

# Debriefing Manual

# Introduction

This manual was created and edited during two European Youth Commission Training Projects, in Bant, The Netherlands. Funding was provided through the European Commission, Education and Culture Department, Youth Programme.

All participants of these training sessions contributed their ideas, time and hard work to the development of the manual. Other resources that were used include the Internet and the material available from the organizations of the participants.

More information about Code-X International and the participants of the training sessions can be found at the end of this manual.

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# 1. What is Debriefing?

## 1.1 A general introduction to Debriefing

Some people say debriefing is so important that it is the learning experience. Debriefing allows participants to process what they've learned. This ensures that activities aren't left unfinished, with participants wondering what they accomplished or why an activity was done. To enable participants to get the most out of activities, it is essential to provide them with an opportunity to discuss what they've learned.

## 1.2 Debriefing definition FOR YOUTH WORK

### Debriefing is a method:

- For groups,
- To reflect after an activity,
- To help people acknowledge and talk about their feelings and experiences,
- To promote sharing and feedback within the group,
- To support self-evaluation and self-learning,
- To transfer the knowledge gained in activities to real life.

### Debriefing is:

- Interactive,
- An open-space.

## 2. When can we use Debriefing?

Debriefing can be used immediately after an activity that had a learning goal (team building activities, intercultural learning games), after stress (conflict, an unsuccessful activity), or after the completion of a project where youth must work together (community service, drama, etc).

### **Debriefing should be done if:**

- The participants are in a learning process OR
- There is an emotional impact from the activity OR
- The participants will benefit from reflecting on their role in the activity.

Debriefing is not necessary after an activity that does not have a learning goal (energizers, sightseeing) or for an activity done for its own value (a game of football, name games). If debriefing is repeated after every single activity it can lose its impact.

## 4. Limitations of Debriefing

Debriefing is fantastic, but it does have limitations. Most of the potential problems can be avoided if the trainer is thoroughly prepared. This means taking into account the characteristics and needs of the individuals, the abilities of the group as a team, and the environment surrounding the debriefing. Before choosing your debriefing method and beginning your planning, take into consideration:

### Individuals

- People who are not used to expressing their emotions, are very sensitive or who have been through a traumatic situation (activities can really bring out emotions)
- People who do not feel the training or debriefing is necessary, who do enjoy playing games or who are trying to give the 'right' answer
- Physical and mental abilities of the participants
- Length of the activity when the participants are tired or unable to concentrate

### Groups

- Cultural, religious, sociological (background/age/etc) or language barriers that could affect the interpretation of the activity or their or comfort during it
- The stage of development within the group (are they operating as a team/ individuals)
- Groups where there is conflict, competition or a lack of respect/trust with one another (people might not show true feelings/take comments too personally)
- Mixed groups (different ages, beliefs, etc)
- Size of the group

### Environment

- Environments where time, space, or materials are limited
- Outside distractions which could disturb the process
- Unclear instructions or trainers with insufficient experience to run the activity
- Trainer team with different expectations/goals of the debriefing

## 5. How to plan a successful Debriefing

In order to plan a successful debriefing, you must first go through a number of steps which include knowing your group, planning your activity, and communicating with your co-trainers. The order of these steps can change, depending on the situation.

Ideally, the trainers must know each other and work with each other before they get to know the group. One situation could be that the trainers have an idea of a training/activity; they plan this and recruit a group of participants. In this way they have some control over the type of group that they will have. Another situation could be that the trainers are given a group and they determine what the group needs (what stage of group development or team building they are in) and determine an activity based on this need.

When planning the activity (regardless of which situation the trainers are in), the trainers need to discuss and agree on a number of factors. They must agree on an aim for the activity \_ what do they want the participants to do or to learn. They must decide on the amount of time they have for the activity and for the debriefing and when/where it will take place. This is written in more detail in the steps below.

### 5.1. Steps in planning the Debriefing:

#### Step 1: Decide on the activity/program

- What is the aim of the activity/program?
- What do we want the group to learn?
- What activity best matches our group/activity/surroundings/timeline/etc?
- How many activities should we use?

#### Step 2: Decide on the method of Debriefing

- Do we actually need to debrief the activity?  
Is there a benefit in running a debriefing?
- What is the aim of the debriefing method?  
What do we want the group to learn?
- What method best matches our
  - Trainers (number and experience level)
  - Group (age, number of participants, language ability, culture, group dynamics, motivation, etc)
  - Type of activity being debriefed (short/long, intense/peaceful)
  - Purpose or goal of debriefing (sharing feelings, identifying learning, drawing parallels to life, feedback to group members, evaluation of activity, etc)
  - Type of Activity for the debriefing activity (drawing, talking, acting, writing, etc)
  - Materials needed (pens, paper, quiet surroundings, big room, etc.)
  - Timeline (both to prepare the activity and for the debriefing activity)
  - There is an overview of all the methods in this manual. You can always choose to adapt one of the methods to suit your/your group's needs.

#### Step 3: Plan the Debriefing

- When and where should we hold the Debriefing?
- From the trainers, who will do what?  
Divide the roles and responsibilities of the trainers.
- Resource analyze:  
Do we have everything we need?  
Is the Debriefing activity safe and is this the right method for this group?

- Prepare debriefing technically:  
If questions or a story or materials are necessary, are they ready?

#### **Step 4: Running the activity (not the debriefing)**

- Prepare the activity  
Analyze the group dynamic  
Prepare the environment
- Explain the activity
- Facilitate if needed during the activity (if necessary give more instructions)
- Observe the activity and the group dynamics in progress

#### **Step 5: Running the Debriefing**

- Immediately after the activity you can begin the debriefing
- Quietly share any unexpected observations with the other trainers (if necessary)
- With your chosen method, you will lead the group through the steps of Reflection, Interpretation, Transfer and Future. Depending on your method and the goal of your training, not all of the steps need to be followed.
- Reflection
  - What happened?
  - Facts and Observations
- Interpretation
  - How did it feel?
  - Impact on individual and on group
- Transfer
  - What did they learn?
  - About themselves
- Future
  - How will this change their behavior in the future?
  - Summarizing the experience and giving feedback to the group
- Again, depending on the method you choose, these steps can look different. Your role as a facilitator is to ensure that everyone who wants to share has that chance, that people listen respectfully, and that you support the process of reflection/interpretation/transfer/future.
- Acknowledge the process and the difficulty of the activity  
Express your thanks or share your compliments on how well they did
- Collect the results  
Make notes for yourself (without making participants uncomfortable) to evaluate with the other trainers

- \* *When debriefing, participants need to be asked to draw their own conclusions and make their own generalizations. The trainer becomes the guide in this process, adding or interpreting information if necessary, but avoiding drawing conclusions or forming generalizations. Participants must be allowed to feel the success and power of doing this on their own.*
- \* *In special circumstances, debriefing can be postponed until a later time. Such situations could be if the group is tired, overly emotional, or not open to listening.*

#### **Step 6: Evaluating the activity (that was done before the debriefing)**

- Analyze the activity  
What worked, what didn't?  
Roles of trainers  
Group process  
Results
- Adapt the activity (if necessary) for the next time



- Ask for feedback from the participants  
This can sometimes also be learned during the Debriefing

### **Step 7: Evaluating the Debriefing**

- Analyze the debriefing with the other trainers, discuss:
  - What worked, what didn't?
  - Roles of trainers
  - Group process
  - Results
- Adapt the Debriefing (if necessary) for the next time

## 6. Problems during Debriefing

Even with the best planning, debriefing can be difficult for trainers. It often lets loose strong emotions within participants. Likewise, it can be very confrontational for people who are not used to reflecting on their emotions. Some people also feel very uncomfortable looking at negative or 'failed' situations. Below we have written a number of suggestions that we have used to help deal with potential problems.

### 6.1. Debriefing brings up traumatic memory/strong feelings with a participant

- Acknowledgement \_ say 'It is a serious problem' or 'It's OK to feel that way.'
- Show understanding \_ open body language, open palm, etc.
- Give room for non participation - 'If you don't feel comfortable, you don't need to draw/talk/etc'
- Give positive feedback - 10 seconds per person when everyone quickly calls out positive things about the person.
- Give positive feedback \_ Make a round of the whole group yelling 'Raoul is great!' and then the name of the next person in the circle, until everyone has heard that they are great!
- Give positive feedback \_ think of something positive you can say to this person in the coffee break.
- Focus the group \_ ensure that group members don't get side-tracked and begin working as a psychologist for the one person \_ if needed say 'Everyone can talk about their own feelings.'

### 6.2. No motivation, a participant(s) doesn't see the point of doing the debriefing

- You can always redirect a question back to participants \_ ask 'Well why do you think we are doing this?'
- Ask the participants to use feeling words \_ ask 'Instead of telling me what you thought of the activity, can you tell me how you felt about it?'
- If one person is taking over the group, remind them that this is a space for everyone, and as such everyone has an equal turn to talk.
- If that person is getting off topic you can also suggest that the topic can be discussed later because now it is time for this activity (Imagine a teacher who says if you want to discuss this we can do that during your lunch break, and imagine the student not wanting to discuss it any more. Sometimes it is just a ploy to distract you!)
- You can redirect the flow by asking if anyone has a (positive) aspect to share.

### 6.3. A participant is not willing to look at anything negative

- Acknowledge that looking at negative situations are more difficult than looking at positive situations.
- Remind participants that you learn a lot from negative situations, give personal examples if you can.
- Ask the participants if anyone can give an example of a negative situation that taught them something.
- Discuss the idea that things are not black and white \_ negative is also a sliding scale.
- Try asking the participants for both 3 positive and 3 negative feelings.

- If the participant feels that the activity was negative, break down the question: how did you feel about this aspect, that aspect.
- Don't push, it's OK for someone just to be quiet and listen to the experiences of the others.
- Remind participants that the debriefing is an opportunity. It is their choice if they want to sit and just listen, or participate and learn.

## **6.4. General advice**

In our experience, we see trainers often solving problems intuitively. Their automatic responses and actions fit the situation and help the participant. So have confidence! The most important thing is for you to keep calm. Remember that facilitating debriefing is like anything else—it takes practice. The experiences that you build up will help you for the next time to remember what methods / tools / words to use, and what not to use. If possible, begin your adventure with debriefing with other trainers who can support you, and use the methods most suitable for beginners. Ask other trainers for feedback when you work in teams, and ask questions of colleagues and international colleagues when you get stuck. Make sure that you remember the goal of your debriefing \_ was it to deal with individual problems? Group dynamics? Personal development? And of course, try to go to a training at least once a year so that you can remember what it feels like to be a participant!

# 7. Methods of Debriefing

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There are 45 methods of debriefing listed. For an overview, see the following page. There, each method has been rated on the following criteria. These criteria should assist you in choosing the Debriefing method that fits your specific situation.

### Method Criteria

- Experience needed by the Trainer (None, Some, Average, Lots)
- Age of Participants (Children, Teens, Adults)
- Number of Participants (Small Group, Medium Group, Large Group)
- Type of Activity being Debriefed (Short/Less Intense, Medium, Long/Intense)
- Purpose of the Debriefing (Evaluation, Sharing, Feedback, Learning, etc)
- Debriefing Activity Type (Drawing, Talking, Acting, Writing, Other)
- Time Needed for Debriefing (5-10 minutes, 15-20, 30, 45, 60+)
- Materials Needed (None, Paper/Pens, Photocopies, Other)
- Preparation Time (None, Some, Lots)

## 7.1 The 45 Methods of Debriefing

### Method 1

**Name:** The tree I

**Materials:** Pre-prepared pictures of tree (attached) and pens / pencils / markers according to the number of participants

**Nr. Participants:** No limits

**Age Participants:** No limits

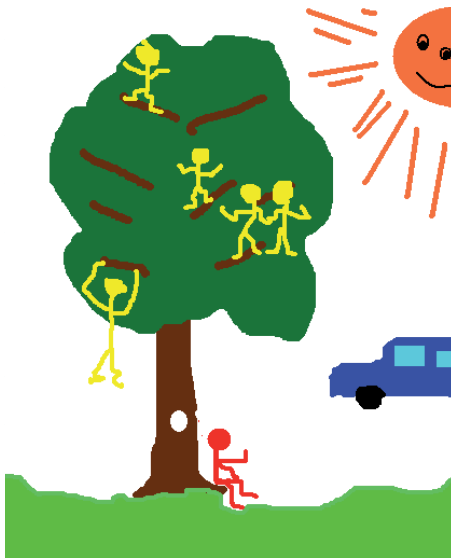
**Time Needed:** According to the group size and the number of the questions (20 min)

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** No special skills needed (1)

**Preparation:** A certain (a few extra copies) number of copies of the tree and pens / pencils / markers should be prepared.

**Method Description:** The pre-prepared picture is given to each of the participants. The trainer gives a short explanation/examples about each of the people in the tree as input to the group. The trainer is going to ask the participants to find their right place on the tree according to their feelings, and the inputs they have. The short explanation should be given \_ every one in the group should color the right person on the picture (5 minutes). Then everybody in the circle is going to share the result (why did they choose that certain person on the tree).

**Special Notes:** Special questions are not needed



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### Method 2

**Name:** The tree II

**Materials:** Pre-prepared pictures of the tree (attached) and pens / pencils / markers according to the number of participants

**Nr. Participants:** No limits

**Age Participants:** No limits

**Time Needed:** According to the group size and the number of questions (30 min)

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** No special skills needed (1)

**Preparation:** A certain (a few extra copies) number of copies of the tree and pens / pencils / markers should be prepared.

**Method Description:** The pre-prepared picture is given to each of the participants. The trainer gives a short explanation/examples on how the tree picture should be filled in. The trainer is going to ask the participants to draw themselves on the right place in the tree according to their feelings/ inputs. For this they have (15 minutes).

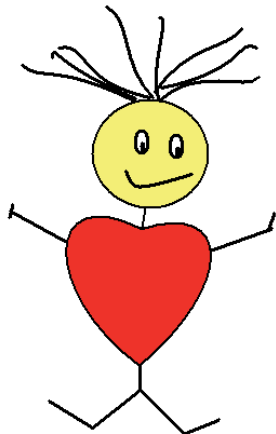


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Everybody in the circle is going to share the result, trying to explain why they chose that certain place on the tree.

**Special Notes:** Special questions are not needed

### Method 3

**Name:** Me, myself and I

**Materials:** Pre-prepared pictures of person (attached) and pens / pencils / markers according to the number of participants

**Nr. Participants:** No limits

**Age Participants:** No limits

**Time Needed:** According to the group size and number of the questions (30 min)

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** Basic trainer skills needed (4)

**Preparation:** A certain (a few extra copies) number of copies of the person and pens / pencils / markers should be prepared.

**Method Description:** The pre-prepared picture is given to each of the participants. The trainer gives a short explanation/examples and a few rules about what each part of the picture actually means.: (a) the head represents the mental condition, (b) the body - the feelings, (c) the legs represent the psychical condition (15 minutes).

Have participants write down their thoughts for all the 3 parts of the drawing and then everybody in the circle will share the result.

**Special Notes:** Special questions are not needed

### Method 4

**Name:** Car I

**Materials:** Pre-prepared pictures of car (attached) and pens / pencils / markers according to the number of participants

**Nr. Participants:** No limits

**Age Participants:** No limits

**Time Needed:** According to the group size and number of the questions (30 min)

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** No special skills needed (1)

**Preparation:** A certain (a few extra copies) number of copies of the car and pens / pencils / markers should be prepared.

**Method Description:** Pre-prepared pictures are given to each of the participants. The trainer also gives a short explanation/examples about what they should express themselves, bearing in mind the parts of the a car (for instance, the driver, the accelerator, the motor, the mirror, etc) (15 minutes). Then everybody in the circle will share the results and explain why they chose that part of the car to represent themselves.

**Special Notes:** Special questions are not needed

### Method 5

**Name:** Car II

**Materials:** paper and pen / pencil / marker

**Nr. Participants:** Max 35

**Age Participants:** No limits

**Time Needed:** According the group size and number of the questions (60 min)

Level of Experience Needed 1-10: No special skills needed (1)

**Preparation:** ---

**Method Description:** The trainer should give a short explanation/examples about what participants should express when drawing certain parts one by one on the same sheet of paper (for instance, the driver, the accelerator, the motor, the mirror, etc) and give reasons for their choices.

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**Special Notes:** Special questions are not needed

As an example: this method can be used for the team-building activities to see how the participants are feeling about themselves in the group.

### **Method 6**

**Name:** No limits

**Materials:** papers and pens / pencils / markers according the number of the participants

**Nr. Participants:** Max 35

**Age Participants:** No limits

**Time Needed:** According to the group size and number of the questions (60 mins)

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** No special skills needed (1)

**Preparation:** ---

**Method Description:** The trainer gives a short explanation - each of the participants should draw a subject according to how they are feeling themselves (10 min) and then one by one they explain why they have drawn what they have drawn.

**Special Notes:** Special questions are not needed

**As an example:** the trainer could choose a specific topic which participants need to think/reflect upon (e.g. kitchen, animals, subjects, etc. and also no limits).

**Variation:** This could also be done as graffiti. This can be done in paint or chalk and as individuals or groups.

### **Method 7**

**Name:** Co-drawing

**Materials:** Pen/paint, paper

**Nr. Participants:** Even number

**Age Participants:** 3 plus

**Time Needed:** Various times possible

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 2

**Preparation:** Prepare time and space. Make sure there is enough paper, pens and tables/ground. Time is something that is very variable in this activity. It depends on how much time the participants need for drawing. Make sure there is an even number of participants.

**Method Description:**

Participants pair up.

The trainer asks question(s).

Person 1 of each couple holds the pen. Person 2 holds the arm of person 1.

Each couple makes a drawing together, and this drawing will be the answer to the trainer's question.

**Special Notes:** This method is very suitable for use with groups consisting of various age groups.

In smaller groups it is possible to explain the drawing(s) to the whole group.

In this way debriefing will be completed and results are perfect.

**Suggestion:** you can do this exercise without speaking or / and a couple can close their eyes.

### **Method 8**

**Name:** Common drawing

**Materials:** Big paper, pens/paint

**Nr. Participants:** Manageable

**Age Participants:** 3 plus

**Time Needed:** Manageable

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 3

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**Preparation:** Make sure you have time and a BIG space available.  
Make sure you have enough pens/paint and a piece of paper that is BIG enough for everyone to reach/use.

**Method Description:** Place all participants with their equipment on the BIG piece of paper.

Give the group a theme within they can draw their experiences of the activity.

**Examples:** feelings, high-points, low-points, occurrences (what happened).

If the group is big extra guidelines can be added.

**Examples:** 'Draw a river (with wild life)' or a 'home'.

**Special Notes:** This method is very suitable for use with groups consisting of various age groups.

### **Method 9**

**Name:** STAND ON

**Materials:** Open space. Board and marker.

**Nr. Participants:** Up to 40

**Age Participants:** Minimum 12

**Time Needed:** 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 5

**Preparation:** A board with a circle drawn on it.

**Method Description:** Everybody sits in circle and one by one goes to the board and draws a sign in the circle to express what his/her position is during the game and their feelings, giving a reason for why they made that choice.

**Special Notes:** Participants can use chairs or something similar to make the circle.

### **Method 10**

**Name:** Finger painting

**Materials:** Big piece of paper, wall (if outside), paint

**Nr. Participants:** Manageable

**Age Participants:** 3 plus

**Time Needed:** Manageable

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 3

**Preparation:** Make sure you have time and a BIG space available.

Make sure you have enough paint and a BIG enough piece of paper (big enough for everyone to reach/use) or a wall available.

**Method Description:** Place all participants with their equipment on the BIG piece of paper or near the wall.

Let the participants reflect a bit on the previous activity and afterwards they can begin to draw their experiences of the activity.

**Special Notes:** This method is very suitable for use with groups consisting of various age groups.

### **Method 11**

**Name:** The events map

**Materials:** Papers/pen, chalk (to draw on the floor)

**Nr. Participants:** Any number

**Age Participants:** 7+ years old

**Time Needed:** Minimum 15

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 1

**Preparation:** Give material to the participants

**Method Description:** After the activity, (eg: expeditions, different games which involved different stages) participants are asked to draw a map of the events.

**Special Notes:** As an alternative participants can draw which event they liked most and/or least.



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## **Method 12**

**Name:** Role play

**Materials:** No special materials needed

**Nr. Participants:** No limits

**Age Participants:** A minimum of ten years old

**Time Needed:** Minimum 10 mins, but the time depends on the number of participants

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 6

**Preparation:** Decide the roles each participant has to play. There are many different ways to divide the roles, for example:

- the leader gives a concrete role to a participant
- the participants can choose the role from the given options
- the participants can choose the role for themselves without any limitations
- every participant can choose a role from a category proposed by the leader

**Method Description:** Each participant must play a role according to his or her feelings related to the previous activity.

**Options:**

- The participants during the debriefing can be sitting in a circle. The leader(s) asks questions. Every participant answers the question according to their given or chosen role.
- The debriefing can also take the form of playing a scene or pantomime. This method gives the possibility of distancing yourself from the experience or to imagine yourself in a different situation.

**Special Notes:** Two possible types of the role playing method

### **1. Action Pre-plays (or rehearsals)**

Pre-plays (or rehearsals) are a natural development of action replays. They simply focus on future possibilities rather than on past events. Acting out alternative courses of action shows more commitment than just talking but is less confrontational than the real thing.

- pre-plays create quick and convenient opportunities for second attempts (compared to real second attempts). There may also be fewer distractions from key issues.
- pre-plays create opportunities for experimenting with alternatives individuals can swap roles with each other, leading towards criticism becoming more constructive.

### **2. Sharing work experience through action**

Individuals can represent their work experience or 'problem at work' by putting it into action using the group. The problem-solving resources of the group can then be harnessed by other group members offering alternatives through action.

#### **"SHOW ME A BETTER WAY"**

A trainer was unhappy about his introductory meeting with a new group. A few days later, he invited group members to enact alternative ways of starting the course, each in turn taking on the role of the trainer. The trainer discovered a wider range of options and received useful advice as the group discussed their suitability.

This method can help people develop constructive action plans. Symbolic and abstract representations of work can sometimes provide a more effective means of sharing than realistic representations, but both approaches have their value.

## **Method 13**

**Name:** Making up a fairytale

**Materials:** No special materials needed

If there is the possibility you can use sheets of paper and pens to write down the most important points of the fairytale

**Nr. Participants:** The most appropriate number of participants for 1 leader is



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10 \_ 15

**Age Participants:** Minimum 12

**Time Needed:** Minimum 5 minutes for preparation of the fairytale  
Minimum 2 minutes for each participant to present the prepared fairytale  
Time for conclusion

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 6

**Preparation:** Give every participant a sheet of paper and a pen (if you have them and if you would like to)

**Method Description:** The leader(s) explain to the participants that every one must create a short fairytale according to their experience of the previous activity. In the fairytale the participants have to describe the activity and themselves as a part of it reflecting their feelings. The leader can also add that the quality that counts most in this debriefing is creativity. After the introduction the participants have some time to prepare the fairytale and take notes (in this method it is better if the participants work separately \_ an individual work, but the method is flexible and if needed the fairytale can be prepared in small groups). If possible during this time the leader can turn on some music to create a better environment for thinking, but be careful because this could change the mood.

After about 5 minutes of individual work the participants gather in a circle (with their notes) and one by one present their fairytales (the leader can give some time limits for each presentation \_ about 2 minutes.)

This method is a very creative way of presenting the feelings after an activity. It depersonalizes and gives the possibility to present feelings in another context and time.

**Special Notes:** The method can be adapted if there is some kind of time limitation. For example the facilitator can ask the participants to form a circle and explain to them that they will create one fairytale for the whole group. Each participant will add one sentence as a continuation of the sentence given by the previous participant. The leader invites a volunteer to start the first sentence of the fairytale.

## **Method 14**

**Name:** Guided journey

**Materials:** The facilitator can use any kind of material that is connected with the theme of the journey, the place where the group is going to 'visit', or gives an input for any of the five senses. The use of the materials can be an attractive way to help the participants in the imaginary journey.

**For example:**

- the leader can put on some typical music for a country, place, or make some sounds connected with a situation or a place
- smells (coffee, flowers, perfume etc.)
- photographs
- food to taste

**Nr. Participants:** No limits

**Age Participants:** Minimum 10 years old

**Time Needed:** Min 10 minutes, max 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 5

**Preparation:** The process of preparation depends on the aim of debriefing, the kind of journey that is going to 'take place'. The materials used, objects and space have to suit the character of activity and the aim of debriefing and depends on the idea and creativity of the leader and the needs of the group.

**Method Description:** According to the materials and the aim of the debriefing the leader develops the story of the journey, describing the actions, places, people, situations etc. The quantity of possible solutions for the facilitator to lead this kind of debriefing is unlimited. It very much depends on the needs of

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the group. The basic rules and ideas are:

The leader tells a story of a journey (using the materials as explained above). He/she can ask the participants to close their eyes, or can also turn of the light and ask everybody to find a comfortable position (the facilitator can also propose another position \_ circle holding hands etc). During the debriefing the facilitator asks the participants to imagine themselves in a concrete situation during their journey. The leader can also ask questions about the feelings and emotions. In general this method is used in order to relax the group, to solve some tensions or to reduce stress by taking the participants in an imaginary world which has something in common with the previous activity.

**Special Notes:** In this method the leader can also use physical touch, situations. For example: make the participants stand in a circle holding hands, make them stand very close to each other so that they feel the presence of other people, you can use physical touch, distance as a metaphor for relationships within the group, sensations during the journey, feelings and situations.

### **Method 15**

**Name:** Making up a song

**Materials:** No special materials needed

The facilitator can propose to use anything that makes sound (objects, instruments)

**Nr. Participants:** 15-30

**Age Participants:** Minimum 5 years old

**Time Needed:** Minimum 10 minutes for the presentation of all of the songs made by the participants. If needed the facilitator can give some more time for the preparation of a proper song.

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 1

**Preparation:** If needed the leader can prepare the materials as above.

**Method Description:** The facilitator asks the participants to prepare or think of a song that represent their feelings or experience according to the previous activity. The song can be either a new invention-composition or a 'reproduction' of a known existing song. The most important thing is to make the participants communicate their feelings and emotions through the music.

**Special Notes:**

### **Method 16**

**Name:** Human Sculpture

**Materials:** No special materials needed. But participants can use materials they find around (flowers, chair, pen, balloon etc.)

The participants use their bodies

**Nr. Participants:** 15-30

**Age Participants:** Minimum 5 years old

**Time Needed:** Minimum 10 minutes for the presentation of all of the Human Sculptures. If needed the facilitator can give some more time for the preparation of a Human Sculpture.

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 5

**Preparation:** If needed the leader can prepare the materials as above.

**Method Description:** The facilitator asks the participants to prepare and act out the thoughts and feelings that they want to represent based on their experience of the previous activity. The human sculpture can be done individually or in a group. Participants can show his/her emotions individually by using others bodies. Or participants can depict the group emotion by using their bodies. The most important thing is to make the participants communicate their feelings and emotions through the medium of human sculpture.

**Special Notes:** The facilitator must be careful to find interaction in the group.

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### **Method 17**

**Name:** Postcards

**Materials:** Postcards or photos

**Nr. Participants:** 1- 25

**Age Participants:** 4- 100

**Time Needed:** 1 min per participant

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 1 \_ 10

**Preparation:** Get postcards

Prepare an area for sitting/standing in a circle

**Method Description:** Give postcards to participants for all to see

Give time to think & choose a postcard

Show the postcard and share why this postcard answers the question

**Special Notes:** Postcards represent answers to questions set by the trainers.  
(Eg. *What did You feel during the activity?*)

### **Method 18**

**Name:** Digest

**Materials:** Paper or chalk or just space

**Nr. Participants:** No limits

**Age Participants:** No limits

**Time Needed:** According the group size and number of the questions (20 min)

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** Basic trainer skills needed (2)

**Preparation:** The trainer should prepare (a) questions according to the activity, (b) space for the debriefing. The participants are not required to prepare anything beforehand.

**Method Description:** The trainer asks the people how they felt during the activity. Trainers can ask closed questions or give the statements to all groups. During the first part of the debriefing, the trainer can ask some questions for clarification, for instance, when the rest of the group agrees on one common answer, but one or a few people are on the opposite side. In this case it could be very useful if the trainer is going to ask for more clarification on motivation, about the attitude or point of view of the participants who have opposite answer to the rest of the group.

The second part is organized in the circle. The trainer asks the questions that were prepared before one by one.

**Special Notes:** It is a 2-part method which is why the trainer needs to be clear about how to link both parts of the methods.

The first part of the activity runs for all the groups at the same time. The second part is run according to the size of the group: (a) if there is small group (~20-25) the trainer asks all the questions he prepared to all of the participants one by one and (b) if there is a large group (over 26) then the trainer is going to ask the same prepared questions but the answers are given only by part of the group for each question.

### **Method 19**

**Name:** Choosing faces 'J '

**Materials:** 'J ' Smiley cards to represent different feelings

**Nr. Participants:** 1- 100 or more

**Age Participants:** 3 plus

**Time Needed:** Depends on using

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 1- 10

**Preparation:** Get Smiley faces

Place for sitting/standing in circle

**Method Description:** Give Smiley faces to participants for all to see

Give time to think & choose a Smiley face

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Show Smiley faces and share why this Smiley face answers the question  
Alternative: if group is very big, participants only show faces to each other, and do not share.

**Special Notes:** You can also give them instead pictures with animals and they can choose the animal according to their feelings about which animal matches with their feelings.

### **Method 20**

**Name:** Finish the sentences

**Materials:** Pen, paper or nothing

**Nr. Participants:** 1- 100 or more

**Age Participants:** 3 plus

**Time Needed:** 1 min for participant

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 1-10

**Preparation:** Prepare the sentences that they need to finish

**Method Description:** Give the beginning of sentences

Wait for an answer

Give the next sentence if it is needed

**Special Notes:** Sharing the sentence ending in large groups takes a long time, so it is better to write them up individually.

### **Method 21**

**Name:** Step into the group

**Materials:** Participants' Shoes

**Nr. Participants:** Any

**Age Participants:** 11 plus

**Time Needed:** 10 minutes

5 for placing the shoes, 5 for observing the result

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 3

**Preparation:** Create an open space

**Method Description:** Have everyone stand in a circle around the open space.

Ask everyone to take off one of their shoes.

Ask participants to put their shoes inside the circle according to what they think is their position/role within the group.

**Special Notes:** This method is very suitable for groups consisting of various age groups.

### **Method 22**

**Name:** Buddy circles

**Materials:** None

**Nr. Participants:** Even number, maximum 16 participants

**Age Participants:** 3 plus

**Time Needed:** 20 \_ 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 3 \_ 5 (depending of group difficulty level)

**Preparation:** Arrange time and space needed. (and materials if you like to use them as a communication form)

**Method Description:** Participants find a buddy and make a couple.

Each couple will consist of person 1 and person 2.

Person 1 is the representative (usually the better communicator of the 2).

The trainer is standing in a spot with enough space around.

All the representatives place themselves around the trainer in a circle.

All the other people place themselves behind (from the trainer's perspective) the representatives.

The trainer will ask question(s) about the activity.

**Example:** 'How did you feel when?'

The representative has to translate this question to the other person through

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non-verbal communication.

The other person answers back through non-verbal communication.

This answer is to be translated into verbal communication by the representative to the trainer.

Trainer then will repeat the answer to the other person and ask if this is correct.

**Special Notes:** This method is very suitable for groups existing of various age groups.

### **Method 23**

**Name:** Spider web string

**Materials:** A ball of string

**Nr. Participants:** Minimum 10

**Age Participants:** All ages

**Time Needed:** 5 to 15 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 2

**Preparation:** Prepare the material

**Method Description:** After the activity, have the group sit in a circle. Ask the question related to the theme of the activity (based on what you want to get from the group).

Each participant should hold the ball while answering the question and throws it to another person when he/she finishes.

The activity ends when all participants have had an opportunity to answer.

In the end a spider web will be created, suggesting the way the participants interact amongst themselves.

The activity can have as many questions as is necessary

(examples of topic questions: feelings, high-points, low-points, occurrences).

**Suggestion:** Each round can include one or more questions.

The questions can be asked by the participants.

**Special Notes:** --

### **Method 24**

**Name:** Light your Matches

**Materials:** Matches (just one box of matches for the whole group and each participant passes the box to the next person or each participant can have his/her own box)

**Nr. Participants:** Any number

**Age Participants:** 10 to (∞)

**Time Needed:** 10 to 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 4

**Preparation:** Choose an environment making sure that it is safe to do the activity (eg.: suitable for lighting matches)

**Method Description:** Each participant should answer the leader's question for as long as their match is lit.

- Examples of topic questions: feelings, high-points, low-points, what happened.

**Special Notes:** Make sure the participants are aware that they should give short answers.

This activity is more powerful if it's done in a dark place.

### **Method 25**

**Name:** MAPS and LEARNING JOURNEYS

**Materials:** Paper

Tools for writing and drawing

**Nr. Participants:** Maximum 15 for a group

**Age Participants:** All ages



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**Time Needed:** 10 to 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 7

**Preparation:** No preparation needed

**Method Description:** Have participants create their own metaphorical maps on which they can represent their learning journeys. Such maps can include places such as: Sea of Possibilities, Safe Haven, Mountains of Work, Pool of Relaxation, Stretch Zone, Swampland, Play Area, Shifting Sands, Road to Nowhere, Stream of Ideas, Point of No Return, Moving Goalposts, Launch Pad, Laughing Water, Terra Incognita. As a reviewing tool participants each tell their story while tracing their journey across their map with a finger. They can add extra places on their map as required.

**Special Notes:** If the group is a large one, try to divide them into smaller groups

### **Method 26**

**Name:** Stuffed animal

**Materials:** Toys (animals)

**Nr. Participants:** Even number, maximum 26 participants

**Age Participants:** 3 plus

**Time Needed:** 25 \_ 50 minutes (1-2 min per participant)

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 3 \_ 5 (depending of group difficulty level)

**Preparation:** Arrange time and space needed. Find and prepare various toys.

**Method Description:** The trainer invites the group to sit a circle. He/she puts toys into the middle of the participant's circle. The participants are asked to choose 1-3 toys (depending on the activity and the debriefing time) that would describe their emotions during the activity. Afterwards participants should explain their choice of animal.

**Special Notes:** This method is very suitable for groups existing of various age groups.

### **Method 27**

**Name:** Flipchart (expected and received)

**Materials:** Paper

Tools for writing and drawing

**Nr. Participants:** Min: 10 people

**Age Participants:** All ages

**Time Needed:** 10 to 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 6

**Preparation:** At the beginning of the training every participant draws or writes their expectations and willingness to give input to the activity. Have participants create their own flipchart maps on which they can represent their expectations and willingness.

There is another option \_ participants make small notes on post its and then put these notes on to one common flipchart. The post its can be different shapes and colours.

**Method Description:** During the debriefing participants evaluate their expectations about their willingness to give input into the activities.

Expectations and willingness are divided into two parts \_ feelings and thoughts about what they received during the training and feelings and thoughts about what they did not receive. Trainers make a summary of expectations and willingness.

**Special Notes:**

### **Method 28**

**Name:** LETTER TO MYSELF

**Materials:** Paper or postcards

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Tools for writing

Envelopes and stamps

**Nr. Participants:** Any number

**Age Participants:** 7+

**Time Needed:** 10 to 30 minutes, sometimes more

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 3

**Preparation:** No preparation needed

**Method Description:** The participants write a letter to themselves in the future (eg. one month or one year later) describing how they felt during the activity / training, what they learned, what they promise themselves to become or to do, or a special message for the person they will be then.

They can give the letter to a buddy they choose or the trainer, and that person has to send the letter at the time decided.

**Special Notes:** This method is useful for debriefing activities with a big impact (a whole training course, a travel experience, a volunteer experience)

**Variation:**

- For just one activity the letter can be written for the moment, and shared in a small group, and not sent
- Can be combined with the postcard method.

### **Method 29**

**Name:** BACKPACK

**Materials:** A big piece of paper (at least A4) with a drawing of a backpack

Tools for writing

**Nr. Participants:** Any number

**Age Participants:** 12 +

**Time Needed:** 10 to 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 3

**Preparation:** The backpack is divided into 4 parts, and you add a title for each part (for example: What I have learned. What I have learned to do. What I have learned to be. New interests.)

**Method Description:** Each participant receives a 'backpack' and is asked to write what they will take back home in it:

- What I have learned? General things learned: language, new things about the culture, more information (intellectual, not feelings)
- What I have learned to do? Concrete things, abilities: I have learned to cook tortilla de patatas; to play the guitar, to dance flamenco, to put honey on the cottage cheese balls
- What I have learned to be? More tolerant, more patient, open minded, I have learned that I am stronger than I thought.
- New interests I discovered \_ something that you realized during the activity and that you will continue after you get back home (eg. Spanish music, juggling, Turkish coffee, ice-skating etc.)

**Special Notes:** This method is useful for debriefing long activities (whole training courses, travel experiences, volunteer experiences)

**Variation:** for teams that will stay together after the activity (eg. school classes, company teams etc.) you can also give one huge backpack for the whole team (on a flipchart, or an actual backpack) and individuals write what they take home with them either on the backpack or on post-its and put it together for the whole team.

### **Method 30**

**Name:** SEASONS

**Materials:** Pictures of the 4 seasons, or colored chalk

**Nr. Participants:** 1- 100 or more

**Age Participants:** 10 +

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**Time Needed:** Depends on use

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 1- 10

**Preparation:** Get pictures of the 4 seasons or you can draw the pictures on the ground

Prepare a place that you can stand in a circle and a place to move

**Method Description:** Put the seasons in different places and the group in a circle in another place.

Ask the question (ex. How did you feel about the activity? How was the team work? How did you communicate? Etc) For each question asked, the participants choose a season that best fits their feelings. They can also choose a place in between 2 seasons.

When the participants are in their places we CAN (don't have to) ask them if someone wants to explain why.

**Special Notes:**

### **Method 31**

**Name:** Candies

**Materials:** Candies

**Nr. Participants:** Maximum 40 people

**Age Participants:** All ages

**Time Needed:** Up to an hour

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 3

**Preparation:** Questions

**Method Description:** Place the candies in a bag and ask participants to take as many candies as they want. Then you ask them to share their feelings about a certain topic. The method consists in the fact that the participants have to answer with as many sentences as they have candies.

**Special Notes:**

### **Method 32**

**Name:** Expression of emotions through 'Smileys'

**Materials:** Led meditation text, meditation music, at least ten kinds of smileys (printed from Internet or drawn).

**Nr. Participants:** Minimum 5 up to 25

**Age Participants:** 5 to up

**Time Needed:** From 15 min up till 60 min

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 7

**Preparation:** Find the smileys, prepare led meditation text, getting to know the target group, preparing the questions for the debriefing, preparing the environment for the debriefing (finding a good place, where participants can feel comfortable while meditating, lights, music etc.).

**Method Description:**

ß Led meditation \_ Trainer reads the prepared text for participants in order to make them relax and think about the activity so they can become conscious of what they felt.

ß Questions \_ The trainer reads out the prepared questions concerning the activity thus inviting participants to debrief the activity by sharing their emotions, discoveries, conclusions etc.

ß Smileys \_ Trainer asks participants to sit down in circle and puts the smileys in the middle of the circle. Trainer then invites everybody to choose at least 3 images that reflect their emotions during the activity. Look at the images for a few seconds. After that the trainer invites them to put the chosen images into the inner circle next to each other. According to the particular situation, the trainer can also ask participants to explain their choice or to add any comments.

ß Conclusions \_ A few questions about what the participants learned in the



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activity and to link it with real life.

**Special Notes:** Target group: This debriefing method particularly serves a target group who has difficulties expressing their emotions due to their personality or cultural backgrounds

1. It would be preferable if the trainer had experience in leading a meditation,
2. When it comes to a group that experiences difficulties in expressing their emotions and feelings, the trainer has to be aware about using direct terms about feelings (Example: Instead of saying: 'What do you feel?' ask in general how people would feel in the particular situation.)

### **Method 33**

**Name:** DARK

**Materials:** A dark place or environment, music

**Nr. Participants:** Maximum 15

**Age Participants:** From 10 upwards \_ younger people can be afraid of the dark

**Time Needed:** 15 minutes approximately

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 8 - Good level of experience needed to understand the reactions of participants

**Preparation:** Choose a room with some open space which is neither too big nor too small.

Make sure that you have removed all possible harmful things which could hurt people in the dark.

It is good if you have some relaxation music to put on before the activity starts. The trainer should prepare some questions beforehand.

**Method Description:** Participants come in the room and sit in a circle, the trainer explains what is going to happen, then turns on the music and turns the light off. Every person makes a movement which describes their feelings according to the questions asked by the trainer. After that, the trainer asks each participant what they did in the dark.

This method is useful for people who have difficulties speaking in front of other people, people who are shy or who have problems with other people in the group.

**Special Notes:** ---

### **Method 34**

**Name:** IMAGINARY CLAY

**Materials:** Open space

**Nr. Participants:** 25-30

**Age Participants:** All ages

**Time Needed:** 25 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 6

**Preparation:** The trainer prepares some questions to stimulate the discussions at the end of the debriefing if necessary.

**Method Description:** Everybody sits in a circle.

The trainer asks the participants to imagine they are holding some clay. They make shapes and explain them to everybody and in so doing they describe and reflect on their feelings, emotions and thoughts about the game or the activity.

After shaping the clay into an imaginary form, every participant gives it to the person standing next to him/her.

**Special Notes:** ---

### **Method 35**

**Name:** POSE

**Materials:** Open space

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**Nr. Participants:** 25-30

**Age Participants:** All ages

**Time Needed:** 10 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 6

**Preparation:** The trainer prepares some questions for after the activity to stimulate the discussions.

**Method Description:** Everybody stands in a circle.

The trainer asks participants to pose in such a way that relates to their condition during the game. Everybody takes it in turns to pose which is then followed by feedback from the trainer about why they chose to pose in that way.

**Special Notes:** ---

### **Method 36**

**Name:** RATE YOURSELF 1 \_ 10

**Materials:** Open space, paper, pens

**Nr. Participants:** Up to 40

**Age Participants:** All ages

**Time Needed:** 15 \_ 20 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 3

**Preparation:** The trainer has to prepare questions about the participation of the group.

**Method Description:** Everybody sits in circle.

The trainer asks participants to write how much they are involved in the activity from 1 (minimum) to 10 (maximum).

A variation is to draw a line in the floor and stand where they feel they should rate themselves.

**Special Notes:** This method can be useful to ask about the particular involvement of people during the activity.

### **Method 37**

**Name:** SOLO

**Materials:** A very big space in nature for instance a forest

**Nr. Participants:** Unlimited

**Age Participants:** 15 to 60

**Time Needed:** Approximately 30 minutes according to the number of participants.

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 9 \_ Trainers have to know how to give good instructions to the participants and be able to perform risk management in order ensure the safety of this activity.

**Preparation:** Participants remove their watches and mobiles and any other things which could tell them the time.

Make sure there is no food around.

Take away all the things which can distract attention.

Participants should be properly dressed for the conditions in the forest.

**Method Description:** All participants should find a free space in the forest and make sure that there is no participant around. Participants can go into the forest and then the trainer observes them from far away. After approximately 10 minutes the trainer stops the activity and invites them to make a circle in the forest and to speak about the experience and their feelings. The trainer must ask them pre-prepared questions and the participants take it in turns to speak.

**Special Notes:** This method is useful after a long activity to summarize the experience of the participants and to give them time alone.

### **Method 38**

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**Name:** SOUND

**Materials:** Open space

**Nr. Participants:** Up to 25 \_ 30

**Age Participants:** All ages

**Time Needed:** 25 \_ 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 3

**Preparation:** None needed.

**Method Description:** Everybody stands in a circle.

The trainer asks people to make a sound that relates to their feelings during the game. Everybody makes a sound one by one, or all together, at the beginning quietly, than gradually louder, they are shouting. It can also be done walking through the space, filling the space, walking first slowly and then quicker and when the trainer claps, they all freeze in a certain position and then express their feelings by sound. After another clap and they start walking again. This can be done 3-5 times.

This will then be followed by feedback from the trainer about why they chose that particular sound.

**Special Notes:** There are people who don't like to express their feelings in a group or people who are shy.

### **Method 39**

**Name:** Led meditation

**Materials:** Comfortable space (sofas), pillows

**Nr. Participants:** So that it is manageable

**Age Participants:** 15 plus

**Time Needed:** 5-20 min

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 8

**Preparation:** Make sure you have time and a comfortable space available. Prepare a led meditation text.

**Method Description:** Start with a short introduction to the activity to make the participants become calm. The trainer reads the prepared text for participants in order to make them relax and think about the activity. This helps them to become conscious of what they felt.

**Special Notes:** It would be preferable if the trainer had experience leading meditation

### **Method 40**

**Name:** Thumbs

**Materials:**

**Nr. Participants:** Up to 40

**Age Participants:** All ages

**Time Needed:** 10 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 1

**Preparation:** The trainer has to prepare the questions.

**Method Description:** Everybody sits in circle or a line.

The trainer ask questions and the participants have to raise their thumbs as follows:

- thumbs up if it is a positive response
- thumbs in the middle if it is a neutral response
- thumbs down if it is a negative response

**Special Notes:** This method can be useful to ask about involvements of people in the activity, feelings, and for all kinds of questions.

### **Method 41**

**Name:** TUNNEL OF TRUST

**Materials:** paper, post it, pencils, colors, clock, PC, speakers, envelopes, tapes;

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- The trainer has to pay attention to the participants in the game, this is because it is a risky game and accidents may happen that can interrupt the debriefing.

**Nr. Participants:** minimum 15 persons, maximum 60.

**Age Participants:** 17 \_ 45 years old.

**Time Needed:** - 10 -20 mins for the game, - 30 mins for the debriefing , (5 mins talking in pairs, 10 mins to work in a group to express themselves in a creative way, 5 mins meditation and 10 mins writing a letter to themselves)

**Level of Experience Needed:** 8

**Preparation:** First of all you have to prepare the area so that it is comfortable and prepare the materials for the debriefing activity. After that you write the flow of the meditation and you need to find the right music.

**Method Description:**

- One of the best ways to do the debriefing in a big group is to start with a meditation or you can finish with a meditation.
- First you start the debriefing in pairs or groups of three. The participants needs to be separated in pairs or groups of and for 4-5 mins they have to talk about the how was the exercise for them.
- After talking in pairs they come back to the big group and they are then put into 8-10 people teams and they have 10 mins to make a team product which will express their feelings and their experiences. The products have to be made in a creative way using the materials given to them by the trainers. After that one person from the teams will come to the front and present the creative product, talking about the feelings and emotions discovered in the group discussions. (If you have a big group you can ask them to speak about the experience.)
- The next step is the meditation. It has to contain 4 steps.

**Get people comfortable**

Rebuild the experience with emotions about the flow of the experience  
Transmit the message from the meditation about what you want for them to learn and what they have learned.

**Get back in the mood.**

- The participants have to close the experience by writing a letter to themselves. The letter will contain a message, their feelings, emotions, and any lessons learned. After writing the letter they have to find a person they trust in the group and give them the letter. The person that receives a letter has to post it one year later.

**Special Notes:**

## **Method 42**

**Name:** Name your feelings

**Materials:** Paper, pens, or nothing

**Number of participants:** 40 maximum

**Age of participants:** 7 to 77 years old

**Time needed:** Warm up : 20 min

**Debriefing:** Link with the level of emotions created by the previous activity.

**Level of experience (1 to 10):** 5 minimum but the more experience the better.

**Preparation:** Divide the participants into 2 groups.

The participants do a brainstorming session and create a list of emotions (or see special notes)

The trainer determines the number of emotions to present to the other group on the level of how closed the participants are.

**Method description:** This method is divided into 2 parts:

The WARM-UP before and the DEBRIEFING after the activity.

It can be used to encourage participants who have difficulties expressing their

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emotions. The warm-up establishes a common way of communicating feelings during the debriefing.

In the groups they prepare how to present the selected emotions that the audience (2nd group) has to guess.

**PRESENTATION:** the acting group stands with their backs to the audience. Upon a signal from the trainer they turn around and act out the 1st emotion. The audience guesses the presented emotion and so on (according to number of selected emotions).

When they are finished the groups change roles. The trainer has to place special importance on the warm-up and remind the participants to keep showing emotions during the debriefing.

**ACTIVITY:** the thing that causes the emotions in the participants

**DEBRIEFING:** divide the participants in groups of maximum 10 people (because in smaller groups it is easier to let yourself go and feel freer to talk).

**Specials notes:** To facilitate the expression of feelings the participants can look back in time and think about previous experiences that caused the same emotion.

Give them a preprepared list of possible feelings (Happy, confused, surprised, etc')

There are 3 ways of presenting the emotions:

- By making a face
- Gesture / pose
- Sound / noise

### **Method 43**

**Name:** Questioning

**Materials:** No special material needed

**Nr. Participants:** 10-20

**Age Participants:** Minimum 14 years old

**Time Needed:** Min 20 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed 1-10:** 3

**Preparation:** Facilitators should prepare in advance a list of questions that they think they will want to use. This list should focus on the original aim of why you chose to lead the activity. Facilitators should also prepare a list of questions for unexpected issues that could arise from the activity.

**Method Description:** The facilitator guides the participants through a series of steps that funnel attention from the experience toward making beneficial changes in their lives.

Each question is a type of filter which focuses the essential aspects of the learning experience.

**Step #1** \_ Review, Recall, and Remember

Refresh the participant's memory about a particular topic or issue.

**Step #2** \_ Affect/Effect

Ask what the impact was on the individual and on the group.

**Step #3** \_ Summation

Ask the group to summarise what they have learned.

**Step#4** \_ Application

Ask how they can apply this new information to real life.

**Step#5** \_ Commitment

Ask them how they will apply this to their lives.

**Question Examples:**

**Step 1:** What happened?

**Step 2:** How did the experience affect you? Did the activity affect the group?

**Step 3:** Can you sum up what we have been discussing?

**Step 4:** Do you see a connection between this and you in your life?

**Step 5:** What would you do differently next time?

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**Closing questions:**

1. How did you feel during the activity / in your role/ as a member of your team etc?  
a) comfortable; b) neutral; c) uncomfortable;
2. Do you think you can apply this activity to other situations?  
a) Yes; b) No; c) I don't know.
3. How useful was this training for you?  
1- Not useful at all;  
2- Not useful;  
3- Ok  
4- Useful  
5- Very useful

**Special Notes:** The debriefing can be navigated by the facilitator in the direction of a proper aim.

If there are some time limits the leader should create some rules in order to limit the time for each answer (for example they can say that each participant has to respond with one sentence or has one minute for his explanation). The leader can also create rules according to the order of answering.

Make sure that you use clear questions.

This method can also be used in a written way as an individual questionnaire for each participant.

**Method 44**

**Name:** Playing cards method

**Materials:** A set of playing cards

One piece of paper to each group

**Nr. Participants:** 4 to 40

**Age Participants:** All ages

**Time Needed:** 10 to 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 6

**Preparation:** Make sure the group is split into 4 subgroups each of them in different corners. Prepare a list of questions for each subgroup according each card symbol and the group size.

**Method Description:** In order to split the groups each participant will pick up a card from the set and form the following 4 groups whose symbols represent a topic:

- Facts are represented by diamonds. \_
- Feelings are represented by hearts. \_
- Findings are represented by spades. \_
- Futures are represented by clubs. \_

**FACTS:** What happened? \_

This is the diamond part of the cycle. A diamond is precious. A diamond is hard. The diamond represents hard facts.

The diamond stage is typically a memory exercise where people recall the sequence of events or describe key moments or forgotten details. Some people may see a different face of the diamond that others did not notice. (At this stage focus on different facts rather than different opinions).

The diamond stage is especially important if people were blindfolded, unobservant or in different places during the event being reviewed.

... this 'first' stage is not always the best way to start a review.

If it was a short activity that has only just finished, or if participants have been very observant, it may seem like a waste of time simply to go over what happened.

If interest in communicating facts is low, you may discover higher interest in asking people to communicate what is less well known - how each other were feeling in key moments.



Notice: \_\_\_\_\_

**FEELINGS:** What did you experience? \_

This is the hearts part of the cycle. It represents unmistakable 'gut' feelings as well as intuitive sensing - feelings on the fringes of perception.

This heart stage is for encouraging people to tune into their experiences and to express and share their feelings. If the nature of the experience is not sufficiently appreciated, there is a risk that subsequent learning will not be well grounded in what was actually experienced.

'Feelings about ...' or 'feelings that ...' are usually opinions. Opinions and judgements belong in the spades zone that comes next.

People will soon become tired of continual questioning about their feelings. Your challenge is to create situations and opportunities in which people will want to and be able to share their experiences.

Here is a golden opportunity to develop communication skills - by experimenting with a range of active and creative reviewing methods.

It generally pays to start a review in 'diamonds' or 'hearts' but there will be times when you (and learners) are impatient to get the spades out and start digging ...

**FINDINGS:** Why did that happen? \_

This is the spades part of the cycle. Spades are for digging and investigating. The question 'why' belongs here. So do interpretations, meanings and judgements.

There will never be time to dig the whole field so take care to ensure that most of the digging takes place in the most productive areas.

One way of doing this is to ask learners to brainstorm a list of issues they could explore. The brainstorm will expand awareness of the size of the field. How you choose where to dig next will depend on many factors.

Many people attempt to do all of their reviewing in this zone. 'Spade in hand' they welcome motivated learners but are soon accused of 'paralysis by analysis'.

A worse mistake is to greet people with the question "What did you learn?" - a question that does very little to facilitate any new learning from experience.

A useful strategy for dynamic reviewing at this stage is to have an interesting collection of 'spades' and to put these 'reviewing tools' in the hands of learners. Tools for deeper understanding?

**FUTURES:** How will it affect you? \_

This is the clubs part of the cycle. This 3 leafed symbol represents future growth and possibilities. Folklore tells us that finding a 4 leaf clover brings good fortune and new possibilities.

In golf, you choose your club depending on where you are (driving off a tree or stuck in the sand) and on how far it is to your next target (a short putt or a long drive). As for 'spades' there should be a choice of suitable tools for learners to use. 'One-club' learners don't get very far!

The club stage is typically a planning exercise, but there are other ways of approaching the future ...

**PREDICTIONS:** What has changed already? What will be different anyway?

**POSSIBILITIES:** What possibilities can you imagine? What choices do you have?

**PLANS:** Decisions. Priorities. Objectives. Action plans. Learning plans.

**REHEARSALS:** Trying out plans in a 'test bed' - one step closer to the real thing.

**DREAMS:** Inspiring ideas that are not yet in your plans. Keep them alive!

### **1. FACTS (diamonds)**

Tell the story of the event in five chapter headings.

Make a short news report covering What? Who? Where? When?

Did anything unexpected happen? Any surprises?

Did anything very predictable happen?

Notice: \_\_\_\_\_

What was most memorable / different / interesting?  
What were the turning points or critical moments?  
What happened next? What happened just before?  
What most influenced your attitude and behaviour?  
What did you think /hope / fear would happen, but didn't?  
Describe the event from the perspective of ...  
*(e.g. a young child, your boss, a reporter from ...)*  
Describe your role from the perspective of ...

## **2. FEELINGS (hearts)**

### **FEELINGS**

Name five feelings that you experienced.

### **CONTRASTS**

What were your personal highs and lows?  
What were your most contrasting experiences?

### **INVOLVEMENT**

At what points did you feel most and least involved?

### **EMPATHY**

Who did you feel was going through similar/different emotions?

### **SELF CONTROL / EXPRESSION**

At what points were you most aware of controlling/expressing your emotions?

### **CONNECTIONS**

Did you get a sense of 'déjà vu' at any time? What previous experience was this most like?

### **ESSENCE / INTUITION**

What music (instrument/song/style) would have suited the event? (or not)

### **METAPHOR / INTUITION**

If you were a ... *(e.g. something found in the kitchen)* during that event, what would you be?

## **3. FINDINGS (spades)**

Why ...?

*e.g. why did you take the role that you did?*

How ...?

*e.g. how did your feelings influence what you said or did?*

What are you finding out?

*e.g. about yourself / the group / the topic?*

Regrets? Missed opportunities?

*e.g. What would you like to have done differently / more of / less of?*

Achievements?

*e.g. How (or how well) did you achieve your group/personal objectives?*

Opinions, judgements?

*e.g. What was most/least valuable?*

Feedback, appraisal?

*e.g. What did you appreciate about others?*

Links, connections?

*e.g. In what ways was the experience like/unlike work?*

Learning processes?

*e.g. What is helping/hindering your learning?*

What have you found?

*Gold? A message? Questions? A solution? Energy? Synergy? ...*

## **4. FUTURES (clubs)**

### **BENEFITS**

How might this experience benefit you in future?

### **CHOICES**

What possibilities and choices can you see?

### **CHANGES**

What will you stop / start / continue?



Notice: \_\_\_\_\_

### ACTION PLAN

What do you want to take forwards from this experience? Why? How? When?

### LEARNING PLAN

What do you want to explore further? Why? How? When?

### PREDICTIONS

What are your pessimistic and optimistic predictions about the real value of this event?

### PRIORITIES

I will be disappointed / pleased /delighted if ...

### RE-AWAKENING

This event has renewed my ...

**Special Notes:** Trainers should respect this order: facts, feelings, findings & futures

## Method 45

**Name:** The four quadrants

**Materials:** A piece of paper for each participant with the four quadrants

**Nr. Participants:** Any number

**Age Participants:** 10 plus

**Time Needed:** 10 to 30 minutes

**Level of Experience Needed (1-10):** 6

**Preparation:** On a piece of paper draw 4 quadrants that will include:

1. I fel't (the emotional level)
2. I learn't (the cognitive level)
3. A future plan is' (the transfer to real life level)
4. A comment I have is' (giving positive feedback to the activity in order to improve it)

Multiply the paper for all the participants.

**Method Description:** After the activity is completed, give a 4 quadrants paper to each participant and ask them to fill in as required \_ in each quadrant the participants should finish a given sentence (as above) .

If you have a small group you can ask everyone to share with the group what they wrote.

If the group is pretty large and having everyone to answer to all the questions would take a lot of time, you can just ask some people to answer to one of the questions and ask for other comments from the group.

Make sure everyone had the chance to express their ideas.

**Special Notes:** Explain the meaning of 4 quadrants

## **8. Further Resources**

### **Debriefing \_ Find more information and new ideas at:**

<http://reviewing.co.uk/learning-cycle>

<http://www.worldofexperience.com>

<http://www.thiagi.com/pfp/Generic/july2001.html#ToolKit>

### **Icebreakers \_ Find new ideas at:**

[http://www3.baylor.edu/~Charles\\_Kemp/ice\\_breakers.htm](http://www3.baylor.edu/~Charles_Kemp/ice_breakers.htm)

<http://www.flora.org/mike/poped/icebreakers.html>

<http://www.scn.org/ip/cds/cmp/modules/tm-ice.htm>

<http://www.susan-boyd.com/tenways.htm>

<http://www.topten.org/content/tt.AU20.htm>

<http://adulthood.about.com/library/blicebreakers.htm>

<http://www.residentassistant.com/icebreakers/Default.htm>

<http://www.wilderdom.com>

### **Games, Stories and Trainings plus more links \_**

<http://www.new-horizons.ro/resources>

\*This website needs a password to login. For the password please email Vali Popescu at [vali\\_popescu@new-horizons.ro](mailto:vali_popescu@new-horizons.ro)

## 9. Contributors

### 9.1. Code-X International

Code-X International is a non-profit international youth organization based in Culemborg, The Netherlands. Our mission is to inspire youth to discover their full potential and expand their intercultural understanding by working together on challenging community projects around the world.

Code-X International facilitates international youth exchanges, trainings, and volunteer projects. For more information about Code-X International or for questions about this manual, please contact [info@code-international.nl](mailto:info@code-international.nl) or see [www.code-international.nl](http://www.code-international.nl)

### 9.2. International Training 2007

The first training was coordinated by Code-X International (The Netherlands) and Youth Leaders Coalition (Latvia) from May 14-18, 2007. All facilitators, participants, and their organizations are listed below.

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### 9.3. International Training 2008

The second training was coordinated by Code-X International (The Netherlands) and Academy of Experience (Hungary) from September 16-22, 2008.

All facilitators, participants, and their organizations are listed below.

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