



**Interreg**   
EUROPEAN UNION

**2 Seas Mers Zeeën**

**ORPHEUS**

European Regional Development Fund

# ORPHEUS: Guidance on the Structured Debate



Social  
innovation

- Trainers can use a variety of techniques that can then be used directly with young people.
- The activities in this presentation can be modelled to replicate how it might take place in a setting with young people.
- The advantage to the trainees is that they can experiment with delivery and adapt to their setting having seen it live.

# Training points



- Establishing the ground rules
- Becoming the facilitator
- Self-assessing (The Blob Tree)
- Discussion starters
- What position to take?
- Managing the 'heat' of the discussion
- Scripts to deescalate, redirect and reflect
- Seeing it from a different viewpoint

# Establish the ground rules



When working with young people on controversial issues, it is important to start with some 'ground rules'. The same goes for this training of teachers or youth workers. The ground rules should link and support the culture and ethos of the setting. They should also support the 'boundary zones for dialogue' that have been referenced in the earlier section of this manual.

- Ground rules
- Respect of views and be tolerant of views
- Listen and respond to the comment, not the person
- Use the correct vocabulary - seek clarification if needed
- Choose language that will include all participants
- Avoid making it about a person in the room
- Keep the conversation within the room
- Everyone has the right to be heard or to refrain from speaking

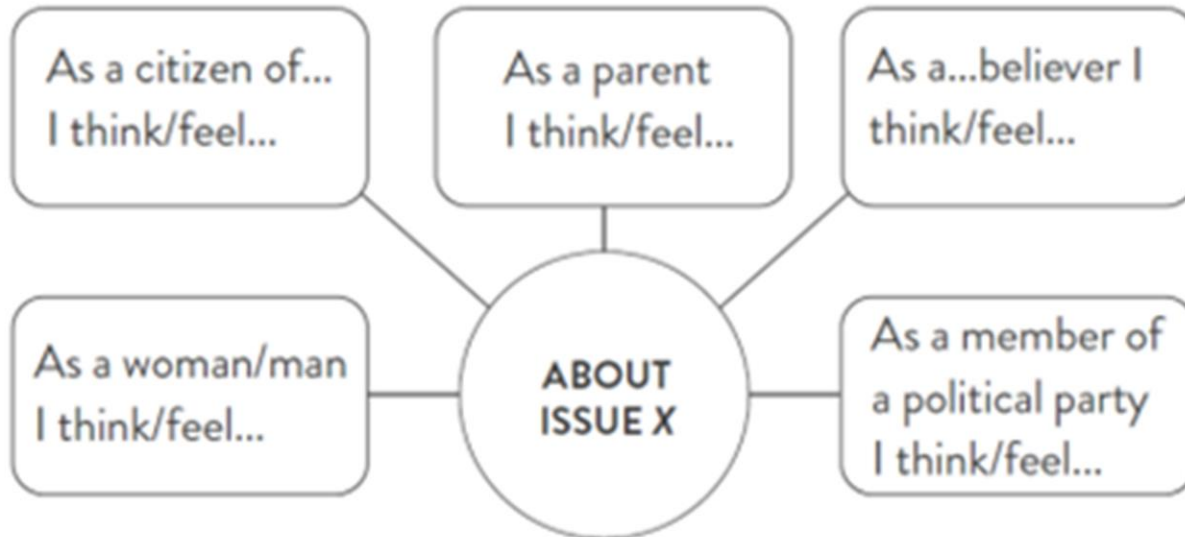
# Becoming the facilitator



- The focus is on being able to facilitate a discussion and how to navigate young people through this process
- It is a move away from becoming an expert on every controversial topic
- It is about frontline staff developing (and building upon) general skills that can be applied to different situations
- Incorporating a variety of delivery techniques that include games, interaction and prompt sheets

# Self assessment (1)

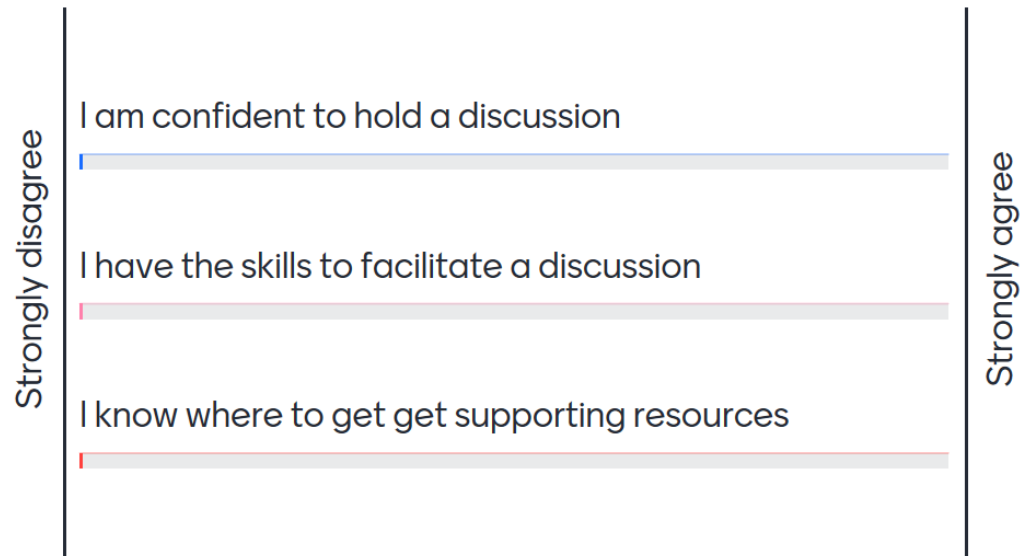
Explore what makes you fearful about the issue from these different perspectives and also what makes you hopeful about the issue.



# Self assessment (2)



## Self-assessment - controversial issues



# Getting the discussion started



- Difficult Dialogue (p.44) has an excellent hand-out prompt to get discussions started. It uses the following key questions for each topic:
- What I know about this issue that is true
- What have I heard about this issue and know to be false
- What I know to be true about this issue but I have some doubts
- What upsets me about this issue
- What makes me proud or hopeful about this issue



# What position to take?



- The challenge for the facilitator is what position to adopt in a discussion.
- The Council Of Europe in their publication Teaching Controversial Issues (p.16) have devised 6 different types.
  1. Stated commitment
  2. Balanced
  3. Devil's Advocate
  4. Stated neutrality
  5. Ally
  6. Official Line
- The task is for trainees to weigh up the advantages/disadvantages of each approach. These can be discussed and users can decide when each one might be employed in a discussion.

# Managing the 'heat' of the discussion.



Some amount of heat is necessary to get the conversation going and shows that viewpoints are being aired. Too much heat and the discussion will become personal, emotional (reactional) and can lead to polarisation.

## Tips to lower the heat:

1. Slow the pace down
2. Say what you see
3. Say what you hear
4. Reminder of the ground rules
5. Park it
6. Find the bigger question
7. Take a break

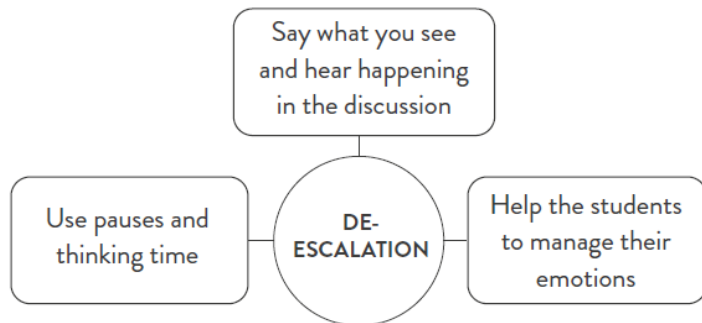


- De-escalation
- Moving away from taking sides
- Explore threats
- Self awareness and self reflection

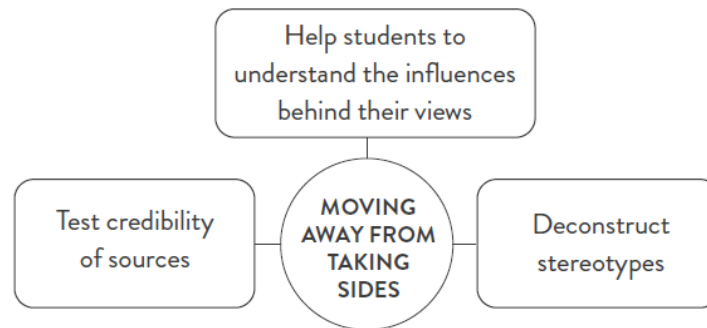
# Techniques from Difficult Dialogue



## 1 De-escalation



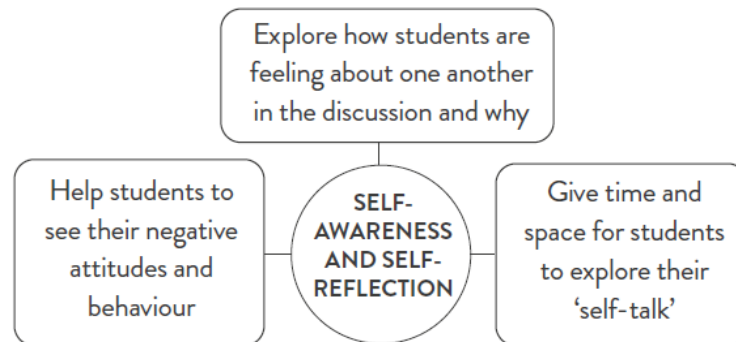
## 2 Moving Away from Taking Sides



## 3 Explore Threats



## 4 Self-Awareness and Self-Reflection



# Scripts to deescalate, redirect and reflect



Type	Comment	Response
Generalisation	All Muslims are terrorists They should go back where they came from	What makes you say that? How many people from that group have you spoken to / met?
Inappropriate words	Paki She's a slag	Do you know where that term came from and what it originally meant? Do you know why people stopped using that word / why it is unacceptable these days?
Offensive to a group	All white people are racist You can't trust travellers	How do you know that? That's not my experience of [ ] group It's difficult when people talk about groups in that way as it just helps to reinforce unfair and untrue stereotypes, which aren't helpful
Comment which target an individual	He's so gay Tramp	What's your intention in making that remark How do you feel when people talk to you in a way that you don't like?
Other	Here we go again You can't say anything anymore I'm not racist but	You're not afraid to say what you think which is a good thing, but have you thought what the effect of that remark could be on other people? You obviously feel very strongly about this - can you tell me why? Why do you think I'm questioning what you are saying?

# Seeing it from a different viewpoint – ascribed roles



- What happens when we give young people a different role to argue? What do they see? What is the impact? Another approach you can take is to give a set roles to young people that they have to carry out within the discussion. This could be that someone has to argue from a viewpoint that they do not share or a position they find uncomfortable
- With a peer, look at the controversial issue you have been given and think of the different roles you could give to the group. What viewpoints can be argued?

# Closing of the session



- Do you feel more comfortable dealing with this issue in your practice?
- Which elements from this training were very useful for your practice?
- What questions and uncertainties are left unanswered?
- What opportunities and limitations do you see now to use this in your professional context