LEARNER-CENTRED APPROACH IN FACILITATION OF LEARNING

Co-funded by
the European Union

Learner-centred approach

- It's an approach where the learning process is designed <u>to meet learners where they are</u> or, in other words, to start from their needs and experience.

- What is the stance of facilitator in this approach?

- What is the potential of this approach?

- What are the limitations?

- How do we integrate it in the learning process of youth workers?

Learner-centred approach

- Related to the **person-centered therapy** introduced and practiced by Carl C. Rogers

- **Trust in the learner's potential:** believe in each learner's ability to grow and learn

- **Learner empowerment:** shift the power dynamics by allowing learners to have a say in their learning journey.

- **Facilitation over teaching:** Transition from a traditional 'teaching' role to a 'facilitator'
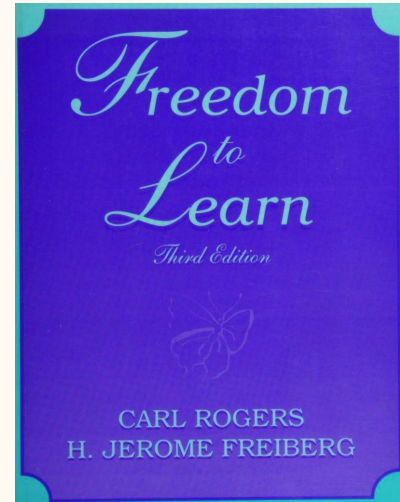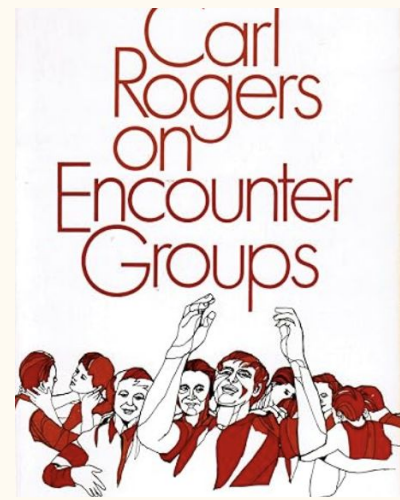
Conditions for learner-centred facilitation

- **Congruence:** Be genuine and transparent as a facilitator. Authenticity encourages openness in learners.

- **Unconditional Positive Regard:** show unconditional positive regard. Accept learners as they are without judgment, fostering a safe learning environment.

- **Empathy:** understand and empathize with learners' perspectives. This connection builds trust and facilitates deeper learning.

Opportunities and benefits of such approach

- **Internal locus of control:** empowers learners to take charge of their learning, enhancing motivation and engagement.

- **Self-directedness:** encourages learners to direct their learning paths, fostering lifelong learning skills.

- **Ownership over learning:** when learners have control, they develop a sense of ownership, leading to more profound and impactful learning experiences.

- Other?

Limitations in the international training context

- **Short learning event:** In brief training workshops (1-2 days), it can be challenging to implement a fully learner-centred approach due to time constraints.

- **Limited knowledge of learner needs:** when learners do not express or not aware of their needs, gaining in-depth knowledge about each learner's needs can be challenging

- **Constraints in making changes (based on emerging needs):** there might be limited space and time to adjust methodology, duration, pace, etc.

- Other limitations?

Questions to ask when preparing for the learning journey with participants

- How do I analyse the needs of my participants prior to the event/programme?

- How do I support participants in identifying their real learning needs?

- How do I incorporate the needs in the programme design?

- How much space do I leave in the event programme for participants to focus on their own learning goals and pursue them?

- How do I create space for self-directedness in learning?

Ways to ensure Learner-Centredness in training design

- Ask specific questions in the application:

    - what NEW things would you like to learn about…?

    - Avoid "what is your motivation/expectations?"

- Support participants in identifying their real learning needs by:

    - Using self-assessment tools/ External feedback

- Ensure ways to collect responses: online meeting, badge evidence, short survey, space at the beginning of the programme, etc.

Ways to ensure Learner-Centredness in training design

- **Incorporate the needs in the programme design:**
  - Trainers' prep meeting for sharing insights from needs analysis
  - Daily reflection and formative (on-going) evaluation to check how much training is matching expectations and needs
  - Daily trainers' meeting to respond to emerging needs and group dynamics
  - Mid-term evaluation to harvest remaining needs

Ways to ensure Learner-Centredness in training design

- Open - ended methods

- Creating space for self-directed learning:

  - free exploration of multiple topics

  - conversations based on participants questions;

  - free choice of what skills to practice during the training

- Methods like "World Cafe", Open Space Technology, Learning Space Dynamics, Fishbowl, etc.

- Individual mentorship (especially in the longer training programmes)

Four Levels of Listening
By Otto Scharmer – Theory U

1. Downloading: You only hear information that validates your existing opinions and judgments. Your Past Mind.

2. Factual Listening: You pay attention to facts and novel information that differ from what you expect. Open Mind.

3. Empathic Listening: You do not just understand the facts; you feel the human experience. Geting into the shoes of the other. Open Heart

4. Presencing. A new reality enters the horizon and comes into being. You listen not just to the person, but to "what wants to emerge". Open Will.

Practice your active and empathic listening

Rules for active listening (and paraphrasing):

- Listen carefully with full presence and focus on the other person.

- Sum up what the person has said:

  - Use the „language" of the person – signal understanding
  - Don't drop something important from your side
  - Don't add your „wisdom"
  - Don't interpret
  - Don't change the order of the thoughts

- If the person does not feel well represented by your paraphrasing – try again

- It is one's own world, own problem and own responsibility.

Practice your active and empathic listening

- Get into pairs

- One person talks about own professional development needs

- Another person listens actively and empathically: for facts, feelings, intentions and values.

- You can paraphrase, clarify and ensure that your understood anohter person's needs as well as possible.

- The person sharing own needs can react on paraphrasing ("I feel you captured my needs well"/ "I would add…").

- Swap roles after 10 minutes.

- 20 minutes in total.

Practice your active and empathic listening

Rules for active listening (and paraphrasing):

- Listen carefully with full presence and focus on the other person.

- Sum up what the person has said:

    - Use the „language" of the person – signal understanding.
    - Don't drop something important from your side.
    - Don't add your „wisdom".
    - Don't interpret.
    - Don't change the order of the thoughts.

- If the person does not feel well represented by your paraphrasing – try again.

- It is one's own world, own needs and own responsibility.

#facilitating learning

Learner - Centred Approach in Training

awero

Co-funded by
the European Union