

The treasure chest

Template M3

This method enables the learners to meet themselves with appreciation and to recognize what their strengths are, but also where they still have potential for development. All this makes us the person we are, and therefore unique!

Often the focus is on what we or others find bad about us, but not on our positive qualities and what we can do. It is time to turn our attention to the good things.

Preparation/materials:

- Seating circle
- a small box as pretty as possible with a mirror or mirror foil inside
- paper, pens and envelopes for all
- Questions for the letter

Duration: between 30 and 50 minutes

Procedure: The exercise consists of three parts:

Part 1: The exercise with the treasure chest

Everybody sit in a circle. The teacher (or another person) presents the treasure chest (a small box with a mirror inside) and explains that it contains the image of a very special person. The first person hands the box closed to his neighbour. Now she is allowed to look inside and from there the box goes around. It is essential for the success of the exercise that everyone is quiet and that everyone makes sure that only the person whose turn it is looks into the box.

Part 2: A letter to the very special person

In a next step, everyone writes a fan letter to himself or herself (written as a proper letter containing a form of address), in which the following questions should be addressed:

- What are your strengths (what do you appreciate about yourself and what are you good at)?
- How do you know that you are particularly good at something?
- Do you have weaknesses as well?



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- Are there fields in which people tend to underestimate you and why do you think this is the case?

The letters are stored in a safe place and returned to their respective authors after a month.

This exercise takes the time it needs. For example, learners who finish earlier can draw a picture or comic strip that describes a situation in which they were not proud of themselves. In the second situation, they describe how the story would have turned out if they had behaved differently or had received support.

Part 3: QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What makes you who you are? The strengths or the things that are (still) difficult for you?
- Was it easier to look at your strengths or at what is often called "weakness"?
- Why is this so?

Finally, each in turn shares a strength with the others – ideally something that others in the group could benefit from. In a familiar group it is also possible to say where you would like others to support you. The teacher starts.



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