

4.5 How do I deal with critical situations?

Goal

The students are always confronted with critical communication situations in their living environment that include intercultural contexts as well. The present exercise supports the students' competences for action that are necessary for their development and furthers their empathy. Another objective of the exercise is to show gender-based strategies.

4th–9th grade

45 minutes



Materials:
questionnaire (master copy, see next page) large sheets of paper or flip chart.

Procedure:

- Introduction to the topic: we are going to think about our handling of critical situations. Clarification of the term "critical situation" (e.g. an emotionally stressful situation, conflicts within the family as well as beyond, hostility). The students compile a collection of specific examples in class.
- The instructor distributes the questionnaire (see below). Individually, the students are to carefully read through each statement and consider how often they show the respective behavior in critical situations. For this, they use a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = I never or rarely behave in this way; 2 = I sometimes behave like this; 3 = often; 4 = very often).
- After about ten minutes, the answers are discussed by the class as a whole. Special attention will be paid to possible differences between boys and girls.
- Finally, the class attempts to organize the strategies into larger categories (e.g. avoid the problem, seek support, tackle the problem head on, show negative emotions). The students compile the nominations in order to document the frequency of a particular strategy and the distribution among girls and boys.

Questionnaire: how do I deal with critical situations

Worksheet for students

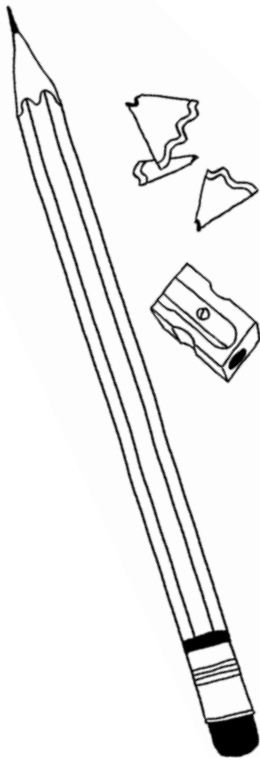
1 = I never or rarely behave in this way

2 = I sometimes behave like this

3 = I often behave like this

4 = I behave like this very often

Check applicable field with a cross



	1	2	3	4
I withdraw and want to be alone.				
I simply think about something else.				
I try to reduce stress through loud music, eating, sports.				
I try to let off steam.				
I try to forget about the issue by doing other things.				
I ask someone for help.				
I am unable to think about anything else but the problem.				
I get annoyed at myself. If only I could react in a more relaxed way!				
First of all, I wait and see.				
I try to tackle the problem right away.				
I leave everything as is.				
I consider various ways to reach a solution.				
I think about every individual aspect of the problem.				
I seek solidarity and support from others.				
I solve the problem immediately.				
I try to suppress the problem as long as possible.				