

Project 2016-1-ES01-KA204-025159 ERASMUS+

Sharing effective educational practices and systematizing a training competences programme for employment and inclusion for vulnerable adults



The group

"... It is something more, or rather, something different from the sum of its members (...); what constitutes its essence is not the similarity or dissimilarity among its members, but their interdependence “.

(K. Lewin, 1972)

The group:

- ❖ A certain number of people in mutual interaction
- ❖ These people see themselves as members of the group
- ❖ These people are perceived from the outside as group members

In a group

- ❖ The members share the rules
- The shared norms concern what is distinctive and of common interest
- Some rules relate to the roles of the members within the group
- Roles are connected together (they are indeed defined in terms of reciprocity)

Small Group: 4-12 members (very close relationships between members, reciprocal interactions are facilitated)

Median group: 10-12- / 25-30 members (less close relationships between members, tendency to divide into subgroups)

Large Group: 30 or more members (less direct and personal relations, polarization between massification and identification)

Workgroup

Features:

- ✓ The interdependence and organized links
- ✓ The sharing of beliefs, norms, values which mark the internal and external relations
- ✓ The existence of a common goal / shared
- ✓ The will of members to use their skills and expertise for the group in order to achieve the goal
- ❖ The target of producing something (good or service) transforms the group in a Workgroup

The **group** is characterized by **interaction**

In the **workgroup** the distinctive feature is the **integration**

FROM THE INTERACTION TO THE INTEGRATION

Integration (Treccani dictionary definition): of reciprocal value, integrating each other, association, merging multiple items or subjects that complement reciprocally, often through the coordination of their means, their resources, their capabilities: (....)

It is favored by:

- ✓ consciousness of existing equalities (allowing to set bonds and to perceive the advantages of the aggregation)
- ✓ Activation of specific emotional dimensions both positive (solidarity, friendship ...) and negative (envy, hostility ...)

To acknowledge the interdependence and to be aware of its necessity (in the philosophical sense)

Interdependence = dependence on the others



COLLABORATION

- ✓ **Positive interdependence**: the perception of being connected with others so that the individual can not be successful without the group and the group can not succeed without the individual (i.e. to feel to be indispensable for the group but also that the group is indispensable)
- ✓ **Negative interdependence** (competitive or individualistic): it happens when everyone has the same target but if the result is reached by one, the others think they will be excluded by attaining it

PHASES OF A GROUP DEVELOPMENT

The workgroup goes through phases in its life: the first step corresponds to an immature state (inefficient, ineffective), the last to a mature state (efficient, effective)

- ✓ **Training:** territory, objectives, activities, priorities, rules, uncertainty and confusion
- ✓ **Conflict:** evaluation of the common action, stress and hostilities, defiance to leadership
- ✓ **Self organization:** cohesion on the objectives, mutual acceptance, trust, shared norms and rules, cooperation
- ✓ **Performance:** sense of belonging, incentive to the formal acknowledgment of formal recognition of the group, tolerance and constructivity, conflict policy, goals achieving
- ✓ **Updating:** satisfaction for the achieved goals, feelings of emptiness

Working mood

INDICATORS:

- ✓ Support
- ✓ Warmth
- ✓ Recognition of the roles
- ✓ Openness and feedback
- ✓ Leadership

If these indicators are present the mood is positive

LEADERSHIP STYLES

(Lewin, Lippit and White)

Autocratic:

(the leader decides without any form of consultation)



Good productivity (where motivation of people has a low influence on the process), high level of discontent, aggressive behavior.

Democratic:

(the leader involves people in decision-making)



serene atmosphere, satisfaction, good/sufficient productivity (presence of a wide range of incompatible opinions may increase inefficiencies)

Laissez-Faire

(minimum leader involvement in decision-making)



low tension level, good/low efficiency (high autonomy and low needs of central coordination are required)

LEADERSHIP STYLES

(Bales)

Functional



it works for group targets

Expressive



it works for relations among members

Interesting: in a group it can be more of one leader

LEADERSHIP STYLES

(various authors)

Participatory



advice and direction of the leader, autonomy of the members, frequency of contacts, empowerment.

ASSERTIVENESS "To Assert", "assert themselves"

The assertive person are:

- attentive to themselves and to the others
- they respect and value their own resources and those of the others
- they foster mutual growth and they do not fear changes
- they have confidence in themselves and in the others
- they are not conditioned by others
- they express their emotions and their wishes
- their emotions and knowledge are without insecurity and anxiety
- they do not avoid conflicts.

ACTIVE LISTENING

- ✓ has to be intended as the ability to listen with a high degree of attention and communicative participation
- ✓ to listen not only to the content but also to the relation
- ✓ to pay attention to communication barriers
- ✓ to provide feedback



To listen means to focus on the informations the other person send to us and to express our intention to understand before judging

In this perspective, listening represents also an estimation and appreciation tool

EMPATHETIC LISTENING means

- ✓ to look at the world through the eyes of the other
- ✓ to be aware
- ✓ to pay attention both to the words and the interlocutor's feelings
- ✓ without criticism and without judgment
- ✓ in the presence of an important emotional content (conflict, problem)

Common mistakes

Do not pay attention

to be distracted or thinking of anything else

Pseudo listening

to pretend to listen

Hear but do not listen



to be kind a half-listening

Focus on himself

waiting for a chance to say what I think

To cut the speech

to desire to speak, to talk over a person

To listen to what you want

I already know what you are saying

To listen to disagree

listening to express disagreement

TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

BRAINSTORMING: to use your brain (brain) to storm (storm) a problem method developed by Osborne (1939) for creative problem-solving aiming to: stimulate idea generation

- ✓ increase creativity of the group
- ✓ reduce social inhibition among group members
- ✓ the “ideative efficacy” is based on gathering a large number of ideas and
- ✓ deferring judgement.

Phases: creative, organizational and evaluative

- ✓ Number of participants: 6 to 12 - diversity as an added value
- ✓ A conductor
- ✓ A large blackboard visible to all

- **Creative phase:**
 - The leader (conductor) describes the theme / problem**
 - Maximum duration: 1 hour
 - Number of ideas: there is no limit
 - The conductor collects and annotates the ideas
 - No proposal may be rejected or refused

- **Organizational phase**
 - Ideas are classified by groups or categories, repetitions are eliminated

- **Evaluation phase**
 - Depth analysis of ideas
 - Choice of criteria to make choices
 - Choice of ideas to be used / carry on

To encourage participation: **DEBATE IN TURN** (C. Lindeman)

- A small **group**
- A participant plays the role of a **counselor/ facilitator**
- The counselor **informs** carefully about the **problem**
- The participants sit in a **circle** (everyone can see the face of each other)
- Everyone takes the floor in a **preset order** (the order is established)
- When a person speaks it is **prohibited any interruption**
- **The length of time of each talk is fixed** - the counselor monitors with kindness
- It is **possible to abstain** from talking and to give the floor to the following person
- This **rule** must be applied **rigidly**
- The counselor has the task to **summarize** the contributions/ **partial** conclusions and **final** summary
- The participants can **take notes** and **prepare their talks**

Handling the participation: THE CONFLICT

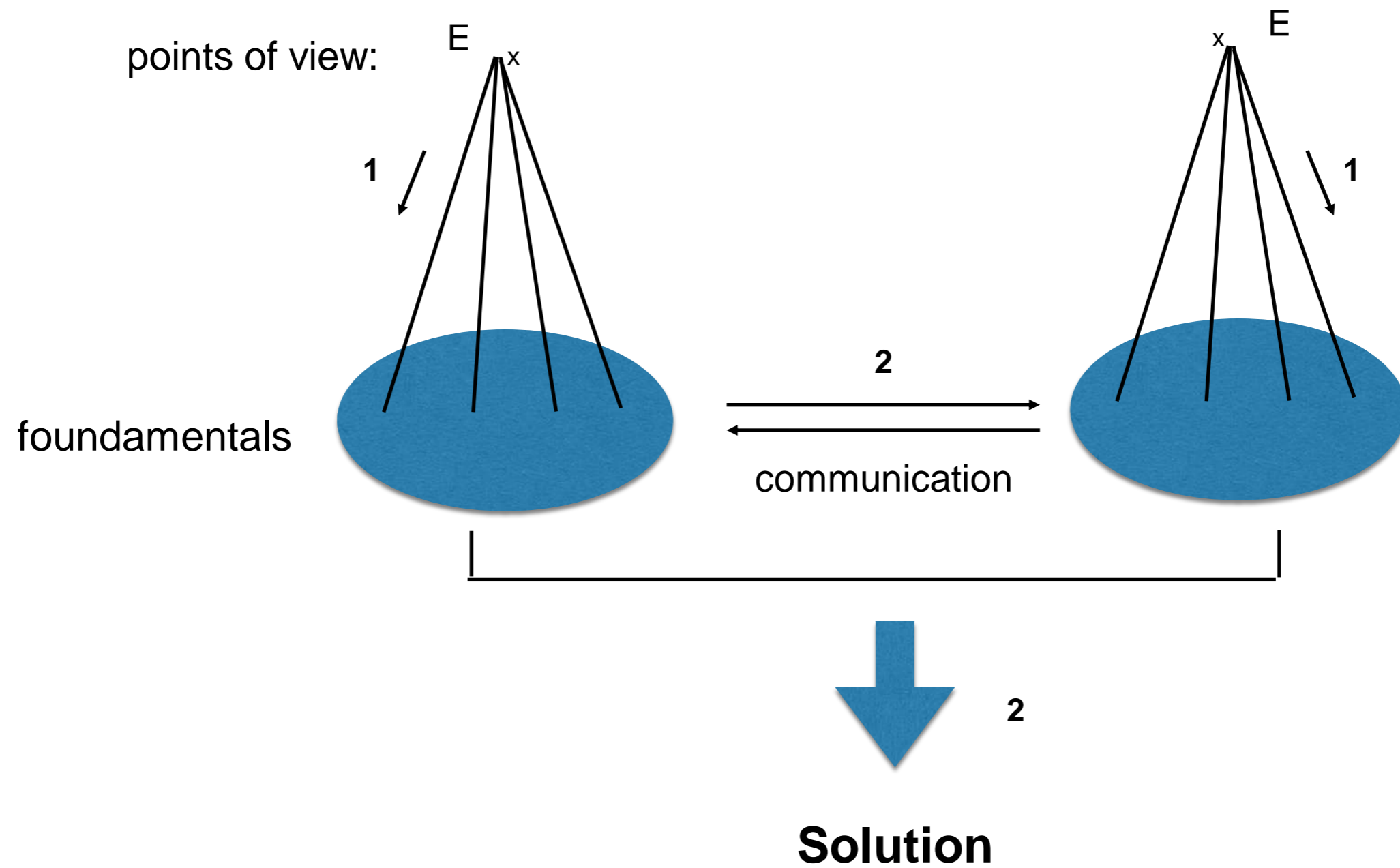
- ❖ The conflict is a normal experience in life of every person and of every group

Conflict is a situation in which at least two circumstances (desires, thoughts, projects ...) are in a **relationship of incompatibility** (or one or the other: **either/or**)

- "... Divergence, contrast, bargaining and negotiation area, not yet defined situation ..."
(Miscioscia e Novara, 1998)

CONFLICT IS:

- It is a condition of the relationship between two or more parties, where there is a **problem** (content) that produces a **discomfort** (emotional meaning)
- It is a relational structure that shows a **transformative potential**
- Approach / competence **“so-stare” (stop and stay) into the conflict**
- **with a double meaning: “to know how to live” and “to stop, to linger”** (*Novara and Religious, 2007*)
- **neither re-solve or dis-solve** the conflict but **to transform** it as an opportunity to **restructure the relations**



- ❖ To switch from the "point of view" level, from the claims, to the level of "fundamental aspects" ("... collection of the needs and sufferings, ... expression of emotions ...") and to activate creativity.

THE CREATIVITY

handling conflict

- to listen not only to the point of views and contents, but also to the underlying fundamental aspects
- to transform / expand the compromise space towards creative invention space.
- to replace either / or thinking (this or that) with the thought and / and (both this and that)
- to put together, in a new proposal, as many fundamental expressed or implicit aspects of members in conflict

Link:

http://www.cppp.it/files/sfoggia_imparare_a_gestire_i_conflitti.pdf

<http://www.patpatfoort.be/>