

# TIPS AND TRICKS FOR PRACTICE

- We will have participants in the group with different preferences on **how to learn effectively**. We have already discussed this in Lesson 1, Topic 4: How to use learning styles. We recommend combining methods and techniques so that each participant can find a suitable method for him or her.
- **Prepare for a diversity of participants.** The group may be made up of people of different ages, nationalities, backgrounds, levels of knowledge, or requiring a higher level of support (e.g. wheelchair users, blind people, people accompanied by an assistance dog, people with mental or physical disabilities,...). Depending on your own capacity, you can determine in advance for whom participation is suitable and add these details to the activity description.
- When designing learning activities, **do not prefer only your favourite methods and techniques** without considering their suitability for the group and whether they will lead to the achievement of the learning objectives. An unbalanced programme can be avoided by working as a team with people who have different preferred learning styles. The resulting variety of activities enhances interest, maintains motivation and energy, and promotes learning effectiveness.
- **Check the activity** after it has been planned: Do the methods complemented by the techniques lead to the set goals? Is there an activity to help participants gain background information? Are a variety of activities planned for all learning styles? What is the variety of methods and techniques used? Do we vary the environment during the activities, for example by having participants sometimes sitting at tables, sometimes on the floor, or working in different sized groups?
- **Innovate** proven activities so that education does not stagnate. Just add something new to a well-established activity: different techniques, a new environment, sequencing of activities or the size of the groups in which participants will create something.
- **The dynamics of the group** will be affected by the choice of methods and techniques as well as the gradual move from simpler to more complex things. For example, in the beginning, it may be more appropriate to work in smaller groups, where it is easier to involve participants who find it difficult to speak in front of the whole group. Role plays, on the other hand, should be included when the group is more familiar and ready for them.
- Techniques include the **use of the place and environment** where the activity takes place.

Community gardens can offer variety, for example by using different parts of the garden: a composter, seating by a fire pit or in a gazebo, different types of beds, rainwater catchment, a greenhouse, a hotbed , interactive elements in the garden, ...

- **World caffè** - simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue<sup>1</sup>. The method is "everyone meets everyone". Use it when you want to get to know participants' attitudes towards current challenges and involve them in proposing solutions. It is useful to have prepared papers, flipcharts, poste-it, markers, tables according to the number of topics and one idea recorder for each table. Participants should be divided into groups according to the number of tables and gradually, within the pre-determined time, the groups take turns at each topic and add what has already been thought of by the group before it.

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<sup>1</sup> World Cafe Method [online]. 2023, Retrieved from: <https://theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method/>