

Collaborative Economy without Barriers

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Guidelines

How to develop self-awareness



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Self-awareness is the ability to see yourself clearly and objectively through reflection and introspection, it is the major mechanism to influence personal development. Self-awareness has the potential to enhance virtually every experience you have, as it is a tool and a practice that can be used anywhere and anytime to ground yourself in the moment, realistically evaluate yourself and the situation, and help you to make good choices. Being self-aware and practicing daily reflection and introspection allows each of us the opportunity to find what we really want out. Only by the accomplishment of self-mastery through a deep understanding of the internal self and the public self through the attainment of true self-awareness, real freedom can be achieved.

The benefits of self-awareness

There are many benefits in practicing self-awareness, the main ones can be resumed as below:

- High self-awareness is an indicator of good success in life.
- It can make us more proactive, boost our acceptance and encourage positive self-development.
- Self-awareness allows us to see things from the others' perspective, practice self-control, experience pride in ourselves and our work as well as general self-esteem.
- It leads to better decision-making.
- It can make us better in our job, better communicators in the workplace and in the daily life, enhance our self-confidence and job-related wellbeing.

Exercises to develop self-awareness

In general activities that help meditation and reflection are useful to develop self-awareness: walking in quiet places as in the nature, drawing, painting or writing. To draw or to color mandala is a helpful technique to calm down the emotions and it could lead to introspection and meditation. Also to learn how to become good listeners will allow to stop downward spirals of self-destructive thinking, by being open to someone else, we can learn to listen objectively to what that person wants to or needs to share, this process helps us to learn how to listen to our own inner dialogues and opinions objectively and lovingly as well.

The following exercises are helpful to stimulate the building of self-awareness, but not every exercise is appropriate for every people: educators and social workers should focus on the target group of people to be involved and select the more effective exercises for them and, if necessary, adapt the exercises to their specific needs.



Core Values

Core values are the fundamental beliefs of a person or organization. These guiding principles dictate behaviors and they can help people to understand the difference between right and wrong. Core values also help companies to determine if they are on the right path and fulfilling their goals by creating an unwavering guide. There are many different examples of core values in the world depending upon the context: core values about life, core values about family, core values about friendship, corporate core values ecc... To individuate the own core values will help to manage personal relationships, to clarify who we are and what we stand for; It will help to explain why we act the way we do, it will guide us in making decisions and it will guide us in business processes. Our essential tenets do not require external justification and they arise from our interiority.

Values exercise

1. Determine your core values

Distribute to the group of learners a list of possible values (see the list below as example), ask them to choose and write down every core value that resonates with them avoing to overthink in their selections. They should simply write down the words that they feel like a core value for them personally. If they think to posses a value that is not on the list they should write it down as well.

Determine your core values

Abundance	Collaboration	Flexibility	Passion	Resilience
Acceptance	Consistency	Happiness	Performance	Resourcefulness
Accountability	Contribution	Health	Personal	Responsibility
Achievement	Creativity	Honesty	Development	Responsiveness
Advancement	Credibility	Humility	Proactive	Security
Adventure	Curiosity	Humor	Professionalism	Self-Control
Advocacy	Daring	Inclusiveness	Quality	Selflessness
Ambition	Decisiveness	Independence	Recognition	Simplicity
Appreciation	Dedication	Individuality	Risk Taking	Stability
Attractiveness	Dependability	Innovation	Safety	Success
Autonomy	Diversity	Inspiration	Security	Teamwork
Balance	Empathy	Intelligence	Service	Thankfulness
Being the Best	Encouragement	Intuition	Spirituality	Thoughtfulness
Benevolence	Enthusiasm	Joy	Stability	Traditionalism
Boldness	Ethics	Kindness	Peace	Trustworthiness
Brilliance	Excellence	Knowledge	Perfection	Understanding
Calmness	Expressiveness	Leadership	Playfulness	Uniqueness
Caring	Fairness	Learning	Popularity	Usefulness
Challenge	Family	Love	Power	Versatility
Charity	Friendships	Loyalty	Preparedness	Vision
Cheerfulness	Flexibility	Making a Difference	Proactivity	Warmth
Cleverness	Freedom	Mindfulness	Professionalism	Wealth
Community	Fun	Motivation	Punctuality	Well-Being
Commitment	Generosity	Optimism	Recognition	Wisdom
Compassion	Grace	Open-Mindedness	Relationships	Zeal
Cooperation	Growth	Originality	Reliability	



2. Group all similar values together

Ask the learners to group all similar values together from the list just created: group them in a way that makes sense for them personally.

Ask to create a maximum of five groupings.

3. One word

Ask the learners to observe the created groupings and to choose one word within each grouping that best represents the label for the entire group of values. Remember them do not overthink their labels: there are no right or wrong answers but only answers that are right for themselves.

My self-portrait

This exercise is indicated especially for persons not used to activity of self-reflection and it may be used as a good beginning of introspection.

Ask to the learners to draw or to paint their self-portrait, let them free to choose the technique they prefer and do not give other instructions to not influence the process of elaboration and creation.

Only when the self-portraits are quite done educators can stimulate the reflection on a deep observation of themselves, leading it to the inner side of the person. Some questions that can help to start this process of introspection could be: how I feel with myself? Am I angry with myself? Do I love my self? Am I proud of me? Am I a kind person? Am I gentle with myself and the others? Am I happy about what I am? Should I change something? Am I doing my best? Am I actively living? Am I using my energy in the better way?

After this reflection the educators can ask to write down something about their personal features, how they are inside, how they can define themselves as persons, if there is something that they would like to change or to improve.

If the group is close-knit and cohesive the educators can ask to share the portraits and self-reflection in a group discussion that will stimulate the participants to open up to the others.

Rate your self

Prepare a document containing a list of values, qualities and abilities and ask the learners to evaluate, in a scale from 1 to 10, their position.

Use their personal evaluation to highlight their strengths and weaknesses, develop a discussion with the learners and work on their strengths to enhance them and on their weaknesses to swing them.

My Identity

My Identity is a fun activity that will help the learners to understand and express different aspects of their identity.

Whatch the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYU4OgMDSjM>

Swot analysis

Swot analysis is designed for use in the preliminary stages of decision-making processes. It is a technique used to help a person or organization identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to business competition or project planning. It is intended to specify the objectives of the business venture or project and identify the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving those objectives. Strengths and weakness are frequently internally-related, while opportunities and threats commonly focus on the external environment. The name is an acronym for the four parameters that the technique examines:

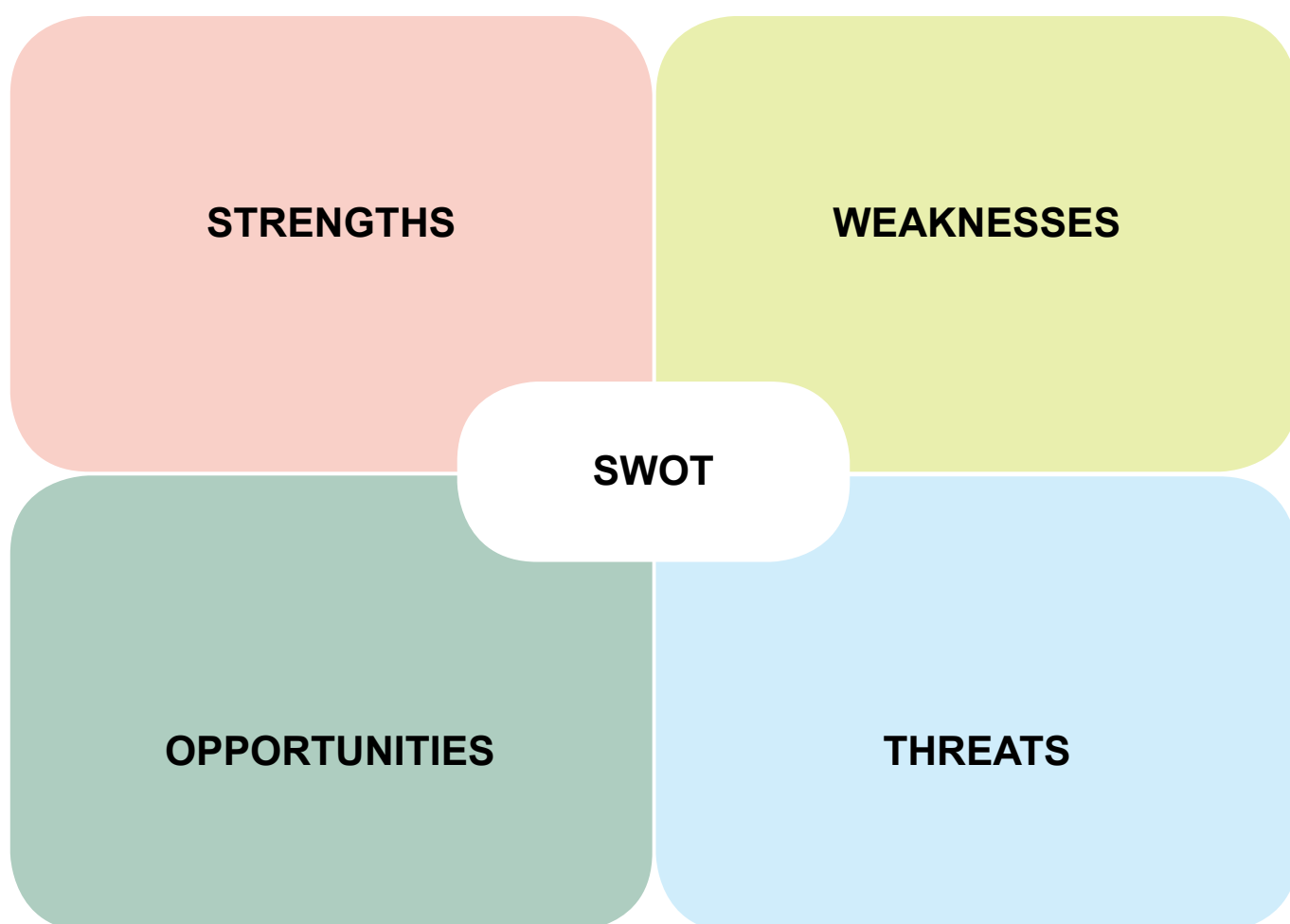
Strengths: characteristics of the business or project that give it an advantage over others.

Weaknesses: characteristics of the business that place the business or project at a disadvantage relative to others.

Opportunities: elements in the environment that the business or project could exploit to its advantage.

Threats: elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the business or project.

Use a table like the following:

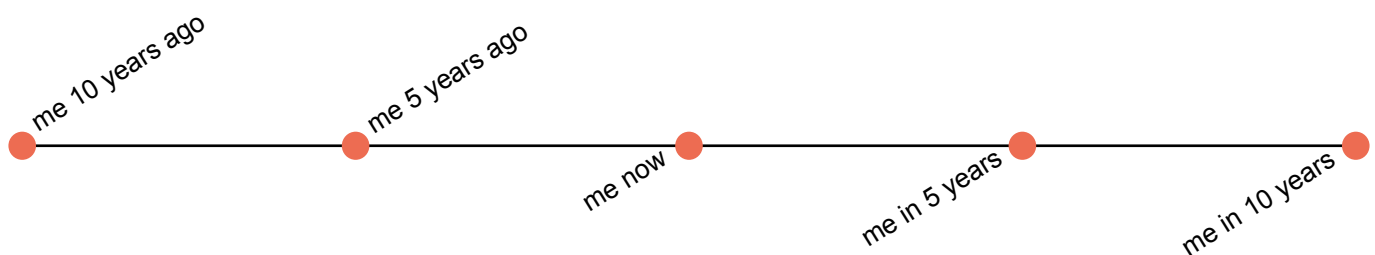


Me over time

Copy the example below or ask to the learners to draw an horizontal line (the line of the time), to divide the line in 4 equal parts and to write from the beginning of the line in each part:

- me 10 years ago
- me 5 years ago
- me now
- me in 5 years
- me in 10 years

Like in this example:



Ask to the learners to write in their line of the time how they see themselves over the time, trying to remember how they were in the past (10 and 5 years ago), how they are now and how they see themselves in the future (in 5 and 10 years). The aim of this exercise is to generate a reflection on their feelings, their qualities, their competences, achieved and to be achieved goals, their expectations in the course of the time. Thinking about their past they will be aware of their personal path of life, what they have done, what is happened to become the person that they are now. Thinking on the present they will reflect on the changes occurred in their person till now, in their abilities and how to direct their path in the future. Looking forward they will express their personal wishes for their life, new objectives to be reached and their expectations.

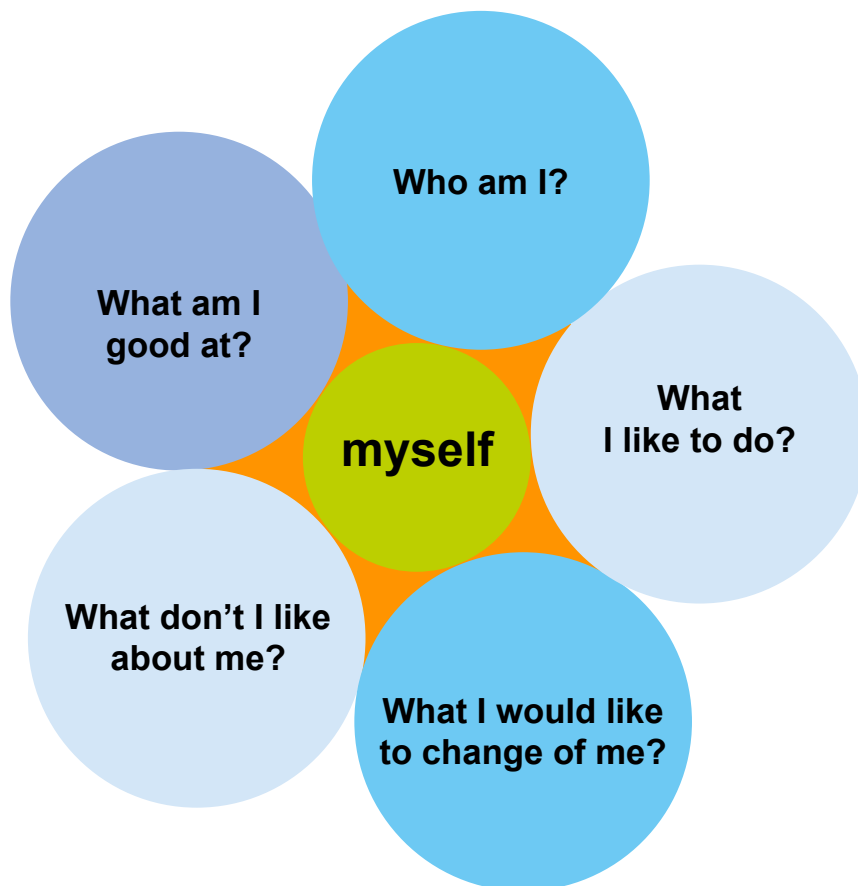
This exercise will allow the learners to have a total overview of their path, to be proud of themselves by reminding all the important things made till now and to be more motivated to set and pursue new objectives.

If their line will show more dissatisfaction than success, they should be motivated by the educators to act in a different way in the present, redirect their path and planning the future to build a more satisfying life.

Educators should transmit the positive attitude to react to possible discomforts and to be able to change strategies to reach their goals.

Flower self-analysis

Educators can create a specific analysis adapted to the learners characteristics. The swot analys could be to difficult and boring for some users as well as tables or numerical evaluations. In this cases educators can use the shape of a flower to make the evaluation easier and more interesting. Educators can prepare in advance a scheme for the Flower self-analysis, with adequate (for their purpose) and understandable (for the users) questions, in order to have the schemes ready to be filled in; Otherwise the educators can ask to the users to draw their flower and instruct them on what to write on the petals. If the analysis wants to focus on several aspects it is possible to draw also the stem, leaves and roots (generally the area of the roots it is used to focus on fears or threats).



Be able to say no!

Educators should stimulate the learners to take decisions that are good for their welbeing, to think with their mind and to be able to show disappointment, to argue with their opinions and, when it is necessary, even to be able to say “NO!”.

Ask to the learners to stand in a circle, the educator is in the middle. The educator asks to repeat what he say after him to the pointed person. The educator start pointing a person and looking him/her in the eyes says with a normal tone of voice: “NO!”, after the educator the pointed person repets “NO!”. The educator should go on in the same way pointing every person in the circle; from here the educator will continue starting gradually to increase the voice saying “NO!”. The participants naturrally will start to answer shouting “NO!” as well.

This exercise is also usefull to blow off steam.



If you were a business product

Educators ask to the learners to imagine: “if you were a business product what would you like to be?” The learners can imagine to be a biscuit, a car, a brush, it could be everything.

Then educators ask to the learners:

- Create a logo of yourself (Yourself = the business product).
- For how long time do you will be on the market?
- Prepare your warranty.
- What kind of services, additions, cares do you need to function properly?
- Present yourself: three things about you.
- How much I worth?

This exercise may be particularly indicated for people who find difficult to make introspection and to focus on themselves. The learners will choose a business product that in some way represents themselves or their wishes moving the attention from themselves to the object.

This activity is good to stimulate reflection and ability of communication. The exercise exploits the use of different methods of expression and communication: drawing for the creation of the logo, writing for the warranty and needed services/cares and speaking for the presentation.

Educators should highlight strengths and weaknesses for every business product discussing with the users (evaluate if will be better to do it individually or in group) on how to improve it.

The last question is the key of the activity: How much I worth?

If people really believe in themselves and in what they do they can reach great results.

What about me

Educators should give learners a series of beginnings of sentences and ask them to complete the sentences in ways that make sense. Learners should work on these independently and then they can share their answers with the group.

Here some possible beginnings of sentences:

- I am very good at...
- I have trouble with...
- I love to...
- When I am bored I...
- Something that make me feel sad is...
- Something that helps me when I feel sad is...
- One thing that I don't like about me is...
- One thing that I like of me is...

Yes or No

The aim of this exercise is to stimulate the participants' reflection on their personal skills and aspects of character. Educators should divide the room in two parts, for example by drawing a line with adhesive tape; on one side stick on the floor a visible paper with the writing "YES" and in the other side stick on the floor a visible paper with the writing "NO". Educators explain to the participants that they have to listen the questions and move towards the side with the writing "YES" if they want to answer yes and to move to the side with the writing "NO" if they want to answer no. At the beginning of the activity the educators should invite them to answer sincerely ensuring that nobody will judge their choice. Without forcing the learners, educators can ask them to motivate their answers. Here some examples of possible questions:

- I am good at collaboration.
- I am very creative and I have many ideas to share.
- I am positive.
- I am a natural leader.
- I am good to give feedback.
- I am an impulsive person.
- I am very patient.
- I am a good listener.
- I am a good speaker.
- I am good at help people.
- I am good at planning.
- I have a sense of humor.
- I am shy.
- I have a good self-control.
- I am good at problem solving.

It can be interesting to repeat the same activity after a period in order to see if in the meantime the learners acquired some new skills.

Tools for self-awareness

Following some cards to develop self-awareness: the cards should be compiled independently by the users. Educators should give enough time to complete this activities without pressure in order to allow to the learners to reflect. The role of the educators is to stimulate the participants to observe themselves, to be aware of their feelings and to be able to react, to improve what they do not like in their life.

1) The first card allow to explore what makes a good or a bad day for the learners and how to make more better days.

2) The second card stimulate the learners reflection on what is important for them and what is important to live better (e.g. for Marco it is important to eat icecream and to make sport is important to live in a better way).

3) The third card allow the learners to reflect on what people appreciate of them, their values and what can help them to be more happy.

Educators can decide to read the cards and discuss them in group or to make it individually.



What makes my day a good day?



What makes my day a bad day?

What can I do to have more good days and less bad days?



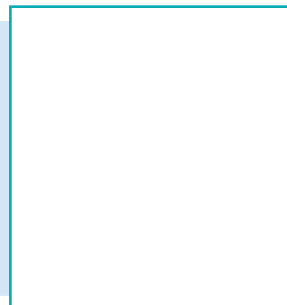
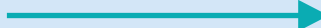
What is important to me?

What is important to live better?

My
One
Page
Profile

My Name

My Picture



**What people
appreciate of me?**

**What is important to
me? (my values)**

**How to support me?
What can help me to be
more happy?**



Self-awareness with the help of the group

This activity is adequate only when the learners will be more self-aware, and only if the group of learners is cohesive and close-knit.

Everyone sits in a circle and the educator asks to reflect on their personal features and on their attitudes, and to recognize in themselves some possible flaws.

This reflection will be personal and silent, as a moment of meditation. After that, ask to reflect on what are the main causes of discomfort, anxiety or conflict in their daily life and ask if someone wants to share it with the rest of the group.

If nobody wants to start with the sharing, do not force the participants to come out but try to create a relaxed atmosphere. In this case educators should be ready to introduce some possible case to be discussed with the group. The educator has the role to facilitate the discussion and to lead it to the resolution of the problem.

Making this exercise the group will learn how to listen and to understand others behaviours and the problem of a single person will be shared by the group that will work to solve it.

An example could be the case of a person that feel uncomfortable because of his shyness, so that he/her finds difficult to participate in some activities and he/she feels his/her opinion is not valid for the others. How the person should react to feel better? What the group can do to help this person?

This exercise will allow to:

- Reflect on themselves and accept their own limits.
- Recognize the problem and its causes.
- Open up to others.
- Ask for help.
- Collaborate to find solutions/problem-solving.
- Accepting help.
- Feel the protection of the group.
- Learn to consider things from different perspectives.

This activity can be reinforced by **Role game**: the educator can ask to the learners to play the analyzed situation, trying different solutions to verify the most effective with the group.

The Blob evaluation

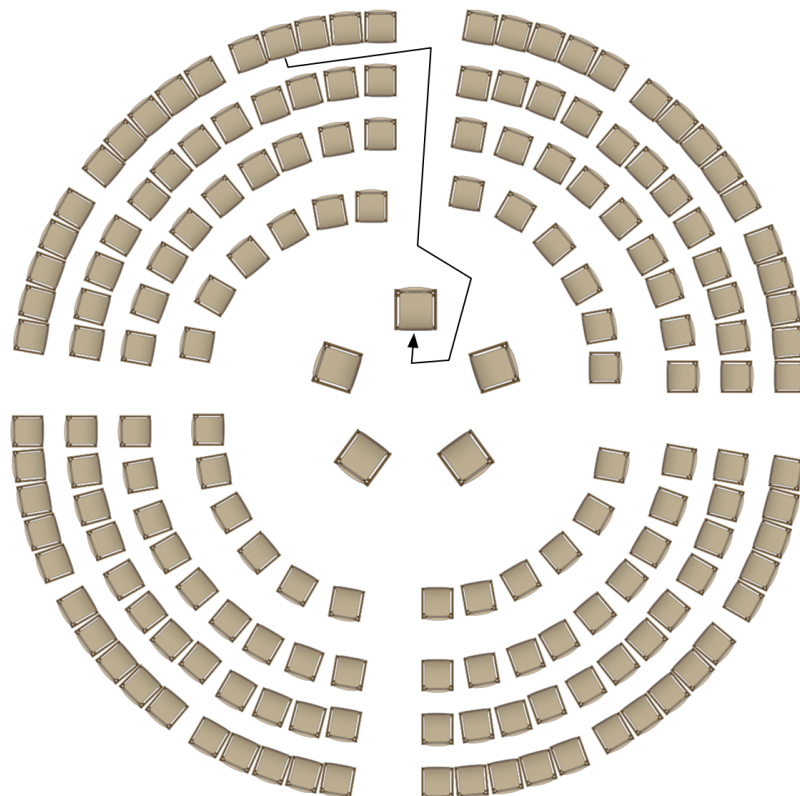
The Blob Tree developed by Ian Long and Pip Wilson can be used as an evaluation tool. It is a tool that can be used to help learners articulate their feelings and help facilitate their development. It consists of many blob figures on or around a tree. The tree represents a setting, such as a school or group, and the blobs represent different emotions and feelings. It is copyrighted and you need to purchase it before you use it. A downloadable copy and license for use can be purchased from the website www.blobtree.com.

Fishbowl method

An other way to involve the whole group of participants in a group reflection to discuss together about a specific situation, to solve problems or conflicts and evaluate different solutions is the Fishbowl method.

A fishbowl conversation is a form of dialogue that can be used when it is needed to discuss topics within large groups. The advantage of fishbowl is that it allows to the entire group to participate in a conversation: several people can join the discussion. Four to five chairs are arranged in an inner circle. This is the fishbowl. The remaining chairs are arranged in concentric circles outside the fishbowl. A few participants are selected to fill the fishbowl, while the rest of the group sits on the chairs outside the fishbowl. In an open fishbowl, one chair is left empty. In a closed fishbowl, all chairs are filled. The moderator introduces the topic and the participants start discussing the topic. The audience outside the fishbowl listen to the discussion.

In an open fishbowl, any member of the audience can, at any time, occupy the empty chair and join the fishbowl. When this happens, an existing member of the fishbowl must voluntarily leave the fishbowl and free a chair. The discussion continues with participants frequently entering and leaving the fishbowl. Depending on how large your audience is, you can have many audience members who spend some time in the fishbowl and take part to the discussion. When time runs out, the fishbowl is closed and the moderator summarizes the discussion.





The Proust questionnaire

The Proust Questionnaire is a set of questions aimed to know the tastes and personal aspirations. The questionnaire was answered by the French writer Marcel Proust, from here takes its name although he is not its creator.

He believed that, by answering these questions, an individual reveals his or her true nature. Actually It is often used by modern interviewers.

Here is the basic Proust Questionnaire:

- 1) What is your idea of perfect happiness?
- 2) What is your greatest fear?
- 3) What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?
- 4) What is the trait you most deplore in others?
- 5) Which living person do you most admire?
- 6) What is your greatest extravagance?
- 7) What is your current state of mind?
- 8) What do you consider the most overrated virtue?
- 9) On what occasion do you lie?
- 10) What do you most dislike about your appearance?
- 11) Which living person do you most despise?
- 12) What is the quality you most like in a man?
- 13) What is the quality you most like in a woman?
- 14) Which words or phrases do you most overuse?
- 15) What or who is the greatest love of your life?
- 16) When and where were you happiest?
- 17) Which talent would you most like to have?
- 18) If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?



- 19) What do you consider your greatest achievement?
- 20) If you were to die and come back as a person or a thing, what would it be?
- 21) Where would you most like to live?
- 22) What is your most treasured possession?
- 23) What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?
- 24) What is your favorite occupation?
- 25) What is your most marked characteristic?
- 26) What do you most value in your friends?
- 27) Who are your favorite writers?
- 28) Who is your hero of fiction?
- 29) Which historical figure do you most identify with?
- 30) Who are your heroes in real life?
- 31) What are your favorite names?
- 32) What is it that you most dislike?
- 33) What is your greatest regret?
- 34) How would you like to die?
- 35) What is your motto?

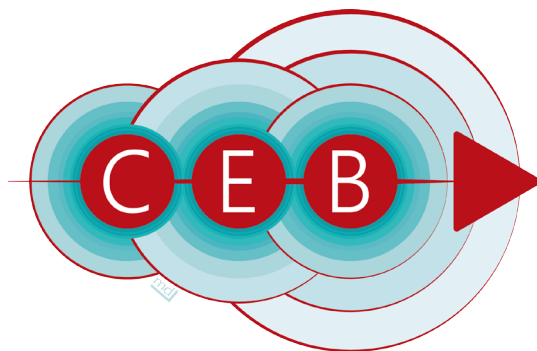
This guideline was realized during the Joint-short term staff training event: Mutual learning for the best support. The training event was held in Palermo on 04.02.2020 -08.02.2020. The guideline aims to support the work of educators and social workers in guiding the adult learners with disability in participating to collaborative economy. It is a product of the Project Collaborative Economy without Barriers – CEB, a Strategic Partnership for the exchange of good practices in the field of adult education, Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

All the guidelines realized during the Project Collaborative Economy without Barriers – CEB and informations about the project and its activities are published in the following web-site: <https://partnershipceb.blogspot.com>

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Sitography

<https://positivepsychology.com/self-awareness-matters-how-you-can-be-more-self-aware/>
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<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-core-values.html>
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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SWOT_analysis
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fishbowl_\(conversation\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fishbowl_(conversation))
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYU4OgMDSjM>
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Collaborative Economy without Barriers

The partnership:

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