

Exercise 2.1. – The raft game

Educational objectives	The students are introduced to the notion of values. The students learn how to identify prejudices.
Resources	Cards giving information about characters.

Procedure

Nine people are adrift on a raft in the open sea. They do not know their exact position. The raft is too small for all of them. Four of them must be thrown into the sea.

Who will they be and why?

Each student receives a card giving some information about the character that she or he is to represent.

This is not only a role-play but also a matter of identifying with a character by finding reasons why he or she deserves to survive more than the others. They must always use the first person – “I”. The situation and what is at stake are also indicated on the card. There must be complete silence during this first ten-minute phase.

- The students work in groups of four to six.
Each group decides who should be saved according to arguments put forward by each student. To increase interaction, each person must not only defend his or her character but should also attack another. A collective decision must, however, be reached within twenty minutes.
- Each group reports their choices and compares with the other groups.
- The whole class identifies the values and prejudices that have arisen.

Materials

Some examples of different characters

A 35-year-old decorator, single, who is active in a political movement.	A gypsy who has just come out of prison.
An HIV-positive prostitute.	An old woman, a widow, who is travelling to her native country with her savings in order to see her son again.
A Russian pianist, father of two children.	An English skinhead who is drunk.
A 15-year-old teenager, winner of an important literature award.	An old famous American baseball player.
An ambassador working for the United Nations.	A young mother who has a broken leg.
A soldier coming back from time off-duty.	