

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Self-awareness (mental and physical, self-esteem)

Self-awareness includes recognition of self and the ability to understand our character, our strengths and weaknesses both physically and mentally, and our needs, desires and dislikes. An understanding of our personalities can help us find situations in which we will thrive, and help us avoid situations in which we will experience too much stress. Self-awareness also revolves around the capacity to be aware of our own position in a group context and to be able to meet other people and problems in a constructive way.

The aim is to strengthen the individuals' *self-esteem* through recognition from peers and especially from positive role models like the playmakers. Drills can focus on stimulating ambitions, personal success as well as teaching the players to respect others. As a playmaker you might want to use yourself as an example; tell the story about how you have grown and gained more self-esteem as a playmaker.

Using competitive drills, children and youth can experience success and achievement on several levels. A sense of *achievement* directly increases self-esteem. Thus, competition, when applied in the right manner, can be a tool in creating a positive self-image, which helps accepting others as well.

To work with *physical consciousness* in sports is also a meaningful component in enhancing self-awareness. It is important to be conscious about how your body works, hereby to learn and experience how your body reacts in different situations and become familiar with your physical limits and strengths in terms of speed, agility and endurance.

Coping with stress and emotions

Self-awareness is the foundation for all the other life skills we need to develop, and essential to managing stress and emotions. To cope with emotional changes, we need to recognize emotions within us and be aware of our emotional reactions and how they affect our behaviour. It also means recognizing the sources of stress in our lives and understanding how this affects us. Self-awareness provides us with choices on how to react, rather than allowing them to govern our behaviour.

Sports can be used to teach children and youth to reflect on and manage emotions and emotional responses from themselves or others. More specifically sports can teach kids and youth how to cope with success and failure, empathize with others, and overcome challenges.

Critical thinking

We live in a complex world, and everyday we encounter numerous views and values, which can be difficult to grasp. Critical thinking enables us to analyse information and experiences objectively, and it helps us to recognize and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behaviour, such as values, media and pressure for society and

peers.

The aim is to create a space where children and youth feel confident in seeking counsel before making decisions and to discuss and demonstrate knowledge about moral and ethical reasoning. Playmakers aim to motivate children and youth to reflect upon the drills and what they have learned in relation to socially relevant topics, which will play an important part in constructive and positive decision-making.

Creative thinking

Creative thinking is the ability to create, to make or bring into existence something new by using your imagination. It consists of four components – fluency (generating new ideas), flexibility (shifting perspective easily), originality (conceiving of something new), and elaboration (building on other ideas). Creative thinking helps us respond adaptively and flexibly in our everyday life situations.

The aim is to motivate children and youth to express their thoughts and ideas and enhance their ability to look beyond their direct experiences in exploring available alternatives. Playmakers aim to motivate children and youth to try doing activities more than one way and to think of new ideas after an activity. Creative and critical thinking skills form an important part of being able to qualify your judgements and they are crucial elements in reflective decision- making and problem solving.

Reflective decision-making

Reflective decision-making helps us to deal constructively with decisions about our lives. It can teach kids and youth how to make decisions about their actions in relation to assessment of different options and what effects these different decisions are likely to have. Reflective decision-making requires concentration and introspection, and it creates understanding on a higher level. The aim is that the playmakers set the stage and priorities time for the participants to reflect upon and practice decision making skills.

Reflective decision-making is an essential element in the ability to engage in the society, to express your opinions, take part in discussions and to deal constructively with conflicts and problems in your life.