

Peer Mediation and Peer Education Programme in School

Name of organisation:

**A Small Step –Centre for culture of peace and non-violence
(Mali Korak- Centar za kulturu mira i nenasilja)**

Description of Training for Trainers Workshop

The Training for Trainers (TOT) is an advanced training for those who are already familiar with conflict issues and management. We divide the whole process into a 4-level approach to learning/teaching about conflicts.

For the TOT we will need two 5-day trainings, e.g.: Friday afternoon: 2 sessions/workshops for the first level, Saturday: 2 sess. in the morning and 2 sess in the afternoon (2nd and 3rd level); Sunday: 2 sess. in the morning (4th level).

Level 1. Learning about conflicts (with students of primary or secondary schools about conflicts). Divide participants into groups of 4 (part. from different regions or countries), giving each group a different issue to discuss, sum up the discussion and briefly inform the whole group about the results.

Issues to be discussed:

- What are the main goals/reasons for teaching conflict resolution in your school, learning environment or country?
- What are main strategies for teaching conflict resolution in schools? (Demonstrate one activity which you prefer most.)
- What are the main issues/key skills related to teaching about conflicts in schools?
- What are the main challenges for teaching conflict resolution in formal and non-formal education?
- What are the differences between conflict resolution (CR), conflict management and conflict transformation?

Some presentations are shared through an activity or role-play after which follows discussion and/or feedback. Focus on the methodology of the presentation: interactive, participating and experiential methods of learning.

Group presentations of the discussions about above mentioned issues need time (2 sessions). At the end we raise the question for all participants: what do you prefer in your teaching conflict resolution in the classroom - to use role plays, games, stories, drawings or/and examples from pupils' experience, real life? We ask two volunteers to show us both ways: one game they use and then talk about it, and one experience (told by one student). Here is this concrete case of the student.

Here is one metaphoric activity shown by John Lampen, Ph.D, trainer of NGO "Hope", done at T4T in Pula, Croatia, 2005.

"Ask 4 people to volunteer. They must choose another four persons, much alike themselves, as a partner. When the facilitator gives the sign, every pair should start towards each other; with the second sign - they freeze. The goal is for each person to bring his/her partner on her/his side. At the end of the activity they hold hands and do not speak.

The observers should pay attention silently and then report what they saw was happening. Then the actors will share their experiences. Questions for the actors: What was each person thinking? I must win - so the other should lose? Show us win-win, compromise and lose-lose solutions.

The question for all is What is needed for both sides to win?

Case: "The boy comes home and his father asks him what grades he got that day in mathematics. He got a good grade, but he becomes furious- yelling at the father, repeating the question, imitating his father. The father wants him to be polite and this renews his son's yelling. What kind of conflict is this? A conflict of relationship? What could be the way out? What could stop such conflict or prevent it?

Prevention: Not asking about the grade but showing interest in problems or tensions the son has in school and outside of the school.

Stopping: With paraphrasing, the father could show that he hears the son - his feelings and needs.

Level 2. Learning about conflicts. How to manage conflicts between sides which do not have equal power (conflicts between teacher and student)? This part also needs 2 sessions, and here we give only some ideas from the scenario.

First step is a warm-up activity (participants stay in two rows, in pairs, face to face - one side are students and the other teachers. Teachers are making gestures and faces of authoritarian teachers. Students can make whatever faces they want, imitating or turning their back to "teachers" - but not touching them. Then they switch the roles. Reflection after activity: How did you feel as a teacher?

Second step is again focused on the role of the teacher. Each participant is given a short questionnaire with 6 questions on a piece of paper: Questions are: 1/ Who are you? 2/What do you stand for? 3/What would you require from your students? 4/What do you never require from your students? 5/What would you do for your students? 6/What would you not do for your students?

They exchange their answers in pairs, and some of them will read the answers number 4 and 6, and then 1 and 2 etc.

Step 3 - There is a very real conflict between one teacher and his 8th grade students. Nobody wants to sit in the front desks. All the boys want to be in the last rows, but there are not enough places there. The teacher said: I leave the decision to you. If I decide - all of you will sit in front desks, first two rows, but even worse for you - you will never learn how to solve conflicts like this. Let us see - is it possible to have win-win solution here? No. Which solution could we discuss? What kind of conflict is this? Conflict of interest. So let's

see the options for compromise: what would you ask from those who will sit in the back rows? ("We must switch places each week; those sitting in back rows on mathematics - should sit in front on literature etc...")

Conflict analysis: Who here has more power? (Teacher) So teacher can make the choice: to use methods of punishment, discipline measures and to decide for himself (or in name of the school, according to the rules in the school) how to solve this situation, not including in the decision making process the other side (Students). This will be the usual solution of such conflicts: he will win, the students will lose. If he includes the students in the resolving of the conflict - both sides could concentrate on the problem - and the solution could be compromise or win-win.

The other examples will be given by participants - and they will exchange or share their experience coming from different learning environments.

Level 3. Teaching/learning about how to resolve conflicts in divided communities. If you are invited to work with multiethnic group of people, or people in the post-war areas or in the areas of potential conflicts, what are your best experiences that you can draw upon? How can you start the dialog across "the borders"?

First step is distinguishing among the trainers those who have and those who do not have experience in working in conflict areas or areas of potential conflict. We ask participants to organize themselves along a single line with these two extreme points: experience in working on conflicts in the community, and without such experience.

Second step is gathering the participants around different sources of conflict within their community, by putting written labels on the floor, such as: "minority issues", "poverty", "religious intolerance", "ethnic conflict", "hate-incidents" because of race, gender or sex issues, "post-war or war situation", etc. The groups formed along these issues should discuss their experiences, and present for the whole group one example that was most impressive in their group.

Third step is sharing experiences in social skills needed for successfully dealing with conflicts, e.g., negotiation skills and mediation skills. Participants are given case studies and situations from the war in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo and Croatia. One case study is about the conflict in Mostar between peace activists and is the basis for the exercise for mapping conflict and role-playing negotiation and mediation.

Exercise: Read about the conflict that happened in April, 1999 in NGO "Peace-bridge" in Mostar, Bosnia & Herzegovina.

Short description of the conflict: Peace activists from NGO "Peace-bridge" in Mostar heard on the radio-news that early in the morning (on March 24, 1999) started USA-NATO bombing of Serbia. Some of them were quite happy with such punishment of Milošević's regime and suggested to go to the bar and celebrate it with one drink. The others were shocked and didn't want to go because they said it was aggression and civilians could be

killed and they don't understand the others. They started to argue. Is aggression sometimes needed and justified (to stop the war) or not? That was a big conflict in the NGO that they couldn't solve. They couldn't go on with their activities. They didn't speak with each other. The NGO split apart.

Could you map their positions, interests and needs and see what is the problem here and are there any common needs and interests for which they could find options for resolution? Could someone play the role of mediator between two sides?

Level 4. meta level: experts exchanging theoretical approaches on different concepts and paradigms of conflict in different countries/political systems and social contexts of European Union.

First step: comparing concepts of CONFLICT RESOLUTION, CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

CONFLICT RESOLUTION implies that conflict is bad - hence something that should be ended. It also assumes that conflict is a short term phenomenon that can be "resolved".

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT assumes that conflicts are long term processes that often cannot be quickly resolved, but the notion of "management" suggests that people can be directed or controlled as though they were physical objects. In addition, the notion of management suggests that the goal is the reduction or control of volatility more than dealing with the real source of the problem.

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION is different from the other two, because it reflects a better understanding of the nature of conflict itself. Conflict is a structural component of society itself. It means that social conflict is naturally created by humans who are involved in relationships, and when it occurs - it changes (i.e., transforms) the events, people, and relationships that created the initial conflict.

Second step: comparing different paradigms of conflict from local to global level (each participant begins by analysing a paradigm of conflict in her/his country/region).