



Project Number: 2016-1-RO01-KA203-024630

Communicating with Children

Practical Activity

Problem-based learning (PBL) – How to cope with suffering

Problem addressed: *child's incapacity to understand abstract terms and causal relations*

Soft-skills: *logical development of communication, problem-solving and creativity, use of visuals and effective use of questions*

Method: PBL – using video in class, group work

Students are faced with the following communication **problem**:

You have a 6-7 year old girl who suffers from burn injuries at her right leg, has undergone significant physical and emotional trauma, initially from the injury and subsequently from the dressing changes and related treatment. She refuses to be cooperative, does not understand why she needs to suffer, where the pain comes from, how and why she needs to endure it and why she should lie in bed while the other children are fine and playing outside. How will you explain to her and how will you make her be patient and cooperative again?

BRAINSTORMING: In groups, students try to come up with different solutions such as:

- Telling her a story,
- Using a movie where she sees other children suffering (Patch Adams – Clown care) and encouraging her that she will feel fine again,
- Using distracting techniques such as: games, music

Solutions are discussed with teacher as moderator.

The whole class watches a video [“How to handle better the pain? The magic wand”](https://youtu.be/YYIIB02UUC8) (<https://youtu.be/YYIIB02UUC8>)

Students discuss and the teacher writes the conclusions on the BB - Story-telling and logical development of the argument:

- What kind of questions were used? /which do you think are correct?
- The role of drawing and story telling in managing/modulating physical pain
- Drawing is an artistic instrument through which pain is objectivized
- Students understand that this technique is used as an adjuvant in establishing the diagnosis and administering the medical treatment, and it is not used to masquerade the pain, but to control it or it helps the child to dissociate himself from it.

It involves 3 simple steps in which the child is asked to draw:

- a. How the pain appears at that moment;
- b. How the wellbeing appears (the lack of pain);
- c. Who can help the first drawing to transform in the second one.



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Further reading

Use of virtual reality

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC554986/>

Hoffman HG, Doctor JN, Patterson DR, Carrougher GJ, Furness TA: Use of virtual reality for adjunctive treatment of adolescent burn pain during wound care: a case report. *Pain*. 2000, 85: 305-309. 10.1016/S0304-3959(99)00275-4.

Virtual Reality as a paediatric pain modulation technique

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14756928>

Steele E, Grimmer K, Mulley B, Fulton I, Hoffman H: Virtual Reality as a paediatric pain modulation technique: A case study. *Cyberpsychol Behav*. 2003, 6: 633-638. 10.1089/109493103322725405.



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