

Section 9

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Peer educators training days

The training for peer educators is based on what they need to do for the planned projects and to provide stimulation for actually carrying out activities as means in the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance. Small group discussions and brain-storm sessions prior to the days will reveal the knowledge and skills they already have and help them to plan the training days.

The training often focuses on topics such as:

You as the peer educator

- Why am I involved in racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance activities?
- Where do I stand?
- What are my support systems?

Designing the programme

- Why include some topics and not others?
- What knowledge is needed?
- Which techniques will I choose and use?

You and the group

- How will I deal with unexpected situations?
- How do I work with the group?
- How people behave in groups?

Planning and evaluation

- What are the expectations of the people involved in the project?
- What makes a good working environment?
- When to organise it?

Training days, usually from morning to evening (10.00 am to 10.00 pm) on a Saturday or Sunday have the advantage of allowing time to work closely with a small group over



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Anti-semitism means to hate all Jews without any particular reason. In my opinion this skepticism demonstrates an uncivilised person and we should do something to get rid of this kind of thinking.

Sotiroulla Aristodemou,
18 years, Cyprus

a longer period of time. These offer better opportunities to get to know people, for finding out what other people really think, discussing problems and getting different opinions of how to handle the problems etc.

The responsibility for planning and running these days can be divided between the peer educators and the peer coach. Three for each day is a good number. Responsibilities should be clearly define by being involved in planning the group will get variety and some implicit training in organisational skills.

The content of the training days may of course be varied enormously. It is important that the topic is one which the group is interested in. That it is relevant for the planned peer education project in the area of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance if they are to be fully involved in the training days.

There are many resource books around from which ideas can be chosen for activities which are fun and will get a group thinking and discussing. With a little imagination many of these can be adopted to suit the theme. The most important thing is to make a start this depends a great deal on the group and the peer coaches. Introducing a range of stimulus materials such as cartoons, video, poster set, articles from newspapers, role plays are good ways of starting and creating an atmosphere in which discussion is possible.

The following activities can be used as a stimulus for discussions, most of them have been tried and tested in a variety of settings and with different groups. The ideal group size for such activities is, depending on the number of trainers involved, 10 - 30 persons. They may need to be adapted a little for the particular age group.



Session 9.1

THE MERRY-GO-AROUND

Introduction

An activity to encourage people to talk openly about their feelings and ideas concerning the topics of the campaign “All different - All equal” to other people. The exercise also allows for one to one communication with a large number of different people in a short space of time.

Materials

- Trigger questions, 13 - 15 questions are probably enough.
- Chairs, arranged in one outer and one inner circle facing each other.

Time

2 hours

Group size

15 - 30 people

Process

People are asked to sit opposite (and facing) another person arranged around the room. Chairs should not be too close that pairs can overhear conversations taking place near to them. Spacing the pairs out will help them to concentrate on their partner. If there is an odd number of people one chair is put slightly outside the circle for a person to sit on (to make a ‘three’).

The people are told that they will move around, so they will not only speak to the person opposite them now. They will have three minutes each time to speak to each other. Every time you will call out the question. The question can vary according to the topic you are working on and the age and level of the group.

The following questions are some suggestions:

- What is your reaction if your best friend told you (s)he had mobbed someone?
- A good friend of yours tells a racist joke to a group of friends. What do you say?
- On the wall of your youth club somebody writes racist graffiti. What is your response?
- What is racism?
- Why does it say “Blacks go home” on the wall?
- Already for a long time it is very popular between your friends to use racist name-calling such as Four Eyes, Paki, Blackie, Gypsies. How do you react?

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alla olika
alla lika



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- What does it mean when you stereotype people?
- What could be done to challenge some of the negative views and stereotypes of minority groups?

After each question and three minutes conversation the people on the outside of the circle are asked to stand and shift one (or more) place to the right. Then they discuss the second question, which you have called out. After five or six questions like this, ask the inner circle to shift one (or more) place to the left. Another five or six questions, with changes of place should take place.'

For the last two or three questions ask both circles to make up their own questions to get an answer. By this stage they have an idea of the exercise and the type of questions.

At the end ask people generally whether it was easy to answer the questions? Did they find something out about their personal limits concerning the issues? Would this exercise influence the way in which they train or inform other young people?

Conclusion

This exercise can be good as starting point to consider the complexity of some issues. It can also be useful near the end, if people are planning to spread their ideas further, by using peer education or other kinds of action. It is a very useful way to enable them to continue their discussions with each other if they wish, so it could be structured to take place prior to time off or a break.



Session 9.2.

CREATIVE ART WORK

Introduction

Creative Art Work is a way for a lot of people to explore their own imagination and to re-assess their creative potential. Being creative has many languages and is as varied as people are. It can provide an alternative outlet for group members who find it hard to express themselves during discussions. Creative work is vital and there are many different forms to suit each individual. One example is described here: Poetry writing.

Materials

- White cards (like postcards)
- A4 paper
- Coloured pencils
- Calligraphy pens
- Typewriter

Time

2.5 - 3 hours-

Group size

10 - 30 people

Process

Begin this session by reading out a poem, song, story or proverb and its meaning to your own life. Explain that we may have heard and read sentences, poems, songs, stories etc. in newspapers or magazines which we felt strongly about, and which expressed our current situation, our feelings or hopes for the future. In this exercise encourage them to recall and write on paper their own poems and stories about racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance. About their own experiences or those from others.

Turn to the next page for two suggestions, which you can use:

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Intolerance is a feeling that most people have because they can't stand their fellow human beings for lots of reasons. As a result they discriminate others and have negative attitudes towards their fellow human beings.

Marina Pitta, 16 years, Cyprus



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respekt pro každého
život pro všechny

**Une Europe unie pour un monde
sans peur, une fraternité de toutes
les couleurs**

Dans notre grande Europe
Il est beaucoup de DIFFERENTS
Des gens de toutes les couleurs
Des DIFFERENTS qui te font peur

Il y a les blancs et les jaunes
les noirs et les cafés au lait
il y a ceux qui croient au Dieu
il y a ceux qui n'y croient pas

et ceux qui te montrent le poing
et ceux qui te tendent la main

l'autre n'est pas ton ennemi
tu pourras t'en faire un ami

si tous deux vous ouvrez le poing
si tous deux vous tendez le main

Tu es un DIFFERENT aussi
pour ce garçon ou cette fille
de ta rue ou du bout du monde
n'oublie pas que la terre est ronde

avec tes mots et tes couleurs
lance ton cri contre la peur
écris-nous le plus beau poème
celui des DIFFERENTS qui s'aiment.

ARTHUR HAULOT
*Président de la Maison internationale de la
Poésie*
(Le Soir du mercredi 22 mars 1995)

when I am born, I am black
a ma naissance, je suis noir

when I grow up, I am black
quand je grandis, je suis noir

when I go out in the sun, I am black
quand je suis au soleil, je suis noir

when I am cold, I am black
quand j'ai froid, je suis noir

but you!
mais toi!

when you are born, you are pink
a ta naissance tu es rose

when you grow up, you are white
quand tu grandis tu es blanc

when you go on the sun, you are red
quand tu vas au soleil, tu es rouge

when you are cold, you are blue
quand tu as froid, tu es blue

when you die, you are purple
quand tu es mort, tu es violet

and you have the guts to call me co-
loured!!
et tu as le culot de m'appeler le colore!!

UNKNOWN

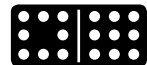


These writings can then be shared with the group. Continue this exercise by using small illustrations, a decorative frame or the use of a calligraphy pen to illustrate their own texts. After that copy them onto a good sheet of paper or white cards and make a small booklet of all the writings.

Conclusion

Before doing the exercise of poetry writing check the literacy skills of the group. One way to modify this exercise would be to draw or paint a picture reflecting a song, poem etc. Other creative art work methods which you can use are: a large picture or mural painting, t-shirt painting, writing songs or making music together, taking photos, face-painting etc.

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I don't think that racism is good for the people and for the world. I think no one is better or worse than others. There is no sense in classifying people by any kind of rule.

Annamaria Bikkes, 21
years, Hungary



Session 9.3

TACKLING A STATEMENT

Introduction

When we as human beings have conversations we use words to express our opinions and points of view. We try to describe reality and present facts with these words. However, words also reveal our attitudes. Words do not just convey facts, but also our values and opinions. Words can be charged with emotions. This four corners activity, can stimulate discussion on specific issues.

Materials

- Open space so that people can move freely around the room.
- Four signs on each of the four corners of the room, indicating four positions:
 - + + = strongly agree
 - + = agree
 - x = disagree
 - x x = strongly disagree
- Flipchart and papers
- Markers and Tape

Time

45 minutes

Group size

15 - 30 people

Process

Everyone stands in the middle of the room while a statement is presented, for instance about Racism. It could be helpful to have the statements written up on a flipchart or board. The statements should be carefully designed to draw out a wide spectrum of responses, probably six is enough in a session.

These statements should not be questions, for example;

- Everybody has prejudices
- Europe is multi-cultural
- National culture and international culture must be learned at the same time
- It is not enough to be curious about other cultures

People are asked to think about the statement for a minute and than to choose the corner which represents their response to the statement. Nobody should stand in

the middle or hover between positions. They must make a decision. Once in a corner, people should pair up with someone in their own corner to discuss the statement. (3 minutes). Then they enter discussion with someone from an opposite corner. They should then finish by going to the corner that reflects their view on the subject now. This may or may not have changed.

Conclusion

This peer learning activity can be applied to a wide range of controversial statements and can be used with people of different ages. It is possible when people are back in their corner, then to ask one representative from each corner to explain briefly their choice to the others. Further discussion at this point is also possible.

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Session 9.4

BLACK AND WHITE

Introduction

An activity to encourage people to look at images and words which are associated with the words BLACK and WHITE in different contexts and see if alternatives could be used. An introduction exercise to promote the use of 'politically correct language'.

Material

- Flipchart paper
- Coloured markers
- A large room or hall
- Tape

Time

1 hour

Group size

15 - 20 people

Process

Divide into small groups of 4-5 people and ask them to write the words 'BLACK' and 'WHITE' on two separate sheets of paper. The small groups have to write down all the words and images which come into their minds when they think of the words 'black' and 'white'.

For example:

- White Christmas
- White House
- White-collar
- In black and white
- Black Death
- Black Humour

When the two lists are complete, come back into the large group and ask a representative from each of the groups to report back on what they came up with.

Lead into a general discussion raising issues such as:

- What did you notice about the lists you drew up? Were they mainly positive or mainly negative?



- What does this tell us about the ideas most people have in their heads about blackness and whiteness? Do these ideas affect us?
- Can anyone think of alternative phrases which mean the same thing but don't use the word 'black' or 'white' in a negative way?

Conclusion

Instead of a report of a representative of each group, you can ask them also to make up a short drama sketch about two or three of the words which they pick out of their list. After the performance you can then lead into a general discussion.

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Sexual discrimination is something I have experienced through someone else's eyes. I have friends of mine getting fired because their sexual orientation was different from other people's.

Jerzy Roziemcz,
20 years, Poland



Session 9.5

CASE STUDIES

Introduction

This activity based on case study situations is about planning for peer group education. This will allow the group to start thinking about barriers or difficulties which can occur during their projects.

Material

- Case studies
- Copy of the 'Step by Step' check-list (8.5)

Time

2.5 hour

Group size

15 - 25 people

Process

After an introduction and short discussion about different settings within which peer group education can take place split the group into smaller groups. Each group should work with one of the six case studies which refer to different situations some are for projects taking place in school or educational institutions and some in grass roots projects coming from young people themselves. These can be rewritten based on local situations relating to intolerance.

Each working group will need a copy of the 'Step by Step' questions which they should address: These can be adapted for example if the group need to address particular aspects like finance or the role of the coach in more detail. Each working group should plan a short presentation to share their thoughts, feelings and discussions about the situation. You should stress that their discussions should focus on peer group education as the method.



Case studies

Formal/In school case study 1

You are a teacher, in your class of 25, there are 8 new pupils who have come as refugees. They have joined your class in the past year. Recently there have been problems in the school playground, the indigenous pupils harass, mob and tease the newcomers, the new pupils in defence start to react aggressively, engaging in fist fights. Although there haven't been any violent incidents yet you are concerned that there will be. You would like to launch a peer group education programme to deal with this situation.

Formal/In school case study 2

You are in a school where they have a ninth grade class with a majority of immigrants. Lately there have been several feuds between the immigrants and the other students. You feel the situation is getting worse and decide to try and solve this problem. You are also an immigrant, but you have not taken part in the feuds. You would like to create a positive role model for the restless immigrants who don't feel welcome. You contact your teacher for help and guidance in setting up a peer group education programme in your school.

Informal settings/Out of school, case study 3

You are a worker in a youth centre. Nearby a Gypsy camp site is located and for a number of months every year Gypsy youth come to use your centre. This creates friction between them and the young people who use the club all year round. Each group tries to mark territory against the other one with the intention of taking over the youth centre. Some of the young people come to you and say that they are tired of this conflict and would like to make some steps towards a more peaceful situation. You suggest that a peer group education project is started at the centre.

Informal settings/Out of school, case study 4

You are a youth worker. After working at the same centre for several years you have developed good working relationships with local young people. In recent weeks you have been working with them on a project about sex education, one of the group has disclosed that he is homosexual. He has declared this to his close friends. Some have told the rest of the young people and now they are making jokes and 'freezing him out' of the group. Approximately 1/3 of the members want to set up a peer group education program to educate the others about homophobia. They approach you for help.

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A friend of mine tried for years to get a job but the employers kept turning her down because somebody said that she was gay. They didn't even know it for sure. They destroyed a person's life in order to satisfy their own stupidity and ignorance. One day she decided that she couldn't take it any more and killed herself. She was 22 years old.

Themis, 16 years, Cyprus

Grass roots, case study 5

You are a young person, your local community has a Jewish Cemetery which recently has been vandalised, some of the buildings and memorials have been painted on and smashed. You feel very bad about this and suspect that young people are responsible for the damage, you would like to plan some work which will help young people understand about Jewish history and people. You and your friends have come together to plan a peer group education programme for other young people.

Grass roots, case study 6

You are a young person, you live in a small town where they have just opened a refugee centre. One night a group of your peers attack and vandalize the centre. You feel bad about the situation and decide to take action. You collect a group of your friend together who feel the same way as you do, you decide that your assignment is to create a better understanding between the refugees and the locals.

