

## **TIME TO CHANGE (AMY)**

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### **OBJECTIVE:**

The formation of a new culture based on 3 other cultures, while learning what minority stress is during intercultural stress.

3 groups (cultures) are almost non-existent. 3 leaders come together to form 1 group. The problem: each group has their own beliefs, and their own preferences when it comes down to the practical side of integrating their culture with that of another.

Challenge: 1 culture, 1 office, 1 belief

**Type of methode:** *simulation game*

**Group size:** *Minimum 12*

**Time planning:** *60- 90 min*

**Materials :** *pen en paper/ colouring pencils/ a letter for each Group (2 the same, 1 different)*

**Preparation:** *tables and chairs for each group so that they can sit separately.*

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE EXERCISE:**

At the World conference of intercultural beliefs, 3 cultures did not meet the requirements necessary to continue their culture, this being stated under the 4<sup>th</sup> law of the international intercultural beliefs society. These groups have been given 7 days to find a solution or convert to one of the other beliefs.

Each group receives a letter from the international intercultural beliefs society. The instructions in the letter are to be followed.

Each group will receive an email from the other two groups with proposals for a solution.

The emails will be read, discussed and answered to according to the instructions given in the letter. These email will then be sent via the next group back to the original sender. This way every email will have 2 answers on it when it returns back to the sender.

A meeting will be held following the completion of all emails being answered to. This meeting is by invitation only.

During the meeting a common belief will be discussed and plans for an office for headquarters.

Next to presenting their ideas, there is, naturally, room for the players to enter into a discussion with the other participants.

The discussion should not last longer than 10 minutes.

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE TRAINER:**

Each group gets a letter. 2 letters are the same, the third is different. The third group (the one with the different letter to the other two) is the minority group. (they do not know this) The minority group will be discriminated against, for the duration of the game:

They will have to wait longer for emails to arrive, will have less time to answer to emails than the other groups, they will receive the invitation to the meeting just too late or not at all..

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PARTICIPANTS:**

Everything will be instructed in a letter

Correspondence between groups is by email only.( no verbal communication at any time!)

Everything that is in the letter is to followed at all times when corresponding with the other groups.

Talking about beliefs of the other groups is not allowed.

### **DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION:**

Yes and no answer:

Is each group happy with the end result?

Did each group have equal say during this game?

Has everybody been included enough when decisions were made?

The group(s) that answered no: why?

What was the problem? How did the communication evolve? Why?

**Group 1 :**

Was it hard accommodating for everyone?

How did it feel to be responsible for group 3 feeling so bad? How did it feel having the final say?

**Group 2 :**

How did it feel not really having a say, always agreeing with group 1?

**Group 3:**

How did it feel not being included? Did it feel like you were left out accidentally, or was there more to it maybe? Was it hard being left out? Did you feel less important than the other 2 groups? Why?

Has anyone had any insights while playing this game? Do you understand the concept of intercultural stress? do you think you experienced this sort of stress? when?

Are there certain situations where you might act or think differently because of this game?

Have you learnt anything by playing this game? What?

**EXTRA INFO:**

The trainer will have to support the discrimination of Group 3 by adjusting the time, or holding back certain information, 'loosing' the invitation until the last minute...

*The whole point of this exercise is to make people aware that not everything goes smoothly when working with different cultures. Awareness for the stress that both parties may feel during confrontations, no matter how insignificant they are, is very important in social work.*

**ADDITIONAL:**

- Letters,
- Explanatory guide for the trainer

## **ADDITIONAL 1 : CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COUNTRIES**

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### **GROUP 1 (LEADER)**

At the World conference of intercultural beliefs, this morning, your culture did not meet the requirements necessary to continue. This being stated under the 4<sup>th</sup> law of the international intercultural beliefs society. We have no choice but to ask you to come to some agreement with other small cultures or to convert to one of the other beliefs.

We regret loosing one of our longest standing cultures, but are sure that a solution will be found, to this unfortunate circumstance.

#### ***1: How to get started?***

First you will have to discuss what beliefs are the most important in your culture. Which ones will you absolutely not give up on?

Then you will discuss in group what possible solutions there are, seeing as there are 2 other groups in the same position as you. Do you merge with one or both and on what terms? Or would you rather they convert to your culture?

Or is a completely new culture the best way to go?

When this is done, email your solution to one of the groups. They will answer your email and send it back.

#### ***2: What now?***

Now you know what you will do: merge, convert, convert the other(s), it is now time to draw up a plan for a room which will become the office of headquarters. Take into account that much time will be spent there for meetings, trainings, administrative work, ect. Comfort is a must, bright colours and a modern touch will be a brand new beginning for the new culture that is to be formed.

#### ***3: Meeting by invitation only.***

You are responsible for sending the invitation (by post = letter, envelope + stamp to be made!) to the other groups to invite them to the conference concerning the details of new culture, the name of the new found culture and the definitive plans for the office of headquarters. during this meeting you will tell the other groups what you have decided, will form the new culture, the office, the name, everything is down to you. The others have to listen because you have the final say.

#### ***Your beliefs:***

Everyone listens to each other, no interruptions or argument allowed.

Differences in opinions are allowed and expressed as such ' I differ strongly', with no explanation as to why.

Compromises are not common.

Agree to disagree is not on.

You have final word when concerning matters of disagreement.

Clear cut rules in life, they are to be followed.

Language is an important part of civilised living, to live together you have to speak the same language.

Seeing someone from another culture gives you the opportunity to teach them what they are missing out on, by not being part of your culture.

## **GROUP 2**

At the World conference of intercultural beliefs, this morning, your culture did not meet the requirements necessary to continue. This being stated under the 4<sup>th</sup> law of the international intercultural beliefs society. We have no choice but to ask you to come to some agreement with other small cultures or to convert to one of the other beliefs.

We regret loosing one of our longest standing cultures, but are sure that a solution will be found, to this unfortunate circumstance.

### ***1: How to get started?***

First you will have to discuss what beliefs are the most important in you culture. Which ones will you absolutely not give up on?

Then you will discuss in group what possible solutions there are, seeing as there are 2 other groups in the same position as you. Do you merge with one or both and on what terms? Or would you rather they convert to your culture?

Or is a completely new culture the best way to go?

When this is done email your solution to one of the groups. They will answer your email and send it back.

### ***2: What now?***

Now you know what you will do: merge, convert, convert the other(s), it is now time to draw up a plan for a building which will become the office of headquarters. Take into account that much time will be spent there for meetings, trainings, administrative work, ect. Comfort is a must, bright colours and a modern touch will be a brand new beginning for the new culture that is to be formed.

### ***3:A meeting by invitation only.***

A conference will be held concerning the details of the new culture, the name of the new found culture and the definitive plans for the office of headquarters.

Group 1 has the final say, you agree with everything they propose.

### ***Your beliefs:***

The leader of Group 1 is the leader during the meeting and has the final say for all decisions that are made. You agree with every decision that the leader proposes.

Clear cut rules in life, they are to be followed.

Language is an important part of civilised living, to live together you have to speak the same language.

Seeing someone from another culture gives you the opportunity to teach them what they are missing out on, by not being part of your culture.

### **GROUP 3**

At the World conference of intercultural beliefs, this morning, your culture did not meet the requirements necessary to continue. This being stated under the 4<sup>th</sup> law of the international intercultural beliefs society. We have no choice but to ask you to come to some agreement with other small cultures or to convert to one of the other beliefs.

We regret losing one of our longest standing cultures, but are sure that a solution will be found, to this unfortunate circumstance.

#### ***1: How to get started?***

First you will have to discuss what beliefs are the most important in your culture. Which ones will you absolutely not give up on?

Then you will discuss in group what possible solutions there are, seeing as there are 2 other groups in the same position as you. Do you merge with one or both and on what terms? Or would you rather they convert to your culture?

Or is a completely new culture the best way to go?

Take into account that your belief is very important to you, compromise is ok, but a base of your own belief is important and no one will convince you otherwise.

When this is done email your solution to one of the groups. They will answer your email and send it back.

#### ***2: what now?***

Now you know what you will do: merge, convert, convert the other(s), it is now time to draw up a plan for a building which will become the office of headquarters. Take into account that much time will be spent there for meetings, trainings, administrative work, ect. Comfort is a must, soft, light colours and a rustic touch will blend old and new in a soothing way. These details in the office are very important to you, don't let anyone talk you out of your beliefs.

***3: An meeting by invitation*** only will be held concerning the details of new culture, the name of the new found culture and the definitive plans for the office of headquarters. Your own input is very important to you.

#### ***Your beliefs:***

Beliefs are very important. Compromise is something that you are willing to work on, but your own input is a must and very important.

Everyone has a say in life.

Life is too short to argue.

Seeing someone from another culture gives you the opportunity to learn and explore the unknown.

Language is no barrier.

Everyone understands each other like you understand each other.

Everyone is as easy to live with as you because that is way to enjoy life to the full.

## **ADDITIONAL 2 : EXPLANATORY GUIDE FOR THE TRAINER**

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The point of this training is to make people aware of the term intercultural stress. The groups will all experience this in their own way and will discuss these feelings during the evaluation round.

### **The game rounds: Part one: new culture**

The emails that will be sent are considered separate rounds. This is to help you to keep track of what is happening concerning the intercultural stress that will be felt during the training. This is not to be told to the participants.

While all the groups write their first email, emphasise that fact that there is not a lot of time. They only have 7 days to sort this problem out. When everyone is ready to "send" their email, then every group "sends" at the same time. You are the email/post deliverer. You take the written email from one group and give it to the next, with exception for the last email. The email to group 3 will not be given straight away, but 2 minutes later. (The reasons being: no internet, power cut, no money to print the email out, lost in the post, wrong address) but these reasons will only be given later in the game.

The answers to the emails continue in the same way. The emails will be sent until there is a concrete arrangement between all the groups. This is the end of 'round one'.

### **Part 2: Headquarters office**

Here the groups will also send emails to each other with plans (drawings) with ideas for the new office for headquarters. These plans will be sent round in the same way until headquarters stops the communication and invites everyone to a meeting. (this will be set up by you. After 2 emails you will explain quietly to group 1 that this is not working, that it is not going fast enough, that a meeting will have to be held with everyone together to make things go faster..) and so group 1 will not answer any emails anymore, but will start writing an invitation and making envelopes and stamps.

While group 1 are doing this, the other groups will continue to send and resend emails with no success. (they do not know the reason why they are getting no reply, stimulate this feeling of anxiety by asking how this makes them feel, what are they going to do about it? If they want to complain with an email let them, these complaints will also remain unanswered to.)

During this round: group 1 will be informed with a separate email by group 3 (encouraged by you) that they are sick of being left out, and to please address

this situation and solve it or steps will be taken against them. Group 1 will now be faced with a dilemma, how to sort this problem out and get the invitations done in time..

Once the invitations have been sent then part 2 ends. Group 3 will only get their invitation when the meeting has already begun.

### **Part 3: Meeting**

Group 1 and 2 will go to the meeting. they will wonder why group 3 is not there. Stimulated by you that they maybe didn't want to come they will have to start the meeting without group 3.

During the meeting group 3 will arrive. No one pays attention to them, even when they try to say something, they will be asked to be quiet. (tell this to group 1 and 2 before you give the invitation to group 3)

During the meeting group 1 will address the rest by telling them what the problem is and what they have decided will be the solution is to this problem. Group 2 will agree, group 3 will try to have their say. Let them try for a few minutes. Then end the game. This is where the game stops and the evaluation begins. Everyone goes to sit in a circle around you.