

## FACILITATING A SOCRATIC DIALOGUE



**KRISTOF VAN ROSSEM (B)**

**WWW.SOCRATICDIALOGUE.BE**

### HOW TO TRAIN FACILITATORS IN SOCRATIC DIALOGUE?

The Socratic method is not a 'tool' you use in working with groups. It is a **craft** that you learn by practicing it many many times. In the training, we work with Socratic didactics : we invite participants to constantly reflect on the own experience. Participants are not told from 'outside' how it ought to be, how a Socratic facilitator should lead a conversation and how problems can be solved. What we do is constantly **showing** the participants how we work from 'inside', by practicing it from the very beginning. By acting it out, we teach participants the craft of facilitating, that will enable them to practice it in various contexts and organizations, and in their own specific way.

For these reasons, our training program is not specified in detail. It is structured in such a way that participants will learn the craft through :

- Participating in a SD and critically observing own behavior
- Studying aspects and movements of the SD.
- Facilitating parts of a dialogue with focus on the different structural aspects
- having direct feedback on their behavior as a facilitator



## BASIC STRUCTURE

The basic structure of the training program can be summarized in the establishment of the **six essential movements** in a Socratic dialogue : to assert, to make it concrete, to explain, to listen, to investigate and to mirror. (See annex). Alongside these movements, **some 20 learning outcomes** have been defined. We don't speak of 'elements' or 'components' but of 'movements' because it characterizes what *happens* and what *should happen* when a group or an individual engages in a SD. It is more dynamic than structural 'elements' (like question – example – core statement) and it leaves more space for possible variations of SD.

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

The main objective is that you **learn to be a professional** in facilitating a SD. That means at least:

- You embody in a constant way the six movements
- You identify interventions of participants according to the six movements and you question them
- Your steering is aimed at a enhancing a maximum of reflection and responsibility on the part of the participant
  - You stay cool. The attitude is that of a passionate distance or a controlled Socratic irony
  - You have a vision on the whole : you can structure and monitor your time and you have knowledge of the heuristics



## **PROGRAM OF THE TRAINING**

### **Part 1: Participating in a Socratic dialogue**

In the first part, students participate in a Socratic dialogue facilitated by one of the course facilitators. The SD is interrupted by short sessions in which we reflect on what has happened and discuss some methodological questions. In this way we work on a continuous deepening of the experience.

Some components of this part are:

- the facilitator as a craftsman: avoidance of meta-language  
finding good questions and examples
- recognizing and questioning assertions
- the structure of SD in a one-to-one position
- the logical background of a SD

### **Part 2: Facilitating a Socratic dialogue**

In this part, participants learn to work with the 'standard' way of leading a Socratic dialogue. They focus on how to constantly enact the essential movements in a SD. With a constant practice and reflection on that practice, participants discover their own coaching style.

Some components of this part:

- the art of questioning
- various ways of capturing the example on flipchart
- exercises to find your own accompaniment style
- development of a personal vision on the role of a facilitator in a Socratic dialogue
- short ways of facilitating a Socratic dialogue

## **PRACTICAL**

If you want to organize a training in your own team, organization, please contact :

Kristof : [www.socraticdialogue.be](http://www.socraticdialogue.be) or [Kristof@socratischgesprek.be](mailto:Kristof@socratischgesprek.be).

You will get a detailed proposal and a price offer.