

# Good idea – Reflection Activity

The student liaison officer of Cambridge Regional College won a Faith and Belief Initiative grant to put on a number of events to bring students together, including a Reflection Activity.

## What was your project?

The event was a Reflection Activity organised and facilitated by 'Inspire Prayer Spaces'.

**This activity was designed to give learners the space and time to reflect on the past, present and future and how they can take control of their lives.**

Past – Acknowledge events that had occurred in the past and letting them go so that they do not interfere with their personal development and growth for the future – letting things go and moving forward

Present – Acknowledge what type of person they are and how people perceive them and whether they present a different person on the inside and outside. What skills and knowledge they have to offer for their current career and relationship prospects.

Future – Acknowledging their current thoughts of the future and widening these thoughts (map of the world) looking at themselves involved in a global village.

Material belongings and what the individual aimed to own and how these aims were restricting their view of their future and challenging this world view to incorporate other/different views of future.

## How did you ensure students were involved in the development of your project?

Initially learners were not consulted about the activity that was planned and delivered, however, the theme was picked to match other college related activities such as 'New Year's Resolution' survey, college wide academic activities linked to ongoing academic progression decision making and opportunities. Along with previous New Year Resolution survey outcomes that clearly demonstrate learners are thinking about change at this time of year.

- Inviting learners to participate in the activity
- Inviting learners to evaluate their experience after participating in the activity
- Further discussions about replicating this activity in the college have occurred which will involve the planning and delivery with learners.

## What impact did this project have on students you work with and within your students' union or college?

- The event had a positive impact. Students appreciated the opportunity to take time to be still and reflect. The guided stages of the activity were supportive in focussing thought and reflection, developing aspirations, self-awareness and the possibility of

coping strategies. It allowed the consideration of spirituality and faith.

- Learners of all faiths and none were invited to the event and worked collaboratively with both presenters and peers.
- Due to the nature of the activity learners generally worked independently, however, some pairing or small group working did occur which influenced the reflective outcomes positively for those participating -
- There was some specific Christian explanation and various Bible texts to prompt questioning e.g. physical paralysis/restricting ourselves with attitudes/behaviours.
- The learners who were involved in the activities ranged from individuals with moderate learning difficulties to Level 2 learners. There was also a range of vocational areas involved, Construction, Hair and Beauty and Foundation learning.

## **The quiet atmosphere provided the opportunity to interact in a safe, non-threatening way with peers. Some major changes in group dynamics were evident.**

### **Were there any other outcomes from the project?**

In the longer term, the event has provided topics for further investigation and discussion. Students reported appreciation of being given 'food for thought'. Staff members commented positively and requested future events for their own development.

### **What lessons did you learn in delivering the project that might be useful to other students' unions?**

- Visual impact of a project is important for learners to participate
- Having a wide menu of activities for learners to choose from within one whole event gave options and choices to those participating
- Working in silence gave learners a valuable experience that was different, but appreciated, by all participants.
- The physical environment (taking off shoes, leaving personal possessions in a specific space within the room and not accessing IT/phones/Ipads gave a greater sense of commitment to undertaking the activities fully.

### **Do you have any feedback from participants at your event?**

- Verbal – the majority of learners participating in the event stated that 'it was really different', 'liked being quiet', 'food for thought', 'didn't think I would like it but I did'. Many comments about the visual impact of the activity.
- Written – 'given me confidence to join the army', 'it's good to know I can leave problems behind', 'I gave me the opportunity to be quiet', 'I liked the opportunity but I didn't like the opportunity', 'It was demeaning and forceful'.
- Ongoing – tutors whose groups participated in the activity 'it did what it said on the tin', 'what an amazing event', 1 tutor continued the ideas into the next lesson which learners would consolidate the learning in the activity.
- Staff who were connected to the event – 'let's do this with staff at a staff only day', 'We need to do this again'.