

# Group reflection in lecturers of personal and social development<sup>1</sup>

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## Aim:

Field of personal and social development as a significant space to apply a concept of “outdoor education” is, in long term perspective, dealing with a not very clear, unambiguous, and outspoken definition and theoretical basis, does not attract attention of substantive numbers of empirical study authors nor does it by far find its place in the focus of a pedagogical “mainstream”. Given a bit of exaggeration, we may assert that we actually do not even know much about personal and social development. In the presented paper, we inform expert public about results of a conducted research, in which we try to reveal a way of practical grasp of one of the most significant parts of the programs of personal and social development, and that is a group reflective session. We are interested in the goals pursued by lecturers at the group reflective sessions, through what particular actions are these goals being fulfilled and in what common communication structures are these actions taking place.

## Methods:

Declared goal is being achieved by means of a qualitative analysis of eleven video-studies of group reflective sessions, series of in-depth interviews with chosen lecturers of personal and social development and stimulated observation of their work. That is in some cases supplemented also by data of quantitative nature, which are used as a support picturing the final image of a crystalized interpretation framework.

We assume that even these may, in certain moments, present efficient supplement of a compiled “mosaic”, and be thus significantly helpful in a complex understanding of observed events. Chosen design might therefore be specified as mixed.

## Results:

One of the essential outcomes of the research is defining of a basic model of leading group reflective sessions, in which all of the emerging categories are being demonstrated – goals pursued by lecturers (endeavor to secure a material for learning, the learning support itself and setting and eventual optimization of learning conditions) and a group of static (personality factors, professional background) and dynamic variables (topic and goal of a particular group, factors on the part of participants etc.), which influence a communication style of a lecturer, throughout which the aforementioned goals are being achieved.

In the following text, particular actions of lecturers which are being used to fulfill these goals, in an original style, are then gradually analyzed. These are in conclusion set into a stable communication

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structure of the group reflective sessions, which brings information as to in what common organizational structures and using what communication exchanges are the three identified goals being achieved.

### **Conclusion:**

Paper contributes to an understanding of one of the most significant and hitherto not much revealed parts of programs of personal and social development (namely outdoor education programs), through which exploitation and valuation of gained experience and practice is being made via pedagogic research optics. It shows that, in spite of a relatively significant diversity in approaches of particular lecturers, group reflective sessions have its vigorous rules and regularities and it is possible to, rather easily, anticipate its course. Likewise, significance of certain factors influencing the quality of a work of a lecturer (e.g. more than a professional background or a real experience level, involvement of lecturers in one of the forms of reflections of their own practice proves to be important) is being unveiled.

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