

Voices through Water

The Creative and Activist Methodologies Toolkit



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Push & Pull

Advocacy, Activist



The activity consists in highlighting the PUSH and PULL factors of a migrant story, therefore the factors that pushed someone to leave his/her own country and the factors that pulled that person to migrate where he/she migrated to.



Target group

Young people 15+ years old

Minimum 7 – no maximum



Environment

A room or a space big enough for all the participants



Time needed

30 minutes or more depending on the length and numbers of stories



Materials

A real-life story

Objective/aim

The aim of the activity is to support participants in understanding what are the "push" factors that make people need and/or want to leave his/her own country and the "pull" factors that make people go in a certain country or region, and so make participants understand the reasons why people need and/or want to migrate.

Step by step instructions

Step 1

Explain to the group that they need to pick up, on a voluntary basis, 5 persons: the "storyteller", the "push factor", the "pull factor", the "obstacle factor" and the "accelerator factor".

Step 2

Once the group selected the 5 roles, the "storyteller" starts to walk forward really slowly while he/she tells a real-life story of a person who undertakes a migration journey, by giving as many details as he/she can. The story has to be told in the first person.

Step 3

Whenever an element in the story addresses the hardships and factors that contributed to him/her leaving his/her own country (persecution, hunger, threats, violence etc...), the storyteller is physically but gently pushed a bit further on by the "push factor" persons.

Whenever an element in the story indicates the reasons to go where he/she was heading (peace, social security, family members, etc...), the storyteller pulls a bit by the "pull factor" person.

Whenever the storyteller encounters obstacles of any sorts during the journey he/she is describing, he/she moves a little bit towards the right side by the "obstacle factor" person.

Whenever the storyteller faces something that would accelerate his/her journey, he/she moves a little towards the left side by the "accelerator factor" person.

Step 4

Once the storyteller finishes the story, make participants reflect on how many elements of the journey contribute to its unfolding, how fast or slow it is and what are the constraints, in a physical way as the storyteller is physically moved further, left and right.

Ask participants how they felt in seeing the physical journey of the storyteller, if they could identify the push and pull factors and guide a reflection on the activity.



Tips for the trainer

To make the exercise more impactful, it is better to tell a real migration story.

In order to be prepared, in case none of the participants have stories to tell or don't feel comfortable in telling a story of someone known, prepare some printed detailed story of a migration journey.

In order to respect the real persons behind the story, ask the storyteller to change the real name of the protagonist/of the story you print.

Do not force anyone to be the storyteller and explain that whenever someone feels uncomfortable in participating in the activity and/or listening to the story, that he/she can leave the room without any judgement – create a safe space.

If none of the participants want to be the storyteller, pick up one of the facilitators to do so.



Comment

The experience is a journey itself, interesting and introspective to watch for the audience as well as the storyteller.



Alternative

The storyteller could lose the concentration being pushed and pulled, so an alternative is to have a sixth role, the "actor", namely:

The storyteller just tells the story from a corner of the room, while the actor slowly walks, "impersonating" the protagonist of the story and being pulled and pushed by the "4 factors" persons.

If the person being pushed doesn't feel comfortable with physical contact, the physical contact of the pushing can be replaced with a sound so associating each push/movement in one direction with a different sound (i.e.: move forward to the sound of a bell; move backwards to the sound of snapping fingers; move right to the sound of clapping hands; move left to the sound of the whistle)



Source

Developed within the MyElections My EU! project by adapting different sources about the "push&pull" factors.

Additional useful sources:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbhpUlxYn-E>
- <https://earthmatters.populationeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Migration-Stories.pdf>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cV4zCTZV7EM>