“Working with people coming from different cultural backgrounds. Developing yours and theirs intercultural competencies and making impacts on your target group”
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Intercultural Sensitivity

BOOKLET WITH METHODS AND TOOLS

INTRO

People who work with young people that come from different cultural backgrounds face with various challenges and often might not know how to react or don’t understand why people react in a certain way. Intercultural sensitivity can be conceptualized as an individual’s ability to develop a positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes an appropriate and effective behavior within intercultural communication. This definition shows that intercultural sensitivity is a dynamic concept. It reveals that intercultural sensitive persons must have a desire to motivate them to understand, appreciate and accept differences among cultures and to produce a positive outcome from intercultural interactions.

What is intercultural sensitivity?

“To be effective in another culture, people must be interested in other cultures, be sensitive enough to notice cultural differences, and then also be willing to modify their behavior as an indication of respect for the people of other cultures”\(^1\). We will use the term “intercultural sensitivity” to refer to the ability to distinguish and experience relevant cultural differences, and we will use the term “intercultural competence” to mean the ability to think and act in intercultural appropriate ways. We argue that greater intercultural sensitivity is associated with greater potential for exercising intercultural competence.

DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL OF INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY

The Bennett scale, also called the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), was developed by Dr. Milton Bennett. The framework describes the different ways in which people can react to cultural differences.

Organized into six “stages” of increasing sensitivity to difference, the DMIS identifies the underlying cognitive orientations individuals use to understand cultural difference. Each position along the continuum represents increasingly complex perceptual organizations of cultural difference, which in turn allow increasingly sophisticated experiences of other cultures. By identifying the underlying experience of cultural difference, predictions about behavior and attitudes can be made and education can be tailored to facilitate development along the continuum. The first three stages are ethnocentric as one sees his/her own culture as central to reality. Climbing the scale, one develops a more and more ethnorelative point of view, meaning that one experiences one’s own culture as in the context of other cultures. By the fourth stage, ethnocentric views are replaced by ethnorelative views. ²

He is well-known for his Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity which is used internationally to guide intercultural training design and to assess intercultural competence. In 2006 he founded the Intercultural Development Research Institute (IDRI), whose mission is to sponsor new theory and research in intercultural development, to formalize a developmental approach to intercultural adaptation, and to inform public discourse with scientific study of intercultural relations. IDRI operates in the USA and in Italy.

http://www.idrinstitute.org
Dr. Milton J. Bennett

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bennett_scale

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Stages of Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) was created by Dr. Milton Bennett (1986, 1993, 2004, 2013) as a framework to explain how people experience and engage cultural difference. The DMIS is grounded theory; it is based on observations he made in both academic and corporate settings about how people become more competent intercultural communicators. Using concepts from constructivist psychology and communication theory, he organized these observations into positions along a continuum of increasing sensitivity to cultural difference.

The underlying assumption of the model is that as one's perceptual organization of cultural difference becomes more complex, one's experience of culture becomes more sophisticated and the potential for exercising competence in intercultural relations increases. By recognizing how cultural difference is being experienced, predictions about the effectiveness of intercultural communication can be made and educational interventions can be tailored to facilitate development along the continuum.³

Why is it a good competence if you are able to function in another culture?

The DMIS continuum extends from ethnocentrism, the experience of one's own culture as "central to reality," to ethnorelativism, the experience of one's own and other cultures as "relative to context." Developmental movement is one-way, permanent and applicable to anything defined as cultural difference, although there may be "retreats" from some positions.

³ http://www.idrinstitute.org/page.asp?menu1=15
More or less familiarity with particular cultures does not change one’s level of sensitivity, although it affects the breadth of competence one can enact.

Positions along the continuum define the general ways in which perception of cultural difference is being organized into experience. The particular configuration of perceptual strategies used by each individual and group is their *predominant experience of difference*: one *position is predominant*, although perceptual strategies may span several positions. In other words, each individual or group has an uniquely complex experience of cultural difference that is nevertheless characterized by one of the following developmental positions.
STAGE 1 - DENIAL

Denial of cultural difference indicates an experience in which cultural difference is not perceived at all, or it is perceived only in very broad categories such as "foreigner" or "minority." The constructs available for perceiving one's own culture are far more complex than those available for other cultures. Individuals experience psychological and/or physical isolation from cultural difference. People are disinterested or perhaps even hostilely dismissive in intercultural communication.

STAGE 2 - DEFENSE

Defense against cultural difference indicates an experience in which cultural difference is perceived in stereotyped and polarized ways. Cultures are organized into "us and them," where typically the "us" is superior and the "them" is inferior. People at Defense are threatened by cultural difference, so they tend to be highly critical of other cultures and likely to blame cultural difference for general ills of society. In Reversal, one's own culture is heavily criticized, while other cultures are perceived in relatively non-critical, romanticized ways. The intercultural worldview is still polarized, but the poles are reversed.

STAGE 3 - MINIMIZATION

Minimization of cultural difference indicates an experience in which elements of one's own cultural worldview are perceived as universal. People assume that their own physical or psychological experiences are shared by people in all cultures, and/or that certain basic values and beliefs transcend cultural boundaries. The stressing of cross-cultural similarity reduces Defense, so people here are much more tolerant of superficial cultural diversity. However, Minimization obscures deep cultural differences, including the masking of dominant culture privileges by a false assumption of equal opportunity.
STAGE 4 - ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance of cultural difference indicates an experience in which one's own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews. Acceptance does not mean agreement - cultural difference may be judged negatively - but the judgment is not ethnocentric. People at Acceptance are curious about and respectful toward cultural difference, but their knowledge of other cultures does not yet allow them to easily adapt their behavior to different cultural contexts.
STAGE 5 - ADAPTATION

Adaptation to cultural difference indicates the experience of generating appropriate alternative behavior in a different cultural context. Adaptation involves intercultural empathy, or experiencing the world to some extent "as if" one were participating in the different culture. This imaginative participation generates "feelings of appropriateness" that guide the generation of authentic behavior in the alternative culture. People at adaptation can enact their intercultural sensitivity as intercultural communication competence.

STAGE 6 - INTEGRATION

Integration of cultural difference indicates an experience of self that is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews. People with a predominant integration position often are dealing with issues related to their own "cultural liminality," or in-betweeness. This liminality can be used to construct cultural bridges and to conduct sophisticated cross-cultural mediation.
More information you can find on this link:

http://www.wholecommunities.org/pdf/privilege/4_Becominginterculturallycompe_Bennett.pdf

Videos:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lGzobyVO2Y
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CD-wtfrB4ZQ

Resources:

http://www.idrinstitute.org/page.asp?menu1=4&menu2=27

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Intercultural Sensitivity

TOOLS AND METHODS FOR YOUTH WORKERS WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

Working with people with different cultural backgrounds can be interesting and challenging at the same time. The topic “intercultural sensitivity” can be approached in various ways. When it comes to creative, playful and intellectual methods the core of each exercise lays in a group reflection afterwards to encourage a sustainable outcome connected to self-reflection and raising awareness.

This toolbox provides a collection of some ideas for energizers, icebreaker games, team building games, workshops, forum discussions and case studies we made experience with on previous projects.

This tools are created, collected, already performed and just explained by Youth workers, youth leaders and volunteers working actively in youth field.

These methods can be performed and used as non-formal education methods, for creating team cohesion, ice breaking, energizing groups of young people, breaking stereotypes, giving opportunity for get to know each other. This methods can be performed in mixed groups, where more than one nationality, gender, race or religion included, and for colorful mix of cultures. The main goal is creating intercultural sensitive group of young people.
Speed Dating Game

Icebreaker Game

Time: 30 minutes

Participants are separated in two groups and asked to sit down. The chairs are placed in two circles, one inner circle and one outer circle. Then all the participants have a partner in front of them, so that they are separated into pairs.

The moderator asks a question to the group and the participants have two minutes to discuss on this topic with their partner. After two minutes, the moderator gives a signal to stop the conversation and the inner circle group moves one chair to their left, so all of them have a different person in front of them to speak to for the next round. This repeats while there are several questions asked by the moderator.

Questions asked to the participants can be modified according to the theme.

Afterwards the moderator debriefs the exercise with the group.

Suggestions for questions: What is culture to you? Talk about your names and if you like or dislike it and why. What can you contribute to this training course? What is your passion? What would you do if you weren’t afraid?
Mission is Possible

Team building game

Time: 1h and 30 min

Facilitator: Here is your first group task - to accomplish following
10 tasks in 1 hour and 5 minutes.

1. Find out who was already participating in some project organised with support of the Erasmus + Programme and for whom this project is the first Erasmus + experience.
2. Write a short article about the project, not more than 15 lines.
3. Write down 7 creative ways how people who are late for the sessions should be punished.
4. Translate “I am dancing in the rain” in as many languages as you know.
5. Bring 3 characteristic materialistic objects, symbolizing the town (venue) and the country of the venue and present them.
6. Write down all reasons why you have decided to come to the venue on one flipchart.
7. Prepare 1 short theatre play (up to 5 minutes) about your biggest fears, your expectations connected to this project.
8. Make a tower with materials higher than the highest participant on the project.
9. Create a group collage - poster of this project.
10. Create an anthem of the project. (up to 5 minutes) + a choreography.

After presenting the results by the group the moderator stimulates a short reflection on strategies the group worked with and can provide time for feedback about this method.
Hopes, Fears and Expectations

Time: 30 – 45 minutes

Trainer/facilitator is explaining to the group:

Expectations – What do you expect from this seminar? (pink post-it paper)
Fears – What are your fears? (green post-it paper)
Contributions – What can you contribute to this seminar? (blue post-it paper)

The participants have 10 minutes to write something on the papers. Afterwards they stick it on three big posters (each topic on one poster) and present it one by one in front of the group.

Ants

Energizer

Facilitator: We need 7 people for this energizer.
Does anybody know what an ant is? Do you know who eats ants?
So let’s divide the group: 6 people will be ants, and they need to protect all the chairs (there will be 10 chairs). Also there will be 1 person that is the spider. The spider needs to sit on the chairs and all the ants need to protect them. When the spider sits on one chair that person drops out of the game. The energizer continues while the spider takes all the ants out from the game.

Then 7 other participants have the chance to play and the game is starts from the beginning.

Acadian villagers building bridges

Team building game

This method can help raising awareness for differences in communication, especially with people from other cultures.

Time: 45 minutes

Number of participants: from 10 to 26.
The facilitator/group leader separates the group in two groups. One group is engineers, who came to teach the Acadians how to build the bridge. The second group is the Acadians. They have no connection with the outside world and they have different customs and ways of behavior but they have to find a way so that they can build a bridge.

Rules (only the Arcadians get introduced): When the Acadians want to say YES, they say NO and for NO they say YES.

If the Acadians want to communicate with another person, they have to kiss on the shoulder of the person they want to talk to first and then touch each other’s shoulder with one hand. If two girls talk, they have to kiss each other on the right shoulder, if a girl and a boy want to talk – kiss on the left. But two male Acadians cannot communicate unless one is presented to another guy by a girl. (guy comes to a girl, kisses her on left shoulder and girl kisses him back, they put hands on each other shoulders and then start the conversation. The guy says he wants to talk to another guy, so a girl has to kiss another guy on the left shoulder and the second guy kisses back, they also put hands on each other’s shoulders and now the two males can start communicating.

If somebody tries to communicate with the Acadians without the welcome procedure, the Acadians start to shout.

In the Acadian’s village, women cannot touch glue, and men cannot touch scissors.

Meanwhile the Acadians practice their behavior and communication, the facilitator explains the engineers how to build the bridge. After 10 minutes, two engineers go to observe the Acadians to learn how their culture functions but they should not tell anything about building the bridge. The engineers brief their group of engineers how to communicate with the Acadians. The group has the task to build the bridge with holding to all the rules.
Debate

**Agree/Disagree debate, moderated debate**

Time: 30 – 50 min (according to the moderator)

There are three papers on the wall: AGREE, DISAGREE and NOT SURE. The trainer reads one statement after another. After each statement people take positions next to one of the statements. Then the participants are asked to tell why they agree/disagree and start a discussion. The discussion is moderated by the facilitator/trainer.

Examples for statements:
1. Multiculturalism is the future of the world.
2. Rich countries are more tolerant than poor countries in general.
3. Intercultural learning is important, for youth in my local community.

Words and Gestures

**Icebreaker Game**

Time: 25 minutes

The moderator prepares small papers with words on it for the game.

The participants are divided into two groups and challenge each other. Each group stands in line facing in one direction and the first person in tries to guess the word which is shown with gestures. The moderator gives the papers one by one to participant who makes the gestures. When she/he guessed right, she/he goes in the back as the last one and the next participant that showed the word with pantomime goes to the rear as the last participant. This goes on for 10 minutes. Then the second group does the same with different words.

The moderator counts how many words each group guessed right. The team with more words wins.

Ideas for words to mime: zebra, watering the flowers, writing a love letter, culture,…
Rolling Dice - storytelling

Workshop - Dice method

Time: 20 minutes

The trainer gives one dice to the participants. There are six words written on the dice: border, sensitivity, tolerance, culture, values & beliefs, difference.

The group sits on chairs in a circle. All of the participants need to roll the dice once, one after the other. When somebody rolls the dice she/he says a few sentences to contribute to the story the group is creating together using the input from the dice, then the next person rolls the dice and continues the story. The story is told and created by all the people in the room.

Let’s dance together

Energizer, dance

Time: 5 minutes

The group leader proposes one song called “Tunak Tunak”, and shows the dance-moves, then the song is turned on (e.g. on youtube) and all the participants dance to it (4 minutes):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTIIMJ9tUc8
Dancing Chairs

Energizer

Time: 10 min

Place chairs in circles enough for everyone to sit and put some dancing music on. When the music stops people have to sit on a chair. Make couple of rounds but lose one or more chairs in every round. The game stops when there is only one person and one chair left.

Variation: you can also play a cooperative version of this game with the task that everybody has to sit on chairs so that the group has to work together and take care that no one touches the floor when the music is over, that means the participants have to sit on each other.

Fruit salad

Energizer

Time: 5 – 10 min

The facilitator divides the participants into an equal number of three to four fruits, such as oranges and bananas. Participants then sit on chairs in a circle. One person stands in the centre of the circle. The facilitator shouts out the name of one of the fruits, such as ‘oranges’, and all of the oranges must change places with one another. The person who stands in the middle tries to take one of their places as they move, leaving another person in the middle without a chair. The new person in the middle shouts another fruit and the game continues. A call of ‘fruit salad’ means that everyone has to change seats.

Balloon game

Energizer

Time: 5 – 10 min
Intercultural Sensitivity

**Card game**

**Icebreaker**

Place the participants on chairs in a circle and ask them to take one card from a deck of cards and to remember the color (spades, diamond, hearts, clubs). Collect the cards and shuffle. Take one card at a time and show the color. The participants who had that color have to move one chair to the right and the others to remain seated. In a while you will have participants sitting on each other laps.

Note: *this exercise is recommendable if the group has had the chance to get to know each other better as it contains close physical contact.*

**Gordy knot**

**Ice Breaker game**

The participants stand in a circle, stretch out both hands and join hands with other people in the circle. Keeping their hands joined, they move in any way that they want, twisting and turning and creating a *‘knot’*. They must then unravel this knot, without letting go of one another’s hands. This exercise is recommended as a start as the group trains itself in “solving a problem” together.
Learn from others for cultures

Workshop

Each participating country works in a group with members of her/his own country. Each team draws a piece of paper with the name of another country which is represented at the training course and has the task to create a poster about this other country.

Facilitator: What information have you personally about the given country in relation to the mentioned topics? Write down or draw as many information as you can in 30 minutes without asking the participants from that country for any clarification! You can also present some clichés you have in mind. Topics: a) History; b) Music & dances; c) Cuisine & eating habits; d) Sports.

Each group presents their poster and gets feedback by the countries they presented.

Debrief on the ways you get to know another cultures (formal/informal education; visiting that country; exchanging information with people from that country; internet etc.)

Let’s Understand another culture

Workshop

In small mixed groups participants share experiences regarding to A – ha moments: when I understood moments in your culture/when you recognized what the cultural background of different reactions of people was. Create a montage from it within the group. Group debate - participants debates for post it’s about the meaning of the montages. The owners react on the messages. Afterwards: Debriefing and reflection on the process of understanding.
Define Tolerance of differences

Workshop

In several (depending how big the group is) small mixed groups the task is to make a brainstorming on the word “tolerance”. Make a definition of tolerance by participants in small groups and reflect if there are negative and positive sides associated with this term. Present the flip charts in the plenary. The moderator will also show the definition by the Council of Europe – trainers input. Debrief again.

Theater play - Acceptance of differences

Workshop

Participants in national groups have to write a story about a situation about cultural differences (for example about a situation where they experienced cultural differences). The stories will be given to other groups and they have to make a play from that. The play has to be acted according to the original story. Debriefing on acceptance.
Our community is appreciating differences

Outdoor workshop, excursion, group work

Go to town in small mixed groups. Find examples of what shows that the locals appreciate and/or adapt cultural differences. Make short movies, photos, interviews with locals, etc. The results will be presented in the plenum.

Adaptation

Case study

Trainers input on specific case study for adaptation. The story can be found in Sensitive and efficient intercultural communication booklet by SALTO Cultural Diversity Resource Centre.

In mixed trios people have to give feedback to each other what they would like to adapt from each other’s culture. Make a difference between adaption and melting pot.

Ability to function in other cultures

Small forum exercise, discussion

Four chairs are in the middle of the room, and the group is sitting around it. Several questions will be asked by the trainers and the 4 people who sit in the middle and have a discussion about their answers of these questions. If someone from the audience feels to join in she/he has to go behind one of the people sitting in the middle, touch her/his back and then both change places.

(Questions: a) Is it possible to fully function in another culture? b) Why could it be challenging if you are able to function in other cultures? c) Why is it a good competence if you are able to function in another culture? d) What happens with your cultural identity if you are also able to function in a different culture?)
What do you want?

Exercise in pairs

**Aims** – Train Concentration, Raise awareness on needs, empowerment, self-reflection

Everybody in the group needs to find a partner and place the chairs one opposite the other.

The moderator can encourage the group to find a partner with whom she/he hasn’t talked much yet. During the exercise one person is talking and the other is just listening, and says **Thank you** afterwards, but can’t say anything else.

Then after 3 minutes they are changing (the moderator gives the signal to switch).

The question keeps repeating: What do you want?

Then participants form a circle afterwards and the moderator is debriefing and group-reflection:

How did you feel? Was it easy /difficult to only talk/to listen?
Utopia – Silent collage

Workshop
Aims – learning about nonverbal communication, challenge creativity, group work

The moderator gives the participants 15 minutes to make silent collage or one or two flipcharts with using scissors, glue, old newspapers, pens and colors.

The group collage is named “Utopia” and is reflecting how participants are imagining their perfect world. Then the moderator opens the exhibition of the results and asks the participants to go and tell what they see on it. The moderator debriefs and opens the conversation about how the collages are reflected regarding to their cultural backgrounds and personal identities. Participants talk for themselves.
Sometimes youth workers, youth leaders or social workers can experience conflicts in their groups, or by individuals. It’s really important to understand the source, the cause and identify possible solution to it.

**HOW TO SOLVE CONFLICTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY?**

CONFLICT RESOLUTION is the foundation for any effort to collaboratively negotiate solutions to conflicts is a positive, respectful atmosphere in which to communicate. In reality you may have to accept that the relationship between the group and individuals involved is not one of trust, therefore, you have two options to consider:

- Build a sense of trust as a first priority
- Accept the lack of trust, and practically consider how to work together in spite of it

**SUGGESTED ACTIVITY**

Divide participants into groups of three (or four if necessary, the fourth person can act as an observer). Assign each group a “conflict” to resolve. This could be the issue of group members always arriving late for sessions; a lack of respect for a certain minority groups i.e. Roma people or immigrants (within or out of the group setting), a conflict of individual “personalities” etc, etc.

**METHODOLOGY**

Ask the group to:

i) Draw up a pathway plan of how they will resolve the conflict on flipchart paper

ii) Prepare and practice their pathway plan as a role play (accepting feedback from the small group observer if one has been assigned)

iii) Present their pathway plan and their role-play to whole group

iv) Accept feedback from the whole group TIMESCALE 30 minutes for i) and ii) 40 minutes for iii) and iv)
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Editorial Info:

This booklet (all of the tools, energizers, icebreaking games, team building games, is invoked by participants (youth workers, youth leaders, volunteers) 35 people that participated on the 7 days Seminar: Intercultural Sensitivity is all around”, in Zagreb, Croatia on 02-08 October 2015, financed by Erasmus + Programme. The participants offer those tools based on their experience, knowledge and research. Tools and methods in this booklet are collected summarized, changed and reshaped for the purpose and aims of this booklet. Those are not invented and not covered by any copyright law.


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