

Character Profiles

Key message

This exercise focuses on getting young people to identify the triggers/characteristics which can lead to a young person being susceptible to radicalisation by asking them to suggest situations and scenarios conducive to radicalisation, and then assessing if they can relate to the character profiles they created. This exercise also helps them to challenge stereotypes and attitudes they may have towards people from certain backgrounds by asking why they thought of that character profile in the first place.

Key words: self-reflection, challenging stereotypes, intercultural awareness and understanding

Summary :

The function of devising character profiles is to present a situation for analysis; to determine what factors created the situation and to explore potential avenues for moving forward.

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

Purpose

- To assess if the situations presented through the characters are easily transferable to participant's experience, can they relate to the individuals they create?
- For participants to reflect on and evaluate the quality of their own values and prejudices
- To assess participants understanding and experience of the topic covered
- To reproduce dilemmas and choices faced in real life

Participants

Suitable for use with a wide variety of groups from age 12 upwards; non-gender specific.

Description

Step 1:

In pairs, the participants are to work on devising character profiles of the different types of people that they believe might potentially be vulnerable to getting involved in radical behaviour. Areas they are to explore and discuss include the individuals:

- Background
- Age
- Family structure
- Religion
- Educational status

Step 2:

After discussing all of the above features the pairs are to construct their character on flipchart sheets. One creative way of doing this (especially for younger age groups) is to get one person from each pair to lie down on a couple of sheets of flipchart which have been stuck together with tape. Their partner draws around them creating an outline of a person which they can then use as the basis of their character. They can name them, dress them in a particular way etc.

Step 3:

The pairs present their character and say a little about why they chose this particular person to fill the brief they were given.

Step 4:

After all the pairs have presented their work, their characters can be hung on the walls and displayed around the room. The facilitator asks participants to brainstorm what they believe might happen to each character in the future.

Materials needed

Flipchart, Markers, Cellotape/Stick tape

Methodology

Development of character profiles, Partnership working, Large group discussion.

Advice for Trainer

Additional follow up questions for the large group discussion should include...

- How did you find the exercise?
- Was it easy to reach agreement with your partner on the type of character you would focus on?
- Why did you choose that particular type of person?
- Did you feel you were prejudiced towards any particular type of individual?
- What was your character's motivation for getting involved in this type of behaviour?
- What do you feel towards them...empathy, anger something else?
- Can you relate to this person?

Source / Literature

Original material developed for the purpose of the YCARE project.



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