

Volunteering Reloaded!

Curriculum of voluntary training



**Funded by
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The photos used were taken during the Volunteer training,
(June 25-27, 2022. -Hungary, Domaszék, Stella Maris)



Volunteering Reloaded! - Increasing young people's willingness to volunteer, raising the general social profile of volunteering and promoting volunteering at local/regional level (Project ID:2021-2-HU01-KA210-YOU-000051350)

ISBN 978-963-89138-1-4



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Preface

This publication was produced within the framework of the Volunteering Reloaded project, for the purpose of presenting youth organizations new methods and practices in the field of reaching out to and the personal development of volunteering individuals. The publication itself works with non-formal, experience-based and drama pedagogy elements, in order to develop and improve young people's organizational skills. Another goal of the publication is to increase the commitment, responsibility and motivation of young people and volunteers, with practice-oriented training. We hope and believe, that the publication will successfully achieve its goal, for which we wish for all participants: volunteer leaders and young volunteers – and last but not least, good time, and to have fun with the training exercises.



Group photo

Preparations

Previous experiences and motivations of the participants

The young people who came to the training, filled out a questionnaire previously, from which it can be clearly seen, that ⅔ of the group already had previous volunteer experience. They gained some of their experience at school and other events and festivals, so there was already a strong basic knowledge level and experience in the group, on which we were able to more easily build up to the further levels.

In response to the question about their volunteer motivations, they wrote the following: gaining experience, helping others, personal development (expanding perspectives, getting out of the personal comfort zone), making new acquaintances and relationships, and spending their free time more wisely and usefully.

When we asked them, why they applied for the training program, the answers included the useful and fun days spent in the company of newly met people with similar interests, the opportunity to gain new knowledge and experience, and the opportunity for personal development, which shows a high degree of overlapping, with their basic motivation.



A snapshot from the training

Structure of the training

During the making of structure of the training, we took into account not only the volunteers' previous experiences, but also the designated goals of the project, and based on this, we created the following structure:

- 30% team building, promotion of group cohesion, within which was emphasized learning about common values, team building, relationship building, getting to know each other's organizations and region more deeply and in details;
- 30% development of self-awareness: our aim was to bring the participants closer to their own motivation, in connection with volunteering, to make them aware of the background of their presence and the undertaken tasks, in order to further develop their empathy skills;
- 30% skill development, during which we provided space for assertive and non-verbal communication, as well as the exchange of organizational skills and best practices;
- 10% promotion of task definition and commitment, when the participants could hear specific examples about the two events, in which they will participate as volunteers.



A snapshot from the training

The schedule for the three days of the training:

Time/Day	Monday (June 25.2022.)	Tuesday (June 26.2022.)	Wednesday (June 27.2022.)
		Wake up call	Wake up call
8:00		Breakfast	Breakfast
9:00		Training: Team building and communications block	Training: organizational skills
10:00			
11:00	Preparations		
12:00	Arrival of participants (room reservations)		
13:00	Lunch (Opening of the training, general rules)	Lunch	Lunch
14:00	Training: (Rules of the training) Getting to know each other games and team-building sessions	Training: Self awareness	Closing the training
15:00			Departure home
16:00			
17:00			
18:00			
19:00	Dinner	Dinner	
20:00	Board & party games	Quiz and party games	
21:00			
22:00	Evening routine	Evening routine	
23:00	Bedtime	Bedtime	

Implementation of the training

For the exercises that we used in the training, it was important to provide the participants with their own experience, as well as to include elements of learning by practical doing and of experiential pedagogy. We only used the frontal presentation method to a minimal extent, applying it when understanding the concept or phenomenon was necessary for its practical application (assertive communication).

Below is a description of the exercises for each designated area. For each unit, we kept gradation in mind: the depth of the topics involved was adjusted to the time spent together by the group, and to the experiences already lived together, to the level of trust developed. The descriptions of the exercises are also listed in this order.

1. Getting to know each other games and team-building sessions

In order to work the most effectively, it is advisable to get to know each other and build a team in advance for the members of the group, who already worked together for a long time or performed short, but intensive tasks together. With this in mind, we prepared the following set of exercises for the participants.

Three important dates



Goal: getting to know each other, creating a pleasant atmosphere

Time frame: depends on the size of the group, 2-3 minutes for each participant

Number of participants: 10-30 people

Accessories: –

The course of the exercise:

The group forms a circle. Each participant formulates three dates that are important to him/her, which contributed to his/her coming to this training/education, and then presents them to the others in chronological order. For each date, you can briefly tell the circumstances, events or mention the important people who influenced the participant's decisions. During the presentation, each participant stands up from their chair and can imagine a straight line inside the circle, diagonally, which symbolizes the passage of time. Following this, he/she presents the dates of three important events.

Variations:

The three dates can be related to a specific topic:

- 3 important festivals that he/she participated in,
- 3 important concerts he/she saw,
- 3 important events that led him/her to volunteering,
- 3 important people who guided him/her towards volunteering

Evaluation:

We can observe the common elements together, and then at the end we can summarize, what (and who) are the events/circumstances/persons that influence our life, or even can completely change our life path.

Introducing yourself to the group using your own keychain or bag



Goal: getting to know each other, introduction of the participants of the training, tuning into self-presentation with symbols, assessing the group's resistance, along our projections

Time frame: depends on the size of the group, 2-3 minutes for each participant

Number of participants: any number of participants, all members of the group

Accessories: The participants own keychain or bag

The course of the exercise:

The participants sit in a circle and prepare for the exercise their own keychain/bag, with which they came to the training. The exercise leader instructs them to introduce themselves through their keychain/bag, i.e. tell them what their keychain/bag says about them, in the "here and now" moment.

The participants personify their objects, and the objects "speak" about them during the exercise. They present the keychain/bag in detail, also covering what the individual characteristics reveal about them.

Example: Excerpt from a participant's introduction: I am Mari's keychain. I have a lovely keychain from Barcelona on me, Mari's favorite. This also shows that Mari likes to travel a lot, and when she travels to a place, she always brings home some kind of memory item....

Variations:

It can be done with other objects that are useful for the group, or that reveal information about the participants relevant to the topic of the training for the group.

Evaluation:

It is not necessary at this stage of the group's development.

Note:

If we are doing the exercise with a keyring, encourage the participants to cover all the things on the keyring. If we do the exercise with a bag, then in addition to the outside of the bag, also show the objects inside. Of course, in both cases there may be objects or parts that the participants do not like to talk about, so it is possible that not every part or object will be presented.



The picture is an illustration. Source: pixabay.com

If the individual participants seem to have difficulty formulating facts that the objects would say about them, or if they get stuck, help them with questions, that we ask the objects in a dramatic way (for example: "Tell me, dear keyring, what does this keyring tell us about Mari?").

It often happens that individual participants find it difficult to describe themselves in the third person singular. If necessary, we should help them by reminding them: to speak „on behalf” of their subject/object.

Gear wheel



Goal: getting to know each other, developing mutual attention, creating a pleasant atmosphere, getting the group be more dynamic

Time frame: 20 minutes

Number of participants: 10-30 persons

Accessories: –

The course of the exercise:

The participants face each other, creating two lines. If there is an odd number of participants, each time someone “rests”.

The group leader will raise several questions/topics, which the participants will discuss as follows: one side speaks for 1 minute, then on the referee’s signal they switch, and now the other side speaks for 1 minute on the same topic. After the first round is over, everyone takes one step to the right, and this is how pairs are exchanged. The new couple gets a new topic.

Other topic suggestions:

- What kind of festivals do you like?
- What festivals have you participated in?
- What music/bands do you like?
- How do you spend your free time?
- Have you ever volunteered somewhere? If yes, where?
- Why did you apply for this program?
- Why is volunteering important to you?
- What do you think of the concept of “volunteering”?

Variations:

Since this material is part of a voluntary training for festival organizers, we put more emphasis on this topic. Any other topic can be introduced with this game or used for the purpose of getting to know each other.

Other topic suggestions:

- What are your favorite movies?
- If a movie were made about your life, what would it be like?
- Who are the three celebrities you would go to dinner with?

- How do you imagine yourself in 10 years?
- What is the most memorable trip of your life? Why?
- Tell me about your hobby.
- If you could do anything you want and money didn’t matter, what would it be?
- Which activities do you tend to forget about? What could you talk about for hours?

Note:

This exercise helps, to have as many participants as possible, to talk to each other in a short time. Exciting conversations can start during the game, which can be continued in an informal atmosphere during a break or after training.

Canned self-confidence



Goal: development of social sensitization, empathy and mutual attention

Time frame: takes place during the entire program

Number of participants: 10-30 persons

Accessories: For each participant, an empty mason jar, stationery (pencil/pen), small colored slips of paper. If the mason jars are also being decorated, then use felt pens to write on colored glass.

The course of the exercise:

On the first day/beginning of the training, each participant receives a mason jar, on which they can write their name and perhaps decorate it as they wish. These mason jars are placed on a table in an easily accessible part of the common space. Next to them we put



The mason jar used in the practice is empty,

the stationery and the small, colorful cards.

During the time spent together, the participants can anonymously write positive feedback, advice or encouraging messages on the colored slips, which are placed in the person's mason jar. It is recommended that everyone leave at least one such message to each of their colleagues during the training, but they can also leave more, as they wish.

At the end of the training, each participant receives his/her own mason jar and can read the messages received. Everyone can take these items home, as a souvenir.



and then later at the end of the training

Variations:

Instead of mason jars, you can use socks, baskets or bags, depending on what you have on hand or what is the theme of the training.

My motivation for the camp?



Goal: getting to know each other, formulating the motivation for the training, practicing self-awareness, listening to each other, practicing listening

Time frame: 45 minutes

Number of participants: 10-30 persons

Accessories: a worksheet and stationery (pencil/pen) for each participant

The course of the exercise:

Each participant receives a series of questions that he/she fills out individually. The questionnaire sheet contains the following questions:

My goals for this training:

- What would I need from the trainers, to make the training go well/usefully?
- What would I need from the others, to make the training go well/usefully?
- What would I need from myself, to make the training go well/usefully?
- How much do you plan to immerse yourself in the tasks?

1-----10

After each participant has completed the questionnaire individually, they discuss their answers in small groups. Small groups should have 3-4 members. In this way, all participants will have the opportunity to put their goals and needs into words, which will help them to become more aware of it, and it will lead to greater satisfaction for them.

Variations:

If all participants agree, the expectations or goals can be written on a common flipchart sheet, which can then be evaluated at the end of the training, analyzing which ones have been met and which ones need to be worked on, in the future.

Evaluation:

After the discussions in small groups, everyone can share with the other participants 1-2 important thoughts, that they wrote on their papers, or that they became aware of during the discussions.

Note:

It is always worth doing this task with the participants at the beginning of the training, as this way we can assess their attitude, find out their expectations and fears in advance, and make them aware of their goals. All this can help them, to participate in the training more actively and motivated. It can be useful, if the participants write their names on the question line, and then the trainer collects and reads them. It can help to ensure, that the trainer pays sufficient attention to the needs of the participants and prepares for the rest of the training, with personalized tasks and discussions.

Mission impossible



Goal: energizing, ice breaker/starter, program/camp launching, creation of proper atmosphere

A first, funny activity to be solved together, with many small problems and tasks, so that all members of the group can actively participate. The team's initiative, activity, imagination, humor, communication, and problem-solving skills can be assessed during the game. It is excellent for creating the basic atmosphere of a program/camp.

Time frame: 40-60 minutes

Number of participants: the whole group

Accessories: Mission Impossible soundtrack music, music player, speakers, written task list (on a flipchart, on large format paper), for the managers of the practice, black clothing for the "secret agent appearance" purposes, sunglasses, sheets of paper, stationery

The course of the exercise:

Setting/story: We usually do it at the beginning of the program, when the group members are still trying to give their best. We enhance the atmosphere with a role-play, for example dressing up as secret agents (wearing sunglasses and black clothes). Example of a frame story: "Cadets! This is not a simple training/exercise/program, we are training new secret agents. This is the drop-in exam, only those who complete the following tasks can continue the program with us..."

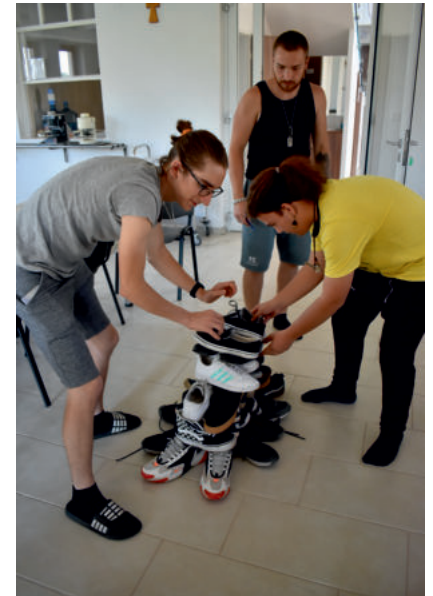
The derivation of the activity:

In order for the activity to "sound bigger and better", you can do a small meditative exercise with the group beforehand, where they can think about how they decided to come to this



Solutions to the task in pictures

program, how they prepared, what the trip was like, their first impressions of the location, the about other participants etc. It's okay if they chuckle, and/or if they don't get too deep. When we reach the end of the meditation: after a loud exclamation "And then let's begin!", the music can be started, and the frame story can be soldiered on, to get the group pumping and going. It can help if they are surprised, because it also moves the group into a different, more playful and focused state. It is worth listing all the tasks, or at least a few, so that a minimal relationship and communication can start with the participants.



Solutions to the task in pictures

If at the end of what has to be said, they still don't move, then it's worth encouraging them - also in a military style: "Come on, people, we don't have much time!" etc.

Some examples of the assignments:

- Build the highest shoe tower!
- Everyone should wear half socks!
- Organize a horse race and bet on the horses!
- The five of you should hug 5 trees together and take a picture (selfie)!
- Have a group hug every 15 minutes!
- Calculate how old you are in total!
- Find objects with all the letters of the ABC!
- Collect 4 objects that are not what they seem!
- Make an interview with XY!
- Do seven push-ups together, so that no one's feet touch the ground!
- Write a short story, in which everyone's name is included!
- Write down your childhood dreams!
- Draw a 5 meter rabbit!
- Take a group photo, where everyone looks different than usual!

- Make a poster using your kindergarten signs!
- Write a poem featuring everyone's favorite animal!
- Come up with a battle cry for yourself!
- Sing a folk song together every 20 minutes!
- Create choreography for a ByeAlex song!
- Count how many chair legs there are in the building!
- Write down the settlements you came from!
- Find out how many rooms are there, in our accommodation!
- Find out when our accommodation was built!
- immortalize the story of your journey today, in the form of a comic book!
- Divide the largest body height value by the smallest body height value, then multiply this by the quotient of the longest and shortest hair length, and finally display the result in the form of a living statue!
- Write a story using words starting with the initials of your full names!
- Display 3 works of art with a live sculpture!
- Count how many siblings you have in total!
- Find the month, in which most of the people here were born!
- Chunchink out the pressners! (This makes no sense, but when the team starts to be puzzled and ask questions, the answer is: "What do you not understand about this task, chunchink out the pressners!" It is worth observing, how the group reacts to this type of challenge - with humor or incomprehension? With a momentum or stagnation? With fantasy or choosing the simpler way?)
- Take photos of everything! (This is especially useful, because those who find it difficult to dissolve, will become more part of the process with photography.)

It is good if they have approx. 1-2 minutes for a certain task, and they



Solutions to the task in pictures

can solve it, but moreover, it is not important if they don't solve all the tasks. The main thing is, that they get excited and that we can see what kind of group we are dealing with. The challenges can be simpler physical, linguistic, social, logical - you name it, but it is important, that they can be implemented and finished quickly.

Evaluation:

It is worth looking at the "evidence" one by one, checking all the tasks, to see if they are there, and if not, then ask why not. It is not necessary to process the task explanation very deeply and in detail, but you can talk about the attitude towards the performance, compliance, activity-passivity and leader-follower roles.



Solutions to the task in pictures

Reference: (Makai N. – Kis-Kopárdi Csaba: Innovatív fejlesztési terv és módszertan a nevelőotthonokban nevelkedő – különös tekintettel a speciális nevelési igényű – fiatalok készségfejlesztésére; Élményakadémia KHE, Tavaszi Szél projekt (Erasmus+ 2014-1- HU02-KA205- 000424))



Solutions to the task in pictures



Snapshot

Creating an Instagram page and story for volunteer recruitment



Goal: energization, promotion of motivation for volunteering, creating/strengthening of group cohesion among the participants

Time frame: 120-150 minutes

Number of participants: 9-18 persons

Accessories: To create an Instagram page: a template that displays the interface of an Instagram page (see image 1); newspapers with color pictures; scissors, glue, felt-tip pens, colored pencils, paints

To create and present an Instagram story: projector, Instagram app/Internet platform, funny items: stuffed animals, masks, hats, wigs or whatever we have available



A template displaying the interface of the Instagram page



Solutions to the task in pictures

receives a template representing an empty Instagram page (the template has 9 Instagram image spaces). We instruct the groups to fill out the Instagram page template, with images and information. To give their organization a name (this should also be the name of the Instagram page). Also, enter a short description or message to your “followers”, for the information section of the template page. And for the parts containing pictures/photographs, make pictures using the tools you have available (newspapers with pictures, scissors, drawing tools, glue).

Making of an Instagram story: They create an Instagram story on the phone of one of the group members, in video format. The purpose of the Instagram story is, to recruit volunteers into their own imaginary organization. In addition, the content of the story is not defined, they can shape it according to their own creative ideas.

The presentation:

At the end of the exercise, all groups individually present to the other participants



Solutions to the task in pictures

The course of the exercise:

The participants form small groups of 4-5 people, and create an Instagram page for an imaginary organization employing volunteers, as well as an Instagram story in video format recruiting volunteers.

Making of an Instagram page: Each of the groups

their template, containing the Instagram page, explaining the details. Then they will present their Instagram story. Watch the story using a projector, so that it is clearly visible to everyone.

Variations:

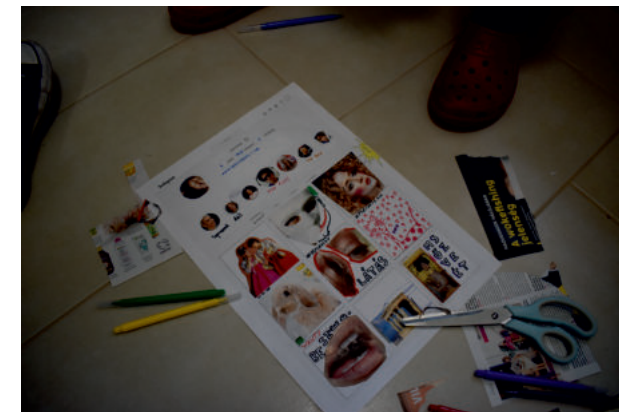
You can use other social media platforms interfaces and templates instead of Instagram: Facebook, Tik-tok etc.

Evaluation:

No separate evaluation is required from the participants. If we want a short feedback, we should sit back in a circle and ask the participants what was the most interesting and joyful experience for them, during the creation of the Instagram profile and the story. During the feedback round, we can progress in teams, but the participants can also share their experiences independently.



Solutions to the task in pictures



Solutions to the task in pictures

Note:

For the presentation part of the exercise, we should use an Instagram account, through which we can present the stories. Participants can send this to us in the form of a message on the Instagram interface, or mark our page in the story, so that it is easier to find it when playing.

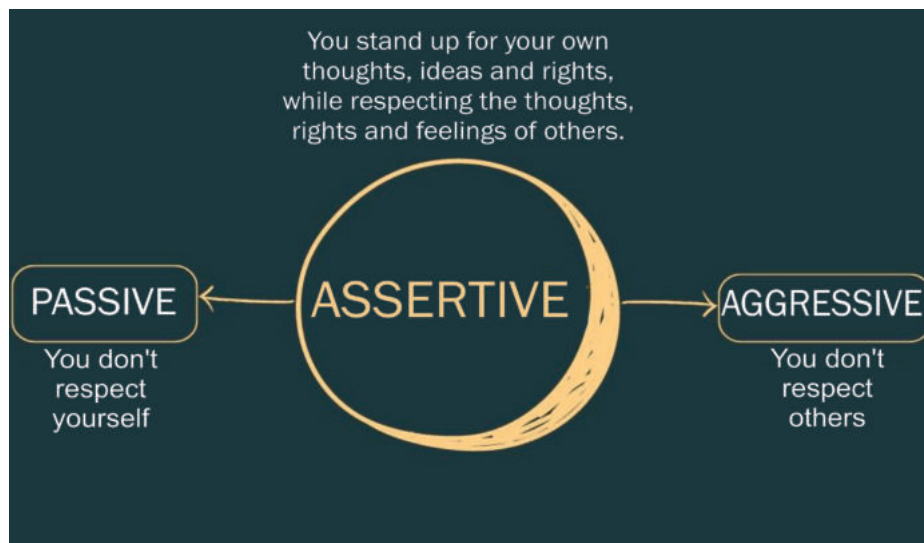
2. Communication exercises

At festivals and events with many participants, communication with visitors, organizers, and fellow volunteers is essential. In order for everyone involved to feel comfortable and the work to run smoothly, it is worth dealing with some communication aspects during the preparations. We brought the assertive and non-verbal communication closer to our volunteers, with the following two exercises.

The theory of assertive communication

Psychologists have distinguished three main communication styles in everyday communication, which mainly surface in case of a dispute or quarrel: these are: the passive, the aggressive and the assertive style. Each person is closer to one style, but no one can be said to always communicate in one or another style. It can be influenced by the situation, the momentary state of mind, the relationship with the interlocutor, or the importance of the situation to us.

The diagram below shows the important characteristics of the three communication styles:



In the case of *passive communication*, the person inhibits his/her own behavior to avoid confrontation and quarrels, does not take into account his/her own feelings, thoughts or opinions, and therefore always acts according to the will of others. Many times he/she does not dare to express his/her opinion, thinking that it is wrong, inappropriate or even not important for the others. Humble, quiet, often pleases others, shy, conformist, does not like to argue.

In the case of *aggressive communication*, the person does not take into account and does not respect the opinions and feelings of others, acts according to his/her own will without showing any interest in his/her interlocutors. He/She often attacks, criticizes, insults, talks a lot, doesn't let others talk, often speaks in a high tone, tense and nervous.

Assertive communication is a mixture of the communication styles outlined above, in a positive direction. An assertive person dares to express his/her own feelings, thoughts and opinions, while respecting his/her interlocutors. He/She talks about himself/herself, does not attack others and is open to dialogue.

Characteristics of assertive behavior:

Representing one's own person in such a way, that it also respects the interests of the other party. The emphasis is not on one's own (aggressiveness) and not on the other party's (passivity) aspects, but on the interests of both parties at the same time, he/she lets both options prevail, and then decides jointly with the other party.

Self-affirmation, I-messages

The most important element of assertive communication is the use of self-messages (I-messages), as this is the best way to focus on our own feelings and thoughts, without the other person feeling offended or attacked. Revealing the facts and showing our own feelings, always helps the other person, to not automatically take a defensive or offensive position.

- Don't talk about the other person! Rather, say what is inside you, what you need. Opinions about others will cause resistance.
- Make yourself aware, of what is inside of you, how certain situations made you feel.

Example: I get scared, when you talk to me like that.

The last presentation was done by myself. I was frustrated by this and wish we could do the next one together.

Listening with understanding attention

Another important element of assertive communication, is listening. Without this, we cannot leave room for the other party's opinion and will.

- Let's listen and hear, what the other person says, and then take that into account.
- Let's repeat briefly, summarize what the other person said, checking that we understood exactly what he/she said.
- Ask him/her if we don't understand something, or if something is not clear to us.

Self awareness

Alf we want to talk about our own emotions and thoughts, we first need to be aware of, and to accept them. At the same time, we must be able to control our anger or fear, in order to communicate assertively.

In order not to push only ourselves or only the other to the fore, a kind of flexibility is necessary. This flexibility can only be achieved, if we are able to consciously change our behavior. Self awareness can really help in all of this.

It often happens, that we know the theory of assertive communication, but in difficult situations or with certain people, it does not work, or it is almost impossible for us to apply it. In such cases, there is nothing left, but a more thorough self awareness or psychotherapy, since we cannot apply what we have learned, due to barriers, fears, or even traumas.

Other information about assertive communication:

- If we manage to start an emotionally overheated conversation by listening, we have a better chance of reaching an agreement.
- Acknowledging and accepting the other person's feelings and desires, does not mean, that we necessarily agree with them.
- Don't expect mind reading from others. Let's try to openly express what is difficult for us, what feelings and desires we have, and how these could be remedied.
- Don't be afraid that the other person will be angry, and therefore prefer not to say anything. Realize, that the other person's emotional reaction is not our responsibility, and if you want to be in a long-term relationship with someone, it's worth telling what's on your mind.
- If we strive for a common solution, it is very important to ask: how he/she sees the subject matter.
- It's perfectly okay to say no, to something we don't feel like doing. You don't have to explain or to break yourself during work. It is our responsibility, to take care of ourselves, by saying what we want or feel.



The photo below was taken during the training

Assertiveness in everyday life – a situational exercise

Goal: development of assertive communication skills, overcoming communication problems, development of problem solving skills, self-awareness

Time frame: 60- 90 minutes

Number of participants: 10-20 persons

Accessories: small scapula's, on which the different situations are written

The course of the exercise:

Before starting the task, be sure to talk to the participants, about assertive communication. If this topic is unknown to them, then let's give them a short lecture on it, so that they get to know the theory.

After explaining or updating the theory, the participants form pairs. Each pair draws a situation, which they have to act out in front of the others in two ways: first using aggressive or passive communication, and second, using assertive communication. Every situation must contain a conflict situation.

After each role-play, the participants should identify the elements of assertive communication, the words, sentences or non-verbal elements, which referred to assertive communication.

Situations:

1. At a festival, a drunk man starts arguing with the organizers and disturbs the other participants.
2. People stand in line for a long time to buy tickets for a performance on a hot day. Everyone is nervous and impatient. One of the dads gets in line, but the cashier doesn't have enough change, to return it properly.
3. At a festival, none of the volunteers want to pick up the trash after a concert. The organizer has to convince some volunteers to do that task.

4. One of the organizers yells at the volunteers, if they don't complete a task perfectly or quickly enough. One of the volunteers decides to stand up for himself/herself and responds to the respective organizer.
5. At an event, one of the volunteers feels taken advantage of, he/she thinks that he/she has to work much more than the others. He/She decides to tell this, to one of his/her superiors.
6. Two volunteers apply for the same task, which requires only one person. Their superior tells them to decide among themselves who stays and who resigns from that task.

Variations:

These situations can also be linked to other topics. Since this material is part of a voluntary training for festival organizers, we put more emphasis on this topic. Any theme can be developed with similar role-playing games.

Evaluation:

- How did it feel for you, to communicate in an aggressive/passive/assertive way?
- Which communication style were you able to apply most easily?
- Which communication style was the most difficult for you to use?
- Which communication style do you use most often in similar situations?
- What (could) prevent(s) you from communicating assertively in conflict situations, from now on?
- How do you think others will react, if you assertively try to resolve your conflicts?

Note:

It may happen, that it will be too difficult for someone to speak or perform in front of others. In such cases, do not force the role play, it is enough if that person only participates in the assessment or evaluation.

Since there is also a strong self-awareness part of the task, in the case of a large number of participants, it is recommended that it is done in significantly smaller groups.

Festival sign language



Goal: creating common sign language, for situations occurring at the festival, team building, reviving the characteristics of non-verbal communication

Time frame: 40 minutes

Number of participants: the whole group

Accessories: flipchart board, on which we write the common words

The course of the exercise:

Non-verbal communication is also especially useful, when the volunteers serving at the festival, cannot communicate with each other verbally, because the distance between them is too great, or the noise is so loud, that they cannot hear each other. In preparation for this eventuality, the volunteers develop their own “festival sign language” among themselves, which includes the signs for expressions that may occur during a festival.

With the participation of the entire group, let's collect the 10-15 situations and sentences that they may need, and let the participants create a sign or combination of signs for these. We practice all of them together. If the participants are open to it, we can also record these movements on video.

Note:

During the program, it is worth reminding the participants of these signs a few more times, so that they become ingrained in them, and cause fun moments for the whole company.



The picture is an illustration

3. Self awareness block

Every practice, exercise and experience contains self-knowledge information. From time to time, it is important to give space to this information, to disentangle it, to raise awareness. The training is not aimed at a deep self-knowledge work, but we thought it important to include some self-observation and self-examination in the program, which brings the participants closer to their own motivation, in connection with volunteering. We also dealt with empathy, which is also an important element, of being a person working in a community.

The theory of empathy

The previous two exercises strongly develop the empathic skill. In addition to experiential learning, it is also worth talking about empathy, so that it is fixed on a cognitive level as well, and they can consciously pay attention to it.

Empathy is the ability to recognize and understand the emotions of others. With the help of empathy, we can put ourselves in the other person's state of mind, thus better understanding what and why they feel, think or act. We feel the other's feelings and motives, without the other necessarily expressing them in words or logically following them. Through empathy, the emotions and tensions of the other person are recalled in our own personality, which is why it is said, that we have a common code with the people with whom we can empathize. This means that we have something in common, we have experienced similar situations and feelings, we have a common trait, or we are connected by something similar. We cannot be empathetic with everyone, but only with those with whom we share a common code, or with whom we can develop a common code over time. Empathy is a choice. We decide to put ourselves in the background and focus on the other, empathize, and stand by the other, even if it causes us difficulty or discomfort.

Since empathy is a skill, it can be developed. Self-awareness is one of the surest ways to increase our empathy, because without knowing and un-

derstanding ourselves, it is almost impossible to understand the others. At the same time, empathy does not appear in the same way for everyone, it can be influenced by many factors: gender, age, frequency of intimate relationships, life experience, preoccupation with ourselves (in the case of illness, anxiety, fear, tension, we find it difficult to pay attention to others), or the degree of our self-evaluation.

According to American professor Brené Brown, empathy has four important characteristics:

1. the ability to see the world through the other person's eyes, or to recognize that their point of view is the truth;
2. non-judgmental approach;
3. recognizing other's feelings;
4. communicating these to them.

Benefits of people with high level of empathy:

- thrive better in social situations,
- resolve conflicts successfully,
- they easily form real intimate relationships,
- they know themselves better,
- they can help others more effectively, especially in the spiritual/mental field.

The following situations do not count as empathy:

- emotional contagion (automatic physiological behavior: yawning, laughing),
- sympathy (we feel unhappiness, when someone is suffering),
- regret,
- counseling,
- minimizing the seriousness of the situation,
- solving other people's problems.

Emotional problems are almost impossible to solve with the tools of reason. Empathy only takes place, when the brain stands aside. We can only be empathetic with our hearts.

Me as a volunteer



Goal: increasing self-awareness, empathy, getting to know each other, awareness of goals and motivations

Time frame: 45-60 minutes (depending on the number of participants)

Number of participants: 10-30 persons

Accessories: a pack of Dixit cards or other similar illustrated cards/pictures

The course of the exercise:

The group forms a circle. Place the Dixit cards or illustrations in the center of the circle.

The trainer should ask the participants: How do they imagine themselves as volunteers? How could they express that using metaphors? Allow a few minutes of thinking time, and then let the participants choose a picture/illustration from the pack that is closest to the metaphor they imagine.

After everyone has chosen the right card, they present it to the other participants in a large circle and explain why they chose that card. The trainer can help the conversation with the following questions:

- Why did you start volunteering?
- What areas do you like to work in at this time (e.g. organization, packing, dealing with children)?
- What qualities do you bring to the fore at this time?
- What are your expectations from managers in such situations?
- How does volunteering contribute to your self-esteem?

Variations:

After each participant has presented their card, they can look for similarities and differences together, or even write them down on a flipchart. If the group is too large and it would take a lot of time to listen to everyone, then the participants can work in small groups of 4-5 people, and then a spokesperson will briefly present the important or possibly common thoughts expressed in the small group.

Note:

If we are working with a beginner group or the participants are still too young, it may be difficult for them to define themselves as volunteers, or even to choose a card. In such cases, it might be worthwhile to ask the additional helping questions right before the task, or write them down on a flipchart, so that they can choose a card based on them.

Dance of the loop sticks

Goal: increasing empathy, dynamizing the group, increasing attention to each other, developing non-verbal communication

Time frame: 45-60 minutes (depending on the number of participants)

Number of participants: 10-30 persons

Accessories: 10-15 cm long loop sticks, various music with different rhythms

The course of the exercise:

Before starting the exercise, be sure to talk to the participants about empathy. If this concept is unknown to them, then let's give them first a short lecture about it, so that they get to know the theory.

Participants form pairs (couples). Each pair is given 2-3 loop sticks, which they place on their



The photos were taken during the exercise

ir bodies, with one end of the stick touching one person's body and the other end touching the other person's body. They are not allowed to hold the sticks with their hands, and they are not allowed to talk during the task. When the music starts, the couple must dance to the rhythm and follow each other's movements, so that the loop sticks don't fall or break.

When we change music, everyone has to find another partner and continue the task with them as a pair. Play music of varying styles and rhythms, and let each round last 1-2 minutes. At the end, the task can be concluded with a joint choreography.



Photos of the exercise

Variations:

You can make the game more difficult by giving couples more loop sticks or placing obstacles on the dance floor. You can also set up an obstacle course, which the couples have to pass through on the rhythm.

If we want to turn the exercise into a competition, then the pairs where the loop sticks fall, are getting eliminated. The pair where the sticks do not fall at all, wins.

Evaluation:

After the exercise, the importance of cooperation, the role of empathy and the need to pay attention to each other can be highlighted and pointed out. The following questions can be answered together:

- How did they feel during the game?
- What seemed difficult about this task?
- Whose movements were easy/difficult to follow? Why?
- How did they resolve communication without words?
- To what extent have they attempted bold moves?



Photos of the exercise

Note:

This exercise usually lifts the mood of the group, it is fun and they tend



Photos of the exercise

to laugh a lot. It can be used at the end of the day, when the group is already tired or overwhelmed.

It can happen that someone finds it difficult to dance in front of others. In this case, don't force them to dance to the rhythm, it's enough if they move or simply walk around the room.

My volunteer motivation - Tell me about your partner`s!



Goal: attunement and attention to others, development of cognitive empathy

Time frame: 30-40 minutes (depending on the number of participants)

Number of participants: any even number of participants, all members of the group

Accessories: –

The course of the exercise:

Before starting the exercise, be sure to talk to the participants about empathy. If this concept is unknown to them, then let's give them first a short lecture about it, so that they get to know the theory.

At the beginning of the exercise, the participants sit in a circle. Then we give them the instruction to choose a partner for themselves, to work together as a pair. After that, they retreat with their partner to a place, where they can stay alone. Their task is to tell their partner, why they came to volunteer and what their motivations are.

Meanwhile, their partner listens carefully and may ask open-ended questions, that help the storyteller explain his/her motivations. Both members of the couple talk about their motivations. After that, they come back to the room, and the couples sit next to each other. Next, they tell the other members of the group about their partner's motivations. They do this as follows: they stand behind their partner, and place their hands on both shoulders of the partner. Then they say: "Hello, I'm -the couple's name- and I'll tell you why I signed up as a volunteer" - then they tell their couple's motivations. Meanwhile, the other member of the pair, whose motivations are being told, does not communicate verbally or nonverbally with the rest of the group. When the first member of the pair has finished, the pairs switch places and the motivations of the previous storyteller are told by the other member of the pair.

Variations:

We can change the topic, of which the group members tell each other. A version, in which we ask group members to tell a specific story, may be easier for them. For example, we ask them to tell a specific story related to why they volunteered, or a specific event that happened during their volunteer work so far, that was most important to them. It can be used excellently as a warm-up exercise, as it helps group members tune in to each other.

Evaluation:

As soon as both members of all pairs have told their motivations, we stay in a circle and ask the participants to share their experiences. They should also talk about what it was like, to be in the role of the storyteller, what it was like, to hear their own motivations. Any other experience can also be freely shared in this circle.

Note:

Participants should choose a partner, with whom they interacted less during the training

4. Development of organizational skills

We considered it an important part of the preparation, to draw the attention of the volunteers to the phenomena, that may cause difficulties for them during the service, and that they should be adequately prepared for them. In addition, there was also talk of practical knowledge and techniques, which can be applied in specific situations, which make their tasks easier and increase their efficiency.

Self-expression with memes



Goal: facilitating the verbalization of internal states and emotions, stress relief, development of self-reflection, energizing

Time frame: 40 minutes

Number of participants: any number of participants, all members of the group

Accessories: cards of a uniform size, containing colorful images of well-known and popular memes in the given culture (it is good if the number of cards is equal to two or three times the number of participants in the group)

The course of the exercise:

During the exercise, the participants choose a meme card for various moods, feelings or self-states - defined by the group leaders – for which they feel, that properly or the most precisely expresses their own feelings and inner state.

They sit in a circle. The exercise leader places the meme cards at a specific point in the room (preferably in the middle of the circle). After that, in the first part of the exercise, he/she instructs the participants, to choose a meme card, which is the most accurate, to expresses how they feel, when some physiological need is not met (e.g. hungry, thirsty).

Once the card has been chosen, they return to their seats and hold their meme card in front of them, for the others to see. The group leader then instructs the participants to share with the group what the meme card

expresses to them, how they feel when some physiological need is not met. The person who feels like it starts the sharing, and after that, he/she chooses another participant, whose chosen meme card “speaks” or looks interesting to him/her. After that, the circle continues in this way, until all participants share their feelings. Then the participants put the meme cards back where they took them.

In the second part of the exercise, the group leader asks them to choose a meme card, that expresses how they feel when “everything is right”, i.e. all their physiological needs are met. So they don’t feel hungry, thirsty, too tired etc... This is followed by group sharing, in the same way, as in the first part of the exercise.



Photo illustration from the training

Variations:

We can also do the exercise in such a way, that each participant receives 5-7 meme cards, which he/she does not show to the other participants. We ask them to choose a meme card and show it to the others, and then come up with a meme text to go with it (for example: “Me, when I’m really thirsty and see one of the festival goers drinking lemonade.”). The other participants then choose from their own meme cards the one, they think

best expresses the content of the meme, and show it to the others. This way, each participant holds a meme card in front of them, and the others can look at everyone else's.

Evaluation:

No separate evaluation is required from the participants. If we carry out the exercise on a topic that may require processing (for example, stress management), it may be worthwhile to include a sharing circle at the end, in which we ask the participants to share their experiences. It is worth providing freedom in this. It is enough, if only those who want, share anything with the others.

Note:

When choosing the meme cards, we can give the participants any topic that fits the theme of the training. The exercise can be used very well as an ice breaker and stress reliever, in any age group.

Health preservation during volunteering, education



Goal: psychoeducation related to health preservation

Time frame: 60 minutes

Number of participants: 6-16 persons

Accessories: flipchart board and felt

The course of the exercise:

During the exercise, after some kind of warm-up and tune-up exercise(s) (for example, Self-expression with memes), based on the participants' ideas/announcements, we will collect ideas together, how to take care of their own health, during their volunteer work at a festival. During the collection of ideas or afterwards, we additionally supplement it with some psychoeducation.

Following the warm-up task, we will tell the participants the instructions. We encourage them to think freely, and show them that they can start

from their previous negative and positive experiences. We ask all of them, to gather what needs should they pay attention to, when they are volunteering at festivals, and what they can do to preserve their own health. That work environment can be particularly hard on the body, so it is important, that the participants are prepared in terms of how to listen to their body's signals, and how to take care of themselves. During psychoeducation, we also provide the participants with a health-preserving, preventive approach. The locations of the work will be festivals, so education related to the prevention of alcohol and drug consumption may also be relevant. The participants sit in a circle, and the flipchart board is in a place, where is clearly visible to everyone in the room. The participants are free to express their ideas, which the training leaders sometimes help to formulate in a way, that is understandable to everyone. We use the terms that they use also, so the group can develop its own vocabulary regarding the topic (for example, instead of "abundant fluid intake", the participants can find a term that is more memorable, so their term for this could be: "quenching thirst"). We write down on the flipchart the key words and concepts, that we have made sure are understandable to everyone, and that everyone has agreed to use them. If there is an idea or topic that is not mentioned by the participants, but is important from the point of view of health preservation, we draw attention to it and add it to the list.

Tasks related to health preservation:

- prevention of physical and mental overload
- hydration: drinking an adequate amount of liquid
- eating the right amount and quality of food
- sun protection: use sunscreen, wear a hat in strong sunlight
- adequate amount of sleep and rest
- attention to personal hygiene (for example: regular hand washing, brushing teeth, showering)
- avoiding dangerous situations
- paying attention to our body's signals
- avoiding excessive coffee consumption
- wearing appropriate clothing (cooler days/warmer days...)

Variations:

The exercise can be carried out on any topic that matches the topic of the given training.

Evaluation:

Note: The exercise should be done with double guidance, by two leaders. Thus, one leader can take notes of the participants' suggestions, and the other can perform the psychoeducation and facilitate the collection of ideas at the same time.

What's in a volunteer's bag? Let's pass it around!

Goal: promoting mutual attunement, creating a good atmosphere and developing a sense of belonging, energizing

Time frame: depending on the number of group members 10-15 minutes

Number of participants: any number of participants, all members of the group

Accessories: –

The course of the exercise:

The participants sit in a circle. During the game, we pass around an imaginary bag. While saying the instruction, hold both hands in front of you and pretend to hold a bag. We start to pass around the bag. Each participant puts something in the bag, that they think will be useful to them, during a festival. What participants put in the bag, can be a physical object (such as a handkerchief), or an abstract concept or skill (such as persistence).

The first participant takes the imaginary bag from the group leader and, holding his hand in front of him, says "I'll put it in the bag..." and passes the bag on. The next participant takes the bag, and first lists what is in the bag, then puts something in it and passes it on. We proceed in this way, until the imaginary bag arrives at the last participant. The last participant

has to list all the things that the other participants have put in the bag, and at the end he puts something in the bag.

Variations:

In accordance with the theme of the training, we can collect things in the bag with the participants on any topic.

Evaluation:

Rather than practice, playfulness is in the foreground, so it is not necessary to think more consciously about the game through evaluation.

Note:

The first reaction of the participants upon hearing the instructions is often fear. However, we can observe that they complete the task easily, because the individual things that are in the bag, are linked to each participant, so they look at the participants during the enumeration and can recall what the given participant put in the bag. The exercise also helps the participants, to pay attention to each other more effectively.



Photo illustration from the training

The leader - the guided exercises

Goal: development of openness, trust; experience of leadership, management/guidance, support; to recognize the differences between leadership, management/guidance, and support

Time frame: 40 minutes

Number of participants: the whole group (even numbers would be the ideal)

Accessories: blindfolds (number of pieces: half of the number of participants)

The course of the exercise:

The participants are divided into pairs. (If they are odd, we can also form a trio (groups of three). In this case, the third person takes on the role of an observer, but during the exchange of roles, he also joins the circle.) One member of the pairs is blindfolded. The task is to guide the blindfolded member of the pair, freely within the available space, and after, to be led by the other the same way. First, by putting his/her hand on his/her shoulder, and controlling him/her without speaking, just by touching him/her. Then they switch roles (and blindfolds). Second, they can discuss a common signal, some kind



Solutions to the task in pictures



Solutions to the task in pictures

of sound (chirping, humming, clicking, grunting, etc.), with the help of which, they can control each other in space, without touching. Then, there is also an exchange of roles.

Variations:

Both members of the pair do the exercise silently. The open-eyed does not lead the other, he/she lets the other go where he/she wants, and only intervenes, if/when there is a dangerous situation.

You can also try the exercise in a form of “leading the blind”, when you don’t hold the other person’s shoulder, but the blind person holds the

sighted person’s upper arm or elbow, and they walk together like that.

Encourage them to be brave enough, to try new things. Moving backwards, sideways, crouching down, climbing stairs, walking slowly or at a faster pace, etc.

You can stretch out or set obstacles and ropes, which you have to hide



Solutions to the task in pictures

under and/or step over.



Solutions to the task in pictures

Evaluation:

- What was it like to lead/guide? What was it like to be led/guided?
- How was the communication between the partners?
- What kind of help did the blindfolded person ask for? Has the leader felt how he/she can

provide the best support to his/her partner?

- For whom, which method was the most comfortable? Why?
- How difficult, or easy, was it to trust your partner?

Note:

At the beginning of the exercise, we emphasize the importance of paying attention on each other, and as well especially on safety. It can be performed both indoors and outdoors.

The perfect volunteer - the perfect volunteer leader



Goal: energize, promotion of motivation for volunteering, formation of group cohesion, definition of roles within the group, awareness of skills and abilities

Time frame: 60- 90 minutes

Number of participants: 10-20 persons

Accessories: Flipchart sheets, colored pencils, stationery (pencil/pen)
Music player device, speaker

The course of the exercise:

The participants form small groups of 3-4 people. Half of the groups will portray the perfect volunteer and the other half of the groups will portray the perfect volunteer leader. The task of the participants is to discuss and talk in groups, and to define the personality, qualities, skills and com-



*The following pictures were taken
at the task implementation*

petencies of the perfect volunteer, or the perfect volunteer leader. After that, they should draw that character, so that these qualities and abilities are visible and obvious (e.g. if he is kind-hearted, we draw him a big heart). After the drawings are completed, the participants must also present their work, with the help of a small scene in such a way, that it reflects the characteristics of their character. For this, they can use music, different tools, acting, role-playing or other creative techniques, which help them to present the perfect volunteer or volunteer leader as much as possible, as they have jointly imagined.



Solutions to the task in pictures

Variations:

Since this material is part of a volunteering/festival organizer training, we put more emphasis on volunteering. However, this task can be used for any role. For example: perfect student/teacher, perfect colleague/boss/employee, etc.

Evaluation:

This task, as the name suggests, presents the perfect role. After each team has presented their work, it is worth emphasizing, that this is an ideal situation, and that most of the time it is impossible for one person to fully meet these



Solutions to the task in pictures

expectations. That is why it is important, to talk about what is expected of a volunteer, what skills and competencies can be developed in a volunteer, and how we can achieve this. As a self-reflection, everyone can say how close or far they are from this ideal as a volunteer, what they would like to change about themselves, what competencies would they like to have, but at the same time, what are the qualities and competencies they are satisfied with and proud of.



Solutions to the task in pictures



Solutions to the task in pictures



Photo illustration from the training

5. Feedback, Evaluation

We ask for feedback from the participants, for the entire training, to see how they were enriched during the program, and to assess whether we succeeded in achieving our set goals.

Five-finger feedback



Goal: feedback request

Time frame: 20 minutes

Number of participants: the whole group

Accessories: paper, stationery (pencil/pen)

The course of the exercise:

The participants give feedback on the program, using their five fingers, based on the following criteria:

- thumb – something, that was very good, that they liked immensely
- index finger – something, that pointed out, made them realize something
- middle finger – something, that they didn't like, was/felt wrong
- ring finger – something, they will take home with them, that will stay with them
- little finger – something small, but special, that spiced up the program for them

Ask the participants to draw their own palm on the paper, and then write down their opinion, impression, and insight for each finger. When they are ready, we collect the papers, so we will have their feedback in a written form.

Variations:

The discussion/evaluation can also take place orally, when the participants take turns telling their own insights based on the above mentioned aspects.

[illegible]

Volunteering

Reloaded

