**Starlight... more than a play**

*The play "Starlight and Apple Pie.*

*We step into the lives of a number of characters connected with the residential care center: a nurse, the director, the doctor and her two children, some residents and ... frequent visitor Rosa. Each of them with their own character, life history and problems. We also follow a number of people in the neighborhood. Young, old, poor, rich ... they feel lonely, each in their own way. Behind four walls.*

*Starlight is a story that moves. Hard and painfully topical about loneliness. Hopeful and cozy, about being connected and gathering in warm neighborhoods and open institutions.*

*Central to this musical theater ... an apple tree with a bench. Strongly rooted and a familiar image in a beautiful garden. Place of meeting, symbol of connection and growth. The tree shows its various forms to the rhythm of the seasons. And the atmosphere and emotions in the story... they sway with it.*

Starlight invites you to arrange activities before and/or after the play. These activities are for both young and old and aim to intensify the spectator's experience and make it last. This document provides a number of tools. The focus is on empathy, connection and communication.

Possible target audiences

* Children and youth through schools, youth associations, sports clubs, etc.
* social workers
* residents and staff of residential care centers
* community workers
* volunteers of all kinds
* ...

Bring target groups in contact with each other, for example an elementary school and a residential care center, and provide joint activities.

Objective

* To raise awareness that loneliness is all around us
* To make people more aware of loneliness or persons who feel lonely
* To create conditions that make lonely people believe in themselves more fully, to be in their strength, to move and connect with other people
* Connecting young and old in a position of equality
* Learning from each other and going for a caring environment together

**Get started!**

1. Music

* Combine young & old in a music album
* Create duets of older and younger (well-known) singer(s)
* Address a choir or establish one. Let the ages vary
* Have classes sing the songs for the residents of an assisted living facility
* ...

1. With hands

* Craft apple trees, the apples can be pictures of a younger person and an older person working together on something
* Place (fake) apple trees and a bench/chair in several central locations and facilitate conversations among visitors
* Cook or bake with apples and enjoy the result together afterwards
* ...

1. In the neighborhood

* Local residents write cards to each other and deliver them personally
* A young person and an older person become 'buddies' and do things together
* Community party with apple pie and music
* The play is performed or told at a central location
* Torchlight procession, bicycle tour, walking tour, search....
* ...

1. A good conversation afterwards

Have an open conversation about the performance. It is best to schedule this immediately or certainly within the week following the performance.

The conversation can be a start to a:

* brainstorm about a new open day or community project
* teambuilding day
* workshop with primary care providers
* discussion between residents and staff of residential care centres
* conversation with community workers
* day for volunteers

1. Working in (small) groups

A lot of individuals are afraid to speak in a large group, but loosen up in small ones. For example, if there are 20 of you, you can make 4 groups and provide four tables that are not too close together.

Each group is given the same questions. For each group, there is a spokesperson who briefly tells what the general conclusions or ideas are afterwards.

Each participant is given a number of questions and there is a moment of silence to think about these questions. The participants are provided with a sheet to write down key phrases or words. It is important that no questions are asked during this moment. After the moment of silence, anyone who wants to can speak freely.

The purpose of this conversation is that the participants evaluate the performance, discuss it and make connections with their own experiences and environment.

After these group discussions, the results are shared with the large group by the spokespersons. The others may always complete.

Potential questions:

1. What did you see?
2. What did you think?
3. What did you feel?
4. Who from the show do you resemble?
5. Did you see characters that you also meet in your everyday life?
6. Did you see situations that you also experience in your everyday life?
7. What does the performance mean to you?
8. Can you use it in your work as a primary caregiver/ community worker/ volunteer/ ...?

If you want to go a stage further in the process, you can ask the following questions:

1. What can I do now concrete to change our situation, to improve it?
2. What can others do (superiors, colleagues, volunteers, neighbors,...) do to change, improve the situation.
3. What concrete actions would you like to participate in?

*Tips for the facilitator:*

* Write down key words on a board, make connections and ask for additional explanations if necessary
* Clarify an unclear answer by, for example, repeating it and checking whether you have understood it correctly
* Broaden the discussion to the whole group by asking one of the following questions
  + Who would like to say something more about this question?
  + Who actually thought very differently about it?
* Make sure there is trust, all answers are valuable even if they are critical or it is not the opinion of the large group

1. Working with statements

You are in a group and each participant is given three cards:

* Green = agree
* Red = disagree
* Orange = I don't know, I abstain

The facilitator formulates a statement and everyone raises their card at the same time. Or each participant takes turns reading a statement. The latter is best done in a familiar environment where people know each other well. You can hold a short group discussion after each statement. You choose the statements yourself according to the target group you have in front of you. You can also add statements yourself.

**STATEMENTS**

1. The play touched me because the story is close to my home world.
2. I recognized several characters from my own home world.
3. (Home) nurses have too little time to talk to their patients.
4. There is too little staff in residential care homes so there is no time for other things than daily care.
5. It is very difficult to realize a project between a neighborhood and a care institution.
6. It is difficult to find volunteers.
7. Community workers are already over-engaged, can they still work on this?
8. The concept of buddies is nice, but impossible in daily life.
9. I think a residential care center should be an open house with an open cafeteria and open activities where people from the neighborhood can participate.