



Erasmus+



*Different kinds of disorders
as a result of the questionnaires
and how to deal with them*



CONFERENCE

held at

AULA MAGNA

ISTITUTO ALBERGHIERO IPSSCOA KAROL WOJTYLA - CATANIA

Catania 14 March 2018



Erasmus+



*Different kinds of disorders
as a result of the questionnaires
and how to deal with them*

CONFERENCE

held at

AULA MAGNA

ISTITUTO ALBERGHIERO IPSSEOA KAROL WOJTYLA - CATANIA

Catania 14 March 2018

INTRODUCTION

During the project week (12/17 March 2018), on the 14 March we held at the Aula Magna of the IPSSEOA Istituto Karol Wojtyla a conference about "Different kinds of disorders as a result of the questionnaires and how to deal with them". The conference was organized by Prof. ssa Dell'Eva Maria Cristina coordinator of the European Project Erasmus+ "Integrative pathways for students with social, educational and motivational needs", project in partnership with Naples, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Malta, Romania (Sibiu and Galati) and Turkey. The conference was inspired by a questionnaire on the special needs of the students of the different European schools, filled by the various partners during the first year of the project and the analysis of educational strategies to manage these special needs.

The conference was attended by speakers from the pedagogical/psychological area and the volunteering area, who with their competences presented different themes: Dr. Maria Carmela Laudani, Pedagogist and Manager of the DSA Group for the National Health Service in Catania she spoke about the parents' and teachers' training

The Engineer Claudio Pellegrino, delegate of the Para Olympics Committee Section of Catania and Dr. Carmelo La Rocca, Vice President of the Life Onlus Association presented "I am I can I do" and "Accept the challenge" interventions on sport as a valid and reliable inclusion strategy for students with special needs and above all with severe physical disabilities.

The last intervention "Developing educational strategies in a disadvantaged social context" was presented by Dr. Maria Elena Rubbino and Mr. Andrea Arena, both volunteers of the GAPA Association, acronym of (Young people absolutely for action), with 30 years experience, working in a difficult neighborhood of Catania where over 18,000 people live. A community, where 4 out of 10 families live in poverty, with a very high level of unemployment and school dropout.

Prof. Maria Cristina Dell'Eva

Coordinator of the Erasmus+Project

**"Integrative pathways for students with motivational,
educational and social needs"**

Istituto alberghiero IPSSEOA KAROL WOJTYLA - CATANIA

PARENTS' AND TEACHERS' TRAINING PRESENTED
by Doctor Laudani Maria Carmela Pedagogist
and Coordinator of DSA Group National Health Service

The parents teachers training is a cognitive behavioral strategy for the treatment of educational dysfunctions.

There are different areas of intervention and the application methods may concern either single couples or groups of couples.

For the management of problems related to special needs, the Group is often favored in order to facilitate both sharing and taking charge.

The group parents' and teachers' training (abbreviation PT) includes 6 meetings lasting 1 hour every two weeks.

After the analysis of the motivation to the PT an assessment is carried out which will provide the necessary elements for the formation of the group.

The analysis of educational styles is a cornerstone of the path and leads couples to make a change in their educational attitudes. In front of a special need, parents put in place dysfunctional behaviors that repeat inconsistent and ineffective educational styles. All this does not facilitate the growth of the minor in terms of autonomy and self-esteem

A constant collaboration with the school is requested to better work out strategies for SEN students.

The cognitive behavioral approach with its intervention techniques can be extended to the scholastic field providing teachers with the most favorable strategies for the management of problems related to the special EDUCATIONAL NEEDS in the classroom.

The strategies examined are the Tochen economy and Tutoring with the final structuring of an "educational contract".

The parent's and teacher's training can be considered a valid compensating tool capable of facilitating the educational process of the minor / pupil with special educational needs for the achievement of the common learning objectives.

ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

My name is Carmelo La Rocca,

I am an Interpreter for the US Government in Catania and as a hobby I deal with sport and disability and young people with social problems.

Since year 2000 I have created a non-profit organization working in this field.

The Life Onlus The site: www.lifeonlus.com

My presentation will talk about personal experiences of people who, despite having disabilities, want to integrate themselves in sport and in everyday life, "accepting the challenges that Life present us every day.

We have mainly chosen the Sea as a means of aggregation because the sea has no boundaries and facilitates the teaching of diving for people with disabilities due to weightlessness.

We wanted to show that the people with disabilities can have the ambition to do extraordinary things like the realization of two Scuba diving World Records a blind girl and a paraplegic boy. We have made the first underwater archeology path for blind people in the world presented by a blind girl to able-bodied people, overturning the roles of assisted to assistants.

Finally an example of entrepreneurship of a Sicilian boy who emigrated to the UK to created a tour operator specialized in travel for people with disabilities.

A very successful Tour operator named Seable The site: www.seable.co.uk

As for the young people with social problems, former prisoners or immigrants, we have created a Pizza Making course, managing to include three subjects at risk of social exclusion, working in local Pizzeria.

We have chosen the profession of "Pizzaiolo" because it does not require a high schooling and usable worldwide. Again accepting the Challenge with Just the willingness to work rather than be delinquents.

The following are the 3 short video that we have personally created that I will elaborate during the presentation.

The videos are the following:

Scuba diving and disabilities

<https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3Dqm5CCgMAnxw&h=ATOgo4u8O6Zb0jhBSwHgr03HAa2FN6rVcmAPUKRNGJknF-oLDTed-sokNNqgDGdTVUQfzo-v2a-AfX6GGRKkyXMAZrbxEHyAnRBthfwQLBn4NC7cd3Q&s=1>

Record del Mondo di paraplegico:

https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DpDxpo-e-RiQ&h=ATPb3vXYZpd20q0Q5_Z0b5pe4W1vErpvAmKfnxT4Fk2qAtCOZwloUdEU-bubi1knjGizlohRm3OsZhbhsORFAN5PXcRcFIW6gjWDbUCNTjMGhDVT8q_I

Seable in the world

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFKEqleS9C4>

Pizza Course for people with Social inclusion problem:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtPspTbpPTk>

1. GAPA: A BRIEF HISTORY

G.A.P.A. is an acronym that stands for “young people absolutely for action” . G.A.P.A. is an association born 30 years ago; it was founded by a group of young people who believed that mafia and exploitation can be beaten by spreading culture and creating a strong sense of community in the territory.

Gapa is a nonreligious association which thinks at cultural, religion, color, gender and social diversities as a great wealth for the entire community.

In the first years of activity, Gapa moved through different places, until it got its own definitive headquarter in an ex warehouse in via Cordai, a narrow street in the very heart of San Cristoforo, a working class area where more than 18.000 people live.

1.1 Context

In San Cristoforo, 4 families out of ten live in poverty; there are few primary schools, there's a very high level of unemployment and local politics utterly lack in terms of support to the poor people and social development.

Another interesting fact is the high level of early school leaving, which percentage in 2014 reached 38,6%, while, in the first six month of 2015, 530 minors were subjected to judicial authority. In this context it's clear how easily mafia recruits young people as drug dealers at street corners, or in the other low level roles in the criminal organization, in order to maintain its power and developing a strict territorial control over the weaker part of the population.

1.2 Context related actions

Gapa opposes to these dynamics by two main lines of action: keeping on exposing these problems to the city and organizing different activities for the people of S. Cristoforo.

On the first line, Gapa publishes a monthly local newspaper called “i Cordai”, in which we write about San Cristoforo and Catania problems, suggesting solutions and expliciting local politics responsibilities in the growth of poverty and criminal power in our city. The Journal is written in a simple way, so that everybody can understand what we want to say; its main purpose is to reach San Cristoforo people and communicate them the possibility of a better life made of rights and social inclusion. “I Cordai” keeps on being published regularly every month.

The second line of action, based on activities, has the purpose of creating strong human relationships, in order to build an example of different socialization, based on the values of mutual respect and social justice. We started different activities related to different needs of the diverse social segments composing San Cristoforo society: Children, Women, Teenagers, Workers and Unemployed people.

The idea behind every activity is that culture and knowledge are the best tools to free people and empower them, letting them recognize the advantages given by a more community oriented social setting.

All of our activities are totally free, and are made possible by donations from common citizens and auto organized funding events such as shows or social dinners.

1.3 - Active Projects:

“G.B. Scidà Community Library

In 2014 Gapa realized a library and entitled it to Giambattista Scidà, a president of the minors’s court who spent his life fighting mafia. As we said, S. Cristoforo’s early school leaving level is very high and illiteracy and relapse into illiteracy are increasing: the library is a place where people can access books for free, where people can study or read, a place where children can concentrate and learn.

The library also hosts book presentations and cultural events and is part of a Community Libraries Network, a partnership project thought to spread culture in disadvantaged areas in the center of Catania.

Greco Roman Wrestling school

Sports and physical activity are important factors in health, self esteem and social relations: we think that everybody should have the right to practice a sport because it leads to psychological and physical well-being.

Gapa started the greco roman wrestling school more than ten years ago, thanks to the efforts of Claudio Alonzo, a federal professional wrestling trainer. The school won national and local competitions, and one of our athletes has been called in the national team and took part to an international competition in Iran last year.

We see this as a great human and professional opportunity: our pupils work hard to improve their skills and gain consciousness of their potential, understanding that they can take control over their own lives.

Tailoring Laboratory

Tailor Lab is an activity that engages a group of women from 20 to 80 years old who live in S. Cristoforo. Every monday morning they meet at Gapa and tail together, socializing and exchanging tailoring skills.

It’s a space where different generations stay together and support each other, this activity is an opportunity for them to develop relations and a sense of community, while practicing and teaching one another.

Job Searching

Gapa volunteers funded a facebook group called “passaparola lavoro Catania” and created

a database of job opportunities to help people find a job or write a curriculum vitae. The database is constantly updated with new requests and announcements, in order to match job offers and demand.

Scuola e Libertà

It's a project of After-School Activity for children followed by an equipe of educators and trainers, working together to create a place where children can meet, spend time together and experience different kinds of relational and cognitive modalities, by paying or doing creative activities. The activities they practice are Social Circus, Painting, Paper Mache, Theatre.

2. PEDAGOGIC STRATEGIES

In this presentation we're going to focus the different pedagogic strategies we're using to work with children and young adults in a disadvantaged context.

2.1 - Needings

In order to act efficiently, we must first of all recognize which lacks and needings our social context has, so that our action project will be strongly linked to our participants.

We found three main needings among people who live in S.Cristoforo: Expressive, Emotional and Learning Related.

On one side we see how difficult is for many to recognize and manage emotions; consequently it is difficult for them to express themselves.

The reason has to be found in the kind of relational dynamics these people live, usually oppressive and/or violent. Too often, the only known way to communicate and express a needing or opinion is raising voice volume and verbally or physically threaten the others.

Furthermone, as we said, another criticality is a general lack of instruction. Many people do not eve know how to learn, having left school too early, and living in an incentive lacking context since childhood.

2.2 - Theories

Some key concept at the basis of our projects.

2.2.1 - Experience

David Kolb made a synthesis of previous theories about experiential learning in 1984, basing on the works of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin and Jean Piaget.

Kolb speaks about learning as a life lasting process (Life Long Learning). He also speaks of learning as a social process, in which teaching happens not only in schools but in various environments such as family, work, everyday life situations.

In this perspective Experience gets a central role; learning by experience is the process that leads to human development.

Experiential learning is a *four steps cycle*:

- *Experience*: fully and openly engaging in an experience (something happens)
- *Observation*: observing and reflecting on experiences made by multiple perspectives (what happened?)
- *Analysis*: creating concepts by integrating observations in theories and hypothesis (how can I make it happen again?)
- *Reproduction*: active experimentation in which hypothesis are tested empirically by action, the result of which is a new experience (Action: something is made happen)

At the end of a cycle, a new one begins, starting a new experience, situation or problem to solve.

2.2.2 - Creativity

Creativity is an existential dimension of a person who uses his or her logic and emotional abilities acting in an open and original way in connection to the environment.

Creativity insists on the unique and sacred value of the person and the value of his/her originality and openness to differences, in the perspective of an improvement for society.

2.2.3 - Action Research Didactics

Experiential Learning and Creativity operate a change in the relations between teacher and student: both are part of an educational process that is based upon more active role of the student, which is involved in *experiences* and has to use logic and imagination to actively solve problems or complete tasks.

Being experience a practical thing, experiential learning links to research action didactics, whose purpose is to enhance a practice.

Research Action Keywords are:

- *Collective researcher* (the subject of pedagogic process is the group of students and teacher),
- *Change* (the process' purpose is not knowledge itself but the introduction of improvements in a practice),
- *Empathy* (focus on emotion and human dimensions during the process),
- *Authorization* (intended as becoming Author of our lives and being able to take control over it).

2.2.4 - Emotional and Physical Safety

A safe and fun space where developing and affirming own personality with no fear of judgement. Listening to own and other's feelings, appreciating differences as a wealth for society.

2.2.5 - Playing

The cornerstone of our pedagogic practice is about Playing.

The advantages given by playing activities are many and contribute in creating a good learning environment.

When we play a game we accept its rules, and eventually negotiate them when conflicts occur; Huizinga, in "Homo Ludens", states that playing is a pre cultural activity, an instinctual element that makes human being able to "get in another world" (Huizinga 1938).

In playing activities we find *Extra Ordinary dynamics and relations*; players somehow get out of their normal lives thanks to a free acceptance of different rules and purposes.

2.2.6 - Keeping the process interesting / Focus on the process

Another great advantage given by playing is that the focus moves from results to process: if doing something is funny or pleasing, our attention will be drawn by the activity itself, which we will find more interesting and motivating than an abstract final purpose.

Learning becomes an engaging process, strongly stimulating participants' interest.

2.2.7 - Mistakes as part of a process

Mistakes and failure are treated as positive aspects of experiences: this is made possible by judgement suspension and by focusing on the process. Even relational mistakes are opportunity to conduct self and group observation and practicing empathy.

It is important to be aware of errors in order to be able to self correct, furthermore, mistakes awareness, when speaking of interactions between peers, becomes a fundamental step in developing community and social responsibility.

2.2.8 - Conflicts management

Conflicts naturally occur and are to be seen as a natural step in growth. Rearrangement of conflict meaning is a good strategy to turn conflicts in positive opportunities. It can be done by experiencing different methods to manage it, is as listening, theatre and judgement suspension, games about conflicts, sports.

In this perspective, criticisms are good tools for improvement.

The *four agreements* are 4 simple principles to practice in order maintain peace and avoid conflicts, they come from the Toltec pre columbian culture:

think well about words to use

don't take everything personal

do not make assumptions

always do the best you can

2.2.9 - Integration

The set of social and cultural processes that make individuals members of a society.

We frequently found prejudice as the main obstacle to intercultural and social integration. Prejudice comes from lack of knowledge and supposition, so we try to dissolve it using practical experiences of knowing each other, by training together, playing together, learning together as a team.

2.3 - Self-efficacy

Albert Bandura developed the principle of self-efficacy:

“Trust of a person in the possibility of obtaining desired effects with his or her own actions, in relation to his or her own objectives and the environment.” (Albert Bandura 1997).

High level of Self-efficacy supporto learning and cognitive activity and greatly improve:

- Independence
- Motivation
- Proactivity
- Better social and cognitive performances in different environments.

3. OUR PEDAGOGIC PRACTICES, OBJECTIVE AND METHODS

Some of our *practices* in relation with **pinpoint objectives**

3.1 - Watching and listening

Our first objective is to let the participants gain the ability to observe and listen to models of reference such as instructors, educator and peers, to learn thought processes and tricks, and drawing motivation from them.

Listening training:

- Reading, playing and acting with verbal and non verbal languages (watching and repeating skills, movement, expressions, words, playing together with rhythm and coordination)
- Theatre
- Silence and rituals of self listening (focus on breathing, focus on heartbeat etc.)

3.2 - Identifying and understanding emotional states

“The cognitive identification of physiological informations can lead to different perceptions of one’s physical abilities” (Bandura 1997) listening and observing emotional and physiological conditions in a safe environment leads to the ability of managing stressful activations and perceiving feelings as positive and motivating.

Furthermore, mood, in addition to interpreting experiences deeply influences attention and memory.

3.3 - Empathy

The intellectual identification with or vicarious experiencing of the feelings, thoughts or attitudes of another.

Empathy training:

- visualization (artistic activities, visual representation of emotions)
- interpretation (verbal and non verbal by storytelling and theatre)
- changing perspectives (role playing and theatre)

3.4 - Mastery

Ability to manage tasks and experiment in a direct and autonomous way, once provided

with all the informations, methods and procedures to achieve the task.

Training for independence:

During activities educators and trainers must:

- Give clear work inputs
- Create a safe space
- Give participants time for autonomous work
- Ask questions
- Guide strategies for solutions

3.5 - Verbalization

Verbalization is the Ability to express opinions and feelings, communicate realistic, positive and motivating feedbacks in verbal relations with others and share thoughts processes.

Verbalization training:

- Creating rituals for moments of discussion and questions
- Teamwork
- Theatre
- Helping others doing exercises or homeworks

4.

CONCLUSIONS: OUR RESEARCH AND WHAT WE LEARN AS EDUCATORS

In light of considerations made to this point, this paragraph will show how theories and specific objectives connect with practice and every day work with our groups.

In our activities, especially with younger participants, we always try to mix different languages (verbal, body language, arts), in order to explore diverse abilities (physical, relational, artistic, logic). This permits us to let every participant experience a variety of skills.

We use creativity to find links between different activities: theatre and physical activity, painting and storytelling and so on.

In this way we can try multiple but connected strategies to incentive interest for learning, because even little progressions in participants skills improve their motivation and self efficacy, while frustration for fails in exercise is kept low by working in a non judging environment.

Working with a wide range of ages is a great challenge, this is why we always program activities and evaluate them using specific forms. Programming lessons permits to work on long term activities, constantly monitoring achievements and criticalities, and constantly adjusting our education style and proposal in reation with the objectives.

Programming does not mean rigidity anyway: educators and trainers must be flexible and always adapt scheduled activities to the contingent emotive and physical condition of the group.

Again, we learnt that creativity is the best tool to solve unexpected problems.

In our practice we always focus on participants' needs, as individuals and as a group; we learnt that opening and listening is the first and most important step in the communication process inside the groupe. Educators and trainers are part of the group and guide participants through experiences, they make questions and don't give answers: participants have an active role in the learning process, and together with educators are part of a constant experience based research.

PHOTOS



From left to right speakers of the Conference:
Doctor Renato Scifo, Doctor Maria Carmela Laudani, Doctor Carmelo La Rocca, Ing. Claudio Pellegrino,
Mr Andrea Arena, Doctor Maria Elena Rubbino, Prof. Maria Cristina Dell'Eva





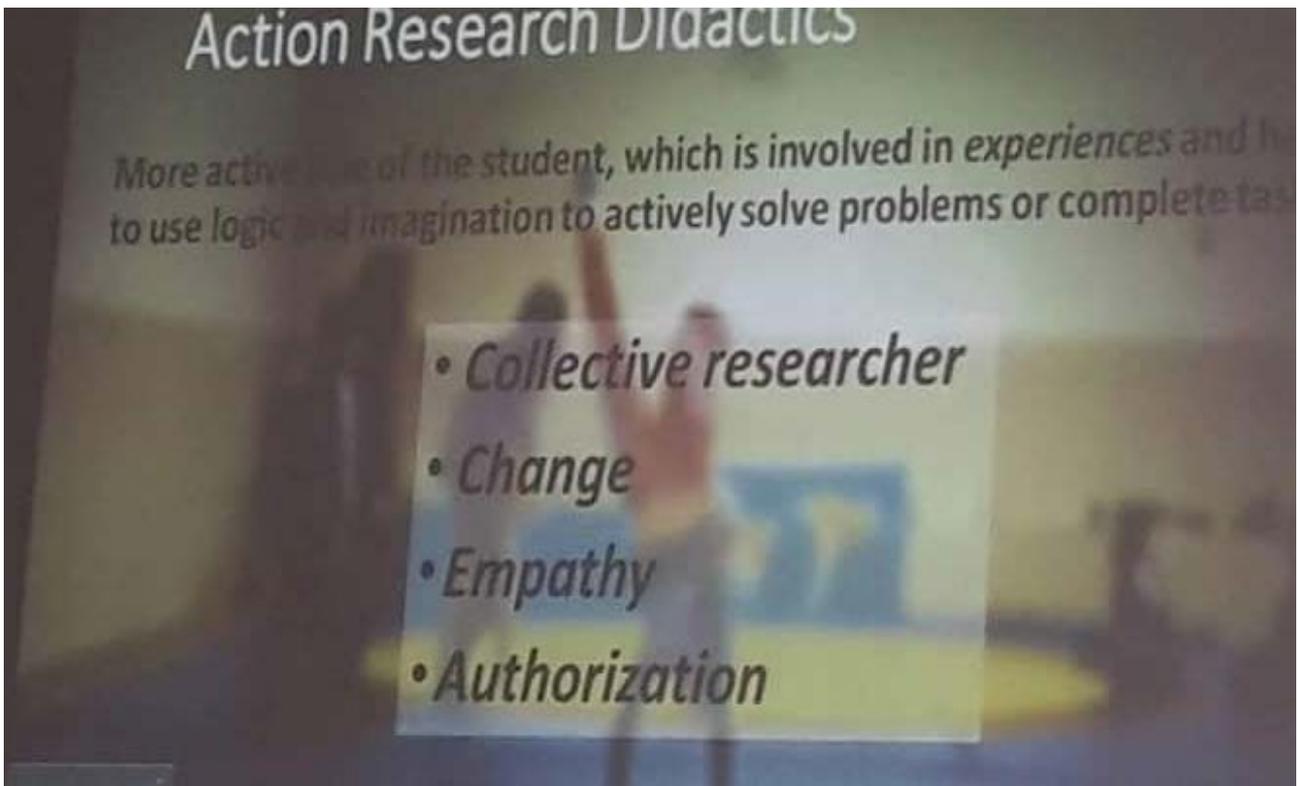
Moments of the Conference





Moments of the Conference





Moments of the Conference





All the partners of the Erasmus + Project visiting Catania and Mount Etna



**Non bisogna essere perfetti per tutti
basta essere speciali per qualcuno**

*Don't be perfect for everyone
just be special for someone*