

Issue 5 - January 2002



youth - training - europe

Coyote



5
magazine

At the Crossroads of
Memories: Training
Activities in the
Balkans

Deep Ecology
Training

Impressions of a
Study Visit to
Algeria

Learning Human
Rights On-line

Anti-Racism
Training



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TRAINING-YOUTH

Coyote

" Coyote - a resourceful animal whose blunders or successes explain the condition of life in an uncertain universe."

(In: Jack Tresidder, The Hutchison Dictionary of Symbols, 1997)

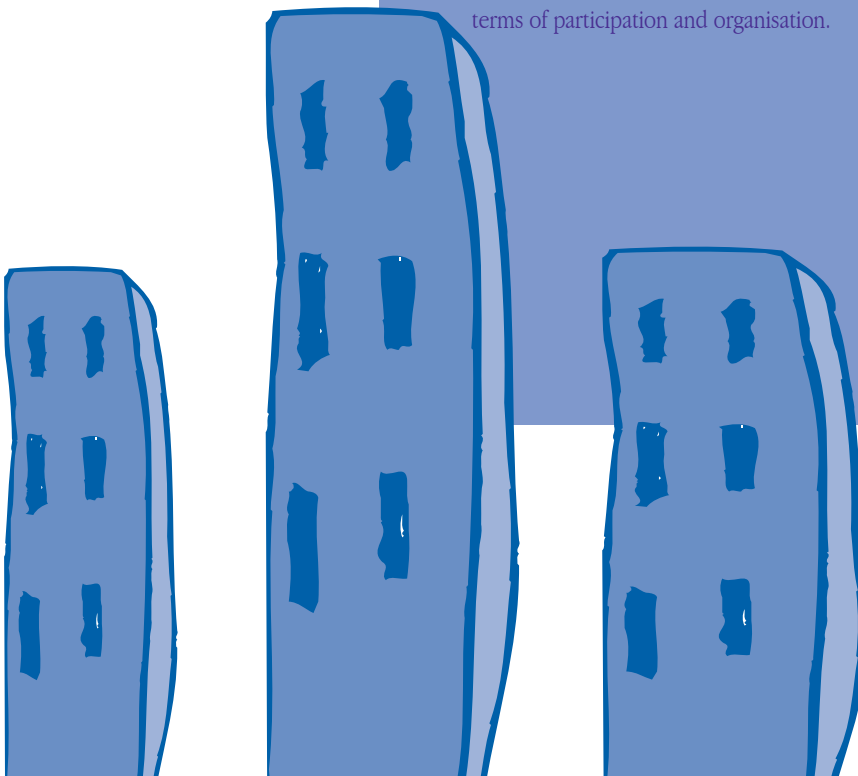
Coyote is a new magazine on issues around 'youth – training – europe'. It is addressed to trainers, youth workers and all those who want to know more about the world of youth worker training in Europe.

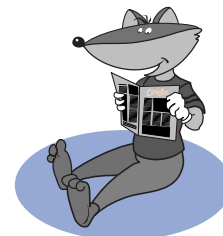
Coyote wants to provide a forum to share and give new insights into some of the issues that trainers face in their work, issues related to the diverse training concepts, methodologies, practices and realities across this continent. It also wants to inform about current developments in this field, especially at European level.

Coyote is published by the Council of Europe and the European Commission within their partnership in the youth field, with the aim to strengthen networking among trainers involved in European youth worker training and to promote the value of European level training for youth workers.

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C o n t e n t s

Editor
Sonja Mitter

Editorial team
Bernard Abrignani
Carol-Ann Morris
Mark Taylor

Administration & secretariat
Balázs Hidvéghi
Sabine van Migem

Design & layout & Spiffy the coyote
The Big Family
Esther Hookway
Florin Bedran

Printing
Council of Europe

Council of Europe
Directorate of Youth and Sport
European Youth Centre Stras-
bourg
30 rue Pierre de Coubertin
67000 Strasbourg, France
Tel: +33 3 88 41 23 00,
Fax: +33 3 88 41 27 77

European Youth Centre Budapest
Zivatar utca 1-3
1024 Budapest, Hungary
Tel: +36 1 212 40 78,
Fax: +36 1 212 40 76

European Commission
Unit Development of Youth Poli-
cies
Rue de la Loi, 170
1049 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 295 11 00
Fax: +32 2 299 41 58

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News from the European Institutions

- 3 **SALTO-YOUTH 2001 – Impressions of the Training Courses**, by Tony Geudens, Peter Hofmann, Sylvie Floris and Guilio 'Mac' Maistrelli
- 7 **New Pilot Training Courses in the Partnership Programme**, by Balázs Hidvéghi

Focus

- 10 **At the Crossroads of Memories – The Role of Memory in Training Activities in the Balkans**, by Jean-Philippe Restoueix
- 14 **What is Anti-Racism Training**, by Robin Sclafani
- 16 **A Journey into the Unknown**, by Peter Draper
- 18 **Deep Ecology Training**, by John Seed
- 20 **“Are we gurus and missionaries who are spreading the word?” – Keeping Our Feet on the Ground**, by Corinne Grassi
- 24 **Moon Light - A Project to Create Conditions for Safe Prostitution**, by Natalija Jurkova
- 27 **Why Mostaganem? – Impressions of a Study Visit to Algeria**, by Sylvie Floris

Training Methodologies

- 30 **Learning Human Rights On-line**, by Frank Elbers
- 32 **Feeling by Doing... - Experiencing How it Feels to be a Refugee**, by Michael Schollert
- 35 **Telling Tales**, by Mark Taylor

Coyote Meets Trainers

- 36 **An Interview with Nana Sagishivali**, by Leen Laconte

Marker

- 38 **Where do Methods Come From?**, by Mark Taylor

Spiffy's Spots

- 41 **The Adventures of Spiffy N°5: Non-formal education**

Welcome to Coyote

- 40 **Notes about the Contributors**

Copies of Coyote can be received upon request at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg.

To receive further information about Partnership projects or subscribe to Coyote, please contact the European Youth Centre Strasbourg by phone or fax, or send an e-mail to info@training-youth.net. Coyote will be happy to receive your comments and your ideas for future articles. Letters to the Editor can be sent to coyote@training-youth.net.



Welcome to Coyote !

Are you interested in knowing more about Europe and its neighbouring regions? This issue of Coyote takes you on journeys to the south-eastern parts of Europe and beyond, to Central Asia and North Africa, to discover some of their civil societies and, in particular, the associative youth life in these regions.

Exploring the reality of a particular region or country and highlighting some interests and challenges for work in terms of training approaches and contents is the theme of several articles and constitutes a particular focus of this Coyote. How can training and youth work help to act against the isolation of a country like Algeria (see Sylvie Floris' article)? How can it provide young people with an opportunity to use their energy and motivation to work towards change in a society like Georgia where professional opportunities are limited for many (see Coyote Meets Trainers)? What importance do painful collective memories play in Europe, in particular in a region suffering from conflicts like the Balkans, and what space is there for dealing with participants' memories in training courses in this region (see Jean-Philippe Restoueix's article)? And, as a trainer coming from outside the region where you run a training, how can you make yourself understood in a foreign cultural context such as Central Asia, and how adaptable are the concepts and methods we use (see Corinne Grassi's article)? These are some of the questions that the different authors pursue in their articles which also underline the importance to support youth work and intercultural encounters in those regions.

Intercultural youth work, both local and international, has also got to cope with the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington and the subsequent "war on terrorism". These articles (together with Mac Maistrelli's piece) give us all food for thought here.

As always, Coyote also stands for diversity. So this issue also contains articles that are less focused on a particular country or region, but rather issue-based or presenting a training method or methodology. Because all good things should come to an end and give rise to new ideas, we are starting off a new method section in this issue: "Telling Tales", looking at the use of stories in training, replaces "Where do you stand?".

Lastly, Coyote continues to keep you updated about current institutional developments with some impressions of this year's first series of SALTO-YOUTH training courses, and an introduction to the new Partnership training courses. "Spiffy's Spots" provides you with related web sites or information that the Coyote team has found useful.

Coyote has now been published six times (starting with issue #0) and many people involved in training in youth work from all over Europe have contributed to the magazine. The Coyote team is always on the lookout for new contributors. Yet, conversations with readers keep reminding us that often enough, people are not sure how they can contribute and if they should get in touch or rather wait until they are contacted for an article. Coyote wants to be an instrument for networking and visibility among trainers, institutions and organisations working with training. Clearly, the Coyote team selects the articles to be published in this magazine. But naturally, our contacts and knowledge about potential contributors, resources and ideas are limited. So, if you enjoy reading Coyote and would like to write an article: Please contact any member of the Coyote team and let us know! Your ideas for contributions are always welcome! (You can find the e-mail addresses in the Notes about the Contributors).

A big thank you to all those who completed the evaluation questionnaire that was sent out with Coyote's last issue! The results are being assessed and your ideas will be taken into account in following issues.

A final piece of information together with an apology to our readers who have been reading Coyote in French until now. From this issue on, Coyote will only be published in English. The articles in this issue by Sylvie Floris, Corinne Grassi and Jean-Philippe Restoueix have originally been written in French. The French versions are included in the web version of the magazine at www.training-youth.net.

Happy New Year & Enjoy your reading!

Soyja Ritter



Impressions from the Training Courses

As we saw in the last issue of Coyote, SALTO-YOUTH is shorthand for Support for Advanced Learning & Training Opportunities for the YOUTH programme of the European Commission. In September 2000, four SALTO-YOUTH centres were created – within the YOUTH National Agencies of Flanders-Belgium, France, Germany and the U.K. – to increase the quality of projects developed within the YOUTH programme, through the organisation of specialised training courses and the coordination of different training efforts within the network of the National Agencies.



This year, each SALTO-YOUTH centre ran their first two training courses, both with the same objectives and the same focus. In 2002, the SALTO-YOUTH centres will organise another series of specialised training courses. Coyote has collected some impressions from trainers and participants of this year's SALTO training courses.

SALTO Training Course on “Inclusion – A Focus on European Voluntary Service”

organised by SALTO-JINT (Flanders, Belgium)

When starting to work on the SALTO Training Course on Inclusion, we bumped into some conceptual discussions which I would like to share with you. Behind this title lay the idea of a training course which aimed to increase the use of the YOUTH programme as a tool in youth or social work with ‘disadvantaged’ young people.

The first trap which we tried to avoid was defining what is ‘disadvantaged’ and what not, because it depends pretty much on the social reality a person is living in. We chose to work with a flexible notion of the target group, raising the awareness that an unemployed person, a wheelchair user or a cultural minority can be considered disadvantaged in one context (country, age, sex, place of residence, etc.) but not necessarily in a different one. Hence the need for clarifying the different views before starting up an international project with this target group.

Not only the definition of the target group provided food for discussion, but also the term used to describe it. Whereas some time ago it was fashionable to speak about ‘disadvantaged youth’, nowadays it is considered to be politically incorrect. It is some of the young people themselves that refused to be labelled this way because they feel it stigmatises them and could make people think there is something wrong with them. However it is not the young people that are at issue, but the lacking social reality surrounding them (poverty, discrimination, etc.) or society that marginalizes these young people in difficulty. To stress that the environment is at stake rather than the young people, we used more politically correct terms such as ‘socially excluded’ young people or young people ‘from disadvantaged backgrounds’ or ‘with less opportunities’.

When drawing up the profile of participants for this training course, we thought of two groups: youth workers who are working with marginalized young people and would like to use the YOUTH programme in their work on the one hand and, on the other hand, youth leaders who are using the YOUTH programme and wish to open up their activities to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Since the team of trainers was convinced that it requires a lot of sensitivity, effort and resources to work with this target group in difficulty, we thought it might be risky to push a ‘generalist’ youth organisation to cater for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds if they are not ready for it and fully realise the implications. On the other hand, inclusion workers might be too stuck in their day-to-day work to take the step to an international exchange programme. Our conclusion was to cater for both: Raising awareness and providing skills for the work with young people in need (helped by the experienced participants in this field) for organisations willing to integrate some participants from this target group in their international activities. For the inclusion workers we tried to unveil all the operational secrets of the YOUTH programme (together with some good practice of other participants) and to promote it as a tool in the pathway of a young person. The YOUTH programme is not an aim in itself but an opportunity to seize in the long-term development of the young people when they are ready for it.

If you are interested to find out more, you can contact Tony Geudens at:

SALTO-YOUTH @ Jint, Flanders-Belgium



by Tony Geudens
(course coordinator and member
of the training team)



SALTO Training Course on “Project Management and Capacity-Building at the European Level”

organised by SALTO-Connect Youth International (U.K.)

by Sylvie Floris (training course participant)

I was lucky enough to be able to take part in the first SALTO training course held in West Sussex, England, from 21 to 29 April 2001. The aims were as follows:

- ✓ To highlight the crucial role of project management in youth programme activities;
- ✓ To learn to devise a project on the basis of the SMART method – i.e., building projects which are Specific, Measurable, Accepted, Realistic, and with Timetabled planning;
- ✓ To master the various stages of a project, manage the interpersonal and financial aspects, take account of risk, and evaluate projects;
- ✓ To pool participants' experiences.

The course was intended to help trainees improve their methods, knowledge and skills in order to set up European projects under the Youth Programme and then pass on to others what they learnt on the training course.

I was one of 24 trainees gathered at Dunford House, a historic, convivial place which contributed much to the quality of the course. The participants came from 16 European countries, 6 of which are already members of the European Union and 10 of which are applicants for membership.

So much ground was covered during the week, both during our formal work and in our exchanges with the other participants, that I cannot relate everything for fear of boring the reader. So I would prefer to concentrate here on one of the most striking aspects of the course, namely a method and, in particular, “Learning by doing and doing by learning”.

The two key events in the week's proceedings took place on the first day after our arrival and on the seventh day.

This meant that they were particularly well-timed because the first day, which was given over to a series of team-building, task-completion and decision-making exercises, enabled us to identify all our shortcomings in project management, while the seventh day enabled us to assess and test what we had learnt in a complete one-day project-staging simulation exercise.

On the first day, everything was centred on a full-scale role-playing game entitled the “Dunford Fling”. The aim was to save Dunford House and the surrounding countryside from an imaginary environmental threat by gathering material and constructing a kind of infernal contraption designed to fling a detector into the nearby marshes to analyse the toxic gases they might contain. We were given a series of tasks to be done within certain time limits and a number of responsibilities which we were to distribute among ourselves. And it was in this way, working partly outside (and frequently in the rain!), that all the participants got to know one another. We worked in small teams which were rearranged several times and there were quarrels, frequent misunderstandings and much laughter

but we also learnt a great deal. About what? Well, mostly about our own failings. The outcome was rather pessimistic for all these youth professionals who thought they knew at least a little about how to manage a project, even though we did finally get our infernal contraption working. It was on the basis of this first day that the organisers set the course priorities with the participants. Three intense days of theory and workshops followed, along with a visit to London centring on the key factors in project management of risk management and security.

In the Bible the seventh day was a day of rest, but this was not the case at Dunford House, for it was on that day that we were expected to carry out a simulated “mission impossible”, namely to set up youth exchanges in one day without actually meeting our partners; we were only allowed to use mail to communicate. I am sure you can imagine the panic as we had to choose the theme, prepare the Gantt Chart breaking down the project into stages and planning tasks from conception through to evaluation, organise a preparatory visit, calculate budgets, draw up application forms, arrange contacts with parents, etc, all of this accompanied by numerous gaffes, errors, and misunderstandings in the written exchanges between the coordinating team and the partners. It was panic stations all round even among the programme experts, and we were exhausted by the end of the day, but we rose to the challenge.

This was an extremely worthwhile exercise because it tested what we had learnt, revealed all our weaknesses, impatience, failings, energy and lethargy, and was, in short, a demanding but highly informative case of being put on the spot. The organisers acted as couriers between the teams and, at the end of the day, as assessors of the projects submitted. Their analyses and their advice completed this process of learning in a virtual real-life situation. However stressful it was for everyone, participants and organisers included, I would also like to say how useful this exercise was in terms of revealing potential future partnerships, because we were putting each other to the test and we soon found out which of our foreign colleagues we would like to work with again on our return from this outstanding week away.

Contact address: sylviefloris@aol.com



SALTO Training Course on “European Voluntary Service in and with Pre-Accession Countries”

organised by SALTO-JUGEND für Europa (Germany)

“EVS in and with pre-accession countries – all different, all the same”?

by Peter Hofmann (member of the training team)

This SALTO training course aimed to support the implementation of EVS in the pre-accession countries. The participants were youth leaders and youth workers involved in EVS, mostly as hosting or sending organisations; about two thirds came from pre-accession countries, one third from EU countries. The course aimed to make them acquainted with the philosophy, quality standards and technical aspects of EVS, and to prepare them to identify and develop specific information, promotion or training activities after the training, and to support the implementation of EVS in their own countries. One main aspect of the training was to create a process of communication among participants from pre-accession and EU countries about their views on differences and similarities concerning voluntary service in each of their countries.

Training course II, day 7, around midnight, in the trainers' team room. What started off this evening as a short meeting, just to run through the programme of the next and last day of the training once more, ended in a lengthy theoretical discussion on: What should participants from pre-accession countries ideally learn and take with them from this training course? A discussion marked by a high degree of fatigue and hence misunderstandings among the team members and by the feeling that this topic had popped up already in one way or the other in several – too long – nightly team meetings before. Our evaluation of the training course did not only allow us to resolve some atmospheric disturbances from these discussions but also to reflect upon the origin and background of these discussions and come up with some thoughts which we found interesting and relevant enough to share with you.

We started our evaluation by asking ourselves one question: What is the specificity of running the EVS Programme in the pre-accession countries in comparison to the EU countries? We soon agreed that the term “pre-accession countries” is a purely technical one which does not lend any relevance to the actual training programme. The only real similarity between Malta and Estonia, for instance, is their status towards the EU – apart from that they do not have anything in common which would justify seeing them through the same lenses.

Consequently, we asked ourselves the next question: Is there any specificity of running EVS in Estonia, Latvia, ... and Malta? Well, we think Yes, considering that a programme such as EVS cannot be implemented in a vacuum, but has to be seen in relation to the political preconditions of voluntary work as well as youth work in the respective countries. Relevant questions are for instance: How does EVS link in with other existing national programmes or policies in the youth field? What is the political aim behind the implementation of EVS? What kinds of young people participate in EVS in a given country, for what reasons, and what consequences does this have in terms of the effects of the EVS programme for the development of this country?

When designing the programme, we thought that since we were training youth workers and youth leaders who should take an active role in the implementation of EVS in their countries, they should be



aware of these questions and come up with some answers to them during the training. But what kind of answers?

Partially for lack of time, but maybe also for lack of awareness, we did not discuss these questions within the trainers' team during the whole preparation phase. We did not exchange our views and thoughts about the policy level of EVS and about the potential of such a programme to develop the voluntary sector generally or the youth work field in particular in Poland, Hungary, Cyprus, etc. We did not discuss among ourselves, if there are specific aims concerning the implementation of EVS in these countries ... but only during the training courses, when we were somehow stuck with programme parts which referred to those questions or when we were unsatisfied with answers or conclusions that the participants – or the training team – could define at the end of a session. Only then did we start to discuss the topic ourselves. A rather late and inefficient occasion, at nightly team meetings after long training days.

Additionally, we complicated our discussion with the more methodological question: How far can you “lead” participants to come up with certain learning outcomes or understandings? Is everything OK which participants come up with during an exercise or discussion? Or rather, when do you as a trainer need to provide, or suggest, certain conclusions? We found that the answers to these questions depend to a large extent on the trainers' understanding of training and on their involvement in the topic at stake. One colleague in the team, for instance, was more concerned about the level of political awareness that the participants should reach during the training than the other two trainers in the team, who focused more on the methodological aspects.

We concluded that it is vital to leave some time during the preparatory meeting to discuss the theoretical or political background of the topic of the training, to have an exchange within the trainers' team on everyone's understanding of the topic and to see, if there is any particular point that one wants to highlight during the course in terms of learning outcomes. This is particularly important, if you cooperate for the first time in a particular team composition and if you want to deal with policy-related issues with the participants during the training. Once you have discussed these questions within the team and become aware of your own open questions and disagreements, it is much easier to take them into account when designing the programme. Clearly, it is rather difficult and tiring when you start this discussion only during the training course. But it was a great learning experience for all of us!

Contact address: peho@a1.net



SALTO Training Course on “Euro-Med Cooperation”

organised by SALTO-INJEP (France)

by Giulio ‘Mac’ Maistrelli (member of the training team)

In theory there shouldn't be any link between the attacks in USA and the EuroMed Youth Action Programme. The first are acts of terrorism and the second is a programme which supports international youth activities between the countries of the EU-EFTA and the so-called “Mediterranean” countries. (The “Mediterranean Countries” referred to here are most of the Arab countries of the Maghreb and Mashreq regions, plus Malta, Turkey, Cyprus and Israel. For a complete list see the Users' Guide to the YOUTH Programme at

www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth/youthprogram.html)

In practice it is a matter of fact that the concepts of ‘terrorism’, ‘Islam’ and ‘Arabic country’ are perceived as nearly synonyms by a vast part of the population in ‘Western countries’, and such perceptions are heavily affecting all the work within the framework of EuroMed. One example of this misconstruction (the most pertinent, but for sure not the scariest) could be the answer I got from two youngsters who declined an invitation to join an exchange project. They refused to participate because - in their opinion - there was “the risk to be attacked by Muslims and even be killed simply because of being Western people” (By the way: the project was in Ankara...).

However: the request of the Coyote editorial team was to tell about my feelings in being a trainer in the SALTO EuroMed training course, so I will stop to tell facts and I will begin to tell you how I feel now.

- **First of all I feel *disappointed*.**

I feel disappointed because all at once my work has assumed an enormous political “taste”, and I need time (and teamwork with my colleagues) to understand how and to which extent this fact could or should affect future training events. I feel disappointed because most people I know now perceive the normality of my job as something strange, maybe risky, possibly absurd. Even some of my relatives talk to me as if I were engaged in a mission of peace in a dangerous place.

- **Secondly, I feel *little*.**

I feel little these days, faced with the huge media mechanism around us. But I also felt “little” before, when I happened to speak about tolerance with participants who spent years in prison for political reasons, or who lost a relative or a friend in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

- **Then I feel *lucky*.**

Because I have the chance to do something tangible for supporting young people in making up their OWN ideas about the civilisations “on the other side of the sea”.

- **And I feel *confident*.**

Because the experience of the past year taught me that the participants in these training courses are strongly motivated and they have plenty of resources and the will to act. But also because the stories I heard about former participants in EuroMed projects and their reactions to the 11th of September confirmed to me how much

an exchange can affect someone's perception.

- **And finally I feel *grateful*.**

Because the experience at SALTO-YOUTH INJEP has been one of the most intensive learning experiences for me in recent years. Thanks to all the colleagues and participants who made this possible.

Contact address: fx-mac@bigfoot.com



Where to find more information about SALTO-YOUTH and the YOUTH Programme?

For more details about the SALTO Training Courses 2001 and information about SALTO-YOUTH, have a look at Spiffy's Spots in this magazine.

In its last issue (Coyote #4, June 2001), Coyote reported about the training strategy of the European Commission and the tasks of the SALTO-YOUTH centres (articles by Frank Marx and Bernard Abrignani). To read the articles, visit Coyote at

www.training-youth.net.

New Pilot Training Courses in the Partnership Programme

The Partnership Programme is offering two new training courses this autumn, for which recruitment will have been finalised by the time this issue of "Coyote" appears. They have long been in preparation, and there is quite a lot of expectation around them in the European youth field.

Let me summarise a bit the background to their evolution:

The Partnership (also often referred to as "the Covenant") offered training courses during its first two years in 1999 and 2000 with themes such as Voluntary Service, Roma Youth Leaders and Intercultural Learning. Then, following a thorough evaluation of the experiences of the first years, the Council of Europe and the European Commission made a decision to embark on an ambitious plan to develop two training courses that address the fundamental and topical issue of European Citizenship. To identify this as the subject matter for courses in youth training was seen as the right decision to have been made. The term "European citizenship" has become a popular one during the past few years, to the extent that it is somewhat over-used. At the same time, probably not enough conceptual and practical debate has accompanied this popularisation, so critical debate is necessary. The discussion of what relevance European citizenship has for young people and what different but overlapping layers it has, will be ever more exciting with two different realities of Europe represented within the Partnership programme: the European Union of 15 states entering yet another new phase of its integration process with the advent of the common currency, and the pan-European Council of Europe which now embraces amongst its members 43 countries - almost the entire continent.

The Curriculum and Quality Development Group

Addressing an issue of such profound relevance, *the Curriculum and Quality Development group* (CQD) was set up with the mandate to ensure the provision of high quality of the training programmes as well as to develop curricula for the courses. Representatives of the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport, the Youth Unit of the European Commission as well as YOUTH National Agencies, INGyOs and higher education institutions were invited to participate. The CQD met three times over a period of 12 months and the main result of its work is the curricula for the courses. It also addressed the issue of quality standards and recognition of non-formal education programmes in Europe.

Contributing to the Debate on Trainer Qualifications

One of the key conceptual debates in the CQD group was whether it should be an aim (even if only a longer-term one) to establish a formally-recognised degree in the field of training for trainers in youth work. Obviously, an underlying dilemma remains whether it is a good idea to try and introduce a formal way of recognition in an educational field which is so explicitly non-formal. Although various scenarios and plans were proposed about how such

an initiative may be realised, the most feasible solution would seem to be to link it to a higher education institution that would cooperate in such an effort. Nonetheless, some fear that our non-formal education programmes might have to sacrifice too much by entering into the terrain of formal education. The CQD did **not** reach a final conclusion about this issue, but the debates were useful and are to be continued. Certainly an essential input will be the experiences and conclusions of the two courses: the training course on European Citizenship in Youth Work and in particular the long-term training course for trainers, called "*Advanced Training for Trainers in Europe*".

"Advanced Training for Trainers in Europe" (ATTE)

The course is designed in a way that ensures maximised participation and personal development in a number of ways. Certainly, as in any long-term course, the thirty final participant-trainers selected will have to attend all course elements over a period of two years. However, *participation* in this pilot course is understood in a number of other ways as well:

Participant-trainers are viewed as partners in and active shapers of ATTE. The team will count on their input, assessment and suggestions throughout the

by Balázs Hidvéghi



various phases of the course. (This was explained by members of the training team in a workshop at the **Bridges for Training** event in Brugge, in September 2001, where they pointed out that the course was meant to be a “joint thinking process” between trainers and participant trainers.)

A number of new elements are also worth mentioning, such as the tutoring system (each participant-trainer will have a tutor, selected from team members or outside experts) with whom they are to be in continual touch analysing the professional development process that takes place. Also, participant-trainers will be asked to develop a training project during the course. A **self-perception** inventory and, based partly on its results, a long-term personal development plan will all add new, hopefully effective elements to this training for trainers.

Another addition that ought to receive some attention here is the insertion of an **Introductory Seminar** at the beginning of the course, preceding the first seminar which is scheduled for January 2002. This will be a meeting to which a higher number of applicants than the final thirty will be invited. The meeting is designed to be an occasion for dialogue about training and European youth work. The main goal of this seminar will be to create an atmosphere of trust and professional discourse whereby both the team members and the applicants can reflect on the potential usefulness and added (personal) value of the course. It may turn out that not all applicants think in the end that they want to participate or they may feel that they would benefit more from it at a later date. In other words, the Introductory Seminar will be an opportunity to refine and clarify expectations, content and individual aptitude. In addition, the selection of the final thirty participants will be made based on the seminar.

The course will be well-documented and updates will be made available on the Partnership web site regularly.

Training Course on “European Citizenship in Youth Work”

This course will be held during the autumn of 2001 and then repeated a year later in 2002. It will examine the historical and political concept of Europe and the evolution of European integration. The possible meaning(s) of (European) citizenship will be discussed with resource persons invited during part of the course to answer questions and provide some factual background for participants. All this will be placed in the context of young people in general and youth work in particular.

The content of the training course will be built up around a few key values, such as an intercultural approach, a strong emphasis on discussions of minorities and the challenges

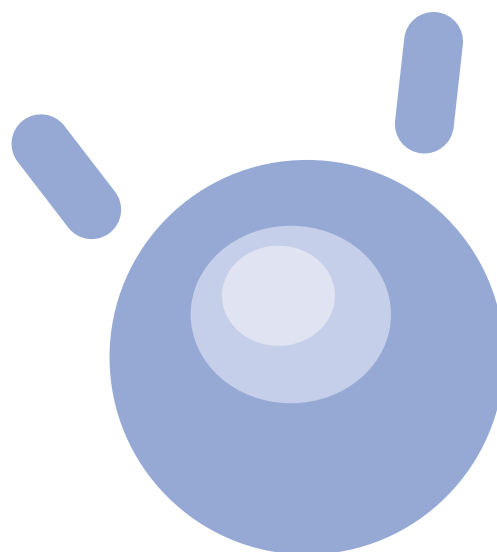
young people of minority background face in different parts of Europe today. In other words, the training course will attempt to construct an understanding of citizenship and especially European citizenship based on exchanges about concepts, values and challenges.

The course will also look at projects linked to European citizenship that participants could develop following the completion of the course. These might include a variety of types of projects based on the priorities of the sending organisations as well as the individual participant’s strengths and interests. The course team will facilitate the process of identifying such project plans during the course.

The training course will be thoroughly followed and analysed by two contracted outside evaluators and a rapporteur. The content, structure or organisation of the second course in 2002 will be modified, if necessary, based on the recommendations and reports produced by these specialists. Updates and the report of the course will be made available on the Partnership web site.

If you’d like to receive more information or share your thoughts, please visit the Partnership web site at <http://www.training-youth.net> or contact the Partnership Secretariat at the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe (30, rue Pierre-de-Coubertin, F-67000 Strasbourg) or send an email to

balazs.hidveghi@coe.int





Spiffy's Spots

Spiffy's Spots is a new section, where Coyote announces some relevant contact addresses, web sites or events from the European youth work scene. We found them interesting - we hope so will you!

SALTO

There will be 4 new SALTO-YOUTH training courses in the spring of 2002 :

- _ **Co-operation between YOUTH programme and South East European countries**
Co-ordinated by SALTO-JUGEND für Europa (Germany)
- _ **Co-operation with EuroMed countries**
Co-ordinated by SALTO-INJEP (France)
- _ **Anti-Racism work in the YOUTH programme**
Co-ordinated by SALTO-Connect Youth International (UK)
- _ **Inclusion in the YOUTH programme with a focus on Action 3**
Co-ordinated by SALTO-JINT (Flanders, Belgium)



For more information about the course topics, possibilities for participation and recruitment procedures, contact a National Agency or SALTO centre.

To find out more about SALTO you can visit www.salto-youth.net. The site includes some background information, the reports of this year's SALTO training courses, an announcement of next year's SALTO training courses and a link to the European Training Calendar, which is provided by SALTO-YOUTH@JUGEND für Europa.

Are you looking for partners for a YOUTH project?

If yes, some contact-finding services provided by National Agencies might be of interest for you.

The German National YOUTH Agency Jugend für Europa has a database (in German language) at www.webforum-jugend.de/ (from there, go to "service" and then "Kontaktbörse").

The British Council's web site includes a database of the British National YOUTH Agency at www.britishcouncil.org/education/connectyouth/partner.htm

The Slovenian National YOUTH Agency MOVIT offers a database of youth organisations from South East Europe who are or would like to get involved in YOUTH projects with other countries at www.movit.si/mladina/database.htm

Bridges for Training

Bridges for Training was a large networking event which took place in September 2001 and brought together National Agency staff, trainers in European youth work and staff from the European Commission and the Council of Europe. The event was organised by SALTO-JINT in cooperation with the Partnership between the Commission and the Council of Europe in the youth field and the Belgian Presidency of the European Union.

A web site was set up at www.eu2001youth.be. It now contains all major outcomes of the event, the programme, report, background documents, photos, films and the list of participants.

Note: Flipchart, the section where readers can announce activities, continues to exist in Coyote's web version at www.training-youth.net.



At the Crossroads of Memories

The Role of Memory in Training Activities in the Balkans

This article expresses solely the views of the author and in no way speaks for the institution for which he works.

It is difficult to have one's own modest, uncertain say on the Balkans. With newspaper articles, reports and eyewitness accounts, works of history and literature, thousands of pages have been produced on the subject. So why do I wish to add a few lines of my own? I am not from that region of Europe. I was born in France, a country regarded as democratic – so I have no experience of living under a totalitarian regime at any time of my life – and whose last war, the Algerian war, a war that took 30 years to say its name, was over one year before I was born. I do not know what it is like, therefore, to live through a war or in the aftermath of one. As a man, I have never been under social pressure to go and fight "for my country"; I do not live in a ruined city, I know nothing of being a student and having to take part in "mineriads" (when the Romanian miners from the Jiu valley descended violently on Bucharest to "teach the students a lesson" in 1993 and again in 1994), nothing of societies on the brink of civil war; none of that features in my own historical experience. So mine is a statement, a thought from "outside", from elsewhere; a statement from what can be but a thin voice in the crowd, no certitudes, just suggestions.

What I intend to look at here is the question of how to deal with upsetting, painful memories within seminars or training activities for members of youth organisations and for officials responsible for youth matters in the Balkans. In the first, more narrative section, this entails presenting what I have to say in the form of short "stories" or scenes from real life. I will then confront those experiences with current thinking on memory and collective memory – an important social building block - in the historical or philosophical spheres and analyse them from an intercultural point of view. Finally I will suggest a few practical pointers for training which, I hope, might be of use to all those working in the youth field in the Balkans.

by Jean-Philippe Restoueix



One preliminary remark: I will not use the term "South-East Europe" when speaking of the Balkans for more than one reason. Firstly, saying "South-East Europe" in this context means that our vision of Europe is above all that of the "European Union", i.e. mainly the west and north-west of the continent. The real south-east of Europe is the Caucasus. Secondly, the concept of "South-East Europe" has been forged and used as if people were frightened to speak of the Balkans, as if using that word cast the subject in a negative light. In this linguistic mask there is a kind of belief stemming from either naivety or political correctness that changing the name of things changes the things themselves. But it also implies not respecting the things, landscapes or people concerned. No one likes to be called by a name that is not theirs. So, as far as possible, with no judgement on my part but every effort to avoid that all-too infamous "western arrogance" (seen most recently, following the terrible terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, when Americans ran to their flag it was seen as "patriotism!" Any Balkans people reacting in the same way, and it's seen as: "nationalism!"), the term "Balkans" here refers above all to the peninsula which, from the Adriatic to the Black Sea, reaches out into the Mediterranean, and the peoples who live there with their own historical experiences. I am talking of a meeting place between religions, between alphabets; of arid

mountain landscapes and green pastures, forested hills, enclosed valleys and narrow coastal strips, a land of legends and epics, a land of bards and rhymers ... that is what must be seen and heard when the reader sees the name "Balkans".

I. A few words

The experiences underlying these thoughts are above all the different training courses and seminars organised within the framework of Council of Europe assistance programmes in the youth sector and encounters in that context. It is difficult to say how much of this is professional, public or private experience. I am not divided into compartments, and any experience, in whatever context, is a human experience, a meeting with others. Nevertheless, the persons concerned will be designated only by their initials in order to respect their story and their memories, many of which are intensely personal. For the author, they all have a face; the reader can draw in the features that spring to mind. So let me first "recount" albeit briefly, in a series of flashes, those little scenes.

Mostar, 1999. The Muslim call to prayer wafts into the meeting room. A Bosnian Serb gives an involuntary shudder of irritation and discomfort. He does not like that sound. Later on

during the course, both he and a Bosnian Croat will admit to having fought on the front line, in the same place, at the same time, each in a different army, feeling confident enough to reveal this to the group.

Albania. "My father was sentenced to prison for political reasons", "... and it was my father who sent him to prison". Neither I nor the other team member present knew what to say or how to react. We thought that it was something of an unfunny joke, a quip in bad taste before finding out, at the end of the course, that they had simply been telling the truth.

Another course in Albania. The team had requested a private discussion with three participants known to be from families "marked out by the party". Under the Hoxha regime, these were families of which at least one member had been imprisoned or persecuted for political reasons. K., R. and U. agreed to tell their story. We were shut in a room, three members of the team, a young interpreter and them.

K.'s grandfather had been a respected imam. In 1945 he had been captured by the communists who buried him alive to force him to say where he had hidden his gold. The experience drove him insane. His family was marked out by the party. The children were not allowed to go to university and the family lived in constant fear of eviction. To enable his younger sister to study, K.'s parents decided to divorce so that the wife could claim to have broken her ties with these "enemies". K. is now an angry young man, a man who has had part of his childhood stolen from him.

R.'s uncle had protested in 1956 against the invasion of Hungary by Soviet troops. He was arrested on the spot and sent to a village of exile. His family had their cards marked by the party. In R.'s home no one spoke of his uncle who had "brought a curse on the family", it was as if he was dead; because of him, various members of the family lost their jobs and others fled to Greece. R. is waiting for revenge: "I am compiling files on everyone who persecuted our family. One day, when justice has to be done, I will use them to tip the scales."

U.'s story is even worse, tragic in its proportions. Her grandfather had been tortured and died in prison. The family had not been able to recover the body. In order to protect U., her family entrusted her to a friend. But the friend too was arrested and tortured, and U. can still see that martyred body now. Today, U. wants the cycle of violence and hatred to end, a halt to the vicious circle of pain.

At the end of that long evening we were all exhausted, wiped out, crushed by this excess of suffering and pain. The interpreter was shattered because translating pain means taking on the burden to the point of complete exhaustion.

A strange place for an encounter, one October night in **Brcko**, outside a bar. I. had noticed the group and wanted to engage in discussion. Initially I refused but then accepted. Our conversation was to last over two hours. I. was a 28 year-old Bosnian Croat. He despises himself: "You think I'm a waster, eh?" No, I. is suffering and cannot find his place in society. During the war his parents took refuge in Germany and prevented him from going to fight, from going to defend his country and his honour as a man... Since then I. has found life and living difficult,

looking on himself as a pathetic coward.

G. is an **Albanian from Kosovo**. Late one afternoon, he described what ten years of not legally existing in his own country had been like for him: banned from speaking his own language, frightened to state his nationality, fearful of going out in the evening and running into young people of the other nationality who would threaten him and his wife. He spoke for over half an hour without once naming those other people: "they", "them", "their" ... I pointed this out. "That's the problem. I don't know what to call them..."

J. is a young **Serb living in Belgrade**. When she spoke of the monasteries in Kosovo, she feared that she might never see them again, that they would be destroyed or made inaccessible.

There were plenty more "scenes" like these ones. My memory is teeming with other faces and other encounters. I would like to go on talking about them and bear witness to their story, but I think you have heard enough and already suspect where my thoughts will be straying.

II. Memory, history, forgetting ...

The experiences related here are firstly based on the word of the witness/protagonist telling their stories, but they are nevertheless part of history in the making. It is not a matter of judging the truthfulness of their words – it is possible that they are not telling the truth or the whole truth or they are lying by omission or design – for even if they did not say exactly what had happened, they were passing on their own representation of it, which finds its level within our ability to grasp reality, even if it looks like a Cubist painting.

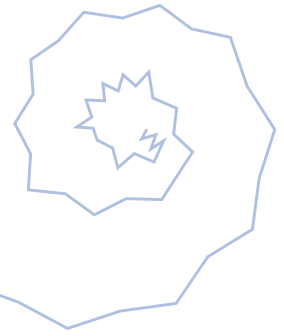
What makes these words even more difficult to hear and listen to (listening here meaning an active process of receiving words from another person), is that they ring with enormous pain, bitterness or anger. And they are all the harder to say because, on the whole, the different societies concerned are not always ready to hear them, as if the weight of these memories prevented the future from existing.

In terms of living experience, these stories reflect a number of contemporary historical or philosophical questions. From the trail-blazing "La mémoire collective" by Maurice Halbwachs, which remained without a successor for nearly twenty years, to the thoughts of Paul Ricoeur on "La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli", taking in the monument built under the foremanship of Pierre Nora, "Lieux de mémoire", on the way, the question is indeed one of the relationship between memory and history and of dealing with painful recollections.

Historians have all too often neglected memory, the statement of the witness, the victim, dismissing their words as unreliable, subject to too many outside, non-scientific factors in favour of sacrosanct documentary evidence, and in doing so overlooking the fact that it is men and women, through their everyday life and experiences, who have made history, without necessarily recounting it; history as a perpetual movement of understanding the past and as a potential key to building the future. Listening



A Journey into the Unknown



Many NGOs provide training for their members in order to increase their skills and competencies for leadership tasks within the organisation. Often, training courses are organised rather spontaneously for a particular target group, in response to needs or interests expressed by members or clients. Some organisations have developed a more global training strategy, to envision and plan ahead according to needs and interests and the organisation's aims and mission. Here, Peter Draper tells the story of how his organisation, the Alliance, came to build its own training strategy, a policy on training for trainers.

This is the story of how the Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations (Alliance) came to start its own Training Policy with the experience gained through a journey into the unknown territory of Training for Trainers. This journey was undertaken with the co-operation and assistance provided by the European Youth Centres (EYC) and the European Youth Foundation (EYF).

The Alliance

As a broad introduction to the Alliance, it is an International Non-Governmental Youth Organisation that represents national organisations running international voluntary service projects. Each national organisation promotes community development, intercultural education, understanding and peace through voluntary service. Much of this is done via international workcamps. These involve 10 to 20 volunteers from different countries participating in 2 to 3 week projects doing local community work, including environmental, social, cultural and archaeological work. Got the picture?

Each national organisation within the Alliance relies on short-term Leader Training seminars to create a pool of workcamp leaders who can be responsible for the day to day running of an international workcamp. The potential leaders are trained in topics like Intercultural Learning, Group Dynamics, Communication skills, and Conflict Resolution as well as the more mundane but equally important Health and Safety, Security, Cooking Rotas etc. As you will appreciate this is quite a lot of work and information to pack into a 2 or 3 day training weekend!

Step One

Anyway, the story begins when the Polish partner of the Alliance, the Federation for Youth Exchange (FIYE), decided that it would invite two 'Trainers' from other Alliance organisations to help with their Leader Training weekend just outside of Warsaw (this was aimed at training 40 / 50 volunteers from all over Eastern Europe).

FIYE invited trainers from two other organisations, Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke (MS) Denmark and the

Welsh organisation United Nations Association Exchange (UNA Exchange), as they had a reputation within the Alliance for running good Leader Training courses. However, due to some logistical problems caused by travel arrangements and getting time off from work, the three trainers (Liz Slowinska – FIYE, Maiken Lassen – MS Denmark and Peter Draper – UNA Exchange) ended up meeting each other for the first time on the morning of the training! With a matter of a few hours to prepare before the participants arrived a sketch outline of the training was agreed. During the event after really late nights, lots of work and a couple of mishaps the weekend thankfully turned out to be a success. The very tired trainers surmised that there must be better ways of working which they could have used and, rather than using the 'tried and tested methods' they knew, there must be other more inventive and effective techniques available which were just waiting to be discovered. Over a glass of Guinness the three red-eyed 'trainers' decided that they needed some training themselves!

Step Two

After discussion within the Alliance network and some investigation it was discovered that training seminars could be held at the EYCs in Strasbourg and Budapest. With a great deal of hope an application was made to the EYF for a grant to run a seminar for those volunteers within the Alliance partners who organised and ran the Leader's Training. With the memories of Warsaw still fresh in our minds we called it a 'Training for Trainers' seminar.

UNA Exchange applied for the funding on behalf of the Alliance and when the good news of the successful bid came through the now very real seminar required someone to organise and plan it. Having been two of the 'red-eyed' trainers to suggest the idea in the first place, Peter Draper and Liz Slowinska along with the team at UNA Exchange searched for other people within the Alliance who were keen to come onto the Prep Team. Eventually we were pleased to have Joanne Chenal (UNAREC – France), Xenia Koutenaki (Conservation Volunteers Greece - CVG) and Sam Hall (UNA Exchange) on the team.

by Peter Draper



This team then went out to EYC Budapest for a Prep Team meeting with our nominated course tutor, but unfortunately due to illness we were unable to meet him. This proved to be an unavoidable source of tension later, as the direct and personal lines of communication didn't really open with him until we met at the start of the seminar.

Our main idea behind the seminar was to get 'Trainers' of leaders together and examine:

- What training currently exists within the Alliance;
- What could be improved;
- What was good enough to share.
- And, of course, for us all to meet with other 'trainers'; and to look with them at new ideas and potential future plans.

The Prep Team and tutor had much to work to do, we had not worked together before, neither had we had time to put all the detail on the plan. This process was hindered further by the fact that we had not really attracted the target group we had hoped for. This had been due to the dates given to us as these were not the most appropriate to our needs (short time for invitations to go out, busy times for staff in the offices of the different organisations etc.) Many of the participants were new to training and didn't know their training programme as well as we had hoped for. Nevertheless everyone who came was enthusiastic and full of energy.

After a shaky start within the team we started to really work together. The programme also came to life, it changed almost everyday due to our evaluation and review process. Our meetings were fun and lasted much of the night, just for a change! The programme also reflected a typical Leader's Training - lots of games, lots of energy, lots of fun.

The seminar was very well received by the participants and everyone went away full of energy and enthusiasm. Phew!! Thanks to the huge amount of enthusiasm generated the Prep Team decided that an additional training was not beyond its capabilities and brought the idea to the meetings of Alliance partners. One of the major issues raised in the participants' evaluations was that they thought that they required further training in the Methods and Methodologies of Training. Together these two positives helped to form the basis of the next Alliance 'Training for Trainers' event. Another successful application was made and we started again.

Step Three

The Prep Team met in Cardiff, but this was before we had been allocated a tutor – possibly getting a little bit over-confident you see! We had a successful meeting, even naively preparing a programme, you would have thought that we would have known better by now! The team decided that it could not afford the costs of sending everyone across to Strasbourg for the next meeting with our newly appointed tutor, and so Joanne and Peter were duly delegated as ambassadors. The meeting was very reassuring to them, though we are not so sure that it was for him!

As a Prep Team we had learnt so much from Budapest, (pos-

sibly more than the participants), we understood our roles much better, we knew each other and the way each one worked, we had learnt some hard lessons and we had gained mutual trust. Information was sent out in plenty of time and was much more concise and focused on the aims and objectives of the training. In addition, we had done a lot of formal and informal communication within the Alliance, so the member organisations were really supportive in helping to recruit participants. We were ready.

We worked differently in Strasbourg. We split our responsibilities up into teams of two or three for each day, with the tutor acting as the anchor point for continuity, this meant that it freed up some of the mental and practical skills of the Prep Team to sort out other issues. As a small example, when preparing the Open Space Technology (OST - see Coyote No.2) day, two members planned the detail whilst the rest of the team painted butterflies and bees in a glorious attempt to decorate the plenary room. Another important innovation for us was using daily evaluations within groups, which helped us plan the following days accordingly.

The final programme for the week took the participants through their own journey. Firstly they needed to look at their own communication skills and that of the group in order to build up the necessary trust and co-operation within this newly formed team. We then explored ideas on how to adapt methods that they already knew and to gain some deeper understanding of why they worked. The next step was to start to think creatively in making new methods and then giving them the supportive atmosphere in order to experiment and learn. The OST day then gave a concrete example of a new technique for the Alliance that worked really well. At the end we started to explore the future of where this journey could take us before our final farewells.

Again we were very encouraged with the results of the seminar. The participants were pleased and enthused (and months later many of them reported how they had used ideas from the course in their own training events), the Prep Team members were remarkably healthy (though at one point we realised that we hadn't been out of the EYC building for almost three days!) and the tutor still had hair left. The Alliance Treasurer visited us on the last two days and was also impressed, so much so the Alliance is now building its own policy on Training for Trainers. Guess who's volunteered to help! Another journey into the unknown.

Contact address: peter.alancat@virgin.net



Deep Ecology Training

Deep ecology is a new philosophy of nature which is based on the belief in the interconnectedness of all beings and which wants to encourage action for social change on behalf of nature. John Seed's training courses aim to empower participants through deep experiential learning, starting with the rediscovery one's own connection with nature.

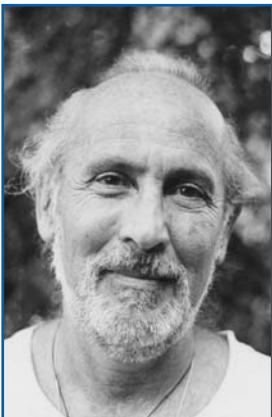
Deep Ecology is the name of a new philosophy of nature that has been exerting a profound effect on environmentalism for the last 20 years. To deep ecology the world is seen not as a pyramid with humans on top, but as a web. We humans are but one strand in that web and as we destroy other strands, we destroy ourselves.

Deep ecology concerns the interconnectedness of all things, the way that all beings - plant, animal and human - are part of a larger organism, sometimes called "Gaia" (named after the ancient Greek goddess of Earth). To deep ecology, we are all cells in the vast body of the Earth and, if we forget this, there is a danger that we may become cancerous cells, growing at the expense of the body within which we ourselves have our existence.

I like James Lovelock's way of putting it. (James Lovelock is the British Scientist who proposed the "Gaia Hypothesis": that the earth itself is a living organism rather than just a lump of rock with organisms growing on it). He says the way that modern humans behave towards nature is as if the brain decided it was the most important organ in the body and started mining the liver. That's not to say that the brain isn't as miraculous as the liver. It's just that both brain and liver are part of a body and the brain has no existence outside that body. To start mining the liver doesn't show what a powerful brain it is, it shows what a stupid brain it is.

If we look at indigenous cultures, we may notice that, without exception, ritual and ceremony play a central role in the lives of these societies affirming and nurturing the sense of interconnectedness between people and nature. This suggests that we modern people can't just think our way out of this fix, we must involve deeper levels of our being than merely our cognition to make the vast changes in our personalities and institutions necessary for our survival and that of complex life itself.

by John Seed



The Council of All Beings

It is for such reasons that Joanna Macy and I developed the experiential deep ecology trainings called "The Council of All Beings". These trainings help end the sense of alienation from the living Earth that most of us feel, and connect us with new sources of joy, commitment and inspiration that follow from union with Gaia.

While many people now *intellectually* realise that we are inseparable from Nature and that the sense of separation that we feel is illusory, nonetheless we feel separate. These rituals enable us to deeply *experience* our connection with Nature, in our hearts and our bodies.

After getting to know each other, the Council of All Beings begins with a mourning ritual. Only if we will allow ourselves to feel the pain of the Earth, can we be effective in Her healing. Then we remember our rootedness in nature. Using guided visualisation and

movement/dance we recapitulate our entire evolutionary journey and release the memories locked in our DNA. We experience the fact that every cell in our body is descended in an unbroken chain 4 billion years old, through fish that learned to walk the land, reptiles whose scales turned to fur and became mammals, evolving through to the present.

We further extend our sense of identity in the Council of All Beings itself where we step aside from our solely human identification and let other life forms speak through us. We go on a "vision quest" to find an ally in the non-human world (an animal or plant or feature of the landscape), make a mask to represent that ally, and lend our voices to the animals and plants. We are shocked at the very different view of the world that emerges from their dialogue. Creative suggestions for human actions emerge and we invoke the powers and knowledge of these other life forms to empower us in our lives.

Through personal sharing and experiential deep

ecology exercises, we explore the depths of our concern and love for our planet in this time of crisis. Rediscovering our interconnectedness with all beings - we find empowerment as agents of healing change. Typically these workshops give participants a deep sense of connection with the natural world and empower us to act more strongly on behalf of nature. All workshop fees go to supporting volunteers working on rainforest conservation projects in Ecuador.

Interested?

If you are interested in joining John Seed in a deep ecology training course, then you will have the opportunity in April 2002 in Amsterdam. For more details, contact John directly or access the web site of the Rainforest Information Centre www.forests.org/ric/ which includes a deep ecology section with writings by John Seed and others and John Seed's workshop schedule. This web site also includes news and action alerts to save the rainforests and information about Rainforest Information Centre volunteers in Ecuador, Papua New Guinea and India.

John Seed, Joanna Macy, Arne Naess and Pat Fleming wrote a book "Thinking Like a Mountain - Towards a Council of All Beings" (New Society Publishers 1988). It functions as an instruction manual for conducting Councils of All Beings and has been translated into eight languages.

Also supporting rainforest conservation in Ecuador is a new project we have developed: the Rainforest Jukebox.

(www.rainforestjukebox.org)

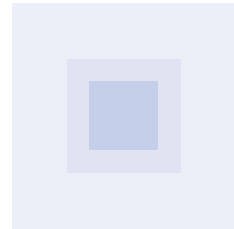
A wide range of Australian artists have donated their CD's and tapes to the jukebox which streams 40 music tracks that you can listen to for free. Funds from the sale of these

recordings go to rainforest conservation projects in Ecuador. The jukebox includes CD's from some of Australia's most creative and passionate environmental musicians who have been empowering, harmonising and funding the Australian environmental movement since 1979. There is also a number of great aboriginal artists. Every visitor to the site results in each of our sponsors donating enough money to buy 2 square feet of threatened rainforest.

For more information, workshop schedules or copies of "Thinking like a mountain", you can write to John Seed, Rainforest Information Centre, Box 368 Lismore 2480, Australia. Email:

johnseed@ozemail.com.au, tel: 61 (0)2 66213294.

If you would like to get an overview of different kinds of environmental training, have a look at Coyote's last issue (#4, June 2001) at www.training-youth.net. In his article on Values, Training and the Environment, Stefan Bužarovski proposes a categorisation of different forms of environmental education based on its values related to the environment, society and intended change. We take this occasion to apologise for some mistakes in the lay-out of the text of his article in the printed version of the magazine.



“Are we gurus and missionaries who are spreading the word”?

Keeping Our Feet on the Ground.

Having a go at being a freelance trainer in non-formal education is not an easy thing to do, even if you already have a large number of contacts and a certain amount of experience. That is why, at the beginning, I often wanted to give up. Then suddenly I received an incredible offer.

Just before the end of 2000, Paolo Bernasconi, a friend I had worked with a great deal a few years previously, who is now a delegate for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), proposed that I work with him in Central Asia on “Leadership skills and preparation for conflict situations” training courses for volunteers and employees of national and regional branches of the Red Crescent.

These volunteers and employees are regularly confronted with the need to manage natural disasters, but the region, and especially the Fergana Valley, is also threatened by confrontations and conflicts, mainly involving armed Islamist groups. Although these volunteers and employees are well trained in disseminating and promoting the work of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, they often lack the basic management and leadership skills required to recruit and motivate volunteers and persuade political and financial decision-makers of the importance of such activities. It also seemed important for the ICRC to address issues concerning attitudes towards people from other cultures.

In spring 2001, we ran three training courses:

▶ in Osh, Kyrgyzstan, on the Uzbek border in the Fergana valley. This course involved Uzbek and Kyrgyz participants from the Fergana valley, Uzbeks from Surkhandarya (in the south) and Tajiks. The participants, who were between 16 and 30 years old, were mainly volunteers from regional branches of the Red Crescent and youth co-ordinators from these branches.

This course had the highest number of participants – 36 – and lasted the longest – six days. It was the most important one because it covered the region which regularly suffers incursions by Islamist groups. The Red Crescent must therefore always be prepared to deal efficiently with the evacuation of the wounded, population displacement and the distribution of essentials.

▶ in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz capital, with 22 Kyrgyz and Kazakh participants;
▶ in Tashkent, the Uzbek capital, with 28 Uzbek and Turkmen participants.

These other two courses lasted only 4 days and had a more condensed programme than the one in Osh. A wider range of participants was involved: although many of them were national co-ordinators, there were also volunteers. Some participants were more experienced than others (some had been volunteers or salaried employees for several years – more than 30 years in some cases – whereas others had just become volunteers over the previous few days).

As I have always been attracted by the idea of new experiences and new voyages, I didn't hesitate. However, I soon began asking myself lots of questions:

▶ What would it be like to work with Paolo, when the last course we had worked on together had taken place six years ago and I had more or less continued in the same job whereas he had taken another path, doing humanitarian work in the field, often far from Europe?

▶ I also wondered about the personal development of one of the team members, who had participated in a long-term training course I had organised several years previously and would now be one of the trainers.

▶ On the face of it, the aims of the Red Cross, the ICRC, corresponded to my ideals but what would happen once I was face to face with its volunteers, once I was “involved”?

▶ Finally, the place I was to go to for five weeks was for me a land of dreams (I was brought up on tales of Marco Polo) but also of uncertainty. I knew that the region had been part of the USSR but what was the situation in that part of the world ten years after the various republics had gained their independence? I also knew that the region had a large Muslim population but that Islamic networks opposed the parties in power.

by Corinne Grassi

Corinne with a Tajik participant in front of a Kyrgyz Yurk (tent)



In short, I was not setting out on a training course like those I was accustomed to, even though Paolo had asked me to prepare basic subjects for the training of group leaders, such as group dynamics, working in a team, project management, intercultural learning, recruitment and working with volunteers.

The first challenge came from the briefing with the head of the delegation: we were told not to focus too much on human rights, as this could put national organisations in a difficult position, and always to bear in mind the three main principles of the ICRC: prevention, neutrality and impartiality.

The second challenge was to decide how to address the issues I wanted to discuss with the participants, whose cultural, historical and social background I knew nothing about. I had run several courses in Russia and Bulgaria and I very quickly noticed similarities (the desire to find a perfect and infallible solution, an eagerness for lectures or games which would teach them everything they needed to know, but little desire for more “intermediary” methods). Nevertheless, I constantly felt that I was walking on eggs within the various groups I worked.

I therefore needed to find a new approach, which would allow me to talk about intercultural matters to participants living in a region where it quickly became obvious that there was a significant cultural mix (a number of our participants were children of mixed marriages and some had grandparents who were of other nationalities) and where communism and Islam had co-existed for several years. There are many nationalities in the region and things are not as easy as one might like them to be in countries where people are seeking their own national identity, heroes and national anthems, etc, ... whereas the borders had little significance only a few years ago. Turks have migrated into the region and are now running prosperous businesses whereas Russian immigrants are having increasing difficulty in finding employment. It is not always a good thing to have the nationality of a neighbouring country. In a region where each person's identity is the result of many influences, on account of the wide range of nationalities, religions and political systems past or present, I often wondered whether talking about my identity actually helped people understand the complexity of their own identity. Would discovering that they had ancestors of the same nationality, who had fought to uphold the same values, help to bring them together? How did they perceive me when I talked to them about working with and sharing the lives of gypsies in different countries, about promising projects I had devised together with groups of young

people that almost nobody wanted to work with? Did they think that I mixed with a strange set of people and that I ought to be distrusted if I said that I had helped set up projects in Palestine?



In this region culture means more than just nationality, as communism itself seems to be a culture which has had a strong influence and is still very much present. Although young people, extremely few of whom belong to any kind of organisation, often prefer to forget, the

older generation are still very attached to the past and often long for the return of the communist period, when young people had an “education”. This gave rise to heated debate between those who claimed that the komsomols were a genuine voluntary service and that patriotism was an important value and those who dared criticise that period. It was during this sort of discussion, when I always had the feeling of being on a very slippery slope and asked myself just how far we could take the discussion, that I became aware of my position on these courses. As I was a foreigner, it was sometimes easier for me to prompt the participants and to “provoke” them into discussing subjects which still seem to be taboo. I was able to make them realise that they were all sitting round the same table, where the atmosphere was positive, whereas they might find themselves facing one another as enemies if a conflict were to break out.

Intercultural learning, thinking about differences and opening their minds to other points of view were certainly the greatest novelty for all the trainees. Although I used traditional “models” (e.g., iceberg and onion and comfort and panic zones), I had the impression of coming from another planet when giving examples of my work and especially when sharing experiences with groups of young people with whom few people have worked so far. Fortunately, I quickly found many examples which meant something to the participants so that I was able to give practical as well as theoretical examples. I had hardly arrived in Central Asia when I started making one social blunder after another – when tea was served, bread shared, etc. I discovered many traditions like Navrouz, the New Year, which is celebrated on the first day of spring with an incredible quantity of food, and I began to understand a number of social and cultural codes. I described all of these personal experiences to the participants and this helped many of them to realise that it was not because things had always been like that in their part of the world that they were necessarily the same in other parts. Most of the participants realised that they had learned a great



deal from their neighbours and their traditions and from other cultures and that these cultures were both similar and different. Although my colleagues later told me that they had heard that these sessions had been “courageous”, had “rocked the boat” and had made some participants think a great deal and realise that they could enhance mutual understanding, others did not hesitate to proclaim loudly that they didn’t need to talk about intercultural matters.

Indeed, one of the things I asked myself most throughout the experience was to what extent you can combat resistance (see Mette Bram’s article in Coyote #3) when you come from another culture and perhaps have a different way of thinking from the group you are dealing with. What do you do when this resistance comes from the oldest members, who seem to have authority over the group, whereas the younger members might have something different to say? And then, after all, I was the one who felt that there was resistance but what did they feel? What right do I have to “preach” what I consider to be the basis for opening up to others, for living together in peace, to people who claim that they are living together without any friction? The approach I adopted was always to be as humble as possible and try not to impose my way of seeing things, while encouraging the trainees to think about how I had understood, perceived or interpreted this or that. I simply tried to share my experience of other countries and other groups by trying to make myself understood through specific examples, in the knowledge that how far you can go depends on the group you are dealing with (some participants found it difficult to understand how I could talk about identity if I didn’t feel “patriotic” and if I didn’t defend my national anthem; nor was it easy to take as an example work with groups of people who had different sexual orientations).

Likewise, I constantly asked myself questions about what I was trying to “transmit” and share through the various themes I was responsible for, and had doubts about this. For many of the participants, the courses presented the opportunity to meet volunteers from other regions and nationals of other countries for the first time. Everything seemed to be new to most of the participants but I never really understood whether the novelty lay in the approach or the themes. One thing is certain and that is that the participants lapped up every word I said as if I were a sort of “guru” or “missionary spreading the word” and that it was easy for me to “dazzle” and “fascinate” them because I came from somewhere else and had travelled a little whereas most of the participants had not undergone much training and thought that other places were a paradise where everything was possible.

By my standards, very few of the trainees were capable of analysing examples or drawing together the various strands of a theme, particularly when asked about projects they had taken part in and about their commitment as volunteers and what they intended to do after their training course. It was rather as if I were forcing them out of a “mould” so that they would “accept” that it was possible to work as a team

and trust others.

This brought me to another series of questions (which I had already asked myself during other courses but which seemed to me to be blatant during this new experience) concerning the entire exercise and especially the impact of such courses, which are only a drop in the ocean in this part of the world.

How can you find the right words to use when you are unfamiliar with the context and even the local culture(s)? To what extent are the approaches and methods appropriate to the context and, above all, how can the trainees be helped to progress further so that they can really use what they have learned “intelligently” in their own context? What can be done to ensure that trainees do not consider themselves experts on subjects which they have often just discovered and have studied only very superficially? What can be done to make them understand that training is only a beginning to thinking in a different way, to seeing things from another angle so that they have a better understanding of the way certain things function and will perhaps adopt different working methods? How can the step from “theory” to actual practice be made? How can participants be encouraged to think about their personal development and to be more objective towards the model they are familiar with?

I am aware that I have asked a large number of questions and I am not at all sure I know the answers. Indeed, I am not sure that it is necessary to answer them fully. I am merely mentioning them because I think it was important that I did ask myself such questions and I believe that in some way they helped me to “keep my feet on the ground”, not to cut myself off from the trainees, and to try and find ways of making myself understood and of encouraging them to think.

I believe that my “bursting into” into the daily lives of the participants can only be useful to them (if indeed it was useful) if there is some kind of follow-up. If the participants themselves fail to take the initiative of continuing the work, a great deal of work will be required with each of them to review what they said, heard and learned.

Participants wearing traditional dress during an evening together



It is impossible to train everyone and, ideally, training should be provided, in part, by “locals”, who are more familiar with the actual situation, the local context and its challenges. Most of the participants seemed to understand the importance of their role in passing on the message and their responsibility to transmit what they had learned. But if they are really to absorb the basic concepts, it will probably be necessary for many of them to review a number of terms and concepts such as project management, team leadership (why are volunteers necessary, how should their work be monitored, how can they be trained, encouraged to stay on and motivated?), encounters with foreigners and their cultures, the acceptance of differences and the importance of diversity, and the role of the Red Cross/the Red Crescent and its principles (how far can one be neutral, impartial, etc?).

Some six months after the training courses, feedback from the participants is still enthusiastic and positive. Practical projects have been devised and will receive the support of the ICRC. All the participants requested that the ICRC should organise other meetings in 2002. It also appears that this type of activity provides some sort of moral support to Red Crescent volunteers and employees in their work. The participants in the course held in Osh were the first to be monitored in the field. The ICRC delegates met participants in their local branches to discuss the course, review certain points, see what could be used and how further dialogue and joint transfrontier projects and exchanges between local branches might be promoted through Red Crescent projects and work. Training is also continuing so as to enable participants to take on responsibilities in the event of conflicts. A new training course organised by the ICRC should be held in March 2002.

If, for reasons of time, context or funding or for any other reason, the course comes to an end now after this highly positive experience, which lasted but a few days, I can only hope that some new seeds have been sown and that they will result in new and greater mutual understanding.

Postscript - Some Thoughts at the End of October

I left Central Asia thinking that the region knows some serious problems but could develop positively. It was like leaving some nice people from a faraway region that hardly anyone can locate. The organisers of those courses could never have imagined today's situation which followed the events of 11 September. Almost nobody I met before or after my experience in Central Asia knew where were those countries (or what was their situation) that the media put in the headlines today. Some participants were from Termez on the southern border of Uzbekistan where American troops arrived at the beginning of October, some Tadjik were controlling the transport of humanitarian food to Afghanistan. What is happening in the heads of those young

people today? I can imagine that our beautiful ideas have probably been swept away or put to the back of peoples' minds. I wish that the terror attacks would stop. But I would also like all our politicians to listen more to civil society and citizens' opinions, to think about the short and long-term consequences before bombing civilians who have already been suffering for a long time.

(**Contact address: corinne.grassi@9online.fr**)

References:

You can visit the web site of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) at: www.icrc.org/

With regard to issues concerning identity – whose complexity we are not always aware of – culture, religion and nationality, I have just read “Les Identités Meurtrières” by the Lebanese writer Amin Maalouf. Almost every page of the book reminded me of the people I met during my stay in Central Asia. The book has been translated into many languages.



Seminar in Osh. The group at the Suleiman mountain.



Moon Light - A Project to Create Conditions for Safe Prostitution

Being socially active and aware of many important issues of society today, I consider that it is necessary to find out and to learn about gender ideas and their links with the question of the equality of rights. As I am a young woman I understand the position of the women very well. Young women may not have the opportunity for advanced education, have limited job opportunities, and low salaries only because they are women. Unfortunately, this happens very often. Women are discriminated against because of their gender. I want to do something for the creation and development of equality of rights of all people. I think that women and men have to have equal rights which are independent from their gender. Also I'd like to help people to understand that the problem of discrimination is actual, is now (because many of them don't know and don't understand it, especially men). I would enjoy helping people here and don't see any problems, which might prevent me from doing so.

I am happy that I have this possibility to tell you about our project, which runs between 1 November 1999 and 31 October 2003. In Latvia, as in other post-Socialist countries, prostitution has developed very rapidly during the period of economic transformations. Prostitution has spread along with the increase of rapes and the feminisation of poverty in Latvia, which has occurred against the background of a high level of unemployment. According to experts from the Latvian Center for Gender Studies, there were between 10,000 and 15,000 prostitutes in Latvia in the period between 1996 and 1998 and this number is growing extremely fast. Young women have dreams of a comfortable lifestyle – money for themselves and their families – nice clothes, and travel to foreign countries. Therefore many of them start their work in the sex business. As you know this job is very dangerous, because women are seriously at risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and HIV infection. Therefore there is an urgent need for the creation of an interdisciplinary intervention activity in the field of health promotion and social care among sex workers in Latvia. At the moment there is no structural policy regarding social and health care for sex workers, although the phenomenon of prostitution is rapidly growing. Above all, the phenomenon of transnational prostitution has been escalating during recent years and there is little experience and skills in HIV/STD prevention among sex workers, nor is there much knowledge of outreach/peer education in this country. These are the most important reasons why the project “Moon Light. Safe Prostitution in Latvia” was created and started by us.

Now a little bit about peer education, that I think, implies a didactic role. We invite a group of selected sex workers to attend specific training courses which teach them all of the skills necessary to function as competent educators within their own environment. After having accomplished this training course, they

are ready to raise awareness among their colleagues about STD including HIV/AIDS and they also are ready to organise and conduct lessons on safe sex practices and preventive measures, which are very necessary in the outreach work with the target group. The target group of this project includes female sex workers who are operating in Riga, Jurmala and Jelgava (the last two are small towns of Latvia). They work mainly on the streets, partly in night and sex clubs, hotels, bars and escort services.

The Project's Long-term Objectives

Here are some of our objectives for the project:

- To create a strong commitment for the promotion of prostitution policies based on the principle of treating sex workers with dignity, respect and confidentiality and to promote their health, safety and civil rights;
- To develop common quality standards of HIV/STD intervention among sex workers which could be applied in other countries of the region.

The Project's Short-term Objectives

In the short-term, our objectives are to:

- † provide sex workers with information and sanitary prevention;
- † promote the use of safe-sex techniques in prostitution;
- † identify social and health service providers and make their services more widely-known, appropriate and accessible to sex workers;
- † gather quantitative and qualitative data concerning the phenomenon of prostitution, its different forms, its transformation and its impact on the territory.

What do we do to realise these objectives? We use street intervention units formed by outreach workers (but this isn't part of our training). Outreach work activities include: mapping of the prostitution scene, gathering information and evaluation of

by Natalija Jurkova



sex-workers' needs, getting in contact and establishing relationships with the members of the target group, providing health and educational information and promoting behavioural changes as far as prophylactic measures are concerned (distribution of condoms and lubricants, information materials etc.) Production and distribution of condom and lubricant kits (small bags with basic products such as condoms, lubricants, sponges and information folders). Distribution of condoms among sex workers, accompanying sex workers to social and public health facilities and mediating between them and these services, recruitment and training of peer educators, supporting peer educators in their educational activities among colleagues regarding safe sex techniques.

How is it that sex workers prefer to work with us and to trust us with their problems? The main thing we do to get their trust is through organising discussions with them. We try to get into their situation and understand them. Our staff speak with women about how have they entered the sex trade and how have they been involved. Women often enter prostitution when they have lost control of everything in their lives. So we try to help them to find at least one thing or topic which they could control and, developing their capabilities to breakaway from their current situation.

Peer Education

The next objective is to introduce the notion of peer education, to ensure its correct application, to conduct trainings for peer educators and to perform evaluation of the impact of peer education.

For organising the training we usually use the "Methodology of Training for Peer Educators", which was created by TAMPEP (see the end of this article for contact details).

There are some basic steps in this methodology that you can see below.

- The first step is the identification of future peer educators and application of criteria for selection of potential peer educators.

- Assessment of knowledge of future peer educators:
Of course, prior to each course, an assessment of participants' knowledge is carried out concerning STD, AIDS, reproductive female organs, contraception, the use of condoms and professional attitude. This knowledge is tested by means of a specially developed questionnaire. The survey also includes questions about the individual wishes of the women concerning the contents of the course.

- The duration of the course:
The sex workers are a very mobile group. That means that all activities concerning organisation and realisation of the training for peer educators should not take up too much time. We think the best duration of the course would be a period of two to three months.

- Formation of trainee classes:
In general, in this step of the training we try to limit the number of trainees per class to ten or twelve persons.

- Continuous evaluation of the course and of the progress of

the trainees:

Every training session ends with the participants' filling out an evaluation form on the contents of the particular session, because this evaluation not only permits us to adapt the contents according to the wishes of the trainees, but also reveals how the members of the target group perceive the training and their own position in it.

- Active participation of members of the target group in the course. (In my opinion this is the basis for the success of the course):

Their active participation is asked for in all phases of the training. The trainees are always encouraged to ask questions and share their experiences with other colleagues, because this will benefit the learning process and also enhance the credibility and acceptance of the information passed on. A colleague-prostitute shares her/his knowledge with the other participants under the guidance of an expert. At the same time this ensures that the future peer educator gains educational experience. At the conclusion of the course, the trainees/sex workers have the chance to produce (written) didactic materials if they so wish.

- Of course, we don't forget about guest speakers:
During every training, some guest speakers, such as a physician from the local clinic, an employee of a contraception counselling centre, a trained peer educator or a social worker are invited to share their experience with the trainees.

- Economic compensation:
The participants are given economic compensation for attending the training. This (small) amount of money rewards the time and energy put into the training, as well as partly covering any possible loss of earnings.

- Trial run-through:
During the last gathering of the participants, each of them puts together a session which they lead. This is as an exercise for the future peer educators in passing on their knowledge to their peers. The contents are based on the material treated during the course.

- The diploma:
At the end of the training all participants are awarded a certificate of completion of the course. This serves as a sign of recognition not only vis-à-vis the colleagues of the peer educators, but also vis-à-vis members of public service agencies of the various countries where the peer educators stay. Incidentally, one of my roles in the training is to prepare these diplomas.

- Monitoring the effects of the course:
After the course, we maintain frequent contact with the peer educators in order to supervise and support their activities, which are the following:

- facilitating contact between peer educators and their peer group

- presenting peer educators to the members of official agencies and facilitating contact between them

- mediating between peer educators and public health services
- preparing peer educators for the role of mobile health messengers

- supplying peer educators with additional knowledge which was not included in the basic course



- providing peer educators with folders and other materials.

Collecting data, intervention methods used in the field and methods of evaluation concerning the results of the intervention are the next roles of mine in this project.

Other Instruments Necessary for Achieving the Project's Objectives

There is not enough space for me to go into all the areas of our work and how it is organised. But I would like to highlight the following sectors.

We receive a great amount of technical support from TAMPEP: assistance in assessing the needs in a given prostitution area; mapping the prostitution scene, identifying target groups and determining their habits and culture; assistance in project design; training of street workers and cultural mediators according to the training modules prepared by TAMPEP. TAMPEP supports us with the necessary literature about organising training when we need it and often we use this information on the seminars and workshops where our street workers and cultural mediators are trained. In-service training is essential for all staff both in acquiring relevant knowledge and in improving team development. There are few courses or certificates that deal specifically with sex work, and our project has to use many different approaches, including attendance at general training on health and sexuality, management and team work, counselling, communication etc. In addition, visits to established projects are invaluable. Staff without pre-existing qualifications are encouraged to study for nationally-recognised qualifications. We receive technical support concerning the creation of networks and various forms of collaboration on a national and regional level between public health authorities, policy makers, police, proprietors of prostitution venues and others.

Our organisation structure is composed of a project group, an operating group and a support group. This was created in order to ensure the realisation of the above mentioned long-term objectives and in order to create a steady and stable basis and infrastructure for maintaining the activities and in order to guarantee the commitment of all parties and bodies to the philosophy of the project. It also has a prime task to seek the necessary support, cooperation, contacts etc. with the local governmental organisations.

We have a drop-in centre for sex workers, which is a major help in maintaining contacts between them and giving support. As they belong to a stigmatised profession, they often have few opportunities to meet and speak together without fear.

Disseminating the results of our work is important to us as is the opportunity to exchange experiences and cooperate with other projects in the geographical region (such as the other Baltic countries, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine).

Our Results

Some of the main results are: information materials for prostitutes are ready; the outreach work in the three towns is working; the opening of the drop-in centre has been achieved; and the group of peer educators has been formed. An article "A Survey about Prostitution in Latvia" was published in the book Gender Equality in Latvia at the Threshold of the New Millennium (it is available in both Latvian and English

languages). We are organising meetings and workshops with sex workers once a week, not only in the drop-in centre or the STD centre, but also at the bars where the women gather together to "get warm" during their working time.

We organised a two-day International Training Seminar on the issues of Trafficking in Women and Prostitution. It was held in Jūrmala in June 2000. As a result, the basis was formed of the national network between NGOs and government institutions which are interested in common work in the field of prostitution and against trafficking in women; the main tasks were defined; an e-mail list was formed; and we were able to exchange reports about the situation in other Baltic states and raise awareness and understanding of the global character of trafficking. In addition, our work received new impulses for new kinds of activities.

The main result of our project is the creating of a refuge in our organisation. The aims of the refuge are to support, protect and treat the victims of trafficking and prostitutes.

What do you think? Why is the role of non-profit organisations important in such kinds of work? I think that sex work is - to a great extent - connected with the criminal world and an already harassed woman does not trust state structures, fearing punishment. So the structure of a non-profit, non-governmental organisation is very flexible, it is used to untraditional approaches, is located in the vicinity of the "customer": street work, work in sex firms, bars. The staff of the non-profit organisation have to receive proper training, have long-term experience, are very customer friendly, which allows building up mutual trust. Our NGO is an intermediate link between the customer and relatively stiff state structures which, on the one hand, makes it possible to protect the interests of a customer (medical, social and psychological) and, on the other hand, those of the state (alienation of minors from prostitution, cooperation with police structures, prevention of STDs and AIDS). And the introduction of trained peer educators helps us enormously in this work.

Literature:

HUSTLING FOR HEALTH: Developing services for Sex Workers in Europe. " The European Network for HIV/STD Prevention in Prostitution (EUROPAP/TAMPEP), 1998.

Would you like to meet us or receive more information? Please contact the following:

Licia Brussa, General Co-ordination and International Networking
Hanka Mongard, Cultural Mediatrix for Central and Eastern European Women and International Networking
TAMPEP International Foundation: Westermarkt 4, 1016 DK Amsterdam, the Netherlands,
Tel: +31 20 624 71 49, Fax: +31 20 624 65 29,
E-mail: tampep@xs4all.nl

Partner organisation:

Tatjana Kurova, Director and General co-ordination of the NGO "GENDERS", the Latvian Gender Problem Centre, Caka St., 91/93 room 9, Riga LV-1011 Latvia,
Tel/Fax: +371 7 315899,
E-mail: gender@parks.lv

Why Mostaganem?

Training is a support tool for youth workers and youth leaders to increase the quality and scope of their work. Many training courses lead to new activities which participants organise following the training. Often, this is also a training aim: giving participants the knowledge, motivation and confidence to start a new project with newly found partners.

One essential element in particular for running international cooperation activities is getting to know the reality and needs of your partner, his/her organisation and culture. And clearly, a training course is not the only, and not always the best tool to experience a different reality and to get to know how your (potential) partners live and work. Sylvie Floris participated in a study visit to Algeria and is telling Coyote about her impressions from a trip to a country with a dynamic youth scene which few people from Europe visit nowadays.

Introduction

The project for a study visit to Mostaganem was the result of a happy meeting of minds.

Nasser Benkhalel, chair of the association *Savoie Jeunesse*, was becoming increasingly interested in EuroMed and, as the local liaison worker for the Youth Programme, wanted to do more than simply provide information, and to organise a meeting of several partners in Algeria. This was a brave, not to say bold, project that came to be carried out as a result of a meeting between Nasser and the chair of the Mostaganem former athletes' association, a longstanding friend with whom he had practised sport in Algeria a few years previously. Their meeting led to their both taking up the challenge of organising a study visit to Mostaganem.

Nasser made it his job to find participants, prepare the file for the European Commission department responsible for EuroMed and seek national sources of co-funding. The Mostaganem former athletes' association took responsibility for the logistics in Algeria and contacts with institutions and associations and, above all, advanced the funds needed to launch the project before it received the EuroMed grant.

This project is a good illustration of a truly ambitious gamble: the political context in Algeria and reactions to the project in Europe were not conducive to visits to Algeria, and yet Nasser Benkhalel was absolutely convinced that something had to be done to put an end to this isolation and to extend a hand to Algerian civil society. He had the courage to take up this challenge and showed tremendous determination to succeed in setting up this valuable cooperation scheme with our Algerian friends in Mostaganem. As a result, the "crazy" project of a "study visit" to Mostaganem actually took place from 11 to 18 March 2001.

What were the objectives of the study visit to Mostaganem?

The study visit was conducted within the framework of the EuroMed programme set in motion by the European Union and partner Mediterranean countries in 1999 after being launched at the 1995 Barcelona Conference. This partnership was set up to foster dialogue between cultures and encourage youth mobility and initiatives in the Mediterranean region.

One of the criteria for selecting projects is that a minimum of two member countries of the European Union and two non-member Mediterranean countries must set up a multilateral partnership (the number of partners on each side must remain equal if the overall number of countries increases, for example three EU member countries and three Mediterranean countries which are not members of the EU). In preparing the visit, Nasser Benkhalel submitted a single application to all the delegations to the European Commission as he was the project co-ordinator and EuroMed activities are always centralised. He worked in close collaboration with EuroMed's Algerian correspondent, Nouredine Si Bachir, who was present during the study visit to Mostaganem.

The aim of the visit was to set up partnerships between leaders of Algerian associations and European youth workers in the hope of organising concrete youth mobility projects within or outside the EuroMed programme.

Nasser had hoped that eight delegations would take part, but the Belgian partners abandoned the project because of the insecurity in Algeria, and the Moroccan partners were unable to obtain visas. We were then left with participants from the following countries: Algeria, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal and Tunisia. In addition to the complex organisational

by Sylvie Floris



arrangements, attention should be drawn to the administrative obstacles (visas) and the problems stemming from the emotion conjured up by a project to visit Algeria. When the delegations met on the first day, before the departure, a number of people expressed fears that had been amplified by articles in the press and embassy Internet sites. The participants felt that they were embarking on a real adventure! Why did we take the risk? In addition to a wide range of individual reasons, we all shared these motives:

- ▶ to see what was really happening for ourselves;
- ▶ to meet members of a civil society about which very little is said;
- ▶ to set up projects in order to encourage youth mobility and encounters between cultures.

The week we spent in Mostaganem exceeded all our expectations and astonished us from a human, emotional and intellectual point of view.

The highlights of the visit

We discovered an extremely active network of associations.

On the first morning, by the seaside at La Salamandre, the little *El Moudja* (The Wave) theatre plunged us into the world of cultural associations in Algerian civil society. All the ingredients for a surprise were present: a site where poverty and grandeur rubbed shoulders; an exceptional, indeed unique, site with a raised stage on the beach, an interior that opened onto the immensity of the sea through a large window at the back of the stage; timeless, unique places. Young actors who already spoke two or three languages (Arabic, French, Italian or Spanish), guided by an extraordinary director, and all this in the middle of a tiny village “on the edge of the world”. A site of tragedy, too, for one of the young actresses had been burned to death by her brother because she ... was an actress. And in spite of this tragedy, but also because of it, the theatre was even more active than before: it brimmed over with life in droves and the young people of Mostaganem and the surrounding area flocked to it.

We received another surprise at the theatrical evening with the *El Ibara* company. It was founded over thirty years ago and during the most violent periods of aggression and attacks in 1994 and 1995, not once did it cease its work of teaching young people, despite all the security problems raised by this act of resistance.

Our last surprise was given to us by the *El Fen Oua Nachat* youth orchestra. About sixty children, adolescents and young adults treated us to an evening of Arabo-Andalusian music with “nuba” (musicians playing in turn); we were bowled over by their energy and kindness, and carried away by their rhythms and their instruments. All the teachers are volunteers as the pupils’ parents cannot pay them but, as at the theatre, there is no lack of inspiration. Civil society is the breeding ground for social, cultural and intellectual activity.

Seventy per cent of the Algerian population is under 30 years of age; young people are Algeria’s strength as well as a challenge, and the educational, scientific and cultural centres and local community centres that we visited were all examples of how dynamic this civil society is. It shows a surprising amount of energy and determination that outstrips its meagre means. The network of associations has only recently been set up in Algeria and it must become more representative. This is the beginning

of a peaceful struggle and the expression of a passive resistance to extremist pressure on any form of “liberalisation”, be it social, cultural or political.

Adults have not been forgotten in the development of this vast network of associations, and I should particularly like to pay tribute here to women’s associations, as they have to fight on two fronts:

- ▶ the political front, as their actions often contravene the “family code”;
- ▶ the social front, as they encourage women to organise themselves, become acquainted with their rights and participate in activities that contribute to the “emancipation of Algerian women”, such as using computers and sports activities.

They are also Algeria’s memory, as they preserve customs and traditions:

- ▶ the traditional costumes of the various *wilayat* (regions);
- ▶ local cuisine;
- ▶ songs and chants, and so on.

Many Algerian women told us of their difficulty in finding their place in society and their permanent struggle: they are the stable elements and reference points in families and the means by which modernity slowly progresses.



The group during their stay in Algeria

We were struck by the way in which the people we met spoke: very freely and with a great need to communicate and show us what Algeria was truly like.

The role of the press was also a source of astonishment because Algerians snap up newspapers as soon as they arrive at the newsstands and devour the local and national news. Thirty national newspapers are currently printed in French and ten or so local papers are published in the Mostaganem area. French is still spoken widely and French-language television apparently has the largest audience; interestingly, Algeria is the country with the highest number of satellite dishes in the Mediterranean. This is a striking contrast with French policy: France, for security reasons, has closed a number of representative and “liaison” bodies in Algeria.

If I had to single out one thing that struck us more than any other in Algeria, I would choose the hospitality we were shown. Wherever we went, our visits always ended with tea, cakes (often made by the women) and music. At a seaside

picnic, we were invited to the home of an elderly person in the village who produced carpets, pancakes and drinks for us (and there were twenty of us!) as if it were the most natural thing in the world. The visits to our Algerian hosts were exceptionally festive occasions. There was:

- couscous with the chairman's family;
- lavish tea at the secretary general's house;
- a party with traditional music on the eve of our departure.

We had every incentive to prolong our stay.

Moreover, we were always aware of the heroism of this civil society, which for ten years has been experiencing a national tragedy and an identity crisis, and, although we were never threatened, the fact that when travelling we were accompanied by a gendarmerie car and two police motorcyclists was a reminder of the sad situation in Algeria. We did not meet any foreigners during our visit, and we were constantly aware of how closed Algeria was and the consequences of its isolation for civil society: the complex arrangements that surrounded every trip, the irksome formalities at the airport, and so on. Algeria is suffocating, not to mention the major problems of urban planning, transport, the environment, etc., it faces.

What results and long-term consequences can be expected from this study visit?

The participants in this study visit, who came from different countries, cultures and social and occupational backgrounds, very soon created ties with one another, and the hospitality shown us by our Algerian friends contributed greatly to ensuring a close-knit group. Nasser's goal had been to set up four projects, but in fact eight projects were devised and set up during the study visit:

1. The "peace relay" in Mostaganem (Algeria) in June 2001;
2. The Mediterranean games in Hammamet (Tunisia) in August/September 2001;
3. Plans for a meeting of youth leaders in Oporto (Portugal) in October 2001;
4. Culture and young people, in Boumerdes (Algeria) in October/November 2001;
5. A study visit to Tamanrasset (Algeria) to discover the cultures of Southern Algeria from 23 December 2001 to 1 January 2002;
6. A project on life in a modern Mediterranean town, to be set up by the Italian partners in the first quarter of 2002;
- 7./8. Two bilateral Franco-Algerian projects, to take place at the end of 2001, involving drama, music and dance associations in Chambéry (France) and the *El Moudja* and *El Ichara* youth theatres in Mostaganem (Algeria).

Projects 1, 4 and 5 should apply for support under the EuroMed programme.

This was, therefore, a week of intense work, during which meetings sparked off projects that grew more elaborate as we made use of the complementary skills of the various members of the group, and finally led to ... other projects. On our return, the contacts we had made and all the potential for partnerships that had been acquired during our week in Algeria were used in a variety of ways, for example:

- ▶ Our journalist friend Giorgio published a report on the

Internet and is now using it as the basis for a weekly programme in Italy;

- ▶ The association NAF in Calabria organised a lecture followed by discussion on 5 May on the present situation in Algeria, with guest speaker Azzedine Zoghbi, Algerian intellectual and cultural mediator for the town of Orly;
- ▶ Mr Paul Méfano, director of the *Conservatoire National de Région de Versailles* (France), invited the El Fen Oua Nacht youth orchestra to spend a week in Versailles in autumn 2001;
- ▶ the Algerian journalist Sid Ahmed Hadjar, who accompanied the delegation for a few days, has been invited to write for a leading Canadian magazine;
- ▶ the *Institut de Sciences Politiques de Paris* (France) wishes to set up a partnership with the University of Mostaganem (Algeria) with the aim of admitting Algerian students;
- ▶ the *Forum Cinéma* association in Chambéry is making a short film with a resident Algerian director, Abdelkrim Bahloul (director of "*Le thé à la menthe*");
- ▶ the Chambéry Festival of First Novels is to set up a partnership project for young readers, involving Algeria, France, Italy and Tunisia, at the beginning of the next school year;
- ▶ the association *Prestimagic* in Chambéry will work on the story of a famous Algerian musician;
- ▶ the *Théâtre de la louve* in Chambéry will put on a shadow-theatre show based on a tale from The Arabian Nights and invite Algerian musicians and storytellers;
- ▶ *Chambéry Foot 73* and *Aix Football Club* will play a fund-raising match against an Algerian football team;

The snowball effect of this study visit to Algeria is even greater than we had hoped.

Conclusion

This study visit to Algeria was both a challenge and a test for the EuroMed programme. It was far more successful than its organisers and participants expected. We hope that it will enable other instructors and partner associations to pursue the experiment in Euro-Mediterranean partnership and organise visits to Algeria for young people. This experience will enable us to work with Algerian civil society on a long-term basis in order to get to know one another better, to our mutual benefit.

Contact address: Sylviefloris@aol.com

Arab dance performance



Training Methodologies

Learning Human Rights On-line

The Internet offers many new possibilities for learning but, especially in the field of Human Rights Education, there are only few learning experiences specifically designed for the Internet and for its main target group, young people. Human Rights Education Associates (HREA) wants to fill this gap and is currently developing, together with the Council of Europe, on-line tutorials introducing different human rights topics. Frank Elbers, responsible at HREA for the development of on-line learning materials, describes what they offer, how they function and where they are available.



by Frank Elbers



The 21st century is destined to become the century of the Internet and human rights. As just one example, my organisation, Human Rights Education Associates (HREA), receives daily e-mail requests from high school students, youth, activists and concerned citizens from all over the world asking for basic information about human rights violations and protection.

Beginning in the 1970s, various intergovernmental organisations like the Council of Europe and UNESCO (the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) realised the importance of preventing human rights abuses through educating ordinary citizens about their rights and responsibilities. Subsequent guidelines and recommendations were used by educators and NGOs to introduce human rights into schools and universities. These initiatives eventually evolved into the field of "human rights education". Today a vast number of curricula, lesson plans, textbooks and training manuals about human rights have been developed for primary and secondary schools and for non-formal educational settings.

However, the human rights education field as a whole has not kept up with the rapid development of the Internet and the new possibilities that this medium offers. At the moment numerous educational materials can be downloaded from the Web, but few learning experiences are specifically designed for the Internet. Some United Nations agencies and a number of universities in North America offer on-line human rights courses; examples are the "Teaching Human Rights Online" initiative of the Urban Morgan Institute for Human Rights at University of Cincinnati

(<http://oz.uc.edu/thro>)

and the UN CyberSchoolBus Human Rights Module (<http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/human-rights/index.html>).

However, none of these are specifically designed for high school, college and university students, or youth in general. Young people are not only a main target group for human rights education but are also very frequent users of the Internet.

In an attempt to fill this gap, HREA, in partnership with the Council of Europe, is currently developing self-guided, on-line tutorials that introduce different human rights topics. These tutorials will be available in 2002. Topics are:

- 1) the European system of human rights protection (specifically the European Convention on Human Rights and the work of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg);
- 2) the rights of refugees and displaced persons;
- 3) the rights of prisoners and detainees;
- 4) women's human rights.

Through a combination of text, images/photos, multiple-choice questions, case studies and audio and video fragments, web visitors can learn more about one of these human rights issues in about 1_ hours. The tutorials are specifically designed for those who want to acquire a basic knowledge of human rights, including activists, university students, and upper-secondary school students. By offering these tutorials free of charge, anyone with access to e-mail or the World Wide Web will have the opportunity to learn about basic human rights concepts, law and protection mechanisms. Each tutorial addresses four questions:

- ▶▶ What are the main issues framing this human rights area?
- ▶▶ What are the relevant international and regional declarations, covenants, codes and treaties that apply? How can one determine if one's national laws and practices are in conformity with these laws and codes?
- ▶▶ What methods can be used to analyse the civil, political, social, economic, and cultural conditions of a vulnerable group in your country or community?
- ▶▶ What can be done to improve the human rights situation of this group?

The tutorials are being designed in such a way that they take advantage of the unique capabilities of the Internet. Interactive multiple choice questions interspersed throughout the tutorials help learners to check if they understand the main concepts. Furthermore, case studies allow users to apply the knowledge and reasoning skills that they have learned.

All tutorials will also include an “action” component to help ensure that learners feel empowered and enabled to defend and promote human rights in their communities. At the end of each tutorial visitors will find additional resources and contact information for key human rights organisations. There is also an option to give feedback on the tutorials, to sign up to receive regular information about the relevant human rights issue, and to share concerns with peers using an on-line bulletin board.

One of the interesting advantages of Internet technology over conventional learning materials is that different media can be integrated. We are developing audio-fragments that will add a dramatic dimension to the predominantly cognitive approach of the tutorials. The tutorial on the rights of refugees, for instance, will include the hypothetical story of a refugee who applies for asylum and the barriers and hostilities she has to face. A border official tells his part of the story and so does a human rights activist who helps the refugee to gain the status of asylum seeker. Each of the three narrators adds a new and different perspective, thus giving “multiple perspectives” that encourages the user to apply critical thinking skills.

Several clear challenges have emerged during the design phase of the tutorials. The first is how to transform traditional text into a format that suits the audiovisual and interactive capacities of the Internet. Another set of challenges involves how to design the tutorials for users that will collectively

have a range of comfort and ability levels when it comes to computers and use of the Internet. In a related vein, users will be logging in from computers and Web servers with different degrees of capability and speed. Thus, the tutorial designs must somehow service the range of users that are anticipated, without sacrificing some of the more sophisticated interactions that the technology allows.

The four interactive and self-guided tutorials will be available on the HREA web site for anyone who is interested to gain a more in-depth understanding of human rights monitoring and protection. We believe that these tutorials will be a unique and worthwhile contribution to the human rights education field.

Based on the results of this initial effort, additional tutorials may be developed in other human rights areas. If demand is sufficient, HREA also intends to seek further support to offer the tutorials in several languages and to make the tutorials available on CD-ROM. In the meantime, you can judge for yourself on our progress
<http://www.hrea.org/learn/>

(**Contact address: felbers@hrea.org**)



Eleanor Roosevelt with the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights



Feeling By Doing...



Imagine yourself faced with the task of having to tell other people how another group of people might feel. Seems easy? Then imagine yourself faced with the same task, however this time the feelings you have to tell others about are feelings so distant from anything you might normally experience. This is actually the task, which more than our 30 instructors in the project Young Refugees face on an average period of one weekend a month.

What is Young Refugees?

Young Refugees is a project that aims to make young people (aged 12 - 18 years) aware of what kind of emotional experiences refugees might have encountered during their escape. **Young Refugees** is a live role-play game that goes on continuously for about 24 hours. It consists of more than 14 different sequences set within one big theatrical frame. The main "goal" of the game is to get from country "A" - in our case Somalia - to country "B" - Denmark - where the participants should try to get asylum.

Sounds easy? Well... It's not!

To make the game as realistic as possible, the 24 hours are filled with annoying people (bureaucratic office clerks, rough border patrols etc.) and challenging scenarios. Imagine yourself in a situation, where an arrogant officer at the border burns the papers you have worked hard to get in a previous sequence. How would you react? Would you protest, knowing that this man is in a position to decide the destiny of your character?

By acting out situations like these with the participants they themselves get to feel the anger, frustration, humiliation and hopelessness refugees might feel and thereby gain a better understanding of refugees' often traumatising escapes.

Buying the Game

The participants in the game are mainly young people from public or boarding schools. Sometimes the schools contact us to give the pupils an extraordinary experience. Sometimes they contact us because they are working on the theme of refugees or related topics. In addition, we have had participants from the scouts, from trade union branches etc. We have no restrictions on who we come to, though it sometimes takes some minor changes in the game to adapt it for the needs of a

particular group.

As we – the instructors – work for the Red Cross we charge our "customers" only for our transport. As the maker of the game has the copyright on the material, the customer has to buy the book describing **Young Refugees**. This is an inexpensive but very important part of the background information needed in the customer's preparation of the game.

Logistics

To make everything work out as we want it to, many things have to be coordinated, including: the routes the participants shall take; locations for the sequences; copying materials; amount of food needed; transporting instructors and briefing teachers.

In an average game we involve:

- 50 participants (school children, scouts...)
- 4 teachers
- 2 gamemasters
- 14 trained instructors

The participants are split into groups of 6 and for the rest of the game they work together as a family, helping each other no matter what happens to them.

The teachers are not actually in the game. Their primary role is "behind the scenes". They help drive us around, prepare food for us and the participants and help us look after participants who – for some reason (physical or emotional) – have decided not to continue in the game.

The Plan

To help instructors and teachers keep track of the game they are all given a personal timetable. This timetable is a plan of the game broken down into as little as 15 minutes intervals. This makes sure that everybody always knows when to be where and with whom.



by Michael Schollert



Here is an example:

| Time | Sequence | Allan | Brian | Christina | Diana | Eric |
|-------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 13.00 | Introduction | Family lecture | Geography lecture | Introduction | | Political lecture |
| 14.00 | Office sequence | Office 3 | Customs office | Office 9 | Office 3 | Customs office |
| 16.15 | First escape | | Guide | | Black marketeer | |
| 17.30 | Check Point (border) | Guard | | Guard | | Guard |
| 18.15 | Refugee Camp | Helper | Food delivery | Nurse | | Chief of camp |

How We Do It

Because all instructors and gamemasters are volunteers from the Danish Red Cross Youth and we therefore have to take into account that people work or go to school, a game is normally run during a weekend. The participants arrive at our starting point Saturday at 1.00 pm. There they are given the rules of the role-play. During this session we stress several times that this role play is acting. There is no violence, no real hatred - just **acting!** It is **not** personal – it is **our** role against **their** role. At the same time they are given four short lectures about Somalia – background information needed for the game - and are then divided into their new families where they get new identities, passports and a “case” which explains why they want to get out of Somalia.

The next 21 hours we - the instructors - do everything possible to induce stress, to frustrate them, to irritate them, to give them hope - and then take it away from them again... All of this is done to provoke emotions within the participants that they are not used to.

"How dare you?"...

... you might ask us! Admitted! It is a dangerous area to work in. We work with people, we provoke them, we do not give them much food, they do not get much sleep, they do not know what is happening next and they experience a lot of physical and emotional stress.

To make sure that the participants are alright and that we do not "lose" anybody by wearing them out physically or getting too close to them emotionally, an instructor playing one role or another constantly follows them. The instructors blend in as bureaucratic office personnel, corrupt "helpers", black marketeers, nice refugee camp personnel, a delegation from the UN and the Danish police. All of these roles are a natural part in different sequences. And they are all roles our instructors are trained to be able to fulfil. While playing these roles they are very aware of the physical and emotional state of the participants" Can we go further?" "Has he/she had enough?" "Do they understand what is going on?"

When a family – according to the timetable – is passed on from one instructor in one sequence to another instructor

in the following sequence, information concerning the family's “state” is passed on as well. That way everybody in direct contact with the participants always knows who they have to look after and is aware of the family dynamics.

Educating Instructors

Our instructors – who are not necessarily members of the Red Cross before they start – form a group of people with nothing else in common but the eagerness to do something different and in the same breath give others a learning experience beyond their expectations. To prepare them for the game, the instructors are taught the basics of youth psychology, pedagogical methods, theatrical means, how to solve conflicts, communication skills and body language - amongst many other things.

This is done during a very concentrated weekend, prior to their first game. Besides the theoretical part of the course they have to go through parts of the game – as participants – themselves. This way we make sure they get a good idea of what it is they are imposing on others.

After the course they are supervised during (at least) two role plays. This is done to help them feel safe in their work, knowing there is an experienced instructor there to guide them.

The course that the instructors attend is made and run by experienced instructors. These instructors are volunteers who have been in the project for years and who have participated in several games recently. The teaching instructors are hand-picked by the **Young Refugees'** coordination group to make sure the information the new instructors get is tested, well-founded and as up-to-date as possible. In addition to this, the teaching instructors are able to answer almost every possible question concerning the game and the means we use.

All the materials we use in the course – such as “How to” papers, guidelines for playing a role, how to prepare a sequence etc. – are made by ourselves. This way we make sure that the new instructors are given relevant and useful information - information they can use the moment they are “in the field”.



Traumas?

At the end of every game we have one of the most important parts of the game: the evaluation – or debriefing as you might call it.

To make sure nobody leaves the game without knowing why we did as we did and to make sure no psychological damage is done, we talk about the whole game, about the instructors' roles, about the participants' reactions and the feelings they are left with. We urge them to talk about what they experienced during the game. We get them to write the three most important feelings they had throughout the game and we then use that as a starting point for telling them "Why we chose the method we did!"

Before we begin what we call the big evaluation, the participants get to eat real breakfast in their family groups. They are no longer in their roles and they get to tell exactly what they want about their experiences. With them is an instructor who listens to them and "guides" them to tell more to make sure we "take the top off" of what they have done. During this time the instructor subtly turns the conversation to be about the ten - then the three - most important feelings they had. When all the families have written this down we begin the evaluation that involves all the participants. We go through every sequence in the game explaining why we did as we did - and then how it relates to real life!

This big evaluation lasts for about 1/2 hours - and this is usually the part that leaves the participants upset about the refugee situation. We are used to seeing pictures of refugees (almost to the point where we do not pay them any attention any more), hearing about them and we are aware of the fact that they are a part of the world we live in. But suddenly they are not just faces or "somebody". Suddenly the participants get a very real indication of how they (the refugees) might feel - and that lifts the refugees from being "somebody" to being "human beings in distress". A very important change in the participants attitude towards and concept of refugees.

Though they are tired when we reach Sunday we know from the looks on their faces that we have made a difference. To these participants the term "refugee" will never be the same.

Aftermath

After a while we often get feedback from the participants or from their teachers. Summing up this feedback, we are told that the participants have obtained a more nuanced attitude in their relation to other people. This new attitude is often reflected in the way they participate in discussions concerning refugees, tolerance in society and on the matter of being different in general.

Following this it is very important for us to stress that we do *not* tell people what to think! We merely give them experiences that gives them the opportunity to see themselves and the people they normally are within situations so fundamentally different – yet safe – from what they are used to. By doing this we hopefully give them a chance to broaden their minds.

Some Background Information

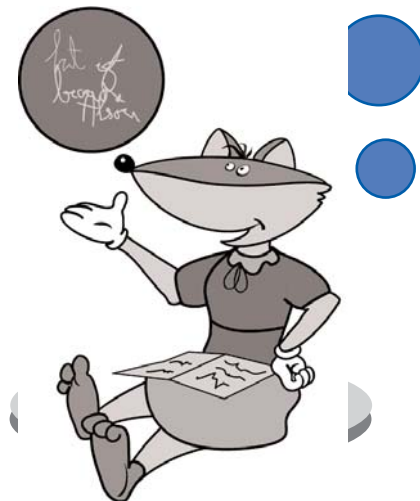
- *Young Refugees* is made by Steen Cnops Rasmussen - a Danish master of music and drama.
- The development started in 1991 and is based on interviews with, and real live scenarios told by, refugees seeking asylum in Denmark. The interviews were done by Steen who paid special attention to the asylum seekers from the eastern part of Africa.
- *Young Refugees* has been run by the Danish Red Cross Youth since 1994.
- Danish instructors have helped establish the project in Norway (1997) and in Iceland (1999) where local Red Cross members are running it.

For further information, please contact me at:

m_schollert@hotmail.com

Telling Tales

by Mark Taylor



After five issues of Coyote looking in this methodology section at "Where do you stand?", we felt it could be inspiring to look at another generic form used in training: telling tales and stories which help us reach the parts that other activities never do. Tales generate images in our heads and appeal to emotions, often leaving things open to several interpretations – great stuff to start discussions and introduce themes. If you have tales you would like to share in this section, please let us know!

This time we look at two little stories related to prejudice and racism.

MARY

Prejudices and stereotypes are schemes which help us to understand reality; when reality does not correspond to our prejudice it is easier for our brains to change our interpretation of reality than to change the prejudice. Prejudices help us to complement information when we do not have it all. Siang Be – a trainer and therapist living in Berlin - demonstrates this process by asking his audience to listen to the following short story:

"Mary heard the ice-cream van coming down the street. She remembered her birthday money and ran into the house".

You could interpret this passage like this: Mary is a child, she would like an ice-cream, she runs into the house to get some money so that she can buy the ice-cream. But where do you find any of this information? Try changing any of the nouns in the passage ('money' to 'gun', for instance) and see what happens.

GOLD STAR

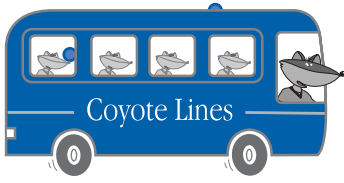
A primary school class comes in from their break. The teacher asks little Alice: "What did you do during your break?" Alice replies, "I played games in the playground." The teacher replies "That's good. Go to the blackboard, and if you can write 'games' correctly, I'll give you a gold star to stick in your book." Alice does so and gets a gold star. The teacher asks little Billy what he did during the break. Billy replies, "I played games with Alice in the playground." The teacher replies, "Good. If you write 'play' correctly on blackboard, I'll give you a gold star to stick in your book." Billy duly does so, and gets a gold star. Then the teacher asks little Ahmed what he did during the break. Ahmed replies "I tried to play with Alice and Billy, but they threw stones at me." The teacher says, "What? They threw stones at you? That sounds to me like blatant unjustifiable racial discrimination. If you can go to the blackboard and write 'blatant unjustifiable racial discrimination', I'll give you a gold star to stick in your book."

Consider the little "story" above, (it was sent to me as one of those forwarded e-mail jokes which slow down the internet). What kinds of messages are contained in it? The scene probably never happened, but it does draw attention to some of the difficulties in trying to analyse if human rights are being promoted in any given situation. School is often a place of non-rights, to use the expression of the French philosophy professor Bernard Defrance. It has been known for teachers, school directors and students to disobey the law or to infringe on the physical or moral integrity of others. Such things can also happen if people are ignorant of the law or when they are confronted with dramatic situations which destabilise them, like violence, expulsion or exclusion. How do we transform our schools into places of rights? Who needs to be involved? What roles can the informal education sector play?

So, that is a first go at telling some tales. Let's hear some of your stories.

Contact address: brazav@yahoo.com





Coyote Meets Trainers

Coyote is a curious little creature and is fond of wandering around Europe to meet trainers in the field. Are you interested in getting a picture on how your colleagues in the field of training think and feel? Then this is your section.

All of you know of course Queen Tamara and her favourite city Trabizond, can draw the map of Sakartvelo by heart and consider Batumi as the place to be for your summer-, sun-, and sea-holidays. And without any doubt, all female singles among the Coyote readers are still waiting for the return of Zviad Cham-sakhardia on a big white horse.

Not Nana Saginashvili. Sparkling big eyes eager to read the interview even before it was written, she is not waiting for anything at all. Dynamic hands express her energy and readiness to act. She has a hunger as deep as the Black Sea itself: for knowledge, know how and information that she wants to take home to Georgia. Because even if she has an international mind and spirit, she loves the country where she lives and works.

Having studied to become a schoolteacher, she worked from 1995 till 2000 in the State Department of Youth Affairs of Georgia as an advisor of international relations.

Interview



by Leen Laconte

COYOTE MEETS TRAINERS



Nana Saginashvili



Nana:

But all of a sudden my whole life changed. Everything turned upside down and inside out. I was flabbergasted. What was the cause? Me taking part in an Intercultural English Language Course in 1998 in London. Being outside my country for the first time, meeting people with whom it was so easy to talk to, seeing 'normal' things from a stranger's perspective...but most of all getting know-how and energy to act and change things at home. All of a sudden I felt very confident and powerful and I wanted most of all to pass that feeling on to others.

Coyote:

I can imagine that this is not an easy thing to do when you work in the State Department?

Nana:

Of course not, especially not in Georgia. Working for the government is not exactly very rewarding. You earn only about 20 Euro a month. But that is not even the most annoying aspect. A lot of people in Georgia earn nothing at all. What really bothered me a lot is the image of corruption, lethargy and bureaucracy our government and administration have. Experience and qualifications are not enough to find and keep your place in such a structure. You need a protector. I was sick of it. I wanted to change things and all of a sudden it was clear to me that I, as a person with my qualities and beliefs could do much more outside the government than inside it. So I quit my job.

Coyote:

You quit your job in a country where the unemployment figures are sky high?

Nana:

Exactly. 41,66% of the Georgian population is under 35 and I do not know how many, but the majority has no job...Young people run around in a vacuum facing a sad economic situation.

Young people are faced by many problems and the current political-economic changes affect young people's socio-economic and spiritual well being. What basic things that we need most, are not there. People are forced to live in a day to day existence. It is painful to see so many educated young people leaving the country trying to save their families.

You must understand that there is not what you call a 'middle field' in my country. Most of our young people have no idea about what the place of young people in society can be, what rights they have or what can be done about the lack of rights. Young people should learn about human rights, it would prepare them for the future. NGOs, private organisations and governments have to pay more attention to the participation of young people in social life. They must create elementary conditions for the development of future generations.

Coyote:

I am sure a lot of politicians will agree with what you say. But it is not a matter of words is it?

Nana:

Exactly. I appreciate the recommendations on teaching and learning about human rights in schools, adopted by so many governments, but in Georgia things should be DONE. That is why I left my job and established an organisation called "International Union ERTOBA". ERTOBA means "cohesion", to be together. It is a nongovernmental, non-profit, non-political organisation. Our aims and objectives are to develop relations with governmental, non-governmental and international organisations. But most importantly, we want to implement concrete projects: to support the organisation of tourism, to run cultural activities, to develop peace initiatives, to work in the ecological and social fields like health, fighting drugs and alcoholism and so on. We organise quite a lot of training activities, i.e. on minority issues, drug abuse, young people's rights, and conflict management... We also organised a Georgian language course for foreigners. Next to all that we have our charity actions in co-operation with children's hospitals. We also offer free medical services for children and send young people to summer camps abroad.

Coyote:

I kind of think that our readers need to be introduced a bit more to Georgia and the Black Sea to be able to really grasp what you are doing. Can you tell us something on their role in history and what they mean in contemporary society, globally and locally?

Nana:

Georgia is located in the Southern Caucasus. It covers an area of 67.9 thousand square kilometres. The capital is Tbilisi. Georgia is a country with cultural traces that go back to 1000 years BC. The Georgian language is not similar to any other language. It has a peculiar vocabulary, syntax, phonetics and alphabet, which originated in antiquity. In the thirties or forties of the fourth century AD, Christianity was declared an official religion. Currently, several religious groups are represented in Georgia: Christianity, Islam, Judaism and others.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Georgia was declared a colony by Russia. In 1918, Georgia declared itself independent but in 1921 it was invaded by the Red Army of Russia. Georgia restored its independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990. Georgia became a member of the United Nations in 1992 and a member of the Council of Europe in 1999.

The Black Sea plays an important role in the development of the economy and culture of the country. One of the main tendencies in its economic co-operation is the development of a common transport network joining all our countries. There is a very attractive project to build a ring road around the Black Sea. But the major large-scale transport project, the pipeline construction and the establishment of power and communication systems cannot be implemented if tension is rising in our region, which can have an awful effect on regional co-operation.

Therefore, the importance of the Caucasus as a geographical and state-political area is currently growing. The Caucasus is the world's crossroad of Asia and Europe, East and West, North and South. During the last years, the amount of global programmes, such as Euro-Asian projects, East-East-projects, Traseca, the pipeline, or the Great Silk Road-project, have been growing.

Caucasus as a region and Georgia as a country hold key positions. Modern international programmes and projects are good for the strategic development of the region but that young people benefit from this is extremely important. That is why it is necessary to start to build a society where young people have their space, place and opportunities to act, to organise and to work.

Coyote:

I see there is a lot of work on the grassroots level, still you also organise international training activities, and quite a lot of them. How come?

Nana:

The main work is on a day-to-day basis with as many Georgian young people as possible. It is not really a political or a principle choice. It is just like that ... when we announce our local or regional training activities we invite young Georgian participants. Young people in Georgia are so glad that at last something is happening. They want to meet, to discuss, they are so eager. They talk with each other about our society, our politics, our problems and challenges. They are very active. When they go back home they start to organise their own local meetings and projects. It is amazing how successful we are in initiating and supporting new youth projects throughout the country... with our basic-training activities.

But I also know that Georgian young people do not have a lot of opportunities, practically none, to leave the country and to meet other young people from other countries. Since I have experienced how inspiring this can be, I decided to organise international training events in Georgia. In that way Georgian young people have the advantage of the training and of the intercultural confrontation.

Coyote:

What exactly are the subjects you are dealing with in your training activities?

Nana:

Intercultural learning; we play games, young people love them. They

even invent new ones on the spot. They like to discuss about corruption and how we can fight it as young people in our local communities. Rights of young people are another favourite subject. Young people in Georgia like to be among young people. They enjoy this new possibility to talk amongst themselves without the interference of adults or politicians... I can tell you, It is far easier to discuss corruption if the debate is not led by those considered to be corrupt.

Coyote:

You are one of the few people I have met who seem to have a very clear and explicit mission in life. Can you tell us a bit, what this mission is all about?

Nana:

"Love your life, make it more perfect, beautify all things in your life. Seek to make your life long, and put its purpose in the service of your people". It is a saying by Tecumseh. He was an American Indian Chief.

I think mankind came to earth as truth, just as all other parts of nature did. Yet there are those who corrupt this truth and call it a lie. I call that the "Big Lie". I speak out, in the hope of awakening others so that the old mind-set of corruption can be changed into honesty and fairness. I try to give that kind of honest energy with the intent of helping to open the eyes of others. There are those of us who know these things, either because we are involved or have experience, or because we just "know" that something is terribly wrong when certain people on this planet treat others in ways that are opposed to the meaning of love and self-respect and all the rest of creation. I am against all kinds of violence. I don't understand the language of the weapon. The world is faced with a cruel reality. We have no right to speak in the name of peace if we use guns. Violence cannot be eradicated by violence. Only dialogue will establish the future society on the basis of peace, democracy, solidarity and tolerance. I as a trainer am responsible for that.

Coyote:

What would you do with one million Euro?

Nana:

I would create a land of peace. Peace comes within the souls of men and we need to take time to enjoy living and life and each other. "The price of hating another human being is loving oneself less". I honour the place of love, of truth, of light and of peace. Please, take a moment, even if it is only ten seconds, and stop and smell the roses.

Coyote:

One story before we go to sleep?

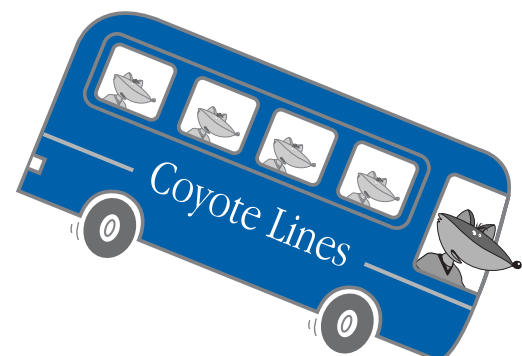
Nana:

I remember one very small story. It is called "The never ending story". A little boy is given a final wish to save the world from destruction. He wishes that the one person who has the ultimate power "had a heart".

Nana Saginashvili can be contacted at:

internationalu@yahoo.com

This interview was conducted by Leen Laconte.



marker

"Marker" is a regular column in Coyote, written by Mark Taylor, looking at issues in training and hoping to encourage debate. Feedback from you will be really welcome, whether as a participant, trainer, observer or something completely different.

Where do methods come from?

"I'm looking for new methods for my work", "we need new approaches for our training" – such are the types of things to be heard often at the beginning of training courses. Sometimes it feels like that is the only thing or, at least, the main thing that interests people nowadays. Forget the contacts with the other people, forget the experiences, forget the self-questioning – just give me the recipe book! Then I can put it together with all the other methods I have collected and I will be better prepared than you are. Even better, give it to me on a diskette and I can change it a little bit and then put my own name on it for distribution as a handout at my next course.

Maybe this sounds a little bit cynical so far. It is. But only to come to some questions and ideas about these things some of us call "methods". Others refer to them using such words as "activities" or "exercises" or "games". It is important what you call them, as participants will react very differently depending on the descriptive context. A really "nice" way to look at this is to divide the participants into two groups and introduce a short activity; to the first group, just call it "a game" and to the second call it "an exercise developed within several multi-national companies such as IBM or Shell for their introductory senior management training". Then compare the seriousness with which people participate... This method about methods came to me in a dream, but I don't claim any ownership over it. Maybe someone told me about something similar and I just forgot who it was or when it was.

Is there such a thing as "method ethics"? A couple of possibly fictional stories

These stories might help a more general reflection about discovering the origins and original aims of methods; giving credit where it is due; and in raising questions about the difficulties in trying to do it even when you want to... You may even come to the conclusion that none of this matters. See what you think.

A friend tells me of a workshop on group dynamics he attended. The trainer arrived, sat down, looked at the group and said nothing for 40 minutes. Then he and the participants spent the next hour discussing what happened in the group. A wonderful, courageous idea! Sadly, I forget the name of the trainer but, my heart pounding like mad, I use the idea a couple of months later in a workshop on "the role of the trainer working with international groups". Reactions of the participants range from confused giggling to rather violent cries of "what the hell do you think you are doing?!" The discussion afterwards is very fruitful.

Do I owe anything to the trainer? or to my friend?

Working in an educational centre in Germany, I find the description of an intercultural simulation game next to the photocopying machine. It seems to be really interesting. There are no references to the game's origin on the photocopy. Questioning all of the educational staff in the building produces no concrete results. The general opinion is that a participant from somewhere must have left it there. In my next course, I introduce the game to my team colleagues and they are excited about it. "Ooh, that's new! Let's try it! It would fit very well into our aims

for Thursday." So we adapt it a bit and it works very well. Participants want a copy of the game and we give it to them. They don't seem to be worried about the lack of references. And, over the next year, the game appears in training course reports all over the place.

What did the game's creators intend to achieve with the game? Does anybody owe anything to anybody?

As a trainee trainer in an outdoor education course, I work with a more experienced colleague called Ellen. She introduces a lovely team-building exercise which she calls "Matthias' Stick". A trainer called Matthias taught her the method and she feels that calling it by his name gives the stick she uses special qualities. It gives the activity a certain mystery and she likes the idea of bringing in the collegial connection. When I use the activity in future courses, I always refer to it as "Ellen's Magic Stick". Apparently this activity is sometimes referred to as the "Helium Stick" as the stick seems to fly away all by itself.

Do I owe Matthias something? or the tree?

A group of trainers is working on a publication for the educators in their organisation. After looking through all their files, they have quite a collection of methods covering introduction sessions, warm up games, presentation techniques, conflict resolution, etc etc. Nearly all of them are known to the editorial team as they have been working on seminars and courses for years. Apart from two or three methods, they have no idea where they have been published before. (Or they have been published in so many collections that giving one reference would be silly – example? the "Gordian Knot"). They decide to include a phrase similar to this in the introduction: ***Many of the methods and reflections in this publication belong to a kind of international method pool. We have given references where we can.***

Is that enough?

Where are the limits?

Whenever trainers from different backgrounds get together there is a wonderful opportunity to compare how they work, what kinds of approaches they use, to question and to think. Does it help us to know that, for example, the BafaBafa intercultural simulation game was invented to raise awareness of cultural differences among American GI's before being posted overseas? Maybe there is no such thing as original thought and everything we do

just builds on what has been before. I still feel that we should at least try to find out some of the origins of the tools we use and give credit to that. Sometimes it is just not possible, or we just discover the tip of the iceberg. Speaking of which: who was the first person to use the idea of an iceberg when trying to explain a concept of culture? My researches only take me back as far as an old report from AFS (American Field Service). Do you have a better reference?

Contact address: brazav@yahoo.com



Peter DRAPER is the Co-ordinator of the Amelia Trust Farm (a community farm project) in South Wales which works with disadvantaged young people. His involvement with UNA Exchange started 5 years ago by hosting workcamps doing environmental and social work, he then moved onto the working group for UNA Exchange's Leaders' Training. He is now on the Executive Committee of UNA Exchange and is involved with the development of their European Voluntary Service programme. The Amelia Trust Farm has pioneered UNA Exchange's latest European work by hosting the first Youth for Europe and EVS projects there. He still trains workcamp leaders for UNA Exchange and has been on the Prep Team for both of the Alliance's 'Training for Trainers' seminars in Strasbourg and Budapest.

Frank ELBERS is HREA (the Human Rights Education Associates)'s Information Officer responsible for the development of on-line learning materials and resources. He is also course director for HREA's distance learning courses for human rights professionals. Frank is a Dutch national who lives and works in Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

Sylvie FLORIS lectures at the Paris Institute of Political Studies on the European Union, its institutional functioning and its implications for foreign students. She organises training courses for youth leaders for the French Youth Office and talks about the Youth Programme to elected representatives and persons responsible for the social integration of disadvantaged young people. She is a trainer for the Socrates programme and places maximum emphasis on the link between research and non-formal education activities. She is employed as an expert by the French Leonardo Agency. Most of her training activities are carried out under the auspices of the European Institute for the Promotion of Innovation and Culture in Education (EPICE), a non-profit-making association (under the French law on associations of 1901), where she is in charge of training courses.

Tony GEUDENS is perhaps one of the last Belgians: born in the North of the country, studied in the South and now living in Brussels. He is always on the lookout for new challenges and likes to wear different hats: Sometimes he is a free-lance trainer, working on topics such as international project management and voluntary service, which brings along a strong intercultural component. You can also catch him part-time at SALTO-YOUTH @ Jint where he organises training initiatives to enhance the quality of projects within the YOUTH programme. His latest passion is event management, as he had the chance to organise "Bridges for Training" last September, a European training event bringing together different actors in the field of training and youth (www.eu2001youth.be). And when there is time left, he runs training courses for youth workers for the federation of youth clubs and participates in work camps with Service Civil International (Japan will be next).

Corinne GRASSI first was a volunteer and trainer for youth leaders from different countries in an international work camp organisation. She then worked for the Youth sector of the Council of Europe as a trainer with international youth organisations, to a large extent with target groups in difficulty of cultural or social integration and recognition. Today she is employed part time for the Youth Express Network, a European network of social workers, and works as a freelance trainer for various NGOs. She is always ready for projects which offer new perspectives and open up the local to the international level.

Balázs HIDVÉGHY (31) has worked as the Educational Advisor for the Partnership Programme at the Council of Europe since January 2001. He is Hungarian, and has a background in education and international relations. He studied at ELTE University in Budapest and at Leeds University in the UK. Balázs worked previously as a teacher and NGO leader. Since 1997 he has been living in Strasbourg, France.

Peter HOFMANN was involved with the AFS Intercultural Programmes in Vienna for seven years after a year as an Exchange Student in England. He studied history and political sciences in Vienna. He was in charge of the EVS National Agency in Austria from 1996 until June 1999. Since then he is focusing on training at European level mainly within the European Voluntary Service programme.

Natalija JURKOVA (20) is Russian and lives in Latvia with her parents, brother and sister. She is studying computer programming at Riga Technical College. She has been a committed and enthusiastic volunteer for the Latvian Gender Problem Centre "GENDERS" for one year. At the Centre she works in projects dealing with trafficking of young women and girls and gender problems, such as discrimination against women.

Leen LACONTE studied Comparative Cultural Studies in Gent. She developed "The Imagination", a national project on youth (sub)culture, the arts and multicultural society. After that she was a lecturer and tutor in a school for social workers (Sociale Hogeschool). Until the beginning of 2000 she worked as Project Officer for the Flemish Youth for Europe Agency in Belgium. Leen now works for Villanella, an arts centre focussing on contemporary art, children and young people in Antwerp, Belgium.

Giulio 'Mac' MAISTRELLI was born in Italy in 1974. Since 1992 he has been involved in international activities, first as a participant and youth leader and in more recent years as a full time trainer. In the year 2000 he joined Vedogiovane, an Italian NGO with which he is developing his skills as a member of a pool of trainers and for which he co-ordinates and manages all intercultural projects. He also collaborates with various National Agencies and with the SALTO-INJEP training centre in Marly-le-Roi.

Jean-Philippe RESTOUEIX is 38 years old. He is a former member of the European team of the International Youth of Catholic Students (JECI-MIEC) and former Secretary General of the European Coordination Bureau of INGYOs (ECB). Since 1994 he has been working at the Youth Directorate of the Council of Europe, where he is currently responsible for the programmes of assistance for the Youth sector. Enthusiastic about Europe, he is also a specialist of silent movies.

Michael SCHOLLERT started working on the project Young Refugees in 1996. Shortly afterwards he joined the co-ordinating group and has – by now – tried almost everything possible in the project. He helped Steen to start Young Refugees in Norway and in Iceland and is still a frequent game-leader on Norwegian games. In real life he works with company integration following friendly take-overs.

Robin SCLAFANI is the Education and Training Programme Development Advisor for the European Peer Training Organisation (EPTO) and the A CLASSROOM OF DIFFERENCETM Programme on behalf of the Centre Européen Juif d'Information (CEJI). As an independent consultant and trainer in the field of conflict resolution and community development, Robin has been working with organizations such as the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA). Originally from New York City, Robin came to Brussels as a Fulbright Scholar to the European Commission DGXXII in 1998.

John SEED is founder and director of the Rainforest Information Centre in Australia. Since 1979 he has been involved in direct actions which have led to the protection of the Australian rainforests. He has travelled around the world lecturing and showing films to raise awareness of the plight of the rainforests. He has produced TV documentaries about the struggle for the rainforests and has written and lectured extensively on deep ecology as well as conducting Councils of All Beings and other re-Earthing rituals around the world.

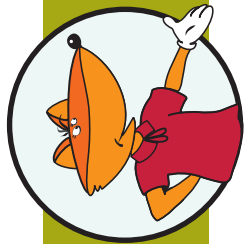
Coyote editorial team

Bernard ABRIGNANI is a civil servant in the French Ministry of Youth and Sports, and works at the National Institute for Youth and Community Education (INJEP). He is in charge of "Action 5 (Support Measures)" at the National Agency of the European YOUTH programme and co-ordinator of one of the SALTO-YOUTH resource centres. He is responsible for devising training courses for the EuroMed Programme and for the compendium of good educational practices. He is a member of the T-kits editorial board. His specialist fields are youth participation, community development, education, crime prevention, intercultural learning and international youth work. He has directed various national and international training courses and published a number of books and articles. (abrignani@injep.fr)

Sonja MITTER is working as a freelance trainer and consultant in the field of European youth work and cooperation. She is German and lives in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Her main areas of interest include intercultural learning, intercultural team work, project management, training for trainers, Euro-Mediterranean co-operation and youth work in and with South East Europe. From 1995 until 2000, she worked, as a member of the educational team at the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. She has a university background in history with a focus on migration issues. (sonjamitter@aol.com)

Carol Ann MORRIS is the Project Officer for Training and Membership Services at the European Youth Forum. She is responsible for the co-ordination of its Pool of Trainers and the training programme. She deals with membership applications and as an information service to the 88 members. Other responsibilities include liaison with the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport concerning training courses and the ADACS programme; working on the Coyote and T-Kit editorial teams; working with the European Commission in the selection of projects for funding through the YOUTH programme. With a background in counselling psychology, she used the latter as a basis for her training and project work with international and local development organisations in India and the UK. (carol-ann.morris@youthforum.com)

Mark TAYLOR is as a freelance trainer and consultant. He has worked on projects throughout Europe for a wide range of organisations, institutions, agencies and businesses. In addition to training and consulting activities, he has long experience of writing publications for an international public. Major areas of work include: intercultural learning, international team work, human rights education and campaigning, and training for trainers. (brazav@yahoo.com)



The Adventures of Spiffy

Mark Taylor - The Big Family

N°5

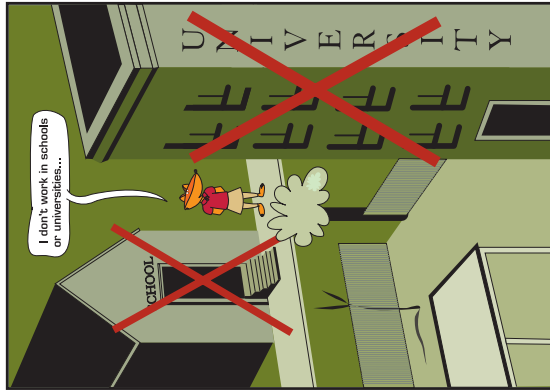
Spiffy explores non-formal education



As an informal educator, I wonder if I also do non-formal education?

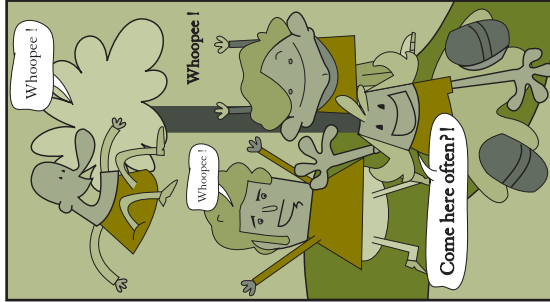
Team member

failed to show up for your course?
Spiffy Productions announce a new modal
Inflatable Trainer with new optional
extras including ambiguity tolerance.
Only €600.



I don't work in schools or universities...

My participants come to the courses voluntarily

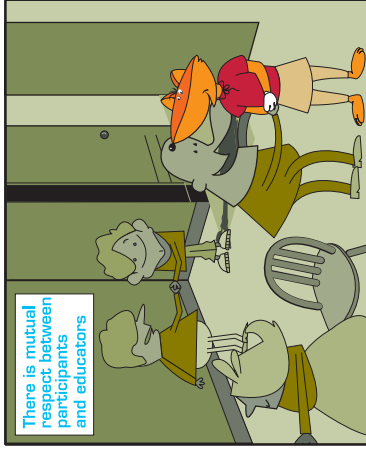


Whoopie!

Whoopie!

Whoopie!

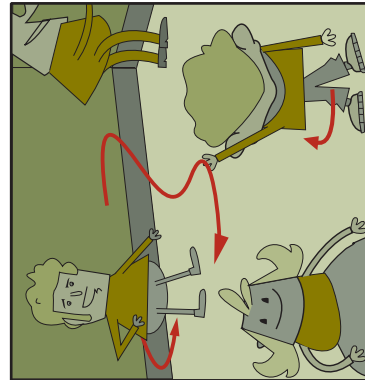
Come here often?!



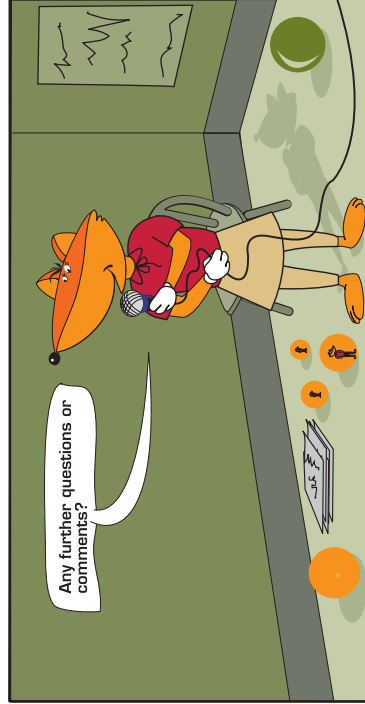
There is mutual respect between participants and educators

Reward: anyone found the spiral binder of my T-Kit on "Project Management" ?
€100 given for its return.
Reply to PO Box Spiffy 500.

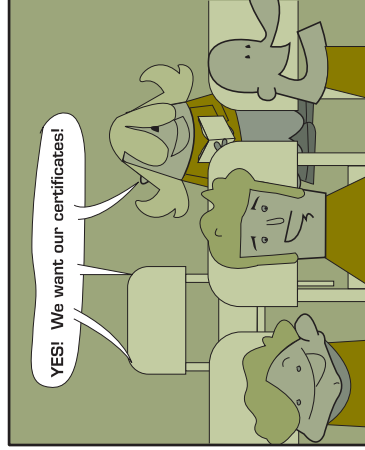
**** Correction: European Citizenship passports have been withdrawn due to lack of definition.



Our methods are interactive



Any further questions or comments?



YES! We want our certificates!



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COUNCIL OF EUROPE & EUROPEAN COMMISSION

TRAINING-YOUTH



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