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INTEGRATING SOCIAL THEATRE AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUTH WORK



Introduction

This manual serves as a practical guide for youth workers aiming to use social theatre and social media as tools to engage young people, foster inclusion, and address social issues. The methodologies presented are designed to empower youth workers and their target groups through innovative and interactive practices.

1. Social Theatre: Methodologies and Applications

1.1 The Power of Social Theatre

Social theatre allows participants to explore and express real-life social issues in a safe and creative environment. It enables them to connect emotionally, foster empathy, and develop problem-solving skills. By projecting inner struggles onto fictional characters, participants can critically analyze and address complex challenges.



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1.2 Techniques and Exercises

Statues of Change

1. Each participant creates a statue representing a state of being stuck (e.g., oppression or exclusion).
2. Participants then transform their statues to depict progress or resolution.
3. Group discussions follow, focusing on the emotions and insights associated with the transformations.

Chicken game

Group members start in the position of an egg and play rock-paper-scissors. The winner of each game evolves to chicken and then, to human. The participant has to win a game against another human to finish the game.

Molecule game

Participants walk in the space. The facilitator call a number and participants gather in the number called. E.g: "groups of 3!".

The groups then discuss various things, called by the facilitator, such a

- Favourite movie
- Favourite book
- Good memories, bad memories
- ETC...

Sociometry

Participants are required to move around in the space and to distribute themselves to quickly capture visually some aspects of the group depending on the prompt the facilitator gives, : where are participants from? How familiar are they with the topic? What are their backgrounds?...

Zombie game

One chair is left empty and one person is a zombie which tries to get to the empty chair. The zombie move slowly to reach it. The group has people who can move fast but once someone gets up from their chair they cannot return to the same place. There is no physical contact with the zombie allowed. The longer you survive without letting zombie sit in the chair the better.

Theatre of the Oppressed

Developed by Augusto Boal, this methodology empowers participants to identify and address oppressions.

- **Image Theatre:** Participants create frozen images representing social issues, inviting discussion and analysis.
- **Invisible Theatre:** Actors perform scenes in public spaces, engaging unaware audiences to provoke thought and dialogue.
- **Interactive Plays:** The audience is invited to intervene in the performance to explore alternative resolutions.



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Theatre of the Oppressed exercise

- In circle, back turned to the inside of the circle, the facilitator call a word (E.g. firefighter) and participants turn inward to act out the word
- Someone poses in the centre of the circle, next one copies the pose
- Someone poses in the centre of the circle, next does the opposite
- Museum of emotions: José says an emotion (eg fear), half of the group express that emotion, the other half observes while walking between them

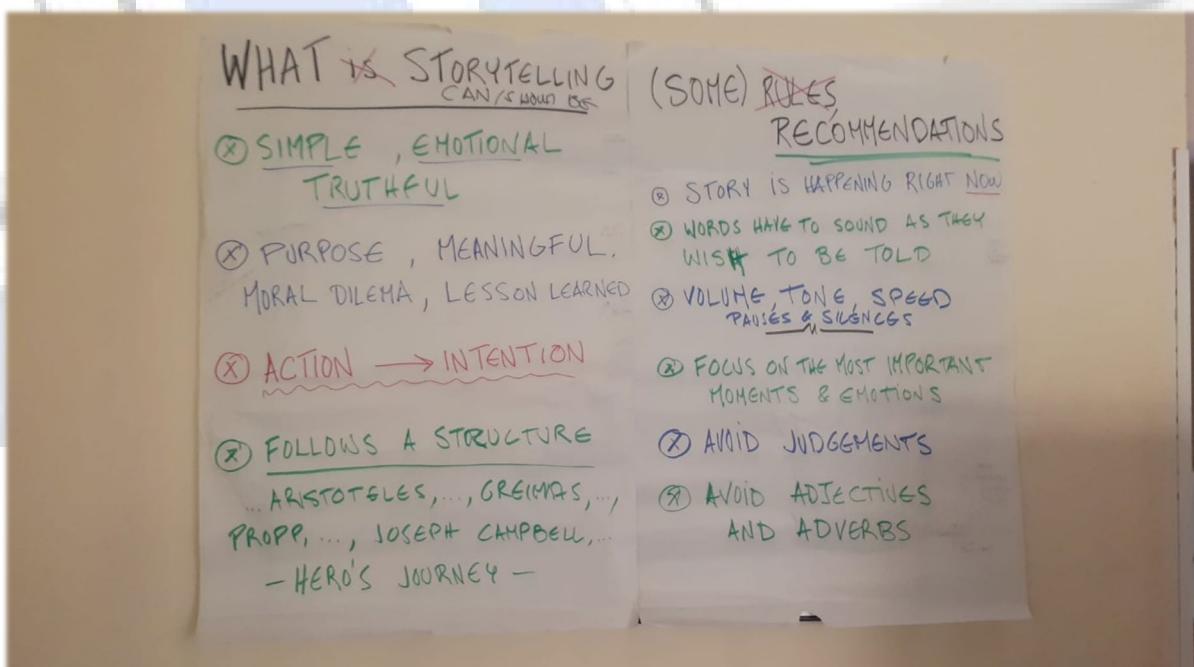
Big action: making a play (2 groups of each 12 persons)

- 30 min to prepare an acting scene
- Deciding on a social theme (E.g. gender inequality in journalism, power abuse in schools/work)
- Deciding on roles
- 1/2 rehearsals
- Presenting it
- Guided by the joker José, asking questions, one of person of the audience get on stage and tries to find a 'solution'
- Questions: who is who? What do you think this person feels? What can we do? Who can do something? Would that help? ...

Improvisation for Social Issues

1. Participants act out scenarios related to social issues such as bullying, discrimination, or environmental concerns.
2. Follow-up discussions analyze the themes and solutions presented.

Storytelling





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Six words memoir

Example of E. Hemingway:

"For sale: baby shoes never worn"

Give 5 minutes and ask participants to create their own a word memoir.

The following step are to add more details to the story to make a PARAGRAPH out of it. Give 10 more minutes for this. In the end, share the stories in pairs.

Clown

- Circle. Everyone goes to the centre, one by one, other applaud > feel that you are in a stage;
- Circle. Everyone juggle on the centre, one by one, and when the ball falls they say "tachana" and everyone applaud > to be ok with mistakes;
- Circle. Pick a bottle. Everyone says, one by one, what the bottle is for them - microphone, cell phone, pillow, etc > use imagination;
- In a line. Everyone walks, one by one, the others observe and after imitate focusing on the walk, shoulders, hands, hair, and so one. Gradually we start to exaggerate the movement > pay attention to others, be an observer, learn from others body expression and language;
- **24 emotions** - admiration, adoration, aesthetic appreciation, amusement, anger, anxiety, awe, awkwardness, boredom, calmness, confusion, craving, disgust, empathic pain, entrancement, excitement, fear, horror, interest, joy, nostalgia, relief. **8 actions** - cooking, walking, shopping, trying clothes, driving and watching TV. Everybody tries to represent and other must guess > feel the emotions and integrate them, learn how to use them a tool in your work.

Improvisation

- Circle. Circle. Pick a chair. Everyone says, one by one, what the chair is for them - bag, guitar, lion king, stage, bottle of water, etc.
- Improvise your all day (alone). First you do it in 2 minutes, after you do it in 1 minute. After half of the group watch and the other improvise their day in 1 minute. For ending, everyone improvise their day in 30 seconds > reflexion about what is missing in our days, how is for us the improvise the normal routine that sometimes do to in pilot mode.
- Divide in group of 4 or 5. Every group gets a paper with a social situation, like: 1) children abuse and domestic violence; 2) abandoned elderly; 3) bullying; 4) gender discrimination; 5) climate change. Every group as 1 minute to prepare the play and 30 sec/1min to represent them. After we discuss about the themes.

2. Social Media: Amplification and Engagement

2.1 Why Use Social Media?

Social media provides a platform to amplify the impact of youth work initiatives. It allows youth workers to reach wider audiences, document activities, and promote social change through engaging digital content.



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2.2 Creating Digital Content

Film Production

1. Teach participants about framing, angles, and camera movements, such as the rule of thirds.

Types of shots:

- Wide - general shot
- Long - full shot
- Medium American shot
- Medium shot
- Medium chest shot
- Close-up shot
- Extreme close-up shot

We also discussed various angles:

- Eye level
- Back
- POV (Point of View)
- Amorce (behind the shoulder)
- Side
- Side 45°
- Low angle
- High angle
- Distopia/Dutch angle

Different camera movements:

- Travelling
- Vertical
- Depth of Field (micro/macro)

2. Guide them in creating short films that highlight specific social themes.
3. Include debriefing sessions to analyze the creative process and the impact of the films.

2.3 Techniques and Exercises

Video presentation

Video presentation: During 30 minutes, Get participants to make a 30 seconds video about themselves. The guidelines for participants is to mention:

- Their name
- Where they are from
- Their area of work
- Their expectations for the activity / life in general
- Their experience with theatre/media
- Name 3 objects that describe them



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Creation of a story based on a social issue

In groups participants have 10' minutes to create a story. After that time, they share their stories. After sharing, they create a performance/role play/improvisation based on the story which they previously wrote. The final part of the session is the performance and then debriefing during which participants share in one word how they felt.

Memes and Visual Content

1. Train participants to create memes that raise awareness about social inclusion and youth issues.
2. Share these memes on social platforms to engage broader audiences.

2.4 Social Media Strategies

- **Facebook Groups:** Create dedicated groups for project participants and stakeholders to share updates, reflections, and outcomes.
- **WhatsApp Groups:** Use for real-time communication and information sharing about activities and events.
- **Visibility Plan:** Ensure all digital content includes appropriate branding, such as logos of partners and Erasmus+.

3. Recommendations for Dissemination

3.1 Within Local Communities

Organize interactive workshops, performances, and discussions to engage community members. Include participants as facilitators to share their learnings and experiences.

3.2 Among Organizations

Foster collaboration by sharing best practices, resources, and methodologies with other NGOs and youth organizations. Network at events and fairs to build partnerships for future initiatives.

3.3 For Target Groups

Focus on NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) and marginalized youth by tailoring activities to their needs. Combine theatre techniques and digital tools to enhance their engagement and skill development.

4. Evaluation and Sustainability

4.1 Evaluation Methods

- Conduct daily reflections using creative methods such as storytelling, drawing, or group discussions.
- Use digital tools for self-assessment such as the [Youthpass](#), allowing participants to track their progress and share feedback.

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4.2 Sustaining the Impact

Encourage participants to use their Youthpass certificates to document their achievements and apply the learned methodologies in their personal and professional lives. Provide ongoing support through follow-up workshops and networking opportunities.

Conclusion

By integrating social theatre and social media, youth workers can create transformative experiences that foster inclusion, creativity, and social change. This manual provides the tools and strategies needed to effectively implement these methodologies, ensuring a lasting impact on participants, organizations, and communities.

