

Social Diagram

Goal(s): Getting to know each other, facilitating group communication, affirmation, self-awareness

Duration: 45 minutes

Age group: All age groups

Materials needed: List of questions

Description:

- 1) The four corners of the room represent answers a), b), c) and d) of the questions below.
- 2) Read out the first question.
- 3) The participants go to the corner that represents their chosen answer.
- 4) In each corner, the participants discuss why they have chosen this answer with each other.
- 5) One person reports on the discussion in her/his corner to the whole group.
- 6) Proceed in the same manner with the other questions (Change question 4 beforehand if you will not address mediation: you may chose questions around constructive conflict transformation).

1. Where would you most like to be now?
 - a) At the sea
 - b) In the forest/ mountains
 - c) In a big city in another country
 - d) Elsewhere
2. What is your hobby/what do you like to do most?
 - a) Sports
 - b) Meet friends
 - c) Computer
 - d) Other
3. Where do you most like to spend your leisure time?
 - a) At home with my family
 - b) Going out with my friends
 - c) Alone
 - d) Other
4. Have heard about mediation before?
 - a) Yes, I have participated in mediation before or I know someone who has done one
 - b) Yes, I know someone who is a mediator.
 - c) No, this is the first time have I heard about it.
 - d) Other
5. What is my interest here?
 - a) I am here because I want to learn something for myself
 - b) I am here because I want to get involved in mediation at school
 - c) I am here because I have had bad experiences with fighting
 - d) Other

Discussion points: Within the groups (see above)

Source: Adapted from a training activity of the Youth Education Center Kaubstrasse, Berlin



Personal Symbol



Goal(s):

For the group:

Getting to know each other, group building, affirmation (especially for youth), self-awareness

For the trainer:

Finding out about participants' needs



Duration: 50 minutes



Age-group: All ages (adapt the questions when working with youth)



Materials needed: Large sheet of paper for each of the participants; colored crayons/markers



Description:

- 1) Each participant draws a personal shield answering questions given by the trainer/s (25 minutes)

Possible questions might include:

- What do I want to learn?
- What do I like to try out?
- What do I want to find out about myself?
- What are my personal goals for the future?

Other questions (especially for youth):

- My favorite subject at school is... ?
- My hobby/s is/are... ?
- What I really dislike
- What I can do best

or:

- What do I want to be when I am grown up?
- My biggest wish for the future is... ?
- If I were a landscape what would I like to be?
- What behavior of others (friends/family/teachers/other people) hurts me most?

A space should be left in the middle of the symbol. Each participant should place some kind of sign in this middle field that tells the other participants something about him/her (for example an olive tree as a symbol as being from Palestine).

- 2) The drawings are hung on the wall
 Each participant presents his/her shield (25 minutes)



Variations: An alternative, especially for children, is to connect the fields with similar or the same content with woolen threads after the explanations have been given. This reflects how each one's individuality is in some cases also part of the group building.

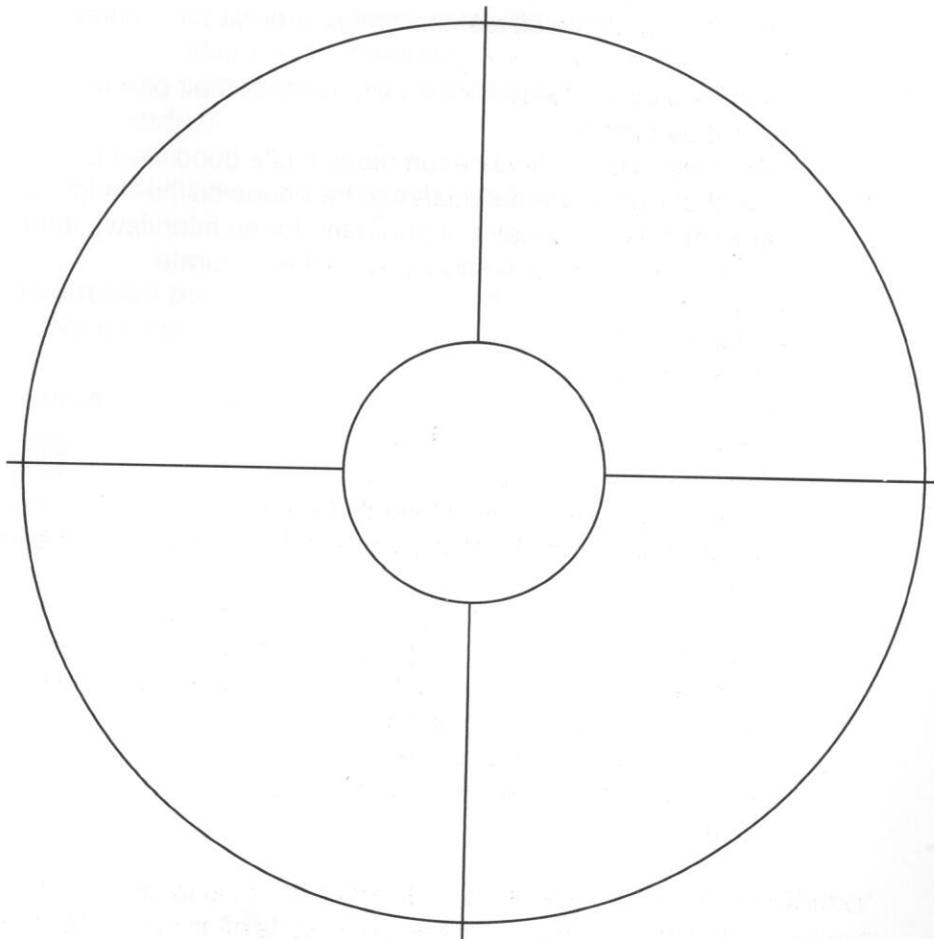


Discussion points: Room for questions and further explanations should be given.

In terms of the activity variation with the thread, the participants may discuss the relevance of similarities and differences in building a group. Further, what does it feel like to share rather personal preferences with some of the group or all of them?



Source: Adapted from Kurt Faller, Wilfried Kerntke, Maria Wackermann: Konflikte selber Lösen. Mediation für Schule und Jugendarbeit. Mülheim, Ruhr/ Germany. p. 31.



Partner Interview



Goal(s): Group building, getting to know each other, affirmation



Duration: 45 minutes



Age group: All ages



Materials needed: None



Description:

- 1) Group the participants into pairs (for example by handing out a number of proverbs that are written on two separate pieces of paper).
- 2) The pairs interview each other following a set of questions. Depending on the age of the group, these might include name, marital status, number of siblings, hobbies, expectations of the workshop, and dreams, for example (5 minutes each = 10 minutes total).
- 3) Each participant presents his/her partner's answers to the group (depending on the size of the group, around 35 minutes).



Attentiveness: Asking the participants to present their partner's answers encourages concentration.

If the participants already know each other, it is a good idea to alter this activity. The trainer could ask each participant to introduce his/her neighbor to person on his/her right hand side (without prior time for an interview), after which their partner verifies whether everything they said is accurate



Source: Unknown

Personal Painting



Goal(s):

For the group:

Getting to know each other

For the trainer(s):

To learn more about the group



Duration: 50-60 minutes



Age group: All age groups



Materials needed: Large sheet of paper for each participant; colored crayons or markers



Description:

- 1) Participants should create a personal painting based on their past or current life (15-20 minutes)
- 2) Participants group themselves into pairs and explain their paintings to each other (10-15 minutes)
- 3) Each participant presents their partner's painting to the group (25 minutes)



Variations: If time is limited, participants can present their own paintings to the group



Discussion points: Questions may be asked if something is unclear, or if further details are desired



Source: Unknown



Bingo



Goal(s): Group building; affirmation; self awareness



Age group: All ages (possibly need to adapt topics to suite different age groups)



Materials needed: Table containing the information below



Description:

- 1) Give out the table below to all participants.
- 2) The person to complete one line (horizontal, vertical or diagonal) first is the winner. The line is completed by attributing fellow participants to the four respective fields. Whether or not the group knows each other so well that they can complete the task without asking, they must check their answers quickly with the others.
- 3) The completed fields should be checked for accuracy.



Source: Adapted from: Frank Beckmann, Mediationsstelle Brückenschlag, Lüneburg/Germany

BINGO

Someone who can stay under water for 90 seconds	Someone who believes in aliens (beings from out of space)	Someone who likes reading	Someone whose birthday is/was this month
Someone who plays an instrument or likes music	Someone who speaks more than three languages	Someone who likes to cook	Someone who likes to travel
Someone who likes sports	Someone who has more than 5 siblings	Someone who knows verses of the Koran by heart	Someone who has relatives in Europe
Someone who has been to the USA	Someone who likes to work in the garden	Someone who likes painting	Someone who prefers being with a lot of people than alone

The Woolen Thread



Goal(s): Group building; getting to know each other; acknowledging similarities and differences within the group



Duration: 45 minutes



Age-group: All-ages



Materials needed: Ball of wool or any other kind of thread



Description:

- 1) The group sit in a circle. The trainer(s) hand(s) a person a ball of wool.
- 2) Someone starts by saying something about him/herself such as "I like to read", "I can run very fast", "I was born outside of Palestine" etc.
- 3) The ball of wool is then thrown to someone with the same preference/characteristic. If there is no one with such a preference/characteristic, the person holding the ball needs to think of others until someone is found.
- 4) Discuss the activity in the group (see below)



Discussion points: The relevance of similarities and differences in the group should be discussed. There are individual characteristic that all participants can identify with (like speaking a certain language), others that only a few or even just two will have in common, and some that apply to just one person. It is important for the group to understand that forming a group does not mean that everybody needs to be the same. Certainly, similarities help a lot. However, differences rarely mean that the group will immediately fall apart. How many differences can the group tolerate or accept without breaking apart? And: how can differences benefit the group? (Compare with "Three Musketeers" activity)



Attentiveness: The activity requires an explanation (see discussion points)



Source: Unknown



3.2 Self-Awareness and Affirmation



3.2 Self-Awareness and Affirmation

The goal of the following activities is mainly to explore the person inside as well as the interaction of the inside with the outside world. How does one deal with this? Participants should not only become aware of this, but also acknowledge what lies inside them ("I am okay the way I am"). Someone who is unsure of oneself will constantly ask for outside confirmation, which hinders constructive conflict transformation.

This part of the manual relates directly to one of the key skills ("building blocks") introduced earlier. Constructive conflict transformation starts with being aware of one's personal attitude towards conflict. In this section, there are a number of activities exploring inner conflict on several levels.*

1) **Biographical aspect:**

The upbringing shapes everyone fundamentally. In our family, we learn how to deal with conflicts: which behavior is positive; which is negative; and what values we cherish. In emotionally difficult situations, we become particularly aware of how strongly our early childhood and family background influences us.

2) **Inner psychological aspect:**

The individual reaction towards conflicts varies. The scale runs from being confrontational, to ignoring, escaping or denying a conflict, to developing self-aggressive or self-destructive behavior, or freezing altogether. Being aware of our individual inner dialogue helps us to deal with conflict. Introverted personal attitudes often "help" only in the sense that they allow us to avoid confrontation and accepting responsibility. Here, suffering is a way to cover up feelings of guilt.

3) **Situational aspect:**

People interpret the circumstances in which a conflict takes place differently. A certain situation might provoke anger in one person, while it does not in another. The ways in which we act and communicate, as well as our social appearance etc. have strong impacts on the context, and thus, on the dynamics of a conflict. Other relevant issues include gender and culture: how do males and females interact, and how does the society deal with conflicts? In order to manage a conflict in a constructive way it is important to be aware of our behavior in certain situations.

4) **Group aspect:**

How does the group deal with conflicts within and between themselves? "Group" in this case refers to a number of people (in a training course or in a school for example) or to the society as a whole. Living, working, and simply being together usually mean that there are also conflicts. These tend to centre around different interests such as envy, power, exclusion, mistrust, and authority for example. At the same time, a group is a unique opportunity to learn a lot about dealing with conflicts in a constructive way, both individually and as a group. Some of the following activities are designed to understand oneself better in groups, as well as the relationships and dynamics within groups. The manual also addresses the group aspect throughout, in the section on group building (establishing a group agreement together, and the relevance of similarities and differences) and conflict analysis (conflict mapping) for example.

5) **Gender aspect:**

The roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created by, learned from, and



within our families, societies and cultures, are commonly referred to as “gender”. Gender deeply influences social interaction and is highly relevant as an origin of conflicts. Working with constructive conflict transformation thus means taking full account of this factor. Gender is a vast field in itself however. It would actually require much more consideration in an additional workshop.

One key self-awareness skill also includes “affirmation”. Being aware of ourselves is one aspect of this, while being confident about our own personalities is another. It is important, especially at an early age, to develop our own values. Trainers should be aware that students tend to receive most acknowledgements – if any- based on their educational performance. As such, if their grades are low, they receive no credit, which does not encourage students to do better, leading to lower marks, even less acknowledgement, and so on. The aim is to make affirmation possible beyond grades in order to break this circle. Affirmation does not just apply to oneself however. Some students, especially boys, like to put themselves in the lime light for example; illustrating the idea, that affirmation also means giving room to the values of others. Trainers should be aware of this.

The following section presents a number of activities that address this issue, together with other activities throughout the manual that also encourage affirmation.

Dealing with self-awareness, self-confidence and affirmation usually leads to discussion of a number of personal and sensitive issues. Thus, before starting with the following activities, it is important that the trainees have begun establishing positive group relationship between participants, characterized by confidence and trust. When conducting the following activities the trainer(s) must pay particular attention to the stage the group has reached, as well as to individual sensibilities. Trainers may potentially need to intervene in cases where boundaries are crossed and not respected. Yet, it is also part of the group’s responsibility to respect such boundaries, to recognize his/her own borders, and find the courage to clearly express these. All of this is part of the learning process dealt with in this section.

Many of the following activities are somewhat complex. These require a higher ability of participants of an abstract thinking. Younger participants will certainly not be able to manage some of them. The activities “define borders”, “comfort boxes”, “identity folder” and “the object and me” work for most age groups, though. Easy affirmation exercises (ask the kids to make a list of what they can do very well, what they have achieved that they are especially proud of etc.) are also a good alternative. The order of the activities follows a rising degree of abstraction and difficulty.

* The conflict competences are adapted from a concept of Sabina Koerner and Monika Engel: *Zivile Konfliktkultur and Konfliktmanagement*. Boenen, Germany 2001, page 17 ff.

Define Borders



Goal(s): Become aware of personal borders; develop the ability to communicate personal borders clearly



Duration of activity: 15 minutes



Age-group: All ages



Materials needed: None



Description:

- 1) Participants divided into two groups.
- 2) Each group lines up opposite each other, leaving a space of around two meters.
- 3) Those facing form pairs: Partner 1 starts walking towards Partner 2. Partner 2 has to say, "Stop" when s/he feels Partner 1 is getting too close.
- 4) The partners exchange roles after a few minutes.



Discussion points: The group discusses the relevance of defining personal boundaries. Where are they? Is it difficult to define them? How is it possible to communicate to the other when s/he crosses my borders?



Attentiveness: This activity is very important for the participants to define their personal borders. This should encourage them to step back from something that is getting to personal for them for example. It is a good idea to communicate this to the group and make it clear that no one will not be judged for this.



Source: Unknown



Identity folders



Goal(s): Self-awareness



Duration: 45 minutes to one hour



Age group: All ages



Materials needed: Paper folders, crayons, markers, glue, old magazines



Description:

- 1) Each participant receives a folder.
- 2) They use the materials provided to decorate the outside of the folder towards answering the question: "How I think others see me?"
- 3) The participants then use the materials to decorate the inside of the folders to answer the question: "How do I see myself?"
- 4) After participants have finished working on their folders, they share their folders with the group.



Discussion points: A discussion may follow after the participants have presented their folders to each other. The group might discuss why others see us a certain way, how this affects us, and the relationships between us.



Source: Mona Nasir, trainer for special education

Comfort Boxes



Goal(s): De-briefing; self awareness/affirmation



Duration: 1 hour



Age group: Youth, especially aged 5 - 14, and in special cases, for older youth and adults (see below)



Materials needed: Glue, old magazines, crayons, markers, colored paper, shoe boxes, personal pictures of meaningful things, personal items



Description:

- 1) The trainer(s) should have asked the participants in advance to bring pictures or things that are special and meaningful to them. If they cannot fit these things in a shoebox, they can either bring a picture of these things or write down the name of the items.
- 2) The participants then decorate the boxes.
- 3) After they finish decorating the boxes, the participants put the things they brought in them.



Attentiveness: This activity primarily aims at children, but can also be applicable to remind adults of things that bring them hope in difficult times.



Source: Mona Nasir, trainer for special education



The Object and Me



Goal(s): Group building; getting to know each other; affirmation; respect for oneself; being conscious of one's personality and standing up for it



Duration: 30 minutes



Age group: All ages



Materials needed: Various objects (toy car, plastic flours, stuffed animal, a book, a pen, a watch)



Description:

- 1) The objects are placed in the middle of the circle. Each participant should select one that reflects something about him/her.
- 2) Each participant is given time to talk about how s/he relates to the object.



Source: Unknown

Conflict Time Line



Goal(s): Learn about personal conflict skills



Duration: 45 minutes



Age-group: 9 years and above



Materials needed: Long pieces of paper, markers



Description:

- 1) Each participant draws a time line on a long piece of paper. Along the line, s/he marks every important event that shaped his/her conflict skills.
- 2) Everyone presents the conflict time line in the plenum.



Source: Unknown

Positive and Negative Personal Traits in Conflicts



Goal(s): Understanding conflict



Duration of activity: 45 minutes



Age groups: 14 years and above



Materials needed: Flip chart, markers



Description:

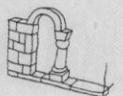
- 1) Ask all participants to take 10 minutes to think of personal traits that they see in themselves that are positive and helpful in conflict situations.
- 2) When the 10 minutes are up, ask participants to share their traits aloud with the group (the trainer should note these down on the flip chart).
- 3) Repeat steps 1 and 2, this time thinking about personality traits that they would like to improve, or characteristics that they think could get in the way of helping to solve a conflict.
- 4) This activity will result in a list of positive and negative personality traits that either help or hinder the process of conflict transformation.



Discussion points: Discuss the list of positive and negative personality with the group.



Source: Unknown



Personal Conflict Competence: Biographical Aspect "Statue Theater"



Goal(s): Raise awareness of the biographical aspect of personal conflict skills (see introduction to this chapter)



Duration: 45 minutes



Age group: 14 years and above



Materials needed: None



Description:

- 1) The participants divide into two groups.
- 2) Each group discusses how they think their family background has shaped their conflict behavior. The group decides on the situation of one person that s/he believes to be representative of how the family background has shaped him/her.
- 3) Both groups work with the method of "statue theater"(*) to present this situation to the plenum. Each group has some time to think of ways to put the situation into a statue. The statue can consist of one or more persons. The person whose situation was chosen is not part of the statue but should be the "artist" modeling the co-trainees into the statue.
- 4) The first group presents their statue. The other participants walk around it, observing it. There is no talking, no questions, no discussion, and no acting.
- 5) The "spectators" sit down, while the statue is still up. They now say what they see. It is also possible to give the statue a title. In a second step, they can now ask what the statue represents as well as each one inside of it and what they felt like.
- 6) The trainer(s) ask(s) each member in the statue in turn what s/he represents and what s/he feels like.
- 7) The trainer also addresses the person who gave his/her situation what s/he feels about it.
- 8) The second group presents their statue.



Variations:

Extension:

The spectators change the situation (statue) to take out tension, aggression or violence. This might be helpful in finding ways to deal with the family situation.

Variation:

Instead of Statue Theater, it is also possible to work with the role-play method (see Part II and the section on mediation for explanations) to explore the biographical aspect by choosing a typical family situation.



Discussion points:

The activity should be followed by a discussion dealing with the relevant

questions around the biographical aspect, such as: how are conflicts dealt with in my family? What is the relevance of my father/mother/sister/brother etc.? How do I behave in such conflicts? Am I happy about how my family deals with conflicts?



Attentiveness:

The trainer needs to ensure that participants are not obliged to disclose personal issues against their will!

It may be necessary to leave space to discuss or close difficult experiences that have been re-opened.

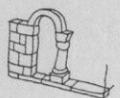


Source: Inspired by the concept of Sabina Koerner and Monika Engel: Zivile Konfliktkultur and Konfliktmanagement. Boenen, Germany 2001, page 17 ff.

(*) What is a “statue theater”?

The Brazilian dramatist Augusto Boal has invented the method of “Statue Theater”. Statue Theater consists of a variety of pantomimes designed to express something. This could be a conflict, an incidence of violence, a certain social phenomena etc. However, unlike pantomime, the “statue theater” renounces not only on talking, but also moving or acting.

It needs a number of people to perform a “statue theater.” This group thinks of a certain situation or phenomena they want to communicate silently to the audience. On this basis, they form a “statue.” It is almost like a theater sketch that froze at the point of highest tension.



Personal Conflict Competence: Inner Psychological Aspect



Goal(s): Dealing with inner conflicts; finding ways to respond to attitudes of self-hurting and self-destruction (see introduction to this chapter)

Duration: 60 minutes

Age groups: 14 years and above

Materials needed: Flipchart paper with list of self hurting attitude

Description:

1) Tell a short story "The Hammer" by Paul Watzlawik (a communication expert) to introduce to topic:

There was a man moving to a new neighborhood. Today it was his first day in the new apartment. He had moved a lot of stuff into the new place. Sitting on the floor in the middle of everything that was still to be unpacked, he observed the huge number of boxes scattered throughout the rooms and wondered where to start.

He was very tired after a hard day of moving everything to his new place. Suddenly, a number of pictures caught his eye and an idea came to his mind. "Alright," he thought, "that's it. I'll put up some pictures. It's not much work and it will make my new home a little cozier." He got up and went to get the pictures. He found a box of nails the repairperson had left whilst fixing something before he moved in. "But where is the hammer?" he wondered. He could not possibly remember where he had put it and it would take ages to go through all these boxes.

"Actually" he thought, "this is a good opportunity to meet my neighbors. I am sure they might have a hammer, and at the same I could say 'Hello, I am Mohamed, your new neighbor.'" He put the pictures down. As he started to make his way through the piles of boxes, he caught a glimpse of a clock lying on top of one box: 9:30. "Goodness" he thought, "I didn't realize it was that late already. They probably will be very angry if I disturb them so late at night" he assumed. "Actually, I noticed the father of the family next door giving me an upset look, as if to say 'How can you move house and work on a sacred holiday like today?'" he carried on thinking. "He's probably a bit stuck up about people visiting later in the evening. In addition, they might not even have a hammer. And if they do, the father will most likely be very picky about it if I don't return it right away". At this point, he stopped in the middle of the room almost paralyzed by the thought of being stuck with such horrible neighbors. However, the next moment he rushed out of his house to ring his neighbors' doorbell. The father opened the door, smiled at him and opened his mouth to greet him. Nevertheless, before he could even get a word out, Mohamed yelled: "You know what? Even if you have a hammer, I don't want anything from you!" He turned around and rushed away leaving behind a puzzled man with his mouth open. (5 minutes)

- 2) Present a list of attitudes/behaviors sometimes adopted when getting into a conflict (see below) (5 minutes)
- 3) Divide the participants into a number of small groups. They should pick three attitudes from the list below and answer the following questions:
 Why are these behaviors adopted and what is this person trying to avoid?
 How would I have reacted in this situation?
 How can we deal with such self-hurting attitudes and what is an alternative strategy? (25 minutes)

Self hurting/destructive behavior:

- Depreciative and/or frightening fantasies
- Isolation through voluntarily chosen retreat
- Turning down oneself/"asking" for negative feedback
- The world is evil/people always want to hurt me
- Cultivate/cherish and conserve feelings of guilt
- Ignore physical signs (stress, pain, psychosomatic troubles)
- Make situations fail on purpose (choose wrong time for the right thing, put oneself under time pressure)
- Create uncomfortable atmosphere (at work or at home)
- Make oneself unattractive
- Get oneself into financial trouble
- Choose friends who are destructive
- Get oneself into dangerous situations
- Adopt a negative attitude towards everything



Variations:

It is possible to explore gender issues with this inner-psychological aspect. Are there differences between males and females in adopting the above attitudes and why?



Discussion points: The groups present the results for discussion in the plenum (25 minutes).



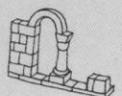
Attentiveness:

It is important for each participant to consider his/her personal attitude. The discussion should not be general and unspecific. The trainer(s) should encourage participants to talk about their personal inner conflicts. How do they deal with them? Giving specific examples, such as going out to play, or studying for the next exam, are useful here.

It is helpful to have some room to discuss or close difficult experiences that have been re-opened.



Source: Inspired by concept of Sabina Koerner and Monika Engel: Zivile Konfliktkultur and Konfliktmanagement. Boenen, Germany 2001. Page 125 and Manfred Guehrs, Claus Novak: Das konstruktive Gespraech. Lummer Verlag 1991.



Situational Aspect: Role Play about Conflict Transformation



Goal(s): Evaluate and assess personal behavior during conflict



Duration: 45 – 60 minutes



Age group: 14 years and above



Materials needed: None



Description:

- 1) Divide the participants into pairs.
- 2) Each pair thinks of a conflict situation, on which the partners typically find themselves in.
- 3) The pairs present the conflict as a role-play to the group. The person whose conflict situation is chosen explains his/her behavior/attitude. Important questions might be the following: Why did I react this way? Did I find it constructive or unconstructive? Why? What is my role in conflict situations? Which situations make me mad? What helps me to calm down?
- 4) The group discusses the situation: How one could handled the conflict differently? What behavior minimized/maximized the conflict?



Discussion points: See above



Attentiveness: The trainer(s) must ensure that no one is obliged to present or discuss something s/he does not want to. The trainer must be particularly attentive during the open discussion on participants' typical conflict situations



Source: Inspired by concept of Sabina Koerner and Monika Engel: Zivile Konfliktkultur and Konfliktmanagement. Boenen, Germany 2001, p. 17