



Practicing social abilities

Key message

This dynamic is mainly addressed to promote an efficient communication and to identify styles of social skills that allow us to defend our rights while respecting the rights of others (assertivity). The development of social skills is an essential factor, both to prevent recruitment by extremist groups and to integrate those who want to disengage from these groups (or have already done it) and have suffered a breakdown in their social relations.

Key words: assertivity, conflict solving, social skills

Summary

In various situations, we feel the need to use correct forms of communication that help us solving conflicts in the right way. To deal with these daily situations, we need to analyse our communication styles, learn and recognise different patterns and determine which are the most efficient.

Module	Group size	Group age	Duration
• Prevention • Intervention	• small • medium	• 12 - 15 • 16 - 19 • 20 - 24	• 1 hour

Purpose

- Identify and learn the most efficient communication styles
- Identify communicative patterns before daily situations and recognise common aspects among the others.
- Exchange roles in communication and develop the capacity of analysis and conduct detection from different points of view.

Participants

youngsters and/or families

Description

In order to work with families, we recommend to make a previous presentation of the activity to both youngsters and their families so that they can have a reflection before starting the session on the problems they have when communicating (discussions). The later development can follow the same dynamic.

Step 1: Present and describe the three communication styles: “assertiveness, passivity and aggressiveness”(see below “scheme of communication styles”). Emphasise on the diversity of daily situations in which we have to exercise our communication skills (e.g. ask for something, give-face a criticism, change a rule, defend oneself from an attack). You can also add to the activity the interpretation of non-verbal communication (“body language”) used in each example (facial

expressions, hands, posture, etc.).

SCHEME OF COMMUNICATION STYLES



Step 2: Form pairs (or small groups) and give them a card with the three communicative styles described or leave them visible in a flipchart / projector (see handouts: "Table of communicative styles"). Ask to participants to think about about some examples of situations in which they have reacted in an "aggressive", "passive" and "assertive" way.

Step 3: Make three groups and give them a situation (e.g. make a criticism, ask for a favour, etc.) and an assertive, passive or aggressive communication style. Each group will have to describe a story representing the situation and the style allocated, and how it would be like to use an assertive style. The situation can be the same as that described in the previous step. *This step can be done as a role play where each group is assigned different roles to represent the story in front of the others.

Step 4: Make a pool and think about the emotions and feelings that have arisen in each style, emphasising on the assertive communication style characteristics and asking them which style do they consider more effective. You can make several rounds using only assertive style, or describing a participant's personal event, etc.

Close the session by giving examples of some assertive techniques (see literature).

Materials needed

Blackboard, paper sheets, pencils, Communication Styles Table (this table is illustrative).

Methodology

Self-assessment and role-play.

Advice for Trainer

- Prepare previously a clear description of the communication styles and a large selection of daily examples and types of assertive answers (how to say no, make and receive criticisms, etc.)
- Encourage the roles' exchange.
- It is advised to introduce previously with some dynamic related with interpersonal communication (communication styles).

- Participants can be proposed to report weekly how many times they applied assertive attitudes.

Source / Literature

Links to assertive techniques:

- <http://justificaturespuesta.com/tecnicas-assertivas-para-afrontar-discusion/>
- <http://www.aulafacil.com/cursos/l11472/psicologia/psicologia/taller-de-habilidades-sociales-y-comunicacion/habilidades-assertivas>

Handouts

PRACTICING SOCIAL ABILITIES



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Practicing social abilities. Retrieved %s, from %sSunday January 5, 2025 from <https://toolbox.ycare.eu/courses/YCARE142/>

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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



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