

The Tree of dreams

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AREA: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

OBJECTIVE:

To map the wishes/demands and difficulties in their local reality.

TARGET GROUP:

School communities, young people aged between 12 and 18 years old.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Large sheet of brown paper (base of the tree), 'apples and stones' drawn on paper, marker, glue.

The local Agenda 21 proposed this methodology aimed at the encouragement of autonomy and participation and at supporting collective and individual empowerment of subjects. It has the objective of promoting the coordinating between Governments, civil society and the private sector to assume responsibilities in order to guarantee social rights and the quality of life in the country and worldwide. The actions are developed from micro to macro, building great world transformation from small local actions.

The workshop is divided into three stages:

- THE TREE OF DREAMS
- THE STONES IN THE WAY
- BULLETIN BOARD: A TRIP TO THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

Step 1:

The *Tree of Dreams* is a large tree drawn on the board or paper. After the tree is drawn, we create a group of discussion to debate about how our dream school and community would be. These dreams are written on a sheet of paper in the form of fruits and leaves and we then begin to hang them on the tree, revealing a future view of the locals. Seen as a flowchart, the *Tree of Dreams* sets targets, which are the

dreams, and conceives possible paths for the collective construction of small utopias, besides probable obstacles to overcome to achieve these dreams.

Step 2:

In turn, the *Stones* in the way will enlighten the obstacles and challenges that will be encountered in the fight for the transformation of the local reality to achieve their dreams. At this stage, on pieces of paper that simulate stones, the students will write down the problems and difficulties encountered in the neighborhood in relation to the highlighted environmental issues.

Step 3:

The *Bulletin Board* is the moment to collect information and research to understand how the identified problems were generated and to know the history of the school and community. We seek to understand how the problems arose and how the school and the community were before. The objective is to build a collective memory interviewing the elders in the community about their life story and collect materials such as images, photographs, drawings, films and other information. All the material collected is transformed into a *COM-VIDA Bulletin Board* that is designed to build panels in school or other community spaces. This action aims to disseminate and to understand the local situation, besides being a document that recovers the local history, valorizing local identity.

After this process of research and local diagnosis, the subjects will reflect on strategies of action that will transform the diagnosed situation to achieve their dreams and goals. It is the moment to reflect on which, what, when, who and how their actions will be carried out and to think about the means of assessing whether the group has achieved what they had planned and how these actions shall be disseminated.

Gaia Sanvicente Traverso is an educator from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She is presently at Imagine Cultura; a producer focusing on the development of educational methods using the principles of research, action and collaboration.

You can view her complete profile and the organisation she is associated with at: http://www.learn2change-network.org/?About_Us__Our_Network__Activists#anker_GaST