

My favourites



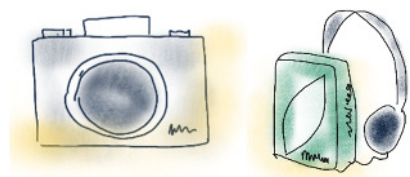
Books, films, TV-shows, radio programs, comics, music, magazines, websites, online communities, videogames ...



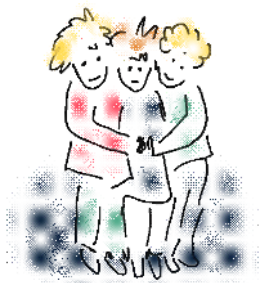
Posters on my wall:

I wanted to be like
(figure/personality from the media)
because

My first important own media device was a



My media biography



Togetherness

Me and my friends, we all liked...

Media stuff I did together with my family



Media and emotions



After a bad day at school, I wanted to ...

... always made me laugh

... always made me feel good

... really scared me / caused nightmares

Rules and interdictions

Rules and interdiction considering my media use:

Back then, I thought these rules were ...

Media stuff adults disapproved of/ did not understand at all:

Method

My media biography

Objective

This exercise invites a grown-up person to look back on his/her favourite media pastimes as a child and teenager to stir up memories and emotions connected to them.

Adults - also youth workers - often find it difficult to understand and accept the ways in which young people interact with media. In media education, a negative or even hostile attitude towards young peoples' media worlds can be a big burden: young people are very likely to avoid discussions on media topics with grown-ups who generally reject "their media". Reflecting one's own media biography can help to find a more understanding and empathic approach.

How to use the method

This media biography exercise can be included in many kinds of training lessons on media topics. We like to use this exercise at the beginning of a

training, because it also gives the participants a nice opportunity to get to know each other. Groups who already know each other (e.g. teams) also enjoy discovering new aspects of each other and finding funny aspects of their media biographies that they have in common.

Time needed:

At least 30 min and more if you want to include media to present the findings.

Introduction

Let us travel back in time. Think back to your own childhood and youth. What kind of media stuff did you really like back then? Do you recall TV-shows you didn't want to miss for anything, films you wanted to see over and over again?

What kind of media preferences did you share with your best friends? Were there media events you celebrated as a family - like watching Song Contest together and casting a family vote or following specific sports events?

What kind of emotions do you associate with your media memories? What kind of media made you happy? Do you remember something that really, really scared you?

It is not important to focus on a specific age. Some of us have vivid media memories from their childhood. For others, the media they preferred as adolescents are more present.

Activity

Individual reflection using the worksheet (about 10 min)
Exchange in small groups (3-4 participants)
Discussion in the whole group

Optional: media production (instead of just discussing)

Individually: the participants present their media biography as a text-picture collage using digital tools like Picolage. (at least 30 min)

Group work: two participants interview each other and then present each other's media biographies. This takes more time than if the participants work individually, but adds a journalistic dimension to the exercise: how does somebody else interpret my story? (at least 60 min)

Tips for the discussion

This exercise usually creates a good atmosphere. It is enjoyable and fun to recollect old media favourites. There is usually quite a lot of laughter. Often, this alone helps to soften hard, dismissive attitudes towards the media favourites of children and young people today.

It is especially valuable to recall how strongly we ourselves identified with our media favourites. What I like is part of who I am. Keeping this in mind helps us to treat the media preferences of today's kids with more respect.

From time to time, group discussions take a nostalgic, misty-eyed turn, however: the media of one's own childhood and youth seem quite magical, while today's media may seem cheap and loud in comparison. In such a situation, it helps if you try to identify similarities in topics and interests. The trainer might also want to point out how similar the motives of media use then are to those of today, irrespective of how different the specific media offers might be. The trainer can also ask if the adults back then found the media consumed by young people as great as the young

people themselves - usually, they did not.

To be continued!

The more time you spend dwelling on your media biography, the more you will remember. It is really worth to take the time to delve into the topic individually. Take a pen and paper and write down your media memories in detail, for example during a long train trip or if you have some time for yourself.



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