

The Tools for Learning Magazine would to foster the reflection about tools for learning in non-formal education and is targeted at youth workers active at national and international levels.



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Tools FOR LEARNING



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WHY THIS MAGAZINE? WHAT FOR?

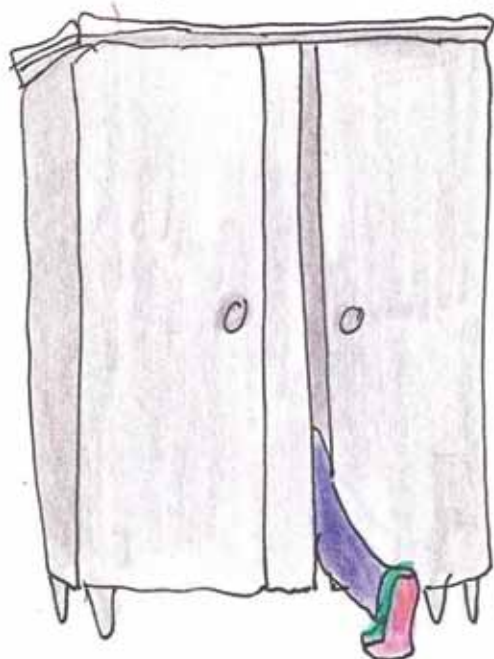
■ Salto EuroMed team

This Magazine is part of a wider project and strategy in the context of non-formal learning and the European Youth in Action Programme and Euromed Youth IV Programme.

This publication aims to give an overview of the Tools for Learning Strategy, but also to clarify what is meant by Tools for Learning and to provide ideas and resources for the creation and development of Tools for Learning. The Magazine would like to become a reference point for increasing discussion and debate about Tools for Learning in Non Formal Education.

This publication is targeted to youth workers and trainers who are active in non formal education, but also for the ones that would like to learn more about the subject.

DON'T ESCAPE FROM YOUR E-EVALUATIONS FOR
TOOL FAIR WORKSHOPS



Many thanks to Siiri and Tanel of Joonmedia for the drawings which illustrate this magazine. More of their wonderful work can be found here:

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WHAT ARE THE PILLARS OF THIS STRATEGY? THE TOOLS FOR LEARNING STRATEGY

The Tools For Learning Strategy has three pillars: the Tools Publications, the online Tool Box and the Tool Fair annual event. Together these three enable Educational Tools to be presented, promoted, reviewed and developed. The intention of the overall strategy is to make Tools for Learning accessible and to engage users in discussion about quality and development.

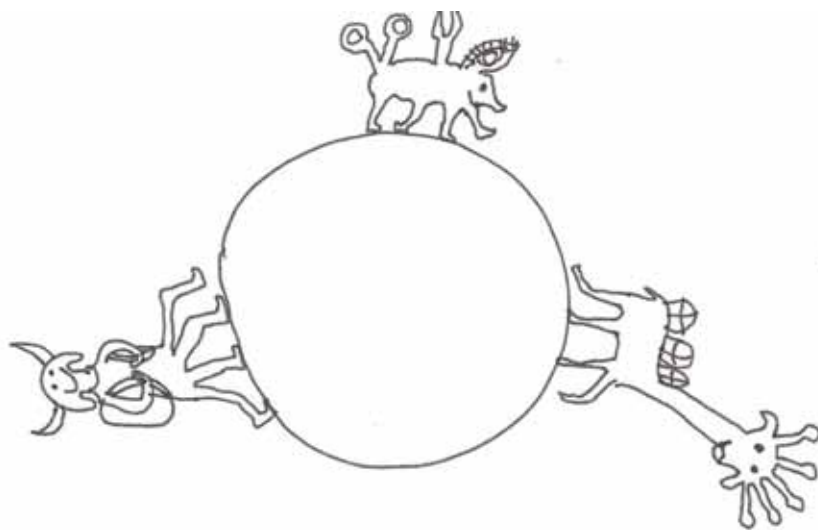
The tools Publications such as the Practical Guides, Studies and Research and Newsletter are used as an educational background for engaging discussions, but also creating pedagogical reference to the strategy in the Non formal learning framework.

The Tool Box is an online library where people can search for, review and contribute to the development of Tools for learning. The Tool Box relies on trainers uploading their ideas and on their peers to use them and provide feedback.

The Tool Fair is an annual event held in different European countries to showcase Tools for Learning and bring different stakeholders together to experience and discuss them. The Tool Fair also promotes the process of peer review and offers the insights of 'critical friends' for those who present a tool.

A 'Tools for Learning Working Group' has been set up to guide the progress of this strategy. The WG is made up of representatives of National Agencies of the Youth in Action Programme plus experienced trainers, coaches and facilitators. In addition to providing opportunities for the presentation and development of Tools for Learning, the Working Group also contributes to the wider dissemination of Tools for Learning beyond the youth programmes and into other areas such as Formal and Life Long Learning.

The Tools for Learning strategy is the responsibility of the SALTO-YOUTH Euromed Resource Centre as a horizontal task on behalf of the Network of SALTO Resource Centres.



IF YOU LOVE YOUR TOOL - LET IT GO, SHARE
AND IT WILL COME BACK TO YOU

What do we mean by "Journey of a Tool For Learning"?

■ Federica Demicheli



WHEN YOU FIRST DESIGN A TOOL FOR LEARNING, YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO IT. THAT IS AN ADVENTURE... IT'S A CREATIVE ADVENTURE!

On the day you first use it, the circumstances might be different to the ones you planned for. The people might respond differently to your expectations and straight away you adapt it to make it work better... or you think how and why they had such reactions and you decide to try again with a different target group... or or... you can decide to ask another trainer to test with you the activity... or ... many possibilities to adapt, change, modify or create

But also the people who participate in it might each take the memory away and some weeks, months or even years later use what they remember in a new context. Some people might read a report of the training event and from that alone make use of your idea. It is not uncommon to discover years later, that your idea has evolved and come back to you in a different form. The rules and materials might be the same but the educational methodology

might have been lost or adapted for a new audience – or vice versa.

One of the aims of the Tools for Learning Strategy is to add some structure to this process and gain the added benefits of consciously developing these tools in a purposeful way. The strategy not only aims to facilitate sharing of Tools, but also to provide opportunities where peers in the field on non-formal learning can reflect and suggest developments.



Reflective Practice and Action Learning in Youth Work

■ Miriam Teuma

Plato famously maintained that Socrates said that the unreflective life is not worth living. Less famously perhaps, William James remarked that while this was perfectly true, it was also true that the un-lived life wasn't worth reflecting on. Both responses are apt when we consider such concepts as reflective practice and action learning in the youth field. Reflective practice and action learning have gathered momentum in recent years in such fields as teaching practice but remain relatively underdeveloped in youth work practice. The following discussion seeks to raise awareness of the potential of reflective practice and action learning as tools in promoting and further developing effective youth work practice.

First however, we need to be mindful of some of the pitfalls commonly associated with the very concept of reflection. For instance, is it possible to think back to situations objectively or is it retrospective reality which in hindsight loses some of its accuracy? Is it possible to be honest and consistent in thinking back on such events

without colouring or clouding them? Can we critically and objectively self-examine our own attitudes and behaviours? Is reflective practice merely "rhetoric" or is practice in any field really affected by reflecting on it?

There are however a number of approaches and strategies that have emerged in recent decades that seek to address and minimise the pitfalls associated with reflection and make it relevant for ongoing action and practice. Consequently, can practitioners in youth work be provided with the right tools for reflective practice and action learning?

These approaches and strategies highlight a number of key factors, both objective and subjective. First, there is the need to try and objectify experience, to try and see the actual experience from the outside and understand it in that context. Second, there is the need to be honest and forthright in recording our own feelings and thoughts on the experience regardless of our own attitudes and behaviours. Third, we need specific tools for questioning and analysing the experience.

While critical reflection can be described as an attitude and a reasoning process involving many intellectual skills with rationality at its core, it also involves essentially subjective characteristics such as independence, courage, empathy, integrity and perseverance. However in meeting all these concerns, reflection it has been argued, without action, is merely an intellectual exercise. The key questions confronting all practitioners, including those in the youth field, are:

Does reflection really lead to action or are we merely verbalising a theory?

One of the responses to these challenging questions is Action Learning which has been described as "an educational strategy, used in a group setting, that seeks to generate learning from human interaction arising from engagement in the solution of real-time (not simulated) work problems".

At its simplest, Action Learning alternates doing and reflection. The doing leads to the outcomes. The reflection allows the doing to be more coherent and focused, and the learning that comes from the doing to be more conscious and effective.

Doing and critical reflection are not activities separated in time but rather interwoven and spontaneous activities - what am I doing here and now in this activity? What would I like to change?

Reflection and evaluation are not the same thing. Reflection is subjective and spontaneous; it is both intellectual and emotional; it is deeply personal and involves our own particular experiences and the consequent learning resulting from reflection impacts on all these. Evaluation on the other hand is objective, empirical and planned; quantitative and qualitative, analytical and synthesising.

Action Learning is described as a style of learning which leads to very practical knowledge and skills as well as to greater understanding and an enhanced capacity for effective action. As Schön (1983) points out learning which comes from experience is often tacit learning. Critical reflection makes the learning explicit.

How many of the following applies to the experience you have just reflected on or analysed?

AWARENESS

How much attention did you give to what happened? How much did you think about it afterwards?
What methods did you use to think about and record the experience?
What feedback did you get on from other participants on your perceptions, attitudes and behaviour?

ACCEPTANCE

Did you accept the nature of the experience and will you act on it as a result?

ACTION

What did you learn from the experience?
How will this learning affect future learning experiences?



Reflection consists of those processes in which we engage to recapture, notice and re-evaluate our experience to turn it into learning (Boud et al. 1985:36). It is a cognitive process and open perspective that involves a deliberate pause to examine beliefs, goals or practices in order to gain new or deeper understanding that leads to actions thus improving our practices and building up knowledge in our minds.

Reflective practice is an in-depth conversation about what we do, how it works, and why we do, that it enables us to actively participate in community situations and experience. It is used to look back, and to look forward. It is used to examine what happened during the doing, and then to use this to work out what to do next. In between these two elements, you build theory — conscious understanding — from the experience:

What happened?

What have I learnt?

How will I make use of what I have learnt?

In reflecting on actual experiences of youth work, regardless of the nature of these experiences, practitioners in the field can employ the tools of reflective practice and action learning as outlined above. In conclusion, a useful cue or note card for youth work practitioners in the field might appear as follows:

The experience	What was I trying to do? What outcomes was I trying to achieve? What were the consequences or outcomes for the young people and me? How did the young people participate and behave? What was I feeling? What did I think the young people participating were feeling?
Information	What knowledge/information did or should have informed me?
Attitudes	How did I behave? Did the way I behave reflect my own attitudes?
Future Action and Learning	How does this experience relate to previous ones? Could I have managed the situation better? Could I have used different approaches or methods? What might have been the outcomes of using these for the young people and me? How can I support young people more as a result of the experience? Has this experience changed my ways of knowing and doing?

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The Tool Fair, from dream to reality

■ Bernard Abrignani

As the 7th Tool Fair is about to be held in Poland in November, it is time to look back on what has proven to be the successful story of a useful adaptable model. From the idea of the first Tool Fair held in 2006 in France and which was not expected to give birth to the dynamic which actually followed it, to the full inclusion of the Tool Fair as a pillar of the “tools for learning” strategy, six years have been the theatre of the development of the model.

The Tool Fair is a place offering the opportunity to test and taste new tools, analyze, exchange and evaluate them, in order to valorize creativity in non-formal education pedagogical initiatives.

It is part of the Salto horizontal responsibility to support active and innovative answers to contribute to the quality development, recognition and visibility of the youth sector and non-formal education as a whole. For a long time, the main answer took the form of the online toolbox, which enabled youth

workers to upload and discover tools. But what the online toolbox can't offer is the opportunity to share ideas and experiences within a “Rencontres du 3ème type” (or “Close Encounters of the Third Kind”) way. This is how the first Tool Fair was born. As needs and experiences change like calls for new answers the Fair has been renewed every year since then, proving to be a flexible model to be adapted to the place, country and needs of the moment.

The core concept of the Tool Fair lies in the opportunity it offers to test, taste, analyze and improve the transferability of pedagogical tools. Involving local actors and national agencies as well as guests from the formal education domain, the Tool Fair usually lasts three or four days, and offers different possibilities to share tools and experiences: An open space workshop enables participants to bring their tools to light, while one hour and two hour workshops permit a deeper presentation and discussion about the tools presented.

During these workshops, the key idea is to remain as interactive as possible. Every participant is in turn presenting and commenting on or thinking about these tools which enrich the participants as much as they are enriched by them.

If the spirit and structure of the sharing has been similar for the past 6 years, it is its permanent capacity of adaptation which has made the Tool Fair successful. Each place and each year has its own characteristics, constraints, advantages, needs and requirements. The strength of the Tool Fair lies in its flexibility. Despite the common goals, targets, and structures, each Tool Fair was unique and brought its stone to the pedagogical tools structure which is now to be continued in Poland, and, next year, in Greece...

The Tool Fair, an adaptable and flexible model

■ COMMON FEATURES, THE TAPE SPIRIT

Test and taste, analyze, produce and evaluate new pedagogical tools

■ ADAPTABILITY - NEED TO ADAPT THE ORGANIZATION AND PRESENTED TOOLS TO THE NEEDS ANALYZED BY NATIONAL AGENCIES AND TO THE PLACE

■ FAIRNESS A FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE GATHERING YOUTH WORKERS IN A SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY, TOLERANCE, AUTONOMY AND RESPONSIBILITY

■ BENCHMARKING SHARING TOOLS AND EXPERIENCES FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL TYPES OF ACTIONS OF THE FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION DOMAINS, BEING IN TURN TRAINER AND TRAINEE.

■ THREE CONSTANTS: PLACE, TIME AND TARGET UNITY

LEARNING AGENDA



Six Tool Fairs improving in quality and suitability

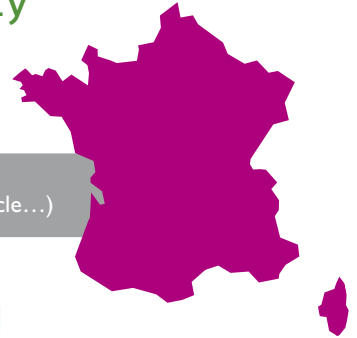
FRANCE

Marly Le Roi

2006

120 participants - 3 days

Technical workshops (How to make a PowerPoint, a video, write an article...)



TURKEY

ANTALYA

2007

96 participants - 3 days

First partnership formalization with a University (Akdeniz University, Antalya)
Technical workshops



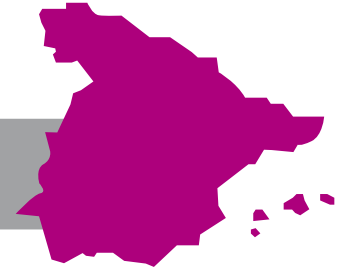
SPAIN

LA PALMA

2008

70 participants - 3 days

Necessity to adapt the number of people to the place
First time "Active discovery" of the Site



PORTUGAL

EVORA

2009

141 participants - 4 days

Adaptation to a historical site

Partnerships with both the University and the City
Increasing youngsters and civil society participation

New activities: Young people animating the active discovery, photo contest...



ITALY

VENICE

2010

110 participants - 4 days

Creation of a specific website where participants could upload and evaluate their tools
Creation and 1st meeting of the European Tools for Learning Working Group



ESTONIA

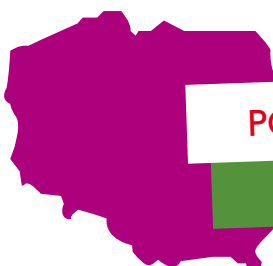
TALLINN

2011

106 participants - 3 days

Thematic: Youth and Culture (Tallinn European Capital of Culture in 2011)

Increasing role for the European Tools for Learning Working Group
Congruent preparation work



POLAND

2012

19 / 23 November 2012



Objective setting for Tools for Learning Specific and Measurable or Broad and Flexible

Which serves the learners best?

■ Jonathan Bowyer

“There are some good reasons why we often start the planning of a training or non-formal learning activity by expressing the objectives or goals. It demonstrates that we know where the activity fits in the bigger picture of policy or strategy; it gives us something to evaluate or review against; it enables us to demonstrate how prepared we are; it adds a robustness to our planning. But what are the disadvantages of formal or strict objective setting, and how can we tune our approach to objective setting so that learning is maximised? In the 1980s a friend of mine worked extensively with groups of young people who



were sent on his courses instead of going to jail, or who were seen by the authorities to be so much at risk of committing crime that they needed some special experience to help them change. When the groups arrived, my friend and his colleagues explained that they had a fleet of canoes, some tents, ropes, helmets and harnesses and that they knew the rivers, lakes and mountains of the area very well. Food and accommodation were arranged but the programme was not prepared. The young people were encouraged to say what they needed and wanted to do and to co-design the programme with the trainers.

If you had asked the participants in these courses to define the objectives, I guess they would have given one of three responses

- To get the authorities off my back
- To avoid going to jail
- To survive the week without getting too wet in the rain
- To learn how to paddle a canoe or climb a mountain
- To have a good laugh

If you had asked the trainers, they might have said

- To develop interpersonal skills
- To change attitudes to authority
- To develop team working skills or
- To generate a sense of hope and purpose

And the authorities might have said

- To reduce offending or criminal behaviour
- To get “them” off the streets for a while
- To build their character
- To try to get some sense into them



So which ones are the better objectives?

Maybe there are all equally valid and just represent positions of the different stakeholders? None of them particularly follow the old mnemonic of SMART (see the box). The outcomes from the programmes were genuinely difficult to measure. They were like beauty – difficult to define but we know it when we see it. So if the learning experiences or the tools for learning that we are planning have outcomes that are hard to define, how do we manage the demand for a crisp and clear set of objectives?

S

SPECIFIC

What exactly do you want to achieve? What learning do you want to see?

M

MEASURABLE

How will you know it has been achieved?
What can you measure or observe?

A

ACHIEVABLE

Given what you know about the people involved, how likely is that they can achieve this in the time available and with the resources available?

R

REALISTIC

How realistic is this objective?
What other influences and circumstances might affect the likelihood of success?

T

TIMED

What are the timescales? When do you want to start?
When do you want to finish? What other factors will affect the timing?

Like many things, the biggest benefits of objective setting perhaps come from the thinking process rather than from lists produced.

Some questions that come to mind to help that process are...

Who are the stakeholders in this?

What do they want out of their investment of time or money or effort?

How will they know they have got it?



This last question relates to the M of SMART - Measurable.

How will the stakeholders recognise the desired achievement, progress, change, performance, motivation, engagement or distance travelled? What constitutes suitable evidence?

This issue of measurement once got me into an argument with a youth worker who was under pressure from Government to 'measure' the outcomes of youth work. He had a good point; much of what we do in non-formal learning is difficult to measure in the strictest sense of the word – but good objectives enable us to know what evidence we might look for. Some stakeholders are more comfortable with things they can put numbers on, whilst for others an observable change that can be described in less prosaic terms is more valuable.

The Solutions Focus approach to therapy and coaching (Jackson and McKergow 2007) uses the concept of the Future Perfect – a description of the ideal state: The basis of this is to suppose that the best outcome has already occurred and to answer questions like “How will you know? What will be different? What will others notice? Appreciative Inquiry also encourages us to address challenges by considering what is going well already and using that as the basis for the dreaming about the future. This type of thinking can be applied at programme level in individual Tools for Learning.

An opposite approach to setting objectives is to simply state the problem that needs to be tackled and to prefix it with “To solve the problem of...” or “To explore possible responses to...”



However, we need to consider the motivational factor of objective setting here – which is more inspiring for you- the problem based approach or the solutions based approach? When designing or adopting Tools for Learning, most of us can't predict all the outcomes: Some will be intentional – and maybe we include them in our list of objectives, but some will be unintentional or accidental – so we can't write them down in any level of detail in advance.

But many of those unintentional outcomes will be positive ones and we don't want to miss them when evaluating our activity or event.

The lack of a prepared programme in my example above might have been one way of saying that we trust the processes we use and we know that the outcomes will be valuable. And by keeping the objectives broad and less-specific, we allow ourselves more freedom to respond to the needs, interests, aspirations or limitations of the participants. It's a higher risk strategy than stating in advance exactly what we intend to achieve, and for some stakeholders that might be too much. It might require too much trust – not only trusting the process but also trusting the skills and character of those running the process and those participating in it.

FOR ME A YOUTHWORK IS A DREAMWORK



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- Jackson, P. Z. and McKergow, M. (2007) The Solutions Focus – Making coaching and change SIMPLE: Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London

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April 2012

OOPS!

SURPRISES FROM TOOLS FOR LEARNING PRACTICE

■ Miguel Angel Garcia Lopez

Eleven years ago, on the first morning of the so-called TC Intro in the European Youth Centre Strasbourg. We start with a formal round of names and countries. This does not seem to be a challenging method except from getting used to the microphones and to the simultaneous translation. Participants start to mention their names, their country and small things about their lives.

A girl from Malta said her name, country and "I have a boyfriend".

This is certainly not typical but why not to mention that?

Some male participants after her in the round, joking, added to their standard introduction:

"I have or I do not have a girlfriend."

Towards the end, one of them said:

"I do not have a girlfriend but as every man I like women."

Without talking, the team looked at each other and decided to react to that. When it comes to the team introduction I added:

"By the way I wanted to mention that not every man likes women. There are men who like men and women who like women."

Oops! Frozen atmosphere. Then in the coffee break the participant came to me and said:

"Sorry, I did not know that you were gay."

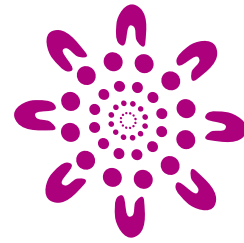
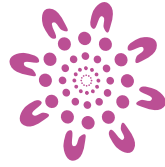
This was an intensive coffee break.

Eleven years ago trainers and participants were not as aware as today about gender-related issues.

But still... A simple round of names can bring surprises and additional learning opportunities.



MY



TOOL FAIR BOX



Quick interview with Gisele Evrard

Quick interviews with famous people about their favourite tools for learning and maybe even their least favourite ones too!

■ Miguel Angel Garcia Lopez

“

■ What is your favourite energiser? (if you have one)

Energisers are to me what a bath is to a cat: we just don't match... I avoid them, systematically forget them and after many, many years, I still do not see the point of energisers. Well, yes, I do see the point of being 'energised', but not necessarily in any way and at any time. Hence, I do put up a very strong resistance to systematic energisers... 'There must be at least one that you appreciate', will you tell me. If I search my memory a bit and although it perhaps did lose a bit of its 'prestige', Madzinga does still work with me. But then if the group is too big or precisely not energetic enough, the 'Maaaaa....' ends up in a sort of sick cat lament... not very vigorous anymore...

■ Tell me a secret Which one is the tool for learning that always works with you?

People! The true source of learning for me is made of people. Peers, colleagues, participants or others. I do feel like a sponge observing, listening, contrasting, sharing, exchanging, questioning, wondering, and exposing. I indeed think that I am where I am today thanks to people. I do apply the concepts of self-assessment and feedback to myself as well and thanks to that, after more than fourteen years in this field I realised about two years ago that perhaps I was able to call myself a 'trainer' (though I still doubt a lot, as you can see). Back then, the feedback and the contributions I received from colleagues at the end of a rich and intense long-term training course really allowed me to think about how do I behave with and in a team/group, what are my weaknesses and my strengths, what do I still need to work on and develop, and what did I already forget that I was able to do... It has been an important moment where the human potential has played an enormous role. No wonder why I

do wish to continue working and exploring coaching, mentoring and supervision... But hey, please don't tell anyone.

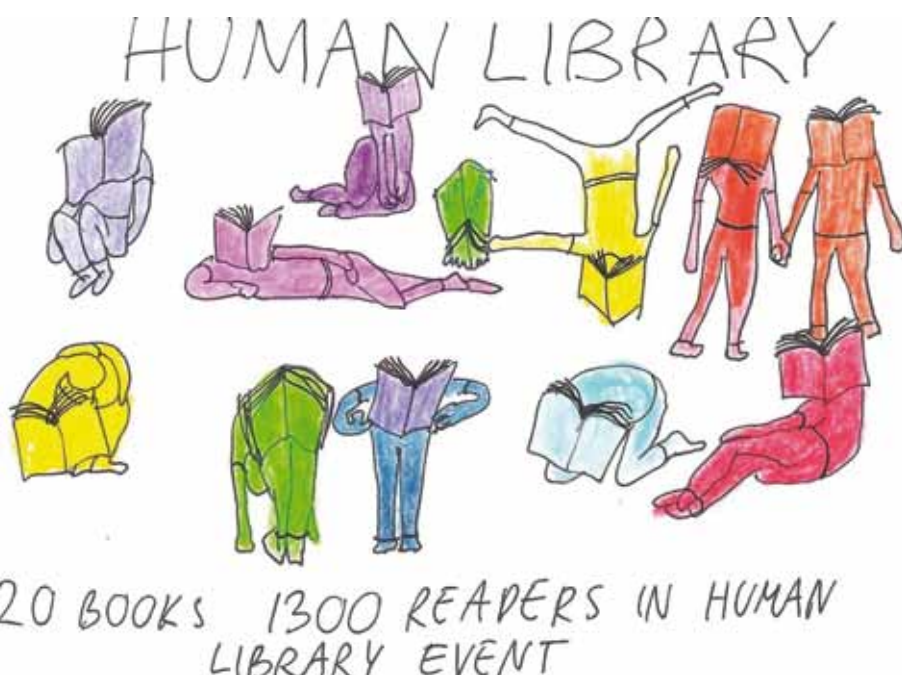
■ And the last one that you have discovered?

Process drama or drama-based pedagogy. I did follow theatre classes in my 'young age' and I do know the process of using scenarios to explore the action-reaction process, for instance when working on impro-theatre. But I never had the chance to see it applied in a training course. The basic idea is to present the group with an already-made scenario (a given situation) which is potentially conflictual. The overall process includes 'acting' a sequence of situations within a given story, which is interrupted by the facilitator so as to explore what is or what may be going on. How the situation ends or whether the conflict is solved is not the point of process drama; the focus is on the actions or sequences and what they generate. I do

believe that such a tool or method requires time and a very good knowledge of drama-based work. As any tool inducing emotions and sometimes very deep and intimate personal thoughts and values, it is not to be used unless the facilitator perfectly knows what s/he is doing.

■ Is there a tool which you see as being very popular but really does NOT fit your idea of a tool for learning?

Not really... To my view, any tool that you use and adjust properly within a learning context supports someone's learning in one way or another. There may be some that I like more or less, but methods which do match the general learning objectives and fit the methodology will do it. What isn't correct though would be to use a huge variety of tools without really exploring their learning value (through debriefing, observation, assessment, etc).





■ In which area do you think that our tools for learning are most developed?
(E.g.: intercultural dialogue, Human Rights, social inclusion?)

Answering that question isn't that simple for it requires knowing all those tools and having an expertise in all those areas, which is not my case. I have the feeling that HRE and more generic Training for Trainers are fields of work where there numerous tools aiming an enhancing a learning process have been elaborated. For instance, HRE benefited enormously from the publication and revision of material such as 'Compass' and 'Compasito'. Of course the methods within those manuals are not new or aren't originally exclusively meant for HRE, but many of them have been adjusted to the sole purpose of HRE, supported by solid and vast theoretical resources. Similarly, Trainings of Trainers have the luxury to embrace tools for learning in general.

As the nature of those trainings supposedly encompasses several key topics trainers have to be able to deal with (HR, ICL, youth participation, democratic participation, inclusion, citizenship, etc.) it automatically opens the door to all possible methods. Lately though, additional tools have been developed so as to allow trainers to reflect and organise their learning process in an autonomous manner. Though this naturally fits the fundamental principles of non-formal education, it wasn't so present about ten or twelve years ago. Tools such as self-assessment questionnaires and/or learning plans, now gathered under different names do add on the already long list of tools for learning, though from a different angle.

I may be wrong but I have the feeling that less exists in the field of citizenship, for instance. Perhaps because it is a topic which you can isolate from others... As for intercultural dialogue, I would rather translate that into 'intercultural learning' when it

comes to learning. ICD gathers concepts and approaches which are those of ICL and is therefore more related to social and political strategies and frameworks than to education as such.

■ And in which area do you think that we need a renewal, some kind of "fresh air" of creativity so that our tools for learning really become more meaningful?

I would not say that we need some 'fresh air' to be more 'meaningful' but perhaps to better fit our reality/ies and the principles of non formal education. I cannot talk about an area in particular though perhaps those where we have the most developed tools are those to primarily question. NFE embodies being creative innovative and looking at everything from a different perspective. Nonetheless and even though we claim to act differently (and to a certain extent, we surely do) we still base our work on a very common way of thinking, simply because this is how our society acts, reacts, and develops... For instance, yesterday I was watching a documentary about youth clubs where I did hear several times the words 'jeunes en difficulté', which you would translate by 'disadvantaged young people'. Until now, we haven't found the best way to describe such groups of young people but I was just wondering if they are the ones having or facing difficulties or if we are rather unable to holistically adjust to – or respond to, their way of being, thinking and facing a reality which doesn't correspond to them and to their way of learning. I know that this is a very superficial or general thought and I do not pretend to have the solution either. But a huge dimension of our work starts from a basis which has proven to fail, at least with certain groups and learning styles. Those are for me the areas where we would need to rethink our way of working and especially our way of dealing with learning...

■ Now I tell you a type of tool for learning and you have to add an adjective which would correspond to your practice as a trainer.
Ready?
Well, ok, a sentence is also acceptable.

Simulations: be careful! It needs a real preparation to reach its learning potential.
Power point: yes but only if creative
Energisers: you must be kidding...!
Group building activities: setting the basis
Drama and theatre: confronting oneself and opening up
Group work: useful and important
Plenary discussions: sharing
Role games: as for simulations. And mind the reverse of the medal...

■ What else would you like to tell us?

Just thank you for giving me the opportunity to share some of those thoughts with you, hoping that tools for learning will keep on developing, changing, confronting our minds and challenging our creativity, in the very primary sense of the term...

”

Thanks!

The ToolFair as a tool for learning

■ Mark Taylor

Let's see! Is it?

Taking the criteria elaborated during the past two years for a 'tool for learning', we thought it might be interesting to see to what extent we meet our own criteria?

A "tool for learning" satisfies the following criteria

“

■ It is a tool to transfer educational objectives into practice; it engages participants in the learning process and provides a possibility for participants to identify their own learning.

YES for all of that! The Tool Fair team provide on-line questionnaires and evaluations, personal feedback to workshop leaders, freedom of choice about what to get involved in.

■ It stands on its own / does not need further information to explain it

Ha ha! it possibly needs too many words to explain all the different sides of a ToolFair! But still, as a developing concept and practise the Tool Fair does indeed stand on its own. And it is being used as an example

by others, for example, Leargas the Irish National Agency organised their own Action I Tool Fair only last month.

■ It combines the theme, techniques, target group, materials, timing, tips for use, etc in its description

It certainly does! have a look at the detailed website!

■ It is not fixed or closed, but rather is open for adaptation according to context, target group, etc

If we look at the ToolFair story (see Bernard Abrignani's article) then we can really see that the ToolFair has grown and developed over the years, to take account of the context and target groups.

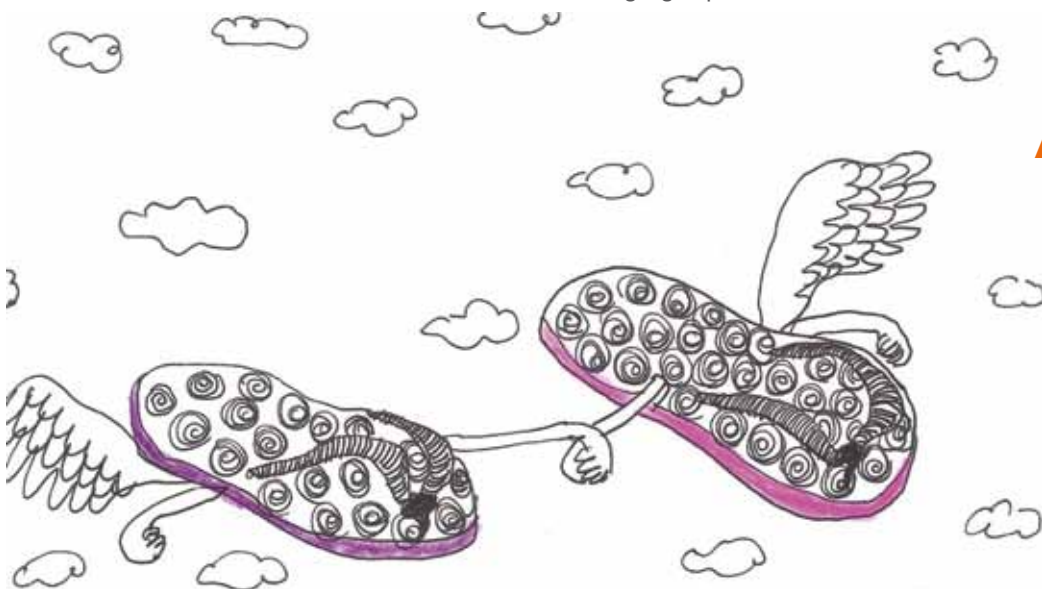
■ It includes tips for transferability to different situations and contexts

One of the main features in giving feedback to workshops and tools is always about adaptation, so this can also be fairly described as a set of criteria which are met.

■ It may well include elements of generic methods (discussions, film, etc)

If it didn't include all of those, then it wouldn't be the ToolFair!

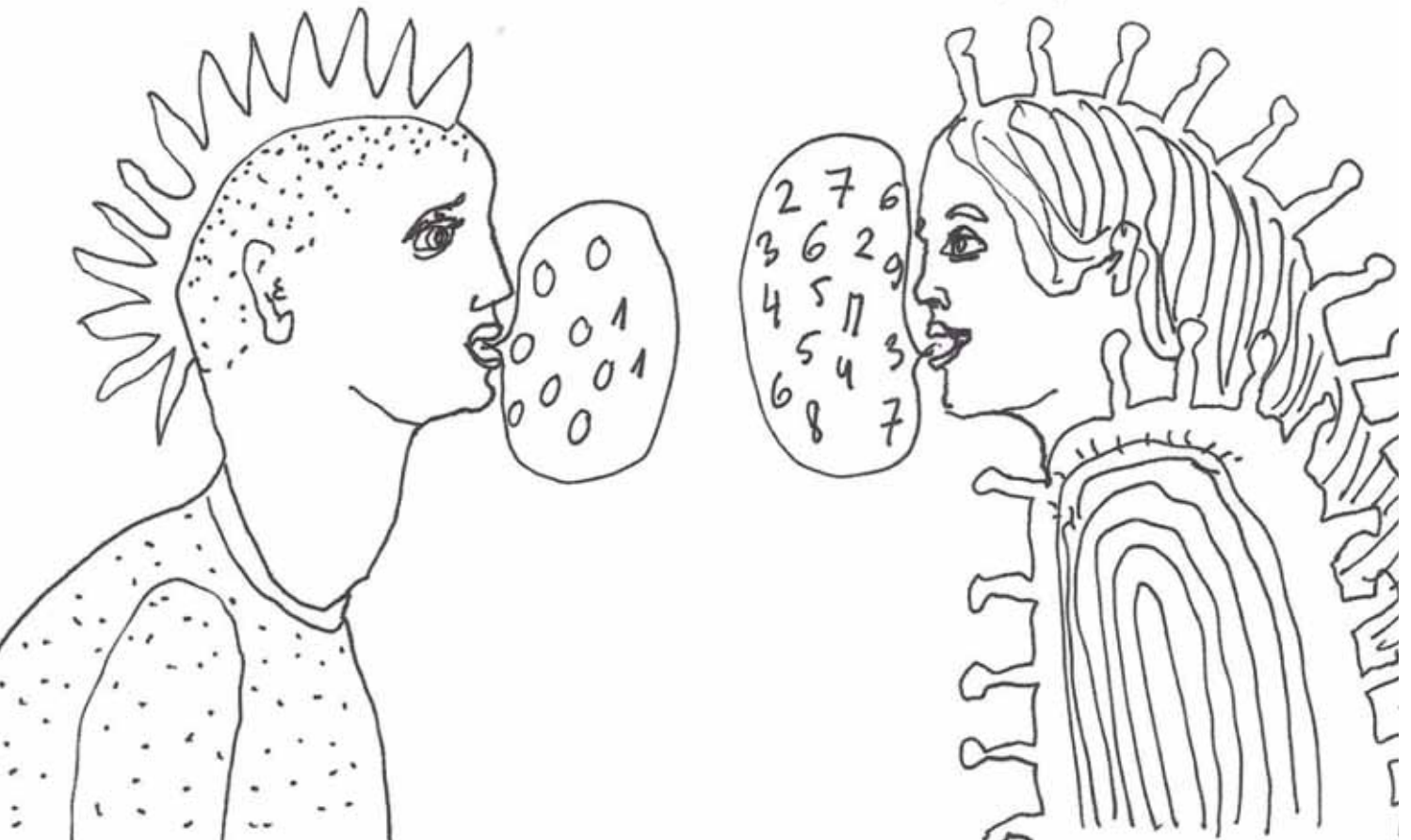
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And, as we always do,
to keep on working

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO **ENGAGE**

MOST OF PEOPLE RUN OUT OF WORDS WHEN TALKING ABOUT LEARNING TO LEARN



we add this note in order
towards a full working description!

■ Dear reader

What do you think?!

Creation and Training - Meeting Points or How to be a creative trainer

■ Claudio Kogon

Many trainers refer to creativity as an outcome of art forms, and when coming to speak about creativity, the fear of facing an activity in which “they have to draw their feelings” or “they have to move their bodies in the space according to...” just freezes them on the spot. But is creation only linked to the arts?

There are evident differences in how creativity is defined or understood. In some cases it is linked specifically to the arts, occasionally exclusively so. (...) In other formulations, creativity is seen as a more general human capacity that can be engaged in all, or many, fields of individual and social actions.

Robinson, 1997

Creation is an intrinsic part of our life. To be creative is a state-of-mind, is challenging yourself at any moment to face the reality from a different point of view, in search for another angle, different, not usually comfortable...because only when we put ourselves out of the comfort zone we will be able to develop ourselves and grow. Yes, fear again, with driving forces.

Everyone can be creative, in every role in the society, in every job, in every profession. What is needed is to identify in ourselves the need to live life differently - every day in a new way, discovering, being active with all our senses, and not a passive spectator of life.

A...misconception is that creativity only happens in particular sorts of activities, and especially the arts. (...) Creativity is not exclusive to particular activities; it's possible wherever human intelligence is actively engaged. It is not a specific type of activity but a quality of intelligence.

Robinson, 2001

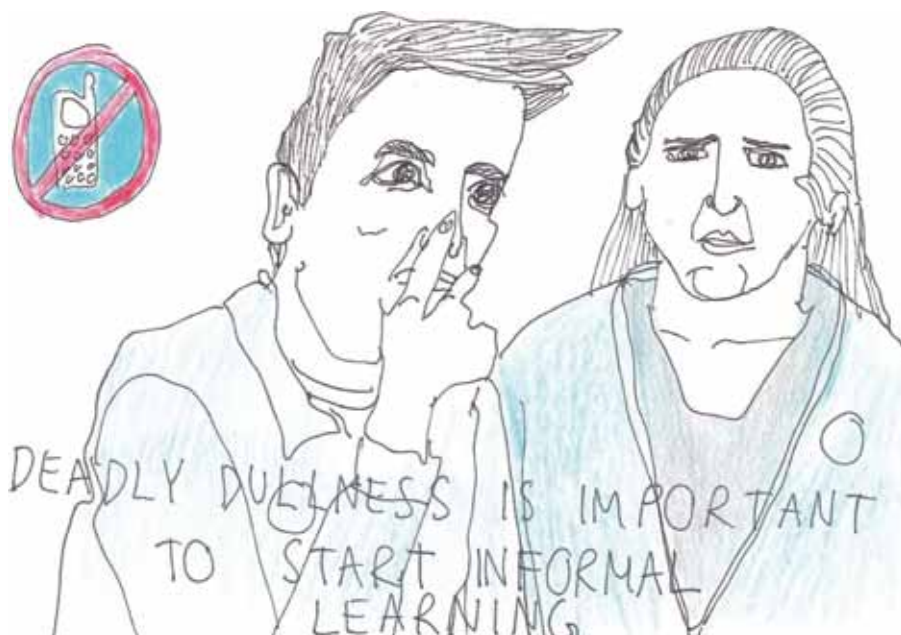
This approach in daily life is intended to create new results, original ones (at least for us). Results which will serve us to live in a better way and to enrich and facilitate it. To identify and pursue our goals, to develop ourselves as human beings and develop the community and the society at large.

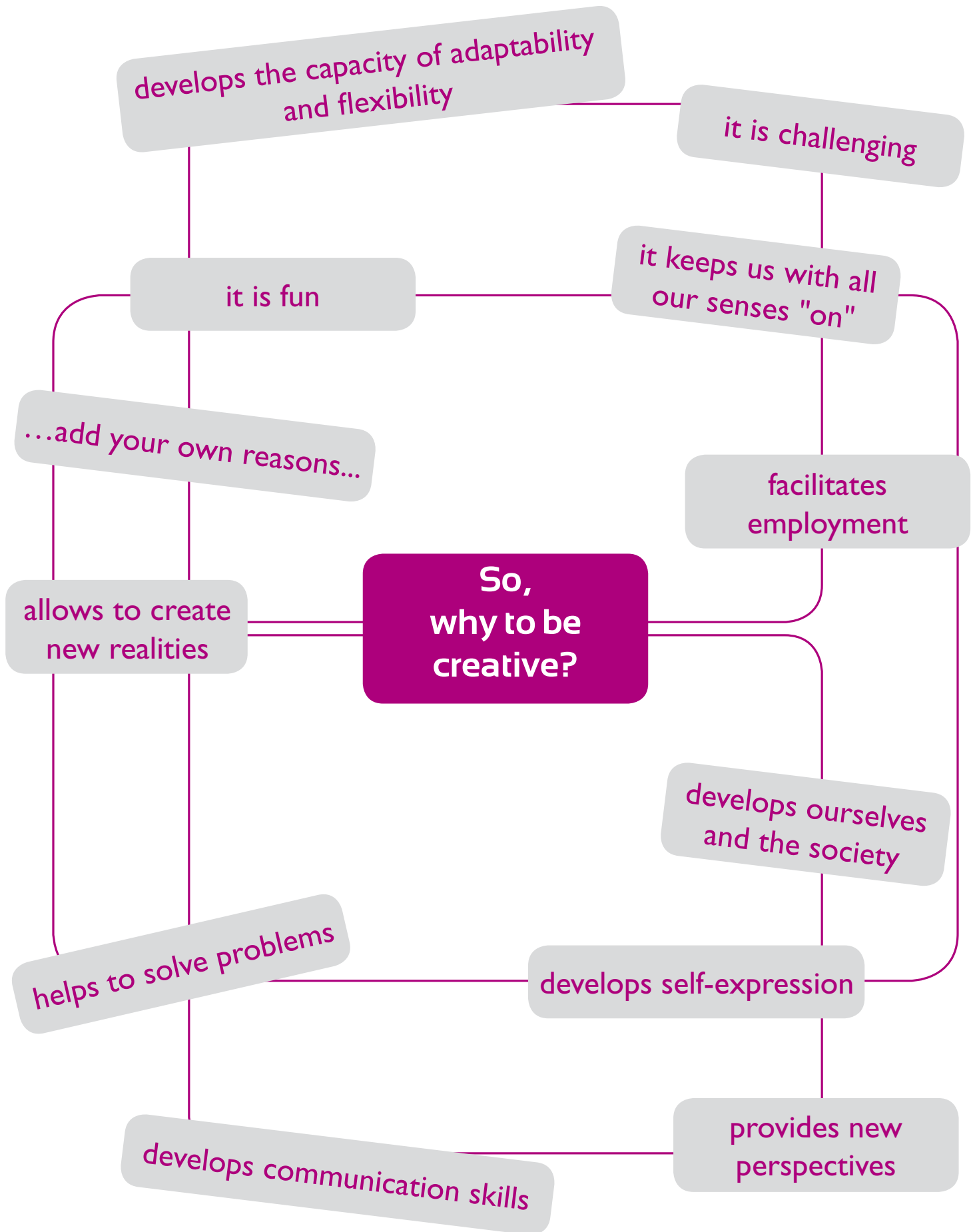
Society has to acknowledge creativity as the driving force of it; creative individuals will foster the society, bringing it to more developed stages.

Industry and commerce want those entering employment to show powers of innovation, initiative and application in solving problems and pursuing opportunities. (...) Creative thought and action should be fostered in all areas of education: in the arts they are central.

Robinson, 1999

How can we fight unemployment without creativity? Young people have to be exposed to creativity and grow into it. Creativity has to be developed from an early age as an approach. Definitely, arts education could be one of the main vehicles, but not the main and only one.





Can we be creative as trainers?

Yes it is a matter of decision, but is intrinsically connected to our way of life. As far as we will live our life in a creative way, our work as a trainer will be creative - a matter of coherence. But if we don't live our lives in a creative way, we fear changes,

BEGIN TO BE CREATIVE

NURTURE YOURSELF

Do you read books?

Do you listen to music?

Do you walk in the nature?

Do you watch your neighborhood with other eyes?

Do you speak to people?

Find ways to nurture yourself from the different art forms (fine arts, performing arts) not only as a passive spectator but as an active person: write, dance, act.

Allow yourself, don't fear.

Walk in the nature, is the best creation ever, and be an active explorer.

IMAGINE

It is not only a famous song, but an act of human beings which allows them to create and experience realities, each person according to their own cultural background, personal characteristic and social context. It will bring you to a fantastic journey.

Dare

Go ahead, try to find your own way, in personal as well as in professional life, there are no failures, just learning experiences.

FIND SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

Identify your sources of inspiration and use them as a departing point when coming to create an activity.

Create

Begin from little things, set the table in a different way, try a new sandwich, walk your city in a different way, with the lenses of 'creativity'. And then, bring it into your training work.

BEGIN, IT IS MUCH MORE EASY THAN YOU THINK...



■ CLAUDIO KOGON IS A TRAINER AND COORDINATOR OF ACTIVITIES WORKING WITH SALTO-YOUTH EUROMED RESOURCE CENTRE. HIS MAIN FIELD OF INTEREST IS ART IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION.

■ HE HAS WORKED EXTENSIVELY IN THE PERFORMING ARTS AND ARTS EDUCATION. CURRENTLY HE IS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE SUZANNE DELLAL CENTRE FOR ARTS AND THEATRE IN TEL AVIV, ISRAEL.



DEFINITIONS OF CREATIVITY

CREATIVITY, NOUN [MASS NOUN] THE USE OF IMAGINATION OR ORIGINAL IDEAS TO CREATE SOMETHING; INVENTIVENESS. OXFORD DICTIONARY

1. THE QUALITY OF BEING CREATIVE; 2. THE ABILITY TO CREATE. MERRIAM-WEBSTER DICTIONARY

CREATIVITY REFERS TO THE INVENTION OR ORIGINATION OF ANY NEW THING (A PRODUCT, SOLUTION, ARTWORK, LITERARY WORK, JOKE, ETC.) THAT HAS VALUE. "NEW" MAY REFER TO THE INDIVIDUAL CREATOR OR THE SOCIETY OR DOMAIN WITHIN WHICH NOVELTY OCCURS. "VALUABLE", SIMILARLY, MAY BE DEFINED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS. WIKIPEDIA THE FREE ENCYCLOPEDIA

IMAGINATIVE PROCESSES WITH OUTCOMES THAT ARE ORIGINAL AND OF VALUE.

KEN ROBINSON IN 'OUT OF OUR MINDS', 2001

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Playworking Communities to Communities which Play

Morgan Leichter-Saxby (Pop-Up Adventure Play)

AS PLAYWORKERS INTERESTED IN COMMUNITY-BASED WORK MIGHT ARGUE THAT IF

play is “what children do” (Ward, 1978) then children’s local opportunities for play might be understood as a measure of how “child-friendly” their community is. Frequently understood as an instinct and need, the expressions of the play drive (story-telling, den-building, ludic movement, etc) can also be seen as creating, sharing and adapting culture. This point of view positions children as community agents, and as the creators of social capital.

However, in many communities children’s play behaviors are ghettoized, corralled into fixed equipment playgrounds, school break times, and the private home. As children’s play is marginalized physically and temporally, so are children’s first means of engagement with the world.

Play is also marginalized conceptually. The above quote may be reframed as “play is what children do” (emphasis mine), as playful approaches to the world are often seen as “impractical” frivolous”, and so “pointless”. This is admittedly an improvement from communities which regard it as satanic – but the strict adult regulation of the spaces and times allotted to children’s play demonstrate the profound anxiety associated with it (Chudacoff 2007).

The freedoms and subversions, the anarchistic tendencies of children at play are viewed as potentially dangerous or wasteful. The instinct to play, which continues throughout the human life span, is then appropriated by corporations seeking to satisfy those needs for us through a consumer relationship – providing a “safe” and “valuable” outlet for these impulses, for a fee.

Children’s responses and resistances to this systemic oppression are customarily misunderstood, by adults who were raised under a similar system which they are now in a position to benefit from, suffer from, and perpetuate. The behaviors of children deprived of play are often distinguished by withdrawal and aggression, by the “rapid firing of play cues” (Sturrock & Else 1998) and by poor skills at social negotiation. Panksepp (2007) noted that there are many cases where great play urges of children are unfulfilled and often diagnosed as ADHD or ODD, or simply “acting out”. This is not to say that the underlying cognitive or social circumstances given these terms do not exist – but that they are exacerbated by a stringent adult definition of “appropriate behavior”, and by few opportunities to for the release and self-regulation experienced during free play. Once medicalized or pathologized, children displaying these behaviors are often seen as proving the systems “right” – demonstrating that children are inherently unruly and unreliable, ignoring suggestions that they are made this way by adults.

Inclusive play provision which supports children’s self-directed processes of spatial, social and conceptual exploration have demonstrated the remarkable and immediate benefits of play in children’s lives. Playworkers believe that, outside the most extreme of cases, children know how to play instinctively and are experts in their own play. This faith in children to teach themselves ways to negotiate boundaries, assess and take risks, and to recognize and meet their individual needs given the chance is in direct contrast to the suspicion adults frequently expressed towards them. All children have needs with are “special”, and all benefit from environments rich in multi-sensory potential, staffed with trained empathetic professionals and populated by a group of children diverse in age, background and ability. By helping to remove the physical, social and internalized barriers that stand between children and free expression of their drive to play, playworkers open the possibilities for children’s engagement with and co-creation of social capital, culture and community.



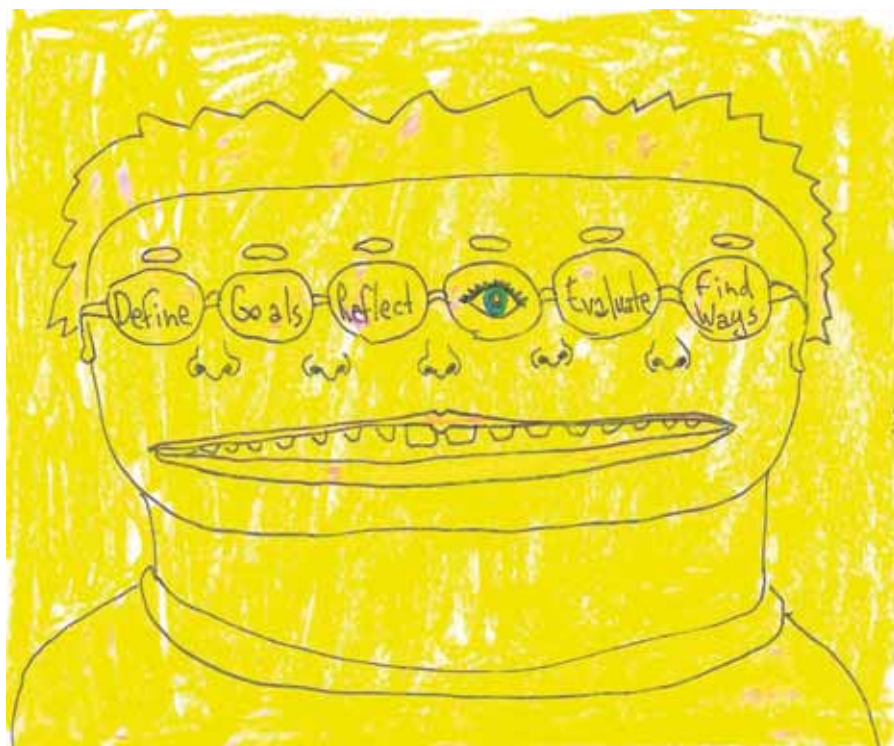


Organizations such as Pop-Up Adventure Play (PUAP 2012) offer programming designed to open public spaces such as parks, libraries and gardens to these playful expressions. Events such as Pop-Up Adventure Playgrounds and Pop-Up Play Shops (PUPS 2012) create celebrations of play which are enormously persuasive to a range of community members internationally. Local organizers of these events cite such secondary ambitions as the rebuilding of social networks broken by war (Colombia), the reclaiming of streets for children's play (USA), and the rejuvenation of ailing city centres (UK). Opening playwork provision to the observation and participation of all ages begins to heal generations of social rupture and repression of the play drive through shared humor, novelty and joy. They provide an alternative framework for understanding challenging behavior (Russell 2006) and encourage visitors to create memories, build friendships, and become involved in a global movement for play.

These events and programs also create opportunities to playwork whole communities by engaging local residents in conversation and in play. Playwork's

emphasis on loose parts (Taylor 2008) demonstrates ways in which scrap can be reused and recycled as low- and no-cost opportunities for play. Issues such as obesity and ADHD are reframed by positive messaging, through the sharing of joy, appreciation of risk and bravery,

practice of non-judgmental support, and a fundamental trust in children. By valuing play, we recognize children as experts in their own play and creators of social capital – and in so doing, move them and their play from the periphery to the centre of community life.



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From tools to non-formal learning tools

■ Miriam Teuma

Human beings have been developing and using tools for over 100,000 years. Initially tools were developed from stone, wood, and other natural fibres. From 6,000 years ago tools made from copper, bronze and iron began to be developed and used. The 19th century ushered in a virtual revolution in the development of standardised precision tools and this continued into the 20th century with ever more sophisticated tools being developed and used particularly in such diverse fields as science, engineering, manufacturing, and communications technology.

By the end of the 20th the concept of tools to aid teaching and learning had also come into vogue. The Centre for Learning and Performance Technology has a Directory of Learning and Performance Tools that lists some 2,000 tools for learning both in education and the workplace. These include tools for social and collaborative learning; image; audio and video tools; collaborative and sharing tools; as well as communication

tools among others. In recent years, SALTO has introduced a Toolbox for training and youth work and has also held Tool Fairs to promote their development and use. But is the very concept of learning tools in any way meaningful when it comes to non-formal learning? Given the nature of non-formal learning and the environment in which it takes place, is it appropriate to use the term tool at all? Are non-formal learning tools in effect blunt instruments?

A tool is normally any physical item that can be used to achieve a particular physical result, especially if the item is not consumed in the process. However, informally the word has also come to be used to describe a procedure or process with a specific purpose. Tools can be classified according to their basic functions such as: cutting tools, moving tools, tools that bring about chemical changes; measuring and perception tools; sharpening and fastening tools; and information and data manipulation tools.

However, tools have a particular aspect that is relevant for non-formal learning purposes. Often, as a result of design or coincidence, a tool may share key functional attributes with one or more other tools. In this case, some tools (multi-tools or multi-purpose tools) can substitute for other tools, either as a makeshift solution or as a matter of practical efficiency. This emphasises important aspects of non-formal learning: imagination, creativity, inventiveness, and improvisation.

It is therefore possible to attempt a definition of a non-formal learning tool as a physical item that creatively and inventively initiates or supports a particular action or process that leads to a particular result or outcome.



But what of the non-formal learning environment in which such tools are employed?

Are there other dimensions to non-formal learning that need to be in place?

In other words, what other features does a non-formal learning tool need to have if it is to be effective?

The non-formal learning environment has a number of common characteristics. Because it is neither mandatory nor compulsory, non-formal learning needs an open, attractive and flexible environment. Consequently, as participants engage in non-formal learning voluntarily it needs to address in particular their own learning needs and aspirations. While non-formal learning is an activity in its own context, it often takes place with, or in

place of, more formal learning environments. While lacking some of the more common features of the formal learning environment such as curricula, syllabi, validation and assessment; it nonetheless aims to adhere to coherent and constructive learning experiences.

Accordingly, in addition to the definition of non-formal learning tools outlined above, such tools should also have the following features:

T	Transferable and capable of further change and development depending on context – much like the multi-purpose tools mentioned above
R	Results in identifiable learning outcomes
A	Adaptive to a variety of learning methods and approaches, for example group work, games, discussions, simulations
C	Combines a theme, target group, timing, materials, description of activity and other tips
H	Helps participants in identifying their own learning needs and capacities
E	Engages and stimulates participants in the learning process
U	User friendly and flexible
S	Stand alone but can also be part of or related to a broader programme.

How can we demonstrate how such a non-formal learning tool as outlined can be used in practice?

The following is an example of how such a tool can be used both in theory and practice to enhance the learning of youth workers.

THEORY

A non-formal learning tool is a physical item that creatively and inventively initiates or supports a particular action or process that leads to a particular result or outcome.

PRACTICE

The tool in this instance is a for example a flower collage (using coloured paper, glue, scissors and sticks) that is employed creatively to initiate and support a learning process that will help youth workers in the field to try and measure the quality of learning outcomes.

Participants cut out flowers with four petals as examples of core features of what should constitute effective youth work namely that it should be *youth centered*; *promotes safety and well-being*; *has educational value*; and *promotes equality and inclusiveness*. Participants then cut out paper insects such as bees, mosquitoes, ladybirds to represent different stages in measuring quality outcomes: absent, acquiring, achieved and advanced (4 As). Participants are then ask to consider at what stage of development – absent, acquiring, achieved and advanced – they feel that the core features - youth centered; safety and well-being; educational value; equality and inclusiveness – are at in respect of their own youth work activities.



PEOPLE IN THE CENTER DON'T KNOW
IF THEY ARE FROM
NORTH OR SOUTH
YOUTHWORKER OR TRAINERS



Participants place the relevant insect on the relevant petal.
Are they all at the same stage of development?
Are some more advanced than others and why?
What do I need to improve upon? How do I bring about improvement?

Participants then add further petals representing what they see as other core features of youth work and rating their development accordingly. At the end of the exercise each participant has a cut-out flower with petals and insects encapsulating where they are in terms of the quality of their youth work and how this needs to be measured and developed on an ongoing basis.

THEORY

Transferable and capable of further change and development depending on context

Helps participants in identifying their own learning needs and capacities

THEORY

PRACTICE

Yes - the flower collage can be used for other purposes; petals and insects can represent different things

Yes – in measuring where they are as youth workers in terms of quality outcomes, participants can identify their own learning needs to address deficiencies and further develop strengths

PRACTICE

THEORY

Results in identifiable learning outcomes

Engages and stimulates participants in the learning process

THEORY

PRACTICE

Yes – participants will have learnt how to measure quality outcomes in a clear and simple way

Yes – participants are physically active and mentally alert

PRACTICE

THEORY

Adaptive to a variety of learning methods and approaches, for example group work, games, discussions, simulations

User friendly and flexible

THEORY

PRACTICE

Yes - the flower collage employs group work, games, discussion and simulation

Yes – the flower collage is simple and attractive and participants can further develop it

PRACTICE

THEORY

Combines a theme, target group, timing, materials, description of activity and other tips

Stand alone but can also be part of or related to a broader programme

THEORY

PRACTICE

Yes – uses a particular theme (Quality Youthwork), a target group (youth workers), materials (paper, scissors)

Yes – it can stand alone and also be part of a broader programme to enhance and measure the quality of youth work

PRACTICE

Siiri and Tanel

Graphic facilitators at the Tool Fair - a portrait

Mark Taylor

Last year, the Tool Fair in Tallinn was graced by the presence of two people who drew what was happening. This was an innovation for many of us who had never seen that happening in educational events before.

We felt it would be good to have a discussion with Siiri Taimla and Tanel Rannala about how they came up with the idea and what is it like in practice to draw like this. They are separate artists with their own specific work and together they make up JOONMEEDIA - joon is the line which you draw and so its very simple 'one line' which is very zen.

So one sunny day in Tallinn and rainy day in Strasbourg we agreed to meet by skype and had a great discussion which went much further than I'd expected.





“

■ First thing which we had to clarify was the terminology to be used about what they do: I had been referring to them as “cartoonists” and what they produce as “cartoons” and this did not fit into their world view at all.

“We call the activity we do “graphic facilitating” because cartoonists make stories or caricatures and we take drawings from real life events, and we visualise ideas but we are not telling stories as such. Being graphic facilitators really explains better what we do in helping people understand something in a visual form.”

■ When and how did you discover that drawings could be useful in educational settings, seminars, etc.

We started in 2009 when we were both teachers in the Estonian Academy of Arts, we had a lesson in our apartment with students looking at a film called “will there be life after capitalism?” which was quite a complicated topic and we found that making small drawings made it easier to understand, to digest. And it was funny too and easier to talk about it. So we developed this method further to help people learn things, to get the information through a different medium.

■ How is it to work together as graphic facilitators?

We started as colleagues and gradually we produced a baby – a real graphic illustration of our cooperation! One of the things we discovered was in drawing over each other's work – it is much easier to make new things in there, it's more creative to play! Usually that's a tabu among artists. There's just one rule: don't lose the drawing, don't draw so much that you can't see both drawings. We even do this with our students – go to an event with ten people and we start to share our drawings, so one drawing might be



constructed by five others, as all give their own experience into it. If you are the one that started the drawing you can then look at it and think 'wow, that's great that they managed to make such wonderful things with it!' Draw a balloon at first, then the next person might make that into the head of a dog and you can think 'oh! I didn't see that in there!'

■ What do you think people learn from your drawings?

From our BIG pictures especially people can really get connected information in a way that they cannot just through hearing. The drawing acts like a memory, helping you to catch the most important ideas. For those people who were NOT present at a particular event, our drawings give them

a special kind of overview. At first we didn't use words in our work, only pictures. So people get inspiration and interest through these 'visual protocol'.

■ What is the funniest or strangest thing that ever happened to you when being graphic facilitators?

There was never anything really BIG – we had lots of 'micro-funnies'!! In one conference about non-profit organisations there was one man who was talking about how you could gain a lot from doing certain things. I can't remember exactly what he was talking about, but I drew this picture of him having a little dog on his head and this was really really funny (for me!) and I could not keep my laughter in! And we who are drawing can have a lot of fun with this kind of thing!

Siiri and Tanel

Graphic facilitators at the Tool Fair - a portrait



was a pause I would transfer that idea into pictures. I think its important to understand what is being said, otherwise you can't draw. Sometimes people say something and you can't believe it – so you draw it to make sure that others will be more aware about that! When we know some of the topics will be talked about beforehand, then I like to practise drawing some of those things – for example to prepare for a conference on cycling I will be trying to draw a bicycle very quickly which makes our work then easier..

■ What are the rules you have in drawing and how did you develop them (I noticed for example in Tallinn that you said 'one drawing, two minutes')?

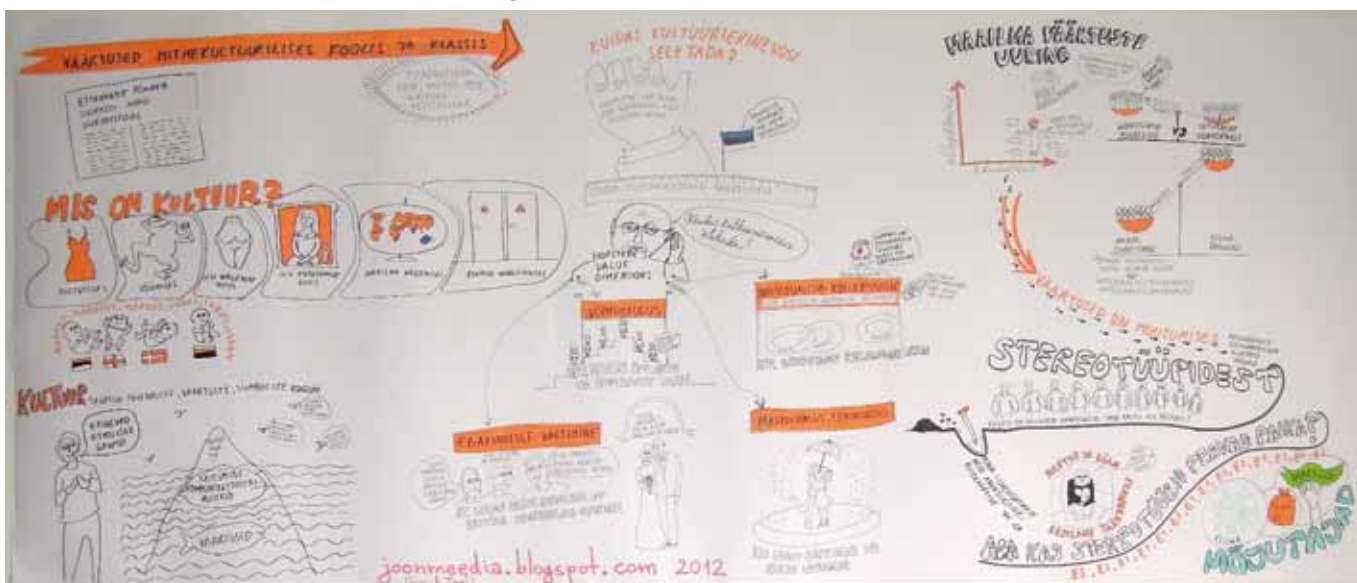
■ How did you approach being graphic facilitators at the ToolFair in Tallinn last year?

We had meetings with Üllý the organiser beforehand and had to choose where we would attend in order to get to see as much as possible with all those workshops. We asked about expectations and I really need the 'bigger picture' in my head, what are the goals, what kinds of people are coming, or I get lost.

■ How did you decide what to choose to make as drawings? Was it ever difficult for you to choose?

Our experience is that whenever someone is inspiring then its very easy to draw and sometimes it happens that someone is not very interesting and then its quite hard and you start to draw things that are around you. You know Sir Ken Robinson? Well, I was drawing him in an event called eksperimenta and he was really talking quite quickly and I caught the ideas in words and then if there

It's more taken from experience. So, if you spend 10 minutes on one drawing then you miss maybe five other ideas; so its better to make it very simple and very quick. With our students we also teach them how to draw basic things very fast – so they can be more creative and amazing things can be drawn.



■ How was it different to work with this group of international people compared to working with Estonians?

The main difference was more structural as there were so many workshops – I couldn't just sit in one place and draw, I had to move and participate in many things. And all the people were very energetic and very spontaneous and that's why we made so many drawings!

■ Did anybody challenge you about the content of your drawings? I see, for example, that you do not censor swear words...

Yes, in fact, one person said to me that I drew one lady too fat! She's not so fat as that! Otherwise not. In different events it has happened that someone comes up to correct facts...

■ I see from your blog that you do not only do single drawings, but also make big picture notes about what is happening in a seminar or meeting - what is that like for you?

Usually then its one of us making such drawings and the other one will take photos or make a film out of it. If you have one big drawing then its very difficult for another to add to it at the same time.

■ What do you think is the future for drawing and Joonmeedia?

For us, its our future! Now I can't imagine not doing it! Nowadays people pay us for doing this more and we hope that this will increase. It started as a hobby. So we are thinking of making a kind of enterprise to make this mission connected to education, to teach this tool and make this method more popular.

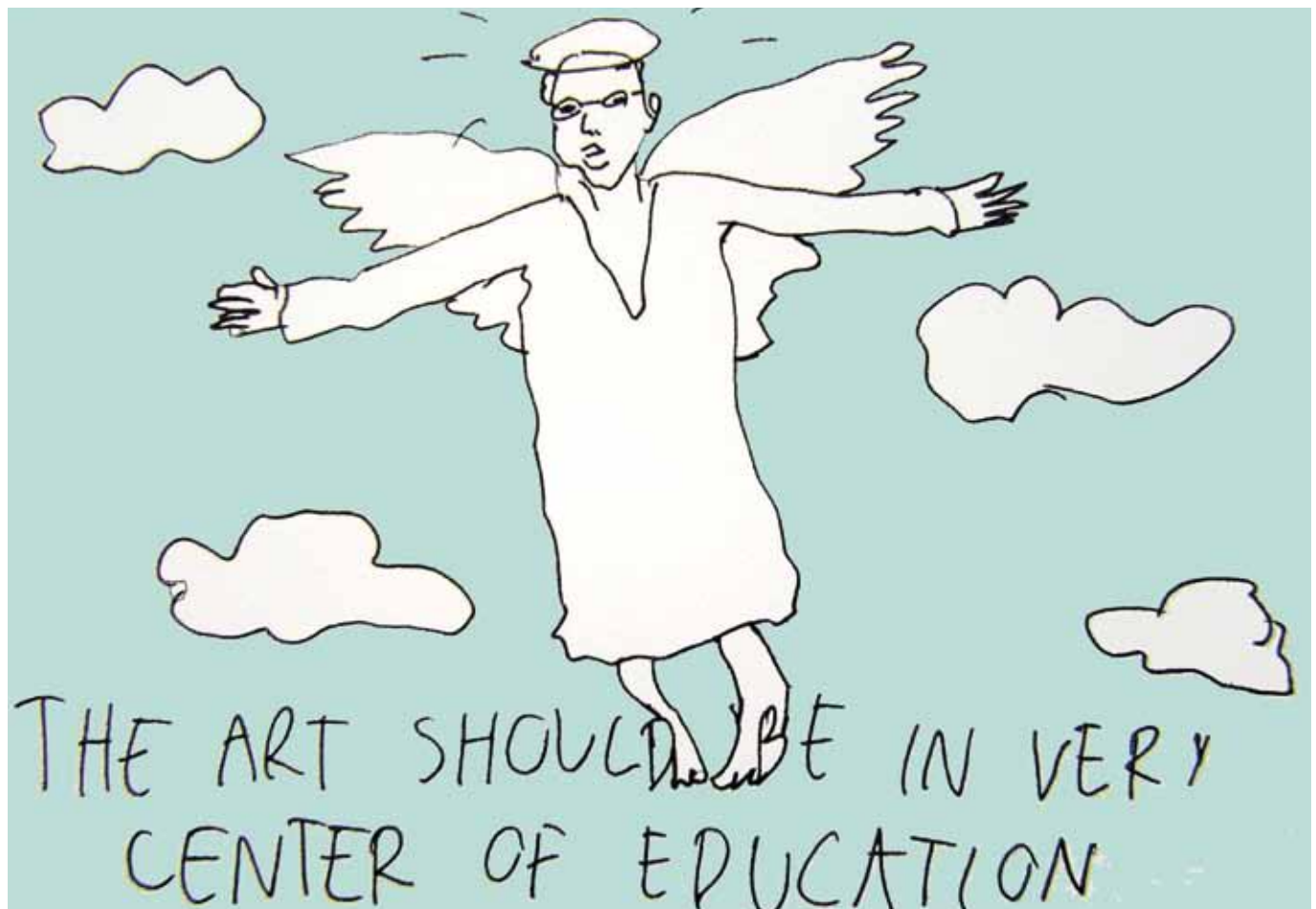
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WEBSITE:

■ [HTTP://JOONMEEDIA.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://joonmeedia.blogspot.com)

■ SIR KEN ROBINSON (AND MANY MORE) DRAWN BY SIIRI TAIMLA AND OTHERS:
[HTTP://WWW.EKSPERIMENTA.NET/IDEA-LABS/IDEALABORATORY-2011/](http://www.eksperimenta.net/idea-labs/idealaboratory-2011/)

And with that we had to end our conversation. We wish them well and hope to be able to cooperate with them again in the future!



CONTRIBUTORS

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Miriam Teuma - has been lecturing within the Department of Youth and Community Studies at the University of Malta since 2001. She is also the President of the Maltese Association of Youth Workers that seeks to promote the youth work profession. She has also been involved in a number of European and Euromed Projects. At present, she is the national correspondent for the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy and is a member of a number of EU groups. She has also represented Malta at the EU Youth Working Party and at EU Youth Conferences as well as at Council of Europe level. Her academic interests are non-formal education, youth policy and youth work practice. In January 2011, Ms. Teuma was appointed the first Chief Executive Officer of the Malta Youth Agency - Agenzija Zghazagh.
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Jonathan Bowyer is a coach, facilitator and trainer. He has worked with National Agencies, SALTO Resource Centres and NGOs. He also spends a lot of his time working in the business sector and the UK Health Service. He enjoys helping to develop people, projects, partnerships and organisations. You can find him at :

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Mark Taylor is a relatively nice dinosaur who freelances from his current base in Strasbourg, France. For complicated reasons, he recently became the proud owner of two ukuleles and, what's more, one of them looks like a frog's face. They now try to teach him to play them, or they (the ukuleles) would get bored. He is President of the UNIQUE network of trainers and researchers, and he has been involved in creating the via Experientia consortium which sets out to expand experiential learning and research. Otherwise, you can find him around the place facilitating meetings, training, running workshops and consulting organisations. One of his passions is to be found in writing what he hopes are useful educational publications. A founding member and now editor of Coyote magazine, he is still waiting to meet Spiffy...

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Morgan Leichter-Saxby is a playworker, writer and consultant, particularly interested in children's play and public space. She is a co-founder of Pop-Up Adventure Play, an international non-profit organisation dedicated to fostering children's opportunities for self-directed play within communities of supportive adults.