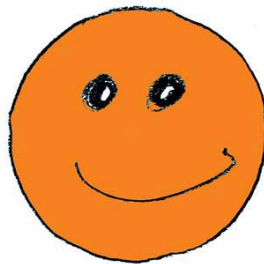


# Some activities to develop psychosocial skills



*"Tell me and I will forget; show me and perhaps I will remember ; involve me and I will understand"*

This Chinese proverb highlights the main difference between the traditional way of teaching, based on imparting information, and the empirical way which allows the participants to work out the theory from practical experience.

It is about bringing changes in attitudes and abilities to enable adults working with children to experience and learn how to accompany their development and how to allow them to expand their own resources.

To reach a certain number of inner changes, we use a specific method which draws its inspiration from the theory of 'learning by experience'.

Psychosocial skills support is considered to be a transversal way of working and an important component of high-quality interventions designed to positively impact the wellbeing of children/ adolescents.

Strengthening skills in the psychosocial field is considered by Education Nationale in France as a "basic intervention, essential for all programs developed in the field, with the goal of reinforcing the inner resources of children and their environment, to guarantee them better personal development".

## **Objectives in the people trained (animators, teachers, social workers, educators...):**

- Promote participation and cooperation in psychosocial interventions ;
- Encourage the individual or the group to take part in the identification of their needs and resources ;
- Use the method of 'learning by experience' (alternating times of practice and of systematic reflection) to develop personal and social skills ;
- Plan psychosocial activities by setting clear objectives that are specific and measurable, aimed at the development of the children's psychosocial skills ;
- Anticipate and adapt to the needs of the beneficiaries and to unexpected circumstances.

## Different behaviours in conflict

<b>Domination "It's that or nothing"</b>	
-	+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One's own interests are sought to the detriment of others ;</li> <li>- there is a fight for power, the conflict cannot be resolved if both parties use that strategy ;</li> <li>- Creates resentment and the desire for revenge in other parties; it damages relationships and belittles the others.</li> </ul>	
<b>Avoidance or resignation "I'll think about it later"</b>	
<i>A diplomatic way of avoiding discussion, it is a withdrawal from a threatening situation.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Risk of break-up because important stakes are not considered and resolved.</li> </ul>	
<b>Adaptation "I accept whatever you want"</b>	
<i>Giving in is the goal; the tendency is to sacrifice one's own interests for those of others.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can create resentment in the one who gives in; it can be seen as a sign of weakness;</li> <li>- the conflict may surface again later.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Favours a climate of harmony.</li> </ul>
<b>Compromise "Let's make an agreement"</b>	
<i>Search for a mutually acceptable solution which may satisfy both parties; sharing on differences, both parties make concessions.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compromise can spawn solutions that are not very creative;</li> <li>- Leads to bargaining relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A happy medium is found; compromise is useful when the parties share equal power and completely different goals;</li> <li>+ Everyone wins and loses something.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration "Two heads are better than one"</b>	
<i>Desire to work with the other party; search for solutions when the stakes are too high to accept a compromise</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demands time and energy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Collaboration is a better solution for all, but it requires a high degree of commitment.</li> <li>+ Greater creativity for problem-solving; reinforces a team and improves a relationship in which people are very involved.</li> </ul>

## **Activity 1:** The desert island- (45 min/ 8-12 years)

### **Objectives**

- Register the group in a problem situation and try to find the best solutions
- To identify the different decision taking in a group

### **Role-playing**

Present the activity : " Today we are on holiday, traveling on a desert island ... We can take 5 things/objects in all. But it is necessary we must agree! Space is limited on the boat ...  
Young people are divided into groups of 5 or 6 max.

### **Instructions**

Step 1: *Personal choice* "only choose the 5 things/objects important to you "

Step 2 : *Pooling* " pooling in each group things/objects retained by each on piece of paper "

Step 3 : *Collective choice* " you make a decision about the 5 things/objects to bring to the group. Note the results of the discussion on the group's page.

Step 4: Each group presents its choice of things/objects.

### **Feedback and analysis**

Ask the young people to share the situation that they wrote down, and how it made them feel :

- Have you managed to come to an agreement in each group ?
- Do it was hard to do ? How did you feel during the exercise ?

*This question will allow young people to express their feelings or pleasant / unpleasant. We can find : frustration , disappointment, discouragement , side -lining , renunciation, or pride, individual or collective success, pleasure ...*

- How did you do in each group ?

*Help young people to identify what has been privileged : consultation, recognition of each or effectiveness and success at the expense of some ... It is possible then make the connection with the feelings expressed. The choice of certain decision taking has effects on the group.*

Others questions :

How did you experience this activity? Which time did you prefer, the collective or the individual?

- Was it hard or difficult to go to the others, or to say no' to somebody to keep your own space? Why?
- Did you learn anything new about yourself? About others?
- How do you find the result?
- What would you like to say about this collective work?

## Activity n°2- Managing emotions (2h/ adolescents and adults)

### Objectives

- Understand the function and usefulness of emotions
- Recognize and understand the role of the four basic emotions (fear, anger, sadness, joy)
- Deal consciously with your own emotions and accompany the emotional reactions of children

### Key Messages

- An emotion is an internal physiological reaction which emerges spontaneously and unconsciously in response to an external event. - It is both psychological and physiological, and needs to be released as soon as possible.  
- A 'feeling', on the contrary, is more sustainable, even controllable, as it is filtered by reason.  
- Each emotion has a use and a reason for being. - It is a healthy and helpful response if we take the time to listen to our emotions.  
- In order to handle an emotion, we need to recognize and accept it, identify where it is coming from, what unfulfilled need it reveals, and finally release it in the

form of words, explicit requests or actions, in response to this need.  
- Each person has their own way to express their emotions: writing, drawing, playing sport, walking in nature, and so on. A very helpful response is to speak to someone we trust.  
- It is very important not to accumulate negative emotions by repressing them. Emotions are pure energy. We should try to express them as soon as possible. If we do not express that we are suffering, it can result in unusual behavior : retreat, solitude, aggression...  
- It is important to be aware of the signals that children give!

### 1. Group activity *Colour labels* (25 min)

Participants stand in a circle with their eyes closed while you stick small self-adhesive labels of different colors on their forehead. The number of labels of each color is not equal and varies according to the size of the group, but there is always one person alone with one color. For

*Example: a group of 20 people includes a group of 10 with blue labels, another group of 6 with red labels, the third group of 3 with yellow, and one single person with a white label.*

**Note of Caution: it is important to choose carefully the person who will be alone (someone capable of expressing their emotions, not the person already discriminated in the group, and so on).**

### Instructions

a. Ask the participants to open their eyes and to group themselves by color in silence. Observe carefully what happens, as this step takes place quickly! Allow a pause for the groups, once they have formed, so that they can become conscious of the emotions they are feeling. No feedback at this point.

b. Ask the participants to silently gather in groups of equal size with as many variations of colour possible in each group. Again, allow for a pause and invite the persons to feel what is happening internally.

### Debriefing

Ask the single person who was labelled white how they felt (*discriminated against, rejected, proud of being different, etc.*). Ask everyone in the other groups how they felt (*the large group felt good, secure together, took pleasure in rejecting the white, had pity for the white, etc.*).

Then ask what was different in the second part of the activity. Encourage participants to speak about their emotions and to not remain only on the factual side of the game. Insist on authenticity. The goal of the second stage is to pass from unbalanced exclusion to balanced inclusion, and thus end up on a positive note.

### 2. Discussion *Basic emotions and how they function* (20 min)

Begin the discussion on the types of emotions, based on what happened in the first activity and extending it to other emotions. Make a flipchart list of the so-called 'positive' and 'negative' emotions. Ask for definitions and explain how they function. Then emphasize the difference with feelings.

### 3. Role-playing *Four emotions* (40 min)

Divide the group into four sub-groups, each of which should choose one of the four emotions. They must imagine or remember a situation involving a child with this emotion and the role of an animator responding to it (10 min of preparation). Each sub-group acts out the role-play, while the others observe the behaviours and responses given by the person who plays the animator (20 min). Short feedback after each situation (10 min).

### 4. Discussion *Role of emotions and appropriate responses* (20 min)

Discuss the function of each emotion and the appropriate response to it. Exchange examples. For more details on the question of the sadness and grief process, see the module *Resilience and resources of the person*.

**5. Experience sharing *Success and failure strategies*(15 min)** Open the discussion to individual experiences and the ways to manage emotions. Touch on success and failure strategies.