

The Lemon (Anti-Bias Method)

Aims:

- Access to the topics Variety, Stereotypes and Bias.
- Sensitization for heterogeneity in (so called) homogenous groups.
- Appreciation of individual features.

Procedure:

- Show at first one lemon to the whole group.
- Ask the participants to describe lemons.
- Write down these descriptions on a poster.
- Bring more lemons in a basket and ask the participants to choose in couples each one lemon and to choose a place in the room to sit together.

Smallgroup-Work (5-10 minutes):

- Ask the couples to take an exact look on the lemon and to note the characteristics on filecards. (Tell the group, that it's not allowed to add additional features (through cutting for example) on the lemons.)
- Ask the couples afterwards to put their lemons in the basket again. Mix them and ask the couples to find their own lemon and take it again.

Evaluation:

- Was it easy to find the own lemon again?
- Which specific features attracted the most attention?

At this point, the filecards with the individual lemon descriptions can be pinned on a board and be compared with the general descriptions of lemons from the beginning.

Questions for the evaluation in the whole group:

- Why are the posters (with the general and individual descriptions of lemons) so different?
- What surprised you?
- Which topic becomes visible with this method?
- How is it related to our daily life/work?
- Did you ever have a first estimation of people/groups, that appeared wrong after a while, while getting to know the persons better?
- Or did someone have a wrong impression about you on the first view?

Further questions:

- Why is it possible to have such a general picture in our heads about lemons, if the individual ones are that different?
- Do we need categories/generalisations?
- Which dangers are related to these mechanisms?

Possible variety:

There can also be as much lemons as participants, that everyone gets an own lemon.