

Workshop 1:

Empathy

Developed by IDEA

Short overview:

Working with socially excluded individuals requires specific empathetic skills. These people often face difficult experiences, low self-esteem, emotional, and social barriers. Empathy allows for a deeper understanding of their situation and helps build trust, which is essential for effective support and education. The aim of this presentation is to develop the ability to take an empathetic approach to socially excluded individuals, helping trainers to better support them in the process of social integration.

Learning Outcomes of the Workshop:

By the end of the workshop VET practitioner will....	understand what empathy is and why it is crucial in working with socially excluded individuals.
	develop skills in empathetic listening and recognizing the emotional needs of marginalized individuals.
	learn techniques for supporting and empowering socially excluded individuals in educational and social contexts.
	be more aware of the challenges marginalized individuals face and will be able to respond to those challenges with understanding and support.
	understand what empathy is and why it is crucial in working with socially excluded individuals.

Overview of the Workshop:

Description of the learning activities, including methods and instructions to the TRAINER	Timing (minutes)	Materials and resources (Including links)
Empathy is an essential skill for people who work with socially excluded	<u>20 minutes</u>	Sign-in sheet

<p>individuals. Whether it's someone facing unemployment, homelessness, or any form of marginalization, understanding their perspectives, feelings, and struggles is key to fostering trust, engagement, and progress in training environments.</p> <p>In this workshop, we will explore how empathy can transform the way we engage with socially excluded groups, helping them feel understood and supported. You, as trainers, are in a unique position to create a safe space where individuals can overcome barriers, regain confidence, and begin their journey toward reintegration.</p> <p>The aim of this session is to deepen your understanding of empathy, equip you with practical empathetic tools, and prepare you to handle complex emotional situations that may arise in your work with marginalized populations.</p> <p>To assess the participants' existing understanding and attitudes toward empathy, a pre-workshop evaluation will be conducted. This can help tailor the workshop to meet the specific needs of the group: Pre-course evaluation form.</p> <p>This brief pre-workshop assessment will serve as a starting point, allowing us to address knowledge gaps, clarify misconceptions, and provide relevant examples and strategies to enhance empathetic approaches during the session.</p>		<p>Pre-course evaluation form.</p>
<p>Presentation with interactive elements</p> <p>This material will be useful for remembering or reinforcing the content, imagining different situations related to the feeling of empathy, as well as</p>	<p>30 minutes</p>	<p>Slides</p> <p>Link to interactive presentation apps to be used</p>

for discussion.		
<p><u>Whole Group Activity [1]:</u></p> <p>Empathy Barrier Mapping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group receives a large sheet of paper and a set of sticky notes. • The group's task is to create a map of barriers that socially excluded individuals face in the context of education, work, and daily life (e.g., lack of financial support, social isolation, communication difficulties). • The groups then discuss how empathy can help overcome these barriers, writing solutions on new sticky notes. <p>Objective: Understand the challenges faced by marginalized individuals and explore empathetic ways to overcome them.</p>	<u>15 minutes</u>	
<p>Mirroring Emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants pair up. • One person shares an emotional situation (it can be related to work or a professional challenge), and the other person's task is to actively listen and mirror the emotions they hear (e.g., "I hear that you felt frustrated in this situation because..."). • After the allotted time, roles are switched. 	<u>20 minutes</u>	

<p>Objective: Develop active and empathetic listening skills.</p>		
<p>1. Empathetic Dialogues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are divided into groups of three. Each group receives a scenario depicting a difficult situation with a socially excluded person (e.g., a person with a history of homelessness feels rejected by others during a workshop). • One person plays the role of the trainer, another the excluded individual, and the third acts as an observer. • The trainer's task is to conduct an empathetic dialogue to help the excluded person feel understood and supported. • After each scenario, the group discusses the empathetic actions taken and how they can be improved. <p>Objective: Apply empathetic skills in challenging situations involving social exclusion.</p> <p>3 scenarios:</p> <p>Scenario 1: At a community workshop aimed at helping people reenter the workforce, Anna, who has a history of homelessness, notices the other participants whispering and keeping their distance from her. She senses their discomfort and avoids engaging in the group discussions. When asked to share her thoughts, Anna hesitates, feeling like her past struggles have already disqualified her in the eyes of the others. The facilitator notices</p>	<p><u>30 minutes</u></p>	

<p>Anna's withdrawal but doesn't intervene, leaving her feeling further isolated and unwelcome.</p> <p>Scenario 2: During a skills training session for long-term unemployed individuals, Piotr, who spent several years living on the streets, shares his thoughts about resourcefulness in tough situations. Another participant makes a dismissive comment, implying that Piotr's experience isn't relevant to the job market. Feeling embarrassed and rejected, Piotr retreats into silence for the rest of the session, his enthusiasm to contribute crushed by the lack of acceptance from his peers.</p> <p>Scenario 3: At a support group meeting for individuals overcoming addiction and homelessness, Ursula, who is finally getting back on her feet, speaks up about her desire to find stable employment. As she talks, she notices that two other participants subtly roll their eyes, clearly sceptical of her chances. Ursula, already self-conscious, falters and cuts her contribution short, feeling that her efforts to rebuild her life aren't taken seriously by others in the group. The sense of rejection deepens her insecurity and fear of failure.</p>		
<p>Empathetic Role Play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are divided into groups of three: one person plays the role of a socially excluded individual, another acts as the trainer, and the third person is an observer. • The trainer's task is to lead a conversation with the excluded individual, demonstrating empathy by actively listening, validating emotions, and offering support. • After 10 minutes, the observer provides feedback on how well the trainer used empathy in the conversation. 	<p><u>20 minutes</u></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles are rotated, so everyone experiences each position. <p>Objective: Practice empathetic communication and learn to navigate emotionally challenging interactions.</p>		
<p><u>Feedback and workshop evaluation</u></p> <p>At the end of the session, we will conduct a feedback session, first fill in the evaluation form, we could also discuss this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What have we learned about empathy in the context of social exclusion?</i> • <i>Which exercise was the most valuable for you and why?</i> • <i>What challenges did we encounter when trying to understand the perspective of marginalized individuals?</i> • <i>What empathetic skills would you like to develop further in the future?</i> <p>Each group or individual will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and reflections on the challenges and successes related to taking an empathetic approach in working with socially excluded individuals.</p>	<p><u>30 minutes</u></p>	

Additional resources for the trainer to explore:

- Some group activity ideas to work on Empathy: <https://www.sessionlab.com/library/empathy>
- Understanding You A Phenomenological Study about Experiences of Empathy among Social Workers Working with Forced Migrants: <https://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=5010715&fileId=5010890>

- “Look Me in the Eye”: Empathy and the Transmission of Trauma in the Refugee Determination Process:
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Cecile-Rousseau/publication/44638720_Look_Me_in_the_Eye_Empathy_and_the_Transmission_of_Trauma_in_the_Refugee_Determination_Process/links/54ef47b60cf2495330e1d5e6/Look-Me-in-the-Eye-Empathy-and-the-Transmission-of-Trauma-in-the-Refugee-Determination-Process.pdf