SCULPTURES OF STRESSFUL SITUATIONS



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PURPOSE

- To share experiences with stressful situations and possible reactions.
- To identify useful and less useful strategies to deal with stress.

PREPARATION

Choose a space where participants have enough freedom to move around and do theatrical expressions.

MATERIALS

Flipchart or other paper and markers

INTRO

Activity is suited for a group of participants from a shared background (especially professional background, e.g., youth workers in youth centres). Spend some time before the activity to get to know each other's backgrounds and positions in work/life. When introducing an activity, set the context whether you will be focusing on stressful situations at work/particular field or stressful situations in general.

SCULPTURES OF STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

STEPS

1. Separate participants into 3 (or more) groups. Invite participants to share in each group stressful situations at work (or other settings, if relevant), each participant one situation.

2. Invite the first group to choose one shared situation and present it to the rest of the participants as a sculpture. It is allowed to use their bodies, objects in the room and facial expressions to create a "frozen scene" that represents what happened, however, no verbal comments should be made. The rest of the participants are invited to guess what happened and what was the situation about.

3. When the situation is clear, a sharing in the large group can be done – discussing how often such a situation happens, what are the usual reactions and strategies to deal with the stress in these settings. The facilitator lists all the mentioned strategies (e.g., yelling at the people involved, deep breathing, taking a pause, suppressing your emotions, working overtime, asking for help) on a flipchart.

4. When all groups have presented their situations and reactions have been discussed, the facilitator summarizes the mentioned strategies that have been collected on the flipchart.



REFLECTION

- Was it easy/difficult to recognize the stressful situations represented by others? Are they common in your life as well?
- How useful (and/or healthy) are the listed strategies? What could be the alternatives?

COMMENTS

If participants are from the same organization/setting facilitator can develop the reflection further to discuss the culture in the organization regarding dealing with stressful situations.