Training Manual
- Persona Doll Methodology

ISSA Peer Learning Activities

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Introduction

The selection of the following activities was prepared for the personalized use for Persona Doll Methodology – ISSA Peer Learning Activity. The selection was made by Zsuzsa Laszlo, certified PD trainer.

Objectives

The purpose of the collection is twofold. First, it is a full length handout for Persona Doll method for practitioners to use (red part). Second, it is a material where training instructions, tips and facilitators are found (blue parts).

Structure of the Handout

The Handout contains the following major sections:

- Introductory training activities
- Sensitivity - warm up training activities
- Persona doll - training activities

Sources:

Persona Doll Handout – Persona Doll Training Center, UK

Guide for the activities:

Materials needed

This collection is prepared for both online and offline trainings, in each activity, a session will be devoted to what materials should be used in the activity, and also what would be an additional material list in case of offline trainings.

Duration

Timing, including debriefing of the activity

Group size

Specification of the size of the group size

Difficulty level (1-5)

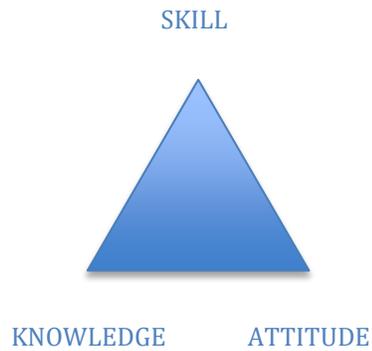Marking with numbers, from 1 (easy) to 5 (difficult).

Training tips

In preparation for training, trainers should try the activities beforehand.

It is suggested to conduct these activities in pairs, and allocate the roles beforehand.

Skills for Persona Doll class activities

SKILL

KNOWLEDGE   ATTITUDE

1. Being open minded
2. Patience
3. Empathy
4. Knowledge about the culture you are facing
5. Questioning your viewpoint
6. Tolerating ambiguity
7. Knowledge of the stereotypes of the culture you are facing
8. Being aware of your own prejudices
9. Being non-judgmental
10. Flexibility
11. Cultural self-awareness
12. Sensitivity
13. Sense of Humor

The Anti-Bias Approach - Derman-Sparks

The four goals of the Anti-Bias Approach by Derman-Sparks are:

1. Identity and Self Respect:

To nurture each child and each adult: building up a knowledge of confidence, group identity and self-identity that does not involve feeling superior to anybody else.

Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social (group) identities.

2. Empathy:

To promote in each child and adult a comfortable, empathetic interaction with people from diverse backgrounds: this has to do with both information and emotional attitudes and feelings.

Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity, accurate language for human differences, and empathetic, just and caring interactions with people from diverse backgrounds.

3. Unlearning Negative Attitudes:

To guide each child's and adult's critical thinking about the various kinds of bias in society: to learn to identify, challenge and eliminate those that are unfair.

Children will develop critical thinking skills about the various kinds of bias in society: to learn to identify, challenge and eliminate those that are unfair. They will increasingly recognise unfairness, have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.

4. Problem-posing/Activist Approach:

To help each child and adult to develop the confidence and skills to stand up for herself or himself and for others in the face of unfair, biased behaviours.

Each child will demonstrate empowerment, and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions. This is an activist goal, to teach that people working together can create change and build a more just community - even in the classroom

Source: Persona Dolls and anti-bias curriculum practice with young children: A case study of Early Childhood (dissertation) by Carol Smith by, Department of Education, University of Cape Town
February 2009

Persona Doll training methodology

Key message of PD method

Early childhood practitioners can make difference in thes life of young children by empowering them to combat discrimination, develop emotional literacy and empathy, and open up to otherness!

Goal of the Persona Doll training

To empower preschool educator and/or practitioners and paraprofessionals, working in early childhood services and programs to challenge discrimination and biases with young children and to promote equality and inclusivity.

Expected outcomes:After the training, practitioners will gain skills and knowledge to be able to:

- Feel empowered to discuss with children "sensitive topics", such as poverty, disability, exclusion, rejection, fear, violence etc.
- Empower children to critically think and openly talk about their feelings and to resist biases, stigmatization and discrimination.
- Enhance the psychosocial life of young children and build community in the classroom.

Training approach

The training is strongly based on Persona Doll approach that is an effective way to help children ages 2-7 to explore and confront bias. Persona Doll practice originates in Great Britain, and is widely used all over the world; in Europe (the Netherlands, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Croatia etc.), South Africa and Australia.

The method provides a powerful, non-threatening and enjoyable way to raise equality issues and counter stereotypical and discriminatory thinking with young children. The dolls help children to express their feelings and ideas, think critically, challenge unfair treatment, and develop empathy with people who are different from themselves. The method offers an effective tool to talk about issues like, racism, culture, gender, and other equality issues. Teachers like its simplicity and the hands-on experience it offers.

Persona Dolls are not ordinary dolls; nor are they puppets. Practitioners, by giving them their own individual personas, change them from being inanimate objects into 'people' with individual personalities, family, cultural and class backgrounds, names, gender and ages. To ensure that the personas they create are detailed and authentic, practitioners include important facts such as where the Dolls live and sleep, the language(s) they speak, their likes and dislikes; the things they are good at and the ones they find difficult, the things that make them happy and those that upset, frighten and worry them, the length of time the family has been in this country, if relevant and its refugee or Gypsy/Traveller experiences. When developing personas especially for Dolls from cultures with which practitioners are unfamiliar, they make sure that they give them appropriate names and pronounce them correctly.

The training starts with self-reflection activities on diversity and ends with direct experiences in using Persona Dolls. On the morning of the third day participants visit one kindergarten in Budapest and the teacher which is very experienced with working with Persona Dolls. Participants will get video materials on sessions with Persona Dolls in different settings and instructions on how to make dolls.

1.1. Group ground rules

There is no Persona Doll training without setting up the group rules. It is the first step to create the trustful circumstances, so that participants will feel safe during the session.

Objectives

Having a set of group protocols that all participants take seriously.

Description

Ask group members what would make them comfortable during the trainings? What are the rules they would like to keep? You can start with some examples. When the list is ready, make participants to raise their hand if they agree to work with these rules.

Examples:

- *Respect the opinion of the others*
- *Be on time*
- *Respect the time of the others*
- *Active participation*
- *Right to not-participate*
- *Agree to disagree*
- *Group secret*
- *Give your honest feedback*
- *Keep jargon to the minimum*
- *No idea is bad*
- *Respect differences*
- *Eating / drinking*
- *Camera on / off*
- *No phones during the training (no vibrate mode)*
- *Mute*
- *Recording the session*
- *…………………………*
- *…………………………*
- *…………………………*

Materials needed

Duration

10 minutes

Group size

Non relevant

Difficulty level (1-5)

1

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

1.2. Persona Doll training expectations

It is suggested to map training expectations of participants before or at the beginning of the trainings. If you do it before, you save time during the training.

Objectives

To make sure they know what they will receive from the trainings. To build confidence in the participants.

Description

Give each participants 3 different coloured post-it notes(e.g. green, yellow and pink)

Ask them to write their answers for the following 3 questions, one oneach post-it:

1. *What do I expect from the training? (green)*
2. *What do I don't want in the training? (yellow)*
3. *What are my strengths, experiences that I can bring into the training? (pink)*

Ask participants to put the post –its on the wall (or on 3 flipchart papers). In an online session: ask them to put it in the Chat or use Mentimeter, an online platform (www.mentimeter.com).

Summarize the content of the answers, discuss the ideas, and provide answers to ALL raised concerns and questions.

Materials needed

Duration

20 minutes

Group size

Non relevant

Difficulty level (1-5)

1

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

1.3. Positive gossip

This is a very powerful activity, and at the beginning of a session gives participants plenty of confidence and energy to work inteams.

Objectives

To provide positive feedback for participants, without necessary knowing the other.

Description

1. Tell participants will work in triads (group of 3). Divide them randomly.

2. Offline: the triads sit on chairs, in a triangle form, facing outside the circle. Online: triads go into breakout rooms.

3. Explain the rules to the participants: There will be 3 rounds. Ineach round, 2 participants will say POSITIVE things for 2 minutes about the third participants, who listen and embrace the positive opinions/feedbacks/hypothesis.

4. It is very important that you keep the time, and signal when it is time to switch fromone person to the next.

TIPs for the trainer

It works perfectly well with people who never met before. However, it is important that it should happen after a few activities, so the participants have an idea aboutthe other participants.

Materials needed

Duration

15 minutes

Group size

Non relevant

Difficulty level (1-5)

1

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

1.4. Active listening (Story of my name)

Objectives

Participants will learn how to practice active listening. Participants will get to know each other better.

Description

Active listening is a technique that helps participants to really listen to one another. In an everyday communication sequence people often interrupt each other, assuming this is helping the communication flow. Often the interruption is based on the fact we are more concerned about what we have in our own minds, and not about what the other person wants to say. With this skill, one can learn how to listen actively.

1. Split participants into pairs. Explain the rule: the listener cannot speak but must demonstrate active interest in what the other person is saying by using body language.

2. For 2 minutes one of the participants will speak and the other participant will be the listener. Then they switch, and for another 2 minutes the one who was speaking, becomes the listener, and the listener becomes the speaker.

3. Tell them silence is fine. When you are the speaker and need time to think, there will be silence. The listener will be quiet, wait, and not show any impatience.

   Topics:
   - *Story of your name*
   - *Your best moment from last summer*
   - *Your biggest challenge in your work this year*

After pair work is finished, spend some time de-briefing the process. Ask people: how they felt; what, if anything was difficult for them; and how they could use this process in a cross-cultural communication setting. Talk about what interruptions mean, when it helps and when does it block the speaker.

TIPs for the trainer:

Have a loud and distinctive signal for when the roles are to change. Online: Use breakout rooms, and signal the 2 minutes with a message or sound. Offline: Make sure that the pairs are separated from one another. Have people move their chairs away from tables and face one another.

Materials needed

None

Duration

20 minutes

Group size

Any group size

Difficulty level (1-5)

1

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

1.5. Sociometry

Description

Think about which side of the Universe you are. Then look around and analyze if you are a minority of a majority, in a certain sense. Look how many new circles you find yourself after each question.

- Morning drinks (coffee-tea-other)
- Eating habits (vegetarian, meat lover, etc.)
- Commuting to work (30 minutes, 60 minutes, more than 60 minutes)
- Evening person- morning person
- Cooking skills
- Sparklingor plain water
- Pizza slice – eat the whole or leave the crust(or does not eat pizza)
- Where do you open a banana
- Book or e-book
- Rubik cube
- How do you put ketchup on your food (circles or zigzag)
- Keep your phone Muted / Vibrated / with Sound during the day
- Dark chocolate or milk chocolate
- Coke or Pepsi (or none)
- Alarm: Stop or Snooze

TIPs for the trainer:

Be aware that there will be participants who for certain topics cannot choose either option. Ask them to share their solution, always allow a new subgroup for participants who have a different answer and listen them carefully.

Materials needed

None

Duration

20 minutes

Group size

Any group size

Difficulty level (1-5)

1

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

1.6. Identity onion

When to use it? When starting to talk cultural identity, and intercultural conflicts. Goal/Learning aims: If one understands the causes of the cultural differences it will be easier to accept things that might look strange at first sight or that is hard to understand.

Full description of the activity:

1. Trainer gives 4-4 coloured A5 papers to all participants (yellow, green, blue, red)

2. Tell the participants:
   a. "You will have to place the papers under each other in the following order. On the top the yellow, under it the greeen, under it the blue and under it the red."
   b. "I will ask you questions, and you have to write the answers on the designated coloured paper. I will tell you which question belongs to which paper. It is important to write the first thing that comes to your mind, don't think about it too much. You can ask questions if something is not clear, but do not discuss your answers with others. Work on your own."
   c. "It is important to know that later on there will be one other person who will read your answers, so bear that in mind when writing your answers. At the end of the session you will get your answers back. Don't write your name on the papers."

3. Read the questions to the group in the following order:

   <u>1 - yellow paper</u>
   What kind of clothes do you prefer?
   What music do you prefer?
   What kind of meals do you prefer?
   Name one of your characteristics, that others might recognize on you.

Materials needed

list of questions, and 4-4 different colour A5 papers / participants, a small bag or basket for the papers, flipchart, marker

Duration

40 minutes

Group size

Any group size

Difficulty level (1-5)

1

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

<u>2 - green paper</u>

What do you notice instantly in others?

What do you like in others the most?

What do you like to talk about with your friends?

What do you do when you meet friends?

<u>3 - blue paper</u>

List three good habit of yours.

List three bad habit of yours.

What would be your dream job?

Where do you picture yourself in five years?

<u>4 - red paper</u>

What do you believe in?

What are your 3 core values?

What is something that you would never do?

4. Tell the participants (and illustrate with 4 coloured papers)

„ If you are ready, please take the red paper. Crumpleit into a ball. If you are ready with the red ball, take the blue paper, put the red one in, and crumpleit again into a bigger ball. If you are ready with the blue ball, take the green paper, put the blue in it and crumpleagain. Finally take the yellow paper and repeat thecrumpling. You will have a big yellow ball at the end."

5. Now take all the balls from the participants and put them into a bag or box. Tell the participants.

"Please take one ball each of you. First check whether it is yours or not. Do not read it, just check quickly. If it is yours, please put it back and take another one. Your task will be to find the owner of the ball. Please avoid guessing. First read the answers on the yellow paper. If you have no clue, you can read the green paper and so on. If you are sure or almost sure about the owner, please approach the person you think wrote the answers. If you were right and found the right person, you might want to ask him/her if you could read all papers. If you are done, please give the ball back to its owner."

6. Wait until every ball is given back to the owner, and they sit down. If somebody is hard to find, emphasize that this is not a winning game.

Debriefing: How did it feel to follow the instructions? Which questions were easy/ difficult to answer? Why? What helped you find the owner of the ball? What do you think this ball thing is anyway? Does it resemble to something? What does it look like? It looks like an onion. It represents our personality with the layers. What do you think these layers represent?

There are different layers of our self, our personality. There are visible and non-visible traits. If you recall the answers you read, were there things about which your opinion isvery different or very similar?
Do you think this exercise helps you understand something about yourself or the others?

2.1. To act or not to act

Description

In small groups, take turns talking about a time when you were involved in or witnessed a discriminatory incident relating to adults (not children). A discriminatory incident is an incident, which is perceived to be discriminatory by the victim or any other person. Some incidents may be clearly identifiable as discriminatory and unfair, while others may be less obvious. They could involve for example:

Discrimination	**Teasing**
Exclusion	**Stereotyping**
Harassment	**Being marginalized/ignored**
Physical attack	**Jokes**
Name calling	**Patronizing attitude(s)**

There is an obvious difference between being the observer and being the target. It is vital that everyone is sensitive to the feelings that this might arouse and to give the necessary support.

- What action was taken?
- What were the obstacles that stopped people from acting?

As a second round, now take turns talking about a time when you were involved in or witnessed a discriminatory incident relating to children.

Discrimination	**Teasing**
Exclusion	**Stereotyping**
Harassment	**Being marginalized/ignored**
Physical attack	**Jokes**
Name calling	**Patronizing attitude(s)**

- What action was taken?
- What were the obstacles that stopped people from acting?

Source: Persona Doll Handout – Persona Doll Training Center, UK

Materials needed

None

Duration

10-30 minutes (depends on the group size)

Group size

Any group size

Difficulty level (1-5)

2

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

2.2. Debate

Objectives

Description

1. Individually consider these statements, decide which ones you agree and disagree with and which ones you are undecided about. Then rank those that you agree with in order of importance.

2. Compare your responses with the others in your group. Which statements created the most controversy?

1. *Young children don't have prejudices. It is we adults who teach them about prejudice by emphasizing differences between people.*
2. *Young children learn which toys boys should play with and which ones are appropriate for girls.*
3. *We violate children's innocence and intensify conflict when we encourage them to explore and discuss equality issues.*
4. *Young children are aware of differences in skin color. It can affect the way they relate to other children.*
5. *You can't expect young children to develop positive attitudes towards others unless they feel good about their culture and indentity.*
6. *Children need positive inputs. It's not good for them to see pictures depicting poverty, hunger or war or to talk about these kind of issues.*

3. Make a group decision about whether you agree or disagreewith the statements.

Source: Persona Doll Handout – Persona Doll Training Center, UK

Materials needed

None

Duration

30-40 minutes (depends on the group size)

Group size

Any group size

Difficulty level (1-5)

3

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

2.3. Jelly Baby

Objectives

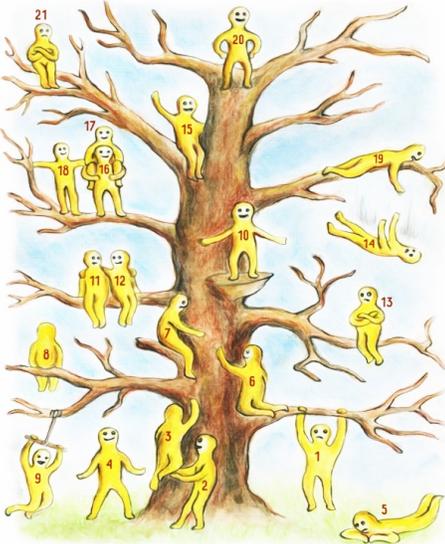This graphic design gives you an opportunity to map participants feelings / thoughts on certain topics.

Description

1. Show participants the Jelly Baby tree. See in Attachment.

2. Ask participants to color the figure that represents the best how do they feel about a certain topic.

3. Let them explain their choices.

Other examples:

TIPs for the trainer:

When leading this activity online, use a picture that has numbers attached to each figure. Then ask participants to write the numbers in the chat box.

Materials needed

Jelly Baby tree printed or online

Duration

10-30 minutes (depends on the group size)

Group size

Any group size

Difficulty level (1-5)

2

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

Source:

Pip Wilson and Ian Long 2018, The Big Book of Blob Trees, by Routledge.

2.4. Creating Personas

Description

In your small groups choose a Doll and create a detailed persona for it.

- its family
- its cultural background
- where it lives
- where it sleeps
- the language(s) it speaks
- the things it likes to do and those it doesn't like
- the food it likes and the food it doesn't like
- the things it's good at and the things it finds difficult
- its fears
- recent history – if appropriate

When the group has worked out the details of the Doll's persona spend a few minutes individually thinking about your particular group of children and how you would, if necessary, amend the persona to reflect them.

During feedback somebody from each group will tell the other groups about their Doll's persona i.e. introduce their Doll.

You will have the opportunity to share what you felt when you were developing your Doll's persona and to talk about any issues that came up for the group and for you personally.

Materials needed

Duration

10-30 minutes (depends on the group size)

Group size

Any group size

Difficulty level (1-5)

2

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

2.5. DOLLS WITH A STORY TO TELL

Description

In the same groups as previously, discuss how you would present the Doll and the questions you would ask to refresh the children's memories. Specify age group.

Work out how you would introduce and develop an anti-discriminatory scenario- perhaps one that you have witnessed in your workplace or experienced as young children. You could refer to the equality issues prompt sheet assembled earlier. You will also need to consider how you will wind up the session.

Take turns in your group with different people taking the role of the member of staff and the rest of your group being the children – remember it is an interactive session so the 'children' need to respond accordingly.

- The Doll sits on the practitioner's lap and she talks for it. Encourage the children to become friends with the Doll and to develop empathy with it – to put themselves in the Doll's shoes. Arouse everyone's interest by asking open-ended questions e.g. What do you think…? Do you ever feel…? What would you do if…? Get the 'children' to participate as much as possible – encourage them to share experiences and ideas and to listen to each other without interrupting.

Think about the skills and attitudes that children could be learning to help them achieve the Early Learning Goals (or your equivalent) particularly those relating to personal, social and emotional development.

Agree who will tell the story during the feedback session. This feedback is very important because many of the joys and difficulties involved in this work are likely to be highlighted.

FEEDBACK: After each group has presented their Doll and its story, people talk about what they felt when they were in the role of the practitioner, when they were the children and share issues that came up.

Materials needed

Duration

10-30 minutes (depends on the group size)

Group size

Any group size

Difficulty level (1-5)

2

Online / offline

It is suitable for both circumstances.

Source: https://personadoll.uk

Glossary

Categorization

The process by which people are grouped into categories on the basis of characteristics shared by members of the same group and features distinguishing the members of one category from those of another.

• *E.g.: There are Italians and there are Koreans in the group.*

National Characteristics

There are general personality characteristics attributed to the people of a certain nation. Although culture has a recognized effect on character formation, the idea of a national character is not generally considered a useful construct, as it invariably consists of an unexamined stereotype.

• *E.g.: Italians are louder than Koreans.*

Stereotype

Stereotypes consist in shared beliefs or thoughts about a particular group of people. A stereotype is an ensemble of characteristics that sums up a human group usually in terms of behaviour, habits, etc. The objective of stereotypes is to simplify reality: "they are like that". Stereotypes are usually based on some kind of contact or images that we have acquired in school, through mass media or at home, which then become generalised to take in all the people who could possibly be linked.

• *E.g.: Italians are always late.*

Prejudice

A prejudice is a judgement we make about another person or other people without really knowing them. Prejudices can be negative or positive in character. Prejudices are learned as part of our socialisation process and they are very difficult to modify or eradicate. Therefore it is important that we are aware that we have them.

• *E.g.: Anti-Italian prejudice in the United States in the early-twentieth century. They were being associated with organized crime.*

Discrimination

• The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex, or disability.

• *E.g.: When a non-Italian employer does not employ an Italian.*

2+1day intro workshop

DAY 1

9.00-9.10	Welcome
9.10 – 10.30	Introduction, basic activities on diversity issues
10.30- 10.50	*Coffee break*
10.50-12.20	More activities on diversity (D.I.E., Constructive Listening, Debate Stetements)
12.20-13.10	*Lunch*
13.10-14.40	Introdcution to Persona Doll Methodology
14.40-15.00	Coffee break
15.00-16.30	Creating Personas (group work)

DAY 2

9.00 – 10.30	More activities on diversity (Leila and Mohammed, ID onion)
10.30- 10.50	*Coffee break*
10.50-12.20	Working with the dolls + films
12.20-13.10	*Lunch*
13.10-14.40	Working with the dolls + films
14.40-15.00	*Coffee break*
15.00-16.30	Working with the dolls + films

DAY 3

9.30- 11.30	*Kindergarten visit*
12.00-13.00	Action Plans