



CIRCUS OVERSEAS MODULE 3

ALTROCIRCO

Pedagogy and act of teaching

25th july - 1st august 2022



Palermo, Sicily, Italy
CircOpificio Circus School



Circus Overseas



Circus Overseas is a two year (2021-2022) project which aims to address the challenges of managing social circus activities and entities through a series of four training modules for young circus trainers and staff from the circus schools' partners in the project and beyond. This capacity building will be done through a combination of circus arts and non-formal education, valuing peer exchange and experience sharing while fostering creativity, liberty, and intercultural dialogue.

Circus Overseas is a partnership project between circus school from 6 different countries: **Sirkus Magenta, Zip Zap Circus, Le Plus Petit Cirque du Monde, Phare Ponleu Selpak, Altro Circo, Palestinian Circus School and Caravan.**

Project objectives are:

- Improve the quality of youth work, by combining NFE and circus, fostering creativity, liberty and intercultural dialogue
- Support for competence and skill development to/for young people with fewer opportunities, inspiring them to participate actively





Module 3

Pedagogy and act of teaching

Pedagogy and the delivery of quality training to youth is essential to the development and improvement of youth and social circus organisations. This training gave tools to young and less young circus trainers to set adapted learning objectives, to design a social circus course, to plan pedagogical activities.

This training, wanted to improve the competencies to manage pedagogical situations with specific attention given to the conditions of safety; to use principles and models to value the diversity of voices and experiences in a group and analyze critical situations of conflicts or group management. The participants also passed through a process to train on how to use creativity particularly through circus arts in order to improve the personal development and the social inclusion of each participant.

2 facilitators, Tommaso Negri and Ilaria Bessone, guided the participants through a training/exchange with 14 participants, coming from 7 different countries.

We believe that in order to exchange in the best conditions it is important to go through a team building process, increase the trust and the cohesion within the group and go through experiential and cooperative dynamics, proposed by the trainers

Parallel to this we developed the exchange through peer learning, to gather the experience of all participants coming from so many different contexts and through Learner-Centered Learning methods, following the idea to build and define the learning contents of the week with the group itself:

Goals

- A module on the way to teach circus to... people (fewer or more opportunities), starting from the idea that everybody is a person, with different and specific needs.
- how to define and set adapted objectives, in relation to the group
- how to plan an exercise, a lesson, and a cycle (tools and methods for short, middle, long term planification)
- feedback and evaluation for an assessment cycle
- communication and group management (learning and teaching styles, leadership models, conflict management...)
- physical and emotional safety, the importance of the setting and safe environment
- creativity: from the participants and the teachers (how can participants be creative if the teacher isn't...)

Methodology

- **Learner Centered Learning**, employing circus techniques in particular
- Analysis of practice: the trainers will facilitate exchange between participants where they are asked to describe a training situation and analyse it collectively
- Introduction to theoretical models using games and NFE methods followed by small group and large group discussion
- Image theatre and role plays

Contents



C-1. Communication:

To communicate effectively and to adapt the mode of communication to the target group.

C-3. Conflict:

To analyse a conflictual situation and to identify various solutions.

C-3. Group Management:

To create a frame for the management of the group in order to ensure good teaching/learning conditions.

C-4. Safe space:

To create and ensure a safe environment, taking into account the physical, environmental and the emotional safety of the participants.

C-5. Lead and co-lead:

To create, develop and implement a pedagogical project in a team.

C-6. Feedback and evaluation:

To observe the behaviour of the target group and to give adapted and positive feedback.

Training programme

	Tue 26	Wed 27	Thu 28	Fri 29	Sat 30	Sun 31
9.30-11.00	Team Building & Games Expectations	Personal Presentation with portrait Safe space: intro	Thermometer Teamwork and group management: Rope, play and jump Clubs games & Competition reflection	Conflict Management: Emotion statues, Hypnotizer	Planning a lesson in pairs	Co-lead a circus class 2 groups
11.15-13.00	Introduction of the week: presentation of project, partners & participants Needs and Rules	Privilege and mainstream Wheel of Power Safe space and cultural encounters	Pedagogical Models: ZPD – Flow model – Learning Pyramid – Obliquity	Conflict Management: 6 thinking hats Conflicts in social circus Short performance	Giving and receiving feedback Co-lead a circus class 2 groups	Co-lead a circus class 1 group
Lunch	LUNCH					
14.00-15.15	Communication: Acro cards and human pyramids VARK model	Workshop in the social project at Danisinni district	Trust & Sherborne games Creative group work with an object	Leading model: Police/Clown/Nurse Leave to the beach	Co-lead a circus class 1 group	Feedabck & conclusion: massage, words and gufi gufi
15.30-17.00	"verbal drawing" What facilitate or hindered communication	Visit Palermo city center	Group work presentations	Beach time in Capaci	Co-lead a circus class 1 group	Visit circus project in the land taken from the Mafia, the Sanctuary and walking to the sunset
	Dinner in the big house	Visit Palermo city center and street dancing ...pizza time!	Free training / skills sharing / workshop by participants	Sunset and dinner on the beach	Walking to the Sunset & Dinner at the Braceria	Party in the school!

DAY 1- Monday July 25th

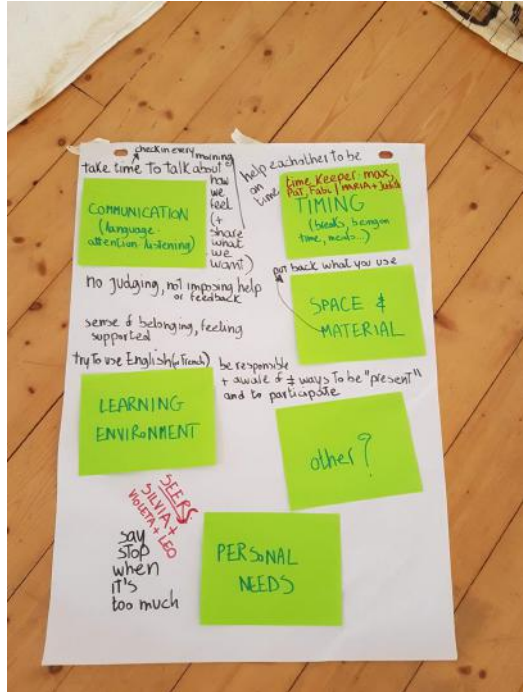
Traveling day

Dinner together in Palermo city center



DAY 2- Tuesday July 26th

Morning



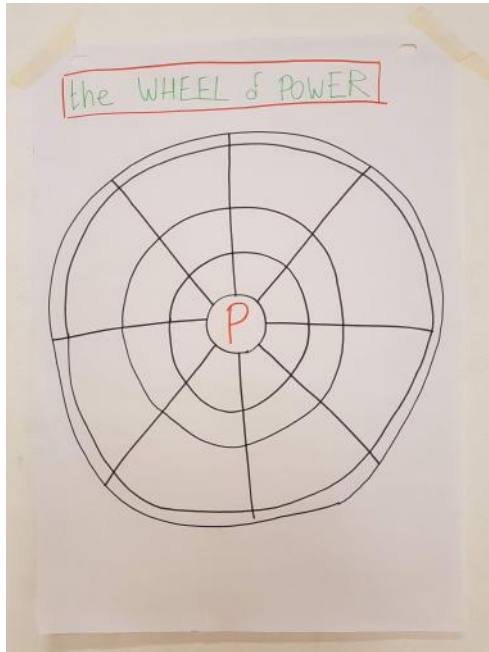
Afternoon



DAY 3 - Wednesday July 27th

Morning

Privilege and Rank, through the analysis of the Wheel of Power



"**Privilege**" refers to certain social advantages, benefits, or degrees of prestige and respect that an individual has by virtue of belonging to certain social identity groups.

- Safe space and cultural encounters, reflecting on the following questions within the group:
How are the «rules» you defined for your group connected to the idea of safety/safe space?
- Do these rules help you define a safe space?
- Is a space safe in the same way for everybody in a group?
- What makes a space safer for some than for others?

Rank

"A conscious or unconscious, social, or personal ability or power [and privileges] arising from culture, community support, personal psychology and/or spiritual power" by A. Mindell.
Rank can be earned or inherited.

Social Rank: is the power you have (or lack) because of your race, gender, age, economic standing, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, education, health, or language. Social rank may be global or may depend on context.

Psychological Rank: is personal power you acquire through your life experience. A person who feels okay about herself has higher psychological rank than someone who feels depressed, lonely, or suffers a lot. Self-confidence, awareness, being able to work out problems.

Contextual rank: each community or group has its own value system. Rank in a local context comes from having those qualities that have currency in the community. In many contexts, being popular, well-connected, an insider or old-timer gives one local rank.

Afternoon

We went to visit a social circus project in the Danisinni district, run by the Circopificio circus school team, giving some circus workshops to the local kids.



Visit Palermo city center



Progetto AltroCirco - Ass. Giocolieri e Dintorni

www.altrocirco.it - altrocirco@gmail.com

Viale della Vittoria, 25 - 00053 Civitavecchia (Roma) - Italy - P.IVA 06894411005

DAY 4 - Thursday July 28th

Morning

Teamwork and group management

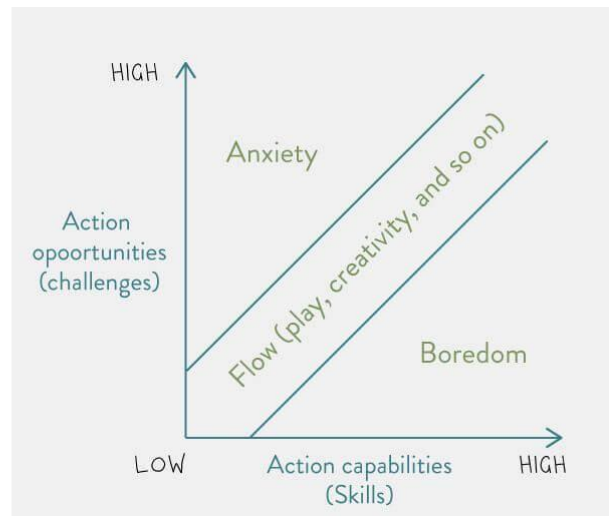
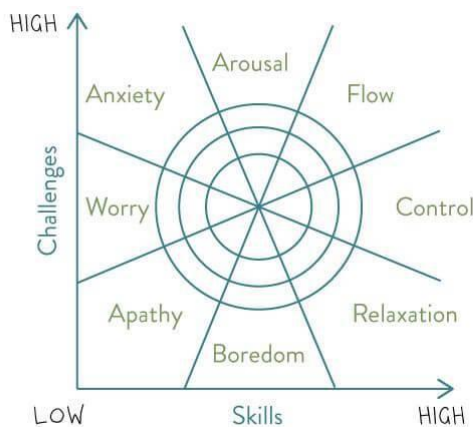


Juggling games to reflect on Competition & Cooperation



To close the morning we presented few Pedagogical Models:
such as the Zone of Proximal Development, by Lev Vygotsky,
the Flow model, by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi,
the Learning Pyramid, by Bethel and Maine,
and the educational strategy of Obliquity!

The Flow Model of Optimal Experience (Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi)



The studies have suggested that the phenomenology of enjoyment has eight major components. When people reflect on how it feels when their experience is most positive, they mention at least one, and often all, of the following:

1. We confront tasks we have a chance of completing;
2. We must be able to concentrate on what we are doing;
3. The task has clear goals;
4. The task provides immediate feedback;
5. One acts with deep, but effortless involvement, that removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life;
6. One exercises a sense of control over their actions;
7. Concern for the self disappears, yet, paradoxically the sense of self emerges stronger after the flow experience is over; and
8. The sense of duration of time is altered

The combination of all these elements causes a sense of deep enjoyment that is so rewarding people feel that expending a great deal of energy is worthwhile simply to be able to feel it.

Afternoon

In the afternoon we proposed different games and activities to develop Trust between participants, employing the methodology by Veronica Sherborne and her cooperative games.

Divided by groups we create some short performance starting from an object moving through the space









DAY 5 : Friday July 28th

Morning

Conflict Management, through different techniques from Theater of the Oppressed, playing with Emotion and statues,

We explore also the 6 thinking hats methods, by Dr Edward de Bono



COLOURED HAT	THINK OF	DETAILED DESCRIPTION
	White paper	The white hat is about data and information. It is used to record information that is currently available and to identify further information that may be needed.
	Fire and warmth	The red hat is associated with feelings, intuition, and emotion. The red hat allows people to put forward feelings without justification or prejudice.
	Sunshine	The yellow hat is for a positive view of things. It looks for benefits in a situation. This hat encourages a positive view even in people who are always critical.
	A stern judge	The black hat relates to caution. It is used for critical judgement. Sometimes it is easy to overuse the black hat.
	Vegetation and rich growth	The green hat is for creative thinking and generating new ideas. This is your creative thinking cap.
	The sky and overview	The blue hat is about process control. It is used for thinking about thinking. The blue hat asks for summaries, conclusions and decisions.

creating some short performance in order to represent a conflict experienced in the social circus context

Afternoon

We discovered the Leading model triangle, with the different character of clown, nurse and policeman

in order to discover our strengths and weaknesses as circus teachers.



And finally we went **to the beach!**





DAY 6: Saturday July 30th

Morning

Divided by groups, all the participants planned a lesson based on the following inputs:
prepare a 20' max activity, choosing a discipline & a technical skill to teach others,
defining different roles in co-leading, social goals for a specific context.

Afternoon

We go to visit another Circopificio external space that is in fact a territory confiscated from the mafia, and a sanctuary on a mountain with an amazing view on the city



DAY 7 : Sunday July 31th

Morning:

By pair they led the planned lesson and then we reflected on, giving and receiving feedback to analyze how we can improve our pedagogical competencies.

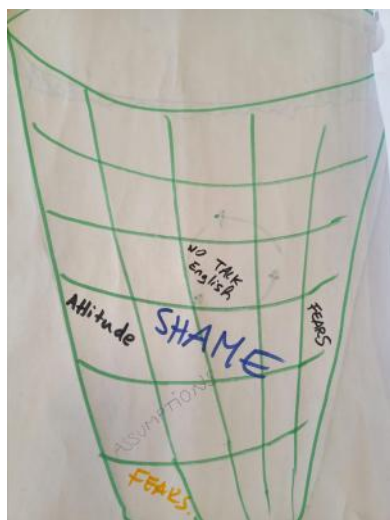
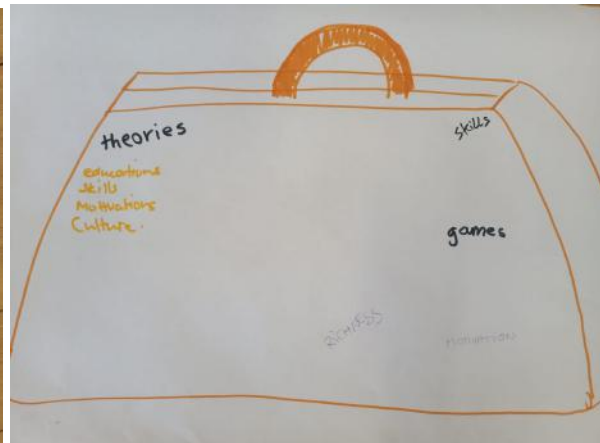
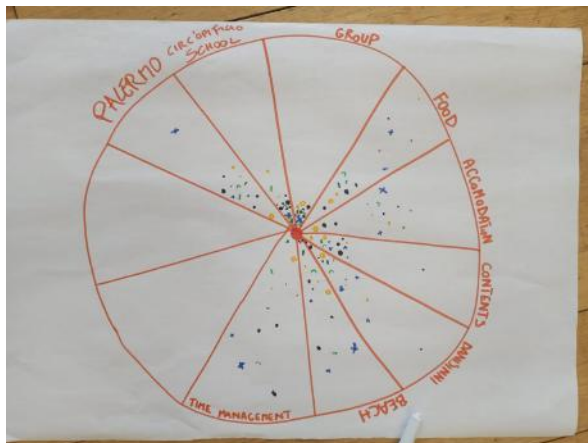


Afternoon

Feedback on the activities from the previous day - exchange on experience

Evaluation and Assessment of learning processes

Final evaluation of the week

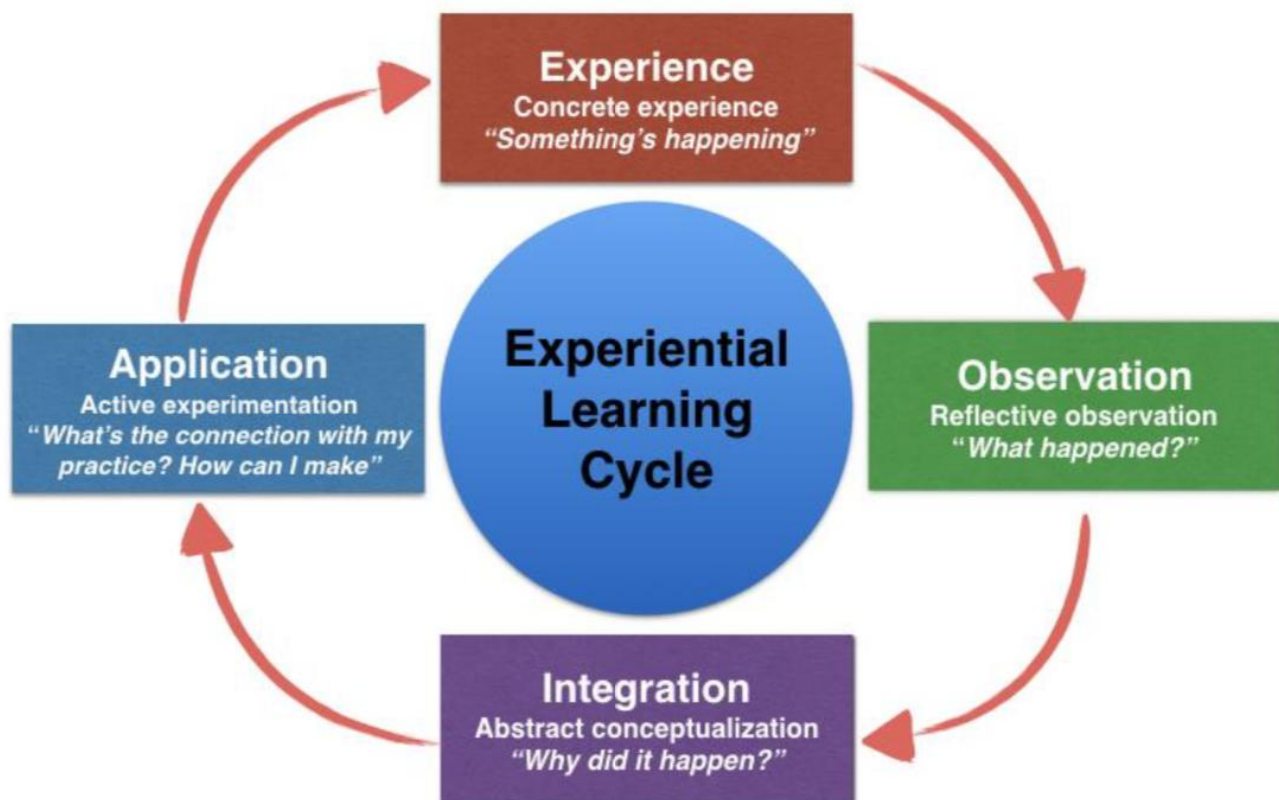


Day 8: Monday 1st August

Departure day!

Experiential Learning Cycle

THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE is the educational approach favoured in the Social Circus training because it requires a high level of active participation. Based on their own background or through the training experience itself, participants are encouraged to learn through action by engaging in games and creative projects, sharing thoughts with the group and reflecting on how they can concretely apply what they've learned to their own projects. By asking participants to engage their perceptions and participate, the experiential approach ensures maximum retention of the material presented in training (according to the Learning Pyramid)

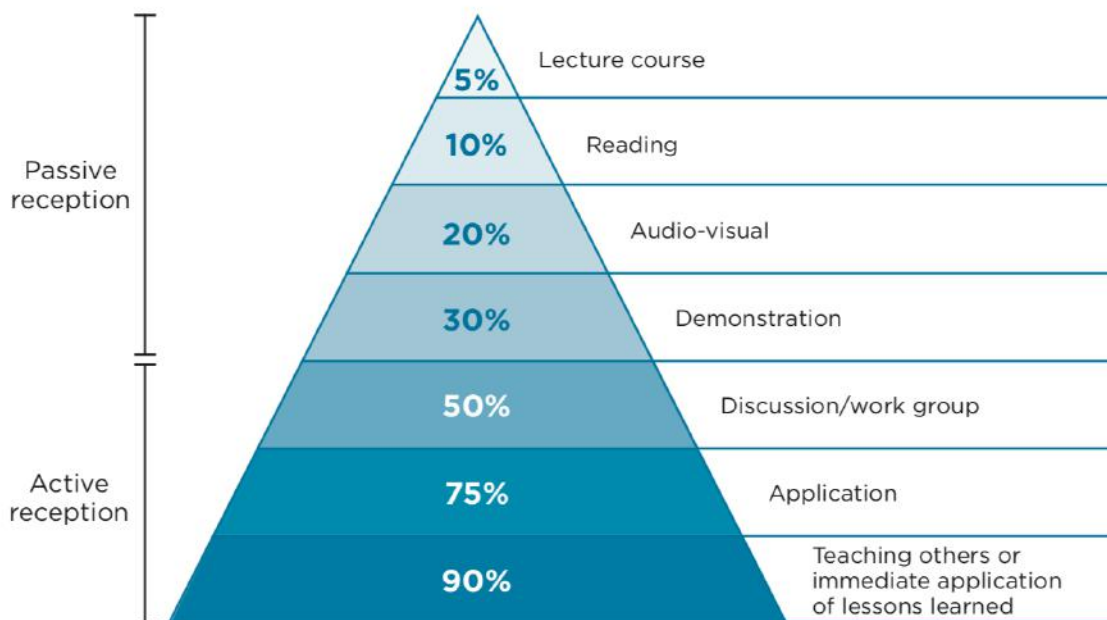


The cycle suggests the idea that every person can privilege a particular form to learn, according to their Learning Style, rather starting from experience or observation, analysing or directly doing. But it also presents a procedure made by 4 steps, to gain a deeper and more personal understanding around an experience.

Following this idea, the role and the responsibility of a teacher will not only be to make students live significant experiences, but also to accompany them in a process of assimilation that allows everyone to take full advantage of it, including all the variety of learning styles present in the group.

LEARNING AND RETENTION CAPACITY

The learning pyramid below demonstrates how retention levels fluctuate depending on which educational method is being used by trainers. Generally speaking, during a training session, the more varied the educational methods being used, the higher retention levels for learning will go – and significantly so.



To maximize the transfer of knowledge, in the training we used relevant educational methods to encourage participation and stimulate learning.

COMPETITION

Games are a great ally to defeat frustration, replacing this big demon in learning with fun, enthusiasm and motivation. But for sure with games comes competition, and with competition comes a question:

Is it good to have competition in circus or circus, as “no competitive” activity reject competition? Before to answer is good to analyze which form competition can takes and how we can manage it. We can observe 4 kinds of competition:

1. Competition with others: when the game or the challenge is with or against the other participants;
2. Competition with groups: when the game or the challenge is between different groups or your group against another group;
3. Competition with yourself: when the game or the challenge is with or against yourself;
4. Competition as a group: when the game or the challenge is with or against your own group.

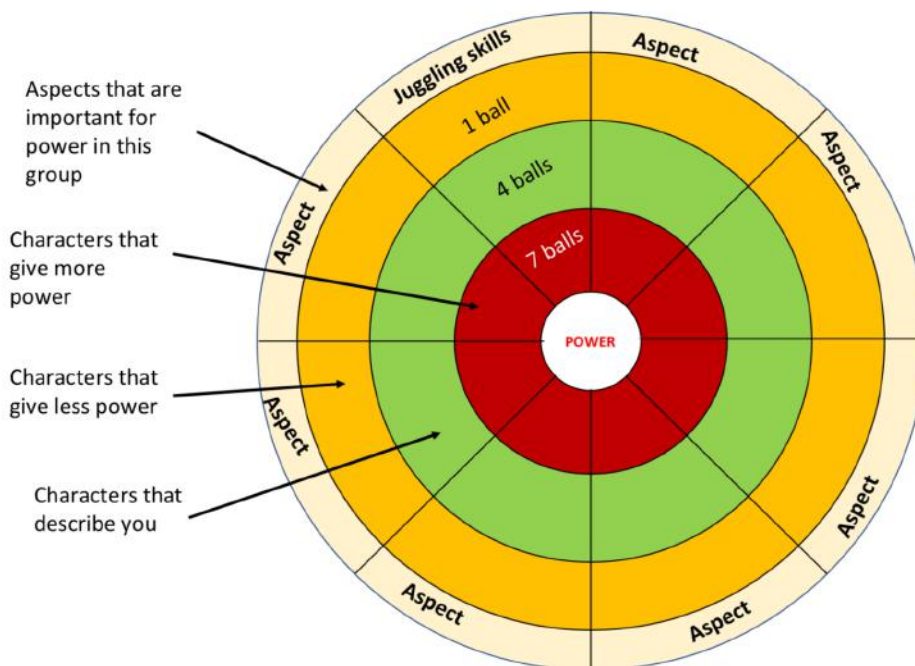
Power and privilege

"Privilege" refers to certain social advantages, benefits, or degrees of prestige and respect that an individual has by virtue of belonging to certain social identity groups.

- What privileges are connected with your identity?
- Do you have travel/immigration privileges?
- Do you enjoy a sense of belonging to a small community or to the majority?
- Do you have intellectual, social or financial power?
- What privileges are connected with being able-bodied and well?
- What are the privileges of your gender?
- Think about your earning capacity, your education, how your family is treated, your age.
- What privileges are connected to your choice of partner? With your first language? With your education?

Rank (A. Mindell)

"A conscious or unconscious, social, or personal ability or power [and privileges] arising from culture, community support, personal psychology and/or spiritual power". Rank can be earned or inherited. Social Rank: is the power you have (or lack) because of your race, gender, age, economic standing, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, education, health, or language. Social rank may be global or may depend on context.



**The
wheel of
power/
privilege**



Intersectionality

- a way to think about our identities and how we experience the world (Kimberlé Crenshaw)
- our overlapping social identities relate to social structures of racism and oppression. Intersectionality merges many identity markers, including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, and more, to create a more truthful and complex identity.
- For example, a queer black woman may experience the world on the basis of her sexuality, gender, and race — a unique experience based on how those identities intersect in her life.
- Intersectionality is directly tied to oppression. Oppression is the force that allows, through the power of norms and systems, the unjust treatment or control of people. Intersectionality shows us that social identities work on multiple levels, resulting in unique experiences, opportunities, and barriers for each person. Therefore, oppression cannot be reduced to only one part of an identity; each oppression is dependent on and shapes the other.
- Understanding intersectionality is essential to combatting the interwoven prejudices people face in their daily lives.

Reflection time

- How much power do you have in a group? In which areas do you have more/less privileges? How does this affect your feelings, and your learning process?
- How are these concepts (privilege, power, rank) useful for social circus? For your work as a circus trainer?
- Can (social) circus increase equality in society?
- How are power and privilege related to the idea of «safe space»?

ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

A great help to go deeper into this topic comes from a great pedagogist of the early twentieth century, Lev Vygotsky. He posited the idea of a “Zone of Proximal Development” (ZPD), referring to the learner's ability to successfully complete tasks with the assistance of more capable other people. Unlike Piaget's notion that children's development must necessarily precede their learning, Vygotsky argued that social learning tends to precede development.

According with this, he sees the ZPD as the area where the most sensitive instruction or guidance should be given, allowing the child to develop skills they will then use on their own, developing higher development:

1. Level of actual development:
what the student can do, right now, with any help. A learning comfort zone;
2. The Zone of Proximal Development:
what the student can do only with an appropriate assistance;
3. Level of potential development:
what the student can't do, yet, even with an external help.



If we think of an acrobatic lesson, it is difficult to imagine learning a flic alone before learning it with the help of someone, watching your back (at least in Europe...). A good teacher must therefore be able to understand when a student is entering the Zone of Proximal Development to learn a flic or another trick, or if they are still not able to reach it even with help, risking getting hurt.

Question for you: as teachers, are we able to give possibilities to students to push their boundaries, if required, or just let them stay where they are, making them feel comfortable with their level?

“A person cannot teach another person directly;
a person can only facilitate another's learning”

Carl Rogers



Photos and Videos

- https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LQZcYHr5qaStgDaydTqzFnfXoLDf7vbN?usp=share_link
- TOOLKIT drive folder, with photos, videos and more references:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1VXCXMUT-3zTPfEfKKt134q1hVPoEBFPI>

About Circopificio Circus School

<https://www.circopificio.it/>

A circus school in the center of Palermo! We want to spread the art and culture of the contemporary circus by addressing those who want to enter this fascinating world of discipline, effort and commitment.

We want to spread the art and culture of the Contemporary Circus, made up of discipline, effort and commitment but also lots of fun and sharing. Our aim is to establish ourselves as a valid alternative to the most popular and popular sports, transmitting to our students the meaning of doing sport by becoming a circus artist.

In fact, through the circus it is possible to learn the fundamental principles of psychomotor skills such as coordination, strength, physical endurance, balance, agility and body mobility, concentration and rhythm. To this, today, Circ'Opificio adds dance and theater to its range of circus disciplines, thus training both body and mind since childhood and creating a real path to becoming a complete artist.

About AltroCirco

[AltroCirco](https://www.altrocirco.it/) is a program of Association Giocolieri & Dintorni for the development and acknowledgement of Social Circus in Italy. It has developed a network of the associations and individuals working with Social Circus in Italy, in order to support a common process of growth and promote circus as an instrument of social transformation. Today is gather more than 20 social circus projects and organizes a annual training for social circus trainers called FiX:

<https://www.altrocirco.it/fix-2022-23/>

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