

Radio Training for Blind People at Non-profit Media Centre Foundation

Theoretical bases

Media training for blind people – this composition seems rather anachronistic today when the world of media is built on spectacle and scenic reception. However, for us it is reality itself. We have been successfully organizing and conducting radio trainings for blind or people with serious visual disorders for years.

The essence of our theoretical base is that we do not make difference, only give *special help*. Neither our curriculum, nor our everyday behaviour are „distorted” just because we work with disabled, we only adapt the forms of giving help to the needs of those included in the training. In finding these forms we rely on the support of our students, it is them who determine the kind of general help they need because of their disability and the nature and size of personal support they need owing to their personality. Therefore, our cooperation is a mutual learning process as a result of which we are able to conduct the procedure of information transmission and to adapt it to the personal needs so that reception will be extremely effective.

Forms of work

We can do the most effective work in *integrated groups*. In the practice of our Foundation the integrated training of people with various disabilities and the work with the integrated groups of disabled (blind, in this case) and healthy persons is usual. Radio work, concluding from its nature, primarily needs group work and cooperation. Differing from other trainings, where the general practice is personal exercising and recitation, our programmes include increased urging for *group work* and practicing the accomplishment of *various roles*.

An obvious result of the learning and work done in integrated groups is the evolution and development of the *communication* between the healthy and the disabled, the repression of aversion or perhaps refusal, the improvement in personal adoption. At the same time, a less obvious but very positive result occurs, too: the various mechanisms of *asking for and offering help* become automatically practiced. This is not a one-way process! Asking for and offering help is a mutual process (including, for instance, the „help me so that I can get to know how to help you” type, as well), and the final result will be a personal and professional cooperation.

Curriculum and tools

As mentioned above, our curriculum is not subordinated to the type of disability concerning the targets to be achieved. Adoption appears in the time used, in the personal adoption of methods and in some cases in the use of special tools. We make efforts to teach our student to use the tools also used by their healthy mates, in certain cases, however, we may need the use of special tools (e.g. speaking softwares in the training of blind). After introducing the mine of tools we usually let a wide space for our students to *choose* the tools fitting their abilities and personality the best and to get it to know more deeply. The person having established a good relation to his/her tool will be able to do more effective and engrossed work.

Concrete data

Our trainings are always prepared carefully. After having announced the programme we organize “*admission talks*” in groups with the applicants where we primarily examine their personal characteristics, their tolerance, their ability to cooperate in groups (mainly in integrated groups), and we try to find out whether they have and if they do, how deep their inner contents to be expressed are in case they are given the adequate knowledge and practical means. We receive about *20 persons* in one group.

We keep six-hour *consultations* once a week during 12 weeks. In these consultations first we primarily deal with theoretical, later with practical questions. Also, the practical workshop activities are done within the frames of these consultations. Of course, as the course continues, more and more personal professional problems are solved.

The other main phase of our training is a *three-day living-in intensive training* which we implement somewhere in the country. We are always very *careful in choosing the site* since it must fulfil the special needs of our disabled students and the requirements raised by the professional work, as well. (For example, there must be a bigger room used for common work and smaller ones for the exercises of little groups.) It is also important that the wider environment of the training be sufficiently inspiring for our students so that they can try their gained practical knowledge, that is do professional work.

The trainings are held by our *two trainers*, and with the involvement of other professional supporters occasionally. Our trainers are experts qualified highly in the field of media, possessing excellent reputation who now have a decade’s experience in the training of disabled people. In addition to performing their work on a very high

standard they lay great stress on optimising and cultivating the personal contacts maintained with the students. In case they have this kind of ambition, we help our graduates to find a trainee's or perhaps work-mate position at the community or small community radios operating in the non-profit sector.