

## Facilitator's Guide: Empathy Quest – Role-Playing Adventure

A structured educational game to help youth understand the impact of hate speech and build empathy.

Prepared for: Youth Workers and Educators

### Objective

To help young people develop empathy by stepping into another person's perspective and experiencing how words especially hate speech can affect someone emotionally. Participants will also practice transforming negative speech into respectful, constructive dialogue.

### Materials Needed

- Role Cards with character descriptions (e.g., 'A teenager who just moved to a new city').
- Scenario Cards describing situations (e.g., 'Someone posts a mean comment about your accent').
- Chairs arranged in a circle.
- Optional props (scarves, hats, badges) to help participants role-play.

### How to Play

#### 1. Introduction by Facilitator

- Explain the purpose: 'In this game, we will step into other people's shoes to understand how hate speech feels.'
- Emphasize that this is a safe, respectful space.

#### 2. Assigning Roles

- Each participant draws a Role Card describing their identity.
- Example: 'You are a university student from a minority language group.'

#### 3. Presenting Scenarios

- Facilitator reads a Scenario Card aloud.
- Example: 'You post something on social media, and someone comments: People like you don't belong here.'

#### 4. Role-Play Interaction

- One participant plays the 'author' of the harmful message.
- The targeted participant (in character) reacts and expresses how it feels.
- Group discusses emotions, impact, and respectful alternatives.

#### 5. Reframing Exercise

- Group collectively rewrites the hateful message into a respectful version.

## 6. Rotation

- Roles are switched, and new scenarios are introduced.

### **Timing**

- Introduction & setup: 10 minutes
- Role-play rounds (3–4 scenarios): 25 minutes
- Group reflection: 10 minutes
- Total: ~45 minutes

### **Debrief & Reflection**

At the end, gather the group for reflection:

- What did it feel like to be in someone else's shoes?
- How did words change the way you felt?
- What strategies can we use in real life when we see or hear hate speech?

Encourage participants to share real-life examples and connect the exercise to their online experiences.

### **Why It Works**

- Encourages empathy by making youth imagine themselves as the 'other'.
- Transforms abstract ideas into real emotional experiences.
- Gives practical tools to transform harmful speech into constructive alternatives.
- Creates a safe space for practicing positive communication.

### **Sample Role Cards**

- A teenager who just moved to a new city and feels excluded.
- An Amazigh speaker proud of their culture but teased for their accent.
- A football fan supporting a rival team.
- A girl studying computer science facing gender stereotypes.

### **Sample Scenario Cards**

- Someone posts: 'Your language is ugly.'
- You are excluded from a group chat because of your religion.
- A classmate spreads a rumor about your background online.
- During a sports match, someone calls you weak because of your gender.