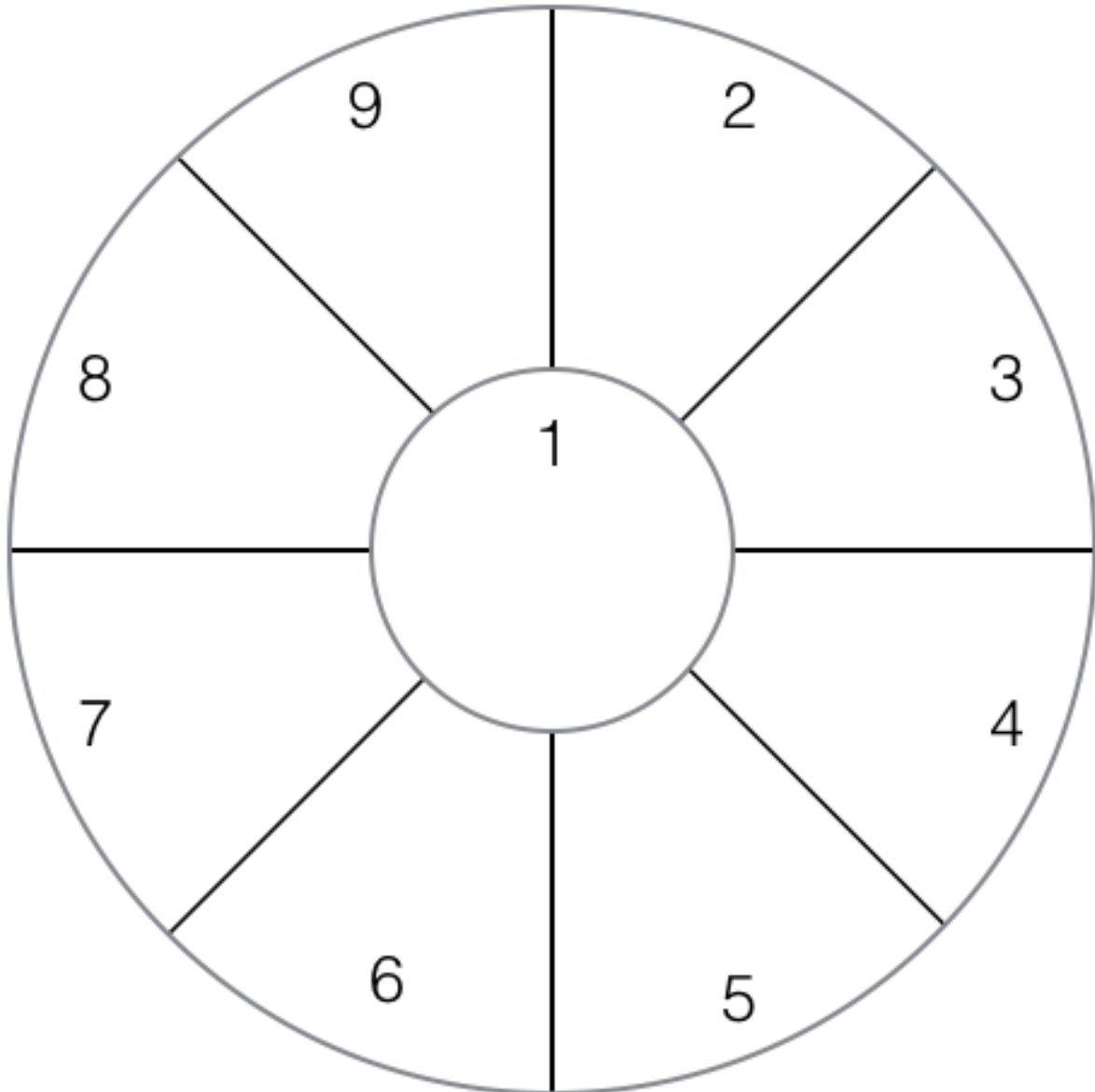
*the teacher announces that someone has stolen the cell phone that the student left in his bag. What are you going to do about it?"*

- Using the Decision Making Wheel sheet as a guide, discuss with the students the following questions about the scenario, and record their answers on the board:
  - What is the problem?
  - What are the choices we have?
  - What consequences will these choices have for ourselves and for those involved?
  - What are the values we need to consider?
  - How do we feel about the situation?
  - Do we need to look for more information about the situation?
  - Do we need to ask for help? Who do we ask?
  - What decision are we going to make about what to do in the face of this flight?
  - Do you think we have made the right decision? Why did we make the right decision?
- Now propose a second scenario: *"You are alone with your best friend in her/his house. He/she goes to a drawer, takes out a marijuana cigarette, lights it, takes a puff and offers to do the same. What do you do?"*
- You invite young people to find a solution to this problem by using their decision making wheel. They must first fill the hub of the wheel (*"What is the problem?"*) and then write their answers in each area of the wheel.
- Invite the youth to present their decision to others and explain their reasons.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - Did you find the decision-making method we experimented with interesting? Why did you find it interesting?
  - Think of a discussion you have had to take in the recent past. Would you make a different decision now that you have learned how to develop a thoughtful decision-making strategy?
  - Will you use the decision-making wheel the next time you have an important decision to make? Why would you do that?

## Worksheet - Decision-Making Wheel



This wheel will help you make better choices in your life. When you have an important decision to make.

- Write the problem in the wheel hub (section 1).
- In section 2, write down the possible choices.
- In Section 3, write the consequences of the choices.

- In Section 4 the values that should guide your choices.
- In Section 5, the feelings that drive you.
- In section 6, the additional information you have.
- In Section 7, the people who can help you.
- In Section 8, the decision you make.
- Finally, in Section 9, how you will evaluate the results.

# VI. Critical thinking and creativity

---



Critical thinking involves the ability to distinguish facts from opinions when exploring a topic.

Critical thinkers rigorously question ideas and assumptions before accepting them as true. They always try to determine whether the ideas, arguments, and information they are given represent a complete picture of reality or whether it is necessary to look for other facts. Critical thinkers identify, analyze and solve problems systematically rather than relying on intuition or instinct.

# 15. Unleashing our creativity

---

*Being able to easily invent different solutions to solve a problem is an essential skill: it is called creativity. Often we don't dare to release our creativity because we are afraid of saying stupid things or making mistakes. However, we must dare to do so because we learn by trial and error. To be creative, you have to look at things from a different point of view and be critical.*



## Goal

Practise creative thinking to generate new ideas and solve problems more easily.

## Target Group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

## Number

4 to 20 participants

## Duration

30 minutes



## Resources

- Flipchart, markers, paper, pencils, ruler.
- Copies of the worksheet 1 "The Square Puzzle" for each participant ;
- Copies of the worksheet 2 "the knight's riddle" for each participant.

## Introduction

- Explain the objective of the activity
- Show participants a graduated ruler: *"This object is used to measure straight lines. But try to imagine for what other purpose it could be used?"*
- Pass the ruler around and ask each participant to demonstrate a different use for the object. If participants can't think of one, give some examples: scratching one's back; marking a page in a book; catapulting to throw paper balls, etc. Encourage participants to look for other uses.
- Explain that participants have just used their imaginations to generate a lot of ideas and think creatively. It is possible to use this funny method to solve many problems in everyday life.

## Activity

- Invite participants to form teams of 4 to 6 members.
- Announce to participants that they are going to do some creative exercises.
- Distribute copies of Worksheet 1 "The Square Puzzle" to participants.
- Introduce the square puzzle by drawing the figure on the flipchart. Give the teams 5 minutes to come up with the solution. (Be very strict about time. You have to move quickly to maintain interest).

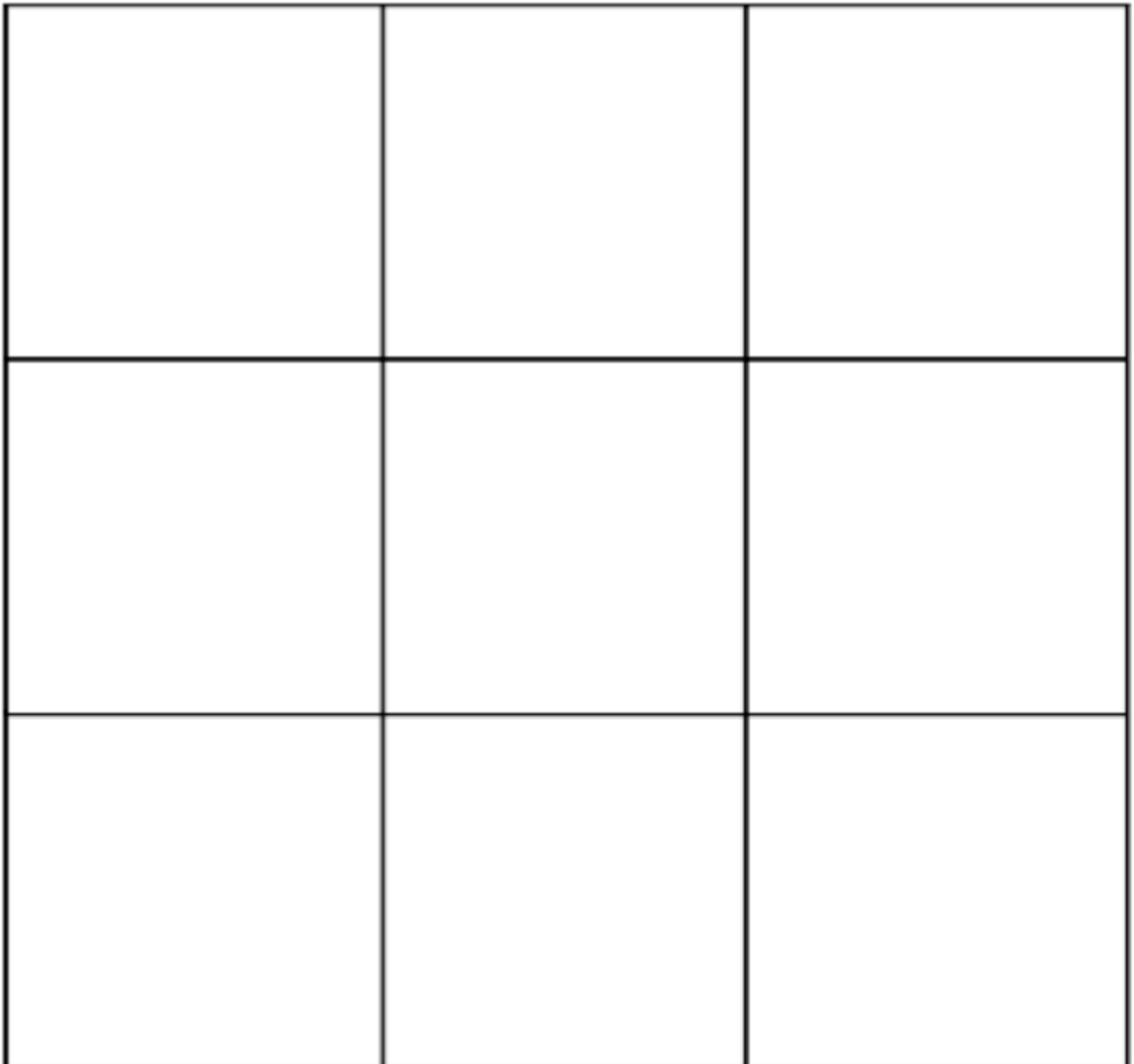
- When the time is up, ask if any team has found the solution. If so, ask them to explain the solution, otherwise explain it yourself and move on to the next exercise.
- Distribute worksheet 2 "the knight's riddle" to the participants.
- Present the knight's riddle by drawing the frame with the necklace on the flipchart. Read aloud the story of the knight.
- Give the teams 5 minutes to find the solution.
- When time is up, ask if any team has found the solution. If so, ask them to explain the solution, if not, ask them to explain it themselves and move on to the next exercise.

## Discussion

- Write on the board: "*Being creative is ...*" and ask participants to make suggestions for explaining what it means to be creative.
- Write the suggestions on the flipchart, for example: find original solutions to a problem; approach a problem from a new angle; imagine lots of possible solutions; don't get stuck in the usual framework, etc.
- Then ask the question: "For what kinds of things can we use our creativity?".
- Write down the answers on the board, for example: writing a story; problem solving; planning activities; doing better at school; organizing a party...
- Conclude the discussion by explaining that to be creative, we must not get stuck in a usual frame of thought, but find a different point of view ("Get out of the box"). Show, using the examples from the previous exercises, how necessary it is to look at problems from a different point of view in order to find the solution.

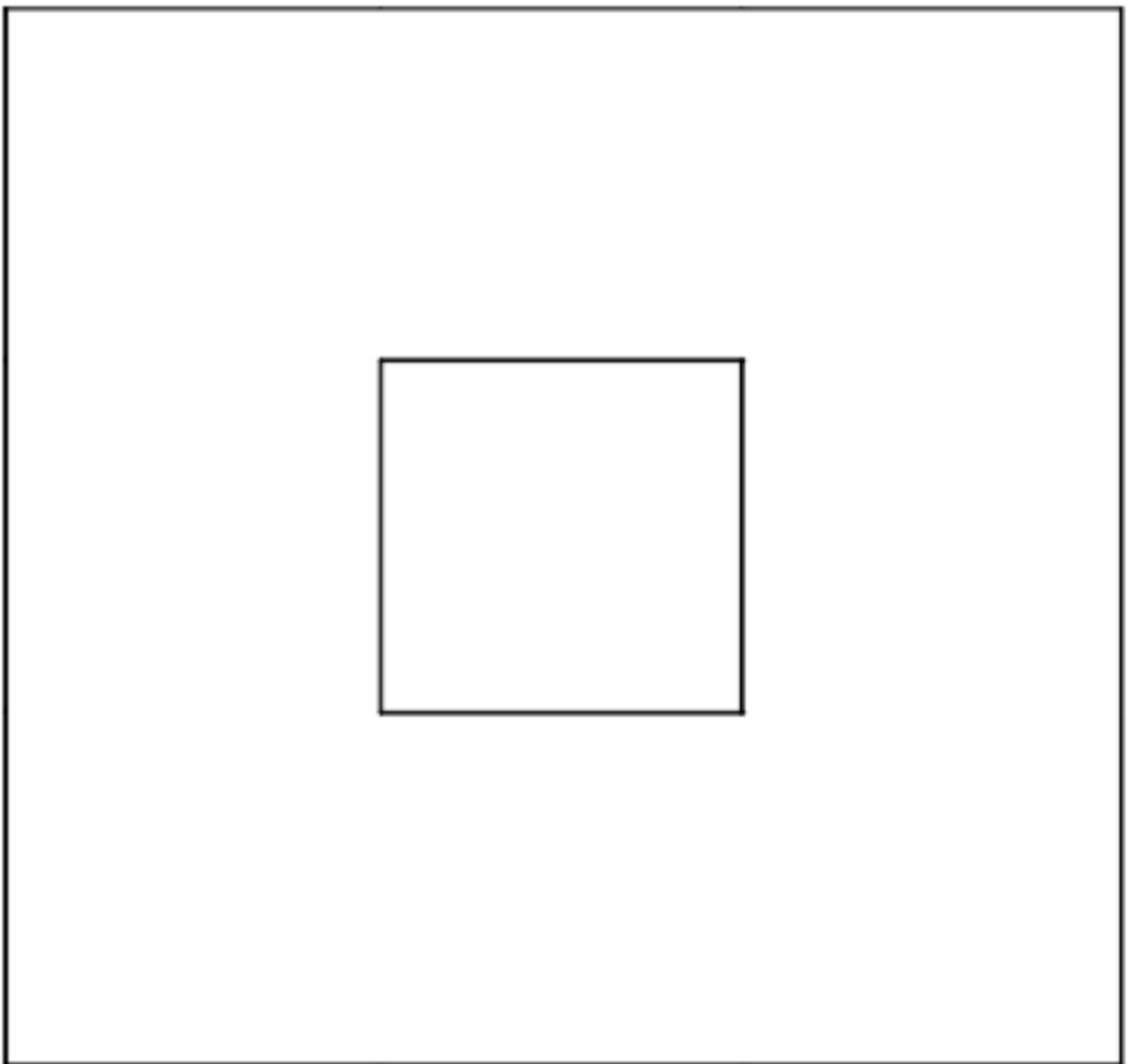
## Worksheet - The Square Puzzle

Delete 8 lines (one side of a square is equal to one line) to obtain two squares that do not touch each other. You have 5 minutes to find the solution.



## Fact-sheet - The solution of the square puzzle

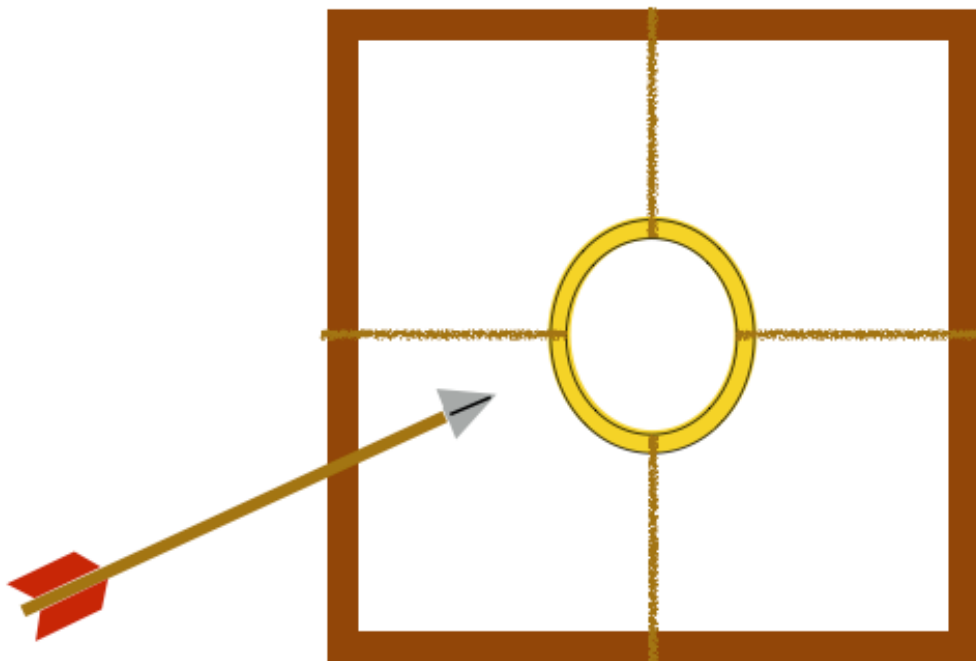
You have deleted 8 lines (one side of a square is equivalent to a line) so that you have 2 squares that do not touch each other (the solution cannot be found if you remain stuck in the preconceived idea that the two squares must be side by side. To unleash creativity, a different point of view must be adopted).



## The knight's riddle

In a faraway country, where people still talk about Kings and Valiant Knights, one of the latter falls in front of an enigma. If he finds the solution, he becomes King in his turn.

Here is the enigma: *a golden necklace is attached by 4 cords to a wooden frame. If the knight manages to free the necklace with a single arrow, he ascends the throne. How will the knight do it?*



## Factsheet - Solution of the knight's riddle

In the riddle, we wonder how to detach the necklace by shooting a single arrow.

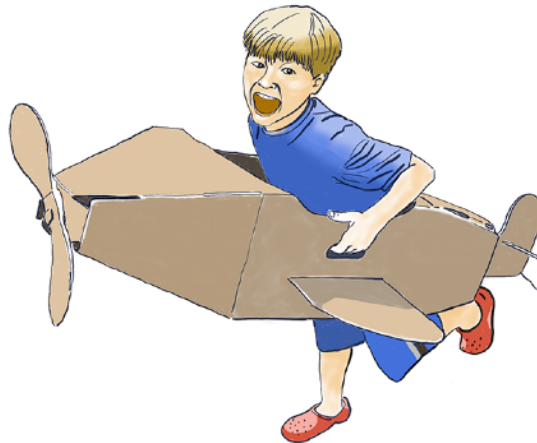
But if it is about an arrow, there is no mention of a bow... It is thus enough to use the sharp part of the arrow as a knife to detach the collar. Silly, isn't it?

If we didn't find it, it's because we remained locked in a frame of thought where we imagined constraints (arrow = bow = shot), which were not real. To be creative, you have to learn to get out of the frame, to "get out of the box" to adopt another point of view.

# 16. The box

---

*People who think creatively ask themselves questions every day, identify problems and use their creative imagination to solve them.*



## Goal

Apply the methods of creativity to his daily life

## Target group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

## Number

4 to 20 participants

## Duration

45 minutes

## Resources

- Flipchart, markers, cardboard box

- "Don't let things go, improve your life" worksheet (one copy per participant)

## Introduction

Present the objectives of the session

## Activity

- Give participants a cardboard box and ask them to examine it.
- Explain: *"You are the leaders of a company that sends fragile objects, such as glasses, through the mail in boxes like this. But many packages are returned with the box crushed and the items broken. There are also comments among the staff that the box is ugly and does not give a good image of the company. How can the box be improved to avoid problems and criticism?"*
- Ask the group for suggestions: *"Give every possible and imaginable idea you can think of to improve the box. Do not criticize other people's ideas or censor your own ideas. All ideas are welcome, even the most far-fetched ones."*
- Write down all the ideas on the flipchart.
- Once all the ideas have been written down, ask participants to choose the ones they feel are most appropriate and realistic.
- Ask participants to close their eyes and think about the different areas of their lives: life at home, school or work, relationships with friends, the neighborhood they live in, etc. Then ask the following question: *"Can you identify anything you would like to improve to make life more enjoyable? For example: improve the relationship with someone (a friend, a family member:...); fix up a room in the house; improve the neighbourhood environment..."*.



- Allow time for reflection, then ask the participants to form small teams of 4 to 6 members.
- Distribute the handout "*Don't let things go, improve your life*".
- Ask each team to agree to choose something to improve in their lives. They should work together for 15 minutes to fill in the different parts of the form:
  - What I want to change...
  - The problem with that is...
  - My ideas for improvement...
  - What I choose to do...
- At the end of the allotted time, ask each team to present the result of their work.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - Should we be afraid to make mistakes when we start something new? Why should we be? Why not?
  - Do people, from time to time, think about what they could improve in their lives or are they content to live in more or less comfortable situations?
  - Should we give up what we have started when we make mistakes? Why should we? Why not?
  - Finally, ask participants if they think creativity is a good thing in life and why.

## Worksheet - "Don't let things get out of hand, improve your life"

A. What I want to change...

B. The problem with that is...

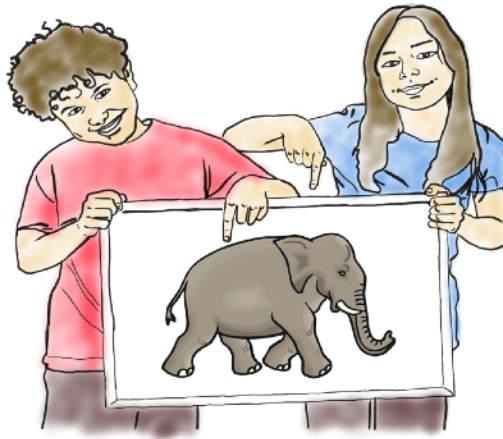
C. My ideas for improvement...

D. What I choose to do...

# 17. A curious story about animals

---

*What seems absurd can be logical and what seems fun can be serious.*



## Goal

Introduce the concept of critical thinking or critical reflection in an attractive way.

## Target group

Children and teenagers from 8 to 16 years old

## Number

2 to 20 participants

## Duration

30 minutes

## Resources

None

## Introduction

Present the objectives of the session

## Activity

- Ask participants the following question: *"How do you put a giraffe in your refrigerator?"*.
- Let participants search for a moment and then give the correct answer: *"Open the refrigerator, put the giraffe inside, and close the door."*
- Point out to participants that you should not try to do things in a complicated way when you can do them in a simple way.
- Ask a new question: *"How do you put an elephant in your refrigerator?"*
- Let participants search for a moment and then give the correct answer, explaining: *"If you say: open the refrigerator, put the elephant inside and close the door, the answer is wrong. The correct answer is: open the refrigerator, take out the giraffe, put the elephant inside and close the door."*
- Point out to participants that this question tests their ability to think about the impact of their previous actions.
- Ask a new question: *"The Lion King is holding an animal conference. All but one of the animals participate. Which animal does not participate?"*
- Let the participants search for a moment and then give the correct answer by explaining: *"It is the elephant because it is in the refrigerator. You just put it in there. This question tests your memory."*

- Add: *"Okay, even if you didn't find the right answer to the first three questions, here's another chance to show your true abilities. There's a river you have to cross, but it's usually used by crocodiles and you don't have a boat. How do you get across the river?"*
- Let the participants search for a moment and then give the correct answer by explaining: *"You dive into the river and swim to the other side. Weren't you listening? All the crocodiles have left to attend the Lion King Conference! This question tests your ability to learn quickly from your mistakes."*

## Discussion

- Start the discussion by asking the following questions:
  - In trying to answer these questions, didn't you feel that you were "out of it"?
  - Was the logic you were in was no different than mine?(Answer: the participants are in a realistic logic while the questions are in a logic of fantasy and humor. You have to put yourself in this logic to find the "correct" answers to the questions).
  - Does this tell us something about what critical thinking is?
  - To conclude, explain that critical thinking involves getting out of the a-priori one may have about a subject and exploring it with fresh eyes.

# 18. Thinking outside the box

---

*Imagination in power!*



## Goal

Give free rein to your imagination, discover that you can look at things differently and think differently.

## Target group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

## Number

4 to 20 participants

## Duration

30 minutes

## Resources

One copy per participant of the "15 Questions for Reflection" sheet.

## Introduction

Present the objectives of the session

## Activity

- Invite participants to form teams of 4 to 6 members.
- Give the following explanation: *"I suggest that you try to look at things in a different way by answering a list of weird questions to free our imagination and critical thinking".*
- Distribute the list of questions to the participants and ask them to try to find a common answer to each question. Give 15 minutes for this work.
- At the end of this time, ask the teams to share their answers.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion based on the following questions:
  - What interested you most in this exercise? The bizarre nature of the questions or the opportunity they gave you to trigger your imagination and invent something new?
  - Do you think that your team or another team has come up with a truly original idea that deserves to be explored further? Which one? Why?
  - Did you learn anything about critical thinking during this exercise?

## Worksheet - 15 Questions for Reflection

- i. How would life be different if there was no electricity? Find at least three differences.
- ii. Explain what a flower is to someone who has never seen or heard of one.
- iii. What kind of soup would you like to eat for dessert? Write a recipe for a dessert soup.
- iv. You can get three things that you want but in return you must give three things that you own that are the same size as the ones you want to have. What would you give and what would you get?
- v. You look more like a square than a circle, why?
- vi. How would the game of soccer be different if the ball was shaped like a cube?
- vii. How would the world be different if people didn't need to sleep? Give at least three differences.
- viii. What would happen if bowling balls and bowling pins all over the world suddenly became alive?
- ix. What do you think is more important, vehicles like cars or computers? Explain why?
- x. If you could choose that something that costs money be given free to everyone, what would you choose and why?



.....  
xi. If you could live in a "tree house" would you do it? What do you think are the 3 advantages and 3 disadvantages of living in a tree house?

.....  
xii. It was decided that parents should take a test before having children. Write 6 questions that could be included in this test.

.....  
xiii. If you could suggest a new subject that should be taught to all children at school, which one would you choose? Why do you think children need to learn this subject?

.....  
xiv. If you could talk to the trees, what do you think they would tell you? Invent a short conversation between you and a tree.

.....  
xv. Are you more like a river, lake, ocean or waterfall and why?

# VII. Self-awareness and goal setting

---



Self-awareness or self-esteem is the inner voice that tells us if we are good enough to achieve a given goal. Self-esteem is the value we give ourselves, the way we believe in who we are.

Interestingly, self-esteem has little to do with the talents and abilities we actually possess. Someone with strong skills may have relatively low self-esteem, while someone with very few talents may have high self-esteem.

Lack of self-esteem can negatively influence behaviour and prevent us from achieving good results.

# 19. The cubes

---

*Each one of us has different sides: a happy side, a sad side, a fearful side, a courageous side, a family oriented side, an outward oriented side, a realistic side, a dream oriented side, etc. Some people openly show their different sides very easily, others tend to show only certain facets of their personality.*



## Goal

To help participants reflect on their own lives, to recognize and share with others the different positive aspects of their personalities.

## Target Group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

## Number

5 to 20 participants

## Duration

45 to 60 minutes

## Resources

- Cardboard sheets;

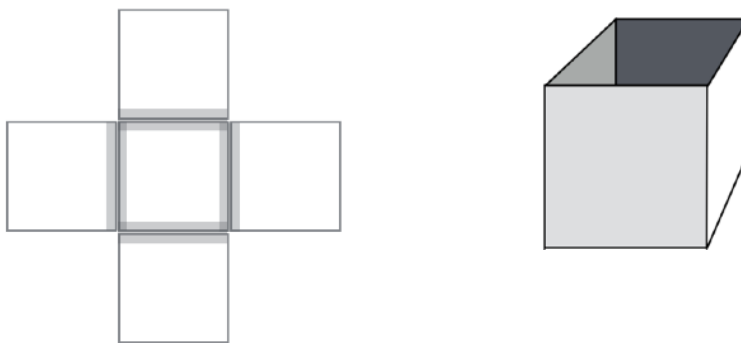
- adhesive tapes;
- old magazines;
- scissors;
- glue;
- markers;
- erasers;
- pencils.

## Introduction

Explain the objectives of the session.

## Activity

- Distribute five pieces of cardboard to each participant and show them how to use them to build a cube by joining them together with tape (see below).



- Then, invite participants to decorate each of the six pieces of their cube with pictures cut out of magazines and words that express something about their lives, for example:
  - on side 1 the things they know how to do well,

- on side 2 their dreams or plans for the future,
  - on side 3 which makes them feel good,
  - on side 4 the achievements they are proud of in their lives,
  - on side 5 what they like about themselves,
  - on side 6, the people they like and love.
- Suggest that participants form teams of 4 to 6 members. In each team, each person will take turns explaining their cube to the others. The others can ask questions to find out more.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - When you explained your cube to others, did you feel that you were revealing aspects of your personality that they didn't know?
  - Did you find it difficult to reveal these aspects?
  - Did you feel that they agreed with the way you portrayed yourself?
  - When you listened to others present their cube to you, did you discover aspects of their personality that you did not know?
  - Did you agree with the way they portrayed themselves?
  - What did you learn from this exercise?

## 20. One step after the other

---

*Your feet will move forward one step at a time. In life, people need to take one step at a time by setting goals and working hard to achieve them. This activity combines goal setting with the reality of moving in stages to reach those goals.*



### Goal

Setting goals and committing to them

### Target group

Children from 8 to 12 years old

### Number

2 to 20 participants

### Duration

30 to 45 minutes

### Resources

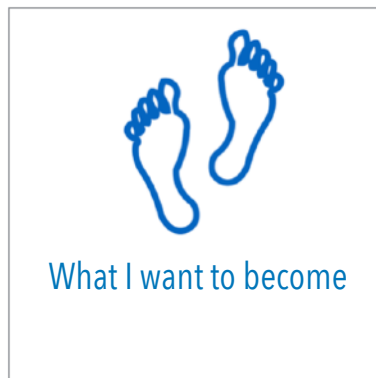
- Large sheets of paper,
- A4 sheets of different colors.

## Introduction

Present the objectives of the session.

## Activity

- Invite participants to take off their shoes, place their feet on a large sheet of paper and mark the outline of both feet on the paper with a marker.
- Then invite each participant to write or draw on the paper, under their footprints, the most important individual goal they have in their lives. The goal should answer the question: "*What do I want to become in my life?*"



- Hang all the sheets of paper with the individual goals on the wall.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion based on the following questions:
  - Are these goals realistic for you?
  - Why is it important to set goals?
  - Do you have other goals you want to achieve?
  - What are the first steps you have taken to achieve these goals?

# 21. Self-diagnosis and personal goals

---

*Setting progression goals is an essential step in becoming responsible for yourself.*



## Goal

- Identify its strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats that may arise;
- Set personal goals for progress.

## Target group

Adolescents 12 to 18 years old

## Number

5 to 20 participants

## Duration

45 to 90 minutes



## Resources

- Worksheet - SWOT Analysis ;
- Factsheet - How to do a SWOT Analysis ;
- Flipchart, markers.

## Introduction

Present the objectives of the session

## Activity

- Give the following explanation: *"SWOT (Strengths - Weaknesses - Opportunities - Threats) analysis is a method that was originally created to assess organizations, but it can also be used to self-assess. The advantage of this analysis method is that it helps you to identify your strengths as well as the opportunities you are well positioned to seize. It also helps you to understand your weaknesses, and to eliminate any threats that may arise"*.
- Distribute the *SWOT Matrix worksheet* and the *Factsheet - How to do a SWOT Analysis* to participants.
- Read the instructions and give any additional explanations that may be necessary.
- After 20 minutes, invite participants to complete their SWOT matrix.
- Ask each participant to present his or her SWOT Matrix and objectives.
- Invite other participants to ask questions or make suggestions to help clarify his or her analysis and goals.
- If necessary, provide additional information on the definition of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion based on the following questions:
  - Did you encounter any particular difficulties during this exercise?
  - What was the most difficult to complete? Strengths? Weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats?
  - Are you satisfied with the objectives you selected? Do you think they are realistic? Achievable?

## SWOT Analysis Worksheet

SWOT	Positive	Negative
Internal level	Strengths	Weaknesses
External level	Opportunities	Threats

My goals:

## Factsheet - Guidelines for SWOT analysis

- Fill in the matrix on the previous page using the following instructions:
  - Strengths and weaknesses are internal to you, they are your personal characteristics.
  - Opportunities and threats are external. They come from your environment.
- To fill out the STRENGTHS box, consider the following points:
  - What advantages (e.g. skills, knowledge, experience) do you have that others may not have?
  - What do you do better than others?
  - What personal resources do you have access to?
  - What strengths do others (e.g., friends, parents, teachers) see in you?
- To fill in the WEAKNESSES box, think about the following points:
  - What could you improve about yourself?
  - What should you avoid?
  - What are the things in you that people around you are likely to see as weaknesses?
- To fill in the OPPORTUNITIES box, think about the following:
  - What interesting opportunities are available to you?
  - What positive events/trends are you aware of?
  - Can any of your strengths be an opportunity for you in the future?  
Open up new opportunities for you?

- If you manage to eliminate any of your weaknesses, what new opportunities would open up for you?
- To fill in the THREATS box, consider the following points:
  - What obstacles do you face?
  - What are people around you doing about this?
  - Are you facing new demands, new requirements?
  - Could any of your weak points pose a threat to you in the future?
- To write down your goals :
  - Look carefully at the chart you have handed in. What conclusions can you draw from it in terms of priorities and goals for the future?
  - Which strengths should be strengthened as a priority? Through what actions?
  - What are your priorities for improvement? Through what actions?
  - What opportunities do you see as priorities for your future? What actions can you take to take advantage of them?
  - What are the threats that it makes you avoid in priority? By what actions?

# VIII. Managing emotions

---



Feelings or emotions are things we feel.

Often we don't like to talk about our emotions, especially when they are very important to us, so they tend to be expressed through our body language and facial expressions.

We need to be aware of our emotions but also of those of others in order to understand them and communicate well with them.

## 22. The Emotion Bench

---

*There are people who are easy to understand: their emotions are reflected in their words and body language. For other people, it's different: they remain quiet and reserved, without expressing what they feel. There are times when it's important to show and tell others the emotions that move us.*



### Goal

Express a body language corresponding to an emotional state and learn to show emotions and share feelings.

### Target group

Children and teenagers from 8 to 16 years old

### Number

4 to 20 participants

### Duration

30 to 45 minutes

## Resources

Two chairs or a bench

## Introduction

Explain that if you are unable to read the body language of someone who is experiencing problems, it can be difficult to respond constructively. Then present the objectives of the session.

## Activity

- Set up two chairs or a bench at one end of the room facing the group.
- Ask for two volunteers, invite them to sit on the bench and inform them that they are now seated on the "emotion bench".
- Explain that you are going to whisper a different emotion in each volunteer's ear and that they will have to play that emotion through words and body language through dialogue. The spectators will have to guess the emotions represented. The bench or two chairs may represent a bus shelter, seats in a movie theatre, or any other place the volunteers can imagine.
- Whisper the emotions in the volunteers' ears and give them the signal to begin.
- The first two spectators who correctly identify the emotions represented will take the volunteers' place on the "emotion bench" and a round will be repeated.

## Discussion

- After several rounds, initiate a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - Is it easy or difficult to identify an emotion felt by another person?



- Do you think that others can easily identify the emotions you are feeling?
- Do you want others to know the emotions you are feeling? Why not? Why yes?
- Can helping others to identify what we are feeling help us? How can it help us?
- How can we recognize the feelings or emotions that others are feeling?

## 23. Out of control

---

*Many people want to control every aspect of their lives and when things seem out of control or when someone else sets rules they have to follow, they feel frustration and anger.*



### Goal

To help participants realize that they cannot control everything in their lives and that they need to learn how to deal with things or events that seem out of their control by avoiding venting their frustration or anger.

### Target group

Children and teenagers from 8 to 16 years old.

### Number

4 to 20 participants

### Duration

30 to 40 minutes

### Resources

- About twenty candies or chocolates wrapped in paper ;
- Two dice.

## Introduction

- Explain that the purpose of this session is to learn how to deal with things or events that seem out of our control by avoiding giving free rein to our frustration or anger.
- Place the chocolates or candy in the center of a table and gather the whole group around it.
- Explain that you are proposing a game that will take place in two parts (do not explain the second part until the first part has taken place).

## Activity

### First part of the game

- Invite a volunteer to take the dice and roll them. If the result is a double number (two "1's" or two "3's" or two "6's", etc.), the player can choose a candy or chocolate from the table. He places the candy or chocolate in front of him on the table for all to see. If the dice do not show the same number twice, the player does not take anything.
- Each participant in turn takes the dice and rolls them. They win a candy or chocolate if they get the same number twice and pass the dice to the next player.
- The game continues until there is no more candy or chocolate in the center of the table.

### Second part of the game

- Explain that this time the duration of the game will be limited (5 minutes for a small group, 10 minutes for a larger group). The game is played in the same way as the first game but this time when a player scores a double chiffre they take a candy or chocolate previously won by another player.

- When the time is up, stop the game. Some players have several candies or chocolates in front of them, some have only one, some have none at all.
- Warning: be ready, this is a game full of energy and excitement, the group can be noisy.

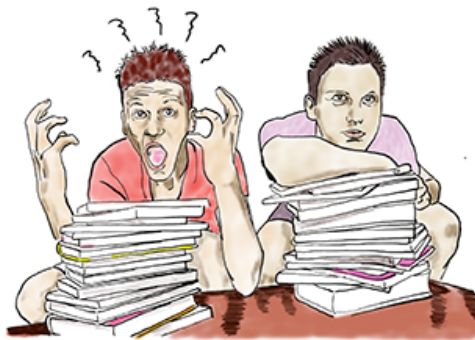
## Discussion

- Initiate a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - What did you do when you failed to score a double digit?
  - Did you feel that you had complete control over your own life?
  - How do you react when you feel that things are out of your control or that the situation is unfair?
  - Did anyone feel anger or frustration during the game? If so, how did you deal with that feeling?
  - What can you do when life seems unfair and things don't go your way?

## 24. The message of emotions

---

*All our emotional reactions are there to help us adapt to every situation in our lives. They serve to allow us to get the most satisfaction out of each moment and to avoid obstacles and dangers that stand in our way. It's a bit like a very sophisticated guidance system that takes us to our main destination: the satisfaction of our needs.*



### Goal

- Understand the message of emotions.
- Examine what happens when emotions are ignored or diverted.

### Target Group

Adolescents from 12 to 18 years old.

### Number

5 to 20 participants

### Duration

45 to 60 minutes

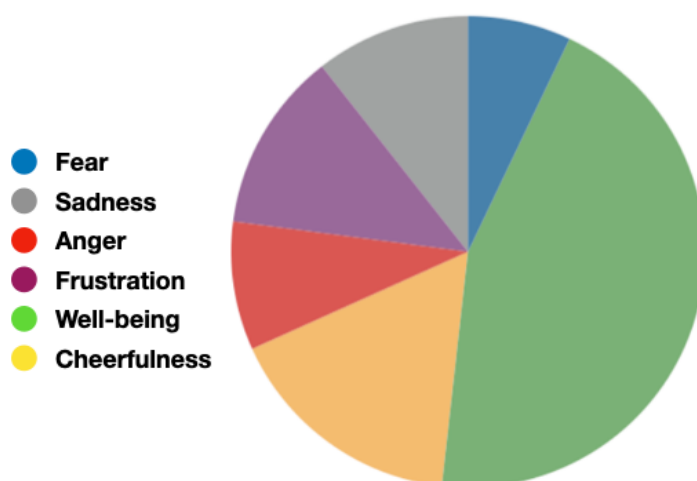
### Resources

- Flipchart, large sheets of paper, markers of different colors, tape ;

- A copy of the factsheet "Birth of Emotions" for every participant.
- A copy of the worksheet "Defenses to Avoid Emotional Pain" for every participant.

## Introduction

- Introduce the workshop by saying: *"Each of us feels various emotions and feelings throughout the day but we are rarely aware of what caused them. For example: When I came to work today, I realized that I was feeling frustrated, in a bad mood. When I got out of the car, I put my foot in a hole and almost fell. Is that what caused my bad mood? Often we see our emotions as obstacles, mistakes or weaknesses. For example, we want to talk to someone who impresses us a lot and we start babbling and blushing. Our emotions often get in the way. We then try to control them and prevent them from manifesting themselves. Together we will try to find out a little bit more about what emotions are".*
- On the flipchart, draw a large circle. Draw 4 or 5 circles of different colors at the top of the paper to symbolize different feelings or emotions: red for anger; blue for relaxation; orange for frustration; etc. Divide the large circle into sections like pieces of cake (see diagram below).



- Explain that each piece represents a feeling or emotion experienced during the day depending on its importance.

## Activity

- Distribute large sheets of paper and markers of different colors and ask participants to create their own "emotion cake" by drawing a circle on the paper and choosing colors that re-present the emotions they felt during the day or the day before.
- Add that they must first make the legend by giving a color to each emotion they want to represent (as on the model).
- Specify that they are not obliged to choose the same emotions as those given as an example.
- They must then divide the circle into different parts representing the emotions felt during the day. The size of each part should be proportional to the intensity of the emotion felt: for example, if you felt a lot of frustration during the day or the day before, you will draw a very large "frustration" part in the cake.
- When the work is finished, ask participants to tape their "emotion cake" to the wall and then explain it to others.
- Take an example of an emotion listed on an "emotion cake," such as anger, and ask the question, "How do you physically react to this emotion?"; Responses to the word "angry" can be: *"Shoulders tense," "Headache," "Difficulty falling asleep"*.
- Take the example of another emotion, on another cake of emotions, for example relaxation, happiness and ask: *"How do you physically react to this emotion?"* - Responses can be *"relaxed", "feeling energized", "at ease", "feeling good about yourself"*.
- After giving a few examples, ask participants: *"Does the emotion we feel tell us anything?"*
- Based on participants' responses, explain that if someone feels "anxious" and comes off feeling tense and irritable, this is an indication that something is wrong and that we need to find a solution; if someone feels

"happy" and full of energy, this is a good indication that everything is going well.

- Add that the emotions we feel are neither good nor bad, they serve a purpose, they give us a message. We need to pay attention to them, get to know them again, listen to the message they send us and act appropriately.
- Hand out or draw on the board the diagram "Birth of Emotions".
- Give the following explanation: *"This is how emotions are born. Something (an event) happens and causes an emotion to arise in us. If it is something that is a gain for us, then we are happy. Our self-esteem and self-confidence can grow, we feel more respected. If it is something that represents a loss for us, we may feel angry because our values or sense of justice have been violated. We may feel fear and anxiety about our future or about an outcome to be achieved"*.
- Ask participants if they can share any cases from their experience where they have felt anger because their values or sense of justice were violated; fear, anxiety or guilt because of something they did or happened to them; sadness because of a sense of loss.
- Explain that when we experience painful or negative emotions we often build defenses to avoid having to deal with them.
- Distribute the *"Defenses Against Negative Emotions"* handout to participants and ask them to mark a cross in front of each defense, in the "Yes" box if they have ever used the defense to avoid uncomfortable or negative feelings or in the "No" box if they have never used it. Other defenses that are sometimes used can be added at the bottom of the sheet.
- When participants have finished, invite them to share some of the defenses they used to explain under what circumstances they did it. Ask them if they have added any other defenses that they also use.



## Discussion

- Start a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - What is the outcome of using such defenses?
  - Is the problem solved? You may get temporary relief but do you feel better in the long term?
  - Do these defenses not keep you away from other people?
  - Is there a more appropriate way to deal with your feelings?
- In conclusion, summarize what was discovered in the activity:
  - Emotions are created by situations or events we experience.
  - Emotions are positive when the event we are experiencing represents a gain for us: we are happy, we feel good?
  - Emotions are negative when the event we have experienced represents a loss for us: we are sad, we do not feel good...
  - Emotions are messages that we receive through our body. We must know how to understand the message we receive.
  - The emotions we feel can create positive or negative attitudes towards others during the day.
  - To communicate well with others, we must be able to recognize and accept our emotions.
  - We must be particularly wary of the defenses we unconsciously use to block negative emotions. These defenses can create problems with those around us by leading us to react in an inappropriate way (refusing advice, remaining inflexible, not listening, reacting badly against others, etc.).

## Fact Sheet - Birth of Emotions

An event occurs and gives rise in us to an emotion.

If it is something that represents a gain for us, then we are happy. Our self-confidence grows.

If it is something that represents a loss for us, we may feel anger, fear or anxiety about our future or a result to be achieved.



## Worksheet - Defenses Against Negative Emotions

Read carefully the sentences below, describing defenses against negative emotions. In front of each defense, mark a cross in the "Yes" box if you have ever used the defense to avoid uncomfortable or negative feelings or in the "No" box if you have never used it. At the end of the chart add other defenses you may have used against negative emotions.

Defense actions	Yes	No
Ignoring fear because you don't want to have anything to do with it.		
Blocking an emotion, refusing to recognize it		
Wishing to be rescued by someone or something		
Blaming others for something instead of accepting responsibility for it.		
Imposing one's point of view in reaction to a strong emotion		
Lowering someone to feel better about yourself		
Remaining inflexible, not listening to others		
Boasting about your achievements, exaggerating your success		
Tricking the results to make your wishes come true		
not taking into account what you have been told or what is obvious because you don't want to face reality		
Making excuses for not having to consider a painful event		
Pretending that all is well despite obvious failures		
Be neat and orderly to avoid letting go of emotions, losing control or doubting oneself.		
Pretending not to understand or creating confusion or disorder in order to hide the truth		



Dominique Bénard, 2020

This publication is licensed under the Creative Commons License



Provided that it is attributed to the author by citing his name, the owner of the rights authorizes the exploitation of the original work for non-commercial purposes, without modification.

Find other books and publications on cooperative approaches at:

**<https://approchescooperatives.com>**