

Art-based lesson problem solving

Coaching session guide for
Adult Educators



Theme : problem solving

Activity: Group Session

Objective : This guide will serve as a group session model for educators to build their own art-based creative lesson on out of the box thinking skills

Learning objectives and outcomes of this lesson:



OBJECTIVES

- ☐ To train on how to use creative thinking when things are tough.
- ☐ To explore the possibilities through “out of the box” thinking.
- ☐ To make your problem subject of conversation and to accept help when things are hard or you don’t know how to solve a problem or situation.
- ☐ To train on creative thinking.



OUTCOMES

- ☐ Learners will discover how to use creativity whenever problems arise.
- ☐ Learners will improve their problem solving skills.
- ☐ Learners will experiment with creative and reflective thinking. They will increase “out of the box” thinking and be aware that help is sometimes needed. To be collaborative and just ask for it. Two know more than one.

Methods used during this session:



Short intros to the
topic and the artwork



Self-reflection and
self-learning



Observation



Guided interpretation



Practical exercise

coaching session plan



Duration: 1 hour



Necessary equipment and
materials:

- Handouts with the works of art to be examined

Coaching session structure and materials

Selected topic:
Problem solving

STRUCTURE

1. Brief project introduction (and lesson structure).
Introduction to the topic warming-up activity.
2. Introduction to problem solving: what this skill is about and how we acquire and use it.
3. Introduction to the selected piece of art.
4. Guided interpretation:
 1. Interpretation of the piece of art
 2. Analysis of the piece of art's elements
 3. The topic through the lens of the piece of art
5. Conclusions.
6. Problem solving skill recap

MATERIALS

1. Coaching lesson guide
2. Database of pieces of art/literature
3. Methodology how to apply arts and literature for education, creativity and innovativeness
4. Links to sources and additional information materials about the piece of art

Suggested timetable for the session

N.	Activities	Dedicate times
1	Introduction to the project. Warming up activity.	5 minutes
2	Introduction to problem solving: what is this skill about and how do we acquire and use it?	10 minutes
3	Introduction to the selected piece of art and analysis of the related information materials.	5 minutes
4	Guided analysis: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpretation of the piece of art 2. Analysis of the piece of art's elements 3. The topic through the lens of the piece of art 	20 minutes
5	Conclusions	15 minutes
6	Problem solving recap	5 min
7	COMPLETE SESSION PLAN	1 HOUR

Warming-up activity to the topic introduction

The educator explains the main aim of this project: to encourage creative use of literature and fine arts into non-formal and informal education and to equip adult educators and training professionals with hands-on methodology and tools how to apply them into the educational process. And that we will focus today on the topic of problem solving studied through an art-work.

The educator will lead the conversation towards the “problem solving” topic. The learners will be asked to do the following:

- a. Please, say with one word what problem solving is to you.
- b. Please, name one person (alive or dead) who you consider a successful problem solver? Briefly, explain your choice.

2. *Introduction to the topic*

PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY

Problem-solving skills help you solve issues quickly and effectively. It's one of the key skills that employers seek in job applicants, as employees with these skills tend to be self-reliant. problem-solving skills require quickly identifying the underlying issue and implementing a solution.

Problem-solving is considered a soft skill (a personal strength) rather than a hard skill that's learned through education or training. For instance you can improve your problem-solving skills by familiarizing yourself with common issues in your industry and learning from more experienced employees.

Problem-solving abilities are connected to a number of other skills, including: analytic skills, innovative and creative thinking, a lateral mindset, adaptability and flexibility, level-headedness, initiative and resilience (in order to reassess when your first idea doesn't work)

2. *Introduction to the topic*

PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY

Running a business also means dealing with problems and issues. So it is very important to have good problem solving abilities.

To observe the problem mostly is not the issue. The harder question is how to solve it.

Very often the situation needs a quick and good solution even if it cannot be completely resolved at the time.

The questions to ask are:

- What do I want to achieve?
- What did I already achieve, and how did that work?
- Have other solutions worked well in the past? Which one(s) ?

When asking yourself these questions, you probably get ideas to face the problem. That is a good start! It is all about taking little steps. It will make it easier to take further steps to reach the final solution. This skill will help to make you more decisive and effective.

2. *Introduction to the topic*

What kind of problem solver are you?

- ☐ pragmatic
- ☐ flexible
- ☐ customer oriented
- ☐ a go-getter
- ☐ results-oriented
- ☐ a thinker
- ☐ quality monitor
- ☐ perfectionist

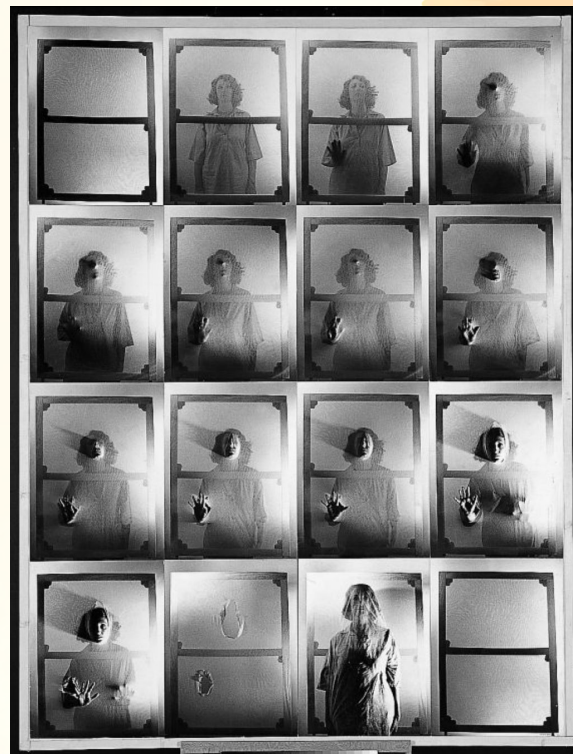
One way to solve a problem is not better than the other, and often they can be combined too. Some problems ask for one method, other problems ask for several methods.

Now, lets do some practice!

3.1 Brief introduction to the artwork and observation

The artwork plays with the wooden stretcher bars of the structures that form the support on which the canvas is stretched..... This structure is usually invisible to the viewer, but here exposed through the use of a semi-transparent cloth, which reveals the contours of the artist's body as she tries to 'impress' herself or 'penetrate' through that membrane.

ARTWORK: Visual art; 16 black and white photographs by Helena Almeida 1976.
TITLE: *Tela Habitada (Inhabited canvas)*



4.1 Guided Interpretation

How to interpret artworks

You should ask the learners to describe what they see / feel / understand from the selected piece of art. The focus of this guided interpretation is on sharing personal views, feelings and thoughts of participants about the piece of art. The purpose is to encourage participants to share their opinion by pointing out that there are no wrong answers.

Possible questions:

- a. What personal associations does this work of art evoke in you as a viewer?
- b. What do you think the artwork is about?
- c. What/Who in your opinion is the focus of the author's attention?
- d. Which are the challenges you think the artists faced in the realization of the piece of art?

How to analyze artworks

You should guide the analysis of the work in terms of elements that compose and/or are represented in it. You will then guide the analysis to allow the learners to elaborate their description about problem solving.

4.2 Guided Analysis

Possible questions for *Guided analysis on the observed/introduced works*:

1. Is there something in this piece of art that makes you think in problem solving skills?
2. Are there any elements in this painting which you can relate to problem solving? Which are they and how/where can you find them?
3. Would you be able to describe how problem solving is depicted in this picture?

Support tools

Optionally you could research and provide the learners with support analysis tools chosen according to the piece of art/literature under observation

ART and LITERATURE TOOLS *How to analyze a piece of art?*

Primarily

- Self reflection through a piece of art
- Color and shapes symbolism related according to the context

Secondarily

- Historical and environmental context
- Art piece and/or artist history

BUSINESS TOPICS ANALYSIS TOOLS (theoretical framework) *How do we analyze the topic?*

- Key points of business and marketing strategy
- Entrepreneurial skill processes and practical examples

4.3 Guided analysis: problem solving through the lens of the piece of art

You will project the artwork on the screen and guide the learners' interpretation of leadership through the lenses of the piece of fine art.

Artwork: Tela Habitada. (*Inhabited canvas*)

16 black and white photographs by Helena Almeida 1976.

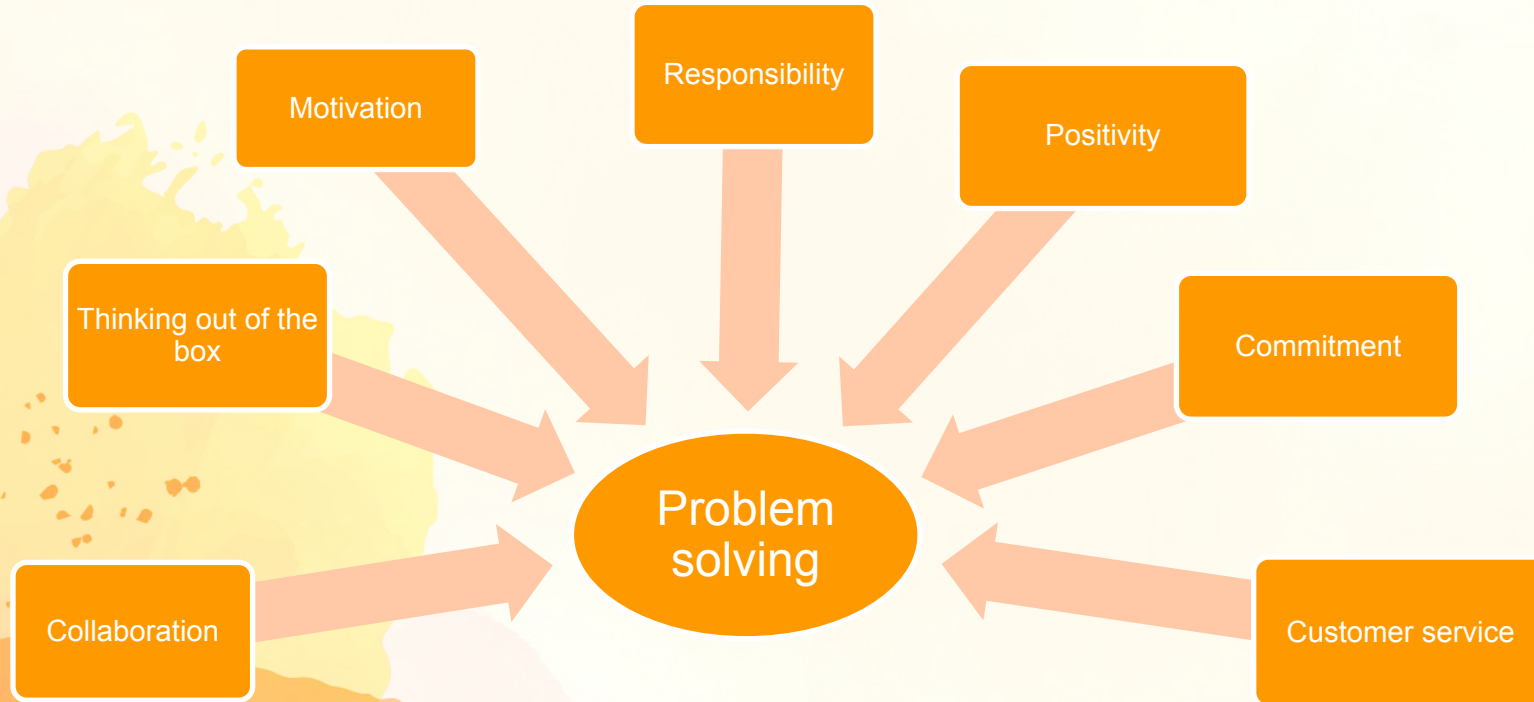
Opening question: *Where can we find problem solving traits in this piece of art ?*

To guide this analysis, you could use the support of one or more of the following activities:

- Q&A sessions – about the topic and about the pieces of art
- Mind maps on the topic of the activity
- Practical exercise through photographing their own version of artwork on the topic of activity

You should collect answers from the learners and listen to their different analysis and elaborations.

Mind map reference



Conclusions

At the end of the activity all participants have a vision of their way of problem solving in their company. They thought about how to think creative, how to inspire others and be inspired, and to realise that collaborating with others feels nice when things get tough.

Why did we chose this piece of art?

(This interpretation is optional to use, and can be substituted by the educator's interpretation).

Helena Almeida was a painter, photographer, performer, and video-artist, yet she could not be defined by any one single media. She used elements of each in her work alternatively, finding new exciting intersections between them. She worked in a variety of different ways in a variety of media almost confronting the limits of each and using them to overcome the limits of the other. Her way to deal with problems.

That also applies to entrepreneurship. How thoughtfully you start a business, you know that problems will come your way that you have to deal with. You may feel stuck, or some parts of your plan that you have created to start the business turn out to be hindering. Along the way you will discover that you have to show to be a successful entrepreneur by dealing and overcoming problems. By crawling into your shell, pretending that nothing is wrong and avoiding problems, you run the risk of failing. So, be creative, solve the Problems to be as successful as possible!

6. Problem solving skills recap

Bringing up the idea to start your own company, everybody can. Creating your own company a bunch of people do. Making a company successful only a few can. Be a few! For this you have to manage the problems on your way. You have to manage them for yourself, your employees and for your customers. Anyone can have an idea to start their own business. Many would like that. Only a few can be successful in this. For this you have to manage the problems that come your way. Not only for yourself, but also for your employees and your customers. So think critically, creatively and ask for help where necessary. Ultimately, this is an important element of good leadership.

References:

- <http://www.artnet.com/artists/helena-almeida/3>
- https://gulbenkian.pt/museu/en/works_cam/tela-habitada-inhabited-canvas-156671/
- <https://awarewomenartists.com/en/artiste/helena-almeida/>
- <http://www.carrieretijger.nl/functioneren/professionele-vaardigheden/probleemoplossend-vermogen>



Thanks!

Do you have any questions?

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