

## Workshop: „Why Me? Why Not?”

Date, Time: Thursday, 31.03.2011, 10:30 – 12:30 and 14:00 – 16:00

Trainer: Nik Paddison, freelance trainer, UK/Montenegro

### Workshop content/theme

An exploration of volunteering, difficulties and dreams, experiences and benefits, after all, why not?

### Aims

Promote the concept of volunteering

### Objectives:

- ~ Think about what volunteering means
- ~ Explore and feel the positive and negative side of volunteering
- ~ Explore ways that you or your school could do some voluntary action in your community

### Method(s)/Approach

Welcome	Who is Nik; Who are Participants – name and where from; Overview and Aim of the session
Statements about Volunteers and Volunteering	<p>~ In different corners of the room there were the following statements on flip charts</p> <p>~ Participants went around and wrote a comment on each one, the first thing that came to their mind as a reaction to that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Volunteers are unskilled</li> <li>o Volunteering takes up so much time</li> <li>o Volunteer work is boring</li> <li>o Volunteering means the Government does not have to provide services</li> <li>o Young people don't volunteer</li> <li>o I don't have anything to offer</li> </ul> <p>~ The group was then split into 3 groups, each group would take 2 of the flip charts and try to summarise all the comments into a sentence or main bullet points</p> <p>~ The flip charts were put back on the wall and each group would present their findings to the rest of the group and then we would move round the room to the next flip chart and so on...</p> <p>~ Some stories related to some of the statements for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Volunteers are unskilled – remember that Noah's Ark was built by amateurs while the Titanic was built by experts!</li> <li>o Volunteering takes up so much time – there was a businessman who was ruined by volunteering, a successful businessman wanted to give something back to the community so he joined the board of a local NGO. He was successful with this and so was asked to join another NGO and another. Eventually his own business collapsed because he was giving all his time to the NGO's and not looking after his business. Volunteering is a responsibility to yourself to know how much time you can give</li> </ul>
Moba – a little story	<p>Moba is a Montenegrin word for Volunteer, but it has a meaning behind it which is when a community comes together to work for a neighbour building a fence or barn, it is community volunteering.</p> <p>I used a short story here about a Moba that happened in Montenegro in February that I was involved with and was able to link it to the next activity in a fun way. The story was about ninja cows breaking into an ecological farm and eating all the vegetables and how the community came together to help build a fence to keep the cows out.</p>
Building Watch Towers	<p>Here I continued the story with the plan that the group would need to build watch towers for the camp site to help keep the cows out!</p> <p>The group was split into 4 small groups, the method for this was that each participant would take a piece of paper, write the first word that came to their mind about volunteering and then make a paper aeroplane. Everyone would line up and I would get them to throw the planes in one go. The furthest set of planes become group 1, the next group 2 and so on...</p> <p>The instructions for the tower building were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build a tower with the newspaper, sellotape and scissors</li> <li>2. Tower must be 1.47m tall</li> <li>3. Tower must be strong and stable</li> </ol>

	<p>4. Tower must be free standing, not attached to anything 5. Build time = 20 minutes</p> <p>Groups 1 &amp; 2 were each given the same amount of newspapers. Group 3 was given a very limited amount of newspaper. Group 4 are volunteers.</p> <p>The three tower building groups start their task. The fourth group is split into two, after 5 minutes the first half of this group is given lots of newspapers and is directed to join the group with few resources, the other half are given specific instructions and plans<sup>1</sup> on how to build a strong and stable tower, they also have a tape measure of 21cm's. They join one of the other two groups. The third building group remain without volunteers.</p> <p>After 20min the towers are tested.</p> <p>The group sits in a circle and we enter a debrief, the following are example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~ How was it to be a volunteer</li> <li>~ What was it like to receive the volunteers</li> <li>~ What was it like to have someone arrive with specific plans and instructions</li> <li>~ How did you feel about the changing group dynamics</li> </ul> <p>The line of questioning was designed to try and compare the simulation with real life and indeed the groups that received the volunteers at first did not know what to do with them and the volunteers themselves felt like spare parts until through negotiation they were able to find their place.</p> <p>These different aspects were explored and developed through the use of questions and questions to specific individuals which had the added bonus of ensuring the young people also had a chance to speak about their experience in the game and their understanding of volunteering in real life.</p> <p><sup>1</sup>Extra Instructions: The best and strongest way to build such a tower is to roll the pieces of newspaper into tubes and build a structure like the Eiffel Tower</p>
Why Me Why Not	<p>This led to a further discussion on volunteering, I asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~ Who here volunteers currently?</li> <li>~ Who has volunteered before?</li> <li>~ What is stopping you from volunteering?</li> <li>~ What kind of voluntary projects could you do in your school or community?</li> </ul> <p>And the final question which I asked everyone to answer in a round:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>~ If you could volunteer for anything tomorrow anywhere in the world what would you do?</li> </ul>
Feedback Forms	

### Further tips, sources, resource material or links

- ~ <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/browse/countries/azerbaijan/doc/a-very-short-history.html> (a history of volunteering)
- ~ <http://www.energizeinc.com/reflect/parable.html> (stories and parables)
- ~ <http://www.energizeinc.com/hot/2006/aug06.html> (teaching about volunteering)

I used several stories throughout the workshop, some of them are not documented but the following are. It was not the same in the morning and afternoon workshops.

By Debra Banks, Nonprofit Consultant: Entering a very cold, dark room, you are presented with the choice of a fireplace, a wood stove and a lantern. What would you light first? The match, of course. When working with volunteers, people needing services and the community or businesses, first the spark must be lit in you. If it isn't, how can you pass it on to others?

Chinese Parable: One day an elephant saw a hummingbird lying on its back with its tiny feet up in the air. "What are you doing?" asked the elephant. The hummingbird replied, "I heard that the sky might fall today, and so I am ready to help hold it up, should it fall." The elephant laughed cruelly. "Do you really think," he said, "that those tiny feet could help hold up the sky?" The hummingbird kept his feet up in the air, intent on his purpose, as he replied, "Not alone. But each must do what he can. And this is what I can do."

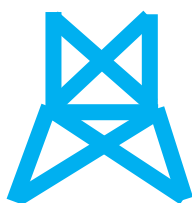
Real life example by Anne Hope Training for Transformation Book 1 P97. Uganda 1959: A village had numerous problems in both the health field (all types of worms, malaria, bilharzias, no clinic) and a very poor school from which the teachers were nearly always absent. In a village meeting the people really did insist that their top priority was to make a football field. I was appalled but

the CDO very wisely encouraged the group to go ahead. They made their football field, started playing football, organised a team, played matches against other villages. The football field was the point in the life of the village. They had gained self confidence, a structure for communicating with one another, and a sense that they were capable of changing things. Later they tackled many other 'more important' projects. But were they really more important? Was not their own intuition that they needed something that would build their own sense of themselves as a community, and their confidence that they could achieve their own goals, far more important than my outsider priority that they needed a clinic? This was also a turning point in my own education about how to work with communities.

The following is the description for the 'Expert Volunteer' tower builders:

How to be an Expert Tower Builder

A strong stable tower should be built with tubes and in the form of the Eiffel Tower



Role single or double sheets of the newspaper or magazines and stick them with the tape.  
When you have a large number of them you should start to build a form similar to the Eiffel Tower.

← 21cm →

### Questions for workshop reflection

What is stopping you from volunteering?



