



III. SELF-CONFIDENCE

Feeling self-confidence and improving the self-esteem of the peer mentors is crucial to make them feel comfortable playing this role. Believe in oneself, thinking that you have things to give to the rest of people, feeling strong and empowered. Maybe it is one of the most difficult abilities to be reinforced during the Chic & Craft course but also one of the most needed for the people leaving with mental illness due to the constant pressure of our nowadays society. We are offering you a wide range of exercises to promote self-confidence and self-esteem within your group.

III.1. THROW AND TAKE

Abilities reinforced: Self-confidence, self-empowerment.

Materials: Small objects to throw away like paper balls.

Description: Invite the participants to stand in a circle and think about the traits/state of mind they believe suppose a limitation to them and they wish they could become detached from. Once all the participants are done with the task, ask them to “throw” the unwanted traits into the centre of the circle imagining that there is a bonfire. Instruct the participants to call aloud the names of the traits they throw away, such as: Fear, anxiety, shyness, vanity, complexes, wrath, demand, etc. Each participant can throw away just as many traits as he/she wishes.

Once all the participants have finished, ask them to imagine that the fire is gone and there are only embers left. Tell the participants to take what they consider desirable or useful such as “courage”, “confidence”, “security”, “tolerance”, “patience”, etc.

Suggestions: You might actually provide the participants with some small objects (for instance paper balls) that would embody the traits to throw to increase the sensation of detachment.



III.2. (UN) DISGUISED

Abilities reinforced: Express one's own feelings/opinions.

Materials: A set of paper eyewear representing different states of mind/traits (can be homemade).

Description: Put the eyewear on and inform the participants "These are the spectacles of mistrust. While I wear them I am very distrustful. Does anyone want to put them on and tell us what he can see through them?" After a while take out other eyewear offering it to subsequent volunteers, i.e. spectacles of: "confidence", "anger", "I do everything wrong", "no one accepts me", "everybody loves me", etc. In each group everyone can express how he/she felt and what he/she saw through the spectacles.

This exercise may help bring to light communication problem within the group. The participants are given a green light- by discharging them of the responsibility- to express their emotions/ observations they wouldn't express normally.



III.3. FOR SALE

Abilities reinforced: Self-discovery, self-worth, overcome one's shyness.

Materials: Pencil, colour markers, cardboard and any other material that might be helpful to create an advertising poster.

Description: Inform the participants that their new assignment is to sell themselves as friends to other participants. For this purpose ask each to create an advertising poster of...himself and have someone buy "him". An example could be: *"Are you alone? Do you feel frustrated, helpless? Martin is the solution to your problems..."*



Suggestions:

- a) The game is to be conducted in silence with use of the advertisement in few words (you might set the maximum number of words permitted). The coordinator might choose to read the advertisements whilst the group will have to figure out who is the author of each.
- b) The personal role to sell could be alternatively: teacher, sales person, father/mother, etc.
- d) Another alternative is that the group members design campaigns of their colleagues instead of their own.



This exercise could be altered to specifically suit Chic&Craft by asking participants to make an advert for Peer to Peer Learning, pointing out the benefits of this style of learning, or also one specifically for a textiles workshop, highlighting the skills and positive aspects of taking part in such a project.

This exercise is useful to help the participants to overcome their shyness and to improve their self-esteem, paying attention in features about themselves they have never thought about them.





III.4. DRAW YOURSELF

Abilities reinforced: Awareness of one's own feelings, externalize feelings.

Materials: Sheets of paper, colouring pencils or markers.

Description: Invite the participants to sit in a circle with their backs towards the inside. Ask each participant to paint himself/herself. Once finished, the participants shall show their paintings to the rest of the group. Ask everyone to observe intently the paintings of their companions checking out whether the variety of colours is rich or poor, whether the painting is simple or complex, whether it is cheerful or gloomy.

Next step, ask the participants to concentrate on their own paintings again and think of their own characteristics they believe to have. Ask them whether they think that the painting expresses the image they have of themselves. Invite each participant to share with the group what- personal features/ characteristics- he/she pretended to express in the painting.

Suggestions: When conducting the activity in large groups you could vary the presentation of the paintings collecting them from the participants once they are finished, mixing them and giving them back to the participants switched so that nobody knows who the paintings belong to. Everyone shall observe the painting received in search of meaning and, after a while, represent its contents with his/her body through a pose, a movement or a dance. Next the participants try and guess who the author of the painting is and the real authors share the message they pretended to transmit with their painting.

Before drawing, you can ask the participants to close their eyes, to relax, breath and say words "*It's me*", "*I am*", to feel themselves. Then, they are ready to draw.





III.5. I AM PROUD OF...

Abilities reinforced: Recognition of one's strengths/abilities; positive thinking about oneself, courage, concentration.

Materials: Sheets with the sentences printed (see below).

Description: Ask the trainee(s) to complete the following sentences:

1. I am proud that on my own I can.....
2. I am proud that when I am scared I.....
3. I am proud that I made a friend (or whoever else) happy by.....
4. I am proud that even when the other people did..... I
5. I am proud that this year I.....
6. I am proud of what I did about.....
7. I am proud when the other people say that.....
8. I am proud that I keep healthy by.....
9. I'm proud that I learned a new skill when.....
10. Something I worked hard for is.....
11. Something I own that I'm really proud of is.....
12. A habit I have that I'm really proud of.....
13. Something I really like about myself is.....
14. Something I've done for my family that I'm proud of is.....
15. Something I've done for someone else that I'm proud of is.....

Suggestions: These Pride Lines can be used in one to one conversation or in a group. If you are working with an ample group and are running short of time you may cut the questions apart and have the participants pick one and share their response with the group.

In case the group is shy and nobody wants to start by presenting his/her sentences, the facilitator might start with his/her own example.





This exercise can be a challenge for most of the participants and maybe they wouldn't be comfortable doing it. Try it with the group in the right moment, when they are ready to share personal feelings with the rest of the group. It is probably that they don't want to talk much about their selves just in case the others laugh at them. To make it easier for them, you can replace the phrase "I am proud of..." by "I am happy when..."





III.6. MIRROR, MIRROR...

Abilities reinforced: Concentration, self-confidence, consciousness, persistence, stability.

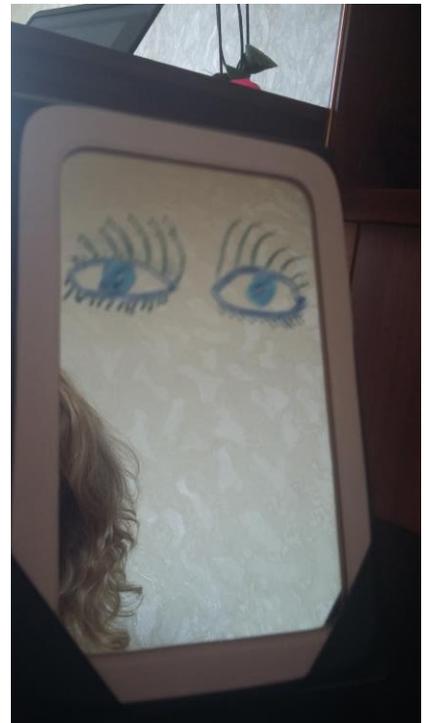
Materials: Mirror(s) sized enough to encompass whole face, a marker.

Description: Ask the participants to put a mirror in front of themselves (you can also conduct the exercise in a toilet room or any other space with wall mirrors). Ask them to put two marks on their respective mirrors on a level with their eyes, and think of them as two human eyes looking into theirs. Tell them not move their heads but stand (or sit) still. Instruct them to concentrate all their thoughts on keeping the head perfectly still and not let other thoughts come into their mind. Then, still keeping the head, eyes and body still, invite them to think that they look like a reliable man or woman should; like a person that anyone would have confidence in... Instruct them to breathe deep and calm while standing before the mirror, concentrating on the air they breathe in.

The goal of this exercise is to acquire a feeling of peace, calmness and strength.

Suggestions: To master the exercise we suggest practicing it in each weekly session for an average time of 3-5 minutes. To achieve best results you may ask the group members to practice it on a daily basis at home.

Looking at the mirror can be embarrassing and uncomfortable for some participants, but it is worthy to do it to be aware about how low self-esteem use to have the people with psychic discomfort.





III.7. SWEET SUCCESS

Abilities reinforced: Become aware of one's special characteristics/abilities, discover one's uniqueness, self-confidence.

Materials: Sweets (candies).

Description: Have participants sit in a circle. Give each person 10 pieces of candy. Go around the circle and have each person name one thing in their life that they think is special or some talent or ability that they possess. As each person says what they want to say, the other members of the group throw that person a piece of candy if that is **not** something that they have in common with that individual.

Example: I say, "I can play the piano." If you can also play the piano you do nothing, but if you cannot play the piano you throw me a piece of candy.

Suggestions: You should try to encourage the members of the group who are having a hard time thinking of something, as there should hopefully always be something to find in a person's life that is good.

The game should hopefully end at a point where all members have the same amounts of candy again or at least where everyone has some so that no one feels left out – this is up to the facilitator.

You can explain about different personality types and temperaments before starting the game.

The participants will enjoy about finding out better things about themselves and each other.





III.8. SECRET SUPPORTER

Abilities reinforced: Self-esteem, self and group reflection, observation and praise of positive qualities in other people.

Materials: Flipchart or whiteboard, markers.

Description: Ask the participants to think of something they have never told anyone before, or a subject that would be difficult for them to talk about. They do not disclose the secret but simply hold it in their minds. Next, they are asked to look around the group and pick the person they would trust with telling this secret to, or the one they would find easiest to discuss the topic with. Once again they do not disclose out loud their chosen person but simply hold them in their mind. Next, participants take it in turns to list characteristics of their chosen person which were behind their reasoning for choosing them, what makes them a good person to share a secret with, what makes them easy to talk to. A list of these qualities is drawn up and the title “Qualities of a good Chic & Craft Peer mentor” put on it.





III.9. THREE THINGS

Abilities reinforced: Self-reflection, self-esteem and motivation, self-improvement, concentration, literacy skills, thinking and contemplation.

Materials: Flipchart or whiteboard, markers, sheets of paper, pens.

Description: Ask the participants to write down three positive qualities of a team mate, three positive qualities they believe to have themselves, and three positive qualities of a good mentor. Real and optimal qualities are then compared and contrasted and the benefits of each discussed. It is a good exercise to open the forum to discuss about qualities the participants wish to work on and improve throughout the mentoring experience.





III. 10. WALK OF PRAISE

Abilities reinforced: Good feelings about self, feeling good at giving others compliments, increased self-esteem, group cohesion, courage.

Description: Form two lines with participants facing each other. Have one person walk or skip in between the two lines. As the person walks through the line, others pat him on the back, give them "high 5" or a hug, share kind words, or smile at them. Encourage the person to go through the gauntlet slowly and to listen to the words and gestures given to him.

Suggestions: It is good that each person play both roles: being praised and praise someone else. This exercise promotes positive thinking and teaches how to accept a compliment. Moreover, it promotes a positive self-image of the group and team building.





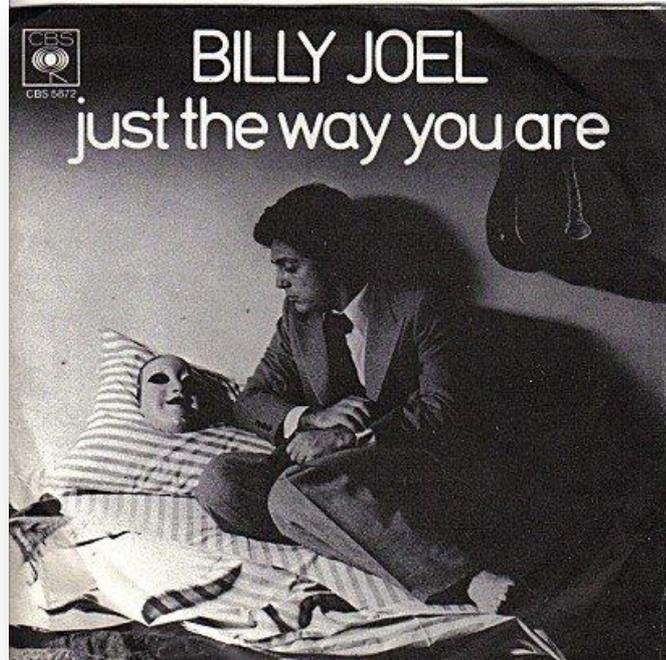
III.11. JUST THE WAY YOU ARE

Abilities reinforced: Self- esteem, self-reflection about ourselves.

Materials: Recording of Billy Joel's "*Just The Way You Are*", cassette/CD player, paper, pencils.

Description: Listen to "*Just The Way You Are*" song while participants follow along with printed lyric sheet (translated into your language). Discuss the lyrics with the group and have each participant write their name at the top of a piece of paper. Pass it to the person on their right. Have them write 2-3 positive comments, descriptors of the person whose paper they have. Continue to pass papers until each participant has their original paper back. Have the participants read their paper aloud. End the exercise discussing about the comments they have found in their papers: do they agree? Do they miss something?

Suggestions: You can also use any similar song in your language; the most important thing is the message to be given to the participants, not a concrete artist or a specific song.





III.12. THE MAGIC BOX

Abilities reinforced: Self-esteem, self-reflection about ourselves.

Materials: Construct a "magic box" which can be any kind of a box with a mirror placed to reflect the face of anyone who looks inside.

Description: Begin the activity by asking the group, "Who do you think is the most special person in the whole world?" After allowing the client to respond individually, continue: "I have a magic box with me today, and each of you will have a chance to look inside and discover the most important person in the world."

Give each client a chance to look into the box after you ask them who they think they will see. Some client may have to be coaxed, because they may not believe what they see. Be ready with some of the following comments:

"Are you surprised?"

"How does it feel to see that you are the special person?"

"You smiled so big - are you happy to see that you're the special person?"

Before re-joining the group, ask each client to keep the special news a secret.

After all the clients have had their turns, ask the group who the most special person was. After each client has had an opportunity to say "me," explain that the box is valuable because it shows that each of them is special. You might ask how it is possible for everyone to be the special one. A discussion about each individual's uniqueness may ensue.

