



2.4.1 TRAINING MODULES

for Prisoner Inmates

Module Title: **Guess Who I Am**



Including **Chess As a Re-education Up-Skilling** tool

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1- SUBJECT MATTER AND SCOPE

1.1 Parent topic

The training module is an operational guide for the exclusive use of the trainer (the term trainer refers to trainers who have carried out or intend to carry out their activities in prisons) who will support the chess teacher during sessions in prisons.

Those who work in the field of training and enter prison must know the context, the rules, the logic and the roles that are represented in it because the prison experience affects both the subjective dimension of people (Prisoner Inmates and trainers), and the production of overall meanings of the training experience. For these reasons, the module has been designed to be adapted to a different, and in many ways more complex, environment from the one usually attended by those involved in training.

The design of the following activity has taken into account some crucial factors, such as cultural, linguistic or age differences that can be found within the group of learners. This form is therefore:

- transcultural
- easily understandable
- Equipped with simple rules
- analogic
- with just a few physical devices

The training activity does not refer directly to the game of chess but is grafted into the sessions dedicated to learning the game and aims to stimulate reflection, encourage new points of view, new visions of the inside (understood both as prison and as the interiority of the person) and offer the possibility of rediscovering the positive aspects of the self to rethink and redefine one's social life, relational and also professional outside the prison walls.

The "Guess who I am" Module focuses on 2 skills related to intrapersonal skills: self-awareness and self-control. Soft skills in prison often remain silent or are silenced by different behavioral obligations. The exercise presented in the Module, free of conditioning and with "soft" rules, gives participants the opportunity to express different identities and attitudes related to the meta-skills in question.



1.2Target

Trainers, educators, teachers, counselors, tutors, social workers, etc.

2- DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

2.1 Description of the Practice

The proposed activity is to be considered as an intervention of empowerment of transversal skills through the synergy between two worlds: that of chess and that of training. The game of chess is a metaphor and at the same time a pragmatic example that supports the exercise presented.

The activity of the "Guess who I am" Module is aimed at developing self-awareness and self-control through a work of self-analysis and communication of one's desires and abilities.

Duration: 50 min. Variable depending on the participants

Procedure: the trainer gives each participant a post-it note and a pen. The trainer shows the group a sheet of paper that reads: "what do I like to do; what I don't like to do". Invite participants to write their answers, anonymously, on the post-it note in 5 min. and attach them to the wall. In turn, each participant will approach the wall and choose a post-it. He will read what is written and will try to understand, also observing any emotional reactions, who wrote it. If he guessed correctly, he will explain why, how he did it, what clues he caught. If he did not guess correctly, the trainer asks the group who wrote it and the author will explain why he wrote certain statements. If the group is too large, it is not necessary for all participants to carry out the activity described above. There is a variant where participants have to guess what the trainer likes to do and what they don't like to do. The trainer collects the post-its and provides his answers.

2.2 Purpose/Objective

The goal is to trigger a process of self-training that begins just when the trainer is no longer there. Self-education means the assumption of responsibility for one's own way of being and the ability to observe oneself in relation to others.

Training is the beginning of a path for the person who, more aware of his or her uniqueness and individuality, sees a more important goal: to choose a path of reintegration, personal and professional, in civil society.

Training in the prison context should therefore be understood as a tool aimed at social reintegration through the stimulation of fundamental skills for the search for and implementation of new life projects.

2.3 Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes were associated with each of the 2 skills.

Self-awareness. Increased capacity to:

- recognize one's emotions (positive or negative) and moods at the very moment they arise;
- Relate goals and desires to the real possibilities of achieving them through one's skills and competences.

Self-control. Learning the ability to:

- regulate one's emotions according to the context;
- resist distractions, unwanted thoughts and temptations in the environment;
- curbing instinctive actions or impulsive and selfish impulses aimed at satisfying irrational desires;
- accept judgments or criticisms.

2.4 Training Approach

REFLECTIVE METHOD. *"Thought makes possible action accompanied by conscious purpose."* This sentence by J. Dewey contains the meaning of the reflective method. But how can a trainer talk about self-awareness and self-control to Prisoner Inmates who are learning to play and chess?

The trainer will not talk directly about self-awareness or self-control. He will not teach these skills to Prisoner Inmates. Its goal is much more complex and delicate. It is a matter of observing, during the game, the skills that gradually come out into the open. From observation it is possible to start a reflection, through questions, examples, metaphors and analogies, which will take on greater consistency with the delivery of the training activity. It will be precisely reflection that will generate, when and how no one knows for sure, new ideas, new desires, new intentions for change.

The trainer, therefore, must always keep the 2 skills in mind in mind, like two beacons that illuminate, from time to time, actions, behaviors, moods that emerge in the game room and that are connected to them. The trainer, together with the chess teacher, has the task of bringing out the skills, stimulating them, seeing them hover in the classroom and being able to catch them on the fly to activate reflections and propose activities to internalize them and use them to the fullest. HOOKING TECHNIQUE. To facilitate the explicitness, by the learners, of the soft skills in question, the hooking technique is useful.

During the session, the trainer captures, i.e. latches on to events related to skills, asks questions, provides feedback and brings out collective reasoning. Hooking is an inductive method: reality, game practice, highlights, from time to time, a certain skill and the trainer must have the ability to perceive it and connect it to his experience and knowledge to then stimulate the participants to think collectively about that specific skill. The goal is to integrate knowledge and know-how.

Let's take an example: the trainer knows well that important aspects of self-awareness are the understanding of one's own prejudices and the ability to admit one's mistakes, to learn something from them and to engage in the process of change.

The trainer, following the instructions of the chess teacher, makes a few mistakes and repeats the mistake several times. At that point he intervenes by showing his mistakes and connecting them to the theme of self-awareness. Then he asks the opinion of others and invites them to reason about their mistakes. In this way, a reflection, a group discussion, will be activated, which is very different from a theoretical lesson on self-awareness.

The hooks are precious materials that must be sought by the trainer and then linked, during the meetings, to the meta-skills on which he intends to reflect. During the sessions, events can occur that can be linked to each of the 2 skills in question, the trainer's task is to make these events rich in meaning and sources of learning.

BRIEFING. Each exercise includes a moment, of about 5 minutes, dedicated to the briefing, in which the group of learners will be explained why they will reason about that particular skill, how it is related to the game of chess and what are the objectives and instructions to complete the proposed experiential activity.

DEBRIEFING. Instead, more time will be dedicated to debriefing, a moment of collective reflection crucial to understanding the real subjective and relational implications of the activity carried out. Experiential exercises are heterogeneous classroom devices and it is not possible to provide unambiguous rules for managing the debriefing.

3 categories of questions have been developed to stimulate both individual reflection and group discussion:

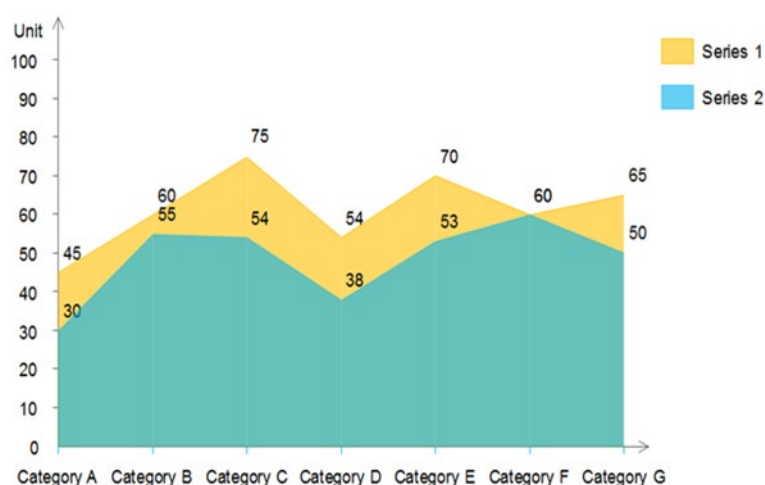
1. **Remembrance. Operational reflection.** The trainer takes the participants back to their recent past by stimulating the re-enactment of the most important moments experienced during the activity through questions such as: what were the most interesting phases of the exercise? What were the most relevant actions in view of the final result? What happened during the activities?
2. **Personal emotions. Subjective reflection.** The trainer has the participants analyze their state of mind during the exercises with a series of questions: How did you feel? What emotions did you feel during the activities? When did you feel these emotions? When did you experience these other emotions (e.g. disappointment, boredom, annoyance, etc.)? What actions, mine or those of other people present in the courtroom, triggered these emotions?
3. **Interpersonal relationships. Intersubjective reflection.** The trainer stimulates the analysis of internal relationships present before, during or after the activity carried out together. Guiding questions can be: Did you have difficulty communicating during the exercise? Have different likes and dislikes emerged from those you had before? Were there conflicts or alliances? Were there any fractures in the group?

The questions presented are suggestions that the trainer must take care to adapt, using the most appropriate verbal and non-verbal language, to the different and unpredictable circumstances.

FEEDBACK. In the specific prison context, feedback is of the utmost importance. The trainer must give feedback as soon as possible, in real time, as he must link it to the behavioral evidence that emerges during play or training activities. It must always be constructive, that is, offered with the intention of supporting improvement through awareness of one's own behavior and above all respectful, adhering to a logic of service and not of judgment or appeal.

SETTING AND POSTURE OF THE TRAINER. It is important to consider that these are not academic classes with a lecturer behind a desk. The environment must convey equality and collaboration and must be free of social hierarchies and discrimination. As a result, the trainer can maintain non-formal postures and attitudes (sits on the desk, walks around desks, sits next to a group of learners, etc.). This is crucial to foster a sense of belonging and allow participants to feel comfortable and participate more actively in the lesson.

ANALYTICAL SHEETS. The analytical sheets (presented in the Tools section) are an effective and easy-to-use tool to observe and monitor the evolution, during the sessions, of the level of Self-Awareness and Self-Control of each individual participant and to understand the changes related to the classroom climate. At the end of the interventions, the data collected can be displayed in an area graph similar to that of the example below.



There are 3 types of analytical sheets:

1. Individual observation sheets. Tool for the trainer to identify, through the Likert scale, the quality of learning and awareness of the 3 skills by each participant.
2. General observation sheet. A tool for the trainer to identify, through the Likert scale, the level of attention and collaboration within the group.

3. Self-assessment form. To be completed by each participant at the end of the meetings. Useful both for participants to rethink the training path, and for the trainer to understand how much learners are able to apply learning to real life.



3- TOOLS

Materials: large post-its and pencils (or pens), a sheet for the trainer.

INDIVIDUAL OBSERVATION FORM

Date:	Name:
-------	-------

Insert, on each card, the evaluation scale from 1 to 5 with the associated values.

Very much = 5

Quite a lot = 4

Little = 2

Not at all = 1

Self-awareness	Vote				
	1	2	3	4	5
Reflects on activities and their own behavior					
Is aware of their emotions					
Productive emotions (curiosity, fun, etc.) are more intense than hindering ones (frustration, etc.)					

Self-control	Vote				
	1	2	3	4	5
Shows self-control and ability to manage emotions					
When extreme feelings emerge (anger, impatience) he is able to control them immediately					
Follows established rules and commitments					

GENERAL OBSERVATION SHEET

Date:

Insert, on each card, the evaluation scale from 1 to 5 with the associated values.

Very much = 5

Quite a lot = 4

Little = 2

Not at all = 1

	Vote				
	1	2	3	4	5
They show attention					
They are actively involved in the proposed activities					

I am comfortable asking for explanations					
They intervene pertinently					
They gladly answer questions					
Collaborate					

Notes.....

SELF-ASSESSMENT FORMS

Date:	Name:
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Insert, on each card, the evaluation scale from 1 to 5 with the associated values.

Very much = 5

Very much = 4

Quite a lot = 3

Little = 2

Not at all = 1

Self-awareness	Vote				
	1	2	3	4	5
How much have you learned about this skill after the training course?					
How much do you think you can apply it to your behavior?					
How much would you like to improve on this skill?					

Self-control	Vote				
	1	2	3	4	5
How much have you learned about this skill after the training course?					
How much do you think you can apply it to your behavior?					
How much would you like to improve on this skill?					

4- REMARKS

Incarceration produces a forced rupture of emotional ties and this feeds in the prisoner new loneliness and feelings of abandonment which, as a reaction, can develop resentment towards the outside world, of which the trainer is also a part. The trainer, therefore, will encounter, in his playful-educational path based on chess, certainly self-awareness and self-control but also anger, aggression or distrust. His task will therefore be to encourage the emergence of the former and to control the possible impetuosity of the last emotions mentioned.



5. DISCLAIMER

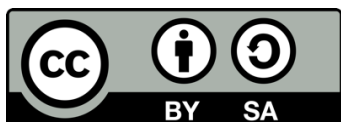
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© May 2024 – Skill Up Srl, UniChess ssdl, INDEPCIE sca, Club Magic Extremadura Sport Club, Center for Research on Education and Innovation, Latvian Chess Federation

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the European Commission as part of the Erasmus+ Project "ICARUS – Including Chess As a Re-education Up-Skilling tool", N. 2023-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000152409.

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