

**No size can fit all
How to seize the chance for
intercultural learning in
international voluntary service**

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This publication has been written by EVS-volunteer Maloe Klaassen on the basis of a first draft prepared by Gokilavani Muthusami as a follow up of the Asia Europe Youth Voluntary Exchange (AEYVE) 2005.

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tous différents
tous égaux



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PREFACE

**The only thing that will never change ,
is that everything is always changing.**

Le Yi King

The publication that lies before you was produced by the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service. It is a product of several moments of reflections during CCIVS activities, starting with the General Conference in Kenya 2004, and was initially a follow-up of the Asia Europe Youth Volunteer Exchange AEYVE 2005 on cultural diversity.

CCIVS created this module on the basis of its own longstanding tradition and experience in international voluntary service. The inspiration to address the issue of cultural diversity naturally came out of this experience, and the general public this module aims at is people working in the international voluntary service movement. The manual is therefore firstly geared at coordinators of projects who will be in a position to implement the suggested exercises.

What triggers intercultural learning?

Over the years a number of observations have led us to believe that it is necessary to re-define our approach to cultural diversity and to define more clearly what it takes to trigger a process of intercultural learning capable of durably changing the vision on the world of those who pass through our projects.

Of course the effect of a project on a person's life also depends on the experience and personality of the volunteer before he or she engages in it. It is however important to realise that a workcamp or any other youth exchange project represents a real chance to influence a young person's outlook on life and changes some of his / her perceptions from then on.

This module is meant to help coordinators make their project as noteworthy as possible in the biography of the participants. Our aim is to make them live the volunteer project as a 'domino' or 'turning point' experience. Let us also not forget that a truly successful project will also leave an impact on the ideas and perceptions of the host community which was in touch with the volunteers.

International volunteer projects do make a difference

The reason why we choose international voluntary service projects as a place to promote this point of view is based on a strong belief that they can make a difference. We do not overestimate the number of people we reach as a movement, but an international voluntary service project can be a very intense social learning experience. In the case of a workcamp a group of people from different parts of the world work and live together for two or three weeks, 24 hours a day, which brings them to closely



From September 2002 to July 2005, a study was conducted on the (long-term) impact of voluntary service by the psychology department of the Regensburg University. It studied the long-term effects after six years on the participants, the field of experience and activities addressed by the project, the process that leads to long-term effects, the relevance of these processes in developmental psychology, the biographical integration of the project and the difference between the various programmes. The programmes varied from international voluntary service to exchanges of school students.

The outcome was that a voluntary service project can lead to one of the following forms of experience:

- 'nice to have' (no noteworthy traces in biography, a nice experience),
- 'mosaic' (the experience contributes to a certain personal development together with other events),
- 'domino' (the exchange experience is a trigger for a string of follow-up events and activities), or
- 'turning point' (the experience forms a turning point in the persons biography, making him or her break out of the habitual structures).

The outcome of the study also states that the experience was valued as an important intercultural learning experience by the people that had followed a preparation to the project.

(For more information, view the PowerPoint presentation in menu 'Extra's')

experience the others and the cultures they bring with them. [listen to 'Indonesian.mp3' in 'Extra's'] This provides an enormous chance to draw the attention of young people on issues they would not necessarily have reflected about under other circumstances. Living an intercultural experience at the same time through the very group life and common project, the reflection unfolds all its sense and can effectively influence the participants' vision on the world.

On the other hand, we generally believe that the approach on cultural diversity and the non-formal educational methods that are put together out of our experience of working in the international field can contribute to the development of a wider scope of projects.

Besides the actual coordinators of the projects, we believe the module can be useful for any stakeholder of a voluntary service project from the staff, board members and active volunteers of an organisation to the local hosts.

Furthermore, the module can be used in any other project concerning youth, non-formal education and/or intercultural learning.

Cherishing tradition while embracing modernity

The module tries to show that it is possible (and necessary) to cherish heritage and tradition while embracing mixity, modernity and pluralism, based on the recognition of one universal human condition.

Acknowledging the net of relations, experiences and heritage every one of us carries, allows to make conscious choices and to leave the cosy security provided by a lifestyle guided by what “one” has always done. As Leopold Sédar Senghor put it “you need to know your own background in order to open to the other”.

We hope this text will contribute to an open-minded vision of the world based on respect for diversity and plurality. The idea is not to elaborate a new scientific world development theory, but to more effectively seize the potential for intercultural learning during a project of international voluntary service. The notions de-

What are culture, cultural diversity and intercultural learning?

‘Culture’ is a highly discussed and even disputed concept. It has lots of meanings in society, but also in social science. In social science, it is mostly studied by anthropologists and sociologists of culture.

Generally, culture can have two different meanings. On the one hand, it means everything that has to do with artistic productions, from paintings to theatre and music. On the other hand, it can mean the habits, knowledge, values, beliefs, etc. that shape the daily life of every single person and group.

The second meaning is the one we are talking about in this module. Our main idea of culture is not static or frozen; we conceive it as being in perpetual evolution and dynamic. It is based on the definition by UNESCO:

‘**Culture** should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group. .[I]t encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (preamble, UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity)’

Our idea of Cultural diversity is also based on the definition by UNESCO and will be further explained in chapter 2:

‘**Cultural diversity** is the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind as a source of exchange, innovation and creativity (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity)’

Intercultural learning is the deep understanding in practice (while interacting with others) of cultural diversity.



veloped in this module on “identity”, “culture”, “mixity”, “stereotypes”, etc, might influence the approach of the project coordinators so that they can promote the ‘openness’ of ‘their’ participants during a project.

Living an intercultural experience

Looking at it from a distance today, it is maybe the rhythm that takes you the most but I do not know if it is really for us to judge, I had the impression I was living this stay in a second state of mind, I do not think I was the same person as I am here, losing all 'normal' meals we eat on a daily basis makes us very different.

Evaluation by a French volunteer on a workcamp by FAGAD Togo, sending organisation Concordia France

You learn a lot about yourself and your culture while remarking the resemblances between European cultures, which we learned during the discussions with one another and cultural evenings (the representatives of every nationality have presented their country by talking about the geography, history, economy, culture, etc.)... To conclude, workcamps are a very strong human experience and a chance to discover a country and its inhabitant, while doing a useful project.

Evaluation by a French volunteer at the KVDA Gazhi primary School project in Kenya in August 2005, sending organisation Concordia France



International Voluntary Service Projects

This module is written by CCIVS and its member organisations. Their main activity is to organise international voluntary service projects.

International voluntary service projects are international encounters of mostly (but not only!) young people from different countries, during which they live together and learn about each other, each other's culture and local culture in a non-formal way. During this period, they offer their time, energy and effort to a project of benefit to a community.

CCIVS (the Co-ordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service) is a global network of independent voluntary organisations, set up by UNESCO in 1948 to co-ordinate the activities of those organisations worldwide. It has about 350 member organisations and branches of international member organisations in over 100 countries, with which they reach about 100 000 people with their projects every year.

The projects are either short-term group projects of about two to three weeks (also called 'workcamps') or long-term (generally speaking) individual projects of several months to several years.

In this module, we focus mostly on short-term projects because they provide a group of people from various backgrounds. On the other hand, it can be used in most of the activities of organisations that set up exchanges of groups of people with various backgrounds, even if they are not specifically aimed at voluntary service or youth.

INTRODUCTION.

Where beast meets West

On the tourist beaches of Turkey, young women flirt and frolic — but go further inland, and a mere glance in the direction of a man can mean death. As Turkey edges towards membership of Europe and western equal rights, Christine Toomey reports on the violent clash of East and West, and the deadly social divide it is leaving in its wake

(The Sunday Times, May 14, 2006)

These and other examples are outcomes of the most common approach to identity, based on the idea that identity is defined by a fixed set of traits that make up a person, which is defined by the group that this person belongs to. The group can for example be ethnical, national, or religious. According to this approach to identity these groups have had a 'pure' form once, but have been subject to dilution and pollution ever since, and this process has been speeded up since the beginning of globalisation.

Within this module, we would like to provide another notion of identity and culture. This is based on a different vision of globalisation and world politics, which postulates continuity in the mixing and cross fertilisation of groups of people and regions, which has always constituted one of the strongest triggers of development.

In this publication, you will find ways of promoting cultural diversity. The basic idea of the module is to promote respect, tolerance and understanding for different ways of doing and thinking based on a universal ground defined by the Human Rights. The challenge is to find the balance between the specific and the universal. We do not defend a cultural relativism where everything is vague and nothing can be seized, where every ancient practice can be justified by cultural diversity and change refused in the name of a static vision of culture. We have a vision of the world, which is dynamic and open for change while cherishing the masterpieces of culture and ways of life transmitted over centuries; a world where the particularities are in a fruitful dialogue and where every person has the right to live in dignity according to the life choices he or she wants to make. One of the major ideas of the module is that there are no recipes to understand the world and that the world cannot be described in fixed or static terms. The key to comprehension is observation and the acceptance of the fact that whatever is generally true for a given continent, country, region, gender, religion, profession etc. will turn into its own mix within a given individual. This will change over time depending on the way the different influences mix. Just as individuals can not be defined once and for all as the product of the country they live in, the country itself must be perceived like a living and thus evolving entity.

This module is meant to introduce reflections that are universally relevant in different socio-cultural contexts. It is about the way to

comprehend cultures, the kind of reflections one should go through before reaching any conclusion, the kind of atmosphere that is more likely than another to open people for true dialogue. The idea and reflections are therefore universal, while the context and methods are particular.

We believe that the issues raised in the module are not only relevant because they increase the intercultural capacity of the young (and not so young) people who will be influenced by the reflections developed – they are relevant because they are at the heart of many misunderstandings and even armed conflict on the globe in the recent years. Ever since the fall of the twin towers simplistic rhetoric has increased, the idea of incompatible, clearly separated homogeneous cultures has slowly made its way into the media and minds¹. This module also wants to be an anti-dote to simplistic thinking, insisting on the possibility and necessity for dialogue among people no matter what background they come from, or to say it with the ever-so-relevant preamble of UNESCO's Constitution:

**Since wars begin in the minds of men,
it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be
constructed être élevées les défenses de la paix".**



¹ We do not think the fall of the twin towers on the 11th of September is the beginning of simplistic rhetoric. This rhetoric has always existed. One of the worst examples is the nazi anti-Jew, communist, gay and gypsy propaganda. Other examples are the American anti-communist and the Soviet anti-capitalist rhetoric during the cold war, the Rwandese genocide of 1994 and the wars in former Yugoslavia.

The events of September 11, 2001 have put the world in a fake feeling of an even different opposition, that of the Westerners against the Muslims, resulting in a one-sided rhetoric and followed by various violent incidents and military interventions. Belonging to Islam has become a powerful identification means for some youth seeking clear and strong markers, which they do not find in a world they consider hostile to the achievement of the life choices they made. We think it is highly dangerous to react to such a complex phenomenon with a simplistic discourse that reduces the reflection down to a religious phenomenon. This discourse can only worsen the youth's feeling of being in front of a global conspiracy created by political and economical powers of the globe against a part of the world population, and thus reinforce the feeling of exclusion.

This module is meant for the coordinators of international voluntary service projects. A project coordinator is a person assigned by the organisation that implemented an international voluntary project to coordinate the activities and dynamics of the group of volunteers. It is the coordinator's responsibility to adapt the proposed exercises to the specificities of his or her project depending on the level of trust, proximity and any cultural taboos present in the group. Each exercise is therefore accompanied by an icon specifying some items to keep in mind when choosing to use it.

The first chapter starts with a reflection on intercultural communication. The second chapter is a comprehensible outline of our approach to cultural diversity. Chapter three will make a link between this approach and workcamp reality. Chapter four explains how to use the module and chapter five provides some exercises proposed to be used in a workcamp. Chapter six is a literature list and in the last chapter you can see how you can contribute to this module.

This module doesn't necessarily seek to propose another theory on culture and intercultural learning. It provides you with another approach of looking at cultural diversity, based on a vision of culture that is heterogeneous and fluid. But most of all, it seeks to provide you with a number of ideas on what takes place in international voluntary service projects and possible methods to accompany the intercultural learning process in your project.

The 'contact myth' and 'ICL'

The objective of voluntary service is not to give unilateral aid, but to facilitate an exchange and transfer of knowledge, experience and expertise in both directions while working on a work project that is useful for the local community.

International voluntary projects have been used as a tool to foster intercultural learning, reconciliation and dialogue among cultures ever since the 1920s. In the aftermath of WWI and later WWII the simple fact of bringing together people of different origin and nationality was a revolutionary way to trigger a learning experience.

Nowadays, though, the situation has changed. Despite the growing potential for contacts between people of different origins and backgrounds, the level of understanding amongst the different cultures in the world remains insufficient and provokes conflict.

Still, the idea exists that the simple encounter of people from various backgrounds and cultures necessarily implies intercultural learning. This 'contact myth' can be confronted with the notion that it is possible that processes of intercultural learning develop automatically, but that such learning processes certainly don't just have positive effects. Prejudices and stereotypes may as well be reinforced or aroused. (SCI coordinating together 2000, 98)

That is why we have to do something to promote positive intercultural learning. A lot of others have done this before (...) A whole 'community' of trainers training people in 'ICL' (intercultural learning) has come up. ICL has become what is 'world peace' in the Miss World competition.

Intercultural learning should be subject, object and situation adequate, but most of the time it is based on an understanding of culture that is static and homogenising. Besides, it is almost always based on a certain cultural reality, which has nothing to do with the cultural reality in which the learning process is taking place.

(Titley, Gavan 2005, 9)



CHAPTER 1

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

As already stated in the introduction, this module presents a vision of cultural diversity, which promotes awareness, respect and understanding for ways of doing, thinking and being that are different from one to the other and based on a universal ground defined by the Human Rights.

Before discussing the concept any further we would like to take a few lines to focus on the first potential obstacle in intercultural communication: the message itself! Messages can be verbal and non-verbal, they can be written or in another audio or visual form. Before reflecting about the content of a statement, the very delivery of the message represents numerous potential misunderstandings.

In order to be able to separate **'what'** is said from **'how'** it is said, one needs a high capacity for communication in general. In order to understand **'what'** is said and **'why'** it is said the way it is said intercultural and interpersonal capacity is required. The mechanism to cope with these messages is intercultural capacity. Intercultural capacity is the deep understanding in practice (while interacting with others) of cultural diversity. While communicating, people learn about each other's backgrounds, history, values, and while communicating, people rely on pre-conceived ideas about each other.

Why communicate?

Spontaneously one would think that communication is about the transmission of information such as “I’m hungry”, “tomorrow the weather will be cloudy” or whatever; but then think of what a mother would say to a child when it has slightly hurt itself, think of what lovers whisper into each other’s ears, think of what one says to people who have achieved something or who are sad or who need to be motivated, etc. In fact you find that a lot of communication is not about the transmission of information but about the expression of an emotion (compassion, consolation, love, empathy, pride, acknowledgment and so on) and the affirmation of roles and relations with each other. Depending on the situation, the degree of information transmitted can even be negligibly low.

Verbal and non-verbal communication

Verbal communication is understood as the exchange of spoken or written words. Language carries a part of people’s identity, be it through the use of national languages, dialects, different accents or the use of vocabulary, the formulation of sentences or a special jargon. We can deduct a lot of information about the likely origin, received level of education and the kinds of people and places the person regularly meets from looking at the language that he or she uses.

Non-verbal communication is less recognised as a proper means of communication but carries many meaningful messages one needs to analyse in order to fully comprehend the given context of a conversation. We communicate in the way we pose our body during a conversation, in the way we shake

someone’s hand as a greeting, in the expression on our face, in the distance we establish between us and others while speaking, etc. We are all familiar with the differences in greetings in different cultures, ranging from physically distant bowing to hand shaking and cheek kissing. You may also have noticed that in some cultures eye contact is seen as a sign of respect while in others it is important to avoid eye contact to show submission. (Children may be asked to look their parents/ teachers in the eyes when they are being scolded at to show that they have understood and agree while in other places they are supposed to look at their feet to show that they respect authority and obey). Numerous other examples could be given on different ways of using the body to communicate.

Non verbal communication can transmit information about the state of mind of a person (fascinated, bored, scared, sceptical, relaxed, etc.) and the cultural traditions the person was brought up with (how to express respect for age or authority physically, etc.).





Written texts and oral traditions.

The importance of written texts and oral transmission varies from one culture to another. In countries in which oral transmission plays an important role the tradition of story telling is very developed. (Think of such famous places as Jamaa al-Fnaa in Marrakech with its traditional storytellers, which is recognised as a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity²). People from rather “oral” countries tend to rely less on written sources of information in their daily lives than people from countries where written sources have historically played an important role. Simplifying things you will find that people from rather “oral” countries are more inclined to get information by asking others (to find their way, to find out about something) than people from the “cultures of writing” who will be more inclined to refer to documents such as info sheets, maps or web sites to find the information they are looking for. Of course the strategy to find information also depends on the accessibility of information on written supports in the countries in question (how easy it is to access internet, how exposed to it people are, and how familiar they are with using it). As with all the other questions related to intercultural issues you will obviously also find that the differences are not necessarily determined by the country of origin of the person in question but also by his or her exposure to education, rural or urban background, age, etc.

² For a full list of cultural practices and spaces recognized by UNESCO please consult: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/intangible-heritage/index.htm>



Direct or indirect

Communication takes place directly (in direct conversation) and indirectly (in books, in the media, on the internet, etc.). Indirect communication is slower and less interactive than direct communication. The potential for misunderstandings is high in both types of communication: in direct communication the expression and wording is often less precise and more spontaneous and the message may be altered because of the limited vocabulary of a speaker if the conversation is conducted in a foreign language. At the same time the possibility to ask direct questions if things are not clear can help the understanding and non-verbal elements supply additional information about the message. In indirect communication these additional sources of information are absent but the communication itself is generally more elaborated and the information more precise. In case of a foreign language the “receiver” of the message is more likely to use a dictionary if the message is written than if the new word appears in a conversation.



High and low context

The way communication is seen varies from one culture to another. As explained above communication is not only about the transmission of information but also about the transmission of emotions. Moreover communication is a way to determine the relation between people in a society. Communication is a way to express the place one occupies in relation to others. You do not speak in the same way to your professor or employer as to your parents or to your partner. Some cultures use more sophisticated systems than others to express such societal differ-

ences through differences in communication: in many languages you have a more formal and a more intimate way to address people (vous / tu; Sie / Du), in others you use different forms depending whether you are addressing a man or a woman (as it is the case in Japanese). Non verbal communication is also very important in expressing the status of a speaker: the distance between speakers, the eye and body contacts and the whole posture are indicators for the status difference that depend from one culture to another.

Edward T. Hall speaks about high and low context countries³. High context countries are countries where the social relations between people are very tightly knit and people are expected to fulfil the roles society foresees for them. Many elements need to be taken into account when communicating: what is the status of the speaker, how respectful do you have to be when speaking (can you openly contradict that kind of person?), how does one traditionally address someone of his/her position, etc. The belonging to a community and the collective needs tend to have a very high importance in high context cultures. You will find that

³ Edward T. and Mildred Reed Hall

Regardons un petit exemple illustrant ce que nous disons :

Conversation entre deux personnes venant d'un "pays à contexte bas" :

A : Salut, comment vas-tu ?

B : Bien, merci, et toi ?

A : Bien. J'ai une idée pour ce soir. Si on allait au cinéma ?

B : Je préférerais aller au restaurant.

A : Hum, j'aime vraiment ce film et c'est le dernier jour qu'il passe, on peut aller au restaurant tous les jours...

B : Bon, très bien, je n'aime pas du tout ce film mais pourquoi tu ne vas pas au cinéma tout seul et on se retrouve après et on va au restaurant ensemble ?

B : OK, ça me semble bien, alors on se retrouve à 23:00 devant le cinéma.

Conversation entre deux personnes venant d'un "pays à contexte haut" :

C : Bonsoir, comment allez-vous ?

D : Je vais bien, merci beaucoup. Comment va votre famille ?

C : Bien, merci, et votre famille ?

D : Ils vont tous très bien, merci beaucoup.

C : Avez-vous une idée de ce que nous pourrions faire ce soir ?

D : Que souhaiteriez-vous faire ?

C : Oh, je ne sais pas. Avez-vous une idée ?

D : Eh bien, j'ai entendu qu'il y avait un spectacle en ville ce soir.

C : Hum, souhaitez-vous vous y rendre ?

D : Et vous ? Qu'en pensez-vous ?

C : Et pourquoi pas ? Cela semble intéressant.

D : Je pense que c'est un très bon groupe. Je vous appellerai plus tard afin que nous convenions d'un endroit où nous retrouver.

C : D'accord, j'attendrai donc votre appel. A tout à l'heure.

D : D'accord, à tout à l'heure.

La différence entre les deux cas vient de ce que les interlocuteurs du second cas essaient de toujours "laisser la porte ouverte" pour que l'autre exprime sa préférence, de façon à ne rien imposer à l'autre (il serait impoli de refuser une proposition concrète). Le sens du compromis est très fort car il est plus important de trouver une solution qui soit bonne pour tous que de satisfaire les besoins individuels. Dans le premier cas, il est parfaitement acceptable de dire clairement ce que l'on préfère et de trouver une solution qui convienne le mieux possible aux deux, même si cela implique de se séparer pendant un moment. Cette solution n'est pas perçue comme un échec mais comme la façon optimale de trouver un maximum de satisfaction pour les deux parties, et donc une bonne solution.

Les deux systèmes fonctionnent bien jusqu'à ce que des interlocuteurs de contextes haut et bas communiquent entre eux. Vous pouvez facilement comprendre pourquoi A peut se sentir frustré du manque de clarté de D, et pourquoi C peut se sentir frustré de la façon dont B impose ses propositions...

En conclusion il est important de retenir qu'aucune des façons de communiquer n'est meilleure ou plus efficace que l'autre. Chaque conversation répond à des besoins de communication spécifique et ne priorise pas les objectifs de la conversation de la même manière : alors que dans le premier cas le résultat concret et la satisfaction maximale des désirs de chaque individu sont priorités, c'est le consensus et le compromis et l'affirmation du respect pour le choix de l'autre qui priment dans le deuxième cas. C'est seulement quand les buts de communication des orateurs diffèrent que les uns peuvent avoir l'impression de mieux communiquer que les autres et la porte est ouverte à moult malentendus s'ils n'arrivent pas à comprendre d'où viennent leurs différences (je veux un résultat concret alors que toi tu bavarde seulement ou bien : je veux te montrer que je te respecte alors que toi, tu veux m'imposer ton choix...).

greetings can be quite complex: they serve to establish a friendly atmosphere, to express the concern about the other as an individual but also to affirm the links that bind the other to the community.

In low context countries communication can be more direct and pragmatic: clarity of the message is an objective in itself. It is acceptable to clearly say 'no' even to someone who is higher placed if it is the correct answer to a question or request. Social relations are also present but less codified and the position in society does not necessarily dictate the way you address people who are superior in terms of status. In low context countries it is more likely for people to use an informal way of addressing each other and individuality tends to be quite highly valued. Greetings are often reduced to a minimum especially in a context of the spoken word.

The typical misunderstanding you may have already encountered in the past between low and high context speakers is the answer given to the question "Can you help me with..., can you take me to... can you find out if..." asked by a low context person. It is unlikely and would be very impolite for the high context person to just say "No, I don't know/can't...because...". The answer will most likely be very affirmative ("yes, of course, don't worry at all...") even if the high context speaker knows perfectly well that there are very few chances that he will find out/ be able to do... The true message he (or she) sends back to the low context speaker is: "You are my guest, I'm responsible for you and I will do everything to make you feel comfortable, I will try to somehow find a solution to your problem, please don't worry about a thing..."

Once again the differences cannot simply be expressed in terms of countries even though you can certainly find some

tendencies more present in some countries than in others. In addition rural areas and people belonging to the older generation tend to be higher context than urban areas and young people, no matter how you classify the country as such. In any case the distinction between high and low context is a scale with all kinds of intermediary situations in between, depending on the situational and personal context: how formal is the situation, is it a familiar or rather professional setting, and so on.

Non violent communication

Before closing the chapter on communication we would like to briefly focus on another aspect that can generate misunderstandings among speakers and readers: the attitude in communication. As stated above, a message contains certain elements (the "what") and is delivered in a certain way (the "how"). When you are tired, stressed and hungry you do not say things in the same way as when you have just fallen in love, eaten well and are relaxed.... If you are upset with the other you will use a different vocabulary to transmit your message from when you want to be as hospitable as possible.

The way you speak sometimes contains more information about how you feel and what you want to communicate than the actual words you are using. It is very useful to pay attention to the way something is said in order to fully understand the message transmitted. If you sense that your counterpart is nervous, frustrated and aggressive it can be useful to talk explicitly about his or her state of mind and to ask about the reasons of his or her frustration and anger, rather than reacting only to the words you hear (which may not be aggressive if taken alone). It can be liberating for the other to be provided

with an opportunity to say what is going wrong rather than just receiving a tense reaction to a tense statement... If you really want to find a solution to a delicate situation, it is useful to separate the “what” and the “how”. Like parents can disregard a child’s whining and shouting because the child is tired, you can choose to react to the reasons why a message is delivered in an unpleasant way rather than to the “form” of the message only. At the same time you can try to avoid wrapping your messages in an unpleasant packaging if your aim is to truly find a solution to a problem and not to be polemic only.

“One should present the truth to the other like an open coat, ready for him to slip into and not slap it around his ears like a wet rug.”⁴

We hope that you will find these reflections useful as guidance for communication in an intercultural setting. The idea of the module is not to predict how people will communicate in one place or another. If we focus so much on communication, it is mainly to alert you about the many pitfalls it contains and to sharpen your mind to think about the elements, which might help you to find the appropriate behaviour in a given situation and to understand why your counterpart speaks and behaves the way he or she does.



⁴ M. Frisch, Tagebuch 1966-1971. Frankfurt a. M., p. 30.

CHAPTER 2

OUR APPROACH

The 'common' approach

As already presented in the introduction, we wish to provide an approach to identity different from the one that is commonly used. This common approach (which we would like to put to question) can be written down as follows:

Identity is a fixed set of traits that make up a person, which is defined by the group that this person belongs to. The group can be ethnic ('Afro-American'),

national ('Japanese'), regional ('Western-European') or continental ('African'). These groups have had a 'pure' form once, but have been subject to dilution and pollution ever since, and this process has been speeded up since the beginning of globalisation.

This common approach can be challenged on the following points:

- * The homogeneity of groups (not all Africans are the same),
- * The feeling of belonging to one group only (reducing oneself to the national or ethnic identity),

- * The continuity of the group throughout history (some considered themselves to be 'Yugoslav' before identifying today with their specific ethnic identity as 'Serbs' or 'Bosnians' or 'Croats'),
- * The idea of homogenisation through globalisation (all cultures are starting to be like the Western ones), and
- * The notion of influences and changes "polluting" identities.



Our approach: Mixity is the key word

The approach on cultural diversity we would like to introduce and promote is a different one and is based on the comments that are listed above. It is based on the notion of heterogeneous cultures, held together by people with feelings of belonging, based on written or oral history and affected by globalisation.



Homogeneous or heterogeneous culture?

Our approach insists on the dynamic nature of culture (it changes all the time) and on the fact that it is always the result of different influences, whether it is on the level of the culture of an individual, a group or on a regional perspective. The keywords to understand this approach are therefore: **dynamic and multiple** as opposed to static and homogeneous.

Our understanding of cultural diversity is based on UNESCO's approach of the concept. According to the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity adopted by UNESCO in 2001, it is crucial to foster awareness of the added positive value of cultural diversity.

According to UNESCO, 'culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and (...) it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs' (preamble, Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity).

As with transmitting messages from one to the other, the transmission of knowledge, habits and ideas is subject to alteration over time. This is one way culture changes. Another is linked to

the fact that new people with different ideas become part of a culture, adding their ideas to it.

The notion of culture is fluid and refers to elements, which are (and have always been!) constantly subject to new influences from within the group as well as from the outside.

People growing up in a certain environment learn these kinds of aspects in a way that differs from people with other backgrounds.

Cultures are subject to a multiplicity of influences over time. This is evident in many spheres such as music, recipes, language, names of people and places, plastic arts, traditions, habits, which bear witness to the different influences they have been subject to over centuries.

Contrary to what can be read in history books and heard in politics, there has been no clear beginning or 'pure' state of a culture: Most nation-states have only been created in the last 200 years, with a long history of contacts, mixtures, and separations of groups of people which lead to its existence.

"National" languages, which are often so preciously kept, are also the result of the political will to define a common denominator for "their" people. Taking a close look, they are often nothing but a dialect which by chance was spoken by the ruling group at a crucial time and was then declared reference language for the whole territory (as it is the case in France for the language that was spoken in Ile de France, or in Spain where it is the language of the area around Madrid, Castilian, that was declared Spain official language in the 18th Century).

A multiplicity of influences: language

Language is one of the aspects on which people distinct one culture from another, 'us' from 'them'. Interesting enough, in language we can see an enormous multiplicity of influences from 'other' cultures. For example, take a look at the following sentence:

Last night, I sat on the sofa, drinking a soda while my friend was drinking a glass of strong alcohol that would make the average person drunk.

Did you know that the word 'sofa' is originally French and alcohol, soda and average are originally from Arabic?

Some more examples:

From French:	From Arabic:
Coup	chemistry
Courageous	cotton
Culture	Swahili
Dessert	sugar
Enemy	cafe
Hotel	giraffe
Property	mascara
Surgeon	troubadour

Exercise on mixity:

(More information on how to do the exercises can be found in chapter 5)

'The roots of language'

Feelings of belonging

Identity is the result of various influences. It is made up by a feeling of belonging to other (groups of) people and is therefore multiple and dynamic, based on interpretations of prejudices and stereotypes.

Human beings find comfort and security in the fact that they belong to a group with clearly defined limits based on beliefs and rules that are shared by the other members of the group. The transmitted traits of the group identity express this sense of belonging. Groups are never homogeneous or static. They evolve with the members who compose them.

Nationality and ethnicity are often put forward to determine which group a person belongs to (I am Tunisian, I am Ashanti, you are Roma, he is Greek, etc.). In daily practice though, it turns out that belongings are multiple and can be more or less relevant according to the situational context (I am Tunisian and a lawyer and a man and not a believer, etc.). Identity is formed through the interaction of the different groups any individual belongs to and therefore not two human beings are the same. Identity is formed over time by experience, alliances and a sense of belonging but also by the image others impose on an individual.

Football

A common example of the different layers of identity can be found in football. The supporters of a game associate and dissociate very easily with their sport's hero or heroic team: one day, a supporter can cheer for a team at local level, being totally against another team, while when the world cup comes up, he or she can happily cheer for someone who played in the team of 'the enemy', but now represents the national team.

It is crucial to recognise two ways of seeing culture: on the one hand, culture can be seen in a static, essentialist way (it has always been like this, we do it like this, they do it differently and we will always do it our way), meaning being only one nation, ethnic or religious group. On the other hand, culture can be seen as something processional, always changing over time and intermingling with and assimilating in other cultures.

Both ways of seeing culture are neither right nor wrong. The reality is that most people use both ways of seeing culture in their daily lives ('dual discursive competence', see Baumann (1999)). They switch between both, putting forward one or the other according to the situational context. Identities are multiple and dynamic, thus people are not obliged to live in homogeneous boxes.

In order to simplify the complexity of links which exist between people and in order to be able to describe collective phenomena, which no individual can know in proper details, stereotypes are used to describe the world.

Stereotypes help people categorise humanity. People are not blank paper sheets or empty computer hard discs. They learn during their whole lives and this experience makes them perceive the world in a particular way. This kind of 'outlook on life' also influences the way other people are seen.

Stereotypes are generalised prejudices (or 'pictures in the head'), held for true by one group of people about another. Every member of a group is supposed to be the same as the stereotype of the group, and, vice versa, an experience with one or several persons can result in a stereotype of everyone of the same group. In other words, as German you are supposed to love beer and football (even if you do not), and this also mean

saying that, for example, everyone from Malawi only walks bare-foot, because you have seen one person once doing it.

They can have a negative effect in giving people a fixed and static idea about others. On the other hand, they can help to render the world a bit more understandable, as they provide for a simplified way to categorise the world population. When considering any existing stereotype it must however be clear at all times that despite its potential "grain of truth" for the statistic medium of a group, it can never be directly applied to a specific individual member of the group.

Exercises on stereotypes

((More information on how to do the exercises can be found in chapter 5))

- The prejudice game
- Word image
- Lemons
- Stereodrawing
- Sculpture of violent situations
- Confronting our stereotypes
- It was only a joke



Vietnamese smiles, African wildlife and colourfulness, Dutch tolerance and the Tibet of the Americas.

Tourists are generally led by stereotypical images when choosing a destination for their holidays. Just look at some introductions to different Lonely Planets travel guides:

“Sadly known for its war, Vietnam possesses a unique and rich civilisation as well as spectacular country sides and its particularly friendly people” (Lonely Planet Vietnam (1996), French edition, 13 [Rendu tristement célèbre par la guerre, le Vietnam possède une civilisation unique et riche ainsi que des paysages spectaculaires, et son peuple est particulièrement hospitalier]).

”Travellers are drawn to East Africa by its incomparable wildlife and scenery. West Africa offers a real opportunity to experience the essence of Black African culture – the art, the music, the markets” (Lonely planet Central Africa (1994 [1989], 11)

“Amsterdam is a piece of art, a living monument in which the most beautiful architectural production of 17th and 18th Century Europe can be admired. It is also a city on top of social, cultural and economical development, and its famous tolerance gathers people, ideas and products, and allows them to grow” (Lonely Planet Amsterdam (1997), Fench edition , 7 [Amsterdam est une oeuvre d’art, un monument vivant dans lequel on peut admirer certaines des plus belles réalisations architecturales de l’Europe des XVII^{ème} et XVIII^{ème} siècles. C’est également une ville à la pointe de l’évolution sociale, culturelle et économique, dont la tolérance notoire rassemble les gens, les idées et les produits et leur permet de se développer.])

“Bolivia is the Tibet of the Americas – the highest and most isolated of the Latin American republics... With two major indigenous groups and several smaller ones, Bolivia is the most Indian country on the South American continent” (Lonely Planet Bolivia (1996 [1988]), 9).

The rewriting of history

Identity, in the accepted sense of today... [means that it] can be summed up with one element of identity. Whenever one feels that he is just this or that – just a Christian, just a Muslim, just a Serb, just a Croat, just... – whenever it is summed up in just one word, it automatically means that it is defined by opposition to somebody else, usually a neighbour. So it becomes a definition for war.

(Amin Maalouf, in interview with Christopher Lydon ‘the whole wide world’ episode six, 2003).

For a culture to exist, it has to be recognised by its members and by other groups. One of the main mechanisms in which this takes place is the transmission of the group’s history whether orally (through stories and songs) or with written means.

To make clear in what way one group differs from another, the group’s history (leading to the present state of being a group) is reduced to certain aspects of it, accentuating the ones that differ from other groups and disguising mutual influences. The history of a group is often told like a predetermined evolution towards the present situation, as if the territory, which later became a certain nation-state, had always been destined to once become a certain country.

In this way, cultures are commonly defined by opposition to other cultures or at least they are defined by fixing their limits and their needs without taking the limits and the needs of other groups much into account. The logic of opposition and limitation favours a sense of “us” and “them”, which can become a pretext for hostilities if the group feeling is exploited to defend the cause and the needs of the group against the cause and the needs of another group.



It is always interesting to look at the dates a country chooses as national holidays and the events they refer to in order to have an idea of the historic events it would like to reinforce in the collective memory of its inhabitants as corner stones of its identity and self definition.

Exercise on the rewriting of history:

(More information on how to do the exercises can be found in chapter 5)

Timeline of significant events

Inside / outside: values and human rights

An essential component of any culture is the existence of values. Values are deeply rooted ideas about the roles and worth of human beings, shared by a group of people. In the contemporary world, values are often put forward to reinforce an argument in politics. Politicians put very strongly forward so-called core values of their own cultures in order to discredit other cultures or to emphasise their incompatibility with their cultures⁵. As values can define norms and norms define laws, they necessarily have a political implication.

Values are the basis for human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as defined by the United Nations, outlines the internationally accepted basic values attributed to every single human being on the planet. The UDHR constitutes the “red line” not to be crossed when negotiat-

⁵ One example in the contemporary world is the discussion on the proposed Turkish membership of the European Union. It has ‘taken on the characteristics of national culture writ large: both Christian heritage and the legacy of Enlightenment secularism have been invoked as cultural fundaments for the imagined community; a Europe that displays little cohesion without this imagined Other’ (Tittley 2005, 14 note 18).

On July 7 2005, four suicide bombers detonated themselves in the London metro. According to Rowland Manthorpe, “[a] nation’s identity is formed, first and foremost, in the national memory. Memory is historical, of course, but, transient and partial, it is not history”.

The way we remember historical facts makes us act in a certain way. Manthorpe states that there were three events in history that could have lead the action by British politicians and society.

One is the events of September 11 2001. The discovery that the London bombers were British meant that any characterisation of the attacks as part of a wider war raised the possibility that any war might become a civil one. Because in July 2005, the chance of civil war was very real in Great Britain, this rhetoric could not be used.

Another historical event that could have been remembered was the Gordon riots of June 1780. The reason for these riots was the Commons’ refusal to repeal the Catholic Relief Act of 1778. More than 200 people were killed in the streets of London in this anti-catholic upraise. Politics in the middle of the first decade of the 21st century shares many similarities with those of 1780. The country was unsettled by a divisive foreign war: for Iraq 2003, read America 1775, that was far from universally supported.

Still, English politicians and media decided to remember another historical event, namely the London Blitz. During the Second World War, the Germans tried to conquer London, but were stopped in the East.

‘The rhetoric of the 2005 Blitz produced an appeal to an inclusive, multicultural British-ness. In Parliament on July 11, the day after National Commemoration Day had evoked the spirit of wartime Britain, Tony Blair showed how old stories could be used for new purposes: “Yesterday we celebrated the heroism of World War II including the civilian heroes of London’s blitz. Today what a different city London is – a city of many cultures, faiths and races, hardly recognisable from the London of 1945. So different and yet, in the face of this attack, there is something wonderfully familiar in the confident spirit which moves through the city, enabling it to take the blow but still not flinch from reasserting its will to triumph over adversity. Britain may be different today but the coming together is still the same”.

By choosing to remember the London Blitz, and not September 11 and the war in Iraq or the Gordon riots, the Labour government was able to pass off an essentially domestic threat as a foreign one.

The fact that the telling of history can be manipulated does not only seem as a threat to Manthorpe. It also shows us that “we are not stuck with the past”. The past can be told in different kinds of ways, shapes our identity and our actions. Recognising this helps us realise that it is possible to choose our own identity, actions and destiny.

(Manthorpe, July 1 2006)

ing values and behaviours. The respect for specific cultural practices ends where they interfere with the basic and universal rights of all humans outlined in the declaration. It is important to insist on the relevance of this limit in order not to let cultural diversity become an excuse for any abusive practice hurting human dignity in the name of culture.

It is useful to find out which basic, deeply rooted ideas people from different cultures share. These ideas might be called basic values. These basic values provide a common ground for people from different cultures to live together. For different groups of people to live in peace, there must be unity in diversity.

The challenge is to discuss about the universality of values and human rights in a neutral way. Quite often, as an outsider accusing the bearers of a culture, it is supposedly impossible to really understand the culture. Besides, being in exile and commenting on your country or culture of origin, you are in danger of being accused of having lost your roots. Commenting on a culture while living it (being inside), there is a possibility of being considered a traitor by those who do not want to put anything into question.

Discussion about culture and values is always delicate and touches on intimate convictions, it can only be successful if it is conducted with enormous respect for the beliefs and convictions of those having grown up with it.

Exercises on values:

(More information on how to do the exercises can be found in chapter 5)

- Strengthened emotions
- Appreciative inquiry
- Trading values

Sculpture of violent situations
It was only a joke
Abigail



Globalisation = homogenisation?

Another contemporary subject that has to do with cultural diversity is globalisation. Globalisation is often portrayed as a tendency that homogenises all cultures and aligns them on the model of the western world.

In order for a peaceful dialogue to exist between countries and peoples, it is important to find a balance between the need to preserve one's own specificity and the need to evolve and embrace new influences. One of the main obstacles to reach this balance is that the new influences come more often from the Western countries than anywhere else and are thus perceived as a prolongation of a history of oppression and colonisation. In discussions between people from industrialised countries and former colonies there is often an implicit sense of superiority and inferiority that is present and perverts their relations to some extent. Whatever influence the industrialised countries globally had (ways of thinking and doing, language, products, administrative systems, etc.) is generally overvalued (or refused as a counter reaction by those who feel humiliated by their presence) and whatever comes from the former colonies (ways of thinking and doing, artistic and culinary influences, language, etc.) is not valued to the extent it deserves (or over-praised by the politically correct).

It is essential for the Western countries to acknowledge today the multitude of influences their cultures have been subject to, coming from the 'South' and 'East' through trade, slavery, colonisation and migration and without excluding episodes of past op-

pression. Radical movements will otherwise occupy the field by suggesting closure and community oriented methods as the appropriate answer to globalisation and cross-influences. Protecting one's own culture in this context means to actively determine which changes to implement and to positively live the new influences rather than being only a passive subject of globalisation. It is possible to protect and value one's culture, and progress towards new horizons at the same time.

The notion of 'multiple identities' is useful to define the possibility to belong to and identify with several even contradictory groups or characteristics at the same time. While recognising all the different parts of identity, you will not feel lost if one of those parts is lost, and you will not feel personally under attack if one of these parts is under attack. Being able to associate with and dissociate from different realities can be a basis for stability.

International voluntary service projects, as organised by CCIVS member organisations, can have a positive influence in furthering another vision of diversity and help ensure harmonious interaction amongst people and groups. They can help foster a deeper understanding of the concept of cultural diversity beyond easy stereotypes.

An international voluntary project can be a 'laboratory' of global society, bringing people from different cultures together in an intense learning experience. It is important to do everything possible for the learning experience to reach its full potential.





Further reading:

The following publications inspired us for the development of our approach on cultural diversity and can be useful background material for anyone who wants to go deeper into the subject.

On identity

Maalouf, Amin (1998)

Les identités meurtrières. (On Identity, violence and the need to belong, 2000) Editions Grasset & Fasquelle.

According to Amin Maalouf, identity in the accepted sense of today is identity that can be summed up with just one element of it (just a Christian, just a Muslim, just a Serb, just a Croat). Whenever identity is summed up in just one word, it automatically means that it is defined by opposition to somebody else, usually a neighbour. He stresses that identity is always multiple and this should be recognised to avoid hostilities.

UNESCO universal declaration on cultural diversity

In 2001, the declaration on cultural diversity is adopted by all the member states of UNESCO. “The Declaration aims both to preserve cultural diversity as a living, and thus renewable treasure, that must not be perceived as being unchanging heritage but as a process guaranteeing the survival of humanity; and to prevent segregation and fundamentalism which, in the name of cultural differences, would sanctify those differences and so counter the message of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Universal Declaration makes it clear that each individual must acknowledge not only otherness in all its forms but also the plurality of his or her own identity, within societies that are themselves plural” (Matsuura in Universal Declaration on cultural diversity, 3).

On stereotypes

Leeds, Christopher (1996)

Stereotypes, national identities, values and Europeans. Presented during the SIETAR congress in the Gasteig Cultural Centre Munich in 1996, 1st June.

With his presentation, Leeds gives an overview of the concept ‘stereotype’ in social psychology from the 1950s on. One known definition of ‘stereotypes’ is found by Walter Lippmann. He applied the word to human thought processes. The real environment was too complex for direct acquaintance, so people create a map of objective reality, in the form of a series of stereotypes. Such ‘pictures in our heads’ clarify people’s ability to cope with social reality. However they will prove erroneous if used wrongly.

Stereotypes can roughly be interpreted in two ways; firstly, as undesirable phenomena and secondly, as a natural cognitive process. In the first interpretation, stereotypes stop a person from understanding another, because it transmits an image of the other that is not reality. To really get to know someone with another culture implies forgetting about stereotypes all along. The second interpretation centres on the idea that reality is not something ‘objective’ or concrete. Reality is a world full of potential sensual impressions, which nobody can grasp in its totality. A normal person would go crazy if all these impressions would consciously reach our mind. Because of that, we have to ‘select’ among them. The individual constructs a social reality, which he deems to be real, based on his own perspective and experience. In this way, stereotypes are functional, as they can be devices for dealing with everyday life in providing ‘boxes’ for interpretation. These ‘boxes’ are not static and can change, though, because they are closely linked to experience, which might change the individual’s perception accordingly.

On the rewriting of history

Anderson, Benedict (2003 [1983])

Imagined communities. London, New York, Verso.

'A nation is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (Anderson 2003 [1983], 6). This phrase summarises the main idea of Anderson's book on nationalism. According to him, nation-states and nationalism are a product of the imaginings of people. Influenced by their leaders, people imagine themselves to be part of a group of people they do not personally know but who are supposed to share the same background in the form of historical writings, religion and language. The aspects of this background are most of the times influenced and manipulated by their leaders.

Baumann, Gerd (1999)

The Multicultural Riddle. Rethinking national, ethnic, and religious identities. London, Routledge.

This book explores the Western popular and scientific conceptions of multiculturalism. Baumann sees a multicultural triangle with three corners of power – nation, ethnicity and religion – that define the conception of culture. He suggests that theories and practice of multiculturalism should not just focus on one of the corners and be essentialist in thinking about culture. He recognises two ways of seeing culture, on the one hand, a popular, essentialist way, and on the other hand, a view that is popular with scientist, seeing a processional culture, always changing over time. Most people use both of them in their daily lives, which he calls 'dual discursive competence'. They switch between both, putting forward both of them, putting forward one or the other, according to the situational context.

On Globalisation

CCIVS globalisation kit

The kit is an educational tool proposing different views on globalisation and several tools (exercises) to start discussions on the topic in all the projects international voluntary service organisations undertake. "There is no such thing within CCIVS as a "globalisation theory", at the latest a number of related opinions, articles, publications, etc. It is rather seen as a channel through which the ideas circulating within the movement can merge into a given space and confront each other. The Kit is a means for everyone to express or make their own opinion on globalisation and CCIVS member organisations as a whole can develop a common approach of the issue".

You can download the globalisation kit by following this link:

<http://www.unesco.org/ccivs/New-SiteCCSVI/CcivsOther/edu-techmaterial.htm>



CHAPTER 3

WHAT DOES THIS CONCRETELY MEAN FOR AN INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE PROJECT?

This paragraph is based on texts that were written by the different editing teams that reviewed the module during the CCIVS cultural diversity seminar in April 2006.

In this chapter, you will find how the different parts of our approach can be implemented in an international voluntary project setting. The chapter is meant to redirect your attention to the dynamics in and background of a group.

The chapter speaks about identity, stereotypes, globalisation and values, and contains warnings that have to be taken into account when doing the exercises that are mentioned in chapter five.

Before going into more specificity about the different subjects, it is important to note that these issues can be sensitive ones to talk about. They touch people's strongest ideas about themselves, which means that while talking about these ideas, strong feelings and emotions can be provoked. Remember that an international voluntary service project can be a successful intercultural learning experience if the experience goes somewhat 'deeper' than learning about each other's food and clothing habits. It can be a 'free place' of cultural interaction. This chapter is about putting our approach 'into action'. More specific ways of introducing the different subjects can be found in chapter 4 and should be taken into account to make the discussions on these sensible subjects a success.



Identity

Learning something about different cultures is especially effective in learning about each other's identities. Identities are constructed by different influences and define a feeling of belonging to one or several groups. In learning about identities, one thus learns how culture gets incorporated. In other words, by learning about the culture of a person, one learns about the culture of a group or several ones. The way the exercises are constructed focuses on the multiplicity of belonging. The idea is to take the

volunteers out of unilateral and homogeneous definitions of who they are and consequently of the way they look at others.

When introducing the topic in international voluntary service projects though, keep in mind that people care a lot about their identity. It is something that is very dear to a person. Because of that, try to bring out discussion about identities in an easygoing way by creating the right atmosphere (see also chapter 4 on 'neutral spaces').

The basic condition for people to feel free to speak about their identity is that there is a feeling of trust and equality in the group. The group co-ordinator must work towards such an atmosphere. If that is not the case one could on the contrary withdraw into his/her identity as a protecting shell and vigorously defend the notion of anything associated with it. In this situation, introducing exercises which challenge identities could actually be counterproductive. Still, if you think the group is ready for it, try to transcend possible borders by doing for example the "turning onion" exercise.

Reflect before using the easy way out by being too sensitive to the cultural restrictions that live within the participants. Participants can try to be nice in anticipating someone else's cultural restrictions which might not even exist. They could react to the others according to the stereotypical idea they have and which would not necessarily be true. The exercise can then turn out into a nice project experience without any conflicts, but it greatly diminishes the learning potential.

To summarise: in order to have successful discussions about identity in international volunteer projects, the coordinator should take the following advices and warnings into account:

- * Identity is very dear to most people: create a 'neutral space' to talk about it!
- * Do not be too sensitive to cultural restrictions. Use the 'free space' of intercultural exchange in the project.



Stereotypes

International voluntary service projects are not stereotype-free. People from different backgrounds have certain prejudices about each other when they first meet. The workcamp leader should facilitate the process of bringing the stereotypes forward in a positive way, allow people to voice and confront them in order to get over them. They can be useful as a ground to stand on in order to get to know somebody but they should not be allowed to block perception and become a limit.

Helping the group mix properly is an important part of exploiting stereotypes in a positive way. The forming of sub-groups according to religions, countries or regions can lead to the consolidation of stereotypes.

By making the participants face what is untrue or exaggerated in the stereotype it is possible to disclose the faultiness of such perceptions and introduce a different vision. A good way to do this is to unveil the historical origin of the stereotype if there is one, proving this way that stereotypes are often based on misconceptions or on facts that have changed in the course of time.

People who do not want to give up their stereotypes will see in others what they are expecting to see. Talking about stereotypes includes the risk of reinforcing such perceptions in a workcamp – for this reason it is necessary to be followed by a debriefing session that focuses on the individuality of each person in the group, doing justice to the diverse elements of her/his character.

Power relations also play an important role in stereotyping. In international voluntary service projects, it is important to reflect about the role this might play in the group. Similarly to what was said in the previous section on identity, some people might feel that they have to defend their 'real' culture vis-à-vis the general stereotype that exists about it. Besides, there sometimes is a specific power relation between the stereotypes on two different countries where the participants come from. For example, be aware of the ideas about the relation between the US and the Arab world and northern and southern countries (especially regarding ex-colonies and colonisers).

If someone states a stereotype that you or someone else finds 'racist', try to react in a non-violent way. Labelling someone as 'racist' and reacting to him or her in an aggressive way, makes the person feel uncomfortable and not willing to change his or her opinion (see also the first chapter on non violent communication).

Do not only take this into account in your own reactions, but also the reactions of the other participants.

When introducing an exercise or discussion on stereotypes, take the following comments into account:

- * Facilitate the process of bringing the stereotypes forward in a positive way, allow people to voice and confront them in order to get over them;
- * Help the group mix properly;
- * Unveil the background of the stereotypes;
- * Have a proper debrief of the exercise;
- * Reflect about the right timing. The group needs to be already consolidated and have a basic sense of trust in each other;
- * Exercises on stereotypes can sometimes prove to be insulting. People should not be asked to talk about their “personal” stereotypes but to talk about general stereotypes that exist in their countries;
- * Think of exercises focusing on positive aspects of the encounter of different people with different origins;
- * Exercises about stereotypes need to be followed by another exercise that stops people from focusing on national stereotypes, trying to find out who is the person ‘behind’ the stereotype.

Be aware of the stereotypical power relations between the countries of two or more participants and bring the subject up explicitly if necessary.

- * Try to react in a non-violent way and make sure that the other participants do the same thing.

The way to introduce an exercise on stereotypes will define its success: do not suggest talking about the truth or the pure state of a culture, rather about the generally existing feelings related to a culture. It is useful to mention that the exercise can help us understand better the external outlook to which we might be

confronted if we go to this or that country. The exercise then becomes a protection time during which some inform the others about the stereotypes related to them in their own countries, in order to warn them. It is not seen as an exercise during which we would be confronted to any bad things some think of the others, which necessarily creates a defensive feeling. This introduction also takes the heat and personal features out of the exercise as we are talking about stereotypes that “exist” in the country and not about what people think for themselves.

Exercises related to identity and to stereotypes are complementary as they focus on the specificity and the multiple belonging of every individual while placing him in a wider cultural context which is characterised by its stereotypes. It is very important to introduce these exercises together and insist on the issue that even though stereotypes and related discussions can uncover important information on everybody, none will ever be the typical representative of a given culture.

Values and human rights while implementing the project

In the last chapter we saw that values are deeply rooted ideas, shared by a group of people. Because they are deeply rooted ideas, they are very dear to them. This also counts for the participants of an international voluntary project. So, when discussing about values, always keep in mind that it is easy to hurt somebody. Try to avoid this.

Besides, values are used in politics to show the incompatibility of the own culture with the culture of the ‘other’. In a project, this can mean for example that the participants explain a misunderstanding or conflict by an incompatibility of values. They might say that their own value is totally different from the other participant’s, which can break the relation of intercultural learning.

In an international volunteer service project, watch out for people accusing one another of not having the 'right' values. Besides, note when you hear someone saying something like 'you will never understand why we think this is right, because you are not one of us' or 'you did not grow up in my situation'. If there are more people of one nationality or background in your project, pay attention to the community pressure that can be implemented within a group. You will notice that some people might change their speeches and behaviours depending on the presence (or not) of another person who belongs to the same culture (especially if it concerns a culture where the community is of great value and one is badly considered when showing off as an individual). There might be a pressure to abide by and do as the others from the same group, or to accuse an insider of being a traitor.

In general, try to discuss values in a neutral way. As with stereotypes, take the heat out of the debates: do not necessarily talk about 'personal' values, but about ones that are known to exist. The exercise 'trading values' can help in that.

To summarise and to keep in mind:

- * Try to break the idea of 'incompatibility of values' in a project, for example by making the participants find the similarities on the basis of their 'different' values;
- * Make people voice their values, recognise the similarities and differences;
- * Firstly, talk about general values that exist and then, if possible, get to personal ones. Touching people by talking about their values make them start reflecting about them, which might make them recognise that basic universal values exist.



A Workcamp as a microcosm

International voluntary service projects are microcosms of global society. As globalisation plays a role in the life of a lot of people and politics and economics of several countries are influenced by it, the project can be an interesting learning experience on the topic.

As we have seen above, cultural particularities can and should be protected while admitting change. At the beginning of a project, people should be made aware that it could be an opportunity to learn on intercultural issues: when you admit new influences, you do not become poorer but richer. In exercises and discussions, the cultural backgrounds of the participants should be valued. A coordinator should recognise if someone's cultural identity is under attack, and try to turn it into a positive learning experience. Remember what was said in chapter 2 (page ??) about the sense of superiority and inferiority which can be present in a discussion on globalisation because some people come from countries who rather export the kind of inventions and new technologies often associated to globalisation while others come from countries whose influences are less visible and valued. As a coordinator, do not try to impose your own view, but give the participants the possibility to understand everything in their own terms. The participants should find the answers to their own questions and reflections⁶.

In discussions about globalisation, the coordinator should take care that:

- * People are made aware that an international volunteer project can be an opportunity to learn on intercultural issues;
- * The cultural backgrounds of the participants are valued;
- * You recognise if someone's cultural identity is under attack;
- * You do not try to impose your view but give the possibility to understand everything in their terms.

⁶ For different views on globalisation, consult the CCIVS globalisation kit <http://www.unesco.org/ccivs/New-SiteCCSVI/CcivsOther/edu-techmaterial.htm>

CHAPTER 4

USING THE MODULE

This chapter is about who can use this module and how it can be used.

It starts with an explanation of who can use this module and what skills are needed, followed by how understanding of cultural diversity can be promoted in international voluntary service projects.

Who can use this module and what skills are needed?

In order to really use the potential of an international voluntary project to learn about each other's cultures and to learn to be 'open' to other realities, it is important to realise that this experience can be enhanced. *See also the explanation of the Re-*

gensburg study on the impact of voluntary service projects on the participants' lives in the PowerPoint presentation in 'Extras'.

Intercultural learning can be promoted by paying attention to what kind of learning process the participants of a project and the local population go through. Stress can -and preferably should- be put on this subject at various moments: during the preparation meetings, training for leaders, and evaluation meeting, and during the voluntary project itself. During training sessions, for example, a lot of culture simulation games are played. A project can be seen as the real version of such a game. The "debriefing session" of this experience (during a meeting after volunteers have returned) is very important and might help people turn their intercultural experience into something useful in their daily life. **Listen also AEYVE 05 – preparation in 'Extras'**

This module fixes on the project experience itself and is meant to help coordinators (or ‘leaders’) promote the understanding of cultural diversity in their group. Below you will find a list of publications that focus on other times when intercultural learning can be stressed (preparation sessions for volunteers, training for trainers, etc.):

- * *Intercultural learning T-Kit*, (2000), Council of Europe publishing. <http://www.training-youth.net>
- * CCIVS leader trainer handbook (1998) <http://www.unesco.org/ccivs/New-SiteCCSVI/CcivsOther/edu-techmaterial.htm>
- * SCI Games and Exercises (1995)
- * Alliance Trainers handbook (2006)

When looking at a workcamp setting, it is important to notice that besides some knowledge of cultural diversity, a workcamp leader needs a lot of other knowledge and skills.

These are some examples of the capacities (skills and awareness) that a workcamp leader should preferably have:

Skills that are recommended	Awareness of the following issues is required
* Debriefing and coordinating discussions	* Diversity
* Conflict management and mediation	* Identity
* motivation	* Anti-racism
* Project management	* Group dynamics
* Intercultural learning	* Youth
* Evaluation and assessment	* Social inclusion and exclusion
* People management	* Stereotypes
* Time management	* Equal opportunities
* Communication skills	* Non-violent communication
* Ability to speak the stated language of the workcamp	
* Creativity	

This module is not supposed to cover all these skills and knowledge (for these, one can have a look at the handbooks and toolboxes that are mentioned above). This module aims to enhance the coordinator’s role in promoting understanding of each other’s culture.

Now that it can be seen where, within the vast horizon of training handbooks and toolboxes, this module can be situated, let us get back to the subject of this module.

‘without’ cultural restrictions

As already stated above, international voluntary service projects are potential moments for intense intercultural learning. People live and work together for two or three weeks, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

An international voluntary project provides an atmosphere of placing people outside their ‘normal’ environment. The normal environment naturally places some restrictions (cultural, familial, etc.) for example in the form of myths or taboos related to certain topics or to doing certain things. Under such circumstances it might be difficult to bring up subjects like identity or stereotypes. As an international voluntary service project is made up by people from different cultural backgrounds, these restrictions normally lose importance because of the absence of outside control and the sanctions usually connected to it (one does not say this or does not do that, and if s/he does s/he is looked upon negatively, etc.), which can make it a special learning experience. (listen to AEYVE 05 – social control in Extras)

It is important to use this potential. In this module, we propose several methods to do this.

Non-violent communication

*You have to listen in order to hear and
you need to watch in order to see.*

While discussing subjects like stereotypes and values in an international group, it is important to try a non-violent way (see also Chapter 1). It supposes to learn to listen in an open minded way, try to concentrate on the message the other wants to transmit even if the other is too nervous, aggressive, frustrated or expressing a point of view you do not agree with at all... and to communicate with calm. If you have a defensive reaction to the way the message is transmitted you will never find out why the person was upset and what s/he really wanted to say. Answer with a question, which allows the other to explain his or her frustration rather than labelling him or her right away. (Say: "Are you upset because you think I don't understand what you really mean? Can you explain me what you would like to say?" rather than: "don't be so aggressive, I don't understand what you want to say".

To learn more about non-violent communication, check for example the website of the Centre for Non-Violent Communication: <http://www.cnvc.org/>



How to observe

First, it is very important to see in what kind of state of understanding the group is.

Also, during your efforts as a group leader to promote more understanding of cultural diversity, it is important to recognise what kind of progress the group is going through.

Camp leaders, but also the participants themselves, can observe the following dynamics:

- * The daily relationship amongst the volunteers of the workcamp,

- * The relationship between the volunteers and the local population,
- * The different identities which are salient in the workcamp, e.g. gender, nationality, language, age, socio-economic group, ethnicity,
- * The communication flow amongst volunteers and between the volunteers and camp leaders,
- * The way in which the local community reacts to the presence of an international delegation.

It is difficult to fully grasp the different cultural elements that are at play in an international group like this, but it is definitely worth it for the participants, and indispensable for the leaders. Try to observe the above stated dynamics.

After observing, participants can share their findings with each other in an informal way and trainers or camp leaders can also share their observations with the rest of the group. Take care though not to appear too intrusive while talking about what you saw and do not make anything too personal if people do not seem to be ready.

Besides sharing the findings about each other's culture that are salient in a workcamp, it is very important for a workcamp leader to observe in order to determine eventual cultural barriers and the degree of confidence within the group. The dynamics that are stated above can also show cultural barriers. Take an example: the different identities that are salient in a workcamp can consist of people expressing a strong adherence to a specific faith or other group with distinct practices, clashing or potentially clashing with the ideas of another participant. In other words: as a workcamp leader, keep in mind the above dynamics and observe the group (even the small practices), and try to prevent them from clashing.

Finally, by way of observing, coordinators can find out how much the process of understanding cultural diversity has already progressed in the group. This can help her or him decide what steps to take next to stimulate sharing and discussion.

How to promote understanding of cultural diversity

This module can be used to promote intercultural understanding in several ways. What is most important is to realise that putting people together in a voluntary project setting is not enough to make them express their deeply held ideas and values. If you want to go deeper than talking about different clothing and food-habits for example, it is important to promote discussions that take them further into their sharing and reflections.

What is important to recognise and is stated above is that international volunteer projects can be ‘free places’ of intercultural exchange, and that they can have less cultural restrictions for the volunteers individually. Taking this into account and although most of the topics in this module are difficult to discuss because they are highly linked to people’s deepest ideas and emotions, we can see that it is a unique chance which should not be missed. Thus, seriously take the advices and warnings from the second and third chapter and the exercises.

When stimulating discussion and reflection on cultural diversity, a structured or an open moment can be created. A structured moment is a moment in that has a clearly defined start and ending and an already defined topic. An open moment does not have any clear beginning and end and the discussion topic can be anything the participants want to talk about.

To promote the project as a learning experience, it is important to alternate between more structured and more open moments.

In any case and whatever the method you choose, it is compulsory to create a neutral space which guarantees respect for the opinions of everybody and provides participants with a security feeling.

creating neutral spaces

A prerequisite for understanding about each other’s culture is to create neutral spaces. Neutral spaces can be defined as an avenue for participants of the project to openly discuss their feelings, thoughts, stereotypes and prejudices. Through this creation of neutral space, participants and trainers or camp leaders experience trust and safety. Because of this healthy atmosphere, all stakeholders are able to share their thoughts, feelings and ideas. With sharing comes learning!

A neutral space is not by definition a real materially defined kind of space (although it could be, somehow like the case of the concept of “speakers’ corner” where all can be expressed!). It is more like an atmosphere in which people can freely express themselves.

Organising a discussion on the rules of the workcamp can create this atmosphere. You could ask the participants to list everything that prevents efficient communication and refrains them from freely expressing themselves. The result of the discussion can be worked out in a “declaration” of the workcamp. This declaration could include items such as the idea that participants should systematically ask questions to each other about behaviours they find amazing and not be offended by any question they are being asked by others. Another general rule that could be established is the need to respect any opinion within the group.

Besides that, you can later find some exercises that are especially interesting to create this atmosphere. Some of the exercises that are labelled 'start' or 'introduction exercise' can help people start speaking or expressing about a certain subject.

As we have already mentioned, a neutral space can also be an actual materially defined space. You can assign a certain place in the accommodation as a place where everyone should be respected. This place is preferably different from the other places where you hang out, cook, work or sleep.

One thing has to be highly considered: it should be possible to make the space a quiet place and people from outside should not be able to disturb.

Below are some declarations that help create a neutral space:

- * No question is ridiculous
- * Nobody carries the ultimate truth
- * Be ready to leave your deepest convictions behind
- * Be ready to leave your comfort space behind
- * Observe before you judge
- * Listen before you judge
- * Ask before you judge
- * Treat any remark with due respect
- * Say when and why you are shocked
- * Explain and do not defend
- * Etc.

You could cover the walls with posters reading such declarations, or use them as the basis for a discussion or the "Work-camp declaration".

As for the discussions on stereotypes, once the atmosphere has started to be protective and people have felt encouraged to confront with ideas and questions they had never dared asking without being defensive, the project can reach a much deeper intercultural learning dimension than it usually does.

Stimulating discussion

The idea of this module is to provide an approach on cultural diversity that might be useful for workcamp leaders if they want to intensify the intercultural learning experience during their projects.

In the chapter that follows you will find a number of exercises that we find useful as starting points for discussions. On the other hand, to introduce an exercise would mean to create a rather structured moment, which might not be the best method for every moment in every group.

Another less formal way to introduce the subject can be to provide 'stimulants'. These are events that take the participants out of their workcamp 'routine' and propose a certain subject without a real formal introduction.

Going out of the usual logics can give the participants new ideas or topics to reflect upon and allow them not to focus anymore on themselves or their personal cases. This last issue can be difficult for some participants to handle within a group of people they did not know before the workcamp, and could limit the scope of discussions and reflections within a group. Going out is also the possibility to open to other themes and find more flexible accesses to intercultural discussions. Going out also gives the possibility to surprise and destabilise participants, and an expe-

rience full of emotions is known to open doors to more intimate and deeper discussions between participants.

Examples of such stimulants are

- * A visit to another workcamp / another organisation / an excursion / an event.
- * Inviting to the workcamp an expert on a certain theme to talk about her or his work (or showing an interview with such a person on TV / radio).
- * Projecting a film / reading a story together / seeing a theatre play.
- * Making a global newspaper together.

exercises

In the next chapter, several exercises are proposed. As stated above, this is a structured way of introducing deeper understanding of each other and each other's culture (but it might be more effective and deeper going than the other).

Following specific activities like the ones that are proposed in the next chapter, project coordinators should spend a few minutes going through a reflection or 'debrief'. Like formal education, non-formal education also requires reflection; otherwise the experience goes into the unconscious and fails to bring meaningful answers. Asking participants questions related to the task or activity or engaging in a small group discussion can do this triggering.

Every exercise has an extensive introduction and a debriefing part that show how to use it and what to use it for. Besides, it is very important to note that some of the exercises can be intru-

sive, requiring a good debrief. What can be intrusive is indicated in the specific part called 'warning' in every exercise.

The proposed exercises are just a few of the possible ones. If you have any other ideas, do not hesitate to do them but take care that you thoroughly debrief for the participants to further think about how to implement their findings in their daily lives.



CHAPITRE 5

EXERCISES

In this section, you will find some exercises that we think foster intercultural learning.

The exercises are classified in four levels.



An exercise level 1 is an exercise that can be used by every project coordinator, regardless the level of experience in leading a project and leading discussions.



Level 2 is for coordinators who feel comfortable in leading discussions.



Level 3 exercises are for coordinators who feel comfortable in coordinating, are experienced in leading discussions and have experience in training others.



Level 4 is the most difficult one. The coordinator should be able to feel if a participant feels uncomfortable with an exercise and redirect the activity if needed.

Please take these classifications into account when you are choosing your exercises!

(Note that the levels indicate the experience of a coordinator and not the level of trust within a group. For that, see the icon 'timing').

The icons that come with the exercises and on which you can base your choice are the following:



: the time that is needed for the exercise. It is either less or more than one hour ('<1hr' or '>1hr')



: whether materials are needed for the exercise ('yes' or 'no')



: the sort of exercise. It can be an introduction game ('introduction'), which means that it is a name game or any other exercise meant to get to know each other a bit more. Secondly it can also be an energiser ('energiser'), which can be used in between activities to 'energise' the participants. Thirdly it can be the introduction to a theme ('theme'). The theme itself is stated under the last icon. Finally it can be a discussion activity ('discussion'), which is used to go further into a theme.



: whether this is an introduction exercise, which does not go very deep into the subject yet, or an exercise that goes much deeper. The first ('start') can always be used. The group does not have to be very coherent yet and there is no need for special trust between the participants. The second sort of exercises ('later') should not be introduced in a workcamp right away. The exercise requires a feeling of trust between the participants. The 'neutral space' mentioned in the last section is needed. This activity can be intrusive, so be careful!



: states the subject of the exercise and the pages for further reading. This can be 'identity', intercultural learning ('icl'), value systems ('values'), 'prejudices', 'stereotypes' and 'non-verbal communication'.

The exercises are list according to the coordinator's level of experience.

This is not the first time these exercises are used

Most of them are known in the international voluntary movement and are written down in other training manuals. It is the context in which we propose to use them which makes the difference. At the end of every exercise description, you find a reference to the publication we got it from.

For other games and exercises on intercultural learning, consult the list of publications in chapter 4 page 34

List of exercises (click on the name to go to the corresponding page)

Level one:

Name	time	material	type	timing	subject	p.
Interview	<1hr	no	intro.	start	identity	43
Question circle	<1hr	no	intro.	start	identity	44
Timeline of significant events	<1hr	yes	theme	start	history	48
Group paintings	>1hr	yes	theme	start	icl ⁷	60

⁷ ICL : Intercultural learning

Level two:

Name	time	material	type	timing	subject	p.
The prejudice game	<1hr	yes	intro	later	stereotypes	45
Strengthened emotions	<1hr	no	energ.	start	values	46
Word image	<1hr	no	energ.	start	stereotypes	47
Majority, minority	<1hr	no	theme	start	values	54
Lemons	<1hr	yes	theme	start	stereotypes	57
Stereo-drawing	<1hr	yes	theme	later	stereotypes	59
Trading values	>1hr	yes	discuss	later	values	63

Level three:

Name	time	material	type	timing	subject	p.
The turning onion	<1hr	yes	discuss.	later	identity	62
Sculpture of violent situations	>1hr	no	discuss.	later	values / stereotypes	65
Island game	>1hr	no	discuss.	start	icl	67
Confronting our stereotypes	>1hr	yes	discuss.	later	stereotypes	61
The roots of language	<1hr	yes	intro	start	mixity	52
Publicity, propaganda...	<1hr	yes	theme	later	icl	49
Your own exercise	<1hr	yes	intro	start	mixity	68
Abigail	<1hr	no	discuss	start	values / stereotypes	58

Level four:

Name	time	material	type	timing	subject	p.
It was only a joke	>1hr	yes	theme	later	values / stereotypes	56

All levels:

Name	time	material	type	timing	subject	p.
Barometer	<1hr	yes	discuss	-	-	64

Interview



Level
1



Time
<1hr



Material
no



Type
presentation



Timing
start



Subject
identity

Aims

- * To get to know each other.
- * Introduction to the chosen theme.
- * First knowledge about how others see themselves.

Group

Maximum 30 people.

Time

- * 5 min interview
- * 10 min presentation

Material

None

Description

This is a short exercise to get to know each other a little bit. It is best conducted at the beginning of a workcamp. Besides getting to know each other's name only, this exercise can also be used to get to know the participants' expectations and fears. Furthermore, they can learn about other people's identity with questions like: 'What do people necessarily have to know about you or your culture?'

Procedure

- * The participants make a circle and the facilitator explains the exercise.
- * Let the participants choose another person to conduct an interview.
- * They ask each other some questions to get to know each other.
- * Afterwards the participants get back into the group and present their partner.
- * As a variation, you can set the questions they are going to ask the other. You can thus tell them to ask the following questions (examples):

What is your name? Where are you from? What do you do in your life? What do you expect from this workcamp? How do you think to contribute to the theme / activities / intercultural learning? What do you think is nec-

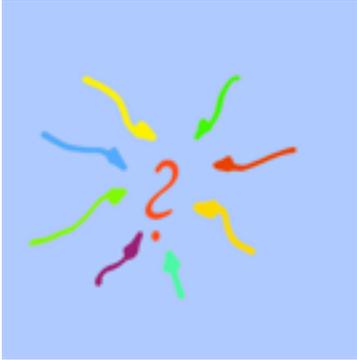
essary for the others to know about you? What do you want to do at least once in your life? If reincarnation would be true, what would you want to be in your next life? Etc.

Debrief

After this exercise, give the participants some time to talk to each other a bit more. Besides, the camp leader can reflect on the expectations that were just heard and possibly how they want to contribute to it.

Source

SIW internationale vrijwilligersprojecten – Handboekje voor begeleiders



Question circle (fruit salad)



Level
1



Time
<1hr



Material
no



Type
introduction



Timing
start



Subject
identity

Aims

- * To get to know each other.
- * Introduction to the chosen theme.
- * First knowledge about how others see themselves.

Group

Maximum 30 people.

Time

- * 5 min interview
- * 10 min presentation

Material

None

Description

This exercise provides a way to get an overview of the group's aspects, activities and experience. As it is mostly a non-verbal exercise and everybody participates, it is a non-intrusive way to get to know these things from everyone.

Procedure

- * The participants sit in a circle on chairs. One person has no chair and stands in the middle of the circle.
- * This person takes one of his/her aspects and says it to the group. This can be for example: I have brown eyes, I am 21 years old, I have two sisters and one brother, etc.
- * Then, everyone that considers sharing aspects with him/her stands up from his/her chair and tries to change places with someone else. In the meantime the person in the middle tries to sit down on an empty chair. Then it is the turn of the last person to be standing without having found a chair.
- * Variation: do this exercise later on, so that people might feel freer to name more intimate aspects of themselves.

Debrief

After this exercise, give the participants some time to chat a bit.

Source

SIW internationale vrijwilligersprojecten – Handboekje voor begeleiders



The prejudice game



Level
2



Time
<1hr



Material
yes



Type
presentation



Timing
later



Subject
prejudices

Aims

- * To understand what other people think about us.
- * To talk more openly about one's identity.

Group

about 10 to 15 participants

Time

- * 15 to 20 minutes in the group.
- * 5 minutes for each person to talk about his or her paper.
- * 10 minutes discussion about the activity.

Material

- * Flip-over paper and marker.
- * One A4 size paper and pen for every participant.

Description

How people see themselves and how they perceive their identity is not always the same as how others perceive them. With this exercise, the participants can learn how others perceive them and how these ideas might differ from how they see themselves. They might understand what image of themselves they give to other people and how this might influence the way people react on them.

Procedure

- * Write the questions on the flip-over paper.
- * If necessary, divide the participants into groups of 10 to 15 people.
- * Let them sit in a circle and provide each of them with an A4 size paper and a pen.
- * The participants write their name in the down-right corner of the paper and give it to their right-hand neighbour.
- * The activity starts there. An answer is given to the first question about the person whose name is in the corner of the paper. Then the paper moves on to the right.
- * This action is to be repeated until the paper reaches the first person.
- * The first person reads out the paper and comments on it.
- * Short discussion about the differences between the paper and the person's own feelings about his/her own identity.
- * Further thinking and discussion about where the differences come from.

Questions

Ideas for questions:

1. What is his, her age?
2. Which country and region does this person come from?

3. What is the favourite country for this person to spend his/her vacation?
4. What is this person's hobby?
5. What is his/her favourite transportation?
6. What does this person study / what is his/her work?
7. With what kind of animal do you associate this person?
8. How do you think he/she sees the role of women?
9. What does this person like to wear most?
10. What was this person's best subject in school?
11. What is this person's favourite music?
12. What would be his/her most cherished ideology?
13. What is his/her favourite food?
14. What does this person hate?
15. What does this person love?

Presentation

The presentation consists of having the participants reading out their own paper and commenting on it. Afterwards, a reflection on the differences between what the others wrote down and what they thought of themselves, and where these come from.

Debrief

In the case of more than one group, one person debriefs to the other groups about how the discussion went.

Source

SIW internationale vrijwilligersprojecten – Handboekje voor begeleiders



Strengthened Emotions



Level
1



Time
<1hr



Material
no



Type
energiser



Timing
start



Subject
values

Aims

- * Energiser.
- * To create an open atmosphere.
- * To learn more about other persons' or other cultures' emotional expressions.

Group

maximum 20 people

Time

- * 5 to 15 minutes for the activity.
- * About 15 minutes for discussion.

Material

None

Description

Every human being expresses emotions. Still, this might differ amongst different persons and amongst different cultures.

How appropriate is it, for instance, to cry in public or to laugh very loud? To what extent are emotions expressed in a different ways by men and women?

This exercise is meant to start a learning process about the others' expression of emotions.

Procedure

The participants stand in a circle. One person starts expressing an emotion, very small (like looking a bit sad, smiling, looking a bit angry, etc.). The person standing on the left of this first one expresses the same emotion, but a little bigger. Every next person strengthens the emotion a little bit, until it reaches the first person who will be crying very loud, laughing as if he/she is crazy or being as angry as he/she never was before. Then the next person in line will start expressing a new emotion that will go round again, until the group has had enough or everyone has started a series.

Evaluation

Take a short break to give participants the opportunity to calm down a little bit and reflect.

Questions to address during the evaluation can be the following:

- * How did the participants feel during this exercise? Did they feel awkward and if so, why?
- * Was there any misinterpretation during the rounds? (e.g.: did someone interpret a sad face for an angry one?).
- * Are there differences in the way participants experienced this exercise? If yes, where can this come from? From their culture maybe?
- * What are the emotions people can or cannot openly express at home? Why? How are extreme/strong situations like grief, birth, marriage, etc. emotionally expressed?

Source

SIW internationale vrijwilligersprojecten – Marjon Schulte



Word image



Level
2



Time
<1hr



Material
no



Type
energiser



Timing
start



Subject
stereotypes

Aims

- * Triggering a creative use of the body.
- * To find out about the use of the human body as a tool to represent feelings, ideas and relationships.
- * To challenge stereotypes and promote empathy.

Group

16 - 30 people.

Time

- * 10 min to do the exercise.
- * 15 min to discuss.

Material

none

Description

This energiser can be used to start a discussion about people's stereotypes and prejudices (or any other notion you want to learn about more). It can provoke a lot of laughter. Prevent the laughter from becoming laughing at someone.

Procedure

- * The facilitator explains the participants that they have to use their bodies to express a word. They will make a statue to explain it. They stay in the position, but look around to see what the others have done.
- * Start with simple words like 'tree' or 'house'.
- * Then tell the participants that you will move into a more difficult stage with more difficult words. Ask them to look deep into themselves and then ask them to express in 'statues' the following:
- * School, work, home, parent, male (or man), female (or woman), love, violence, gay, Japanese, European, African, or any other word you want them to visualise.

Evaluation

Ask people how they felt during the exercise. Did they feel comfortable in this exercise? Did they have any problems expressing some words? If yes, why do they

think they did? Did they feel a difference between expressing places and activities (school, work, home) vs. identities (European, Japanese, etc.)? Ask them what they found out when they looked at what the others did. Did they make the same statues? If not, how can they explain the difference?

Source

Marija Gajic - www.salto-youth.net



Timeline of Significant Events



Level
1



Time
<1hr



Material
oui



Type
theme



Timing
start



Subject
rewriting
history

Aims

- * To understand how we reconstruct our memories and which events are the most significant to us.
- * In that process, to identify cultural differences and how we relate and remember certain events.
- * To understand if there is a particular event that is important to all regardless cultural differences.

Group

about 4 or 5 to a group

Time

- * 30 minutes to work in small groups.
- * 5 minutes for each group to present.
- * 10 minutes for the trainer or camp leader to provide an overall presentation.

Material

- * A1 size paper
- * Markers

Description

Every one of us very differently experiences and interprets events in our lives. This timeline exercise indicates which events have a significant impact on us. This exercise also helps identify if there are global events that are significant to everyone in the group, or to see if there is a similarity between similar cultures.

Procedure

- * Divide the participants into groups.
- * Each group should have participants of different nationalities/cultures.
- * Provide each participant with one A1 size paper.
- * The participants are to indicate (on the same paper) a timeline (past, present or future) and 3 events that are very significant to them.
- * Amongst the 3 significant events that they are asked to indicate, there should at least be one event that is not personal (e.g. the fall of the Berlin Wall).

Presentation

Each group should spend time comparing the similarities and differences within and between cultures as they have come up during the exercise.

Debrief

One person in each group reports to the other groups what similarities and differences have come up.

Source

Intercultural learning toolkit

Publicity, propaganda and power



Level
3



Time
<1hr



Material
yes



Type
theme



Timing
later



Subject
rewriting
history

Aims

- * To show the influence of publicity and propaganda on the way opinions are shaped.
- * To make a link between this opinion-making and the rewriting of history.

Group

8 to 30 people.

Time

- * 10 minutes to explain.
- * 45 minutes in small groups.
- * 30 minutes in plenary.

Material

- * Handout 'propaganda'.
- * 4 extra publicities cut out from magazines by you.
- * 1 paper and 1 pen per small group.

Warning!

Watching the propaganda posters can bring up discussions with strong feelings. Watch out for hot discussions getting personal, especially if there is a participant from the country the propaganda comes from. If these discussions start, intervene and ask the participants to concentrate on the questions, with the promise that the discussion can be held in plenary afterwards.

Description

Publicity and propaganda are both made to influence people's ideas, feelings and choices. This exercise is meant to show how this is done. The participants are going to explore the messages a publicity and propaganda want to transmit. The same mechanisms are in action in the way historical events and political facts are remembered and presented by the media and public authorities. The historical facts are linked to the intention to transmit a given message. This can be called the rewriting of history.

Procedure

- * Divide the group in small groups of 4 people (6 if more than 20 participants).
- * Give every group the handout 'propaganda' and 4 publicities you cut out of magazines (try to find a variety of publicities, for example: do not only take beauty or household products).
- * Every group gets 45 minutes to answer the questions stated on the handout for every image.

- * In plenary, one person of every group presents their findings to the other group

Debrief

- * Did every person in the small groups agree on the answers to the questions? Were the answers on the pictures on the handout the same for every group?
- * Is there a difference between publicity and propaganda or do they work with the same mechanisms?
- * If not, what were the differences and does this explain a difference of interpretation of the propaganda?
- * How did you feel about seeing the propaganda and publicities?
- * Do you think propaganda and publicity have a big influence in changing people's minds?
- * Are they means of changing the minds of big groups of people?
- * Can you think of other ways people's minds are changed?
- * Does the way events are reported in the media have a role in this?
- * Are the stories in history books the same in every country?

Source

CCSVI

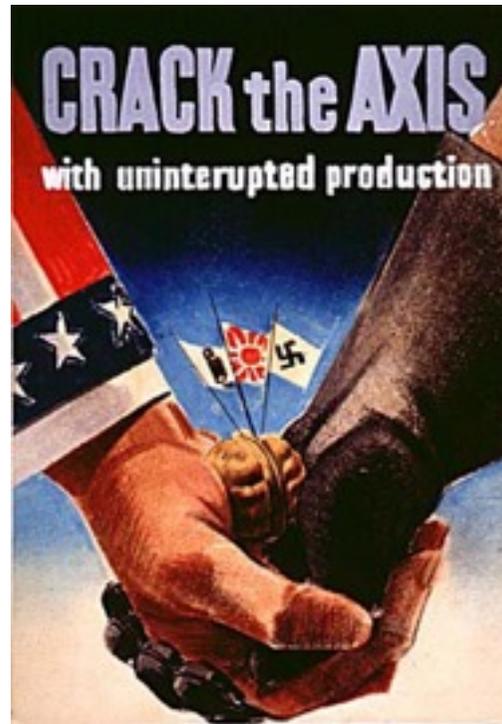
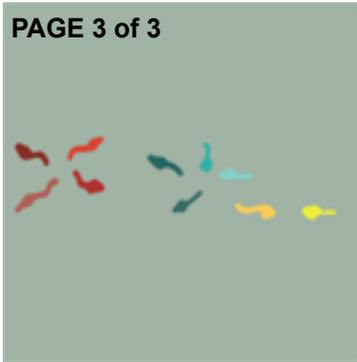
Publicity, propaganda and power

Handout 'propaganda'

- * Describe what you see in the picture and what the message means.
- * What is the target group of this image?
- * What is the target group supposed to do or not to do?
- * What are the characteristics of a good citizen/consumer?
- * What are the characteristics of a bad citizen/consumer?



Publicity, propaganda and power



Victory Waits on Your Fingers, Produced by the Royal Typewriter Company for the U.S. Civil Service Commission, NARA Still Picture Branch (NWDNS-44-PA-2272).

Crack the Axis, by Charles Allen, Pastel and gouache on illustration board, NARA Still Picture Branch (NWDNS-208-B-5-12).

When You Ride Alone You Ride With Hitler!, by Weimer Pursell, 1943, Printed by the Government Printing Office for the Office of Price Administration NARA Still Picture Branch(NWDNS-188-PP-42).



The roots of language



Level
3



Time
<1hr



Material
yes



Type
presentation



Timing
start



Subject
mixity

Aims

- * To give an example of what mixity within a culture means
- * To start a more general discussion on cross cultural influences and to show that any culture is the result of influences from different origins

Group

8 to 30 people.

Time

- * 5 min explaining and distributing sheets.
- * 15 min finding Arabic and French words.
- * 30 min discussion in plenary.

Material

- * 1 list with 10 sentences for every participant
- * 1 list with 'answers' per 4 people
- * 1 pen or pencil per person.

Description

This exercise is an example of the mixity that exists within language. It shows the provenance of some English words, which come from French and Arabic. It can be an interactive and understandable way of showing the participants what mixity can mean. In this exercise, we talk about language, but similar examples of mixity can be found in music, cooking recipes and ingredients, plastic arts, fashion etc.

Procedure

- * Give every participant a list with English sentences containing words from arab and french origin (see the following page for lists of words)
- * Ask everyone to circle the words they think originate from another language than English.
- * Make small groups of 4 people (6 persons if there are more than 20 participants) and give them a answer sheet (the same sentences with circles around the words that originate from arab or french). They have 10 minutes for comparing the answers.
- * Get back to plenary.

Presentation

The small groups present their findings to the others and a discussion takes place

Evaluation

In plenary, the following questions could be asked: Did you know that these words are originally from Arabic or French? Can you think of more English words that have roots in another language? Do you know words in your own language that are similar in the language of one or more of the

other participants? Can you think of words in your own languages with French, Arabic or other roots?

Do you think a pure version of language exists?

What influences the development of languages?

What influences the development of languages today? Which influences should be included in the new editions of grammar books?

All languages come from only a few big language groups.

This means that a lot of words are similar in different languages. Think for example about the word 'café' or 'tea/chai'. Because of this, we can not be sure about the real 'beginning' of a word. In this exercise we saw some clear examples of words that are the same or similar and used in two languages. It is not always possible to say that a word originates from one language or the other. Roots from different cultures in languages indicate the historical influences a region was exposed to: colonisation, migration as well as science and trade have left linguistic traces over centuries and even millennia. The Roman Empire added hundreds if not thousands of words to all the languages its soldiers found on their way, creating entire new languages. Arabic scientists have added essential vocabulary to English and other languages in the Middle Age. Creative play writers like Shakespeare have scrupulously added hundreds of words from other languages to English when they felt that there was no appropriate English expression. In modern times the influence goes rather the other way round: music, youth cultures and industrial production (just think of computers) added many new English words to different languages

Source
CCSVI



The roots of language

Arabic English

(Source:

www.outreachworld.org/Files/Curriculum/ArabicEnglish.pdf)

Albatross
Admiral
Alchemy
Alcohol
Alfalfa
Algebra
Algorithm
Alkaline
Almanac
Amber

Antimony
Apricot
Arsenal
Artichoke
Assassin
Average
Bedouin
Cafe
Caliber
Camel
Candy
Carafe
Check
Chemistry
Coffee

Cotton
Elixir
Gauze
Gazelle
Genie
Gerbil
Giraffe
Guitar
Hazard
Henna
Jar
Jasmine
Julep
Lapis Lazuli
Lemon

Lilac
Lime
Lute
Mafia
Magazine
Mascara
Mask
Massage
Mattress
Monsoon
Mummy
Orange
Safari
Saffron
Satin

Sine
Soda
Sofa
Spinach
Sugar
Sumac
Swahili
Syrup
Talisman
Tamarind
Tambourine
Tariff
Troubadour
Zenith
Zero

French English

(Source:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_words_of_French_origin)

Ability
Abnormal
Abstinence
Accept
Accoustic
Action
Age
Ambiance
Angle
Application
Artificial
Base

Bisquit
Blase
Bombe
Bourgeoisie
Bravery
Bureau
Camouflage
Campaign
Chance
Classic
Cliché
Communism
Couple
Culture
Déjà-vu
Descent

Diet
Diquise
Eager
Ecstasy
Enter
Fantastic
Frontier
Illustration
Intelligence
Interest
Jargon
Joint
Kilo
Laundry
Machine
Memory

Message
Mortality
November
Nurse
Object
Official
Oil
Organic
Passion
Perfect
Philharmonic
Porc
Possibility
Quest
Rarity
Recoil

Salon
Science
Servant
Soil
Spiritual
Sustain
System
Task
Universe
Version
Void
Wage



Majority, minority



Level
2



Time
<1hr



Material
yes



Type
theme



Timing
start



Subject
values

Aims

- * To learn more about the values that underlie each other's thinking.
- * To see if there is a difference in the values of minority and majority groups.
- * To create an open forum for discussion.

Group

At least 4 people

Time

1 to 2 hours, depending on the group size

Material

- * Pens,
- * Flip charts,
- * Markers,
- * Tape

Description

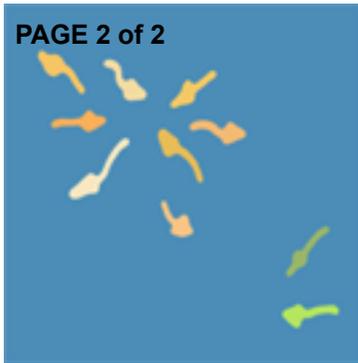
Appreciative inquiry is a most valuable method in understanding differences and appreciating the values of cultures. Appreciative inquiry is used to reconnect the values and importance of society especially where there is mistrust between different cultures.

Procedure

- * Divide the group into pairs. Make sure they come from different countries or cultures and one is from a majority and the other from a minority group in their country.
- * Distribute the questionnaires and guidelines. Explain the content and purpose of the exercise as in the introduction. Give 15 minutes to each to ask questions (30 min in total).
- * Ask the interviewers to individually summarise the values they found during the interviews prioritising the most common in his/her own culture and write them on a flip chart (10 min).
- * Invite the group to make a common list of the values and different values that were found: allow the participants to do this in an ample time (15 min).
- * Debriefing (40 min).

Debrief

- * How did the participants feel when they were asked and how did they feel as an inquirer?
- * When was the last time they appreciated to be a majority or a minority?
- * How can they relate this to minority-majority relations?
- * Are values of majority and minority common?
- * Are there significant differences?
- * What values are usually proclaimed but not adhered to?



Majority, minority

The practice of the interview (questions to be asked)

Questions for the majority:

- * Describe your most positive experience with a minority in your country, a time when you felt really alive, proud, creative or effective. What were the circumstances at the time? How did you feel? What was the most positive thing you found out about them?
- * What would be necessary for you to have more experience like this in the future ?

Questions for the minority:

- * Describe your most positive experience in the company of a majority. Think of an occasion when you felt really alive, proud, creative or effective. What were the circumstances at the time? How did you feel? What was the positive thing you found out about this relationship?
- * What would be necessary for you and other minority young people to have more experience like this in the future?

Tips for conducting the interviews:

- * Use the questions as your script, i.e. ask the questions as they are written and do not attempt to influence the answers.

- * Allow the interviewee to tell his/her story. Please do not tell yours or give your opinion about their experiences.
- * Listen carefully and seek to find the values underlying the experience. Use the following questions to probe further:
 - * Tell me more?
 - * Why do you feel that way?
 - * Why was it important to you?
 - * How did that affect you?
 - * Can this experience change your perceptions about minority / majority?

Some people will take longer to think about their answers - allow for silence. If someone does not want to, or cannot answer some of the interview questions, that is fine.

Source

Intercultural Learning T-Kit de Brahma Kumaris, World Spiritual University, London, UK.



IT WAS ONLY A JOKE!



Level
4



Time
>1hr



Material
yes



Type
theme



Timing
later



Subject
values and
stereotypes

Aims

- * To understand the place of humour and its use.
- * Participants will be able to describe how humour can be used in relation to racism.
- * Participants will be able to show the role that humour plays in oppression

Group

Until 60 people, groups of four to five.
Not recommended for young people unless you know the group well and think it appropriate

Time

60 - 90 minutes.

Material

- * Post-its,
- * Flipchart,
- * Pens,

Warning!

This exercise is a very difficult one to lead. Humour is considered funny because it is recognisable or it touches people. It can become dangerous to speak about humour if people do not continue to recognise the fun in a joke and start to take a joke as an offence. If you think that the participants and you understand each other's sense of humour and possible offensive jokes can be coped with and found funny by everyone, this exercise can be enlightening. If you are not sure about this, do not do this exercise.

Description

With this exercise, the participants can find out what jokes are used for. It can get clear to them that they are sometimes used as differentiating mechanisms, changing for instance a person into an 'other'.

Procedure

Participants were asked to bring three jokes. In groups of four to five, participants share the jokes and compare and contrast them using the following criteria:

- * Who was the joke aimed at?
- * Who was the joke about?
- * What is the joke about? Does it rely on history, myths or stereotypes?
- * What is the purpose of the joke?
- * What do all the jokes have in common?

Each group has 30 minutes before feeding back its conclusions to plenary

Debrief

The general discussion in plenary should be lead according to the following concepts:

Humour can be used:

- * As a coping strategy,
- * To reduce discomfort,
- * To reinforce stereotypes,
- * Often in a cruel way.

Racist humour should not be underestimated:

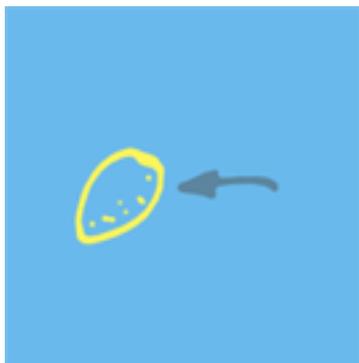
- * Racist expression is invisibly reinforced,
- * It rapidly spreads,
- * Myth becomes fact by repetition,
- * It becomes acceptable when being passed person-to-person.

Besides, the following questions can be addressed if time allows:

- * How are jokes used in oppressive thinking?
- * How do they operate in terms of attitudes and opinions?
- * Where do young people hear these jokes?

Source

Sharon Holder - www.salto-youth.net



Lemons



Level
2



Time
<1hr



Material
yes



Type
theme



Moment
start



Subject
stereotypes

Aims

- * To make the participants speak out about their stereotypes.
- * To learn more about the power politics that is inherent to stereotyping.

Group

various

Time

30 minutes

Material

- * Enough lemons for everybody in the group (or any other fruit or object).
- * A carrier bag.

Description

This is an icebreaker that introduces the idea of individual differences. It can be used at the start of a session around stereotyping, differences and equality of opportunities

Procedure

- * Give each group member a lemon.
- * Ask everyone to look closely at their fruit, examine it for distinctive marks and feel the skin.
- * Encourage each participant to personalise his/her lemon by giving it a name.
- * Allow five minutes to do this and then collect all the lemons into the carrier bag. Shake the bag to mix the fruits.
- * Spread all the lemons out on the floor in front of the group.
- * In turn, ask each participant to come forward and collect his/her lemon.
- * If there is an argument over whose it is, try to adjudicate, but if they still cannot agree, place the lemon to one side as unidentified. If this happens, you should be left with two at the end to reunite, but will find that most people (amazingly!) can successfully claim their fruit.

Presentation

Everyone presents 'their' lemon, taking into account the following questions: How sure are they that they claimed the right fruit? How can they tell?

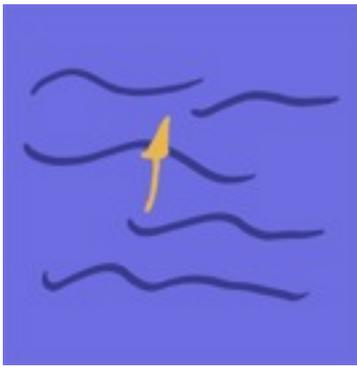
Evaluation

- * Facilitate a discussion. Encourage them to look at the parallels between this exercise and differentiating between people. Examine the stereotypes: are all lemons the same colour? Are they all the same shape?
- * Reflect this into the stereotypes that exist between people of different cultures, races and genders. What does this mean to the group?
- * Your evaluation of this process and the issues that emerge will help you develop further sessions around differences and equality of opportunities.

Further info/Source Hilary Spiers - as submitted to the T-Kit on Social Inclusion (www.training-youth.net) - Partnership on European Youth Worker Training.

Source

Jugo Rostas - www.salto-youth.net



Abigail



Level
3



Time
<1hr



Material
yes



Type
discussion



Timing
start



Subject
values and
stereotypes

Aims

- * To understand the personal and cultural values of the participants.
- * To understand that all have different systems of values.

Group

about 5 to 30 participants

Time

- * 10 minutes to tell the story and explain the game.
- * 20 to 25 minutes in the group.
- * 5 minutes for each group to report.
- * 20 minutes (or more if needed) to debrief and discuss.

Material

A pen and a sheet of paper for each group.

Description

The exercise is a simulation game which is based on the personal and cultural values of the participants and can be used in a training course. It is especially recommended to be used in an international group where differences between value systems are more noticeable

Procedure

- * Tell the participants the story of Abigail:

Abigail loves Tom who lives on the other side of the river. A flood destroyed all the bridges across the river and only spared one boat. Abigail asks Sinbad, the owner of this boat, to take her across the river. Sinbad accepts only on condition that she has sex with him first. Abigail, not knowing what to do, runs to ask her mother for advice but she replies that she does not want to get involved in her daughter's affairs. In despair Abigail accepts Sinbad's demand and he ferries her across the river. Abigail hurries to find Tom, throws her arms around him and tells him everything that has happened. Tom rejects her harshly and she leaves him. Not far from Tom's home, Abigail meets John, Tom's best friend. She tells him the whole story

too. John gives Tom a slap in the face and goes off with Abigail.

- * Then, in small working groups the participants are asked to put in order who behaved best and who behaved worst in this story. Decisions have to be taken and their consequences must be accepted.
- * Each group reports its list in plenary.
- * A discussion and debrief is following

Evaluation

After the discussion, explain the idea of the game and the way people reacted: such decisions are based on the values found in the submerged part of the iceberg, most of which are unconscious values. Abigail fits into our idea of relationships – mother and daughter, friends, boyfriend, sexuality. Listening to this story we look at it through our own personal assumptions (the age of the characters, the location, the circumstances). You make assumptions instead of acting on information..

Source

unknown

Stereo-drawing



Level
2



Time
<1hr



Material
yes



Type
theme



Moment
later



Subject
stereotypes

Aims

- * To understand more about stereotyping.
- * To find out what are the group's stereotypes and start a discussion about it.

Group

6 people per group (but can easily work with several groups).

Time

30 minutes.

Material

Per group:

- * 1 A4 paper,
- * 1 pen.

Warning!

- * **Reflect about the right timing to introduce this exercise. The group needs to be already consolidated and have a basic sense of trust for each other;**
- * **Exercises on stereotypes can sometimes prove to be insulting. People should not be asked to talk about their "personal" stereotypes but to talk about general stereotypes that exist in their countries;**
- * **Be aware of the stereotypical power relations between the countries of two or more participants and explicitly bring the subject up if necessary.**

Description

This is an icebreaker, which introduces the idea of individual differences. It can be used at the start of a session around stereotyping, differences and equality of opportunities. Most people are familiar with this game in some form, so it is a good way of starting with a group without too much explanation. The results are very clear too, so it is an effective way of starting a debate and helps to provoke discussion about how young people are seen by adults in the community.

Procedure

- * Ask the group to form a circle with participants facing each other. Hand out a sheet of paper to one member of the group and give them a pen. If you are working with more than a group of six young people you may want to hand out two sheets of paper so that everyone gets a turn.
- * Explain that what you want them to do is draw the head of a 'typical' young woman or young man, or if you are working on certain topics such as drug use, gay issues,

etc. you can ask them to draw a typical drug addict or gay person. Draw attention to the need for details, for example hairstyles, hats, makeup, etc.

- * When they have finished, ask the participants to fold the paper so that their drawing cannot be seen and to pass it to the person on their right.
- * Continue passing the paper and adding to the 'portrait of youth' until you have completed head, body, arms, legs and feet. .

Presentation

Present the picture to the group. Have people got similar ideas of what a 'typical' young person, drug addict or homosexual looks like? What are the differences? Where do they get their images and information? How accurate are they?

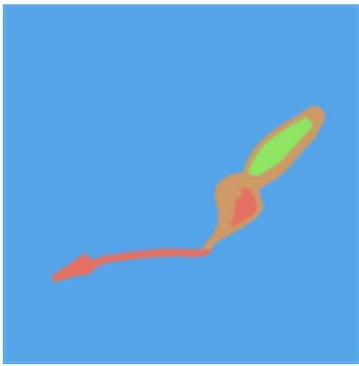
Evaluation

Facilitate a discussion around stereotypes and how these impact upon people's views and opinions. Discuss how stereotypes are internalised from the images we see through the media as well as through our own experiences.

Further info/Source Hilary Spiers - as submitted to the T-Kit on Social Inclusion (www.training-youth.net) – Partnership on European Youth Worker Training Tool Types Exercise.

Source

Jugo Rostas - www.salto-youth.net



Group paintings



Level
1



Time
>1hr



Material
yes



Type
theme



Timing
start



Subject
icl

Aims

- * Non-verbal communication.
- * Group integration and development.
- * Deciding when and how one wants to join in group activity

Group

4 – 20 participants

Time

1 to 1,5 hours.

Material

- * Paper (waste paper, wallpaper or roll of brown paper).
- * Colours (coloured pencils, watercolours, finger-paints, fat pens).

Description

Creating something together in a group can foster cooperation within the group and can show how the participants work together. With this activity, the group process can be 'monitored'. Besides that, non-verbal communication in this activity helps participants that are not very strong at the official camp-language express their ideas. Furthermore, it can show how the different participants use non-verbal communication.

Procedure

- * The participants sit around the paper, which is laid on the ground or on a large table. They should not speak.
- * Each group member can decide how much he or she wants to contribute to the formation of a group painting.
- * The painting can have a theme, e.g. 'the cultures of the world' or 'my culture'.
- * At the end, a discussion takes place.

Evaluation

The painting(s) should be discussed at the end. Observers could ask questions like: Who started? Who hesitated and why? Who started new impulses? Who continued them? Who ended them? How many people were painting at the same time? Were there breaks? How did the group decide the painting was finished?

Source

SCI 'Games and Exercises' (1995).

Confronting our Stereotypes



Level
3



Time
>1hr



Material
yes



Type
discussion



Timing
later



Subject
stereotypes

Aims

- * To create an open space to freely express our own stereotypes. These stereotypes could be about the other or stereotypes we hold about ourselves.
- * To confront the stereotypes about the other.
- * To have a discussion about stereotypes and behaviours that come out of them

Group

Group of 6-8 participants.

Time

- * 1 hour in small groups.
- * 30-45 minutes to debrief

Material

- * A1 size paper,
- * Markers.

Warning!

- * **Reflect about the right timing to introduce this exercise. The group needs to be already consolidated and have a basic sense of trust for each other;**
- * **Exercises on stereotypes can sometimes prove to be insulting. People should not be asked to talk about their “personal” stereotypes but to talk about general stereotypes that exist in their countries;**
- * **Be aware of the stereotypical power relations between the countries of two or more participants and explicitly bring the subject up if necessary**

Description

Most of us hold stereotypes about different groups of people or about ourselves. Often we suppress these thoughts, which tend to subconsciously surface during our encounters with the other. We are afraid to openly talk about our stereotypes for the fear of being labelled a racist or fear of being persecuted by others. This leads to internal frustrations and anxiety when we are unable to really talk or discuss our thoughts. Recognising the dilemma that stereotypes tend to create, we suggest that one of the best ways is to simply create a neutral space whereby people can openly express themselves and ask the others to react to it (in my place people sometimes say that people from your place do this or that, is that so?). As much as it sounds easy to simply create an open space where people can express themselves, it is challenging to create a space where people will freely express their thoughts. The key element for this exercise to work is trust. There must be trust within the group and between the group and camp leaders or trainers otherwise this exercise will not work.

The important factor to remember is that it is not a session for people to negotiate if the stereotype is right or wrong. It is to speak of the stereotypes that we all have. We have all come together in the attempt to break the stereotypes.

Procedure

- * Divide the participants into groups.
- * Each group should have participants of different nationalities/cultures.
- * Provide each participant with a paper and instruct him/her to divide it into boxes; similar to the example provided below. You can add in more types (gender, age, different cultures, etc.):

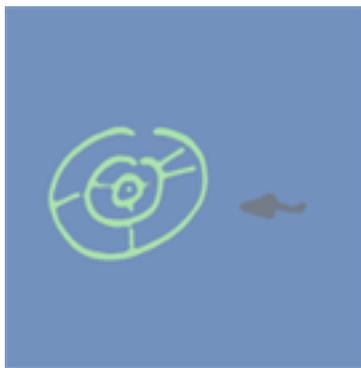
	Men	Women
European		
African		

Evaluation

- * Ask the groups to pin up their tables.
- * Camp leader or trainer should spend some time reading all tables.
- * Sit down in a circle and discuss the different stereotypes that came up.
- * Provide time for all participants to voice their opinions and reasoning.

Source

Intercultural Learning T-Kit.



The turning onion



Level
3



Time
<1hr



Material
yes



Type
discussion



Timing
later



Subject
identity

Aim

To allow individuals to discover that we are made up of multiple layers of identities.

Group

Individual exercise

Time

- * 30 minutes for individual exercise.
- * 15 minutes to debrief.

Material

- * 1 A4 and 1 smaller round paper,
- * 1 pin to connect the two papers, leaving it possible for the round paper to turn,
- * 1 pen,
- * Markers.

ATTENTION!

For this exercise, a feeling of trust and a neutral space are indispensable. Do not introduce this exercise at the beginning of a project and take care of a thorough debriefing.

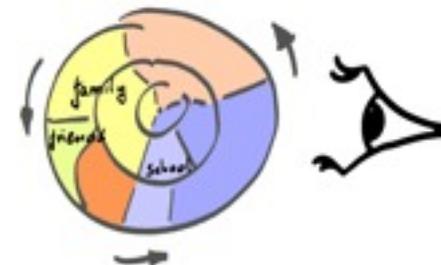
Description

The onion exercise illustrates the idea that the human personality is made up of different layers. Each layer represents some influence that the person has received, starting from birth until the present day. In the centre of the onion you find the individual's birth, and early years going to the outside. The layers are divided into different parts, signifying the most influential people, activities or things during that period. Apart from this, the kind of person s/he is and the networks to which s/he belongs are determined by other factors such as gender and religion.

The drawing signifies the different parts of identity and how people put forward a different part in different situations.

Procedure

- * Prepare the papers that the participants are going to use. Connect the round paper to the rectangle and draw a person's head on the other side.
- * Ask the participant to draw a personal version of the onion as shown below:



Evaluation

Form small groups of about 3 to 4 people to reflect on what the participants have written down. Afterwards they might want to say something in the whole group, but this is not necessary (this is an individual exercise which takes a lot of reflection, and might bring up some things that they do not want to talk about immediately).

Source

Intercultural Learning T-Kit and Ccivs



Trading values



Level
1



Time
<1hr



Material
no



Type
presentation



timing
start



Subject
identity

Aims

- * To allow individuals to discover how deeply rooted their values are.
- * To try to find a way to compromise about values or at least try to find “working agreements”..

Group

Group of at least 8 and maximum 35 persons

Time

- * The necessary time will vary, but is estimated between 1 and 2 hours
- * 10 minutes to explain the exercise
- * 20 minutes of trading
- * Between 20 and 60 minutes of compromising
- * 30 minutes evaluation

Material

- * A room big enough for participants to walk about in,
- * Cardboard cards, each holding one value:

e.g.:

“Most people cannot be trusted” or
“Humans should, in every way, live in complete harmony with nature”
There should be enough cards for every participant to have eight of them. There can be duplicates, but there should be at least 20 different value-cards.

Description

Values are generally seen as the ‘foundations’ of a culture, as a part of the iceberg that is underneath the surface (refer to the article about the iceberg). People find it difficult to negotiate about it. This can be a real problem when engaging in intercultural learning. We try to tackle this problem with this exercise.

Procedure

- * Prepare the value-cards. Make sure that they contain values, deeply rooted beliefs about what is good and what is bad. Also, try to ensure that each value you note down could be actively supported by at least one of the participants.
- * Explain the exercise.
- * Randomly hand out the value cards to the participants and make sure that everyone receives 8 of them.
- * Ask the participants to “upgrade” the cards through trading – that is, exchange values that they have on their cards with values they prefer. There is no obligation to trade 1 to 1. The only rule is that nobody should end up with less than 2 cards.
- * Once trading has stopped, ask the participants to get together in groups holding similar value-cards. They should discuss what it is they have in common. If you like, you could also ask them to focus on where these values came from and why they hold similar values.
- * Ask them to find somebody that holds values that are very different from theirs. These pairs should try to formulate values they can both agree on, on the basis of what they have on their cards. Although participants might be tempted to simply find compromises by finding more and more abstract or very broad and almost

meaningless statements, motivate them to stay as concrete as possible.

- * Finish the exercise when you feel that most of the pairs have come up with two or three compromise statements.
- * Hold an evaluation meeting with the whole group.

Evaluation

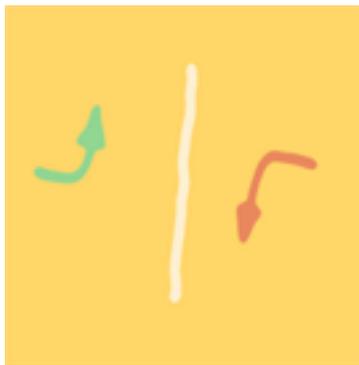
The following questions might be interesting to address during the evaluation:

- * How did the participants feel about the exercise? Was it easy to trade values? What made it easy / difficult?
- * Did they find out something about their own values – and where they come from?
- * How was it to compromise on their values? What made it particularly difficult? How can you compromise on values?

To link this discussion with a reflection on the role values play in intercultural learning: values are often seen as at the foundation of ‘culture’, and they are so deeply rooted that almost all people find it difficult to negotiate about them. How can we then really live together at intercultural level? Are there some common values everybody can agree on? How do you live together if you cannot agree on values? What kind of ‘working agreements’ could you make?

Source

Intercultural Learning T-Kit.



Barometer



Level
all



Time
<1hr



Material
yes



Type
discussion



Timing



Subject

Aims

- * To start a discussion on a topic, for instance prejudices;
- * Better understanding of the concept;
- * Self-awareness.

Group

10-15 people or 20 - 30 people (divided in small groups of 8 - 10 people).

Time

45 minutes.

Material

- * Flipchart,
- * Pens.

Description

This exercise can be used to start a discussion on whatever theme you want. Because all the participants are asked to choose sides, everyone is included in the discussion. On the other hand, people are not forced to say something. With non-verbal communication, they already give a statement.

Procedure

- * Divide a room or another kind of space in two parts by creating a line in the middle in any kind of way. One side means 'I agree' and the other 'I disagree'. There is no middle which might mean 'I don't know'.
- * The facilitator will put a statement forward and the participants will go to one side of the room, according to their opinion. They have two minutes to decide.
- * Then, the participants have six minutes to state the arguments for their choice and convince those on the other side.
- * The people that want to change sides after a few minutes are allowed to do so.
- * The participants have one minute to make a final decision and go to the appropriate side.
- * Then, the facilitator puts another statement forward

Examples of statements:

- * There are some useful prejudices,
- * I have my right to have prejudices,
- * I do not have prejudices,
- * Prejudice always lead to discrimination,
- * Sightseeing is more important than getting to know people,
- * The meeting programme is optional.

Evaluation

For a debriefing session, erase the line in the middle and sit down in a quiet place. Then hold an evaluation that can be based on the following questions:
Did the participants have a hard time choosing a side and if yes, why? When some of the participants were persuaded to change sides, how did they feel about that? Did they really change opinion or not?
Does the group share an idea about prejudices?

Source

Marija Gajic - www.salto-youth.net
& *SCI international publication 'Games and Exercises' (1995).*



Sculpture of violent situations



Level
3



Time
>1hr



Material
no



Type
discussion



Timing
later



Subject
stereotypes

Aims

- * Non verbal communication.
- * Clarifying personal (and/or collective) conceptions of 'power', 'xenophobia' and 'racism', and possibly finding out how they can really be changed.
- * To find out possible culture differences in defining these themes

Group

Small groups of four people

Time

1 to 1,5 hours.

Material

none

Warning!

Expressing a violent situation or seeing one being expressed by others can be a very intense experience. Try to see how everybody feels during the exercise and make sure that there is an atmosphere of respect. For example, no one should be laughed at while making a statue with his/her body

Description

Creating something together in a group can foster cooperation within the group and can show how the participant work together. With this activity, the group process can be 'monitored'. Besides, non-verbal communication in this activity helps participants that are not very strong at the official camp-language express their ideas. Furthermore, it can show how the different participants use non-verbal communication.

Procedure

- * Personal conceptions of 'violence', xenophobia', and 'racism' are expressed through human statues. Group members should represent a situation that they have felt to be racist of xenophobic. This could be introduced as follows:

- * "Try to remember an everyday situation you have seen or experienced yourself, which struck you as racist or hostile to foreigners. Remember scenes or pictures of this 'violence'. In your group, represent this situation as a sculpture".
- * In groups of four, each person takes turns to form the others into a sculpture, including their postures, gestures and even expressions.
- * The sculptures are then performed for the whole audience.
- * Afterwards, you can put in one of the following positive themes:
- * 'three wishes': The builder/sculptor can change three things, e.g. a gesture, a position or a facial expression.
- * 'reality – ideal world – in between': Form a second sculpture showing how the situation would be dealt with in an ideal world. The audience can then suggest a half way sculpture to show how they worked their way from the reality to the ideal.



Sculpture of violent situations

- * REMARKS: 1) This exercise can also be used to express other notions with a bad connotation.
- * 2) In case the exercise generates strong feelings in the participants, the game leaders should be prepared to introduce a discussion about emotions and experiences.
- * VARIATIONS:
- * Sculptures can also be made to represent the collective perception of 'violence', 'xenophobia' and 'racism'. Postures, gestures and expressions in a sculpture can be altered until everybody agrees that it really represents the 'collective' perception. Then collective 'ideals' can be made in the same way.
- * The sculptures can also be made to express a conflict in the group: rather than discussing what happens, the people involved in the conflict are asked to place the others in a sculpture that expresses the conflict (for example one facing in one direction, the other looking away and reaching out with the hand to a third one, while two others are laughing). This can

be a way to understand the frustrations and perceptions of the ones and others, especially when there are language problems in the group.

- * The sculpture as public action: in a public place (e.g. a shopping mall) the group slowly forms, person by person, a communal sculpture. The sculpture should stand for about 5-10 minutes before, one by one, people forming the sculpture break off. Participants can ask passers by for their ideas about violence and possibilities for positive intervention. The process can be repeated a few times

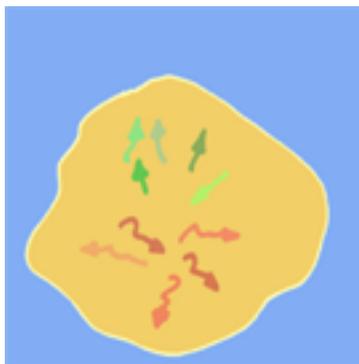
Debrief

To reflect on this exercise, the following questions can be asked:

Did the participants think the sculptures were like in real life? Did they experience any specific feelings when 'being sculptured' or seeing the sculpture? When performing this exercise in public: what were the reactions of the spectators? How can these reactions be explained?

Source

SCI 'Games and Exercises' (1995)



Island game



Level
3



Time
>1hr



Material
no



Type
discussion



Timing
start



Subject
icl

Aims

- * Consciousness of one's own cultural background.
- * Compare one's own and foreign norms.

Group

Minimum 10 people

Time

1-1,5 hours.

Material

None

Description

This exercise is firstly about finding out as a group what the group's idea of culture is, and what the different aspects and 'rules' of it are. Secondly it is about intercultural learning: how to 'survive' amongst a group of people that do not speak your language and have other cultural 'rules'? How can two groups live together peacefully, either positively tolerating each other, or merging into one group without losing their own cultural characteristics? How can they prevent misunderstandings leading to aggression between them?

Procedure

- * The participants divide up into two groups (by nationality in bilateral meetings).
- * Each group (separately) lands on a strange island by shipwreck.
- * The group members discuss how to organise their life on the island, i.e. how to live together, how to provide themselves with food, what their long term aims are, what sort of relationship between men and women to have, what sort of power and leadership structures they have, how should everyday life be regulated, etc. The group mostly deals with the necessary problems and questions of survival.

- * Then the two groups meet. This can be staged as the following story: 'One group finds a boat and lands on the second island, which they think is the mainland. The two groups cannot understand the language of each other. Now they must ask new questions:
- * How to succeed in understanding? How to organise living together now? What conflicts emerge? What sort of power structures is there? Do they fit into conscious aims?

Evaluation

Questions to be asked:

How did you feel within your group? How did you feel in relation to the other group?

Source

SCI 'Games and Exercises' (1995).



Your own exercise



Aim

This exercise is meant for coordinators who want to create their own exercise that fits the group and situation.

Group

As you are making up the exercise yourself, you are supposed to adapt the exercise to the group. For this reason, the number of persons in your group defines the number you create the exercise for.

Time

The subject and the procedure make up the time you set for it.

Material

The materials you need depend on the exercise you have thought of. Make sure that you have made a list of the materials you need and make sure that all materials are present at the beginning of the exercise.

Warning!

Creating one's own exercise is only for people who have a lot of experience in doing and leading similar exercises. It is important to have knowledge about group dynamics in practice and how to influence it, and you should have good practical knowledge when imagining the exercise before letting people doing it. 'Play' the exercise in your head, carefully think about every part of it and write everything down.

Description

In the international voluntary service movement and in youth organisations in general, many of these exercises are used. They have been created by trainers of youth organisations or school teachers throughout the years.

Sometimes, you might think there is no exercise that really fits your group and the subject you want to bring to attention. This is possible of course. All the exercises are made because of this in the first place.

This is not a real exercise, but it gives you some ideas on how to create your own.

Procedure

First and foremost: use the frame in which all the exercises are written down in this module. Always be clear about the timing, aims, group, time, material, description, procedure, debrief and warnings.

- * Start with the aims: why do this exercise? What reflection do you want the participants to go through? What questions do the volunteer have to ask to attain this reflection?
- * Continue with the description and write down the answers to the following questions: what is this exercise about? Why bring up this theme in the form of an exercise (and not just in a discussion for example)? Who is this exercise meant for? While making the description, keep in mind that besides promoting discussions, it is also possible to do a non-verbal exercise. This kind of exercise can help people who are not able to express themselves well in the camp language.



Your own exercise

- * Then write down the procedure and debrief. Be sure that every stage of the exercise is written down clearly and in the right chronological order. Make a clear distinction between the procedure (the actual exercise) and the debrief (talking about the exercise afterwards). In the debriefing session, write down the subjects you want the group to talk about. It can be useful to write this down in the form of questions.
- * Then have a good look at the procedure and write down the practical things: for how many people is this exercise meant? ('group') How much time will it take? (Split out the time in different stages if possible). Do you need any materials and if yes, what exactly? (Write down the whole list and do not forget anything).
- * Finish with the timing and warnings. 'Timing' means the amount of trust within a group: if there is a lot of trust

and there is no real risk doing an exercise that can really touch people, call it 'later'. If not, it is a 'start' exercise. Warnings are really important. If the exercise is about a difficult subject, people should be warned that they should know enough about the subject to go into details within the group. If it is about a subject that might touch people, indicate it. Normally, most of the warnings will only come up after having done the exercise. Write them down for the next time you do the exercise or for other people that might use your exercise.

Debrief

The debriefing session is a very important stage of the exercise. It allows people to reflect about what they have just done and what they could learn from it. They can make a link to themselves and their lives and they might even keep this new knowledge in mind afterwards. Start

with asking someone to have a summary of what they have just done, ask some people to state what can be learned from the exercise, and then ask if they have some example of a similar situation they have gone through.

Source
CCSVI

CHAPTER 6

FURTHER READING

CCIVS Homepage

<http://www.unesco.org/ccivs>

UNESCO and Youth homepage

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.phpURL_ID=5058&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

European youth portal

<http://europa.eu.unt/youth>

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CHAPTER 7

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE?

With this publication, we tried to give you an extensive and comprehensible module enabling to learn more about intercultural learning in international voluntary workcamps. We would like to hear your opinions about the module itself, from the texts providing a context for the exercises, to the exercises themselves. If you want to contribute, you are welcome to send us the answers to the following questions (or a part of it) to cciivs@unesco.org

I. Please, indicate how you liked the following parts of the module
(From 1 as terrible to 5 as great)

i.	Preface	1	2	3	4	5
ii.	Introduction	1	2	3	4	5
iii.	Chapter one – intercultural communication	1	2	3	4	5
iv.	Chapter two – our approach	1	2	3	4	5
v.	Chapter three - what does this concretely mean...	1	2	3	4	5
vi.	Chapter four – using the module	1	2	3	4	5
vii.	Chapter five - exercises	1	2	3	4	5
viii.	Chapter six – further reading	1	2	3	4	5

II. Please, comment on:

1. Was there something missing in the module? If yes, what should be added?

2. Do you think reading the module has changed something in your perception of cultural diversity. If yes, what?

III. If you used some of the exercises that are proposed in the module, which one(s) did you use and did they “work”?

IV. During your project, did any of the following subjects come up in discussions and can you give examples?

- Bi-polar version of the world
- Living an intercultural experience
- Multiplicity of influences in for example music, language, names of people and places, plastic arts, traditions, habits, etc
- The “grain of truth” in stereotypes
- The rewriting of history
- Bringing forward stereotypes in a positive way
- Power relations in stereotypes
- How to create “neutral spaces”
- Ways of stimulating discussion

V. Are there any specific cultural considerations that were missing for the region in which your project took place or do you think that the ideas and exercises of the module can be universally implemented?

VI. Please share any comments, suggested additions, impressions, complaints and ideas the volunteers had in relation to the module during the project (Please specify if you conducted an evaluation session about the module).

VII. How did you experience the intercultural learning process in the group?

VIII. How did you feel about your role?

IX. Did you check any other training resources on coordinating international volunteer projects and/or intercultural learning? Can you recommend any for the bibliography of the module?

Thank you very much for your time and reflections

CCIIVS

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