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Activity sheet

Role play: Thinking out of the box

Duration: 40-60 minutes

Number of participants: 10 to 20 participants

Age: 15- 25 years

Material: Post-it; pens; A4 papers; flipchart; A3 papers; markers; fictional situation sheets printed.

Objectives:

- To cultivate empathy;
- To empower negotiation skills;
- To overcome personal empathies and prejudices over different social, cultural and economic background;
- To respect potential differences with others and to be aware of finding potential similarities with other participants.

Progress:

Step 1: Introduction to the activity

Before the activity, the facilitator has put on tables fictional situation sheets (1 per table) and post-it with role names (4 per table) Examples of fictional situations have been added to the annex of the document. Participants are divided into groups of 4 to 5 and are installed at a table. Each group has to engage in a role-play based on a fictional situation linked to an environmental dispute. Each member of the group has to embody the role that is attributed to its seat and has to defend arguments that are related to its character.



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Step 2: Organization of debates

When participants are installed at their table, they have 5 minutes to take notice of the fictional situation and their role, and write several arguments on a paper they will defend during the debate according to their role. Then, the coordinator gives 25 minutes to the groups for debating and trying to resolve their fictional situation. During these 25 minutes, each group has to debate and reach a compromise for resolving the situation. After the given time ends, groups exchange tables and embody new characters for resolving new situations. It is recommended to exchange one to two times.

Step 3: Debriefing

This part shall not be disregarded. It is vital that youth are encouraged to share their feelings and experiences on the activity. In the beginning of the debriefing the facilitator announces the number of times the groups reached a compromise, and congratulates participants for their achievement!

For debriefing, the facilitator can ask the questions below to the group. Participants are free to speak up:

-What is your appreciation of the activity?

-How do you feel after this activity?

-How did it feel to try to embody someone else's opinion?

-Do you feel your negotiation ability has been empowered?

-Do you feel your empathy has been reinforced?

-Did you feel listened to?

-Did you feel you were really listening to the other side (i.e. were you listening in order to understand or in order to reply)?

-Did you feel at any point (even slightly) that you were not so sure about your arguments?
Which part surprised you the most?



ANNEX

Fictional situations

Situation 1: Imagining the future of a ravaged city

Inhabitants of a city just experienced severe floods that destroyed a large number of infrastructures such as schools, houses and supermarkets. The mayor of the city summoned a citizen debate in order to build the future of the city that responds to the inhabitants needs and the environmental issues. The debate is composed of a group of inhabitants of the city, a representative of a building company, a psychologist, a lawyer, a representative of an environmental NGO and a director of a supermarket group. Together, they have to find a consensus regarding the future that should be built for the city in order to respect inhabitants' needs and well-being. The mayor presents the debate.

Roles:

- The mayor
- A group of inhabitants (2 to 3)
- A representative of a building company
- A psychologist
- A lawyer
- A representative of an environmental NGO
- A director of a supermarket group

Situation 2: Insuring the cohabitation between men and wildlife

In a rural municipality, farmers gathered in an association to protest against the interdiction of slaughter wolves who attacked their flocks of sheeps. Citizens associations which support the protection of the animal oppose the project which consists in establishing a quota of wolves to slaughter for guaranteeing less losses in flocks.

Roles:

- A farmer pro wolf slaughter
- A representative of an environmental NGO
- An elected representative who defends farmers that call for wolves to be slaughtered



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- A farmer against wolf slaughter
- The mayor who is against wolf slaughter

Situation 3: Reconciling environmental and social issues

A well known oil industry has decided to drill a new oil well in a region rich in biodiversity, where inhabitants depend on local resources for their economy and their essential needs. This project would allow the supply of oil for several cities in Europe concerned by a sudden rise of prices due to lower reserves and an important social crisis. On the other hand, this project will have severe environmental impacts such as the release of dangerous components and the emission of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere. It will also impact the inhabitants and the biodiversity of the territory where the oil well will be drilled.

Roles:

- A member of the European Parliament who defends the new oil well project
- A representative of inhabitants of the territory where the oil well will be drilled
- A member of an environmental NGO
- The director of the oil company in charge of the new oil well project
- A European citizen severely impacted by the rise of oil prices

Situation 4: Integrating youth voice inside environmental policies

A group of young environmental activists from France, Italy, Greece and the Netherlands have been mobilized during several weeks in the streets in order to contest the lack of political courage regarding the emergency of environmental issues. Their anger has been heard. Young environmental activists have been invited by the European commission president to discuss policies that should be invested at the European level for informing citizens on environmental issues, and encouraging initiatives on territories for acting against environmental issues. The president of the European parliament has invited counselors to help him judge the feasibility of youth propositions.

Roles:

- A group of young environmental activists
- The president of the commission
- A representative of an industry lobby
- A representative of an environmental NGO
- An economist