

Mosquito Methods – Diversity



"In CISV individuals and their perspectives meet. Within these meetings, we create peace education. With concrete methods and a starting point in the challenges within society we encourage people to be active citizens, locally as well as globally. Based on the UN Declaration on human rights and democratic principles CISV Sweden is a non-profit, politically and religiously independent organisation, open to everyone. CISV Sweden is a collaborative organisation for and a union of the local CISV chapters within Sweden."

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The People Behind This Book

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Mosquito Methods – Diversity

Four Books on How to Create a Positive Change

In 2009 CISV Sweden released *Mosquito Tactics - A Book About Peace Education*. The title was inspired by the famous quote “If you think you are too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito in the room” and addressed CISV Sweden’s view on peace and peace education. As CISV Sweden is trying to create active global citizens through experiential learning and peace education the next step will be a set of four method books; *Mosquito Methods*.

Each of the four books in the *Mosquito Methods* series address one of CISV’s peace education content areas:

Diversity – Explores the identity of the individual and asks us to consider ourselves within our own and the wider community.

Conflict and Resolution – Helps us to understand how conflicts can arise deliberately or otherwise and what can be done to help bring a peaceful resolution.

Sustainable Development – Looks for integrated ways to promote economic and social well-being, while protecting the environment through the responsible use of natural resources.

Human Rights – Considers how human rights affect every aspect of our lives and how violations can lie at the root of problems such as poverty, violence and lawlessness.

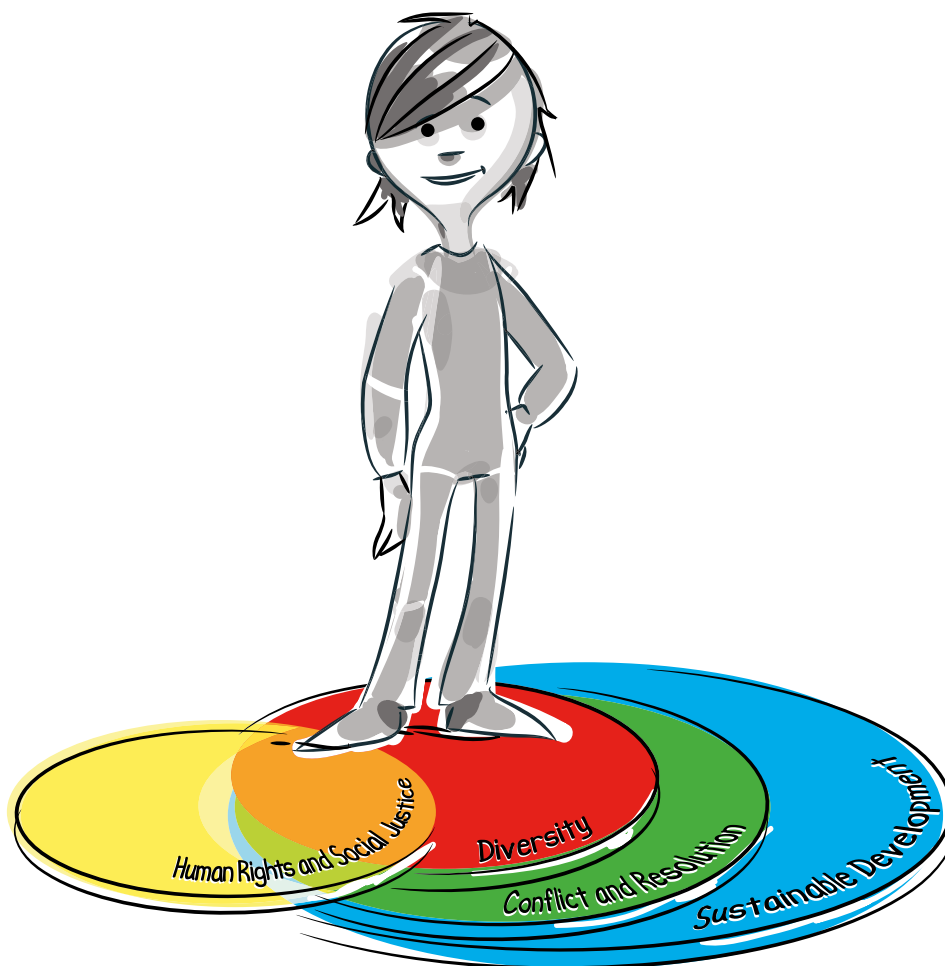
Each book includes information about how CISV works with experiential learning and an introduction to the content area. After the basic introduction each book is divided into chapters about different topics within the content area. Every chapter will also include an example of an activity that lets participants of different ages explore the theme through experiential learning.

Finally we want to send a big thank you to the ones who have contributed to the project, and the ones who are reading this book. It is our hope that *Mosquito*

Methods will be useful and that we all together can create projects to increase cultural understanding, for human rights, for good education for everyone, for peaceful solutions to all conflicts, for equality and diversity and against racism, discrimination, poverty and pollution.

/ The Mosquito Methods Team;

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Peace - What Is It?

Peace Education - To Develop Yourself and Others

Peace includes freedom, justice, democracy, and a world where everyone can enjoy their human rights. The main idea of peace education is that you will learn about people whose life differs from yours, which will help you find ways to resolve conflicts. It is an ongoing learning experience and you will gain more knowledge as you meet new people and learn from these meetings. These experiences also transform our attitudes and we gain skills that we can apply and develop over time. In this way peace education offers opportunities for individuals to develop themselves and simultaneously help others to do the same.

More Than the Opposite of War

Even though war and peace are often described as opposites, there is much more to peace than simply the absence of war. Even if we are not in open conflict we can still have negative peace, and whilst negative peace is much preferred to war, it leaves much to be wished for. Discrimination, racism, poverty and other forms of so-called structural violence are still a part of everyday life even though we are “at peace”. This book however, along with its predecessor *Mosquito Tactics*, refers to peace as in positive peace; a society where no one is held back from fulfilling their dreams by the norms and social rules of their surroundings. Positive peace is the absence of discrimination and inequality, but not of conflicts. A conflict is not automatically negative, it all comes down to how we decide to handle it. Conflicts offer us the chance to learn from one another and grow as a group while discussing and finding solutions. As to this day, there is no place on earth where there is a positive peace.

It is important to remember that we are all part of a society, and that we all have an impact on other people’s opportunities. We have an individual, as well as a shared, responsibility for each other. Some acts of discriminating behaviour are more obvious than others. Some are constantly brought up, like those related to gender and ethnicity,

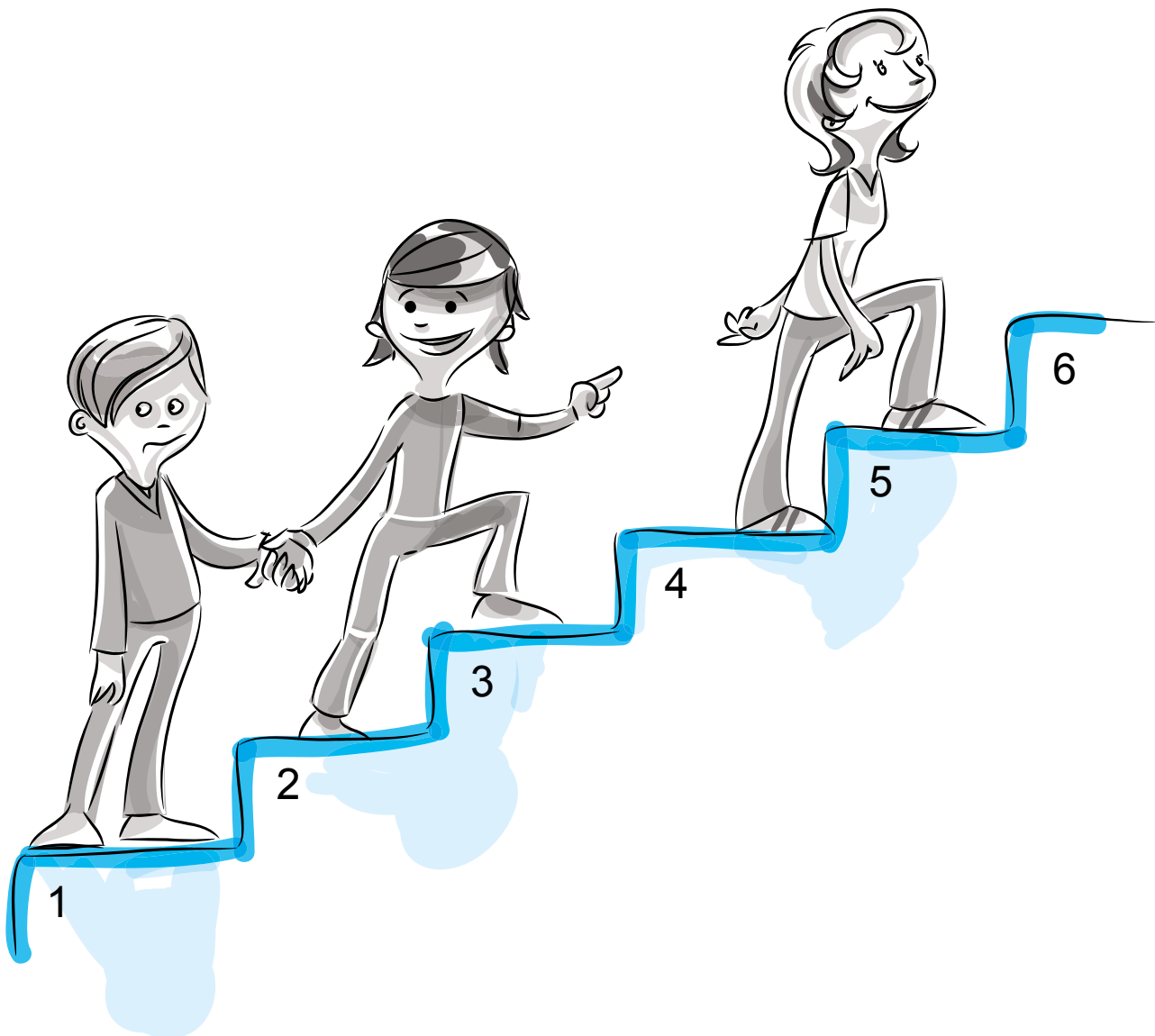
whilst others, like those related to age and functionality, are not discussed as frequently. Many of these subtle forms of discriminating behaviours are deeply linked with the norms we follow, things we do but rarely reflect on. Meeting new people, especially those whose norms differ from our own, helps us become aware of our own prejudices and routine behaviours, enabling us to challenge and change them. With a deeper understanding of other people and the lives they live, it becomes easier for us all to cooperate. It is important, both on a local and global level, to learn how to handle conflicts that may arise when people with different values meet.

Four Pieces of Peace

To achieve peace there are a number of things that we as active global citizens need to tackle. CISV is built on top of four pillars, our four areas of peace education. We believe that peace cannot be achieved unless we work with a broad spectrum of issues. The four pillars are Diversity, Conflict and Resolution, Sustainable Development and Human Rights.

Learning by Doing

Before a group starts working together, it is important for the individuals to get to know each other and feel safe. Otherwise it will be difficult to discuss and come up with ideas, since the people in the group will not feel comfortable enough to express their opinions. These pages present a number of steps you might want to consider when working with a group. Think about the social development of any group as a staircase. In order to reach the top step, where everyone feels comfortable taking part in group activities, you first need to climb the lower steps. In CISV, we have broken it down to the following six steps:



1. Names

Name games make it easier for the participants to start talking to each other. To be able to call someone by their name enhances communication, and by learning people's names you show them respect. This helps your participants to feel more comfortable in the situation.

2. Communication

To be able to discuss and express opinions, it is important that the participants can communicate in a way that suits everyone. It is important to learn in what ways your participants are comfortable communicating to avoid misunderstandings. This should be achieved before moving on to the next step. For example, some people need to talk while they're thinking, while others need to sit quiet and reflect before talking.

3. Cooperation

This step is about cooperating with the other group members. Little by little, the participants will feel more comfortable with each other and partaking in group activities, which is important when it comes to speaking your mind and experiencing peace education.

4. Team building

At this point, participants will have to start depending on others to do their part, whilst still managing their own, to reach a common goal.

5. Trust

In order for the group to be able to discuss more serious and personal issues they need to trust one another. It is therefore important to focus on building trust at this stage.

6. Role Play

This kind of activity requires that the group members have developed a deep bond, and not all groups reach this stage. The participants get to play roles that, for instance, can reflect the situation of different people in society.



This way the participants learn to discuss and to express their opinions and thoughts. Make sure you plan your time so there is room for discussion after the role play has ended.

Do, Reflect, Generalise and Apply

Learning by doing, or experiential learning, is a method of learning through experience rather than reading books or attending lectures. It involves putting ourselves into new, often prearranged, situations. After an experience, we discuss certain topics or how a problem could be solved. It is a good way of getting people with different backgrounds to meet and develop an understanding of each other.

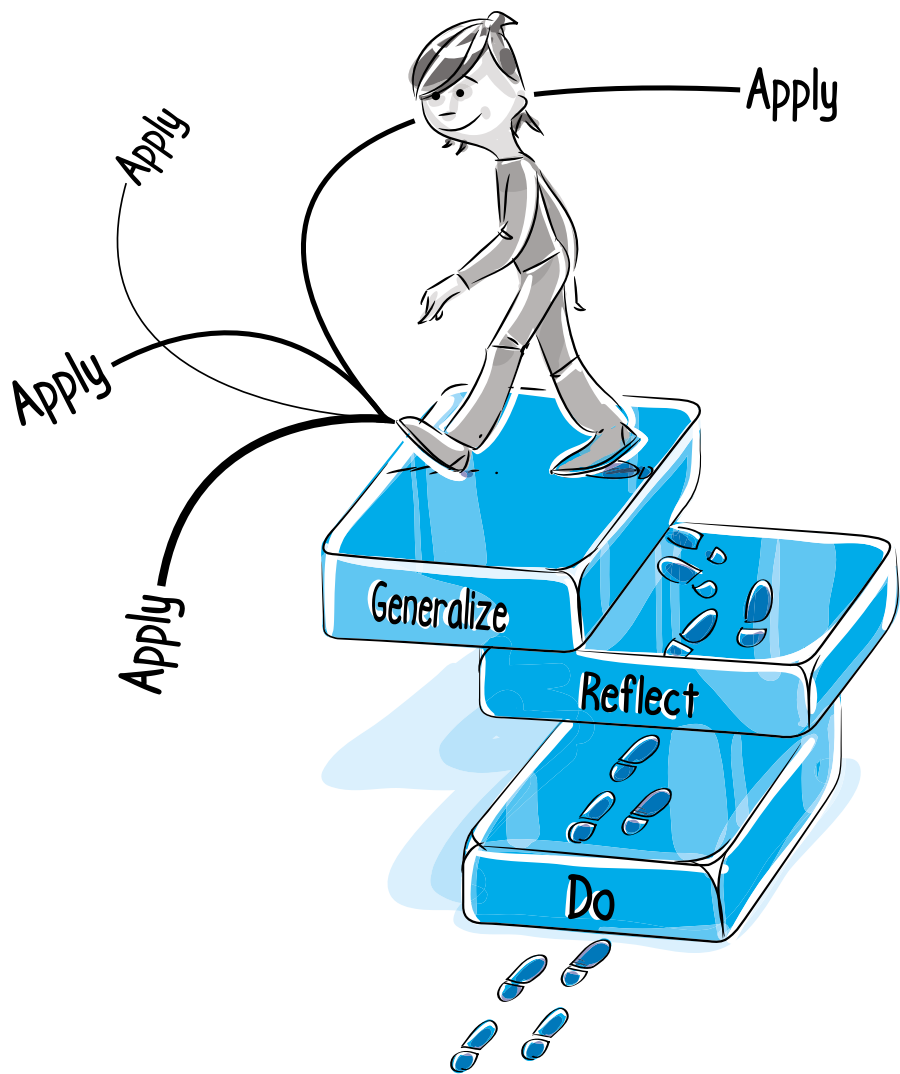
The participants must be given the opportunity to reflect on our new experiences in a constructive way. Through this kind of learning, experiences give us new knowledge that we bring to future situations. In the end, we will have improved our ability to manage new, unexpected or difficult situations.

It is valuable to meet new people, and to experience new things. At the same time, we need to have the opportunity to reflect on what we have learned. Something that happens can be understood in many different ways, depending on our background. If we are given the opportunity to discuss and talk about our reactions, we will probably react differently the next time we are in a similar situation.

The process of experiential learning involves moving from partaking in an event to reflection, putting our experiences in a larger context, and then using the new attitudes, skills and knowledge in future contexts accordingly.

In order to understand the concept of experiential learning you can look at the model on the next page. Following this process a participant goes from participating in an activity (do) to gain new knowledge to use in everyday life (apply). To be able to generalise, to put the activity in a context and see the bigger picture,

time for reflection must be provided. Letting participants discuss questions in small groups will help them to reflect on what they have just done and why they acted in the ways they did.



Perspectives on Diversity

Diversity is about discovering, respecting and learning from differences between and within groups of people. It is about being aware of your part in a group or society, but also about awareness of others and their parts. It is important that we learn to appreciate the fact that not everybody thinks alike, looks the same or wants the same things.

Diversity is about both differences and similarities, and every group we are part of have their own version of diversity. The trick is to use the diversity to your advantage - in that way we learn new things and become more creative. When we focus on diversity we see what possibilities and skills that people have. By exploring ourselves and our own identity, we develop ourselves and the groups and cultures we are part of.

To be aware of diversity is also about thinking of others and to pay attention to discrimination, inequality and injustice. Although we do not always think about it, most of what we do on a daily basis affects others.

In this book we will explore some of the different perspectives of diversity. We will focus on age, ethnicity, sexuality and gender. There are of course more parts of diversity, and hopefully this book will help you to reflect on how diversity is a part of your life, and in what ways it affects you.

Discovering Diversity - *a Personal Reflection by Jacob Möllstam*

Many of us are passionate about diversity of thoughts, ideas, cultures and personalities. But where does it start? Where does our view on diversity come from? I think appreciating diversity is something we are taught. It can be a teacher at school, a friend at camp or an experience in our day to day life that opens our eyes to things that usually are hard to see even though they are all around us.



DISKINLÄMNING
↑
RUNT HÖRNET





A couple of years ago I was working as a junior school teacher in a neighbourhood that is best described as a copy of the Bullerby Village in the books written by Astrid Lindgren. A child-friendly idyll where the residents are often described as both well educated and socio-economically strong. Those are permanent labels that don't give the whole picture, though it is hard to tell at first. I did not realise this until a certain October day right before the autumn break, when I brought my colleagues and students on an excursion to an abandoned cottage nearby. We had planned for everything. The walk there was not too long, we had brought an updated first aid kit and plenty of extra snacks for the ones that had forgotten or could not afford to bring their own. We had thought of everything, except one thing. When we arrived at the site, another class of students were already there. They came from another school in one of the many immigrant-dense neighbourhoods in the next town. Not a Swedish born student to be seen. My wonderful and at the same time obviously milk tooth-white students were amazed. They probably had never seen kids originating from other countries before.

While my colleagues and I tried to solve the situation with the teachers from the other school I overheard two six-year-olds discussing the double booking in their own way. "Don't you get it? They are all adopted!" I hear one of them say, and the words are etched in my head.

A couple of months later I have a new group of students and have a lesson with our intermediate level school kids. The lesson is a part of our current theme refugees, which we work with in geography, social sciences, technology and in connection to issues of basic values. My students are currently making blankets that are to be donated to an NGO in Pakistan. One of the older students looks up from the cross stitches and spontaneously asks me: "Jacob, to which country do refugees flee to?". This is a question that is as clear as daylight in a world of Astrid Lindgren, but at the same time quite troublesome when one of the most immigrant-dense areas of Sweden is located less than ten kilometres away.

One cannot get angry at people who show their ignorance. Ignorance is something to consider, but that is not the same thing as thinking the people behind it are stupid. We all need to open our eyes, but in different ways and to different perspectives. To be open to new ideas and impressions is not a fixed condition. In the same way as the camp bubble inevitably bursts after leaving camp, we lose a bit of our ability to see things from others' perspectives. It does not matter what labels we put on ourselves or others. Appreciating diversity is a kind of fitness. It needs to be constantly exercised to not lose strength.

Diversity by Challenging the Norms

Many well established organisations are far from as diverse as they would wish to be, and would need to be to follow their own political principles. These organisations are asking themselves why so few people of certain skin colour are applying for their board positions, why female members are speaking less at meetings than male members and why youth do not want to be involved in the important work of the organisation.

It is easy to conclude which people are missing in the boardroom, at the chair positions or in the rostrum in plenary, but that does not pinpoint why the organisation is not as inclusive as it wishes to be. Instead we should choose to look at these issues from another perspective. Rather than looking at whom an organisation excludes, we could look at who is included, and why.

Why are only people of a certain colour applying for the board positions? Why are the male members speaking so much? Why are we only attracting people of a certain age to the activities?

By asking these questions, organisations can start to work with their internal structures. We often let ourselves believe that it is all about one group having to raise their voices rather than somebody else having to lower theirs. But truth is, the number of seats in the board and the total amount of minutes in a plenary session is often limited. If more people are to be let in, some have to step away.



It is controversial, but without doubt important, to dare to question internal structures and reflect upon which groups the organisation is really attracting and involving. These are often people that fit in the norms of ethnicity, sexuality, gender and age. If an organisation truly wants to reflect diversity, it needs to give space to others instead of keeping up discriminatory internal structures.

The Equality Effect

We're Open to Everyone... or Are We?

“Everybody is welcome, we do not exclude anyone. The fact that there are no girls/boys/transgender people/people with disabilities/young people/XXX in our organisation is simply because there are no XXX who want to join!”. Quotes like this are not uncommon when talking about how organisations can reach a more diverse group of people, and are problematic in many ways. To be open and inclusive on paper is not enough. It is important to dare to go deeper and systematically review ourselves to be able to discover and eliminate the excluding factors in our work. Who are obvious participants in our activities? How does these norms affect the ones that do not fit in? The problem can be everything from not being able to get to the activity premises with a wheelchair to not finding anyone to identify with in the information material.

The Equality Effect is a method created by the Swedish foundation Crossing Borders, and works as a support for organisations that want to open up to a more diverse group of participants.

The Equality Effect is based on successful experiences from working with inclusion and reaching new groups of people. Most people realise that it is important to work with equality and inclusion, but lack the knowledge of how to do it. That is why the Equality Effect is built not only to create insight regarding problems with inequality and exclusion, but also to give practical tips and concrete tools on how to work. The Equality Effect consists of the following eight steps:

- 1. Basic values**
- 2. Obstacles**
- 3. Fellowship**
- 4. Role models**
- 5. Targeted efforts**
- 6. External communication**
- 7. Cooperation**
- 8. A long-term perspective**

The basic values of an organisation are often written down in a document that is covered with a thick layer of dust, instead of being a well-used and vivid tool. Clear and firmly established basic values can become the spine of an organisation, and work as a support in the everyday work if used successfully. What norms and values will apply to your organisation or activity, and how will you make sure they are realised? Through continuous discussions about norms and values you can define words like equality and inclusion, so that you know that your internal discussions can be concrete and lead somewhere without being just talk. To make the basic values come alive you need to connect them to goals and actions so that you know how to work to realise them.

To challenge norms takes power, will and courage. Because of that the responsibility for reformation often falls on those referred to as the driving spirits of the organisation. These people often does a lot of good, but to reach sustainable work of equality and inclusion the ideas need to be anchored to the basic values of the organisation. If not, the work could become bound to certain people and dry up the moment those people leave the organisation. If everyone works together to realise the basic values of the organisation more will be accomplished and the driving spirits will not have to end up worn out.

When the basic values are in place it is time to review the own organisation. The aim is to identify obstacles to equality and inclusion, and then direct the resources so that those obstacles can be overcome. For example, the obstacles

could be inaccessibility for people with disabilities, sexist jargons, high fees or that the language used in the organisation is hard for others to understand. To demolish these exclusive obstacles is vital if everyone shall be able to participate. In order to do this the first step is to visualise the obstacles - a task that can be tricky due to the fact that even the ones affected by them often does not notice them. The more people working on discovering and tearing down the obstacles, the more perspectives and experiences can be used to move forward. What obstacles to participation are there in your organisation?

Fellowship can be both exclusive and inclusive. With the right methods one can create a safe and open environment for different target groups. Which routines do you have for introducing new people to the organisation? In what way are you making everyone feel safe and comfortable, and how do you strengthen the group feeling? People in leader positions are extremely important to create a feeling of safety and fellowship. What kind of support do those individuals get for creating fellowship in the groups that they are responsible for? Have you discussed language and jargon in connection to the feeling of fellowship and safety? A great principle is to imagine that “everyone” is in the room - all religions, sexualities, disabilities, genders and so on. If you still feel comfortable with what you are going to say it will probably not bring discomfort to anyone, but if you are not sure if what you want to say will be comfortable for everyone you should reflect on what you really want to communicate and why. It is also important to consider the use of words like “we” and “them”. Can everyone in the room identify with the “we”?

The possibility to identify with role models in an organisation should never be underestimated when it comes to open up that organisation to a wider audience. The phrase “If that person can do it, so can I!” often applies. Role models show what possibilities there are and inspire others to push boundaries and dare to try new things. That is why it is important that there are individuals to identify with at all levels and parts of the organisation. Even a single person can make a difference by proving that it is possible. It is important to consider not

only what kinds of people are represented, but also what they do. For example, women have been represented in music for a long time, but most of the times as singers and seldom as technicians or playing instruments. To shatter measures like that by showing more possibilities creates a growing acting space and new opportunities. It is also valuable to look at the own working group to see what norms there are about responsibilities and who should do what. Could you train each other internally to be able to diversify who does what? If the distribution of tasks within the leader group is based on traditional gender roles, it is not very strange if similar patterns appear among the participants. Lack of role models can be solved by external recruitment or cooperation with other organisations. Also consider the possibilities to widen the spectrum of role models by looking at who can be seen on promotion material or who are asked to speak at your meetings and conferences.

Within areas where a group is underrepresented, targeted efforts can be motivated and successful. A targeted campaign is an activity that is directed to a specific target group that is under-represented within an organisation. Targeted efforts starts at the specific needs and desires of the target group in order to create the best conditions possible for that group to participate. The goal of targeted efforts is to open channels for excluded people and groups to find a way in to the organisation, but in the long term the aim is that such efforts should not be needed. The optimal situation is of course that everyone should be able to participate at equal conditions. For a targeted campaign to be successful there needs to be a way for new participants to stay and grow within the organisation. The campaign should be carefully prepared to fill its own purpose and then integrate the target group into the regular work of the organisation, at equal conditions as everyone else. Nobody wants to be a participant in a targeted campaign forever, it should be a channel into - and not a continual sidecar to - the organisation and its work.

The external communication of an organisation can be coded in different ways - by the use of colours and fonts, how the work of the organisation is described,



who is displayed as front figures or what kind of language is used. Most times, people are quick at picking up such codes. We “know” what concerns us and what does not. This affects us when we choose what events to attend or what contexts to engage in. An organisation that wants to reach new target groups needs to be innovative and self-conscious at all levels. In what ways and through which channels do we promote ourselves? What does our promotion material communicate? If the external communication does not change it is likely that it will continue to reach the same groups of people as it always has, and is lost on others. Remember to consider not only the pictures that promotes your organisation, but also what codes are sent out by the use of language, wording and where the material is displayed. In areas where there is a distinct over- and underrepresentation the external communication should be aimed at the under-represented group - although everyone is welcome - since the overrepresented group will participate anyway.

Also remember to be clear on who you address, for example what genders and ages are welcome to your activities, is any equipment or prior knowledge needed, are the premises accessible and is there a cost for participation? In that way nobody has to abstain from participating because they are scared that they will not fit in or not be welcome. It can be a good idea to try your promotion material on reference groups to see how it is received by the target group that you want to reach. This is also an effective way to find out if your wording is conceivable to everyone.

Cooperation with other people, organisations or companies can strengthen and improve the work with equality and inclusion. It can be a way of learning from others’ experiences and knowledge, and a way of boosting the motivation when things get heavy. An organisation that succeeded in reaching a group of people that your organisation fails to attain can enrich your work with competence, contacts and inspiration. In the same way, you can enrich their work by sharing your experiences and network. Cooperation partners are thereby invaluable when trying to reach new audiences. To reflect upon who would be your least expected cooperation partners, and what you could do with them, could be a great start for this kind of work.

It is important to celebrate success, but also to not stagnate and believe that all work is done. A red thread and a long-term perspective on the work with equality and inclusion is necessary to create sustainable improvement. In order to do this it is important to consider how the work towards equality and inclusion can be integrated into the regular work of the organisation, without risking to fade away as time passes. To make equality and inclusion standing items on the agenda is one way to do it. It is also important to include the whole organisation in the task, so that it is not only a matter for the underrepresented groups. Theme days and other occasional efforts can create energy, but can never be the spine of the work. To create action plans and elect individuals or groups that are responsible for the work towards equality and inclusion reduces the risk that it gets lost along the way. A good idea is to analyse the current situation before initiating work of change, so that you have something to compare to when evaluating and measuring your success.

The Equality Effect guides an organisation through their work with equality and inclusion, step by step. Do not let the fear of failure or the load of work paralyse you. Choose a defined area in your organisation and start from there. Organised work with focus on solutions can make a difference. It is critical that the management of the organisation stands by the work, and that those responsible for the realisation of the tasks gets the mandate and resources to do it. Take the time to make sure both leaders and remaining members stand by the work, and make sure the work is visible in your governing documents so that it is incorporated into the work of the organisation - and not a sidecar.



Activity on Discovering Diversity

Requirements:

- **Materials:** Post-it notes, pens
- **Time:** 30 - 60 minutes

Do:

Split into groups of five and give each group six post-it notes and pens. Ask them to write down things that they all have in common on three of them, and things that makes them unique on the other three. When all groups are finished, ask them to quickly share with the other groups what they've written.

After all groups have shared, give each participant a piece of paper to individually draw a picture of themselves while you gather up all post its and put them a few centimetres apart on the floor, on a wall or on a table. Now, ask all the participants to place their picture somewhere around the post it notes and connect their picture to as many notes as they think they can relate to. They can connect through taping a piece of string in between, drawing with a marker (this would require large sheets of paper behind the notes so that the participants won't draw on the floor) or any other way that fits. When everyone is happy with their profile, sit down in new groups of five and discuss.

Reflect:

What notes, or what kind of notes, are connected to the most pictures? Why? What notes, or what kind of notes, are connected to the least amount of pictures? Why?

Are you surprised of any absence of connection to something you thought was "normal"?

Generalise and Apply:

What was most difficult to find; similarities or differences?

In your country, is diversity considered a good or a bad thing?

Is this a diverse or homogenous group?

What could be added to make this group more diverse, and what could be gained from that?



Age Diversity

We are often expected to act or live our lives in certain ways due to our age. Society views life experience as something very important, and because of that it can be hard for young people to get the opportunity to take part in important decisions and have their voices heard. At the same time, this puts pressure on people of higher ages, who in their turn are expected to be able to make well informed decisions at all times. In society, the most power lies with the ones closest to middle age, and the young and elderly have a harder time getting their voices heard. We must remember that you see different parts of society depending on how old you are, and the world adults see is not always the same as what children see. That is why it is important to take advantage of the age diversity and let everyone have a say when it comes to making decisions.

Age Based Influence and the General View on Youth

Do you remember being a little child? Do you remember tripping on the white lines at a zebra crossing, because you did not lift your feet high enough? Do you remember not being able to exit through an automatic sliding door because the sensor didn't reach that low? Do you remember being a small person in a world made for big people?

Have you ever been the youngest person in a group? Have you ever felt like your youth made you a representative for all the teenagers in the world? Do you remember sitting through discussion after discussion where no one asked for your opinion, because no one expected you to understand the issue? Do you remember actually saying something, doing something, achieving something and find yourself surrounded by surprised faces? Have you ever heard someone praise you with the words "in spite of being so young" tagged on at the end of the sentence?

There are many things that make people different from each other, in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. One of the most obvious reasons for discrim-

ination and one of the most accepted is age. This goes for both young and old, but this text is going to focus on discrimination due to young age, as that is what is most relevant in our context.

Segregation due to age is common practice throughout society. Fundamental for much of society, from school systems to civil laws, is the perception that children are objectively different from adults. Different from both those groups are teenagers. The group with the most power here is the adults. They are the majority and they are the ones setting up the rules. Adults decide what children are to do, when they are to do it and even why they are to do it. Even activities that explicitly claim to be about children's activity in decision-making are set up by adults and children must conform to adult ways of thinking and acting in order for their voices to be heard at all. Even when the setting is made "child-friendly" it is adults who have decided what constitutes child-friendliness.

Children are a minority group. This does not make children stupid. Neither does it give adults the right to decide not only what children do but also what they are able to do (not much), what they like (to play) and what they will do if left alone (get into trouble). Nevertheless this is an attitude we recognise.

The 1989 United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child serves as the foundation for a lot of contemporary thinking about children and children's rights. It is easy to say that the Convention of the Rights of the Child is there, that what it says is easy to understand and that it cannot be questioned. However, there are as many approaches to children and children's rights as there are people on earth. The Convention presents us with an ambiguity, clearly visible, but not much discussed. Are children to be free, independent human beings in their own right or are they first and foremost in need of adult protection? "The best interest of the child shall be of primary consideration." The Convention does not say who is to decide what is the best for children, the child itself or an adult. It does not say who is to consider it, the child or the adult. And finally, it does not say whose conclusion is more highly valued, the child or the adult. The separation of children and adults continues and the adults remain in the position of power.



The question often asked when children and young people are to be more involved in democratic processes is what can be gained by including them. Maybe the organisation in question values to having a mix of young and old in any kind of governing body. Maybe the “voice of young people” needs to be heard, as the topics discussed concern young people. Or, most likely, someone thought that this is a good opportunity for the young to learn.

These are not bad reasons to involve young people, at least not with the approach that children are a different kind of beings from adults. If they are, then of course children and youth also think differently, and therefore can add something to the discussion solely by their presence in the room. However, something is wrong if no one ever thinks about the primary and obvious reasons to get young people involved and to give them power: that anything else is a part of systematic age discrimination. Children are often not included because they represent a different group than adults. The reason for children to be involved is not that they add another perspective. Neither is it that they should learn things that might come in handy when they grow up. The reason for children to be involved is that they have the right to be involved.

Do you remember being a little child? Do you remember being the youngest person in a group? Have someone ever told you that you will understand when you get older?

Let’s create another reality. A reality where small people do not have to struggle to be seen and heard in a world constructed for big people. A reality where young people can be counted on to contribute other than a “young perspective.” A reality where children are allowed to say what is best for them, and where children are to define their own childhood.

United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child

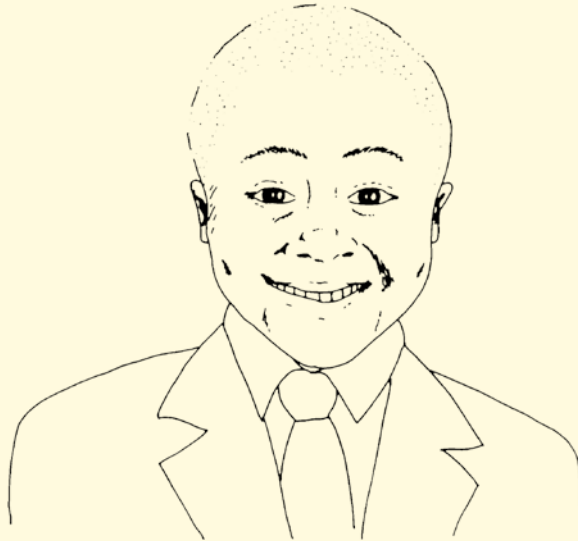
The Convention on the Rights of the Child is a human rights treaty which ensures that all children and youth under the age of 18 have the same rights.

They have the same right to live and develop, to grow up as free, healthy and independent humans, to be protected from violence and to have their thoughts and opinions respected. The convention states that the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration in all cases, and that a child's opinions shall be taken into account in all matters affecting the child.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an important part of the work to improve children's situation in the world. The UN adopted the convention in November 1989, giving children rights of their own for the first time in history. Since then, all countries of the UN except Somalia, South Sudan and the USA have signed it - making it the greatest UN convention today. It is the work of UNICEF to watch over and control that the states who have signed the convention to follow it through a special rapport of process.

The Convention of the Rights of the Child is of great help to various non-governmental organisations to continue their work, as it gives guidelines in ensuring that countries give children the rights that they should have.

Portrait: Kid President



Kid President started off in a YouTube channel in 2012 from the simple idea that kids are worth listening to, and that we can create positive change by doing little things. Kid President is created by Brad Montague and his 10-year-old brother-in-law Robby Novak, and their video “A Pep Talk from Kid President to You” has been viewed over 32 million times. Among other things, Kid President has talked to the US president Barack Obama through a can-and-string-phone, and inspired people all over the globe to “make the world more awesome!”.

One of the many amazing qualities of Robby “Kid President” Novak is his love for dancing. “It’s everybody’s duty to give the world a reason to dance - so get to it!” he says in one of his videos. Novak has a brittle bone condition, which has resulted in over 70 bone fractures since he was born, but he refuses to let that stop him from doing what he loves.

“We’re doing this because we believe kids can change the world. We also believe grown ups can change the world. It just takes all of us working together.” Kid President states on their website.

Activity on Age Diversity

This activity explores issues related to age diversity and its relations to people's identities. The participants get to discuss expectations on the different age groups, and how those expectations affect them.

Requirements:

- **Materials: pens and paper**
- **Time: 90 - 120 minutes**

Do:

Introduction

The facilitator should stimulate participants to take a few minutes to individually reflect upon the definition of different age groups.

Age Groups

The facilitator places four large papers in the room - each of them should contain one of the following words: CHILDREN, YOUTH, ADULTS, and SENIORS (some blank space should be left on each paper). Then, the participants should walk around the room and write answers and comments for the following questions on each paper (these are only suggestions, feel free to add or remove statements):

- What challenges does a person of this age group face?
- What benefits does a person of this age group enjoy?
- Rank the level of independence seen by this group (1 being no independence at all, 4 being highly independent)
- Rank how fun it is to be a member of this age group (1 being "it's not fun," 4 being "it's extremely fun")
- Rank the ability of members of this age group to influence others (1 being unable to influence others, 4 being highly capable of influencing others)
- Rank the amount of respect a member of this age group receives from others (1 being no respect, 4 being high amounts of respect)

Age Roles

The facilitator now reads statements, and participants are asked to walk to the paper they find the quote or statement fits best; CHILDREN, YOUTH, ADULTS or SENIORS. Participants have to select only one of the options and are not allowed to stand in between two alternatives. Below are some examples of statements, you can use as many as you'd like or make up your own. Facilitators should write observations on papers for the discussion later, and participants should be told to remember where they walked.

When I speak, people listen to me.

- I can change the world.
- I want to change the world.
- I can be myself.
- I am responsible for my actions.
- I am happy.
- I am confident.
- I am carefree.
- I am comfortable being alone.
- There are high expectations of me.
- I value family above all else.
- I am open-minded.
- I am a driving force in groups that I am part of.
- I am qualified to make decisions that affect others.
- People come to me for advice.
- I feel misunderstood.

Reflect:

Participants should sit down in small groups of about 5 and discuss the following:

Individually summarise for the rest of the group what you wrote on the papers for each age group. Please also specify what you believed to be the numerical age range of each group. How was this different from what others thought the age range should be?

In the second part of the activity, what did you base your decisions off of when you had to choose between age groups?

Did you often find yourself caught between two groups? Which ones and why?

What did you find most difficult in this activity?

Generalise and Apply:

What role does age play in your own daily life?

What challenges have you have faced as a member of your specific age group?

In what ways are the barriers between each group defined? In what ways are the lines blurry?

How does someone move from one age group to another? Is it the same for everyone?

(Optional: What happens when a person cannot overcome the challenges of their age group before moving to another one?)



Ethnic Diversity

Despite the fact that ethnic diversity is a given part of our globalised society, it is a subject that has caused many conflicts and sometimes leads to racism and discrimination. It is a clear example on how diversity can create tension when focusing solely on the problems of differences, and not the strengths of a diverse society. In this chapter we will read three different stories about personal experiences of ethnicity and diversity.

Peace Work From My Own Point of View - *a Personal Reflection by Anwhar Athahb*

My first memory as a child is from when I sat on a bus in the Arabian Desert on my way to my sister's school. Finally I was coming to school with her, I thought. But when we arrived to school my expectations was replaced by disappointment – the school was not how I expected it to be. The classrooms were caravans and the teachers were strict. When I got to see how students got slapped on their fingers because they had not been cutting their fingernails, everything changed. That someone used their freedom in such a way made me angry. Because I am from a family with a great political involvement, who played a great role in the opposition against Saddam Hussein in Iraq, commitment is something that has followed me through my life. Justice, democracy and freedom – words that always meant a lot to me.

During my teens I found myself in an identity crisis and started to ask existential questions – who am I, who do I want to be and why am I here? The answers came to me one by one in a car ride through Europe to Syria. Religion and the thought of world citizenship became a force for me. That was the time when I began to discover who I was. During a long time I had dreamt of working with issues of peace, justice and security from the perspective of my own religious identity, but I only found Christian peace organisations which were established in Sweden. I was jealous. I also wanted to work with questions regarding peace from a religious identity, but I wanted it to be my own.

Time went by and I started university and moved away from home. In connection to moving to Stockholm I also started to get active in the Muslim civil society, and my search was finally going to pay off. I got involved in a new project, “The Peace Agents”, with the purpose to involve youth in peace questions from a Swedish Muslim point of view. This was going to change my life. As a result of the project “The Peace Agents”, the first Swedish Muslim peace organisation was born: Swedish Muslims for Peace and Justice. I got involved and worked with inclusion and member-issues. A few months later I got elected secretary of the organisation. Our work was characterised by a vision that peace was about the ability to contribute with good actions regardless of where we were: at school, at our workplace or in private meetings with friends, family and others. We wanted to strengthen individuals and their ability to contribute to the society and to find inner peace.

Despite our equal rights, we are met by the society in different ways. Because of a redundant hierarchy of properties like gender, ethnicity and religion we are given different opportunities. Structural problems, which lead to discrimination, hate crime and racism are a reality for a lot of people.

Even if difficult problems are widespread, that does not mean that they are beyond solutions. I believe in the decisiveness of people. Peace is not just the absence of violence and war. Security, safety and harmonious co-existence is something that must be encouraged continuously. In the Koran it says that change starts from an individual level. If you can change your own attitude, it will actively contribute to effect your surrounding. A lot of people believe that there is something wrong with themselves, not knowing the fact that stereotypes can affect your own view of yourself. My ambition was to assist people who found their way to the organisation to strengthen their feelings of empowerment and work to increase their awareness of their innate leadership skills.

Today I work as a strategist and policy advisor to the Green Party councillor in the Stockholm County Council. These corridors are many strides beyond the

powerlessness I felt that day at my sister's school in the refugee camp. A current event at work reminded me of why my work continues to be personal and not just professional. When I was back at my workplace during a strategy weekend a security guard asked me if I was "here to clean up, or...? ". Climbing up the social ladder may strengthen the individual, but some challenges are more deeply rooted in society than what individuals can handle. Some challenges need to be tackled at the community level. The image of Muslim women and the professions they may have is narrow. I'm not saying it would be bad to work as a cleaner, or that the security guard meant to be mean to me as a person. However, I feel that it is a problem that the image of Muslim women is undifferentiated. It is a picture that is characterised by a stereotypical idea of what we can do, what we do and what we are capable of accomplishing.

The most satisfying thing is to see another person grow and find peace in herself. Let us therefore avoid being a hindrance to anyone's development. Let us further assume responsibility for our footprint on the environment. Together we can achieve more than we think. Future yarn will be spun from our common thoughts.

Moving to Sweden - *a Personal Reflection by Zufan Araya*

I moved to Sweden on April 14, 1990. Leaving my country for the first time was not an easy decision, but situations at home made it impossible for me to live there. The first months in Sweden were great, the weather was beautiful with long sunny days, beautiful country, family around me (parents and siblings) and I had PEACE more than anything. I could walk safe day and night in the streets of Lund and I loved it.

The real life in Sweden started after this honeymoon. I started to think about my future. Of course, I had to start with the language, but that was the easiest part. I had a goal, and that goal was to get my PhD in biochemistry. This had been my dream since I was a teenager and I believed that I had come to the right country. BUT!!!





I had my degree from a recognised university and a four years experience as a pharmacist but all that did not mean much. People had doubts about me and my background even though I had my papers approved in Stockholm. How am I going to show myself if I do not get a chance? Everything looked impossible but I promised myself to never give up until I was where I needed to be. I had to fight for every step but at last I made it. I got my PhD in Pharmaceutical Biochemistry. I still have to work hard for every step in my life, but it is getting better and better.

It is not easy to live in Sweden as a foreigner but it is not harder than anywhere else. Poor or rich, black or white - we all have the right to go to the same schools and hospitals. Isn't it great?

A Swedish Exchange Student in Detroit - *a Personal Reflection by Anna Nordin*

Detroit International Airport in August 1976. A foreign exchange student from Sweden arrives.

I am 18 years old and about to spend my senior high school year in Detroit, Michigan, USA.

My suitcase is heavy. I am looking for my host family whom I hopefully will recognise from a picture. Looking around. There is a great variety of clothing, languages and people. Oh, that must be them. They greet me welcome to the US. We walk out to the car. It is humid. The temperature is in the 90's and "stinking" smog covers the sun. This is not quite what I expected. The car is just as big as seen in the American movies and has air condition and cruise control. Maybe this isn't all bad. At the house I borrow a phone to make a long-distance phone call to tell my parents that I have safely arrived. No cell phones back then.

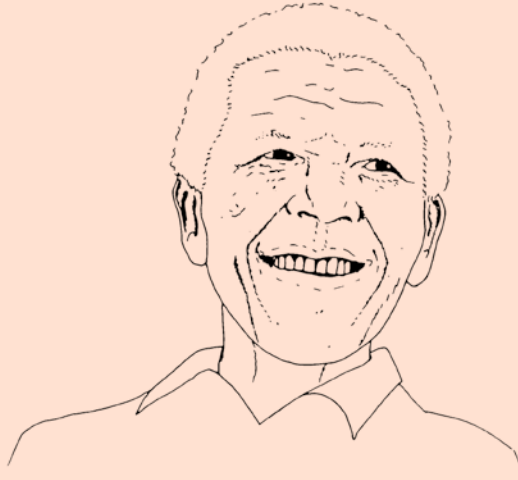
Detroit in the 70's was very much influenced by the riots in the late 60's. The

suburbs were segregated, as were the schools. Coming from Sweden this was very confusing and hard to understand. Though, after several months in these surroundings the influence was so strong that I started to accept the situation and act as I was expected to.

I had done quite a bit of travelling in Europe with my family during the 60's and 70's. When you passed a border in Europe, the language, money, food and culture changed. In US this diversity was everywhere, living side by side (with different success). My best friend, Donna, was Native American. This friendship widened my view of the American people and their history. I also learned a lot about Native American culture by attending different "pow wows" with her and her family. The diversity of people also influenced the variety of goods in the stores, clothing, music, TV and food. The school offered a variety of classes. Examples were foreign languages, history of US/Europe/Latin America and great many sports.

Looking back I had a wonderful year. I learned a foreign language, got good education and learned about and did adopt a new culture. I grew as a person and learned that who you are depends on where you are, the current situation and what your history is. These were my lessons learned from one year abroad in my teens.

Portrait: Nelson Mandela



Nelson Mandela was a revolutionary, an activist and the first black president of South Africa. He passed away in 2013 at the age of 95 and is remembered for his commitment to human rights and freedom.

During the 1940s Mandela protested against racial segregation and the apartheid policies in South Africa. Because of his resistance towards the government he was sentenced to a lifetime in prison and spent the years from 1964 to 1990 imprisoned. During these years he became known as a symbol for the resistance against apartheid and racial segregation. When he was

freed he started negotiating with the ruling party to achieve a diverse and multi-racial government and end the racial segregation. In 1994, Mandela was elected president of South Africa and his continued work was focused on human rights and the coexistence of different races. At the end of his term as president he left the politics and continued his work for diversity up to his death in 2013.

Mandela was a man who recognised the value of diversity. He worked against discrimination and segregation and for peace, human rights and freedom.

Portrait: Rosa Parks



Rosa Parks, also referred to as “the mother of the freedom movement”, was an African-American civil rights activist from Montgomery, Alabama. Parks is known for her refusal to give up her seat to a white passenger during a bus ride. During the time, in 1955, the laws of Montgomery, Alabama stated that bus passengers should be segregated by race, by making the first few rows of seats exclusive to white passengers. Even though the law did not require any passenger to give up his or her seat to anyone, the bus drivers of Montgomery made practise of making coloured passengers give up their seats when there were no seats left in the white-only section.

It was when the bus driver asked Parks and three other passengers to give up their seats to a few white passengers who were standing up, that she decided not to comply. Because of this, Parks was arrested and charged with a violation of the segregation law - even though she did not really break the law in question. She was bailed out of jail the following evening.

Rosa Parks’ civil disobedience lead to a bus boycott by the 40 000 black commuters of Montgomery, and she is to this day viewed as an important symbol for the modern civil rights movement and remembered for challenging racial segregation.

Activity on Ethnic Diversity

This activity aims to give the participants a positive view of intercultural interaction and the ability to reflect on how they would react upon cultural differences when they occur. It will also give the participants time to discover and understand what defines different ethnic groups, how we are alike and in what way we differ.

Requirements:

- **Materials:** Printed rules for each participant, large sheets of paper, coloured pens
- **Time:** 60 - 90 minutes

Do

Split up in to groups of five and introduce the groups to the situation and project. Each group member is then individually given instructions on how they are allowed to act when working in their group. The participants are not allowed to tell others what their instructions are.

Project:

You now have 30 minutes to create a comic strip on how your group of five people saved the world from a giant monster. Your personal instructions also apply to your character in the comic strip, but you are free to come up with reasons for why you act like you do.

Personal instructions:

Your right hand must always touch the floor.
You speak like Yoda.
You must greet others by showing off your arm muscles!

You must always look the person you are talking to in the eyes.
You can only speak the most exotic language you know..
You must applaud yourself if you break any of your own rules.

Your feet can never touch the floor.
You can't speak.
You must shake hands with everyone in the group.

You are very concerned with hand hygiene .
You must put your tongue out when someone else is speaking.
You are only allowed to whisper.

You are not allowed to ask anyone to repeat what they said, even if you didn't understand.
You cannot show your teeth at any time.
You can never make eye contact with anyone.

Reflect

Split into new groups of five and start off with everyone telling what they were supposed to do according to their instruction note and how that went. Were you able to finish the project?

When finished, discuss the following questions:

- How did you react to the appearance of the other people in your group?
- What was most difficult about the activity? What was easiest?
- Did you play your role well?

Generalise and Apply

- How well did you cooperate within your group? Did the cooperation change as time passed? If so, why?
- Did your rules make you feel like an outsider in the group?
- Do you think the group would have been able to create a better comic strip if you all had the same rules?
- What could these rules represent in real life?
- Do you think people should give up their “rules” to conform to the norm?



Sexuality and Gender Diversity

In our society there are norms and structures connected to sexuality and gender that form our lives, how we behave and how we treat one another. When a baby is born we immediately assume that we can tell whether the baby is one gender or the other, either a girl or a boy, just by checking what kind of sexual organs they have. When we start to speak with someone, we often instantly decide whether it is a woman or a man we are standing in front of. However, the gender which the society claims people to have may differ from the gender to which people actually feel like they belong to.

Norms about sexuality show in the way people are expected to be heterosexual. For example, if we look at literature and movies that show love stories, the couples are almost always a boy and a girl who fall in love. The norm is that men and women fall in love with each other, not with people of the same gender. It is important to question the norms that our society has created, ask ourselves why they were created, how norms affect all of us and what we can do to create a more open and equal society for all.

Transsexuality - *a Personal Reflection by Elliot Malmenborg*

The thought of being born in the wrong body is awful. Imagine waking up only to feel that confined. To know that it is tough to get it right. That the body is not attuned to the way one feels.

That is exactly the way I feel.

I am a 17-year-old guy who was 15 when I realised that something was wrong. I felt that something was not as it should be. I had been wearing male coded clothes for several months, but it still did not feel right to just be called a tomboy. I wanted people to call me boy, that people would see me as a boy. I searched the internet and found articles where people wrote about something called transsexualism, and about not being comfortable in your own body. I





could relate to that, and read a lot about it for weeks. I was scared about what people would think if I came out as transsexual, and that they would think that it was weird. But this is who I am. And why should I be ashamed of who I am?

I changed my name to Elliot a while after that. I no longer felt comfortable with my old name. I came out to my school class so they would understand part of how I felt. I don't think they understood all of it, but they tried. And that is what matters. Not long after I came out to almost everyone I knew, I started seeing psychologists and doctors who were to give me some kind of "proof" that I was transsexual. That took me a year, and gave me the possibility to find out whether I would want to medically change my body in the future.

Transsexuals can choose to start by going through for example a testosterone treatment. Testosterone is the hormone that biological men have in their bodies. If you are like me and want this hormone that makes you more like a man you can get it through an injection. Testosterone makes your voice lower, gives you more muscle mass and so on. After that one can remove one's breasts or correct one's genitals. I have not considered that yet. I take everything one step at a time. What is most important to me is that I feel comfortable with who I am, and I will eventually. Even though I sometimes feel like there is no progress, every day is a step along the way.

I have family and friends who accept and support me, and that support is amazing to have – whatever I choose to do in the future. I know who I am, I am who I am, no matter what. I have left the old person behind me, it is as Elliot I feel comfortable and can be a 100 % myself. You should never be ashamed of who you want to be.

Gender Equality

Even though the consciousness of gender discrimination has risen lately, there is still a lot of work to be done when it comes to making sure that men and women are treated equally. UNICEF states that:

“Gender equality means that women and men, and girls and boys, enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. It does not require that girls and boys, or women and men, be the same, or that they be treated exactly alike. In fact, gender equality cannot be achieved, for the most part, by providing everyone the same services, opportunities and protections, delivered in the same ways.”

Consequently, gender equality is not about treating everyone in the same way, but about giving everyone the same opportunities by adjusting society to the different needs of men and women. People are different from each other, unique, and therefore require different efforts to receive the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections.

Gender inequality shows, for example, in the lack of women in power positions, gender based differences in salaries and violence against women. There are various opinions about how gender inequality should be dealt with and what methods should be used. Some examples of methods are appropriated parental leave, affirmative actions like quota systems and the integration of a gender equality perspective in all aspects of politics. What is most important is that we recognise the difference in opportunities among men and women, and thoroughly work to erase the gaps between genders.

Portrait: Jón Gnarr Kristinsson



Jón Gnarr Kristinsson is an Icelandic politician, actor and comedian who became famous during the financial crisis of 2008.

In 2009 Jón co-founded a new party called Besti flokkurinn, “The Best Party”, which was very successful in the 2010 city council elections of Reykjavík, with promises ranging from gender equality to free towels. They also claimed that they would not honour any of their election promises.

Jón Gnarr was elected Mayor of Reykjavík and has since then been very outspoken

with his views on human rights in general and LGBT rights in particular, participating in pride parades dressed as a drag queen and criticising the Chinese government for the way they treated human rights activist and later Nobel Peace Prize winner Liu Xiaobo.

Jón suffered from dyslexia and learning difficulties in his younger years and has been diagnosed with ADHD, a condition that he has actively discussed through written articles and participation in international conventions on ADHD.

Activity on Sexuality and Gender Diversity

This activity explores issues related to sexuality and gender diversity. The LGBT (abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered) community still does not have their rights respected in many countries. In addition, a lot of people don't feel comfortable talking about these issues. CISV appreciates the similarities between people and values their differences and also supports social justice and equality of opportunity for all.

Before you run this activity it is important that you know your group of participants, and have already thought of possible reactions that may come from the participants. Talking about sexuality may evoke quite a strong emotional response amongst participants, so as a facilitator you should try to prepare yourself and think about emotionally intelligent ways to work with participants' (and your own) feelings.

Requirements:

- Materials (all included throughout the explanation): printed or handwritten profiles and debriefing questions, blank posters (the quantity depends on the number of participants), coloured pencils and pens.
- Time: 90 - 120 minutes

Do:

Introduction

This part is an introduction in order to guarantee that all participants will know all the sexuality and gender concepts that will be used throughout the activity. Take one concept at a time, and encourage the participants to discuss their meaning. It is important that the facilitator knows the correct relations between terms and meanings in advance, so it can help the participants to get the right relations.

These are some terms that it is important to discuss, feel free to add more:

- LGBT (Abbreviation: lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered - Oxford dictionary)
- Homophobia (An extreme and irrational aversion to homosexuality and homosexual people - Oxford dictionary)
- Biological sex (Based on a person's biological status, such as sexual chromosomes, genitalia and other organs. Usually categorised as Male, Female or Intersex.)
- Sexual orientation (Is related to a person's pattern of emotional and/or sexual attractions to men, women or both sexes. Usually categorised as heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual.)
- Gender identity (Is related to the person's identity in relation to their biological sex. When someone's experience of their own gender matches their biological sex it is called cisgender, and when their experience is opposed to their biological sex it is called transgender.)

Sex and gender profiles

The participants are now divided into groups of 4-6 people. Each group is given one piece of paper with a person's profile on it. Profiles can be found below. Once the groups have one profile each, they get one sheet of paper, pens and coloured pencils.

Then, they are asked to draw the profile they were given and to create an image of how that person's life is, assuming that he/she lives in the same place as the participants does.

Reflect:

Participants now get debriefing questions to discuss in the small groups. The questions could be (feel free to add your own ones):

- How is the person treated in school or at work?
- Does the person suffer from any kind of discrimination?
- Are there any specific policies towards the person?
- What kind of stereotypes do LGBT people have to live with?

After that, the groups change their places and leave their drawing for another group. Now, the participants face the drawing of a person that have been created by another group. The groups are now given new papers with a few more questions to discuss (feel free to add more):

- What are possible causes for homophobia and other forms of discrimination due to differences between individuals?
- Do LGBT individuals have their human rights violated in those cases?
- Does homophobia happen in places where LGBT rights are legally assured? Why?

Profiles

Woman, 23 years old

Biological sex: male
Sexual orientation: homosexual
Gender identity: transgender

Girl, 17 years old

Biological sex: female
Sexual orientation: homosexual
Gender identity: cisgender

Boy, 12 years old

Biological sex: male
Sexual orientation: homosexual
Gender identity: cisgender

Man, 40 years old

Biological sex: male
Sexual orientation: homosexual
Gender identity: cisgender

Girl, 4 years old

Biological sex: male
Sexual orientation: heterosexual
Gender identity: transgender

Woman, 35 years old

Biological sex: male
Sexual orientation: heterosexual
Gender identity: transgender

Generalise and Apply:

Facilitator now reads out loud (and lets participants discuss):

“The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, from 1948, does not include specifics on Sexuality and Gender diversity. In 2008, the debate around LGBT rights was firstly presented by a group of countries, but many countries do not agree with having specific legislation to promote LGBT rights. In this case, do you think LGBT rights should be specified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?”



Notes

Here are a few blank pages for your own notes and ideas.
Get creative, take action!

Mosquito Methods

Four Books on how to Create a Positive Change

To achieve peace there are a number of things that we as active global citizens need to tackle. Mosquito Methods is a series of four books that aims to give people the tools to work with four areas of peace education;

Diversity – Explores the identity of the individual and asks us to consider ourselves within our own and the wider community.

Conflict and Resolution – Helps us to understand how conflicts can arise deliberately or otherwise and what can be done to help bring a peaceful resolution.

Sustainable Development – Looks for integrated ways to promote economic and social well-being, while protecting the environment through the responsible use of natural resources.

Human Rights – Considers how human rights affect every aspect of our lives and how violations can lie at the root of problems such as poverty, violence and lawlessness.

We believe that peace cannot be achieved unless we work with a broad spectrum of issues, and hopefully Mosquito Methods can help you to discover new perspectives on peace and world citizenship.



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