**Size: small group, Duration: 45-60 min**

**TITLE: TRANSFORMING NEGATIVE WAY OF EXPRESSION**

**AIMS**:

* To make students learn the meaning of words they use during their inner dialogue
* To direct attention to words, their associations and anchoring
* To direct attention to the process of transforming negative way of expression
* Replace personal negative vocabulary with positive one

**DESCRIPTION**:

The exercise implemented step by step, will make students/participants search for negative expressions and transform them with more positive ones. Positive attitude of an individual often results from his/her positive vocabulary. Hence, it is important which words we use at they trigger associations - either **positive ones** which are goal oriented and reinforce target motivation or **negative ones** reinforcing avoidance motivation.

**Step 1:** First, the trainer/teacher invites the students to form a circle and to pay attention to their posture. Every thought and every emotion also changes mental processes. By controlling our body parameters (e.g. muscle tension) we regulate and influence our thoughts and emotions in a positive way. When proceeding with the exercise, the trainer follows the steps below:

**Step 2**: First, try out a negative posture: drop your chin on your chest, move your shoulders forward, tighten your stomach muscles and let your eyes be half shut. Lower your lower lip. Breathe shallowly.

**Step 3**: Try to find out what you feel. Try to think of something nice, joyful and cheerful. (You will realize you have run into an inner obstacle preventing you to think of something nice.) The posture of your body is associated with negative emotional patterns.

**Step 4**: Now let’s try the opposite: a positive body posture. Release your stomach muscles; lift your eyes, chin, your head, look, eyebrows and corners of your mouth. Pull your shoulders back and take a deep breath for a few times. This body posture arouses positive emotions and makes it difficult to be absorbed by negative feelings and emotions.

**Step 5**: When the students have given a short comment about the previous experience (this part should not take more than 10 minutes) divide them into groups of 4-5 so that maximum four groups are formed.

**Step 6**: The trainer says a few words about the meaning of positive speech and the choice of words. Then he/she gives each group a task which he/she prepared in advance:

The 1st group receives a list of words with negative connotations and looks for positive synonyms. The trainer should prepare a list containing at least 20 words with negative connotations.

Example:

**Negative words Positive words**

Argument, fight disagreement

Overloaded extremely busy

Stupid has to learn a lot

Depressed not very happy

Worried absent-minded

The 2nd group receives a daily newspaper to look up negative terminology and vocabulary.

The 3rd group also receives a daily newspaper, but they look up positive vocabulary only.

The 4th group receives a short dialogue containing more negative words which should be replaced by positive ones. (Note to the teacher: dialogues used during classes of mother tongue/foreign language).

**Step 7**: Based on their assignments, the first three groups make a joint poster and present it later on. The trainer should motivate the students to be as creative as possible! (The use of graphic representations, colours, symbols etc.)

Based on short dialogues they were given, the 4th group performs a role play.

**Step 8:** When the students are done with their presentations, the trainer/teacher invites them again to form a circle and to give their opinions about the exercise and to say a few words about their feelings.

**MATERIAL:**

Paper, pencils, glue, scissors, daily newspaper

**PREPARATION:**

The trainer/teacher should be well prepared for this exercise including all the material needed and well defined aims and operational goals.

**COMMENTARY:**

This exercise is very useful during mother tongue/foreign language classes. Teacher should take this into account when defining operational goals of the exercise.

The exercise is intended for young people and adults and has been adapted to be used within a small group.

**EVIDENCE:** Theoretically Grounded

**AUTHOR:** Sonja Bercko

**SOURCE**: Lama’s advice in Practice. (NVC)