



THE HANDBOOK



Toolkit for youth workers

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01	ABOUT THE TOOLKIT
02	HOW TO ORGANIZE A FACE TO FACE WORKSHOP USING PEER EDUCATION
04	ORGANISING THE WORKSHOP
10	HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE CURRENT METHODOLOGY WITH YOUR PEERS
12	CHALLENGES
13	EASY CHALLENGES
24	MEDIUM CHALLENGES
35	HARD CHALLENGES
46	DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS



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ABOUT THE TOOLKIT



The Toolkit for youth workers was created in the contexts of the Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership project E-employed, for educators / teachers / youth workers to support the youngsters they work with, in acquiring skills to maximize their chances for employment.

The Toolkit contains 30 challenges (activities / working methods) in the form of cards that help youngsters and young adults to experience real life situations, out of which they can draw learning conclusions.

Facilitators of the face-to-face workshops are there to guide the participants through an experiential learning process, and help them become aware of the lessons learned, as well as how they can be transposed into real life.

Find out more about the E-employed Project [here](#).

HOW TO ORGANIZE A FACE TO FACE WORKSHOP USING PEER EDUCATION

WHAT IS PEER EDUCATION

A peer is a person who belongs to the same social group as another person or group. Peers are individuals who share related values, experiences and lifestyles and who are approximately the same age. The connecting element or “peer factor” can also be based on other aspects of a person’s identity such as:

- ethnicity
- religious or philosophical belief
- gender
- sexual orientation
- occupation
- socio-economic and/or health status
- physical or personality traits
- history or origins



Peer also means *equal*: “meaning we all learn together and that all our contributions are of equal worth”. Essentially, your “peer” will be someone in whom you see part of yourself in. Someone “like you” in one or more aspects of your identity. Recognizing someone as a peer is often unconscious and intuitive.

Peer education happens when young people carry out informal or organised activities with their peers, over a period of time, to develop their competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes etc) knowledge, skills, beliefs and attitudes enabling them to be responsible for themselves and others and to create a space where they can feel well, safe and respected.

Peer education rests on the idea that *young people are the experts on their own lives, and are therefore the best starting point in any learning process.* Peer education enables youth to deal effectively with problems that affect them.



Peer education can take place in any setting where young people feel comfortable: in schools and universities, clubs, churches, community centres, workplaces, on the street, on the Internet... It can happen in groups, or just between two people

The method of peer training is based upon the belief that young people deliver a message to their peers that is often more credible and efficient than when it is delivered by authority figures. Contrarily to formal education settings where the transmission of knowledge is vertical (typically: a lecture delivered by a teacher to their pupils), peer training is a horizontal process where peers educate each other in a spirit of mutual learning. It assumes that all individuals are both learners and teachers and that the knowledge of a group is necessarily greater than the knowledge of one individual.

Peer training is now an increasingly important form of non-formal education in the youth sector, providing opportunities for youth empowerment through the development of self-awareness. It requires a pedagogical reflection about how to support young people in the long term to develop competences such as a growth mindset, self-awareness, self-confidence, communication skills, teamwork skills, public speaking skills, facilitation skills, leadership skills, etc.

ORGANISING THE WORKSHOP

When you work with people, it is important to think of the settings where they will gather. When you gather a group of people somewhere, it's important to think of their well-being. *What kind of place would be appropriate for your target group?* We encourage you to think from their perspective and identify a venue they would feel connected with. A proper environment will help the group to feel more comfortable and willing to engage. Here are a couple of parameters that you need to take into consideration when choosing the venue:

Space - the room should be big enough to host the group comfortably, should have big windows for natural light to come in and should be equipped with the basic necessities for a workshop (flip chart, markers, pencils, pens, paper etc). For further details on materials needed, please consult the "materials needed" section of each challenge. Chairs should be arranged in a circle, including all participants. The facilitator is also part of the circle and will sit in the circle most of the time when addressing the group, especially during the debriefing session. Choose a space which is easily accessible for your participants and make sure basic necessities are covered during the workshop (such as snacks, water, access to bathrooms).

Facilitation - Good facilitation helps everyone feel valued and understood and encourages participants to be involved in their own ways.

The role of the facilitator within a group is:

- To keep the group focused on the task
- To remain as neutral as possible
- To involve and encourage everyone in the group
- To listen and contribute
- To remind the group what has been discussed.





Safe and Supportive environment - Creating a safe space for participants to connect and get to know each other is a first and essential step in peer education activities. A supportive environment encourages learners to be an active part of the group, learn from their mistakes and take responsibility for the activities they are involved in.

The Common Ground - Despite sharing a peer factor, your participants are essentially a group of individuals with their unique personality traits, experiences and values. It is important to bear this in mind when working with others and be open to individual differences. Instead of relying on hidden expectations, allow your participants to create a set of guiding principles for their work and find common ground.



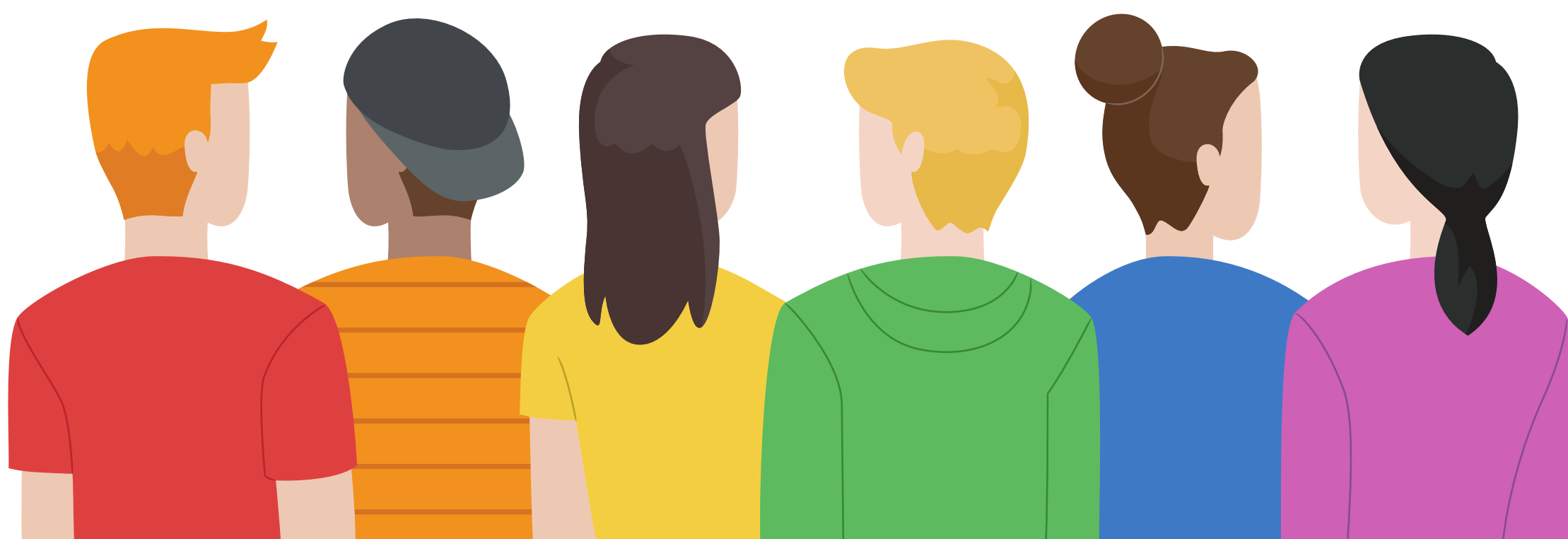
When people own the rules, they are more likely to feel a sense of ownership. Establishing ground rules may also come handy should the group run into conflict.

Experiential learning: is the process of “learning through experience”, or “learning through reflection on doing”. It is an approach that involves all aspects of the person, and focuses on the learning process for the individual. It is distinct from didactic learning in which the learner is more passive. It means using methods that give people the opportunity to live meaningful experiences on a specific issue, topic or situation. When participants experience these aspects themselves, they are more likely to empathise and relate.

Flexibility - In peer education it is essential to leave space for participants' ideas and to be responsive to the group's needs. Sometimes, a planned activity doesn't work the way it was supposed to because the group is not in the "right mood" to engage with it, or because the format is not adapted to the learning patterns of the participants. This means you have to be flexible with your agenda.

You can exchange or skip activities to keep people focused without losing sight of your goals. You can be transparent about it and have a direct conversation with the group, asking them what they would like to change in the process to be able to contribute better.

Debriefing: Sometimes trainers simulate an experience and expect that magically participants will learn from it. Besides having the experience, what actually makes the whole difference in the experiential learning/non-formal education is the **DEBRIEFING**, the reflection on the experience that you have just had. The debriefing is a structure to help participants analyse and integrate their experiences and may take a variety of forms, such as checklists, informal discussions, structured discussions, or written commentaries. One such model, **EIAG** model, asks participants to experience, identify, analyse and generalize the results and procedures used in the simulation.



Experience the group is experiencing a structured common activity, designed by the trainer with the aim of generating specific learning objectives. In this phase the trainer would normally not interfere with questions, unless the group is facing blockages, has some resistance of engaging in the activity. In such case there are questions that aim to:

- overcome the opposition in such way that the resistance is included in the activity,
- learn from these blockages in case they cannot be overcome.

For instance:

- *What is happening? What do you feel related to this?*
- *Would you like to give it a try?*
- *What do you need to know in order to...?*
- *Can you be more precise or give an example?*
- *What would you prefer? Do you have a suggestion?*
- *What are your suspicions of?*
- *What is the worst and best thing that can happen?*
- *If you could guess the answer, what would that be?*
- *Can you phrase this differently?*
- *What else? Would you say more about this?*

Identify important facts that happened during the experience and are relevant for the evolution of the task/group.

This is the sharing phase when the participants have ended the experience. The questions are oriented towards generating data, being descriptive about what happened from the different perspectives of the people within the group.

- *Who would like to share about their experience? Who else?*
- *What did you think was the most significant thing that happened?*
- *Who had a similar experience?*
- *Who had a different experience? Who reacted in a different way?*
- *What did you notice?*
- *What made you feel good or bad during the experience?*
- *What did you become aware of?*

Analyze the evolution of the task, seek the source of the behaviours and their effects. Now the participants share common information about the group and individual experiences. The questions are oriented towards analysing and giving meaning to this information to the group and individuals.

- *What did you feel/think/notice when...?*
- *In what way did that behaviour influence you?*
- *What does this mean to you?*
- *What makes you think this was good/bad?*
- *What problems did you face and how did you attempt to meet them?*
- *What did you try to do that worked good for you? In what way?*
- *What did you try that did not work for you? In what way?*
- *How could it be different?*
- *What do you understand better about yourself/the group?*



Generalize, help participants to draw conclusions and find the learning points for their lives.

In this phase participants are working on bringing the learning from the simulated experience into their daily life and see what makes sense to each.

The questions are oriented towards drawing conclusions.

- *What was your intention?*
- *What did you learn comparing your intention to what you heard from the group?*
- *Does this experience remind you about something in particular?*
- *What does this experience help you clarify?*
- *What principle/law is operating?*
- *What did you learn/relearn?*
- *What did you learn from this game that you did not know*
- *Did you learn anything that you could use your in life?*
- *How does this help you in your life?*

Conclusions: now it is important to validate these conclusions.
Sequential steps for validating conclusions:
List conclusions: identify conclusions drawn from the game experience.

Game Data: Identify the specific happenings in the game that brought you to this particular conclusion.

Judgment: Is the conclusion drawn from the game experience true or untrue in the real world.

Life Data: Identify specific happenings from real life that support your contention that the conclusion is realistic or unrealistic. This last step can often lead to a search for data that supports or disproves the conclusion.

An option is also to validate/reinforce the conclusions with theoretical background, presenting concepts, studies, research.



The above **EIAG** model is presented to serve you as an inspiration when formulating your own debriefing questions with the group. There are many more out there and you can use any of them as long as in the end the participants will go through a full experiential learning process and will be able to draw a conclusion that can be associated with the conclusion.

Basically, experiential learning is giving participants the opportunity to go through a facilitated learning experience in compressed time, in a safe space and funded by a facilitator that is there to help guide the learning process.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE CURRENT METHODOLOGY WITH YOUR PEERS

In the process of testing these methods, we developed an educational methodology called **Challenge By Choice**.

So, we created the Challenge By Choice Method guide, which walks you through organizing and implementing educational experiences using the methodology.



E-EMPLOYED TOOLKIT FOR YOUTH WORKERS



Inspired by the “Tool Kit for Quality Peer Education” published by the European PEER Training Organisation. / “Peers for Equality” - Toolkit for tackling gender based discrimination published by Ofensiva Tinerilor.