Emotional Competencies:
Being a Trainer and Carl R. Rogers' Philosophy
of Interpersonal Relationship

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Contents

Dedication

I dedicate this essay

- to Veronika who supports and challenges me in our living and learning together constantly. I am very grateful for that chance to grow and develop.

Furthermore I am grateful

- to my teacher and trainer in client-centered therapy E. Ruschmann for her deep understanding and perseverance during the years and

- to all participants and team-colleagues for the big chance to learn from them such a lot.

„Das erste Wirkende ist das Sein des Erziehers; das zweite, was er tut; das dritte erst, was er redet.“
(R.Guardini, Herkunft unbekannt)

("The first effect of an educator is his being; the second is what he does; only the third what he says."
Translation: PW)

1. Introduction: Origin and Aim of this Essay

At the end of the long-term training course of the partnership of the Council of Europe and the European Commission called "Advanced Training for Trainers in Europe" (ATTE) I am reflecting on some learning results that I want to share with the European training community.

In the European Youth field young people and multipliers are trained for more active participation and social inclusion in our European society. I have the impression that the main focus of these training-courses lies on the knowledge about Europe and the skills to use this knowledge. I think nowadays that's not enough for reaching good results.

Since about ten years it becomes more and more evident that a successful performance at work is closely linked to emotional competencies of the acting people. In the field of economy and enterprises this has become a self-evident issue (see: Goleman). Cherniss mentions in her essay "that there now is a considerable body of research suggesting that a person's ability to perceive, identify, and manage emotion provides the basis for the kinds of social and emotional competencies that are important for success in almost any job. Furthermore, as the pace of change increases and the world of work makes ever greater demands on a person's cognitive, emotional, and physical resources, this particular set of abilities will become increasingly important." (Cherniss)

I am convinced that emotional intelligence and emotional competencies are important aspects of the ability to participate actively in the society and I think that there must be put more emphasis on these aspects. Young people who have emotional competencies explicitly at their disposal have a much bigger chance in the local community and on the labour market.

To develop these competencies practically Carl Rogers' philosophy can be an easily applicable and powerful tool. In my essay I want to put the main focus on the personal and the social competencies of a trainer, i.e. the interpersonal relationships in training courses and the personality of the trainer him- or herself on the background of Carl Rogers' philosophy of interpersonal relationship and person-centered therapy.

Most people working in the Youth field have some knowledge about Carl Rogers' philosophy. I think that his approach is today implicitly integrated in many of the actual training-models and -methods. As a reminder I want to go "back to the roots" and put his original "core conditions" for development and growth back into the explicit focus and have a closer look at the values of this training approach.

Henrik Otten writes in his study on trainers' competencies: "High quality European youth work also has this obligation to provide active supervision and support to young people but has the additional task of mediating (several, PW) objectives, such as participation, solidarity and democratic commitment in the context of an intercultural education, with such attributes as tolerance and active respect for human dignity, and thus work towards the development of a liveable European citizenship." (Otten, p.8)

I think that Rogers' philosophy can be useful for beginners and for experienced trainers in the European training field

- to have or improve constructive exchange in communication
- to develop or improve satisfying relationships, professionally and personally
- to support the handling of difficult training situations within a team or a group
- to develop the own personality, own strengths and overcome individual weaknesses
- to reduce the gap between the person as a being and the 'role' of a trainer
- to enlarge the own competencies as trainer
- to foster young people and multipliers with these competences

for developing the quality of trainings. As Otten points out one important element (related and linked with others) that can constitute quality refers to the

"Personal aspects: These are the trainers' competencies that are assumed to be necessary. They involve various dimensions: cognitive/intellectual, moral/ethical, emotional and action-oriented (…). They can be regarded as personal and social skills and are understood in this study as basic attributes that, given the multicultural character of the training and the necessity for multicultural learning, trainers are particularly required to possess." (Otten, p. 12)

One important aspect in the ATTE-training course was to develop quality criteria for training courses on the European level. The following criteria for training quality have had been suggested:

- Need analysis
- Aims and objectives
- Participant-centeredness
- Expected outcomes
- Effectiveness of individual and group learning process
- Relevance of the theme / topic
- Trainers team work
- Coherence of the training principles / objectives / methodology / duration
- Balance between the preparation / delivery / evaluation / follow-up
- European dimension
- Use of resources
- Non-formal education approach

For to reach these suggested quality criteria there are several emotional competencies requested. Emotional competencies refer to the acting persons, trainers and participants and have a special outcome: "Emotional competence refers to the personal and social skills that lead to superior performance in the world of work." (Cherniss)

Goleman lists twenty emotional competencies (in 4 linked clusters) to be learned:

	SELF Personal Competence	OTHER Social Competence
Recognition	**Self-Awareness** - Emotional self-awareness - Accurate self-assessment - Self-confidence	**Social Awareness** - Empathy - Service orientation - Organisational awareness
Regulation	**Self-Management** - Self-control - Trustworthiness - Conscientiousness - Adaptability - Achievement drive - Initiative	**Relationship Management** - Developing others - Influence - Communication - Conflict management - Leadership - Change catalyst - Building bonds - Teamwork & collaboration

(Goleman)

I am convinced that the important topics in the European Youth field as Citizenship, Human Rights, active participation, social inclusion, qualification and work and intercultural learning can be strongly moved forward towards the civil society if the multipliers and young people have a strong development of their emotional competencies at their disposal.

Without going deeper into the topic of Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Competencies it can be said that many of these competencies might find their achievement and development by using Rogers' philosophy.

Of course it is possible just to do the job as a trainer quite well: planning, carrying out and evaluating the work that has to be done. In the team they have a working-relationship. After that the trainer goes home and looks for the next job. Then training is just a job that the trainer does as his profession. But in my opinion and experience being a trainer can be much more. And for the sake of higher quality of high level training in Europe I think there *should* be much more. A development and improvement can be a process on different levels:

- development of the personality
- development of relationships within team and group
- development of the group itself
- development of the competencies of the young people and the multipliers
- development of the quality and the results of the course
- development of standards for high-level training courses.

If there is a wish to develop the requested emotional competencies Rogers' practical philosophy can be of great value. A starting point are the three "core conditions".

Rogers remarks that creating a climate marked by the "core conditions" realness, acceptance and empathy makes" exciting things happen. Persons and groups in such a climate move away from rigidity and toward flexibility, away from static living toward process living, away from dependence toward autonomy, away from defensiveness toward self-acceptance, away from being predictable toward an unpredictable creativity" (Rogers 1980, p.43f).

In the following chapters I will describe Rogers' philosophy from different aspects:

- In chapter 2 I will recall these '**core conditions**' for developing communication more generally.
- Chapter 3 deals with the **fundamental attitude and behaviour** of a trainer.
- **About Communication** (chapter 4) deals with two important aspects of communication.
- **Working as a team member** (chapter 5) deals with Rogers' experience as a team member.
- Chapter 6 deals with the use of this philosophy for the **handling of conflicts.**
- In chapter 7 I want to make some proposals for the **practical use of Rogers' philosophy**
- **Closing remarks** will finish the essay.
- At the end you will find some hints on **literature**.

2. Basics for Growing:
The ‚Core Conditions' for Facilitative Practice

REALNESS – ACCEPTANCE – EMPATHY

To some extend everybody has a kind of understanding and practice of these „core conditions":

- More or less we all are real, transparent and talking honestly about things that are on our mind.
- More or less we are mostly accepting the opposite person as s/he is and behaves.
- More or less we have a kind of feeling for his / her needs, wishes and thinking.

We use them in all kinds of communication – to some extend. But often they could be improved.

Every individual has resources for development inside him-/herself. "These resources can be tapped if a definable climate of facilitative psychological attitudes can be proved.
There are three conditions that must be present in order for a climate to be growth-promoting. (…)
The first element could be called (…) **realness** or **congruence**. The more the therapist is himself or herself in the relationship, putting up no professional front or personal façade, the greater is the likelihood that the client will change and grow in a constructive manner. (…) The term "transparent" catches the flavour of this condition (…) For the therapist, what he or she is

experiencing is available to awareness, can be lived in the relationship, and can be communicated, if appropriate.."(Rogers 1980, 115f) It does not work if I try to hide my real feelings and thoughts towards colleagues or participants. Mostly we are together for several days and 'negative' feelings and thoughts will arise. If I try to hide them – something will go wrong. They will break through somewhere else, mostly unexpected and inappropriate.

"The second attitude of importance in creating a climate for change is **acceptance.** When the therapist is experiencing a positive, acceptant attitude toward whatever the client *is* at that moment, whatever immediate feeling is going on – confusion, resentment, fear, anger, courage, love, or pride, movement or change is more likely to occur." (Rogers 1980, p.116)

I see it as a personal challenge to accept the opposite person just as s/he is at this moment. Often it is difficult just to accept all the emotions and ideas of the other person. It can be difficult not to get directly involved and to burst out with *my* ideas and feelings!
To be very clear, it does not mean to *agree* with the other person, it does only mean to fully *accept* his / her expression of his / her personal situation.

"The third facilitative aspect of the relationship is **empathic understanding**. This means that the therapist senses accurately the feelings and personal meanings that the client is experiencing and communicates this understanding to the client." (Rogers 1980, p.116) This kind of careful and active listening is very rare in our lives. We often think we listen, but very rarely do we listen with true empathy.
It might be a misunderstanding but what Rogers describes does *NOT* mean to identify with the other person or his problems, it means a kind of going empathically and emotionally along with the other person with "real understanding".

Focusing on training situations I think that these three conditions are a powerful tool for the improvement of quality. If persons feel deeply accepted relationships can freely develop and a lot of energy is getting free and available for developing the contents of the course.

It is not easy to develop the competencies in one's own personality. It needs the will to change something and it needs a lot of honesty with oneself.
Referring to the Self-awareness cluster Goleman writes: "Emotional self-awareness reflects the importance of recognizing one's own feelings and how they affect one's performance. (…) Self-awareness is key to realizing one's own strengths and weaknesses. Individuals with the accurate self-assessment competence are aware of their abilities and limitations, seek out feedback and learn from their mistakes, and know where they need to improve and when to work with others who have complementary strengths." (Goleman)

The first step to improve Rogers' basic conditions could be to learn being more empathic, to learn to become a more sensitive listener: Trying to see the other person through his or her eyes and trying to understand him or her with his/her motivation, thoughts and feelings. Leaving yourself – for the moment – aside.

Acceptance and realness are – in my experience – much more difficult to develop. I have to work a lot with myself, my strengths and my weaknesses, my successes and my failures. It is a long time and complex process of honest self-development.

Some practical exercises for personal development and change can be found in chapter no.7.

3. The Trainers Attitude and Behaviour:
Rogers' Personal Learnings

I think it is obvious to everyone that the attitude and the behaviour of a trainer has great impact on the group, the process and the learning of the participants.
Otten says: "Trainers on these high quality European level training courses are primarily the trainee's dialogue partners and have proven counselling, discussion, facilitation and action methods skills." (Otten, p.15)

I think that the "trainer's being", his values, attitude and behaviour is a kind of "hot" topic: What is the "right" attitude for a trainer? What is allowed? What is forbidden? The answers often stay vague and unclear.

Often colleagues are working very result-orientated and don't care so much about relationship, group dynamics, group- and individual development (including there own one). From my point of view there should be done more – for a more satisfying process and better results of the training course.

After the presentation of the basic conditions **realness**, **acceptance** and **empathic understanding** I want to describe some more aspects which are an effect of them:

- Perception of the basic conditions
- Communication of feelings
- Self acceptance

Perception of the basic conditions
This has not been mentioned explicitly: It is not enough if the teacher or trainer *has* an understanding of the participant. He must also show at least some of his understanding and acceptance to the learner. "The students must, to some extent, perceive that these attitudinal elements exist in the teacher." (Rogers 1980, p.271ff).
It is not enough to say "I understand you", the teacher or trainer must show his understanding more detailed.

Communication of Feelings
Nothing is happening without 'a stream of thoughts and feelings'. "I have found it enriching to open channels whereby others can communicate their feelings, their private perceptual worlds. (…) I would like to reduce the barriers between others and me, so that they can, if they wish, reveal themselves more fully. (…) So I try (…) to create a climate (…) where feelings can be expressed, where people can differ – with each other and with the instructor. " (Rogers 1961, p.19f)
In training courses –as general in communication - this 'stream of thoughts and feelings' is often avoided and disregarded. Developing individual processes, team- or group processes, developing relationship means to me to develop also the emotional part. The being (attitude, behaviour) of the trainer can foster this process.

Self Acceptance
It is a paradox but that's the only way that I know: To accept myself empathically is the basis for change. When I am able to accept my deeds, words, feelings and thoughts then they normally start changing slowly. Rogers writes:

"I believe (…) that we cannot move away from what we are, until we thoroughly *accept* what we are. Then change seems to come about almost unnoticed." (Rogers 1961, p.17)

There is a relationship between my own process and the process of a group. Roger writes: "The degree to which I can create relationships which facilitate the growth of others as separate persons is a measure of the growth I have achieved in myself." (Rogers 1961, p.56) So developing the own personal competencies contributes directly to the development of the group and the individual participants.

4. Listening with Understanding:
Carl R. Rogers about Communication

Communication is not always a smooth and inspiring process. Rogers judges one point as one of the major interrupting and blocking factors. 'Normally' we don't really listen to the other person. We have a "natural tendency to judge, to evaluate, to approve or disapprove, the statement of the other person, or the other group." (Rogers 1961, p. 330f) We evaluate what has just been said from *our* point of view, from our own 'frame of reference'.

"This tendency to react to any emotionally meaningful statement by forming an evaluation of it from our own point of view, is, I repeat, the major barrier to interpersonal communication." (Rogers 1961, p.331)

What could be done to overcome this blocking situation? How could 'real' communication be achieved or facilitated? "Real communication (…) means to see the expressed idea and attitude from the other person's point of view, to sense how it feels to him, to achieve his frame of reference in regard to the thing he is talking about." (Rogers 1961, p.331f)

My personal experience is that when I am involved in the discussion or conflict often I don't want to take the time to express my understanding. I have something on my mind and I want to get rid off it as soon as possible.
What a joke: Exactly the most important moment to listen is the most difficult one.
In chapter 7 you can find exercises for 'real' understanding.

5. A Support Group:
Carl Rogers about Working as a Team Member

Often trainers are working in teams – and often that's not an easy process all the time as most of us know quite well..
We are different. We have different values, different backgrounds and experiences, a different personal structure. These will – nearly unavoidable – lead to tension and misunderstandings.

Therefore we are trying to create good relations and a stable and trustful basis in a team before working on the cognitive level. I think that using the basic conditions of Rogers for this process can be of great benefit.

Rogers describes his experience: "We believe that our major task is to *be ourselves*. To this end, we spend several days together before the workshop convenes so that, insofar as we are capable:

we are fully open – first to one another, and later to the whole group;
we are prepared to explore new and unknown areas of our own lives;
we are truly acceptant of our own differences. (…)

Thus it can be said that we now prepare *ourselves*, with much less emphasis on plans or materials." (Rogers 1980, p.182ff)

I think it is not so easy to develop this kind of attitude. It is challenging!

6. From Discomfort to Crisis: Dealing with Conflicts

Dealing with discomfort and crisis is a huge topic and the ability to "perceive them differentiated and to deal with them" is an important competence for European level trainers,
"both one's own crises resulting, for example, from role conflicts, and crises suffered by the trainees. This competence involves a high degree of self-reflexive autonomy (Otten, p.18f).

Lots of books have been written, lots of training courses have been run, lots of concepts are known. Many different kinds of conflicts are possible, as for example:
- Intra-personal conflicts
- Inter-personal conflicts
    - Conflicts between two
    - Inter-group conflicts
    - Inter-organisational conflicts
    - Inter-community conflicts
    - Inter-national conflicts.

Also many definitions of conflicts have been worked out. Also different levels and intensities of conflicts are known. Discomfort, incident, misunderstanding, tension, crisis… Where does one level end and the next one starts?

Of course there are also endless ideas about how to deal, handle or solve conflicts. Many models have been developed.

For me personally the three basic conditions of Carl Rogers are offering a far-reaching tool to deal with many different kinds of conflicts, if I am personally involved or if I try to mediate a conflict between others.

Intra-personal conflicts:

- REALNESS / TRANSPARENCY: I try to be as real and honest with myself as I can and enable myself to look at all my different aspects, all my different feelings of the conflict situation.
- (SELF-)ACCEPTANCE: From deeply inside myself I'm trying to accept myself: "This is where I am at this moment. That's my reality!" It is like it is (and it will change).
- EMPATHIC UNDERSTANDING: I understand myself with a feeling of warm regard and I might get a deep understanding of myself.

This kind of attitude is – in my understanding – the most important basis for personal change. There is no big difference if I have to deal with an

Inter-personal conflict (as involved person):

- REALNESS / TRANSPARENCY: I try to be real and authentic with myself and I will communicate this attitude towards the other person.
- ACCEPTANCE: From deeply inside myself I'm trying to accept myself. At the same time I also try to accept the other person with his ideas, his concepts, his thoughts, feelings and expression.
- EMPATHIC UNDERSTANDING: I try to understand myself with a feeling of warm regard. At the same time I try to understand the other person from his / her "frame of reference". I will communicate my self understanding and the understanding of the other person.

Inter-personal conflict (as mediator):

- REALNESS / TRANSPARENCY: I try to be real and authentic with myself, with my thinking and feeling and I will share as honest as possible. My motivation can be understood by the other(s).
- ACCEPTANCE: From deeply inside I will try to accept the different persons with their ideas, their different concepts, their thoughts, their feelings.
- EMPATHIC UNDERSTANDING: I will try to understand every single person "from inside" and I will communicate my understanding.

As mentioned above: Trainers are no therapists, but these short hints might give an idea about the possibility how to use the basic conditions in situations of tension for to overcome difficulties in communication.
The Manual on Human Rights Education "Compass" gives some hints about managing conflicts within a group:
"Remember that conflict can be helpful and creative if managed properly.
Take enough time for the debriefing and discussion. If necessary make more time.
Help to clarify people's positions, opinions and interests.
Ease tensions in the group. (…)
Encourage everybody to listen actively to each other.
Stress what unites people rather than what separates them.
Search for consensus. Get people to look at their common interests rather than trying to compromise and move from their stated positions. (…)
Offer to talk to those involved privately at another time." (Compass, p.55)
These are also helpful advises for managing conflicts in a groups.

7. Practice: How Rogers' Philosophy can be used practically

Rogers' philosophy can be used in all fields of personal and professional life. Here I want to focus on several practical aspects that might be interesting for trainers' performances.

- Questions for self-evaluation as professional trainer following a whole training course
- Exercises to use Rogers' philosophy

7.1. Questionnaire for a training course

(from two different perspectives,
- the perspective of emotional competencies and
- the cognitive perspective)

After the engagement:

- cognitive level:
  - o Collecting information about the organisation
  - o What are their history and aims?
  - o What might be their needs? As organisation? From me as trainer?

- personal reflection:
  - o Am I the right person for that task?
  - o What do I want to learn at the training?
  - o What do I want to care about especially?
  - o What will I need personally at the training course?

First contact via E-mail:

- cognitive level:
  - o What are the aims as organisation?
  - o What are your actual needs?
  - o What do you expect from me? How do you see my role?

- level of relationship:
  - o Who I am, how I work, my professional experience, something about my values for trainings (transparency, realness)
  - o Who are you? What are your needs?

Planning of a first prep-meeting:

- cognitive level:
  - o What should be done in our meeting?
  - o What should be reached?
  - o How to prepare myself?
  - o what might be my job at the meeting, in the training course?

- level of relationship:
  - o What are my personal aims for the meeting?
  - o How do I feel about that prep-meeting?
  - o What will be easy for me?
  - o What might get difficult?
  - o At which points I feel secure / insecure?
  - o How do I want to behave? What do I want to avoid?
  - o How much of myself will I show? How?
  - o What can I do to support the team development? To support trust, confidence?

Prep-meeting:

- level of relationship:
    o How do I present myself? How is my attitude?
    o How do I support the good atmosphere?
    o How do I look closely at the others? Trying to understand them.
    o How close am I with the three core conditions during the meeting? (Being real, trying to understand empathically, accepting every person's position and showing these values in my behaviour.)
    o How do I care for myself?
    o Using the informal time (breaks, meals) to stay in good contact with the prep-team-members
    o Rules and advices for the cooperation in our team

- cognitive level:
    o Concrete planning of the next steps and first framework for the training course
    o Information about the participants (background, application forms)

After the prep-meeting:

- level of relationship:
    o How did I perceive myself? What was well done? Where could I improve?
    o How did I perceive the other prep-team members? With whom there will be difficulties? Why? What might be *my* portion of the problem? Who might be challenging for me? Why? With whom it will be easy?
    o How do I see the participants? What might be their needs? How to meet these needs?
    o Keeping good contact to all of the prep-team members via E-mail, personally and in general

- cognitive level:
    o To fulfil all tasks and preparation that I am responsible for
    o Preparation of the contents of the training
    o Sharing ideas with the other prep-team members

Before the training-course:

- level of relationship:
    o Getting back into good contact with the team-members, expressing myself (see above)
    o Caring about myself (being aware and expressing my needs, my joy, my fears and (hopefully) also my anger and frustration)
    o Looking at the participants, what will be their needs, their thoughts, what is their "personal luggage" and so on.
    o How will I start with them to create a trustful atmosphere? What are the rules?
    o How will I present myself?

- cognitive level:
    o Clarifying the aims and objectives
    o Clarifying the modus of cooperation

o   Last preparations, agreements and arrangements

During the training-course:

- level of relationship:
  - o   Caring about myself
  - o   Caring about the team, as a whole team and about every team-member personally
  - o   Sharing my mood, my feelings, my joys, my fears and so on with the team
  - o   Closely looking at all of the participants: How is the group developing? How do I perceive every one of them? (Who is that person? What is on his / her mind? How does s/he might feel in the group, with the contents of the training? About whom should I care more?)
  - o   Creating the confident and trustful group-atmosphere
  - o   How do I live the three core conditions during the week with the participants, with the team?
  - o   Midweek evaluation focusing on group process and contents of the course

- cognitive level:
  - o   Adapting the program to the actual needs of the group

At the end of the course:

- level of relationship:
  - o   Preparing the separation of the group
  - o   Evaluation of the feedback of the participants
  - o   Evaluation with the team – on the level of relationships and on the level of topics

After the training course:

- level of relationship:
  - o   Self evaluation: How was it for me? Where did I succeed? Where could I improve next time?
    What went well in the team? With whom? Why? What could have been done better next time? How?
    How was it with the participants, the group?
  - o   Staying in contact with the closer team-members and participants
  - o   Celebration of our success.
  - o   Personal report and celebration of my success

- cognitive level:
  - o   final official reports and so on

In the T-Kit No.6 you can find another example for self-reflection (p.85).

7.2. Exercises (to use Rogers' philosophy and to improve the emotional competencies)

For myself: Self evaluation : (short excerpt from a questionnaire)
What kind of working conditions do I need to feel secure?
What kind of people in courses are "easy" for me? Why? Which not? Why?

How do you care for yourself in a training-course? Mentally, physically? Social? Time? What are my strengths, my weaknesses? Can I accept myself empathically as I am at this moment?

(see also: T-Kit, No.6, page 21: "Make Life Easier!")

Your "negative" feelings:

When and how do you perceive your anger? Emotionally? Physically?
What do you do with that feeling? Try to hid it away? Try to oppress it? Speak about it? To whom?
What made *you* angry in that situation? Why? What does this anger has to do with *you* personally?
Do you know why situations / people like this make you angry? History of your anger?
Can you deeply accept yourself with your anger?

The other person: Listen to the inner tone.

If someone is talking, listen to the inner tone of her / his message:
 What is behind / beneath the words?
Can you "hear the feelings" of that person?
Are there differing messages of the words and the tone, gesture, mimics, body-language?
What might be his / her inner reason?

I myself: Listen to your own messages:

You can use the same attitude and the same questions as above.

Perception of emotions:

Lean back for a moment (during the training-session), close your eyes. How do you feel at this moment? Well? Unwell? Why? This might lead to

Transparency:

Shouldn't I talk about my feelings to the team / to my colleague / towards participants?

A short break:

Concentrate for some seconds on your breath. Just one exhalation --- and nothing else. Relax!
(see also: T-Kit No.6, p.22, "Breathing and Relaxation")

Group atmosphere:

Participants write a (anonymous) paper about their feelings and put it in a box. Everyone takes one and reads it out (or the trainer does).

Group feeling: A wish:

Everyone writes anonymously a wish on a sheet of paper (for instance.: "What I wish for to improve the group life") and puts it in a box. The trainer puts them on the wall and reads them out. Afterwards the participants can try to fulfil some of the wishes.

Me in the group:

Write your name in the middle of the paper. Put the names of all participants in an appropriate distance around your name. Afterwards you can ask for the "Why?"

Why is the one name close to mine? Why is another person's name so far away? What are the different feelings towards the different persons? What is attracting / distracting me? Why?

The different types:

Write without preparation or thinking a list of all the participant's names. Afterwards you can ask the "Why?" Why is this person at the first position? Who's name can't you remind? Why?
What kind of people do you like? Which not?

Acceptance:

Take a person whom you don't like so much. Try to understand this person. Try to listen deeply to that person. Try to step into his / her shoes. Why is this person as she / he is? This person behaves as good as she / he can! Why do *you* have problems with this person? What is your 50 %-portion of animosity between you two?

Real understanding:

(see Carl Rogers about Communication, chapter 5)
"Each person can speak up for himself only *after* he has restated the ideas and feeling of the previous speaker accurately, and to the that speaker's satisfaction."

As Rogers emphasises the quality of listening and understanding I want to cite a detailed description of an listening-exercise:

"Go on, I'm listening

This activity focuses on listening skills, but it also helps develop logical thinking and confidence in expressing an opinion.
Group size: Any Time: 35 minutes

Instructions
1.Brainstorm with the whole group what makes a good listener.
2.Ask people to get into threes: one person to be the speaker, one to be the listener and one the watchdog.
3.Tell the speakers that they have 5 minutes to tell the listener their personal view on an issue that interests them
4.The listener has to listen and make sure that they understand what the issue is about, why the speaker is interested in it and what their point of view is.
5.The watchdog observes the listener 's active listening skills. They should not participate in the discussion but observe the discussion carefully, withholding any suggestions for improvement until time is called.
6.After 5 minutes, call time and ask the watchdogs to give feedback. Swap round until everyone has had a chance to be speaker, listener and watchdog.

Debriefing and evaluation
Discuss the activity. Some useful questions may be:
- Did the speakers successfully convey their ideas and feelings about the topic? Did they find it helpful to speak to someone who was using active listening skills?
- How was it to be a listener? Was it difficult to listen and not interrupt in order to make a comment or add their own opinion?

<u>Tips for facilitators</u>
The group may initially come up with some of the following points. Hopefully by the end of the activity, they will be able to list them all - and some more.
A good listener:

- shows respect, maintains eye contact with the speaker and doesn't fidget.
- signals that they are attentive and listening by nodding occasionally or saying "go on, I 'm listening ".
- does not interrupt.
- does not rush to fill silences but gives the speaker time to think and resume talking.
- does not take the focus of the conversation away from the speaker by commenting or disagreeing.
- uses open-ended questions to encourage the speaker to continue speaking or to elaborate.
- summarises or restates the speaker 's remarks from time to time to show that they have understood.
- responds to the feelings that may lie behind the speaker 's words, and shows that they understand how the speaker feels." (Manual on Human Rights Education "Compass", p.56f)

8. Closing Remark

Participating in the ATTE-training course was a great chance to develop competencies for improving as a European-level trainer. Aside important knowledge and skills I could clear up the importance of emotional competencies. As mentioned at the beginning I consider emotional competencies as a basic and inevitable quality criteria for high-level training courses as they are already implemented in the economical field. The training of multipliers and young people in Europe should be provided with a deep understanding of it – for the sake of a developing European civil society.

As I am closing I want to recall several – for me – important points:

- Following Rogers' philosophy of interpersonal relationship, based on the "core conditions" for communication **transparency, acceptance** and **empathy** can be of great benefit, personally and professional.
- Following these basic conditions in my role as trainer can be of great benefit for the team, the group, every single participant and the training results.
- Implementing these kind of values to the participants has not only an impact for the actual training course but also for their future work as multipliers.
- Learning and teaching about these conditions is one part of developing trainer's competences and a contribution to the development of quality criteria for training courses in the European field.
- Following his values is a process of lifelong learning.

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