

Lemons

Lemons - an exercise to reflect and exchange on personal experience with prejudices and pigeonholing, to promote critical attentiveness towards stereotypes, pigeonholing and discrimination, and to discuss action steps how to prevent/hinder pigeonholing.



Inclusion And Diversity



Role Play



10+



20 participants (work in pairs)



Lemons, flipchart, paper, pens



Participants can prepare a slideshow for the story of their lemon and present to the group



#1 Explanation and group discussion - 10 minutes
#2 Couple work - 10 minutes
#3 Group work and discussion - 20 minutes
#4 Debriefing and Reflection - 10 minutes



YOU.TH. Manual for youth workers
- 3.3 Theatre Methodologies -
Role Play

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An open space

Implementation:

Step 1

The participants sit in a circle. Show a lemon and ask everybody to describe it: "How are lemons like?" Let the group brainstorm for a while collecting ideas and associations on the flipchart/white-board.

- Ask now the participants to pair with somebody they know least in the group and to sit together. Give each pair a lemon, which they can look at, examine, study for a while.

Step 2

After a couple of minutes collect all lemons and mix them together in a large bowl, putting it in the middle of the circle.

Each pair has now to find their own lemon; one after another the pairs come to the middle and try to identify their lemon.

Reflection:

- How could you find "your own" lemon?
- What surprised you hereby?
- What do you think when referring to the lemon?

Step 3

- The first part of this activity has to do with generalisation and pigeonholing - naturally we put all lemons in the same box, as they all seem same to us.

- What does this have to do with our everyday life?

Step 4

- Introduce the topic of stereotypes, attributions and valuing of features and characteristics of certain persons and groups. Based on these we often build prejudices about the person/group, which have nothing to do with their characteristics. Such processes happen daily and we are all involved in them:

"putting not only lemons but people as well in boxes".

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- Split the participants randomly in groups of three to four. With the help of the discussion questions below each group exchanges on personal experience and cases of pigeonholing.
 - Emphasise on the trust needed to share such experiences and on the confidentiality to be respected. The small groups do not report the shared individual stories and cases to the plenary.
 - Emphasise as well that the purpose is not to discuss what “right and wrong” behaviour is, but rather to talk and reflect together on the mechanisms that trigger prejudices. The point is to sharpen attentiveness and understanding of how pigeonholing sets a trap for our own perception of diversity, as pigeonholing reduces and simplifies diversity.

Small-group discussion questions:

- When did you last feel pigeonholed/as if “put into a box”? How would you label this “box” (gender, ethnical background etc.)?
- How did you feel about it? How did you react?
- When did you last pigeonhole somebody else? Why did you do that? What made you react like that?

Step 5

- Back to the plenary invite the participants to provide feedback on the activity: How was it to share and to listen about stories of pigeonholing?
- Ask the group to share some of the boxes’ labels without telling personal details and stories.
- Collect the different labels and prejudices on a flip-chart.
- Close up the discussion emphasising on the feelings associated with being pigeonholed/pigeonholing others and on what steps can be undertaken to hinder pigeonholing.
- Write down the diverse action steps suggested by the group

Instructions for debriefing:

Key Takeaways:

Ask participants to identify one or two key takeaways from the activity. What lessons or realizations will they carry with them?

Action Planning:

Encourage participants to consider how they can apply the insights gained from this activity to their future goals and dreams. Are there specific actions they can take to leverage their strengths?

Closing Thoughts:

End the debriefing session by summarizing the key points discussed and thanking participants for their contributions. Reiterate the importance of recognizing and utilizing their strengths to achieve their dreams.

Remember to foster a supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere during the debriefing, allowing participants to share their thoughts and feelings openly. The goal is to help participants gain deeper self-awareness and insights that they can carry forward in their personal and professional journeys.

Tips and notes to the facilitator:

The length of this activity may require splitting it in two parts eg, using part one (lemon basket) as a warm-up and sensitisation to the topic and part two as the essential group work on prejudices.

As a last step to this activity, before going into the discussion phase, the participants can be instructed to create a “character” for their lemon, and imagine its journey, until it arrived to the training room. They are then instructed to create a photo collage with their lemon, showing the different phases of its journey. For example, the first step could be the birthplace of the lemon, how did its town look like? Participants can be creative to do some world-building, using props from the room. Afterwards, they present their collage or slideshow to the rest of the group, while narrating its story.
