

## What to do - Corner exercise

1. Find your buddy group and go to the corner that you have been assigned.
2. Read the case 'A high school student's confessions'.
3. You should now discuss what can be done to prevent someone from being socially unhappy at school.
4. Based on whether you have been assigned corner 1, 2, 3 or 4, you must now discuss:
  - a. Corner 1: What opportunities does the student in the case have to do something themselves?
  - b. Corner 2: What opportunities do classmates have to do something?
  - c. Corner 3: What opportunities does the school have to do something? For example, the teachers and the management?
  - d. Corner 4: What can society do? For example, local politics, national level, youth politics?
5. Choose a referee to write down your suggestions.
6. You have 15 minutes for the exercise.

### Case - A high school student's confessions

"I attend 2nd grade in gymnasium. Just as everyone else, I experience 2.g to be a very difficult year academically. But what makes it even harder is when you have no friends in class. We are about 30 students in the class, and everyone has formed groups and cliques - except me. I always sit alone and for the most part, there is no one else sitting in the same row. I do not really know why. And when one finally does sit in the same row, it is a couple of chairs away from me. Every time we have a break, everyone goes to their friends and girlfriends while I just sit and do nothing. They know very well that I am sitting all alone, but they do nothing to help me. The problem is also that I have tried countless times to be part of the community. But I get rejected all the time.

And every time there is group work, everyone finds themselves in groups and I work alone all the time. It is hard to get up every morning and know that you need to enter unsafe zone; the school. It is not nice to enter a classroom where people see you but do not greet you. You do not feel welcome that way. "

(The post is from a site where young people who are experiencing problems can chat with each other).

## Questions and pointers to the four corners of the collection

**Corner 1:** What opportunities does the student in the case have to do something themselves?

**Points:** You can try to talk and think positively about yourself. Believe that the other students obviously think you are good enough as you are. You can practice being open to your classmates and try to be positive about who you are. Try to shelve your thoughts about feeling different. Negative thought patterns can lead to withdrawal from the community.

One can quickly come to think that the student has to pull themselves together: "The student themselves are responsible for becoming part of the community in the class." And that is true, but what if you do not feel like you can? That you do not know how to get in? And when you finally muster the courage to tell a teacher, you are not understood. This can strengthen the feeling of "I am the one, who is wrong". It is important to share your thoughts with someone, even if you have not been understood the first time. You should be aware of each other in class and if you are worried about classmate you should act.

**Corner 2:** What options do you have as a class to prevent someone from feeling left out?

**Points:** Is everyone invited to go for a walk / play games when initiating social activities in class? You can have the attitude that gymnasium is a place where there must be room for everyone - everyone does not have to be friends, but everyone must be able to function properly together in class, since you have to spend several years together. You can try to be aware of whether cliques are formed quickly. It may feel safe to find a clique quickly, but it will be difficult for others to join once they are formed. And sometimes it means that you - consciously or unconsciously - exclude someone else.

**Corner 3:** What can the school, e.g. teachers and management, do to create a good start for a new class?

**Points:** Why do some teachers / leaders think that it is up to the students themselves to form communities and relationships? Why might it be a good idea for teachers to divide students into groups in advance? Are the teachers role models to the students?

The school has a great responsibility and an obvious opportunity to create a good, safe environment for the students - it is easier to start a good and inclusive school culture than to change a bad one.

What would be the good thing about talking to a teacher? Can it be difficult to talk about such a things with a teacher? Why? What if the teacher does not understand one? How can the teaching staff prevent loneliness?

In many cases, a teacher can provide good help. But a prerequisite for the teachers to be able to help is that they know what you are thinking about.

**Corner 4:** What can be done at the societal level to prevent loneliness?

**Points:** Why is it important for society to deal with loneliness? Loneliness can occur in any community, but just as one can prevent in smaller communities, one can also do something in the big ones. For example, by making the subject of the prevention of loneliness obligatory in educations for teachers, educators, etc. or to make it part of the curriculum in secondary education.

## Rounding up

- Loneliness and social dissatisfaction are individual problems, but the solution lies with both the community and the individual.
- All actors can do something - and the best results are achieved if everyone works together towards a common goal.
- Different actors have different resources and opportunities to do something.