

Social participation



A guide for counsellors in social
activation, reintegration in the
labour market and active assistance

Henk Spies
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STAB
Fontys Actief
Stichting Onbenutte Kwaliteiten Rotterdam

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Table of contents

Introduction 7

- 1 Social conditions and basis for an individual and customer-oriented approach 11**
 - 1.1 A changing condition 11
 - 1.2 A different approach 12
 - 1.3 An individual, customer-oriented approach in a social and policy context 16
 - 1.4 Programme mediation and various activation perspectives 18
 - 1.5 Parts of the methodology: counselling and mediation 22
- 2 Case studies 25**
 - 2.1 Introduction 25
 - 2.2 Participants' stories at the start of the programme 26
 - 2.3 Bea's story 29
 - 2.4 Abdel's story 32
- 3 Programme counselling 37**
 - 3.1 Programme counselling: mediated interaction 37
 - 3.2 Interlude: Marcel's programme 46
- 4. Programme mediation: intake, assessment and programme plan 51**
 - 4.1 Registration, contact, intake 51
 - 4.2 Assessment and programme plan 53
 - 4.3 Interlude: Hans' programme 66
- 5 Programme realization: training, care and assistance, mediation and counselling plan 57**
 - 5.1 The programme plan as a working plan 75
 - 5.2 Training and work experience 75
 - 5.3 Care and assistance 77
 - 5.4 The mediation toward paid or unpaid work: central concepts 80
 - 5.5 Mediation: the process 81
 - 5.6 Development oriented support, career guidance and aftercare 86

6	Programme mediation in practice	89
6.1	Introduction	89
6.2	Pieter's mediation programme	89
6.3	Miep's mediation programme	95
6.4	Hetty's mediation programme	100

Appendix 105

Recommendations for additional literature (mostly in the Dutch language)	105
About STAB, Fontys Actief and Stichting Onbenutte Kwaliteiten Rotterdam	107
Contact information	109

Introduction

7

This guide is aimed at counsellors and mediators in the broad field of social activation, reintegration in the labour market and active support. The main aim of their work is to stimulate the social participation of those people that have been cast aside. This can be done in different ways: through paid or voluntary work, by activities aimed at physical or psychological recovery, or by a combination of those.

The guiding principle is that everyone should be, or should at least have the opportunity to be, in one way or another, socially active. To achieve that, we try to find the most suitable or most appropriate way for each individual.

The target group consists of people who have been unemployed for a considerable time, who receive benefits, or who have been socially inactive for some time because of, for instance, health problems, psychosocial problems such as addictions, homelessness or psychiatric problems, and who want to become active again. In all cases, it concerns people of whom it is generally accepted that they have little chance in the labour market. Issues such as age, sex, and colour of skin also play a role here. Some municipalities call this target group the 'granite file'. In this book, we use the term 'participant' for these people insofar as they take part in a programme.

This book is based on a number of pillars: the methodology of an individual, customer-oriented approach and the counselling method as developed by STAB in cooperation with Utrecht University; the methodology of integral programme mediation as developed by Fontys University of Professional Education, and the implementation practices of Helmond Actief and Onbenutte Kwaliteiten Rotterdam. These methodologies and practices have already appeared in several publications. For more in-depth background information on the methodology used, see the list of books in the back. The aim of this guide is to present the essence of this approach in a practical and concise form. For this purpose, we describe, among other things, real-life cases. We also hope to make clear that methodology is not just a recipe book or a timetable; it consists of a complex number of principles, measures, tools, and roles that can never be applied 'irrespective of persons'. Depending on the reactions of the participant, programme counsellors must continually assess and make choices before taking the next step. This guide intends to provide them with a number of tools and how to use these, by supplying a number of examples of the assessments and choices that counsellors have to make in practice.

Methodology is, in our view, a structuring of (professional) procedures. The essence of this procedure consists of counselling and mediation. As a temporary intervention, it is aimed at the stimulation and counselling of learning processes connected with

activities and, together with this, the mediation for clients toward a more permanent form of social participation.

In the learning processes, various levels can be distinguished: how to deal with fear and trust, discovering new perspectives, concrete goals and activities, and learning from feedback (at the level of feelings, knowledge and skills as a result of experiences). Learning processes are naturally dynamic in character. This means that the goals and activities of a programme can change during the course of time and should, sometimes, be adjusted.

8 Mediation always involves several parties: besides the participant these could be an employer, an organization for voluntary work, a care organization, but also a client, a social network. All these parties can be considered as customers and are as such also partner in the realization of the activation programme. To realize long-lasting forms of social participation, the programme should not only be recognizable to the participant but also to the other parties involved. This means that, with regards to the programmes' goals, the wishes and motives of the participants must be translated into real perspectives that are socially acceptable and desirable, but the expectations of an employer or organization where the participant is going to work voluntarily must also be met.

Book structure

The book is structured as follows. Chapter I deals with the basis and social conditions of an individual, customer-oriented approach. It also introduces the most important aspects of the methodology in diagram form. We make a distinction here between programme counselling on the one hand and programme mediation on the other, subjects which are, in practice, inextricably bound together.

In the second chapter we introduce some participants whose programmes we follow through. In the first instance, we only give information that was known at the start of the programme. Disrespectfully said, these are problem cases. Next, and ahead of more methodology elaborated further in the book, we describe the full programme of two participants (Bea and Abdel). The problem cases, which are initially described in a cursory way, should during the course of the book change into human beings, each with their own story and perspective of a long-lasting form of social participation.

For this purpose, the methodology for an individual, customer-oriented approach will be further elaborated in chapters 3, 4 and 5. Chapter 3 is devoted to programme counselling in the form of mediated interaction. This counselling is aimed at enhancing people's self-steering abilities by stimulating and supporting further development of the participants' competences. In this chapter we will outline a programme-type approach of the participants' learning process and observe the requirements for the interaction between the programme counsellor and the participant.

After this chapter there is an interlude in which the programme of one of the participants (Marcel) is described.

Chapters 4 and 5 deal with programme mediation, aimed at reaching a long-lasting form of social participation. In chapter 4, the first steps of the methodology are drawn up: intake, assessment and, based on that, the programme plan. In the steps to be taken, both the content as well as the process are being considered.

After this chapter there is another interlude in which the programme of Hans, one of the participants is described.

In chapter 5, the last steps of the methodology are drawn up: programme realization, mediation and development-oriented support after the mediation. Here, we also consider the content and the process as well as the various possible parts that make up the programme.

Chapter 6, the concluding chapter of this guide on methodology, addresses real-life stories which follow-up those in chapter 5. Three actual mediation programmes are described: Pieter's programme, which consists of a combination of voluntary work and assistance, Miep's programme includes active support and voluntary work, and Hetty's programme consists of a combination of employment mediation and support.

9

Reading pointer

This book can, of course, be read from front to back. Those with mainly practical experience could start with the case studies and continue from there to study the methodology chapters. The case studies can be found in chapters 2 and 6 and in the interludes after chapters 3 and 4. Those who are more interested in the theory could begin with the methodology chapters and continue with the case studies. The methodology is described in chapters 1, 3, 4 and 5. Finally, the book can also be used as a reference book by reading it selectively.

Justification

The author of chapters 1, 3, 4 and 5 is Henk Spies; chapters 2 and 6, paragraphs 1.4.3 (care activation), 5.3 (care and assistance), and the case studies in the various chapters are by Johnny Vanschoren. Both authors have, of course, commented on and tailored each other's concepts extensively. In the chapters on methodology, texts are used written by Ben Valkenburg, Marianne Coenen-Hanegraaf, Emiel van Doorn and René Kersten.

René Kersten (Fontys Actief) supplied many suggestions, tips and additions for the concepts. Isabel den Engelsman (Stichting OK Rotterdam) was actively involved in the provision of material for the case studies and for parts of chapter 3. Niels van den Oever and John Hoefnagels (both from Stichting OK Rotterdam) provided comments on the concepts and supported the process for the realization of this publication. For the case studies we used and are grateful for the experiences of the programme mediators, counsellors and case managers: Paul, Saadia, Wim, Stefan, Dian, Tijs, Jacqueline, Isabel and Karin.

1 Social conditions and basis for an individual and customer-oriented approach

1.1 A changing condition

11

Working with people that are far removed from the labour market takes place in continuously changing conditions. In the past few decades, large shifts have occurred in policy frameworks and policy instruments, responsibilities, and in the organization of implementation. One important development behind it concerns the emphasis on activation. The labour market policy, as well as welfare and care policies, is more and more focused on increasing peoples' ability to manage for themselves instead of inducing passivity by taking care of them. Not much was expected from the unemployed in the past. People with physical, psychological or mental problems or handicaps and people in particular situations such as being homeless or addicted, were protected from society by placing them in isolated institutes and refugee centres (the so-called institutions). By not expecting anything from people but just 'kill them with kindness', they are not taken seriously and made dependent. The carers often talk, in this connection, about acquired helplessness and institutionalization.

The policy on the basis to activate people has been translated in various ways. The guiding principle in the labour market and social security policies is 'work before income' and, more recently, 'work first'. Income (from work) is always more preferable than receiving benefits. Since the early nineties, the policy has been to emphasize a more and more active labour market policy. Between 1998 and 2000, government spending on active labour market policy rose from 0,8 to 1,2 billion Euros. This amount does not include expenditure for subsidized work, running costs and related services such as childcare. The implementation structure has also been radically reorganized putting a strong emphasis on the stimulation of outflow.

Privatization and decentralization have come into effect with SUWI (Structure Implementation Work and Income: 2002) and WWB (Social Security Act: 2004).

Municipalities are financially responsible for their social security clients and their reintegration in the labour market and have now a larger scope for policymaking. The mandatory invitation for tenders to implement the programmes has, in the meantime, been discontinued (however, European ruling, where municipalities must call for tenders for large commissions, remains in force). As a result, the municipality's scope for policymaking has been even further enlarged, be it within a fixed financial framework.

This means that the role of social security organizations (social services and UWV*) is

* Organization for the implementation of employed persons insurance schemes – reintegration and temporary income support

no longer being just responsible for the control of the legitimacy and appropriation of the benefits, but they can now also direct reintegration through case management. This means that these social security organizations (meaning the case managers) are also the clients of the reintegration programmes for social security recipients. There is an exception for UWV-clients who follow a programme based on an IRO (Individual Reintegration Agreement). They have their own budget that they can use, according to certain preconditions, to their own insight. They are therefore not only participants but also clients.

12 People who receive benefits are not only obliged to take part in activities aimed at finding work (employment programme) but they must also accept subsidized or any additional work when offered. Some people feel that it should also be compulsory to take part in a social activation programme. Refusal to do so or dropping-out means in principle a cut back in social security. The policy on sanctions has been laid down in the 'Wet Boeten en Maatregelen' (Penalties and Measures Act). This law establishes, case by case, which type of penalty to apply for breaching the social security rules.

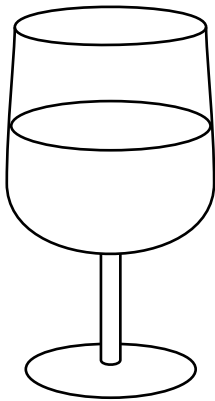
1.2 A different approach

Almost 15 years of reforms in the social security and labour market policy have led to big changes in the working process of programme mediators. It is not clear whether these changes have improved the long-lasting reintegration and social participation programmes.

This book is based on the belief, and supported in practice, that there is much more ground to gain in the areas of reintegration in the labour market, social activation and active assistance. The essence is a different approach, characterized by a number of principles. An individual, customer-oriented approach is one of the most important features. 'Individual' because everybody is different and, consequently, everybody must be approached in a different way. This is not only the case for the participants but it also applies to all other parties such as employers or organizations where the participants work on a voluntary basis. Customer-oriented does not mean 'you ask and we deliver'; what we mean here is that we are looking at the underlying question. The customer is not always right; he is part of the team and together we look for the best solution. Besides, the counsellor has to collaborate with a number of clients/associates. Not only the individual participant is a client but also the (potential) employer or the organization where a participant can work on a voluntary basis, the client and even the organization itself can all be considered as customers. As a consequence, constant mediation is needed to establish whether the participant's wishes are economically, socially and organizationally feasible and fit the requirements. The objective is to find mutually effective perspectives and to put these into practice. We view the participant as a person with his/her own background and relationships. Who is this participant; does he or she have a realistic view of him or herself within his/her own environment? These facts should be guiding for the type of support to offer, the responsibilities that can be expected, the actual goal and the training and activities programme (the direction to take). This is not just the adding up of some loose elements; it is a coherent

story. The way people function can also be defined by their social situation and environment, which are either contributing or counteracting factors. Activation, therefore, focuses not only on the participant but also on his/her relationships within their environment.

Figure 1.1 is the glass half empty or half full?



13

We don't just focus on people's problems but also keep an eye open for their qualities, what are they good at, what can they do, their strong points. Where others (clients, possible employers, those offering voluntary work, but also participants themselves) often view the glass as being half empty, we also see the glass half full. Conforming to people's strengths and qualities makes them the driving force of their own programme. By reason of analogy: we not only want the participant to take the steering wheel but also that he or she uses the throttle.

An important condition to achieve a long-lasting solution is the fact that the participant him or herself must support and take responsibility for the programme, and will continue to do so when the counsellor is no longer in the picture. The participant directs and the programme supervisor concentrates on enhancing that direction (or self-steering). For this, it is essential that the programme and mediation be attuned to the participant in question. This does not mean that everything that the participant wants is immediately taken as the thread of the programme (you ask, we deliver). It means that it is impossible to ignore the participant's wishes and motives; just like you cannot ignore the boundaries of the possibilities within a programme dictated by society and the constitutional state. We need to find the underlying question, which will be the basis to establish a concrete, individual goal, and activity programme, in accordance with the participant's eventual wishes and within the boundaries set by society. Programme counselling and programme mediation are conditional: the work takes place within a situation in which both the counsellor and the participant have responsibilities. The most important condition is that they work together towards a form of social participation that, in the opinion of the counsellor

as well as that of the participant, fits the participant's individual circumstances and falls within the boundaries of the law. This means that they must always maintain a constructive dialogue, whatever happens. The counsellor is responsible for finding the potential of the participant. The participant must help to find his/her potential and, subsequently, accept suitable or well-reasoned alternatives in the programme steps. In chapters 3, 4 and 5, we explain what we mean by 'suitable' and 'well-reasoned'. A participant's non-constructive attitude or not accepting a suitable alternative are reasons for sanctions. The counsellor should take the responsibility to clearly communicate this to the participant from the start. Setting boundaries, applying or threatening sanctions must not be an 'external' condition' but should be an integral part of the programme, also when setting or maintaining these boundaries, the individual approach remains important. Should a participant not accept the boundaries in which the work is to be done, the counsellor is responsible to explain to the participant, if necessary together with the case manager, what the consequences of his/her choices will be. An individual approach means that, even when it becomes difficult, a participant should be individually and openly addressed. The primary goal for applying or threatening with sanctions within this approach is to start and continue a discussion; the door should stay open (within reason) as much as possible. This means that a(n) (impending) sanction must always be explained with respect to the individual situation and that the participant must be specifically told what is expected of him or her; this in contrast with the usual anonymous written sanction procedures in official jargon that participants find often difficult to understand and that create detachment. It can also mean that a sanction procedure is started, then stopped when there is a constructive dialogue with the participant again, then carried through, then a pause, and so on and so forth. All this demands close cooperation and interaction between the counsellor and the case manager. The long-term goal is to bring about changes in the situation and actions of the participant.

Cooperation is essential on different levels. Cooperation between the counsellor and the participant occurs on the interaction level; they function as a team and as such complement each other. The participant does what he or she can do for him or herself and the counsellor offers support, if necessary, by temporarily relieving the participant of some of his responsibilities as found necessary and by adopting the role of mediator during the interaction. The counsellor reciprocates his observations that he sees or hears from the participant (this will be further elaborated in chapter 3), so that the participant can make use of these during the process.

Mediation means that the actions of the counsellor/mediator are focused on making the participant aware of his/her own way of thinking and acting during interaction with other people in certain situations, and to make the participant understand the result of this interaction and what his/her contribution to it was. We must, after all, base the work on the actual interaction, that which actually takes place between a counsellor and a participant. This is often taken for granted but in practice this is not always so obvious. Being in contact means that you can work from a collective focused viewpoint.

An important factor in guaranteeing the continuity, coherence and coordination of the programmes at the organizational level is linked cooperation (with

benefit agencies, care and assistance institutions, education institutions, et cetera). Competition and rivalry is not in the interest of the participant's programme. Good cooperation can prevent repeating or missing activities or that they are conflicting. Cooperating partners should recognize each other's independence and realize that their own working process is only a small part of the whole process. To this end, the wishes, needs and demands of the participant should be put before the interests of the individual organizations. This means that cooperation should be based, as much as possible, on the individual participant's programme (bottom-up) and the question of who can contribute what and from which organization, to supplement the overall cooperation in the chain (creating top-down conditions). In the current context, it is particularly important to be in continuous rapport with the case manager (the client) of the benefit agency. The case manager formally initiates an activation programme, is also responsible for the approval of the programme plan and must be regularly informed about the programme's progress. Case managers also play an important role in the formulation of the conditional framework for the participants; the requirements as defined by the legislator (as representative of society). Case managers can also give support by passing on relevant information to the programme counsellor, facilitating material for the activation programme, and providing supporting tools from the municipality (such as budget support, child care and other care facilities).

One method to attain such a rapport is to have the counsellor and the case manager both present at the first meeting with the participant. Another good moment for a three-way discussion is when the definitive programme plan is signed. Other cooperation partners, in the various phases of the activation programme, could be:

- General social services (social-cultural and community work, social work)
- Specific social work (naturalization, disability care, social relief work, addiction programmes, budget guidance, resettlement, juvenile welfare)
- Health care (psychiatry, RIAGG*, homecare)
- Societies (migrants, disabled, trade unions, community associations, churches, elderly, and so on)
- Previous employers or organizations where a participant worked on a voluntary basis or did practical work
- Potential employers
- Social job creation
- Education institutions
- CWI (Centre for Work and Income)
- Volunteer groups and data banks
- Child care
- Associate counsellors

Counsellors should know the social map of the region in which they work and have insight in the availability, possibilities and the strengths of the various parties with whom they (could) cooperate.

* Regional Institute for Ambulatory Mental Welfare

1.3 An individual, customer-oriented approach in a social and policy context

The methodology of the individual, customer-oriented approach will be further elaborated in chapters 3, 4 and 5. However, we first would like to explain the relationship of the social situation in which we work. It is a fact that the individual, customer-oriented approach relates well to the present policy principle but is not necessarily an automatic extension of it (hence the title of the previous paragraph 'a different approach'), especially in the way in which the participants are viewed.

16 In the policy forming in the past decennium, some implicit portrayals of mankind have played an important role. Since the late eighties, people receiving benefits are often seen as being rational, calculating citizens for whom, by weighing up the costs and benefits, it is a rational choice to be dependent on benefits. To prevent people from doing this, many policy measures include financial deterrents such as a reduction in benefits and applying sanctions. Also, people on benefits are often believed to be passive, incompetent, dependent and not able to function normally in society (read: not able to work) nor make responsible choices with regards to their future (read: to find work independently). As a result, many policy measures are of an obligatory and paternalistic character.

Although there are almost certainly participants who fit this portrayal, some marginal notes must be made here. First of all, these images do not take account of the personal and social circumstances that contribute to individual actions. Secondly, no single portrayal can do justice to the diversity between people. And thirdly, no human being can be reduced to a one-dimensional character. The answer to the image of these calculating and incompetent people who are entitled to benefits is not the image of competent and deprived people entitled to benefits, although there are undoubtedly people that fit this image. Instead, we want to look with an open mind at the participants without first forming an opinion and ask ourselves what kind of person we are dealing with. We must, however, look past the first impression and consider the various spheres and broader aspects of their life, and the complexity, cohesion and social involvement of the participant, to approach a participant from a wrong and/or one-sided perspective (i.e. with prejudice), can easily lead to distrust and an unnecessarily false start of the relationship.

1.3.1 The approach of the participants

An individual, customer-oriented approach follows the policy assumption that people, who are entitled to benefits, are also responsible to develop him or herself as best they can from their situation. However, these responsibilities must be firmly established by the individual, as well as the support needed to be able to take on these responsibilities. Asking too much of people can lead to frustration and asking too little doesn't do justice to their development potential; people feel when they are not taken seriously. A paternalistic approach in a steering and coaching approach can sometimes be adequate, but as a general policy its result is contradictory: people will not become independent if you don't give them responsibilities.

An approach 'irrespective of the person' runs a large risk to being off target in a

lot of individual cases. An individual, customer-oriented approach is intended to attune to the participant's personal and social circumstances. This means that not everybody is approached in the same way; more responsibilities are expected from some participants than others and the type of support can differ, both of which can change during the course of the programme. Most important is functionality; if someone is capable of doing things by him or herself, then, in principle, they must do this. This distinctive, individual approach is following important general policy assumptions, but the results can be sometimes different.

1.3.2 The purpose of activation programmes

17

The purpose of activation programmes is for people to fully take part in society, through paid or voluntary work or by taking part in a care programme, or a combination of these. The guiding principle is that everyone should be socially active, one way or another, in surroundings where they are expected and able to make a contribution.

A secondary objective that always plays a part is to strengthen the control that people have over their own life – the extent and adequacy into to which they take responsibility for their own life. This is increasingly important in a more and more complex society in which traditions quickly lose their significance. Matters that once were obvious are no longer so. This means that increasingly more matters demand individual choices, in other words, more responsibilities. This applies also to people who, through all sorts of setbacks and difficult circumstances, have partly lost their self-confidence and find it difficult to control their life in an adequate way. Strengthening this control is of particular importance to these people if they want to take 'a normal' part in society.

Making choices for people (paternalism) does not make them independent. By stimulating and supporting them in developing the control of their lives (self-steering) they will be better equipped to deal with the demands of modern society.

Activation programmes, when reasoning from an individual, customer-oriented approach are, in principle, open-ended, i.e. the objective can not be set beforehand without involving the participant. At the same time, the individual participant's wishes, motives and development perspectives are not the only reference points. The general expectation is that citizens (this includes people on benefits) are, in one way or another, taking part in society to the best of their ability and that their own perspectives remain within the framework of the constitutional state. A definitive interpretation of these general expectations can only be made together with the participant. 'To the best of their ability' means that those who are capable to work must, in principle, work, but whether the participant is capable must, again, be determined in a dialogue with the participant. One of the roles of the counsellor is to clearly explain these expectations to the participant but, at the same time, the counsellor must not take one-sided decisions, except when a participant does not want to do anything.

Paid work is considered to be the most desirable form of social participation, when possible and achievable. However, the policy assumption (work before income) has

been very strictly set, bringing with it the risk that counsellors cut corners and participants suffer the consequences. However, some things must be put in perspective here.

Firstly, not all work necessarily contributes to social integration. Secondly, and in view of long-term results, a voluntary position with good prospects for, for instance, further development of social skills, would be a better move than to place someone directly in a job where there are hardly any contacts between colleagues, supervisors or clients and which will almost certainly result in the participant dropping out due to lack of counselling. The shortest route to work does not always result in long-term reintegration and participation.

18 Thirdly, to place someone in a job directly, considering the target group with which we work is of course not always achievable in most cases. It could, however, be the long-term perspective of a programme.

1.3.3 The organizational situation

In the present situation, counsellors often have to deal with institutional goals that have been set and agreed with the client (usually municipalities and the UWV*). These goals, such as limiting benefit volume (i.e. the number of people receiving benefits) and achieving as many programmes and programme activities as possible, can be at odds with an individual, customer-oriented approach. This all highly depends on the chosen time perspective. From a long-term perspective there are not many differences, the aim is, after all, to realize a long-term placement for the participant, which is, ultimately, also the most economic for the social security agencies. From a short-term perspective, direct job placement could be cheaper and more advisable to do, although it is extremely questionable whether this would be long lasting. In this case, it results in disharmony between the objective formulated from the individual, customer-oriented approach and that set by the client. In principle we see the client also as a customer with which we wish to share thoughts and whose questions (the underlying questions) we wish to answer. This means that we also include the long-term perspective in our discussion. When we do not manage to create the conditions for an individual, customer-oriented approach for the participants, it is important to establish this fact at this level. This will prevent having counsellors judged on the (disappointing) end results caused, to a considerable extent, by the lack of the conditions required to carry out their work and from a premature assessment.

1.4 Programme mediation and various activation perspectives

The individual, customer-oriented approach, which is explained in this book, concerns various reintegration perspectives (forms of social participation) and their combinations: paid work, social activation (voluntary work, own initiatives) and care activation. It is evident that within these various perspectives distinctions occur. No two jobs (paid or voluntary) are the same, there is regular work but also subsidized

* Organization for the implementation of employed persons insurance schemes – reintegration and temporary income support

work and the various forms of aid cannot be compared. The advantage of paid work compared to the other options is that it leads, in principle, to economic independence and this is what is aimed for, if possible and achievable. Voluntary work is an equally valuable alternative that can contribute to building a social network; strengthen personal and social skills, a meaningful existence and a possible step towards paid work. A care programme can also contribute to social participation and in combination provide support, for instance, in voluntary, subsidized or also paid work. The individual, customer-oriented approach not only concerns the participants. We already mentioned earlier that we also work for the client with whom we actively share thoughts. This applies even more to the 'other party' in the labour market: potential employers where participants could be placed in paid or voluntary jobs.

19

1.4.1 Paid work

The labour market is an economic structure. Jobseekers are seen as providers of labour; employers offer the demand and the labour market acts as mechanism to bring the two parties together. Price mechanism is an important feature of markets. When demand is high and supply limited, prices rise and vice versa. Conversely, market forces can change (financially or otherwise) by supporting the supply and demand. This economic view of the labour market plays an important role in labour market policy. Wage subsidies can be an important tool for placing participants, while this is not the only tool. 'The labour market' is an abstraction, even when in everyday language and policy jargon this is seen as real, for instance, one talks about the 'distance to the labour market'. There are many places and methods in which people can find a job or employers can find personnel. Generally, two strategies can be distinguished in which a job or personnel can be found. On the one hand, a broad approach (the hunter firing a shower of shot) or, on the other hand, a target-oriented approach (the marksman). The first approach fits the image of the 'market' but in practice the second approach is usually more effective considering the target group we discuss here. Only a minority of all vacancies appear in advertisements or in job vacancy departments. Most people find a job through informal contacts. 'Via-via' can be seen as a form of exchange of information as well as a 'letter of recommendation'. Some people find a job through mediation from the CWI or a reintegration organization.

Although financial considerations such as the offered or requested salary and whether or not wage subsidies play a role in establishing an employment contract, these are certainly not the main considerations. It is very difficult to find the right information. Every jobseeker is different and every job is different. Employers want the right employee, someone who can do the job and fits the company, and generally try to avoid personal risks (for instance, sickness absence or people leaving quickly for another job) as much as possible. In principle, the jobseeker also wants a job that suits him or her best. But how do you decide whether someone is suitable or if the job fits the person and in how far he or she will form a risk?

In the absence of good information, employers often use a rule-of-thumb approach in their recruitment and selection policy to avoid risks. In general, they would rather not employ immigrants, women, elderly people or people with health problems. People's employment records and educated guesses whether or not someone fits the corporate culture also play a role. 'Firing a shower of shot' – applying for jobs

often and being non-specific when applying – will generally result in failure for our target group when these rule-of-thumb criteria are applied.

A direct approach offers better possibilities. The guiding principle is that the jobseeker and the client are both seen as customer. The match must be right for both of them. A counsellor must, therefore, be able to give both customer relevant and concrete information and consider both their interests. It is not relevant to enter into a general discussion with the employer about their selection criteria and, when addressing the participant, it is not about 'a participant distanced from the labour market', but it is about Hans or Abdel, or Bea.

20

It concerns actively sharing thoughts with the (potential) employer to see if a concrete solution can be found for the employer's problem (i.e. the demand) and if a construction can be found to limit the employer's risks (for instance, by taking on a part of the supervision or through a form of outsourcing). To this end, it is necessary to get not only an understanding of the participant but also of the nature of the employer's vacancy problems. In short, just as he does with the jobseeker, the counsellor is looking at the underlying question (as such, an individual, customer-oriented approach) to try and find a concrete solution, i.e. to make a match. In this context it is important that, during the mediation for regular work, one should not to just look at 'official' (registered or published) vacancies. Most employers frequently need personnel as a result of natural staff turnover. In a period of slow economic growth, this could amount to 10%; during periods of economic growth this could rise to 40%.

1.4.2 Voluntary work

The previous section is about paid work but programmes can also be directed at finding a place in voluntary work. Voluntary work, as a form of social participation, measures up to paid work even though this does not automatically lead to the participant's financial independence. For some participants, dependent on their situation and possibilities, voluntary work is a better choice for social participation. Voluntary work is usually less demanding and offers a safer environment for the participant in which to develop. It is also a possible step in the direction for regular work. To find a place in voluntary work, the course to follow is similar to the one taken for regular work. The objective of each programme, even if it is directed towards voluntary work, is to place people in an environment where they can make a contribution and where it is also expected of them to contribute. The latter is not always so obvious in a voluntary job as it is in a paid job since there is no remuneration. This does not imply that there are no expectations at all. Every organization has an objective, and to achieve this objective everybody involved is expected to somehow contribute to this to some extent. It is the counsellor's responsibility to find out what a company, that might enlist volunteers, represents, the contribution these volunteers can make to this company and what (else) is expected from them. The 'requirements' from these organizations will, at first sight, be less clear as those demanded by an employer looking for an employee. That makes it even more important that the counsellor gets a clear picture of what these requirements are. Voluntary work as a form of social participation is, after all, only meaningful when something is expected from the volunteer (and that could be many things).

Voluntary work is usually done in a formal organization. This formal way of social participation could be a step too far for many groups and participants. Informal ways of voluntary work, such as informal care or activities within their own social network, could be more fitting for some participants or within certain cultural environments, and could possibly lead towards more formal forms of participation. The social network provides, as it were, a connection between the individual and the anonymous outside world (i.e. society). Strengthening the social network, and the support that this provides, could be a necessary step towards social participation. Examples of social participation are, for instance, undertaking joint activities such as excursions, informal meetings or taking part in group events.

21

1.4.3 Activating, development-oriented care programme

Activation programmes aimed at paid or voluntary work are often combined with forms of assistance and care. This is of relevance to people with personal and/or social problems such as debt problems, physical or psychological handicaps, health problems, addictions, judicial problems, homelessness, and familial problems, which interfere (or restrict) activation.

Assistance and care can be applied in different ways:

- sometimes preceding the activation programme aimed at work, in particularly when the problems are so serious that paid or voluntary work is not feasible in the short term;
- sometimes running parallel with activities, such as training, work experience, voluntary work and job mediation, if the combination is achievable.

Assistance and care can even continue after someone has been placed in a paid job.

Personal and social problems don't have to be completely resolved before the start of someone's assistance and mediation programme for paid or voluntary work. However, these problems must be made sufficiently manageable by limiting them and/or by looking for suitable work in a suitable work environment. It should be taken into consideration in how far a particular person is capable of carrying through activation and assistance simultaneously. Responsibility is good, but too much responsibility should be avoided.

In these circumstances, counsellors work closely together with the assistance professionals. This is based on the individual, customer-oriented approach, following the participant's demands, perspectives and own efforts as closely as possible. Welfare services do not always apply these guiding principles. The concrete care and assistance plan must follow the participant's activation perspectives under his/her own direction. This involves some task assignments, however, it should be prevented that the participant and the activation programme are separated into individual, unrelated parts. The counsellor is responsible for a coherent and integral programme: the various parts of the activation programme should enhance and not counteract each other. A joint approach with the participant, if done in a proper way, should also make the participant experience it as a whole. This means that the counsellor acts as mediator for the organizations and professionals in care and assistance, mediates between the participant's demands (including his/her perspectives) and the offer of assistance.

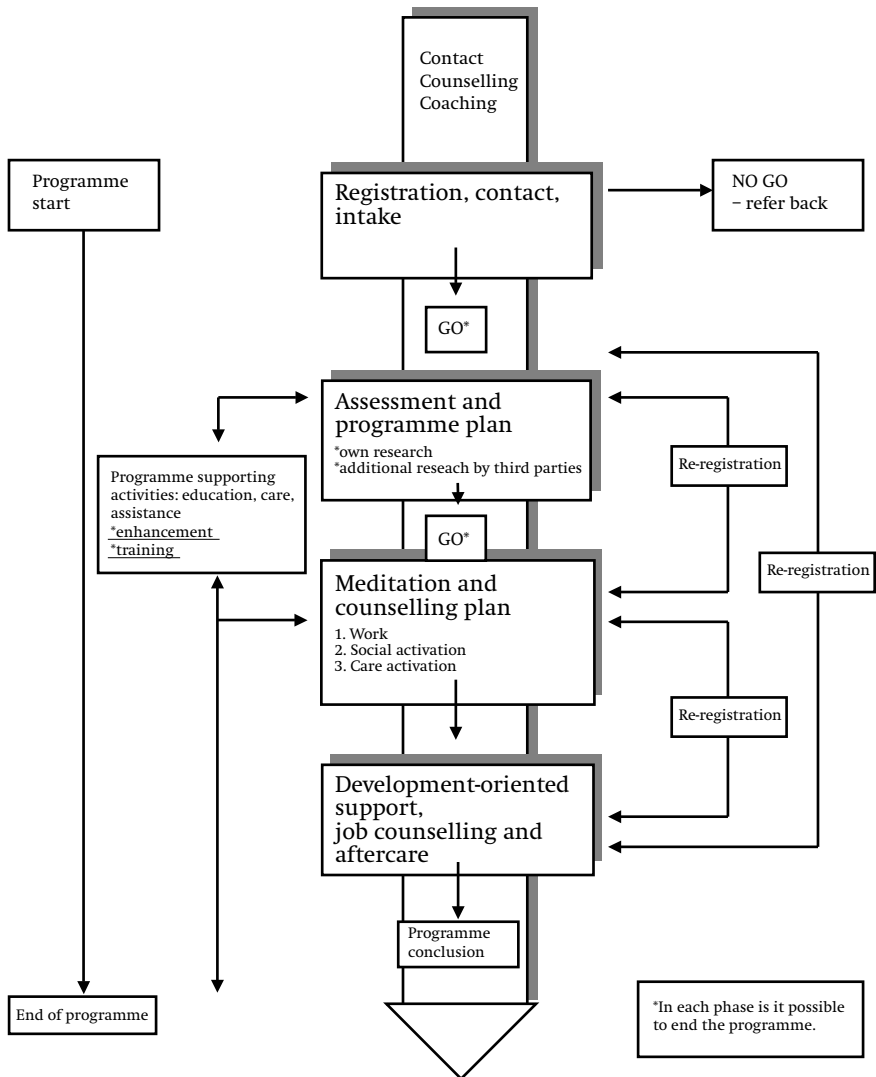
Sometimes, a participant has so many problems that activation aimed at work or voluntary work is, initially, not feasible. If this is the case, the care programme will mainly focus on care and assistance. Also, in this type of programmes, activities outside the home such as taking part in cultural and educational activities or informal voluntary activities, including small-scale forms of work experience or voluntary work, could be of important added value. Many people feel motivated to take part in activities, such as making social contacts, being part of something, taking one's mind off problems, spending a meaningful day, bringing structure in their life, making a useful contribution, being appreciated, and so on. These activities can contribute to more effective assistance, to a better control of people's own life and to a better social re-integration. From this viewpoint, more and more care and assistance organizations pay structural attention to social activation. They develop a form of programme supervision and activation assistance within their own organization or in cooperation with reintegration and other organizations that specialize in social programme counselling.

1.5 Parts of the methodology: counselling and mediation

The parts of the methodology that are elaborated in chapters 3, 4 and 5, are further described in diagram 1 on the next page: on the one hand a continuous process of counselling, on the other hand the steps to take within the scope of mediation towards a long-lasting form of social participation. The steps can be identified as follows:

- Registration, contact, intake
 - Assessment and programme plan
 - Mediation and counselling plan
 - Development-oriented support, job counselling and aftercare
- This distinction follows the view on separate products that has become accepted since privatization and the contracting out of work. In this way, it is also possible to identify the different 'products' and the different emphasis put on the different steps. In the aim to find workplaces and to direct homeless people towards certain forms of assistance, a relatively large emphasis is put on the first and, to a certain level, on the second step, while by long-term counselling of volunteers or in job coaching, a relative large emphasis is put on the last step. Although different emphasis could occur, any type of programme follows these steps, unless a participant drops out early.

Next to the various steps of the methodology, a continuous process of counselling can be identified. This indicates that setting steps, within the scope of mediation, presumes continuity and a certain quality of interaction. Also, particularly during the mediation process, attention is paid to the secondary objective of each programme: enlarging the participant's direction (self-steering). We want to emphasize here that mediation and counselling are, in practice, connected and pre-supposed: mediation assumes contact and counselling, while counselling must be goal-oriented, meaning that it must relate to the programme on which the counsellor and participant work together.



There are two observations concerning the diagram. First of all, steps are not always taken in a proper, serial order as suggested by the diagram. Assessment is, in fact, continuously taking place in all phases. During the programme, the participant's image, as formed in the assessment phase, is gradually further completed. An example of this can be found hereafter, in the case study of Hans. It could be the moment to adjust the programme 'to take a step back' to be able to move forward again. At the same time, it is possible to anticipate a potential placement during the assessment phase (as a hypothesis, to test), which can be used as a returning point to evaluate the initial assessment (from A to Z and from Z to A).

- 24 Secondly, a counsellor's work is not always organized in such a way that they (can) 'do' the whole programme. Some counsellors focus mainly on the first part of the programme (often called: work introduction) while others focus more on programme mediation and programme realization or on job coaching after an actual job placement. Additionally, there are specialisms in the various activation perspectives: employment mediation, social activation or care activation. Here, it is important that care is taken for a proper hand over. This should not only concern objective information from the file but should also include subjective issues such as the relationship formed between counsellor and participant and specific points of interest in the supervision. In those cases where the various steps have not been 'according to the book', it is particularly important that all counsellors taking part in the programme have an overview of the whole process.

In chapter 3, programme counselling is explained as a condition for taking qualitative, responsible steps during mediation. In chapter 4, we discuss the first two steps of the methodology: registration, contact and intake, and assessment and programme plan. Chapter 5 is devoted to the last two steps: mediation and counselling plan, development-oriented support, job counselling and aftercare. In chapter 2, we first present some case studies.

2 Case studies

2.1 Introduction

25

A large part of this guide on methodology consists of case studies concerning activating programme counselling. These stories are written from different perspectives: the situation and story of the participant, the methodical approach and reflections of the counsellor, the other bodies involved, and the developments within the activation programme.

This book continues with a description of the methodology and case studies, alternately. This chapter focuses entirely on practical experiences.

In the following paragraph we start with an outline description of the five participants whose activation programmes are portrayed during the course of this book. We sketch their character and situation, as it was known before the start of the programme. The purpose of this is to show the great diversity of the participants, their various backgrounds and characteristics; the very different reasons why they are unemployed or have difficulties finding their first job. Some have taken part in an activation programme before which had not resulted in a long-lasting prospect.

The problems are noticed first; the obstructions that make it difficult for them to develop a satisfactory prospect of life and sustaining long-lasting participation in society. In this case, the first impression is not a good impression; the impression we get is that of a 'half-empty glass'. In principle, the counsellor starts with the glass half-full, the wishes, motives, possibilities and capacities that are sometimes not noticed at first sight. In this paragraph we concentrate on the half-empty glass, in anticipation of the continuation in the following chapters.

In the third and fourth paragraph of this chapter, we describe the complete programmes of two other participants. The aim is to draw a total picture of a programme: the various steps taken in the methodical approach, the complete story of the participant, the strong points as well as the limitations, the specific activation perspectives executed by the different parties, the results and the actual methodical approach and reflections of the counsellor.

These stories have been drawn up in analogy with actual practices and are anonymous. For the sake of privacy, the participants' names have been changed and some situation details have been changed or excluded.

The methodical approach and reflections of the counsellor during the programme have been italicized, because they are the concrete forms of the methodical approach explained in this book.

It concerns the real actions as well as the thought processes of the counsellor during the activation programme, how he or she incorporates the information into analyses, insights and outlooks, which considerations played a role and which motives determined certain actions and choices.

The case studies are not idealized but intended to be realistic and inspirational for counsellors (their managers and management team) and are not representing an ideal picture. It is a concept of how to put the methodology into practice, how interaction between the different bodies takes place and the possible results.

26

2.2 Participants' stories at the start of the programme

Initial situation Pieter

Pieter is a Dutchman aged 35; he is single and lives with his father, mother and brother. He went to the Junior Technical School and completed his training in construction and painting. Pieter had been working four years as a house painter when he had a serious road accident, the result of which was a compound fracture of the leg. His leg has not yet fully recovered and walking is still a problem for him. During convalescence after the accident, he became seriously depressed. He was admitted to the psychiatric department of the hospital, where he was treated for his leg, for three months and received medication for depression and saw a psychiatrist.

That was the moment when Pieter started to talk about his experiences of sexual abuse, which he had had, in his early youth. But, according to him, assistance was not of any help to him whatsoever. He really did not want to say much about it because it made him feel worse and he also felt that the psychiatrist had nothing to offer." Just talking did not make me any wiser". When Pieter was discharged from the hospital, he visited the RIAGG a few times to deal with his sexual abuse experience. He gained nothing; he found that the therapist was a bore and acted pitifully and as he was back home, he didn't think it was that important. The therapy was stopped. After the accident Pieter was on sickness benefit, and after a while, he became the recipient of disablement insurance benefit (WAO), combined with income support.

Pieter has never had a job after the accident and is now 10 years unemployed. He did try to find work as a house painter but he was not successful because, in his view, he has difficulties walking. Pieter found it difficult to accept that he could not get a job but has now reconciled himself to the situation. He thinks that painting is a wonderful profession. In the years that he worked he had a lot of fun with his colleagues and when he talks about it now he gets more and more enthusiastic. Pieter also feels that he has to explain to everybody why he doesn't work. He gets the impression that he has to defend himself and that is why he lost contact with

many friends and acquaintances. They had work and got girlfriends and children while he is still living with his mother and father. He feels a complete failure.

In the past, Pieter has gone through a social activation programme, a number of voluntary jobs at places where he could do paintwork and other odd jobs. He liked the work itself but was often working alone and felt himself being walked over. Again and again, the voluntary work ended in failure. In the periods when Pieter felt depressed and feared failure, he detached himself and did not get in touch with his voluntary workplace nor his counsellor.

These periods followed a recurring cycle: after a period of depression and failure, Pieter gets back on his feet and is ready for new activities. Pieter's voluntary work always ended during these periods of depression. At the voluntary work places, people were not pleased with him because he was continually talking about his sexual abuse and what this did to him.

At some stage, he was only talking about himself, which was found to be aggravating.

27

Initial situation Hetty

Hetty is just 17. She finished her lower secondary professional education (VMBO) but does not want to study further. She wants to cohabit with her boyfriend and wants to work so that she can have her own income. When Hetty was 7 her mother died. Her father could not take on the responsibility for the four children because he had many problems himself. The Child Welfare Council placed the children under guardianship and placed them in different foster homes and juvenile homes. This was not easy for Hetty. She experienced several problems and crises that resulted in a number of transfers. She has never had a good relationship with her guardian families.

She did, however, have a good relationship with the care coordinator at her VMBO School, who understood her and helped her as best as possible. The school itself was not of much use to her. She chose to study 'welfare' because that was the subject that her girlfriends chose. This type of work, however, doesn't interest her in the least.

Last year, she was expelled from the adolescent unit of the juvenile assistance. She then roamed the streets for a few days. At present, she is staying with her brother but she would really like to live independently with her boyfriend. In official terms, Hetty is a school dropout without work and with low qualifications.

Initial situation Hans

Hans is a male aged 29, single, and diagnosed by the GGZ* as having a borderline personality disorder. Hans' problems started when he was 14 owing to the divorce

* Mental health care and care and treatment of drug addicts

proceedings of his parents. It was in this period that he started truancy and was expelled from the MAVO (school for lower general secondary education). After one year at the secondary vocational training for electrician (KMBO electrical), he had to stop because of a metal allergy. He started using soft drugs and argued a lot with his elder brother. He lived for a short while with his father and, until he was twenty, with his mother but was often away from home.

Hans worked for a number of years through employment agencies, each time for short periods: he worked for the money but the atmosphere, the work and the colleagues began to bore him more and more. As a result, it became more difficult to start a new, agency job during the past few years. He became a heavy drinker and cannabis user and, as a consequence, his psychological problems grew more serious.

In an earlier reintegration programme, Hans did some occupational training at an 'organic' market garden. He works there now on a voluntary basis and without programme counselling. However, the case manager and the social services are worried about Hans because, during the winter months, he often withdraws to his house for longer periods (3 to 4 months) and is unapproachable. He often stays away from the market garden for long periods. This is why he is registered once again to investigate if a more long-lasting programme is feasible.

Initial situation Miep

Miep is a Dutch female, 46 years of age. Her whole life has seen a succession of problems. She grew up in a family with an alcoholic father and a handicapped and depressed mother. As an adult woman, she also found no happiness in her own family life. Miep has two children by two different partners. Both children have been placed under guardianship. She has lost contact with her eldest child but she has occasional contact with her youngest child of 12. This child is staying with his father, a refugee, from whom Miep is divorced.

Miep was still young when she went to live with her first partner, after her mother died. Through a combination of factors, the drugs scene and psychological problems, she was not able to make something of her life. Right now she still encounters several problems. She is under financial custody due to a debt repayment procedure. According to her, this debt was caused by her last relationship. She has several physical and psychological afflictions (for instance, diabetes and delusions). She lives alone in an old, large and uncomfortable house in an old district from where she wants to leave because she doesn't feel comfortable living there. She has a bad reputation in the neighbourhood where she is known to be a drug user. She accommodates strangers in her house, distrusts everybody and isolates herself from her environment. In the past, she has taken part several times in a reintegration programme, mainly in the form of occupational training. She could never stick it out for long because she was, she felt, being judged and watched.

Initial situation Marcel

Marcel is 34, went to the LTS (junior technical school) and qualified in metalworking. He has 13-years of experience as metalworker with a big company. He was reasonably happy with his work, which he did to make a living. Marcel has been discharged due to, he believes, cutbacks. He has now been unemployed for four years.

Marcel lives alone now, but he was married before and has a daughter who is now 8 years old.

After 9 years of marriage his wife left him for another man and took their daughter with her. For Marcel this was like a bolt from the blue. He felt very bad about the fact that he couldn't see his daughter. He tried to get parental authority but this did not work out in the end. There is now a visiting arrangement and his daughter stays with him for a weekend every fortnight.

29

2.3 Bea's story

Bea is a 52-year-old female and has been unemployed for 20 years. For a number of years she did administrative work in her husband's company when they were married. She completed the HAVO (higher general secondary education) but has no further qualifications. She was divorced 20 years ago and consequently lost her job.

After her divorce she stayed at home to look after her son. She also did some voluntary work at her son's school for a number of years. She stopped with that when she started to look after her mother (informal care), who died two years ago. Now, Bea lives alone; her son lives independently.

Bea has again started with voluntary work. She worked as a hostess for elderly people. Her son had an accident, after which she went through a bad patch. In the meantime, she attended a computer course. She wanted to stay active so as not to become socially isolated, which she had felt to be after her mother had died. She wants to be positive but feels that it will be difficult to find a job because of her age. She hasn't any specific job wishes, she is happy to do voluntary work.

Intake and assessment

Bea's contract with her last voluntary workplace will not be extended. Furthermore, the case manager from the social services department has decided to refer her to a programme aimed at paid work. This is the context of the assessment.

The counsellor wants to investigate, together with Bea, how the programme aimed at paid work can be organized. She sees many possibilities for Bea because of her work experience in her husband's company (administrative work, organization) and the voluntary work she has already done (hostess, hospitality, care). She feels that Bea might be ready for a new phase in her life, but it must be Bea's own choice. The counsellor wants, in any case, to encourage Bea to make use of her capacities in the direction of a regular job.

From Bea's first reaction it is clear that she has a negative picture of her prospects for paid work. She feels that she could possibly work as a paid hostess in the public sector, the type of work she did before as a volunteer.

The counsellor thinks that Bea finds it difficult to take on new things and that she wants to play it safe by choosing a hostess position. She suspects that Bea has a fear of failure and a perfectionist presence and character. A hostess function offers few perspectives in the labour market. She wants to present this fact to Bea. Perhaps there are possibilities for administrative work, or as a receptionist, and such like.

30 The counsellor presents Bea with the facts that there are little chances for a paid hostess function in the public sector. She says that if Bea's career choice is limited to the public sector, her chances on the labour market will be reduced, and that there might be other possibilities. She talks to Bea about possible administrative functions as an office clerk or receptionist at a private company. Bea explains that her age will be an obstacle for doing paid work. The counsellor asks her how long she could work for a boss. Bea says that she has done this before and that she is positive about it.

During the discussion, the counsellor focused mainly on broadening the search prospects and on Bea's fear of failure. She encouraged Bea to believe in herself; she pointed out the competences and experiences she acquired during her past employment and voluntary work. The fact that the counsellor herself so emphatically believed in her capacities greatly increased Bea's self-confidence. That is why she, eventually, decided to actually look at the possibilities for paid work.

Programme plan

Bea herself eventually decides to start the programme aimed at paid work. Even though she still has doubts, she is willing to try it.

Bea's doubts remain in the background and are an important point of interest for the counsellor during the progress of the programme. A second counsellor, a specialist in employment mediation, will be involved to realize the mediation programme. This means that Bea will be transferred.

Mediation

The counsellor who supervised Bea in her previous programme is looking for a programme supervisor from a reintegration organization, someone who will get on well with Bea. It should be somebody who will consider Bea's specific situation and personally encourage her.

The two counsellors have been in contact before the discussion to provide information about Bea: about her doubts concerning her age, her fear of failure that stops her from starting new things, her long-term unemployment, but also about her work experiences and capacities she has thereby acquired.

To ensure a smooth transfer, a three-way discussion is held: Bea and her two counsellors (the first and the second).

The discussion about a possible programme directed at a regular job went well.

Bea talked about her various experiences: about the administrative work in her ex-husband's company in the past and, more recently, her voluntary work. The counsellor from the reintegration organization explicitly indicated that Bea's chances for paid administrative work are good because of her considerable qualities. Bea declares that she would very much like to do that kind of work and that she is willing to do some additional training. The counsellor suggests a short intensive training and work experience programme, five days per week, for six months. This will enhance her capacities and bring them up-to-date. This will also compensate her lack of recent work experience. Bea says that she is interested but she wants to think it over.

After a short time of reflection, Bea has a talk again with her first counsellor. She says that she is positive about her last discussion with the counsellor from the reintegration organization. She feels confident enough and wants to 'get on with it'; she wants to 'give it a try'. She feels supported by both counsellors and is positive about the fact that she can do some training. During her training programme, Bea would like to continue with her voluntary work as a hostess in a home for the elderly.

31

Bea has started with her training for which social services gave its consent. She kept both her counsellors informed about the progress of the training and of other relevant matters.

After a first introduction morning of the training programme, Bea spontaneously goes to see her counsellor. She had been really shocked by the great number of books she received. She had gone through them and is worried that she is aiming too high. Another worrying aspect was the young age of the other participants. She was the only 'lady of an advanced age'; the other participants were much younger.

The counsellor told her then about her own education past. That she had also started training at an older age, even for a period of three years. She too had had her doubts but, looking back, the three years went flying by. The counsellor's story was important for Bea and it encouraged her to start with her training.

Later on, the counsellor saw Bea about four times to find out how things went and to see and discuss any possible doubts or problems. It turned out that Bea was getting more and more enthusiastic; her tests results were very satisfactory. She also measured up to the other, younger ladies. Bea said that she received a lot of support from her son; he was proud of her and gave his mother a lot of encouragement.

Bea radiated self-confidence. When the counsellor recalled Bea in the past, when she appeared sombre and was full of doubt, she now saw a self-assured woman who was proud that she did this and that she had made it; you could see it in her face.

Through the training institute, Bea was introduced to an agency with a bridging function toward work. They run simulation workplaces in various departments: reception desk, purchasing, sales, warehouse planning, accounting and personnel department. During a period of three months, Bea acquired her administrative training and work experience there.

In a discussion with the counsellor, Bea indicated that she felt at first very insecure about her office skills. But, by doing it, she found that she had not forgotten it and felt self-assured about her capabilities. After the training, the counsellor at the training institute coached Bea towards a paid job.

Now, Bea works as a full-time office manager and is very happy in her job. She receives clients and students and keeps the changes in the timetables of colleagues up-to-date. She takes care of various administrative tasks and answers the telephone and email messages.

32

2.4 Abdel's story

Abdel is an 18-year-old boy. He lives at home, in a traditional Moroccan family with five children of which he is the second child. The family lives in an old part of town where many immigrants live. His father used to work in the textile business but developed diabetes and was on sickness benefit for a long period of time. At this moment, the family depends on national assistance benefit.

Abdel did not finish his VMBO (lower secondary professional education) and has been in trouble with the law since he was 15 years of age. On the street, he came in contact with a group of dropouts who were terrorizing the neighbourhood. Several of these young people, including Abdel, were convicted for offences such as shoplifting, driving a car without a licence, and assaulting elderly people. According to the probation and aftercare services, the list of criminal offences is too long to mention. Abdel's parents have also indicated that he is unmanageable and aggressive.

Abdel has just been released from the detention centre and applied for national assistance benefit.

Intake and assessment

Abdel is invited, in writing, for a consultation at social services in the presence of the counsellor. He doesn't turn up and nothing is heard of him.

The counsellor suggests that the case manager at social services does not impose a sanction yet for not appearing at the first invitation. The counsellor first wants to make a house call for a low profile contact with Abdel. She also wants to explore the social background and form a picture of the family, the living conditions and the possible support given by the parents.

The discussion during the house call was very difficult. The parents were present at the discussion and Abdel was very shy and it was difficult to make eye contact.

The counsellor doesn't want to put any pressure on Abdel and tries to raise the matter as calmly as possible by asking him open questions such as: "What would you like to do?" and "How can I help you with that?"

Bit by bit, Abdel started talking about his situation, where it went wrong and about his life in the detention centre. He showed letters from the probation and aftercare centre and his lawyer. He is free now but still has to appear in court for another case.

The counsellor asked if they could together contact the probation and aftercare centre to discuss his situation further. Abdel agreed to that.

Next, Abdel's father started to interfere in the discussion. He complained about his son, his past and his mistakes, that he did nothing and should do something. Abdel became very angry, got up, went upstairs to his room and closed the door with a bang. The parents asked the counsellor what to do now.

33

The counsellor told them to wait for two minutes and that she then would call Abdel to come downstairs.

No sooner said than done, Abdel came downstairs and sat down calmly.

Then, with everybody present, the counsellor explained how she would deal with the problem. She wanted to know from Abdel what he really wants to do regarding work. She said that the father should give Abdel some space so that he can adopt a more positive attitude, that he needs encouragement now, not telling-off. She explained to Abdel that his father feels responsible for the family and Abdel and that Abdel should be more understanding of this difficult role.

The counsellor's mediation not only involves resolving unemployment but also the social environment, in this case, between father and son.

Abdel said that he would like to work as a forklift truck operator in a warehouse. That work appeals to him, he heard about it from friends. The counsellor concludes the discussion and invites Abdel for a follow-up discussion at the office.

In the second discussion, the counsellor discussed and settled a number of practical things with Abdel: his registration at the labour exchange (CWI), things he needs to arrange in connection with his social benefit application. Abdel is also informed about the fact that he needs to do training if he wants to become a forklift truck operator. He has no problems with that. Furthermore, an appointment is made with the probation and aftercare centre.

During the discussion at the juvenile probation and aftercare centre, it emerged that they no longer had any records of Abdel. Because of his age, his records were forwarded to the probation and aftercare centre for adolescents, where they had not yet received it. Further information may be obtained from contact with the lawyer.

In the discussion with the lawyer it becomes clear that it is good to start a programme with Abdel. He still needs to be detained due to a missed community service sentence, but that could still take a long time. The counsellor suggests writing a letter about the job-training programme, which might result in a possible reduction of his sentence. The lawyer is willing to cooperate with her.

The job-training programme takes three months; the counsellor and the lawyer both feel that it is worth a try. In any case, Abdel very much wants to do it.

Meanwhile a discussion has taken place with the case manager to arrange the social benefit application and to give information about Abdel's situation and programme prospects.

Abdel was very quick in choosing the type of work that he wanted to do. The counsellor is, initially, doubtful about this quick choice and also about Abdel's unclear judicial situation. She decides on two alternatives:

- either, to first start an orientation and job-training programme to see where he stands, how strong his motivation is to do something about his lack in training and work experience, and to see how the judicial situation will turn out;
- or, to start directly with the job-training and mediation programme.

After a few discussions with Abdel, she chooses the latter alternative because Abdel shows to be persistent in his choice and is strongly motivated. Furthermore, the duration of an orientation and job-training programme is a bit longer which could cause a loss in motivation and put him back on the street.

Programme plan

Abdel has a problematic past but he really wants to work and better his way of life. With his clear career choice he has a good chance in the labour market. He gets little support at home, which means that support should be found elsewhere.

The counsellor discusses the programme plan with Abdel. To become a forklift truck operator, he needs to do a short training for three months followed by a three months apprenticeship. During this time, contact with his lawyer will be maintained in order to find out how his judicial file is developing. Hopefully, this will not cause an obstruction but that is unpredictable. In the meantime, the counsellor will have discussions with Abdel, the supervisor of the training programme and with Abdel's parents.

Programme mediation

The counsellor knowingly chooses a training programme in which they work with small groups, where youths like Abdel are given sufficient attention. It is also a training institution that has good contacts with companies where an apprenticeship usually turns into a paid job. The training starts with an entrance assessment, part of which concerns matching; so it is clear from the start if the candidate is capable enough to do the training and to work for a company. This assessment is jointly planned and executed with a colleague counsellor, who is the contact person for this training institution.

The counsellor has a discussion with the personal supervisor from the training institution to inform him about Abdel's character and situation. This is necessary so that extra attention can be paid to certain signals and, where necessary, direct action can be taken. It is decided that a follow-up meeting will be held every 3 or 4 weeks to discuss further developments.

In the interim discussions it becomes clear that Abdel is doing well. The training programme is going well and his confidence is growing.

During the interim discussions the counsellor also talks about Abdel's circle of friends. In the meantime, he is surrounded by a different group of friends, all youths who either work or are doing training or practical work. Abdel says that these other friends mean a great deal to him. The counsellor states that it is really quite surprising that youths like Abdel, with his past tough attitude, are in fact very vulnerable on the inside. Abdel's experiences with the detention centre and his father's attitude made him feel vulnerable. The counsellor successfully discusses this vulnerability by using a personal and direct approach that is confronting as well as supporting.

35

During an interim discussion with the parents, the counsellor learns that they cannot believe how quiet and well-behaving Abdel is now. They ask themselves if something is wrong. The counsellor puts their minds at rest. She tells them that Abdel's training programme is going well and that soon an apprenticeship and work can be realized. The parents are quite worried about a letter from the lawyer that they just received.

Abdel presents the letter from the judicial authorities and is very sad that he must, again, appear in court, just when he is doing interviews for an apprenticeship following his training.

The counsellor contacts the lawyer to find out what is going on. The letter acknowledges the failure to fully comply with the allocated community service, which means that he still needs to serve part of his prison sentence. As a result of the previous request (in connection with his training programme), a remission of six weeks to 22 days has been granted. It is not yet known when Abdel has to do this prison term.

In fact, it involves a certain risk: Abdel will soon start his apprenticeship, which will be followed by mediation for work. It is not yet known when he will receive the summons for his jail sentence. When the courts summon Abdel, the lawyer will ask for a postponement and request a pardon in connection with Abdel's current activation programme. To limit the risks as much as possible, it is decided that mediation will be realized through a posting arrangement by an agency that works with different companies.

Abdel has now successfully finished his apprenticeship. He works via an employment agency on basis of preferential treatment, which means that he will be working continuously for at least six months. Hopefully, he will receive a pardon from the courts.

Aftercare

Despite the fact that the work goes well, Abdel still has problems at home with his parents due to a difficult relationship and upbringing and the rules and values at home.

To the counsellor, Abdel comes across as a good-natured youth who is still a child in the relationship with his parents. He has just started to look for security and wants to better his life. He really needs his parents' support for this but they have distanced themselves from him.

Abel's parents contacted the counsellor. The mother was in tears and the father said that he suffered a headache. They begged for help and indicated that they could not communicate with Abdel.

36

The counsellor first thought about involving welfare workers. But, on reflection, she decided to take on this part of the counselling herself. Welfare had nobody available with experience to deal with the family's language and culture. Furthermore, she feels that she has the trust of both the son and the parents, which puts her in the best position to lead the counselling.

At a next house visit, the problems are put on the table. The father worries about money, they are on benefits and Abdel does not pay for his board. This puts their housing benefit at risk. That is why he wants Abdel to move out, also because their house is too small. Abdel, on the other hand, doesn't want to go and live on his own yet because his work situation is not completely stable and he still needs his mother's care.

Despite the fact that Abdel is doing much better, the communication with his father hasn't improved. The father takes a negative attitude towards Abdel, which Abdel reciprocates, it is a vicious circle. The counsellor draws attention to the father's negative attitude, even now that Abdel has changed a lot and he is working, which is very positive. The father acknowledges that he is glad that Abdel works and is no longer in trouble with the police, but he does not quite trust it yet. Abdel indicated that he is prepared to register himself for housing and will pay for board as soon as he receives his salary. He will also take care of his own sickness insurance.

The counsellor concluded the discussion with a number of assignments for Abdel and his father and by setting a date for the next house visit.

3 Programme counselling

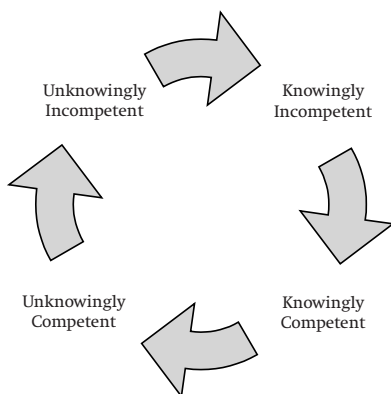
3.1 Programme counselling: mediated interaction

37

Programme counselling focuses on the participant's training and development programme coupled with the mediation programme to realize a long-lasting form of social participation. A central point of development within the programme counselling is to always enhance the participants' direction (self-steering) by stimulating and supporting the further development of the participant's competences. Counselling also aims to form a true picture of the participant, to make a programme plan and to bring this plan to fruition.

It is generally not possible to realize long-lasting changes in the participant's lives straight away; this takes time. It concerns learning processes in which people should become aware of certain routines so that they can, eventually, change these routines into new routines. These learning processes require a programme-type approach. Here, no attempt is made to deal with everything at once but the work focuses on the most important teaching methods, guided by exemplary teaching: learning from well-chosen activities and experiences (casuistry). To begin with, things are taught in a certain, specific situation (and not in general, abstract) so that in a later phase a transfer can be made to other situations (to put, what has been learnt in one situation, in a wider perspective in another situation). The activities and experiences are derived from the participant.

Figure 3.1



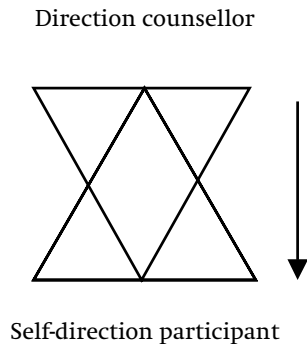
Learning processes can be reproduced in a schematic cycle. At the initial situation (see Figure 3.1 above left), one is unknowingly incompetent, i.e. not aware of any shortcomings. The first step is to become aware of this. The second step is to knowingly experiment and develop to adequately deal with a situation. The third step is to make the new competences so routine that they become 'unknowingly competent'. At this point, a new shortcoming presents itself and the cycle is repeated.

This methodology is based on the fact that everybody can learn when the right conditions are created. The content and approach of the learning process must fit the development potential, the learning style and abilities of the individual participant. 'Fit' means that the learning process is focused on the zone of proximal development, meaning that by using the already existing competences, new competences can be learnt.

Everyone is his/her own boss, i.e. everybody directs his/her own life. This direction is not always effective. People sometimes make choices that will cause trouble for him or her or society. One of the goals of programme counselling is to strengthen the participant's own direction (self-steering). For this purpose, the participant must have or get a clear understanding of the many choices, in the different areas of life, that he can or must make every day, and what kind of choices these are. This demands a mediating role from the counsellor on which we will elaborate below. Next, the participant makes his/her own choice and, based on this choice, takes the necessary steps for which he or she carries the accompanying responsibilities. The participant's self-direction is not just a goal but also a means that must be also realized within the programme. It is not the counsellors' task to solve the problems but to teach the participant how to deal with the problems. A helping hand should not make the participant interdependent but (more) independent. In other words, the counsellor tries to make him or herself redundant.

As the participant's self-direction increases during the programme, the counsellor's direction decreases, just like communicating vessels.

Figure 3.2



For this, it is necessary to (further) explore the participant's capabilities. One way to gain a better insight of these capabilities is to examine the participant's course of life (see Figure 3.3). Everyone's life has high points and low points. By looking at the way in which the participant got back on his feet after a low point, a picture can be formed of the participant's capabilities and of the manner in which he or she directs his/her life. It is important to find out what the factors are that pull the participant down (the arrows pointing down) so that the participant and the counsellor become aware of these and bear these in mind during the course of the programme.

Figure 3.3

39

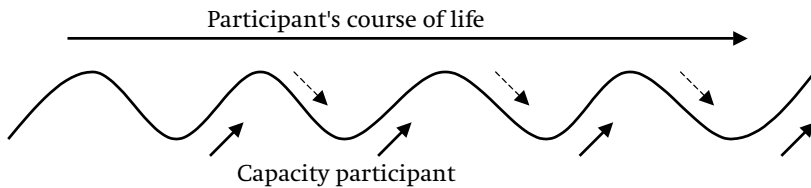
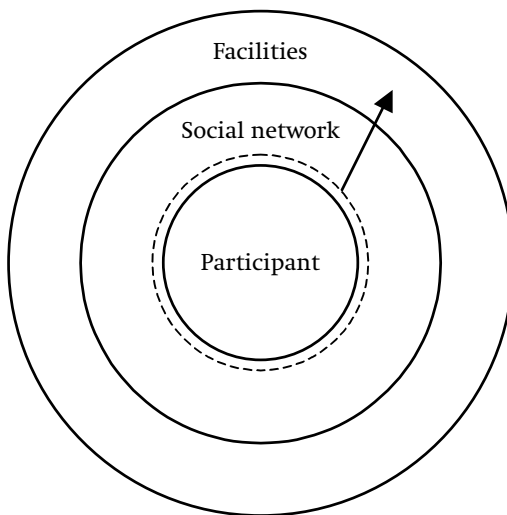


Figure 3.4



Counselling is therefore supplementary and counterbalancing. If a participant is capable of doing something him or herself, then he or she is expected to do that. Therefore, we keep as close as possible to the area of proximal development (the dotted line): that which the participant can only just do alone but where there is still a lot to be learnt. If help is needed, we first look at the participant's own natural network. This network is also further developed, as far as is possible, during the programme. The

counsellor's task is to complement the participant's competences and his/her social resources (the network).

The participant and counsellor work as a team, making as much use as possible of each other's knowledge and qualities. The participant is the expert on his/her own life and the counsellor has his/her own professional expertise. Working as a team, however, is not as obvious as it seems. It requires a relationship based on trust, which needs to be established.

40

First and foremost, actual contact is important. This means that the counsellor should not spend most of the time studying forms and records but that he or she should make contact: eye contact, acknowledge the participant's words, give a nod, smile, face the participant, show agreement or affirmation, use a friendly intonation and respond in a positive way to what the participant says, and so on. The verbal response must correspond with the body language. Making contact means that you can work from a common viewpoint. In general, making contact is straightforward but sometimes more effort must be made. Moreover, it is important to create a secure situation for the participant: be clear and predictable in your actions, be aware of your own communication style and modify this to suit the participant, find out how the participant makes contact, and make contact on the emotional, ability and knowledge levels.

A relationship based on trust does not occur naturally; trust must be inspired and earned. This implies a positive approach of the participant, respect, equality, openness and taking risks, and from both, a (self) reflective attitude.

A positive approach can be distinguished by the ability to recognize people's possibilities and by positive feedback (giving compliments). Someone who is always being approached as 'someone who is not capable' will, in the end, believe that that is what he or she is. When people's limitations are emphasized they will become more restricted. By emphasizing someone's possibilities and capabilities, that person will expect more of him or herself and will behave as 'someone who is capable'. People's strengths can often be found within their limitations. Blind people, for instance, listen much better than people who are not visually impaired.

Positive feedback (giving compliments) is much more efficient than negative feedback (saying or indicating what isn't good).

Establishing a relationship based on trust assumes respect and equality between the participant and the counsellor. Equality must not be confused with being the same. Of course, the counsellor and the participant each contribute to the programme in their own way, but both their inputs are just as valuable and essential. Respect and equality also signify openness. The counsellor does not withhold any information from the participant (not even to safeguard them), gives well-intended feedback and listens to the remarks made by the participant about his/her functioning. Also, the subject of possible sanctions imposed by the social services regarding their benefit must be openly and honestly communicated. It must, of course, be avoided that openness turns into rudeness. It is advisable to stop and think about how, in which context, and at what point in time any openness should be exercised.

People can usually without fail sense if the efforts made during interaction are

authentic or just a 'trick'. We cannot not communicate. There is little or no point in giving one compliment after another when these are not genuine. It does, however, make sense to show how you feel by explaining, for instance, why you appreciate certain things and the reason why you react in a certain way or by showing that you are irritated or that you feel intimidated. Imagine, for instance, a participant who always puts the blame on others, or a skinhead with lots of tattoos and who radiates contempt for authority – in such situations you sometimes have to make an effort to stay positive during the interaction.

In this context, professionalism doesn't explicitly imply detachment. Incidentally, this doesn't mean that the counsellor should include his/her own life in the programme: the participant's process must be (and stay) the central point.

41

To establish a relationship built on trust, it is necessary that all participants show a willingness to consider their own actions and, in that sense, adopt a vulnerable attitude. If this willingness is lacking, then the aim is to create such safe circumstances that there will be room for a reflective attitude. We must, of course, have an idea what it is that makes the participant feel secure – you are free to ask.

The establishment of a relationship built on trust signifies and also needs to be goal-oriented. Participant and counsellor have, after all, come together to meet a certain goal. If goal-orientation is lacking, the meeting might be pleasant but the participant will wonder what it is that the counsellor wants of him or her. The counsellor should therefore make it clear from the start what the purpose of the programme is: to find a long-lasting form of social participation that fits the participant's character and strengthens the direction of the participant's own life, by striving for mutual equivalence. The latter means that the participant and counsellor should, together, come to an agreement. The next step can only be made when they both agree about its reason and direction and the way in which this step should be taken. If a participant doesn't believe in a certain step, he or she will not take responsibility for it. If a counsellor doesn't believe in a certain step, he or she will in turn not take responsibility and not offer (optimal) support. Not only the goal should be made clear but also the steps that will, in principle, be taken to reach that goal. We return to this later.

To be goal-oriented is also important for the participant's learning process. It is important that both the counsellor and the participant continually indicate what they are doing and why. In preparation of each discussion the counsellor and the participant should both think about the points that they feel should be discussed, explain to each other the reasons and together draw up an agenda.

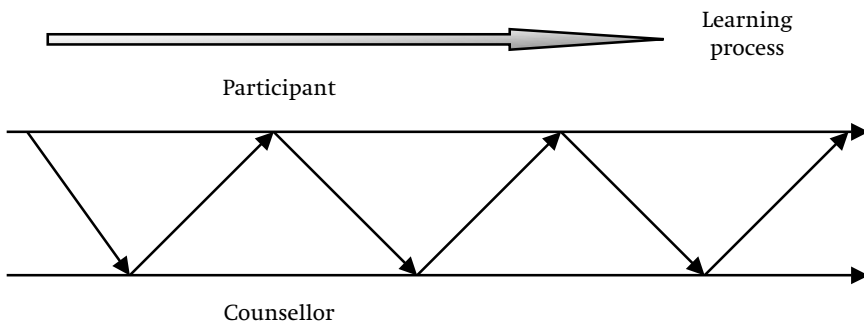
In this way, it will always be clear to everybody what, and the reason why this is discussed.

The programme will also specify the combined learning goals so that the participant him or herself can follow the progress of these. During the discussion and activities, both the counsellor and the participant should pay attention to the fact whether the learning goals and mutual expectations are being realized; if this is not the case they must inform each other about this. It is important for the learning process that this is, as much as possible, a conscious process. In this context goal-oriented means: a continuous reflection on the participant's learning process. What is the meaning of what we just said/did for our mutual goal? Knowing the goal of the (learning) activities is a condition for learning.

Mutual equivalence does not only concern the counsellor and participant's interaction but also the programme's goal: it must be what the participant as well as society demands and finds acceptable. To build an independent livelihood based on crime is, for instance, not a programme goal that society would accept.

Problem-orientation is also a dialogue process. The participant's wishes and motives are the basis for starting a programme but those wishes and motives can also be brought up for discussion during the programme.

Figure 3.5



The dialogue process of a programme will take shape during the interaction between the participant and counsellor. It is important that the observations are made as much as possible without prejudice and with 'an open mind'. For this purpose, it is necessary to postpone the interpretation and assessment of the observation. The skills required for this are, amongst others:

- to verbally and non-verbally acknowledge the message ('hmm hmm', 'yes', light nod of the head, smile, look someone in the eye) and to postpone critical (confronting) questions;
 - to summarize part of the discussion to ascertain that it is clearly understood;
 - to return a word, for instance: 'Everything went wrong' 'Wrong?'
 - to give a brief account of what you saw, heard and felt during the discussion.
- Even if the counsellor is touched or irritated by the participant's story, it is important to express these feelings. This is a condition to keep an open mind. If the counsellor omits this, he or she will, at a certain point, react with a mind full of stored prejudices, based on his/her own interpretation and assessment. Expressing what you see, hear and feel, gives the participant an opportunity to react. This is done by following certain steps:
- to communicate what you actually see
 - to indicate what your conclusions are
 - to ask if this conclusion is consistent with what the participant has in mind
 - to discuss together the lessons that can be learnt and how to proceed from there

During the interaction, we strive to make the dialogue exchange as long as possible ('playing ping-pong') by continually testing what the other person says and answers. This is only possible by listening carefully. Using plain questions will invite the participant to examine his/her own thoughts and emotions. The participant is encouraged to do some self-examination and reflection: to determine what he or she wants to discuss (as part of the mediation for job-finding and during employment), when, how, and also to what extent he or she wants the discussion certain matters. To get this clear, it is very important to keep asking questions.

Skills that can be applied when in dialogue exchange (ping-pong mode) are, amongst others:

- look the participant in the eye;
- Don't use question marks in opening sentences, for instance – 'Lets start the conversation'
- Make sure that the participant can follow you, with regards to voice, position, behaviour and pace;
- Acknowledge the answers;
- Take advantage of any opening;
- Summarize what you observe or what is said.
- Mention the non-verbal behaviour too;
- Be honest about subject and sensitivities, even when this goes wrong;
- Mention the desired behaviour;
- Attract attention to focus on the objective
- Give non-verbal invitations to continue the dialogue
- Allow enough time for thought, to pose or answer a question;
- Give positive and objective feedback.

43

This assumes a mediating dialogue: a questioning approach. The basic assumption is that interaction is embedded in the participant's process. The counsellor/mediator somehow reciprocates the things he or she observes/hears from the participant, so that the participant can in turn use this for his/her own process.

Mediation means that the work of the counsellor/mediator is aimed at making the participant aware of the way in which he or she thinks and reacts to other people in certain situations, to explain the result of this interaction and the participant's contribution to it. Here you can apply the STARR methodology:

- S of situation (description of the circumstances)
- T of task (what was your actual task?)
- A of action (what did you actually do?)
- R of result (what was the actual result?)
- R of reflection (how did it effect you, what did you think, how do you look back on it, then and now?)

In this way, the participant can learn to consciously make use of these thoughts and actions. Similarly, mediation also means individualization: to make people aware of their own role in a social activity (interaction). Generally, we only look at what we do and at the result of that, but we hardly look at how we act. It is exactly the latter from which we can learn.

Mediation is, initially, a questioning approach (as opposed to an explanatory approach): ask questions, make comments and respond in such a way that the

participant's routines (in the interaction) are interrupted so that the participant becomes (more) aware of these routines so that they can be changed.

For the counsellor, the interaction with the participant consists, for the greater part, of asking questions. Asking question has several functions:

- By asking questions you show an interest in the other person's story;
- Questions are necessary to collect information about the other person's message;
- By asking questions you give the other person the chance to explain him or herself clearly and completely;
- A question starts the communication;
- With a question you can verify if you understood the message correctly;
- A question is an invitation to explain a viewpoint;
- Asking questions stimulates introspection.

44

Collection of information is the central point at the start of a programme. Later on, more and more emphasis is put on development and introspection. The aim of introspection is to get an answer to the question of how the participant would like to view his/her own solutions and developments. The result of this is that the participant continues to follow his/her own direction. We look for solutions and developments that fit the person. This means that, when we ask questions, we continually look for a connection with the other's frame of reference (playing ping-pong). Initially, the interviewer must let go of his/her own opinion and interpretations, e.g. put them temporarily on hold (ask impartial questions). When questions are based on the interviewer's own frame of reference, there is a 'chance' that they fit but this will seldom result in reflection.

Do's:

Ask informative questions and questions aimed at reflection and development. Informative questions are used to gather information about the participant. If the counsellor is close to the participant, he or she usually asks open questions and continually responds to what the participant says (playing ping-pong). These kind of questions start with: who, what, how, where, which, when, why, etc, to which the participant must give concrete answers; but this should not turn into a cross-examination. Also, you should not forget the objective; the questions are not about satisfying the counsellor's curiosity but should be focused on finding a fitting form of social participation.

Questions aimed at reflection are intended to make the participant think about him or herself. This can be done in several ways:

- By asking open questions about motives, requirements, obstructions, feelings, hypothetical situations;
- To summarize ('do I understand correctly that ...');
- By asking confrontational questions. These types of questions raise matters that seem obvious or are sensitive to the participant and/or are being avoided. Confrontational questions can also focus on contradictions in behaviour or statements, the differences between words and actions and between verbal and non-verbal behaviour, about someone's self-image and how other people see

him or her. These questions can be very direct but can help to turn a corner. However, the result could also be that the person withdraws from the interviewer. Confrontational questions can really only be useful within a trustful relationship. However, this trustful relationship is not the main purpose. Confrontational questions will put the relationship to the test and are intended to stimulate the participant's development.

Development-oriented questions focus on actions. The problem is clear; the participant knows why he or she is acting in a certain way (reflection) but that now steps must be made to act differently the next time. Development-oriented questions stimulate the participant to think about how this change can be acquired. They don't imply advice or solutions. The counsellor communicates during the interaction that the participant is not left to take these new steps on his/her own but that help is available. Questions focused on reflection and developments involve silent moments, which give the participant time to think.

45

Don'ts:

It is, in general, better to avoid leading questions and questions that imply solutions. The latter, a question in which a solution is already concealed, appears to be a question that stimulates reflection, but the questions and solutions are usually formed by the interviewer's frame of reference. Even though the problem is not yet clear, a solution is already offered. Leading questions are also often based on the interviewer's frame of reference. It is, in fact, not a question but an opinion or assessment concealed in a question.

Double questions should also be avoided. By asking two questions in a row, the other person should, in principle, answer twice. This is usually not done, and double questions will only bring more confusion.

Yes/no questions should be avoided in most cases because they do not entice people to talk. On the other hand, a yes/no question could work well with someone who doesn't talk or who is not able to make a definite choice between two conflicting possibilities.

Why-questions can, especially at the start of the communication, come across as accusations because, in principle, they inquire about many things at once: thoughts, feelings, and ideas. When someone is clear about what is going on, a why-question could be answered well.

Summarizing, programme counselling is aimed at making contact, stimulation through mediation, and counselling of the participant's learning process and also includes counselling after a job placement for regular, voluntary or care work. The programme involves several steps that are made in the framework of mediation. We will elaborate on this in the following chapters.

3.2 Interlude: Marcel's programme

46

In the following case study a connection is made between the previous and the next chapters. In Marcel's programme, the counsellor combines the building of a relationship based on trust with a discussion on relevant and confrontational subjects. From the start, Marcel is given the responsibility to make choices. In the initial phase, the counsellor gives extra guidance and is more goal-oriented. Later on in the programme, counselling will move more into the background but will still be on hand – to support and to coordinate. Counselling continues during the entire programme and also concerns the cooperation with other organizations that are involved in the counselling of Marcel during parts of the programme. Marcel learns to change his own direction of his personal living conditions as well as his work perspectives; he is, in fact, the one who does all the work. This story is in anticipation of the next chapter, especially about the different assessment parts and how these are translated into a programme plan and its further development.

For a good understanding of the following text, you should recall Marcel's initial situation as described in chapter 2.

Intake and assessment

Marcel is referred to a reintegration project by the municipal social services. He has to get back to work whereby the social services initially suggest social activation. The motives for this are not known.

During the first meeting the counsellor gives information about social activation, what the programme has to offer and what he can expect from it. Marcel himself must decide whether he wants to take part in an activation programme but, on the other hand, Marcel feels the pressure from the social services requires that he must do something. He decides to participate in an activation programme.

In a second and third conversation, the counsellor continues to ask questions about Marcel's actual lifestyle condition: his employment record, his housing and social situation, his social background and networks, his skills. In short, the counsellor is trying to form a picture of Marcel's personae. The discussion also includes Marcel's real wishes and motives.

These are at first not very clear. He is not so sure he can believe that he has any chance in the labour market. More and more big companies close down and many people are unemployed.

The counsellor noticed that Marcel often smelled of alcohol during the meetings. He often cancelled meetings, especially those that took place in the mornings. Marcel looked untidy and seemed preoccupied; physically a tough guy but apparently a broken man. The counsellor confronted Marcel with the fact that she thinks that he drinks too much. She does this in a questioning manner: "I have the impression that you sometimes drink alcohol, am I right?"

At first, Marcel started to cry but then he started to tell the whole story. For some time now, he has had marital trouble; his (ex) wife had regular affairs, which he found terrible. He thought he was only good for doing the work and bringing in the money. At a certain point he started to drink because he felt frustrated, first he drank little to make him feel better but later he drank more and more. He and his wife quarrelled more and more and she also hit him. There were problems at work too: he was often late or ill due to his alcohol consumption. His employer found out about Marcel's drinking problem and, eventually, fired him.

At that time his wife left him and took his daughter with her. He had lost everything, his work and his family. The only thing worth fighting for was to get his daughter back. But, because he was an alcoholic, his wife kept his daughter away from him for two years. Finally, a visiting arrangement was made for his daughter.

47

Marcel says that he spent half a year in a clinic for treatment of his alcohol addiction. He completed the programme. During his treatment much attention was given to the loss of his family and work and the fact that he could not adequately stand up for himself when, for instance, his wife hit him. He has a better understanding now of the process that led him to drink.

Marcel is still taking part in a programme for treatment of addictions and is doing quite well. He no longer drinks every day but sometimes, when things are difficult, he doesn't know where to draw the line. Marcel drinks mostly when he feels useless and unable to achieve anything

The counsellor asked Marcel if she could contact the addiction care centre to discuss the possibilities for cooperation to improve Marcel's situation. Next, a three-way discussion was held in which the different roles of everyone taking part in Marcel's programme were agreed: the present alcohol use and personal lifestyle situation are taken care of by the addiction care centre and the counsellor will work on a programme for reintegration in the labour market.

In the following discussions, the counsellor, together with Marcel, is setting up a clearly defined outline for Marcel's reintegration programme. At the same time, she focuses on the various parts of the intended activation programme. For obtaining a good result, she needs to integrate the different parts: the personal lifestyle, enhancement of the skills, and preparation for the labour market.

Marcel would like to get a paid job but understands that he has to change his behaviour for this to be a possibility. He points out that if he would be in a paid job, he would feel better about himself. It will take his mind off things, he would have something to do and have a better income. He especially wants to give a good example for his daughter. When his daughter spends the weekend with him, he doesn't drink. The addiction care centre later confirms this. He declares that when he is working he won't drink anymore because the work will make him feel more important. The counsellor decides that Marcel's motivation is strong enough to rely on.

In reply to the question what type of work he would like to do, Marcel says that he would like to do technical work but not in the metal industry. That is filthy work and he doesn't

want to do that anymore. He does like manual work but can not precisely indicate what, probably something technical. The counsellor proposes a form of technical orientation and retraining, possibly in combination with some work experience: an apprenticeship.

The counsellor consulted with the social worker of the addiction care centre about Marcel's possibilities to get a paid job.

48 She assessed that it would certainly be good if Marcel had a job. She feels that his drink problem is sufficiently resolved: he keeps his appointments and work could, at this moment, be a real possibility. Marcel has debts but the social worker has sorted these out with him. He has an arrangement with social services to repay his debts, while they also take care of his rent and energy costs. This means that it is financially possible for Marcel.

The counsellor feels that it is worthwhile to start an intensive training and work experience programme with Marcel. His social problems have been solved as well as possible. He is strongly motivated and is prepared to dedicate himself to this programme.

Another aspect of the programme is to bring about changes in Marcel's personal care, his performance and his living conditions. His performance is part of his social contacts and contacts with an employer. Better living conditions will influence his personal performance. Marcel is very willing to contribute to this. The counsellor will sign Marcel up for 'personal care' training. In this training attention is paid to the outward appearance, healthy food, cooking, house cleaning and budgeting.

Marcel has practically no social network. His daughter visits him every two weeks when he does some nice things, like going to the swimming pool, the playground or the zoo. He enjoys these visits very much. I do everything possible for my daughter, says Marcel. He also visits his parents and sister. They live elsewhere, quite a distance away, so he will stay there for a few days. The contact is good, but Marcel does feel ashamed for his family because he has no work and is divorced. When he is with them, his mother pampers him and they often give him provisions to take home. He does, however, feel quite isolated when he is at home alone. The counsellor will have to pay attention to this in the future.

The programme

The counsellor confronted Marcel with the fact that he smelled of alcohol. This confrontation enticed Marcel to discuss his life story.

The counsellor responded mainly to the positive parts of Marcel's story, in particular to his wish to work. She started with his current competences (acquired through training and previous employment) and set about to develop these (by means of additional training and work experience). Marcel had really given up hope that he would ever have a paid job again. The counsellor, however, did think it was possible and discussed this with Marcel. By taking this viewpoint, the counsellor earned Marcel's trust and, even more important, he became more confident.

The counsellor tried to make Marcel realize that it is important to do something about his personal appearance, to keep his promises and not go to meetings smelling of alcohol, especially if he wants to get a paid job. The counsellor involved the social worker in the programme and together they agreed to a division of roles and tasks. During the assessment phase, it was found that Marcel attended all the meetings, no longer smelled of alcohol and actively took part in the discussions.

Programme realization

During the assessment phase, Marcel had started the training for personal care. The training was a good experience. At this training he came in contact with other men and a couple of them got together to set up a dinner group. In turn, they ate together at each other's place. This extended his social network.

49

The assessment showed that some form of retraining and work experience was required:

- *Retraining because Marcel doesn't want to work in the metal industry anymore but possibly do some technical work;*
- *Work experience because he will need to rebuild a work routine, he has been unemployed for quite a while and he had an addiction; he will also need to get used to working at the required production level.*

Based on this analysis, the counsellor feels that a training workshop should offer the opportunity to combine technical assessment and orientation, and it will be a step in the direction of training and work experience. This will be a quite costly programme, so the motives must be very clearly explained to social services. Social services agreed with this programme on basis of the counsellor's arguments: a motivated man, finished with his addiction, with technical capabilities, which is a good basis to build on for a long-term solution.

The counsellor can now make an appointment with the training company to discuss, together with Marcel, the situation and investigate further possibilities. During this meeting, Marcel's wish for technical work has been explained and his problems with alcohol were discussed. This is a point of attention of which the training company must be aware so that they can keep an eye on this. It is agreed that should anything occur, they would take action and contact the counsellor.

The training company tested Marcel's abilities in reading, writing, etc. to find out Marcel's general knowledge level; they also conducted a proficiency test. These tests have shown that Marcel's level is good in all areas; it is even a cut above that of the other trainees in the company. Further actions concerning the programme, based on these tests, were discussed in a three-way meeting: Marcel, the training company and the counsellor.

To start with, Marcel will work for three months in different technical disciplines (a few weeks per discipline) to establish the discipline for which his abilities are sufficient, but also to find out which type of work he prefers. It is also the intention that the training company will give recommendations for further direction of the programme. They will look at his technical skills, social skills, and his role as employee. A report will then be made up, after which the direction of the programme can be further agreed.

This period of orientation has been discussed with the training company, Marcel and the counsellor. From this, it has become clear that Marcel possesses sufficient social and technical skills and is a good employee. Marcel made the choice to train further in electrical engineering. It is now time for the next step in the programme: a vocational training for the duration of six months. During this time, there are weekly discussions with the training company, to which the counsellor attends once a month so that information can be quickly exchanged and further procedures can be discussed. The training company will supply a final report after six months with recommendations for continuation of the project.

- 50 The training company recommended that Marcel should follow a short training for electrical fitter (six months). After completing this programme, Marcel will have an MBO (intermediate vocational training) diploma electrical fitter and can be mediated to paid work.

Marcel became more and more self-assured during the programme; he also enjoyed having to go to work five days per week. He needed some time to get used to a new time schedule such as when to do the shopping and when to clean his house, but he talked about that in a confident way. The positive reactions from the training company made Marcel feel good; he was even asked to help some other boys. Alcohol became less of a problem during the programme. In fact, the counsellor hardly had to interfere. Immediate problems did not occur. The regular contacts with the counsellor were characterized by extra personal attention and support, which attributed to Marcel's growing self-confidence.

During the early stages of the training, three-way discussions were held with Marcel and the social worker of the addiction care centre once every two months. Later addiction care was cut back and ended.

Aftercare

When Marcel started the training programme for electrician, the counsellor's supervision was cut back and transferred to the supervisor at the training institute. From some subsequent telephone contacts it emerged that the training went well, Marcel had obtained a high level and there were no more problems.

A paid job as electrical fitter was found for Marcel directly after the training and in the meantime, he has moved house and now lives near his parents which enables him to see them more often.

4. Programme mediation: intake, assessment and programme plan

4.1 Registration, contact, intake

51

Together with the ongoing programme counselling, steps are also taken with regard to mediation. The first step is to establish contact with the participant and, consequently, the intake. Contact can be made by way of reference by clients (municipalities, benefit agencies) or through collaboration with other organizations. It is also possible that contact is established in a more active way by visiting people in their own environment, at a community centre or at their home. Thus barriers are broken down to actively take steps to look for a form of social participation. Establishing contact with participants is linked to providing information and an intake during which it will be ascertained whether a person is a part of the target group and whether there is a sufficient basis to start a programme together.

Contact with the client

In most cases, contact with the client will precede the contact with the participant, by means of a 'warm' or 'cold' transfer by the client (i.e. an active transfer by the case manager, or a reference of the participant without further contact between both organizations involved). This does not apply to participants who are actively recruited by the counsellor, or to participants who are enlisted by for instance social work or assistance. Either way, this does not influence the contact with the client.

During the contact with the client, there are a number of important issues:

- To create conditions to start up the participant's programme in an appropriate way;
- A problem-orientated approach from the client as a customer;
- Cooperation with the client while executing the programme: gearing the programme to the benefit policy.

In order to realize this, consensus should be achieved about goal, method, division of tasks and time schedule (see chapter 1.2). In addition, the contract terms should be agreed concerning the price, planning and results. Agreements are often made at organization level (for instance about product prices) and at programme plan level. There often are two turning points within the programme plans: after the intake the client decides whether or not a programme will be started, and after drawing up a programme plan the client decides whether or not the programme plan will be implemented. The agreements should leave enough space for an integrated approach. In the case of separate products (intake, assessment, mediation, coaching, counselling) it should be clear that basically these products belong together: the ongoing mediation

of the participant at different stages is essential for the method to be successful. The mediation should build on the results of the assessment and on the relationship between the counsellor and the participant.

If creating conditions to start up a plan in the right way or realizing cooperation at the level of the individual participant fail (or just about fail), this should be explained to the client. This does not implicate that one should not go ahead starting programmes with participants. It does mean that expectations of the programmes should be adjusted. It also means that the participant should have clear knowledge of the conditions on which a programme should start. The participant should be enabled to make his own decision.

52 In the contact with the client we aim at equality, involvement and reciprocity. We want to share responsibilities and the approach of the participant should be geared to the programme and to the social security benefit. This assumes reasonable consultation based on substantive arguments and developments in the participant's programme. If a client has a different opinion about his role, we should talk to the client and make our expectations clear to him or her. This can be the case if a client has no consideration with the participant's programme and developments, if a client has no consideration for steps taken in the programme, or if the client's approach is purely formal and hierarchic. Being consumer-oriented is not the same as being consumer-subdued. This really is exactly the same as the interaction with the participant. But in this case the dependency is at a different level. To try to achieve equality from a subordinate position will cause more insecurity than when this is done from a dominant position.

Making contact yourself

If participants are not referred but have to make contact themselves, there is a different starting point that demands an (more) active role of the counsellor. There are several ways to make contact: offer-oriented by organizing information meetings and circulating brochures, and problem-oriented by informal recruitment and 'working location oriented.' What will turn out to be the most effective way depends on how easy or difficult it is to reach potential participants. Information meetings and brochures are of course less intensive but have a potentially larger reach. An informal way of making contact is aimed at the building up of a relationship based on mutual trust and breaking down barriers basically by adjusting to the environment of the potential participants. Initially, this demands a (mediating) presence approach: an empathic attitude, being a good listener, 'being there' for a participant, and sometimes giving feed back on what you observe. Giving information on possible ways of social participation is of course an issue as well. The aim is to, in time, engage in conversation more purposefully. Whether this will happen and at which tempo will be determined by the potential participant.

Intake

During the intake procedure we will try to take the step from contact to contract. An important part of this is the framework: making clear the rights and obligations, the starting points and the way in which the counsellor works with regard to verbal and

non verbal communication. The most important aim of the intake is to decide whether to take the plunge: will a programme be drawn up or not? In this light, the intake has several aims concerning the contents. And, in advance of a possible programme, it also has several aims in regard to the interaction between the counsellor and the participant.

The contents deal with:

- Giving information on possibilities for social participation and programmes leading to that;
- Verifying if someone is part of the target group (as agreed with the client);
- Collecting information (factual) that is important for a programme: personal details, current income, living conditions, current daytime occupation, mobility, previous education, employment and apprenticeship history, professional network (names and contact details of other professionals: counsellors, benefit counsellors, social workers, doctors); asking the participant's permission to contact other professionals if necessary;
- Exchanging expectations regarding everyone's role in the programme;
- Beginning to build an image of the participant (this will be dealt with further on);
- Making agreements;
- Evaluation of the conversation.

53

At interaction level the aim is:

- To make contact;
- To propagate a team spirit.

4.2 Assessment and programme plan

The assessment is aimed at getting the right impression of the participant, on the basis of which a programme plan can be drawn up. In this section we deal with the issue of 'the right impression', and how we should look at a participant.

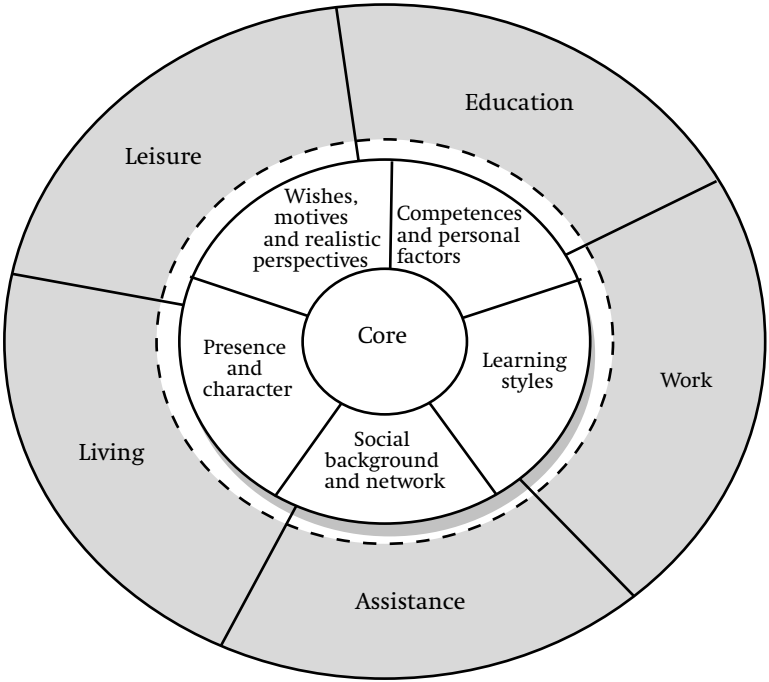
In the assessment we look at the participant from a wide angle. We particularly search for the core or the 'motor': the basic forces and motives that drive this person. Here, a number of concepts play an important role. These concepts can be considered as 'tools' that will return in the different stages in the counselling process. With these tools, the counsellor will be able to form an impression together with the participant, of the participant's core and most important points for development.

There are five aspects, which determine the participant's (and from any other human being) thinking, performing and feeling to a substantial degree:

- The desires, motives and realistic perspectives;
- The competences and the personal factors;
- The learning style;
- The social background and the participant's natural and professional networks;
- The participant's presence and character.

Before working out these aspects we would like to emphasize that the significance of every particular aspect is individually determined by the interrelated coherence between the aspects! This coherence determines the core or the essence of all those different aspects for the participant. That is why in this coherence we particularly look for the connection of the participant's possibilities and strengths. This way of looking can be summarized in the 'participant's 'pie chart'.

Figure 4.1



In the outer ring of the circle are the various contexts from which we look at the participant: work (paid or unpaid), education, assistance, living and leisure. For the assessment the inner ring is particularly important, as well as the core of the circle, in which various aspects of the participants' thinking, acting and feeling are distinguished. The dotted line represents the zone of proximal development: that what a participant is about to learn, but is not yet capable of doing this independently, but can do this with the mediating supervision of the counsellor.

4.2.1 Wishes, motives and realistic perspectives

Everyone has wishes and expectations, which can be more or less, clear, actual, univocal, positive, personal and realistic. If these wishes and expectations are clearer, the more specific steps can be taken. If not, the more important it is to make these clear.

- “I want a job as a forklift truck operator” or “serving coffee in a nursing home” are concrete, univocal, positive and personally formulated wishes.
- “Something to do with the catering industry” is less clear: what is meant by the ‘catering industry’? Kitchen, serving, bar work, cleaning-up, doorman, administration, design, representative in catering goods, during daytime or at night are all possibilities.
- “Something to do with people or working in a museum” is neither clear nor univocal.
- “As long as it has nothing to do with care” is negatively formulated: what then?
- “I want an end to famine in the world” is neither clear nor personal: what would your contribution be to that?
- “I have not the slightest idea of what I want”. If the participant wishes to find out what he really wants, this is a starting point for a programme.

55

The participant’s wishes should always be considered in relation to the underlying *motives*: why does a participant want or not want to do certain things? It is important to get an insight, of this so that the underlying motives can be taken into account. In the course of a programme, the participant’s wishes can be brought up for discussion, for example, because they lack actual perspectives. This also applies to the underlying motives but to a lesser degree. With regard to the programme, these motives can be regarded as facts on which there is no going back. This does not implicate that motives are fixed forever, but it does implicate that changes require great effort and patience and are more in the field of psychotherapy than in the field of reintegration. In more practical terms, we deal here with issues that have to be taken into account during the programme to a large extent.

Regarding these motives a number of issues can be distinguished:

- The participant’s basic security. When does a participant feel secure and when not?
- The intentions underlying the participant’s wish. What does a participant wants to achieve with (voluntary) work? Research has shown that there are various underlying motives: status and respect, self-determination and independence, participation in a social context, appreciation by others, making your own useful contribution, development possibilities, spending and structure of time, and possibilities for a personal recovery.
- The participant’s motivation. Is the participant able to actually work towards the fulfilment of his wish for a longer period of time, for instance: perseverance, being on time?

When dealing with customer-orientation, we have emphasized that the participant’s problem (wish) cannot be taken as the thread of the programme but that we have to look for the underlying question (motive) and reciprocity. This means that the participant’s wish should be related to a form of social participation that suits the participant’s possibilities and personae, in the opinion of the counsellor and the participant, and falls within the boundaries of the constitutional state. When looking for work or voluntary work, it also depends on the opportunities in the labour market or to the extent in which voluntary work is available or can be created. Perspectives should be *realistic*.

To get the right impression of realistic perspectives the counsellor needs to make an evaluation of:

- The participant's competences;
- The possibilities of the participant with those competences in the labour market.

4.2.2 Competences and personal factors

A participant has a range of various competences, which are all bound up together:

- *Functional competences*: the extent to which an individual has control over his/her own body and the actual capabilities to do the work. A participant can, for example, be good at heavy labour but be poor at delicate work that depends on the motor system.
- *Cognitive competences*: the competence to sort out and handle information adequately. A participant may be good at remembering things (learning by heart) but be poor at connecting facts.
- *Social competences*: the ability to establish contact with others in a social environment. A participant may perform well in a one-to-one situation but not in groups.
- *Emotional competences*: the ability, during interaction, to notice instinctive aspects from others or themselves and to be able to react adequately to this. A participant may not be able to deal with criticism or does not perceive when he goes too far in criticizing others.
- *Affective competences*: the ability to make links to what other people think, do or feel. A participant has a poorly developed empathic ability and has difficulty to empathize with others.
- *Communicative competences*: the ability to express oneself in a comprehensible way. A participant may be very well able to put forward his opinion on someone or, on the other hand, has difficulty in expressing what he thinks, feels and does.

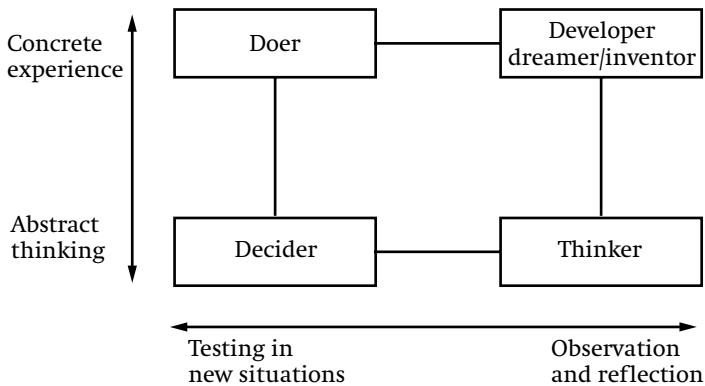
Which competences have been developed strongly and which competences have not, may vary for each participant. The counsellor tries to appeal to current competences as much as possible and to the inherent strength of the participant. From there, steps are taken to further develop these least developed competences.

Together with competences, which in principle can be learnt, one also has to deal with *personal factors*. These are features of a participant that cannot be changed, such as a physical or mental handicap. Someone who lost an arm has also lost the use of it. Especially when dealing with psychological inhibitions, it is not easy to determine in how far it is possible to correct disturbed behaviour. In the short term, such inhibitions should be considered as personal factors that should be addressed. But in general, we assume that anyone can learn and develop and we do not easily consider people's features as something that cannot be changed. For that matter, 'inhibition' may be a specific asset. For instance, some mentally ill people are highly motivated to do repetitive work, which would drive others crazy. Autism may be an asset in working places where there is no contact with other people. Something, which is an obstruction in one situation, may be an asset in another. A healthy amount of self-confidence could escalate into an inhibition, for instance arrogance.

4.2.3 Ways of learning

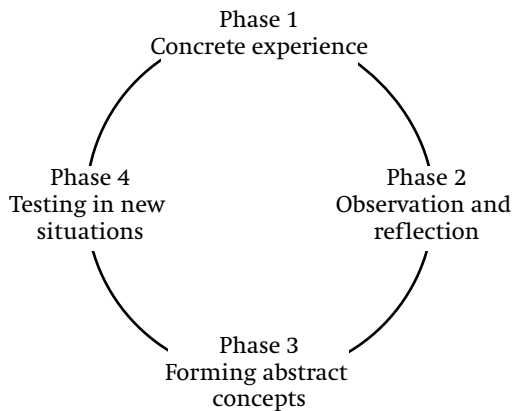
Anyone can learn, or, in other words, anyone can acquire competences. However not everybody does this in the same way or in the same tempo. There are two aspects to learning: how and under which conditions someone learns. Concerning the former, various learning styles can be distinguished (see figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2



57

Figure 4.3



These learning styles correspond with different stages in Kolb's learning cycle (figure 4.3). Most people have a preference for a particular stage in that cycle:

1. Concrete experience (doer)
2. Observation and reflection (thinker)
3. Forming abstract concepts (developer – dreamer/inventor)
4. Testing in new situations (decider)

People tend to develop the stage, which they are good at. 'Learning how to learn' is learning to control all these stages/learning styles. However, in the short term, it is sensible to (first) attune to the dominant learning style of the participant. To find out the participant's dominant learning style one can look back on something that the participant has learnt and check how he or she learnt this.

Doers learn best by being active in concrete learning situations (trying out everything). Developers learn best by looking at a situation from different angles and making associations. Thinkers learn by linking new things to things they already know (to formulate a theory) and deciders learn by trying out things and thus finding out what 'works'. The aim always is to learn how to use all learning styles; to go the full circle.

58

There is a second aspect to learning: the *conditions* in which a person learns best. The following issues are important:

- Which *working situations* are most agreeable to the participant? For example: some people learn most if they can work together with other participants, while others would rather work on their own behind their desks;
- What way of taking *instructions* is most agreeable to the participant? For example: the one participant would rather have the assignment explicated to him step by step, while others would like to hear the whole assignment first and then start to work;
- How does a participant react to *feedback and criticism*? For example: a participant can handle criticism of accomplished tasks, but can not cope with personal criticism;
- What *stimulates* the participant? For example: the one participant swells with pride when he can show his 'performing', where others withdraw and would rather not receive compliments in public;
- How can the participant gain a complete *overview* of and *insight* of the situation? For example: the one participant needs to be stimulated regularly when accomplishing a task, while the other is perfectly able to reflect during the process on what he has done and to decide on how he can best go on;
- How can you promote that *knowledge takes root*? For example: one participant can gain knowledge by learning by heart and by often repeating it; the other looks for links with things he has done before (memory aid or steppingstone) and relates it to the new gained knowledge and as such is able to remember it.

4.2.4 Social background and network

You are who you are. Recording social backgrounds and natural and professional networks has more than one aim. Experience has shown that if the people close to the participant (family, friends) have no enthusiasm for the participant's perspective, it will be very difficult for the participant to achieve his/her goal. It is not stimulating when housemates and neighbours find it is strange that the participant tries to get up early every morning so as not to be late. If the participant's parents feel that real work is to work with your hands, this is no stimulation for a programme oriented at administrative work. If a participant's natural network holds a strong negative view of a perspective developed by the participant and the counsellor, it may be wise to talk to

the participant's family and/or friends, to see if perhaps one or more persons could become enthusiastic. If this fails, a talk with the participant should make clear whether the aim of the programme needs to be revised, or that the participant thinks that he can manage on his own.

It is important to get the right impression of the participant's social background: the family, neighbourhood, region, his/her cultural background in which people have different ways of dealing with one another, the degree in which they find things important, or not, etc. It is important to know the participant's background and what this means for possible points of attention in the programme. This does by no means implicate that a participant's social background determines his possibilities or can be used as an excuse to do or not do certain things. If you are born with few opportunities, this does not indicate that you will remain a person with few opportunities for the rest of your life. It is true, however, that a person with little opportunities has a different view of life than a person who was born in more fortunate circumstances.

59

Everybody is a part of a natural network consisting of other people: family, friends, acquaintances, colleagues, neighbours, and so on. This network is as it were part of the 'natural environment' of the participant. It is an environment to which the participant "belongs" and where he or she feels secure. It also is an effective learning environment: all kinds of things are expected of the participant. That is why it is important to embed the learning programme as much as possible in this natural network. On the one hand to make as much use as possible of the existing network for support, and on the other hand to extend this network with a new environment and new people: colleagues, (other) volunteers, other participants, and so on. We primarily do this by looking together with a participant for a long-lasting form of social participation. Here the importance of a long-lasting placement becomes clear: by spending a longer period of time in an environment, the people in this environment may become part of the participant's natural network. In this way, a learning programme is made to last and will continue to last long after the professional involvement has been discontinued.

In addition to the natural network, a participant also has a professional network consisting of doctors, lawyers, reintegration benefit counsellors, social workers, and so on. These professionals associated with the participant may be consulted, with the participant's permission, to get more information for the assessment. In this framework it is also possible to record experiences from former employers and colleagues from a previous voluntary workplace or apprenticeship.

It is important that the various professionals cooperate and not oppose each other. The professional involvement with the participant should be adjusted and coordinated as much as possible and should be based on the (to be developed) participant's programme.

To get a precise impression of the participant's natural and professional network, you can draw up an eco gram. In each part of the pie chart (see figure 4.1) people who are important to the participant can be recorded. This is relevant for the layout of the basis mentioned in the previous chapter, namely that the participant should do what he or she is capable of and subsequently support should be found in the natural network and, in the last resort, the professional network should be involved (see figure 3.4).

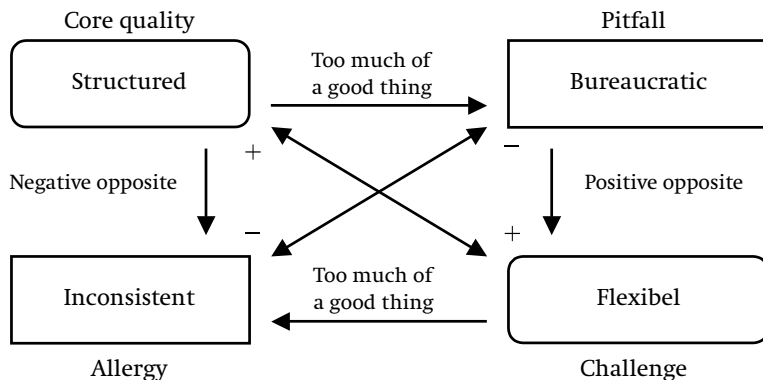
4.2.5 Presence and character

The theories and ideas a person has about him or herself, based upon his/her individual history, defines the presence and character (“that is the way I am”, “that really suits me”). These ideas are the result of the sum of biographical facts (age, family background, educational past), individual features (physique, motives, intentions, knowledge, affections and emotions), experiences and self-image. Presence and character is not an invariable quality, but it is the participant’s continually changing story about himself or herself. However, if a participant looks upon himself or herself as someone who cannot learn, this participant will not learn much. Although, this is principally not an invariable fact, it certainly is something to take into consideration in the short term.

60

The participant’s presence and character is an important asset and can be, at the same time, an important pitfall depending on the situation someone is placed in and what is expected of him or her. An asset may tip the scale and become a restriction or a pitfall (too much of a good thing). An asset is mostly connected to appreciation or an allergic reaction to the behaviour of others. It is important to gain knowledge on this subject in order to determine the right mediation. Equally important it is to determine how far someone can be challenged. Offman developed this model. Figure 4.4 is an example of the core quadrant, which could be, for instance, that of the counsellor or a case manager.

Figure 4.4



With presence, we refer to the way a participant keeps contact with others; the significance of things for him or her, the standards and the way he or she sees himself or herself in respect to other people. In other words, a participant brings along his/her own particular character and behaviour and the way in which he or she presents him or herself. Someone could be rather shy and tend to keep a low profile; he or she may have a “warm personality”, or is someone who likes to grumble but doesn’t mean any harm. The participant’s presence needs to fit in with the presence of the (intended) workplace, voluntary workplace, school, type of assistance, the neighbourhood, and so on. What topics are discussed during lunchtime and breaks? What kinds of jokes are made?

If the participant's presence does not fit in with that of the workplace, voluntary workplace, and so on, the participant will permanently feel insecure. The participant will be unable to move, literally and figuratively speaking. The more vulnerable a participant is in his relation to his environment, the more important it is that the presence fits. A salt-water fish should not be placed in freshwater, for in that case he will die

4.2.6 Coherence, essence and strength

Although the above-mentioned five aspects have been dealt with separately, in the end it is the coherence between those aspects that really matters. Individual programmes should be based on the participant's coherence, essence and strength. Moreover, one should look at the coherence from the participant's perspective.

61

If a participant expresses certain wishes and motives, it is important to know the social background of that. Are they well considered or not? Are these the participant's own wishes and motives or are they inspired by his environment? It is also important to know whether the lack of certain skills is connected to his social background or with his/her learning style. Did the participant actually have the opportunity to acquire this and did this happen in a learning situation that fitted in with his/her own wishes, motives, learning style, presence and character, or not? Did the lack of certain skills rather have to do with a lack of motivation to learn those skills? These examples clearly show that without a clear picture of the coherence of the various aspects it is impossible to give the right impression of a participant's personae. Without the coherence from the participant's perspective, 'skills', 'motivation', 'presence' and 'social network', remain separate features, except maybe from the counsellor's viewpoint. Certain priorities are always set from the perspective of the participant's personae. Looking for respect and self-respect may be the main issue for a participant, opposed to his social background and the values belonging to the background. In order to develop the (self) respect the programme needs to fit to the already existing skills. Only after a period of time there may be space to learn new things. This is in essence the participant's drive for a possible programme.

Looking for coherence from the participant's perspective is the key activity from which a link may be found with the possibilities and strength of the participant.

This does not mean that we do not see the participant's limitations, obstructions and problems. The image of the 'half empty' glass is just as important as the image of the 'half full' glass. However, the 'half full' glass is the directive for the programme we draw up.

4.2.7 The assessment process

Earlier, we examined the question what is meant by a right impression of the participant and the basis of which a programme can be drawn up. Here we deal with the assessment process – the discussions and the activities that can be taken to create this impression.

The aim of the assessment is to develop insight in the wishes, motives and real perspectives, the skills and personal factors, the learning styles, the social background

and networks, the participant's presence and character and the coherence of all those issues as seen by the participant. Furthermore, the aim is to develop insight in the possibilities to enhance the participant's competences, to develop a programme and to build a relationship based on trust, which is the basis for a constructive dialogue.

It is important that from the start of the assessment it should be made clear to the participant what he or she can and cannot expect, and that the participant himself or herself is expected to make choices and to take control as much as possible. A good introduction is essential for the ongoing process.

Tools for the assessment are:

62 •

- Discussions between counsellor and participant. These discussions are the basis for the assessment. Talking is not always necessary to reflect on the aspects of the assessment. Another possibility is to show the participant certain things or have him or her experience things. There is the possibility of non-verbal communication or to do things together, to find out certain things separately, and so on. The various aspects in the above-mentioned scheme are as it were the playing field where both meet to communicate. It is important that in time they should have covered the entire playing field and that this is done from the participant's perspective. It is essential that the counsellor attunes to the structure of the participant's 'story' and that he completes his 'agenda' from that point: he should not 'complete his agenda' if it is not clear if this is the case. During the assessment discussions, the last conversation will be evaluated as well as the agreements that were made, an agenda will be set up together, the 'pie chart' will be further completed, new appointments will be made and, finally, the discussion will be evaluated.
- Visiting work places and organizations. This will provide the participant with ample information and it can be avoided that the participant becomes focused on one particular example. It is also important that the participant finds out things for himself or herself, for instance by addressing people from his natural networks.
- Testing. Tests come in handy when dealing with competences. It is essential that the test situation be geared to the participant. Testing functional skills by way of the tasks for which a participant is highly motivated, will make him or her perform better than when he or she deals with tasks which do not interest him or her. The test should be done in optimal circumstances for the participant (and/or optimal learning conditions). If a participant indicates that he or she can work with computers, provided that manuals are available at all times, he or she should be tested under those conditions. The test question is: how quick and how well can he work if manuals are available. Finally, a test should not only reveal what a person can do at this moment, but also the possibilities to further develop skills. Tests can be used in the second stage of the assessment, as a way to encourage reflection, to give 'feedback' to the participant or to put a stagnating process on the right track again. In itself, a test is not an assessment instrument. Therefore, these tests should not be met without reservations.
- Consulting other professionals such as a doctor who may be able to give more information on a particular disorder of the participant, a social worker who may be able to provide information on other problems (for instance, debts or

housing problems), or a parent or caretaker who may be able to give more information about the participant. This is of course only possible with the participant's consent and only if it adds extra useful information.

During the first stage of the assessment the aim is to get a first impression of the participant and to develop an initial idea about the issues that may be important for the programme. The assessment should start in a broad and orienting way because, at that time, a lot of underlying meanings are not yet clear. During the second stage a number of issues will be further examined. Besides obtaining information from the participant, mediating interaction is becoming a more and more important part of the counselling: from reciprocation (see also chapter 3) and stimulation to continually think one step ahead.

63

4.2.8 Programme plan

The programme plan reflects the assessment. It does not come about in one moment but in the course of the assessment and in cooperation with the participant. The participant should have the opportunity to think about certain possibilities; the counsellor should be able to check whether certain offers are available and suitable or if they can be made to fit, and should coordinate this with the case manager (the customer). The more concrete the programme plan, the better. This goes for the content as well as for the approval that must be obtained from the customer. If the programme plan is completely clear, there is no point for the customer to bargain about the costs or to present a completely different plan (such as participation in a 'work first' project).

The programme plan consists of:

- A concise picture of the participant (for this figure 4.1 can be used). A dynamic picture of the participant should be drawn up, wishes, motives, real perspectives, skills and personal factors, learning style, social networks, presence and character and, especially, the essence and the coherence of these. This impression should leave space for changes and developments. The impression should be particularly concise; it should not be a list of everything that is known about the participant. This information, such as reports of discussion and activities can, of course, remain in the file.
- The realistic possibilities for the participant's development (proximal development zone) in these areas, linked to the intended placement. These should be translated into learning goals for the participant.
- The (long) term goal of the programme: what kind of social participation, possibly within a combination, is pursued? How is the search profile formulated? What are the conditions for a possible placement concerning the tasks and activities, skills, possibilities for development, social network, and the environment and organization culture? What should be taken into account (for example, personal factors, the participant's presence and character, practical issues such as transport, working hours, and so on).
- Intermediate steps (sub goals) towards the longer term. One should reason back from the longer-term goal to the actual situation (from Z to A): what should be

done to get from A to Z? For this, attention should be paid to:

- ❑ Personal problems and obstructions (care and assistance: for example debt problems, addiction, homelessness, and so on). These problems can be managed, if necessary, by linking them to the support from the participant's natural network and from care and assistance. The eco gram, set up for the assessment, can be applied for this.
- ❑ Skills and competences (possible work experience and training, preceding or parallel to other activities). These skills and competences will be translated (if necessary) into learning goals together with the participant and will be linked to programme supporting activities: training and/or work experience such as apprenticeships or working while retaining unemployment benefits.
- ❑ The participant's personal assets (working at his or her challenges in relation to the intended social activity, for instance, flexibility, self-confidence, social contacts and skills). This will be translated, together with the participant, into actual, specific and personal learning goals and into experimental situations for the participant.
- ❑ The possibilities and support from the participant's natural network. Does he or she receive sufficient support from this? Should the network be enlarged and, if so, how to set about it?
- A priority: what is the most important issue for the participant to start with? For some participants this could be assistance or 'working at himself or herself', while others would like to start work as soon as possible and then deal with other issues. Of great importance are the issues that provide the participant with a sense of security (for example, having a job, the feeling of being accepted by others, being sure of professional assistance). A basic sense of security is a condition to be able to develop. A second priority is based on an inventory of possible cooperation partners: intake for education, waiting lists for assistance, seasonal work, unemployment, holidays, and so on. Based on these considerations a strategic order can be made in the steps towards the long-term goal. Which activities can take place at the same time should also be indicated. The most adequate way is as short as possible, but is as long as is necessary for a long-lasting participation.
- An impression of the participant, which can be presented to possible employers and providers of voluntary work. The problems and obstructions should not be disguised but provided with solutions: "If certain conditions are met, a participant may be an excellent employee for a company or organization". Furthermore, a reference can be made to the counsellor's personal experience with the participant: "I know that this participant stopped regularly with things he had started, but he or she always kept the appointments with me."
- Points of interest for counselling in the (future, intended) workplace, voluntary or work experience place, during care and training. What are the participant's learning goals? What is his/her learning style? What is the best way to give feedback? What is the best way to give instructions?
- The agreements that are made by the participant, counsellor, partners in the chain (other professionals), social network (friends, acquaintances, neighbours, and so on) and the employer or organization where the participant is going to do voluntary work. Who does what and when? Who is responsible for what and

who has specific qualifications? How and when and with whom will things be communicated?

- A budget divided into various programme parts and set up in a time frame.

Programme goals should be described in a concrete way and it should be obvious why this goal is important and effective for this particular participant. Goals should be concrete, specific and personal, or SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely. 'Looking for a job' is not good enough. It should be clear what kind of job it should be, the desired conditions, why this job is suitable for this participant, and how this job fits the participant's learning process. 'Improving self-confidence' is neither sufficient: in which situations? How are we going to assess any development? In which time frame? The more SMART the programme plan, the better it will work. The smart goals should not become independent items but should be related to the long-term perspective (the 'outcome'). Sometimes some tensions occur between the short-term and the long-term goals.

65

The programme plan is not only important in relation to the participant but it is also the basis for contact with the customer (who provides the funding for the intended steps). It is also important for attuning to, cooperation and coordination with, other professional involved with the participant.

Of course, while the work is in progress, there may be several reasons to start doing things differently. In that case, the programme plan may be adjusted in consultation with all people involved (in any case the participant and the customer).

The participant, the counsellor and the customer should approve the programme plan. If they all put their signature on the plan, the contract is a fact.

The aspects in the above-mentioned comprehensive list should be part of the programme plan. All these aspects should be contemplated. It is the combination of a great number of details that resemble a clear core. An experienced counsellor can digest this information quickly and will continue to do so during the assessment phase and later again when the programme plan and mediation are realized.

For agreements with participant, the customer and other organizations involved, the above-mentioned information will be completely recapitulated on one or two A4 sheets.

In general, customers, reintegration and activation organizations have their own schemes in which the total assessment and programme plan information is incorporated.

4.3 Interlude: Hans' programme

Work principals and points of interest described in the previous chapters will be made concrete in this case study. It mainly deals with:

- *The supervision relationship: at first the contact is difficult, but then the counsellor explicitly and consciously develops a team spirit in the course of which he lets the participant make the choices. He gives this a great deal of time and attention together with considerable orientation and exploration activities by the participant;*
- *The assessment continues throughout the programme and is aimed at the person, the approach and fitting characteristics, the work place and the type of work;*
- *The programme plan is linked to the assessment and will be further developed and adjusted in the various steps during the working process.*

66

In this story we will anticipate the next chapter, the mediation phase: the explicit role assigned to the participant, exploration of the labour market to a large extent and the search for a suitable mediation structure.

For a good understanding of the following text, you should recall Hans' initial situation as described in chapter 2.

Intake en assessment

The first intake with Hans, in the presence of the case manager and the counsellor, is very difficult. It is impossible to start a conversation and make contact. Hans is hardly capable of answering the questions and he feels more and more embarrassed about the situation. As a result there are long periods of awkward silence. It is agreed that the next discussion will take place at the work-training project where Hans works, again, on a voluntary basis.

Hopefully communication will be easier in different surroundings (not in an office) and in presence of the work supervisor of the organic market garden.

Two weeks later when visiting the site of the work-training project, Hans is absent because his grandfather died the day before. The counsellor takes the opportunity to talk to the work supervisor to get a clearer picture of Hans and particularly to find out how to approach him. The supervisor confirms that it is difficult to get in contact with Hans. That is why there are no discussions with Hans about the 'supervision'; there are only discussions that are functional and practical and that have a clear (work) goal. The work supervisor also tells that the deceased grandfather and the grandmother, who is still alive, are very important to Hans. It will have to be seen what effect this event will have on Hans.

Some time later it is decided that a new case manager will be called in because this case manager knows Hans from his childhood. Their mutual parents were acquainted, so there were familiar contacts over a long period of time. The new case manager can be informal during the discussion so that a more effective contact might be established.

That discussion went well. Real 'contact' was established and Hans was able to exactly indicate what he wants to achieve. The counsellor and the case manager indicated how they could contribute to this. It was made clear that Hans would be responsible and he would think about what exactly he wants to realize and what kind of help he might need. It was agreed that the next appointment would be made at Hans' imitative.

This is an essential element of the counsellor's approach; the participant's own responsibility as the central actor. In this case, the matter has been raised more explicitly because in the past things went wrong whenever someone else started to determine what was good for Hans. Hans is now in charge of his programme and determines (within realistic and feasible limits) the direction and the aim of the programme. Now that the roles of the case manager and the counsellor, as well as their added value, have become clear to Hans, they are now his tools instead of the other way around. Hans 'acts' and is not 'made to act'. This is the decisive factor for Hans. Furthermore, this is now the foundation on which the 'team and team spirit, stands.

67

Three days later Hans called for an appointment. During this call he was assigned some homework: "Think about where you would like to work and why you want to work there. What can you contribute to realize that? What should we, as supervisors, bear in mind?"

In the next discussion the outlines of the programme plan are discussed.

Hans indicates that he wants to play it 'safe' and does not want to take risks (have a relapse). What he would like to do most of all is a kind of apprenticeship in a normal company in the green sector, in addition to his work-training project. He wants to continue his work for the work-training project for four mornings a week as a back up should the new work fail.

The new work should be of a 'physical nature', outdoors, it should also put his mind to work and involve planning.

Hans indicates that he got a new aim in life after the death of his grandfather. He now has to play an important (and to him meaningful) role in his grandmother's life. He promised his grandmother to make something of his life and to look after her. In the long-term, Hans wants to provide his own income but he does not want to take any risks by making decisions too hastily. It is notable though that Hans has not been depressive since his grandfather died.

The counsellor subsequently made agreements on how the search for new employment could be executed. Hans gets an important role: he will look for possible companies making use of his personal network and try to obtain information on these companies (job finding). The counsellor will continue to support him when questions arise.

Hans is noticeably relieved with this division of tasks because he is aware of the recognition that he is good at the things that he is going to do. Also, the tasks that he cannot do well (making contact and talking to others) will be handled by the counsellor.

Programme plan

At first contact with Hans was difficult. A good work relationship was made possible by an informal and accessible approach. Hans was given most of the responsibilities and the work was done in small, unhurried steps; this was essential for Hans' approach. His grandfather's death and his sense of responsibility for his grandmother have brought about a big change for Hans.

68 Together with Hans, an explicit choice is made for a form of reintegration in the labour market. Depending on the feasibility, a choice will be made for regular or subsidized work. For the time being Hans will continue to work in the work-training project. In addition to this, he is going to look for another job, preferably in the private sector, with the help of the counsellor.

Training is not an option yet, maybe later when it is relevant in view of his intended work place. An apprenticeship could be an option as step towards a new job. For the time being, no action will be taken concerning his psychological and social problems because the first priority is to realize a meaningful life perspective. The problems may fade into the background if Hans feels good because of the meaningful role he plays for his grandmother, and because he is in charge and making a real effort for his future perspective, mentally as well as physically. The personality disorder will not disappear but may fade into the background. That is why the counsellor thinks about the possibility of taking part in WSW (Social Job Creation Act), a subsidized working guidance programme.

It is expected that there will be more willingness for treatment/medication, if needed, when there is a meaningful work perspective, and less willingness if treatment/medication is a condition to start with integration in the labour market. This perspective (WSW working under guidance and, if necessary, treatment/medication) will be discussed with Hans in a later phase, after some progress has been made in the work integration programme.

Mediation (ongoing assessment and programme plan development)

After a period of exploring 'job-finding-activities', Hans makes an appointment again with the counsellor. He discusses the various new ideas and contacts he has made.

He heard about a new zoo not so far away. Working outdoors with animals is something that appeals to him. He has got the name and telephone number. The counsellor makes a telephone call to the company in the presence of Hans. It turns out that during the approaching winter this company needs but few employees and they are doing some rebuilding and development work. After the winter there is possible space for trainees/voluntary workers.

The counsellor checks with Hans what he thinks of the fact that the telephone call is made in his presence and of the way the counsellor talked about him. Hans indicates that he finds this a pleasant way of working. His response to the counsellor's question is that he does not want to wait till after the winter but wants to look for other companies. This is also essential to Hans: transparency, visualizing what you do and think and, moreover, checking with Hans what he thinks.

One week later, Hans shows up with another proposition: working in the woods that are under management of the Nature Reserve Foundation (Stichting Natuurmonumenten). In the past, he gained work experience there in a work-training project. He has got the name and telephone number of the forester with whom he used to have contact. The counsellor calls the forester who says that he still remembers Hans: a hard worker, not very talkative. After the winter period, Hans can start work there as part of a work training. There is no opportunity for paid work, according to the forester.

The counsellor discusses this information with Hans and asks him to think about what he would like to do. Working in the public sector (like nature reserves, work-training projects) is more secure but there is little chance for paid work. Similar work is also available in the private sector, with landscaping companies, tree nurseries and such. Here are more chances for getting paid work.

69

After some time to reflect on the matter, Hans contacts the counsellor. He has thought things over and he feels that he wants to be in charge and not have to depend on benefits anymore. He wants to aim for paid work in the private sector but to get started he feels the need for a work-training/apprenticeship. The counsellor advises Hans to enquire with people from the work-training project if they know employers in the green sector. Furthermore, the counsellor wants to have a discussion with Hans and the work supervisor of the organic market garden in order to gain more insight in Hans' specific work standards and the 'directions for use' that Hans needs to stand out well.

During the discussion with the work supervisor and in Hans' presence, the counsellor gets a lot of relevant information (*assessment*) that Hans can confirm:

- Hans' experiences are mainly with woodwork: handling tools like a cleaver, saw, cleaving hammer, and cleaving wood for the hearth. It concerns heavy physical labour that can only be maintained if you know how to divide your strength during the day. In addition, he has experience with pruning trees and pollard willows. Hans is good at this type of work, he really likes the outdoor work.
- The work should be meaningful to Hans; it should be useful; there should be a perspective for new tasks and challenges. Hans wants to be taken seriously and to be involved.
- According to the work supervisor there are a number of important points of interest:
 - ❑ *Cooperation*: Hans is a silent person and finds it difficult to work with people that are dawdlers, he then becomes dominant and commanding. Hans is not a sociable colleague. Hans is able to cooperate well if this is required for certain tasks. He can also work on his own and gets on with the job if he knows what has to be done.
 - ❑ *Withdrawal*: If Hans is not involved, there is chance of withdrawal with which he will place himself outside of the group (if there is a group). Withdrawal may affect his work attitude.
 - ❑ *Drinking*: Hans has an 'alcohol tendency' so, after a night of boozing, he

often reports himself ill. This has been discussed and Hans is aware of the consequences this conduct may have in connection with paid employment. He indicates that he can handle this. The counsellor does not put this aside but will evaluate it on the basis of the apprenticeship and will then make it a point of discussion, based on facts.

Hans chooses to look for work in a tree nursery. He is given some names and addresses by a network contact from the organic market garden and then he sets out to explore and to gather facts. On his bicycle he visits some companies to form a picture and to talk to people he knows. In the end, it is up to Hans to make a choice for a particular company.

70

This is the initial impetus for the 'job-finding' systematic in cooperation with the participant. Moreover the result of job-finding is a perfect reason to call the employer (to inspire the employer by telling him of Hans' particular wish to work in his company).

Hans chooses, through a tip from a network contact, for 'Jos van Gennep Tree nurseries'. This company appeals to him because it is a big company and he has heard a lot of positive things about it. Hans himself saw that there is a large variety of trees and the company is situated in beautiful surroundings. The counsellor will make an appointment for an introductory interview together with Hans. The counsellor asks Hans what he may tell the employer about him (borderline, alcoholism, depression). Hans indicates that, in principle, he may tell the employer everything; he wants to lay all his cards on the table. The counsellor asks him to reconsider this.

The counsellor decides to first make an exploratory visit to the company without Hans because he does not know this company and employer yet. He hopes to get a clear picture of how the employer is going to react to the possible mediation of Hans and under which conditions this might be realized.

During this exploratory visit to the company, the counsellor is told that (as yet) there are hardly any possibilities for employment; it doesn't pay, it is only temporary work, it is dirty and hard work that is generally only done by people from Eastern Europe. However, the employer is willing to offer Hans opportunities for further development and training (it is a certified training company in the green sector). The tree nursery is now only part of the company, more and more of the work is done in greenhouses. There is still enough work in the tree nursery; moreover his neighbour and brother (Piet) have some possibilities for work too.

In a subsequent evaluation, the counsellor informs Hans about the exploratory visit to the company. Hans decides that it is worthwhile to start a mediation discussion aimed at a possible placement as an apprentice. Hans meets up with the counsellor 30 minutes before the meeting to prepare for the mediation discussion (division of tasks, what and what not to say, and so on).

The mediation discussion with Jos van Gennep went very well. Hans is very eager to make his start there. The agreement with van Gennep is that Hans will work on

Wednesdays (so that he can combine this with his work-training project). Van Gennep agrees with this and an apprenticeship contract is drawn up, starting with a period of five weeks.

The counsellor realizes that there are possibilities in this company to develop the apprenticeship into a vocational training, as this is a certified training company. In the next evaluation this will be a subject for discussion.

Two week later, there is an evaluation discussion with Hans and the employer. It is obvious that Hans likes it here. Most of the time he works on his own but occasionally with someone else. It is a lot more quiet here than at the work-training project. Hans would like to continue working here but he would like to do more outdoor work. Up to now he has worked mainly indoors. According to van Gennep this is due to the weather conditions. There will be outdoor work in the near future and there are lots of opportunities to work with van Gennep's two brothers (nearby). They work in other branches of the green sector. It is decided to extend the apprenticeship to four months and that, beside Wednesdays, Hans is also going work on Fridays. During this agreed period, Hans is going to find out for himself which type of work he likes most, but van Gennep's advice/opinion will also be requested. At the same time, the possibilities for a training that is relevant for the actual employment perspectives and one that appeals to Hans are examined. Van Gennep says that, for the time being, he has no regular job opportunities for Hans.

71

The counsellor considers van Gennep's remarks and decides to discuss the implications of the mediation construction through a subsidized working guidance programme (WSW working under guidance) in a next discussion with Hans.

One month later the counsellor has a discussion with Hans. Hans his apprenticeship is going well. He also worked one day at van Gennep's brother who said that Hans had done well. Hans is content. Subsequently, the counsellor discussed the following aspects in order to improve Hans' working and mediation conditions:

- In consultation with van Gennep, Hans is going to collect information on courses he could and would like to do and that will contribute to his chosen career perspective;
- Hans will consider his work availability in the long term (currently only two days a week because of his grandmother) and how this relates to 'being in charge yourself' and making something of your life. In short: which choices do you make for your future?
- In addition, the counsellor discusses the necessity to apply for a 'subsidized working guidance programme'. This should be considered because of the seemingly bad labour market conditions in this branch and the fact that lots of Eastern Europeans work there for low wages, but also because of Hans' problematic background with its risks for the employer. Hans is not in favour of using 'that nonsense' to get subsidized work with external supervision on those grounds. Whereupon the counsellor proposes to make 'this nonsense' work in Hans' advantage and to aim for Hans' goal: to make it possible for Hans, in the long-term, to take charge of his own life.

Hans considers these subjects and presents his decisions at the next consultation. Hans found out in his search for suitable training that the 'green sector' does not do well and courses are cancelled because of lack of participants and lack of employment. Nevertheless, in consultation with van Gennep, Hans found a suitable training that can be tailored to his needs. Hans gives the counsellor the address, telephone number and name of the contact/ teacher. The counsellor immediately contacts the training college and makes an appointment for a visit, together with Hans, to discuss the realistic options.

72 In addition, Hans has decided take on the route to a subsidized working guidance programme (WSW working under guidance) and he agrees that an old psychological research report is used for that purpose.

Furthermore, Hans discussed his availability with his grandmother. Hans indicates that, if he gets paid work and do training, he can be available for four or even five days a week. Now that Hans' working conditions and mediation conditions have been optimized, the next steps in the programme can be made concrete and implemented.

The counsellor takes steps to formalize the application for the subsidized working guidance programme (WSW working under guidance). Hans is registered at the Centre for Work and Income (CWI). Hans received approval within one month owing to the application report from a specialized reintegration organization. On the basis of this, the counsellor immediately contacts the consultant of the WSW-centre who deals with the regulation for the subsidized working guidance programme and explains Hans' situation, his programme goals and programme developments. The WSW-consultant promises his cooperation and outlines the scope in which the counsellor can continue his mediation concerning employers and a possible employment as part of the subsidized working guidance programme. In this way, the 'waiting list' of the WSW-consultant can be by-passed (for which earlier work agreements were made).

Together with Hans and the teacher tree culture from the vocational training college (mbo), the counsellor discusses the possibilities for an education programme for Hans, as part of an adapted BBL (block or day release pathway) programme (practical training), which will lead to the qualification of assistant tree culture level 2. The counsellor also informs the teacher about Hans' directions for use, his preferences, and the fact that it is impossible for Hans to be educated together with 16 and 17 year old kids. The teacher indicates that a training programme can be set up which can be done more or less in practice. However, this will ask a lot from the apprenticeship company because the 'credit points' must be obtained from them. This should not be a problem because van Gennep is a certified training company. With Hans' educational background, he should be able to qualify for the BBL-level 2 in one year's time and, should he want to continue, would need another two years to qualify for level 3. Hans indicates that he thinks himself able to be successful within this setting. On the basis of the commitment between the teacher and Hans, the counsellor sets to work to arrange the funding for the training with Hans' contact at the social services. She was kept up-to-date about Hans' developments and agrees with the training.

The counsellor and van Gennep discuss the possibilities of indentures and an employment contract as part of the training, by making use of the tool subsidized working guidance programme. The long-lasting character of this regulation offers perfect possibilities for the employer to anticipate the company's developments and perspectives together with Hans. Moreover, because of this regulation Hans his salary is low without causing any harm to Hans; he will earn the normal CAO (collective labour agreement) wages. This makes Hans a competitor for the cheap Eastern bloc temporary workers and, what's more, he will get qualified in a training programme that is geared to him. It is decided that the definitive agreements for employment will be made when Hans, the teacher and the counsellor meet to arrange the training.

73

Hans is offered employment, as yet for the duration of the indentures and the employment contract (one year). Van Gennep states that the possible continuation depends on Hans' performances and developments. Within one year after the intake, Hans takes service with van Gennep for 32 hours a week based on indentures and an employment contract, as part of the tool subsidized working guidance programme.

5 Programme realization: training, care and assistance, mediation and counselling plan

5.1 The programme plan as a working plan

75

This phase deals with the execution of the programme plan after its approval by the client. Parts of the programme can be further defined if required. If the programme plan has been sent to the client in a much less detailed form and only contains the basic ideas, then this is the moment to define the plan further (see 4.2.8). This is also the case when intake and assessment are done by programme supervisors other than the programme planner. If that is the case, the finalization of the programme plan can go ahead dependent on the agreements made by the first as well as by the second programme supervisor.

The program can be aimed at direct mediation towards a paid or unpaid work place, contain an intermediate step in the form of training, care and assistance, or the programme is a combination of different activities that run parallel. Obviously, a program is not cast in stone, and there can be good reasons to adjust the plan during its execution, for example, by changes in the availability of certain services or because of an advanced insight following the participant's development. It is recommended that the plan be reviewed at each step to compare it with reality.

The phase is concluded with the drawing up of a supervision plan for the next phase (development-oriented support) or the handover to a new paid or unpaid work place or a care situation.

5.2 Training and work experience

Intermediate steps can be very useful but should not become a routine. To train people or let them gain work experience without making clear in which framework or how this relates to the participant, leads at the most to better-educated unemployed. Goal orientation comes first. Training or gaining work experience must be directed at the further development of skills that are needed to execute the intended (voluntary) work. One purpose of intermediate steps can also be to further draw the participant's picture or to further explore particular aspects with the participant. Training or gaining work experience is part of a continuing assessment. The programme plan must specify what the objective is of the training or work experience, so that at the end, it can be evaluated if and to what extent the intended (intermediary) objective has been achieved.

Training can be a necessary step to go before mediation, for example, to obtain the qualifications needed for the intended function: to obtain a suitable level in arithmetic and such like. In Abdel's story in chapter 2, specific training is coupled with mediation.

Training can also run in parallel with mediation in the form of a combined (paid or voluntary) work and training programme, either with or without a guaranteed job. The aim is to realize a long-lasting form of social participation. This means that training has a supportive function and is not the main goal; educational participation is, after all, by definition not long-term

76

Many participants do not have good experiences with education – “they are slow learners” or could not find their niche in the educational system and left school without any diplomas. This does not mean that they have no ambitions to be educated, but it does mean that careful attention should be paid to see if a certain form of education fits the participant.

Most of the education system is curriculum based instead of pupil-oriented. Education within this curriculum system is also often more theoretical and knowledge based and not aimed at practical and professional skills. It is especially essential for those people that had bad experiences with this type of education – who were often considered by the school as troublesome pupils – that their wishes and motives, capabilities and competences and their way of learning are taken into account. The main thing is that the participant's interest and attention are retained and that the learning process is continually stimulated in all possible ways; it is not about what someone should eventually need to do and know (the curriculum). With regard to the content of training, it is essential that this be attuned to what is required of the participant at the intended (voluntary or paid) work place.

During intake and assessment, attention must be paid to the participant's education history and an impression should be formed of the manner in which he or she does learn; what is the dominant learning style and which conditions are needed for that. The counsellor must also, during the assessment, show or let the participant experience the fact that he or she clearly can learn. These points are of extra importance when training is to be an explicit part of the programme. The counsellor and the participant must together watch the continuity in the realization of the different parts of the programme. In the mediation towards paid or unpaid work, the administrator is above all a ‘salesman’ who sells the participant's qualities and explains the added value he or she will bring to the potential employer's business or voluntary work place. Adversely, in the mediation towards training, the counsellor is the purchaser who requests offers from relevant training centres with programmes that fit the requirements of the participant. This illustrates the different roles the counsellor has in the mediation for training and in the mediation for paid or unpaid work. The counsellor must negotiate with training centres about the content, the level, and the (pupil oriented) approach of the training. The available curriculum must perhaps be adjusted to fit the pupil and a suitable intake point must be found to make sure that there won't be a void in the participant's programme.

From the preceding intake and assessments, the counsellor knows what to take into account and how to attune to the strengths and possibilities of the participant. This information is given to the teacher so that he or she can take this into consideration. Periodically, or whenever necessary, the teacher and the counsellor will

discuss the participant's progress. Besides the individual contact between the counsellor and teacher, it is also important to cooperate at the organizational level concerning agreements on aspects such as more flexibility or increasing the number of intake points, policy viewpoint, methodical approach and work processes, and restricting the waiting lists.

Work experience can be gained in the form of an apprenticeship, work without the loss of benefit or via voluntary work (with or without payment). As with schooling, some participants have bad work experiences (or have never been accepted for a job). They find themselves not suitable to work for a boss because, so far, they have always had problems with them. They may think that their work tempo is too slow, as a result of which they will eventually fall short. It is important to get a good perception of the participant's work experiences; not only about their competences and knowledge they may or may not have gained, but also and in particular about their 'social work experiences'. Negative work experience does not mean that the participant does not want to work, even though this may be the initial impression radiated.

77

This means that, especially when looking for an apprenticeship, work experience or voluntary job, it should be taken into account that the participant will require proper supervision. Hans' story is a good example; from the assessment of the current voluntary job, a new apprenticeship and an intermediary position were found.

It is essential that a work experience job fit the participant. Here the development of the participant is central and not his/her productivity. There must be space to learn from the experience that is gained. This means that there must be time for reflection and experimentation and that constructive feedback must be given.

It is most important that, just as with training, the participant's interests and attention are retained. During mediation for an apprenticeship, work experience job or voluntary job, the counsellor acts as a mediator and 'salesman'. This will be further discussed in paragraph 5.4. Considering the development goals, the counsellor will need to give more attention than usual to the discussions with the potential employer or provider of voluntary work regarding the content, level, conditions, and the supervision of the work, for which existing functions will probably need adjusting.

5.3 Care and assistance

Care and assistance often feature in activation programmes aimed at paid or voluntary work. In a number of cases care and assistance form the main part; it is known as care activation.

Many participants of re-integration programmes have social or personal problems and have often (had) contact with care and assistance organizations.

The support given is often aimed at finding solutions to the problems and not always sufficient attention is given to the activating and strengthening of direction (self-steering) of the participant. Other participants are only partly helped and still wrestle with different assistance issues and some have never had contact with care and assistance organizations.

Within the framework of intake and assessment, the counsellor must at least

gain an insight into the care and assistance issues and contacts that the participant experienced so far. This is not always obvious, people often feel ashamed for their assistance problems or they are not always aware of their personal assistance requirements, or they find them hard to put into words. Some participants are disappointed by the assistance; they feel misunderstood, so much, that they have little expectations and do not see the need to discuss their personal problems. This means that the counsellor must be extra alert and must invest effort into the counselling relationship with the participant and continue to discuss personal assistance issues and experiences with the care and assistance organizations. People need time to gain trust in the counsellor to discuss their personal situation and assistance issues. The positive approach at the starting phase, the emphasis on the strong points (the half full glass), and the counsellor's personal style of communication are important aids (see chapter 3). Besides this, the counsellor must lend support so that people are able to express their personal and social problems in their own words. Sometimes, a fitting form of confrontation is necessary and effective (see Pieter's story in chapter 6). This does not really mean that the focus should be on the individual problems (which social workers often do) but on the relationship between problems in different areas of life, the wishes and possibilities to change these, making use of the strong points and the development prospects.

The counsellor, after conferring with the participant, contacts the relevant social workers as part of the assessment. This is sometimes necessary to gain a better understanding of the problems, the limitations as well as the possibilities for change and improvement. At the same time it is possible to check in how far the social services is (or could be) contributing to other parts of activation programme such as training or mediation towards paid or voluntary work.

To work out a programme plan, the position of assistance and care within the programme should be established; this involves a number of strategic considerations:

- Is the assistance problem limited or under control and are the limitations sufficiently manageable in relation to a paid job, then assistance can be combined with a mediation programme towards a paid job (see the stories of Marcel in chapter 3, Hans in chapter 4 and Hetty in chapter 6).
- Should the social and personal problems form a limitation in such a way that, for the time being, mediation towards a paid job is not possible, then this should be first addressed in the programme. If possible, this could be combined with a form of social activation as a step towards work at a later phase (see for example Pieter's story in chapter 6).
- Sometimes the problem is so complex and serious that most attention must go to the assistance problems. This is referred to as a care programme, but even then, a combination with social activation could add value, as a contribution to the development of the person and support for the assistance process (see Miep's story in chapter 6).
- The combination of assistance with work mediation or social activation has the added value that the participant can develop better. However, in view of the participant's capacities, it should be checked which activities can be combined.

During the realization of the programme, the counsellor acts also as coordinator who, together with the participant, controls the relation between the individual activities. He closely follows the developments at the different fronts and checks how these developments influence each other and the participant. From this perspective, he follows not only the assistance process, but also informs the social worker about the developments in other areas.

The counsellor is simultaneously 'mediator'. This is clear from the mediation towards paid or voluntary work and, in this context, can be seen as salesman. However, in the area of care and assistance, the counsellor is chiefly a purchaser.

Mediation for assistance is not an obvious case. Participants are not always positive toward assistance and similarly, the social workers find the participants not always the easiest of clients. The assistance availability is often limited and many organizations have waiting lists due to strict intake criteria. Every assistance organization has its own viewpoint and approach that does not always coincide with other organizations. The manner in which many assistance organizations work is at odds with activation programme supervision:

- They are organized as product oriented, managed and financed (supply oriented and not demand oriented);
- The problems are broken down and divided over many organizations and compartmentalized, as a result of which there is no coherence and, therefore difficult to execute.

Consequently, the counsellor must meet and discuss often with the social worker to negotiate changes to the existing offer, to make it more fitting for actual development and reintegration prospects for the participant. This does not only involve the content of the assistance but also the individual customer-oriented approach of the participant. The counsellor knows from the assessment and his/her own relationship that has been built up with the participant, what works in a negative way and what works in a positive way. This is essential and important information that is handed to the social worker to take it into account.

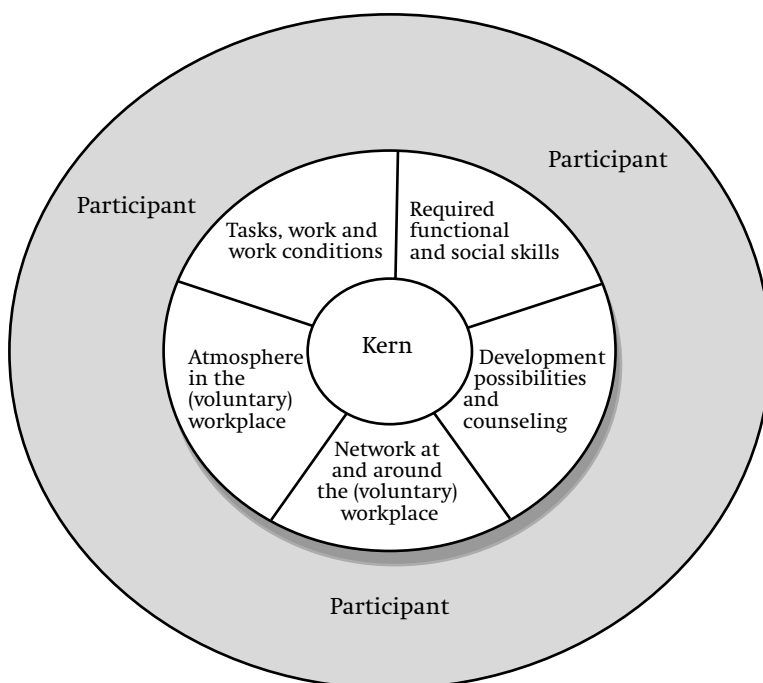
Even when a long-lasting form of social participation has been realized, the social services can play an important supporting role. This should not always be intensive, but availability alone can be of great value for the participant as well as the employer and the counsellor.

Besides cooperation on a personal level between the counsellor and the social worker, cooperation on an organizational level is also important; this concerns making agreements with reintegration organizations, activation organizations and assistance and care organizations. This could involve, for example, the limitation of waiting lists, harmonization of the methodical approach and work processes, and attuning the policies on specific problems. At the execution level, organizing joint work meetings around firm action plans can strengthen the cooperation.

5.4 The mediation toward paid or unpaid work: central concepts

The assessment phase centres on the participant and in the mediation phase the counsellor gains an extra client: the potential employer or provider of voluntary work. In a similar manner as was done with the participant, an impression is formed of the intended employer/provider and the workplace/voluntary position using a variant of figure 4.1 (the participant's pie chart).

Figure 5.1



The type of intended workplace is described, in terms of figure 5.1, in a search profile:

- What type of tasks and work would the participant like to do?
- Which skills would the participant like to apply?
- What are the development prospects the participant is seeking?
- How should the social environment be in the workplace?
- What type of organizational culture kind is the participant seeking?
- What is the most pivotal for the participant, what is essential, what is desirable and what is a bonus?

This search profile is the basis for finding a job or voluntary work. When a place is found (see paragraph 5.5) the employer's requirements are registered and translated into the required tasks and activities and work conditions that are offered. Then, the required functional and social skills, the development possibilities and supervision

that are offered, with respect to development in the work, are viewed, and a map is made of the network (colleagues, bosses, clients, suppliers) in and around the workplace and of the atmosphere in the workplace.

In this workplace analysis, figure 5.1 is completed for the actual workplace. This workplace analysis is considerably less detailed than the assessment of the participant. The objective is to systematically examine if and to what extent a match can be made between the participant and the potential workplace. A function profile is made up on basis of the workplace analysis in which the different aspects of the workplace are described briefly and to the point, and also what the core of the work is; what is essential at this specific workplace. Based on this, a match is tried, but this will never be perfect. There will always be differences between the ideal workplace (the search profile) and the actual workplace (the workplace analysis). During this matching, it might be possible to adjust the workplace as much as possible towards the participant, where this is not possible (where there is no real match) that will be point of attention for supervision at the workplace.

81

5.5 Mediation: the process

Job finding

When looking for a paid or unpaid job, the participant's own natural network is first considered. Which employers and/or organizations for voluntary work actually know the participant? Who from his/her network has a job or knows a company, employer or organization where voluntary work can be done? What can these people tell about the work done at these companies or organizations? Hans' story is an example of a participant who looks for a possible job for himself.

The second step when looking for a job is to use the counsellor's (professional) network: employer contacts, colleague's knowledge of employers, training centres, social job creation etc. These networks can usually provide background information about a company/organization. This is an advantage when making contact, because the knowledge of the company/organization can be useful

In the last resort, we can use the labour exchange or job vacancy department (CWI – Centre for Work and Income), employment agencies, branch organizations, voluntary work organizations, etc. However, this has the disadvantage that there is little background information to be found about a workplace the result of which is that the contact has a higher trial-and-error factor.

In practice, most jobs are found by word of mouth and only a minority of vacancies are officially announced (somewhere).

Telephone contact

In general, the first contact with an employer or organization where a participant might work voluntarily is made by telephone. It is important that the contact is made with the person within the company/organization that can make the decision to take on personnel or volunteers. This first contact should be of a short duration, especially

with companies, as the employer or organization must not get the impression that mediation for a possible placement will take up much of their precious time. The aim is to inform the employer or organization, to invoke interest for the participant and to arrange a meeting for an exploratory discussion; as soon as this is achieved, the call is ended. It can be beneficial to hold this telephone conversation in the presence of the participant, as this forces the counsellor to introduce the participant well and the participant will notice the counsellor's efforts and how he or she speaks about him or her: this can help in motivating the participant.

82

The process of approaching potential employers is generally more critical with companies in the profit sector than with non-profit organizations. There can also be differences in culture and the manner of communication, but in a methodical sense, there is no difference.

When dealing with an employer or organization that is known to the counsellor or his/her colleagues (and vice versa), the call can be kept short: "I have Hetty sitting next to me and in my opinion she would fit in well with you, it is possible that we can discuss this together?" A long story would make a meeting unnecessary while confidence is generally inspired when people meet.

When the employer or organization is completely unknown to the counsellor and his/her colleagues, the most important goal is to arrange a meeting to get acquainted with the company. The immediate cause for this could be an actual participant, but it would be better not to talk over the telephone about a specific participant but about a number of possible suitable participants.

The employer must know who is on the telephone and the scope of the conversation: mediation and supervision of people towards paid or unpaid work. The counsellor explains his/her involvement in the service: "I know some motivated participants, people with possibilities. Before I start negotiations I first want to make contact to inquire about the demands. Following this, I will organize a meeting between the workplace and the participant. I don't want to go out of my dept. I am aware of both the qualities and the shortcomings of the participant and I am looking only for those places where the participant will be of added value. In this way, the risks are precluded as much as possible and, if necessary, I can offer extra support during the initial period: financial means, extra training or extra supervision".

If everything goes well, the telephone call should end with a fixed appointment for the counsellor to meet the employer at the company/organization for an explanatory discussion.

The explanatory discussion

The explanatory discussion is held to get to know each other. If this concerns a new company, the applicant is usually not involved (for example in Hans' story). If, however, the counsellor knows the company well, the participant sometimes comes along for the discussion (for example in Hetty's story).

At the request of the counsellor, the employer gives a short introduction of the company and possibly of the work or position too. After this, the counsellor illustrates his/her services, responding to the requirements and the demands of the employer.

It is important that the counsellor obtains a clear picture of the workplace and, to achieve this, the counsellor requests a tour of the workplace. It is normally not a problem for the employer to make time for such a tour, as the pride to show off the workplace is a driving force that is nearly always present.

The counsellor tries to gain a clear understanding of the employer's wishes and motives.

He or she tries to think together with the employer about the problems and solutions inside the company/organization. For example, are there currently any personnel problems? Are certain tasks left undone because of the difficulty in finding suitable staff or volunteers, or because they are too costly to complete? What kind of staff or volunteers is the employer actually looking for? The average employer is not looking for a participant with diploma 'X', aged 'Y' and with work experience 'Z', but someone who is a go-getter, who can take a joke and accept criticism and, of course, someone who has a reasonable outwards appearance. During the talking and the touring of the company/organization, the counsellor can form a picture of the kind and content of the work and the atmosphere within the company/organization (is it neat or messy, quiet or noisy, orderly or chaotic, formal or informal, the communication direct or indirect, etc.). In short, forming an impression of the potential (voluntary) workplace (see figure 5.1). Based on this impression, the administrator can assess if the company/organization does indeed suit the candidate.

83

Following on from the story of the employer or occupational therapist, the counsellor explains where he or she can contribute to resolve the personnel problems of the workplace. After having verified that the employer or occupational therapist accept the way of working, the counsellor then directs the attention towards the participant. To begin with, the counsellor presents the participant as a possible option, outlining why he or she is suitable without hiding any potential risks. This option is discussed on the basis of realistic arguments. It is important that the counsellor tries to involve the employer in thinking about the participant's possibilities so that he or she will become more associated with the participant.

The counsellor thinks together with the employer and when he or she raises objections, it is initially a good sign because it means that they are interested.

When dealing with objections, there are various effective responses:

- Be businesslike (stay calm, do not get emotional, do not take objections personally);
- Apply the recognise-acknowledge-explore trick: recognise the other's signals, acknowledge the resistance (by taking the role of the neutral witness), and invite the employer be more precise about the voiced objections: from this one can offer counter arguments;
- Be objective: both parties translate interpretations as much as possible into facts;
- Individualize: the participant is an actual person with weak and strong points who can add value to a real workplace, as long as he or she is treated as a representative of a group (generalization) he or she does not get the chance to assert himself or herself. Responds such as ignoring, denying, attacking and belittling are not effective.

A successful visit to a workplace finishes off with an appointment for a job interview for the participant with the employer.

In case there is no immediate possibility for a job placement, the visit will at least produce two results:

- The counsellor has obtained a clear insight for possible future placements.
- The employers are made aware of the councillor's professionalism and the quality of his or her services and are, consequently now part of the network.

Tests and mediation

84 After the explanatory discussion, the counsellor passes on the information to the participant and, together, they decide if they should continue or not. Once it is agreed that the job is suitable, a mediatory or job interview will be organized. The counsellor prepares the participant for the interview: what does he or she want to ask or tell the employer? What are the important points that the participant should observe about the company/organization in order to be able to make the right decision? They also discuss and agree to the points where the counsellor can offer support during the interview.

During this discussion, the counsellor should, when necessary, take over the control from the participant. What counts is the result of the interview and not the process.

It is usually not so important to improve the quality of the participant's presentation (those that are important for the interview), as this will not be important for the work that he or she will do.

From the counsellor's viewpoint, the success of the first contact between the participant and the employer depends on a good assessment and good preparation. The counsellor must be convinced of the participant's core qualities (assessment) and it must be clear how he or she will present these core qualities to the relevant employer. To this end, the counsellor can prepare a monologue for him or herself for which there are three important aspects. Firstly, to bluff your way makes no sense; if the counsellor paints too nice a picture of the participant, this will irrevocably lead to problems in the future.

Secondly, it should not be a general story but about the concrete advantages for the employer (a good selection saves time, only motivated candidates that fit the company/organization are presented, the possibility to offer support during the probationary period) and a specific participant. Employers usually think in terms of groups of jobseekers and about the company risks associated with these groups; long-term unemployed are not motivated, have no work pace and require a long-term training period.

People with a handicap and/or with a WAO-past (having been on sickness benefit) are often sick and cost a lot of money if they drop out. People from a low social background are aggressive, unpredictable and are a bad representation of the company. It is of no use to talk about this on this general level. The discussion should not be about a 'candidate with a WAO-background' but about 'Pieter', who has a problem with his leg but who could function very well in your organization by doing all kinds of jobs.

The information about the programme supervision should also not be general,

but specific. Not “as counsellor, I can supervise” but “Pieter must learn to stand on his own two feet and make social contacts in a normal way. I can help him in this”.

Thirdly, the counsellor should be in line with the employer’s perspective, whose primary task it is to keep the company/organization going. The latter is therefore the way in which to approach the employer. The announcement “I am looking for a suitable (voluntary) position for my participant and I am thinking of your company/organization” is made from the counsellor’s perspective. However, from the employer’s perspective it should be “that Pieter could be an extremely motivated candidate”.

The programme counselling and possible supervision at the workplace must also be offered from the perspective of the employer or the organization: to introduce and guide the participants in made-to-measure steps into the company/organization. This also includes the dealing and finalizing of the administrative package associated with these made-to-measure steps and supervision, as the employer often does not have the time and expertise to do this.

85

The mediation or job interview offers a possibility for both the employer and the participant to get to know each other. The interview could possibly be combined with a tour of the company/organization. The participant can then get his/her own impression of the work, the employer, the tasks, colleagues and/or (other) volunteers and the work climate. This will give the participant a good basis to decide if he or she wants to work in this company/organization. Conversely, the employer gets an impression of the participant that will be the basis for his definite decision to employ him or her. If possible, an agreement can be made about the placement, a trial apprenticeship or period, working hours, supervision and the contract. The counsellor observes the verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the participant and the employer, and intervenes where necessary: i.e. to compensate for awkward statements made by the participant or to react to a negative response from the employer.

Where the employer has doubts, your reaction could be to normalize, objectify or individualize the situation, but you can also suggest specific tools for mediation such as: to start with an apprenticeship (work without loss of benefit), extra training/supervision, wage subsidies and such.

The probation period

The last step to conclude the mediation (signing an employment or voluntary work agreement) can be an introductory apprenticeship or probation period whereby the employer as well as the participant can experience if this is indeed successful. By starting work immediately, it might reveal if the participant’s skills need to be developed and the manner in which this can be achieved.

Drawing up the counselling plan

When mediation has been successful, the counsellor draws up a general counselling plan, which is a further development programme plan. The addition and further actualisation is based on the question of which points are considered a good match and which still needs some more attention. For this we use the two pie charts (see

figures 4.1 and 5.1). These are put on top of each other and compared. The aspects that do not completely match require attention for counselling. Besides that, there are, of course, also points for attention as a result from the assessment.

In the assessment, points for attention are formulated on the basis of participant's wishes and motives in relation to his/her skills and personal circumstances: approach to study, social background, network, presence and character. These are supervisory goals that depend on the participant's personae. During mediation it is the aim to find a workplace that fits the participant to the core and where the counselling goals can be realized.

86 Counselling goals must reflect those aspects that are important in the life of the participant, they must meet his/her wishes and motives, strength and personality, but they should also be in keeping with important matters at the workplace.

The counselling plan fulfils a number of purposes:

- This plan enables the participant to have a say and get an understanding of the goals, the structure and method of the supervision. This insight is a condition for giving the participant as much responsibility as possible for the direction.
- The plan forces the counsellor to be explicit in his/her working methods and to build in points of reflection, so that a careful and development-oriented treatment of the participant can be guaranteed from the start, as much as possible. It should also prevent the counsellor from falling in a trap or making thoughtless mistakes that will later be difficult to correct. The plan also serves as a practical guideline during the supervision. The plan is the basis for a regular evaluation and possible changes in the supervision.
- The plan offers others in and around the workplace (employer, supervisor, colleagues) points of attention and gives them some hold on the participant's supervision. It can also keep others up-to-date with the counsellor's supervision activities.
- The plan allows continuity should the counsellor be replaced by another (professional).
- The plan forms the basis and justification for the funding of the (professional) supervision.

5.6 Development oriented support, career guidance and aftercare

In this last phase, we should gather the fruits of all the previous efforts. When the previous phase has been successful and a (hopefully long-lasting) placement has been realized, the participant's learning process should now be consolidated as this is now mainly embedded in his/her new natural network. The natural network is or must become an effective learning environment.

The *development-oriented support* focuses on the actualization of the tools and conditions for this learning process, which will be specified in the supervision plan.

The objectives of supervision in the workplace are:

- To teach a participant to function in the workplace by performing a specific job and as a part of the organization as a whole. It particularly concerns the further development of functional and social skills and also, within this scope,

the cognitive, emotional and communicational skills.

- To offer support and, possibly, an exemplary function for the employer, work colleagues or other volunteers.
- To contribute to the participant's ultimate further integration and emancipation.

The general *counselling plan* that has been drawn up at the completion of the mediating phase is now further developed. How to start and apply the supervisory goals in the workplace will be examined later in the workplace analysis: who is present at the workplace and when, to what extent can these supervise the candidate and in which areas, what support will they need for this, what support must the counsellor offer and to which work tasks can this be attached.

87

With respect to the content of the plan, there are always many approaches: that from the point of view of the candidate and that, which is observed in the workplace as being necessary, possible and wishful. A particular skill that in the first instant is not directly necessary for the function can still form a part of the counselling plan because it is worthwhile for the candidate's development (and emancipation).

The counselling plan contains objectives related to the functional and social skills, cognitive, emotional/affective and communicative skills and the role of the participant in the natural network of the work situation (and possibly outside).

The translation of these objectives into intermediate steps, the associated sub-goals, and a further phasing takes place by making use of with the help of exemplary themes

The participant can learn things from the exemplary themes that he or she needs for the current work situation but also things that can be used in other (work) situations. This concerns the participant's work performance and forms of communication required in the workplace which he or she is only just capable of doing but from which much can be learnt.

The practical application of the supervision can vary very much; this depends on the supervision that the employer can or cannot offer and on the learning style of the participant (see paragraph 3.2.3).

Career guidance is also aimed at the longer term to make sure the participant is in the right job. The work situation can, in time, have a great influence on the participant. His/her earlier formulated wishes and motives can change because, for example, the participant obtains certain skills and develops higher ambitions. Wishes and motives can also change because the participant is confronted, in the work situation, with new possibilities and has since learnt that he or she can make his/her own choice with regard to these possibilities. Aspects such as self-confidence and a changing self-image can also make a change after some time. The more the workplace contributes to the realization of the objectives of integration and emancipation, the greater these changes can be. To ensure that, in the long term, the person is in the right job and the goals are realized, it is important to follow these changes and translate them, as good as possible, into the participant's career (and other areas of life).

This means that the counselling must be of a dynamic and flexible character. To participant's developments must be watched, for which the counselling plan is a good tool.

The final result of the development oriented support and career guidance is that the counsellor makes him or herself redundant. Where, at the start of the project, the most important goal was to get the participant's learning process going, the most important goal at the end of the project is for the participant to direct his/her own learning process: learning to learn.

This means that, at the end of the project, the counsellor and the participant reflect on the development of that learning process and, together, try to create the conditions for the participant so that he or she can continue the process independently. This also means that the counselling is reduced. If the (ex) participant indicates that he or she feels the need for a discussion after the programme has ended, a meeting can be arranged by way of aftercare.

88

Even if after some time unexpected problems arise, it is advisable to spend some time on these, regardless of the fact that the project has really ended. Prevention is after all better than cure.

6 Programme mediation in practice

6.1 Introduction

89

With reference to the previous chapter and in conclusion of this guide, we describe three concrete mediation programmes. We describe the complete programmes, raising the principles and points of attention that occurred in the previous chapters:

- *The supporting but also confronting counselling methodology, aimed at enlarging the self-steering abilities of the participant;*
- *The assessment oriented on the different area's of life, specifically to reveal the participant's strong points and abilities but also the obstacles;*
- *The programme realization, the way in which the various activities are combined and the involvement of various other actors.*

We have chosen three different activation possibilities that are in part combined.

Pieter's story (6.2) concerns a social activation programme combined with social assistance and, in a later phase, the possibility to move on to employment.

Miep's programme (6.3) involves many aspects of social assistance where voluntary work has been useful and in line with the participant's wishes and motives.

Hetty's story (6.4) concerns an employment-finding programme in which assistance was an important part both during and after the programme.

These programme descriptions show a clear relationship between the in-depth assessment (both the strong points and the obstructions) and the outline of the mediation possibilities. The parts of the programme are connected and integrated, linked to the participant's wishes and motives and the possibilities to realize a better and more enduring existence.

For a good understanding of the following, you should again take note of the initial situation of these three participants as described in chapter 2.

6.2 Pieter's mediation programme

Intake and assessment

After Pieter failed a voluntary job, he has come to the counsellor again because he wants to do some other voluntary work. He feels the pressure of social services but most of all; he wants to obtain a more positive existence for himself.

The counsellor knows Pieter and, at first instance, is not willing to immediately start arrangements for voluntary work. It has already gone wrong a few times and this time he wants to avoid that as much as possible. That is why he now decides for a more intensive approach:

- To confront Pieter with the events of the past programmes and, together with Pieter, to gain more insight in the underlying motives and factors that lead to the success or failure of a programme and which are also important to change his behaviour.
- To apply an easy accessible working method, to thoroughly discuss each new activity, to follow-up on what is achievable and in Pieter's interest, to work step by step to strengthen his confidence.
- To look for a form of social assistance that is supporting and fitting for Pieter's situation.

90

During this assessment phase, the counsellor has a weekly meeting during which the following matters have been discussed in connection with actual activities:

- Pieter would very much like mediation for voluntary work, in the short term. Talking about the future, he says that he would later like to get a paid job as painter or chauffeur. He would rather have a job where he needs to work with others. He wants to have as much fun in his work and with colleagues as he did before, when he was still employed. It is important for him to make contacts at work and do things together with colleagues. Work is also a way to get away from the problems at home, from his mother who is depressed, the conflicts with his brother. Deep down he would love to have girlfriend, a job and start a family.

According to Pieter, he used to be a very good painter who always produced good work. He worked mostly as a painter on new developments together with a number of colleagues and people from other disciplines. He enjoyed working in such a team; they had a lot of fun together but also worked hard to get a job finished on time. They had a pint of beer together and also met during free time to go to football matches and such. He could more or less work independently, there were not often different people breathing down his neck. That is why he doesn't want to do paintwork in people's homes; he feels that they are complaining too much. Pieter thinks that he can work as a painter even though he is walking with some difficulty, but he can put weight on his leg for quite some time.

Through this story, the counsellor gets a clearer picture of Pieter's personae, his motives, the kind of work that fit him and, most of all, the working environment, and a vital factor that influences his functioning.

In anticipation for paid work, Pieter again wants help to find voluntary work. Initially, the counsellor has no confidence in this and first wants to discuss with Pieter why this didn't work out in the previous programmes. He confronted Pieter with the recurring periods of depression, the absences from his voluntary work place and, after that, getting back on his feet again. The counsellor wants Pieter to tell him what went wrong every time, what happened during these low periods and what was the cause, how did he manage to get back on his feet again and again.

- Pieter states that he really felt good when he started the voluntary work but that, in the end, it disappointed him. He often had to work alone, did not do much paintwork and had to do all kinds of awful jobs that nobody else wanted to do. He felt he was not appreciated. He did not like the atmosphere at the workplaces; the people were quite grumpy and not interested in each other.
- When things at home didn't go well he could not make the effort to go back to work because his mother was depressed and stayed in bed or his brother was aggressive again and terrorized the whole family. He felt himself to be a failure and was afraid to phone his workplace.
- There were times when Pieter himself was depressed because of everything that had happened in the past, and the accident, which was the reason why he lost his job. During his depression he cuts himself off from the others and stays in bed for days. At those times, his mother phoned the voluntary work place to let them know what his problems were. After that, he was afraid to contact the voluntary work place because he was ashamed of the fact that his mother called them and told them everything about him.
- Pieter indicates that he would like to talk about his situation with others, in particular with people that also experienced sexual abuse.

91

He no longer wants assistance, he feels that the social workers didn't understand him and started to act pathetically. He tried to discuss this with others at his voluntary working places. At first, he thought that this was acknowledged but later on he felt that people started to avoid him.

The counsellor told Pieter that it is a fact that this is not acknowledged always and everywhere. Another alternative must be found for this.

- Pieter's living conditions are not optimal. He lives with his parents and brother. His brother is often aggressive and violent as a result of sexual abuse traumas, which have not been dealt with. His mother is often suffering from depression and puts a heavy burden on Pieter. The father is the stabilizing force of this family and Pieter can go to him with practical questions but not for emotional support. When Pieter attended school and, after that, worked full-time, he did not suffer depressions. The family accepted this, as their motto was 'a man needs to work'. After the accident and losing his job, he could not satisfy the family's motto. His brother never worked and spent his youth in institutions and with juvenile welfare and was already a failure. Now that Pieter doesn't work, he has appointed himself as caretaker of the family. He helps his mother when she is depressed and he tries to help his brother. Pieter would rather make more choices for himself and live independently, but he doesn't feel up to that yet.

The counsellor talked with Pieter about his worries and what can be done to make this step. Pieter says that he never lived independently and he doesn't really know what this means. He is afraid that he cannot survive on the social benefit he receives. Besides, he worries that he might be very lonely when he is living on his own. He has no friends and no job.

- Social network: Pieter regularly sees a cousin but of late these contacts have decreased as the cousin has a girlfriend. When Pieter feels good and the family is doing well, he does all sort of things such as going to a football match or a dancing party with acquaintances. Pieter finds it difficult to deal with other people. He is embarrassed about the fact that he is unemployed. He is also ashamed about his sexual abuse and the way it still influences his life. However, he does feel the need to talk about it.

Programme plan

92 The counsellor has now a clear picture of the reasons why the previous programmes often went wrong. He has now a full picture of Pieter's wishes and motives, his skills and personal factors, his personality and the environment that he needs to be able to function well. Together with Pieter, the goals and activities of the programme plan are discussed. They decide on an integral approach aimed at improving the personal and social existence and to find a fitting reintegration prospect.

The following parts are included in the programme plan:

- *Living independently and social network;*
- *Learning to cope with the psychological-social problems;*
- *Social activation from a double perspective: extending social contacts and skills and a possible move up to regular work.*

Programme actualization

Living independently

The counsellor, together with Pieter, obtained information from social services about the amount of the benefit he would receive when living on his own, the average rent for the house he would like to move in to and how much housing benefit he would get.

This information had a positive influence on Pieter about him living on his own, but he is still worried if he is able to do this.

For this reason, the counsellor registered him with the placement committee to find out whether Pieter would be eligible for the 'sheltered accommodation' scheme. If so, he could get additional supervision. The placement committee advised positively on this.

A permanent housing counsellor has been assigned to Pieter. This counsellor visits him every week. If Pieter feels the need, the counsellor is also his contact person. The counsellor's organization offers a 24-hours service, which can be called in case of a crisis or calamity. The housing counsellor also had discussions with Pieter's family. The father has been put into action; his function will be to give a signal in case Pieter is getting into a depression or crisis, so that he can telephone the housing counsellor or the 24-hours service.

On the counsellor's initiative, a division of tasks was made:

- The housing counsellor focuses on: the day structure, the preparations concerning his moving out and all the practical details involved, supervision over the budget, help by learning to cope with his family and their efforts to help, especially before, during and after the move, stimulating social contacts, and acting as contact person during periods of depression.
- The counsellor focuses on: extending the social network, voluntary work, and involving 'experienced' experts in the area of sexual abuse.

Pieter, the housing counsellor and the counsellor agreed to have a three-way discussion once every six weeks in which the above-mentioned tasks will be geared up.

Pieter has found a house and now lives independently. With the support of the housing counsellor and his father, he can cope well. He is very happy that he made the move.

93

Social network

Pieter would like to extend his social network; he feels that he does not meet enough people besides his own family.

The counsellor decides that this is a relevant part of the activation programme and, together with Pieter, is looking for ways of extending his social contacts. He takes Pieter's interests in the football club, of which he is a supporter, as a starting point. He arranges that the social services pay the membership fee.

Pieter is now a member of the supporters club. The members of the supporters club meet regularly (once or twice a week) to watch football matches, to help during home matches in the football stadium and to offer support during the away matches. They often have a beer together after the match. He feels himself at home in the world of football; he loves football.

Learning to cope with the psychological-social problems (caused by sexual abuse)

Pieter makes it clear that he doesn't want professional help anymore. He would like to talk with other people, who have been through the same, about their experiences.

The counsellor found a self-help group for Pieter in which men with sexual abuse experiences take part. This group is supervised by an 'experienced' expert with whom Pieter can also have a person-to-person discussion.

Pieter is very positive about this self-help group; he feels that these men understand each other. He regularly talks with the expert whom he can also call should he feel the need to talk about his experiences. He makes use of this possibility and feels good about it. Pieter realizes that he might need assistance in the future but he does not want this at the moment.

Voluntary work

The counsellor applied to social services for a medical test, to establish whether there are any limitations for Pieter to exercise his choice of work as painter or chauffeur. The test showed that there are no medical limitations. To assure a better chance of success in a new voluntary workplace, the counsellor suggests that Pieter follows a course in social skills. There, he will learn how to stand up for himself better and how to make social contact without immediately discussing his sexual abuse. Pieter has done this and it resulted in a much better personal functioning.

94

Next, the counsellor discusses the wishes and possibilities towards a paid job. Because of Pieter's vulnerable personal functioning and the fact that he needs to build up a new day and work routine, it is decided to start first with voluntary work. In this situation, this is seen specifically as a step towards a paid job.

After that, particular attention is paid to the criteria that are important for a voluntary workplace. In what kind of environment does Pieter himself feels at home? What kind of work would he like to do? What kind of support does he need at work? His wish to work together with other people must be taken into account.

Pieter has started voluntary work in a community centre where he does odd jobs, including paintwork, together with another handyman. Furthermore, he works voluntarily on the local bus. He is a substitute driver and works together with the driver. They get on well; he is also a fan of the same football club of which Pieter is a member. They pick-up people in the neighbourhood, especially elderly people, and bring them to different places within the neighbourhood. He really likes this work because he goes all over the place and sees a lot of people. He chats with everybody about football or other things, which he likes to do. It turns out that Pieter almost never cancels his voluntary work as he gets a lot satisfaction from it. At the programme conclusion, Pieter works 20 hours at both voluntary workplaces.

Aftercare

The counsellor had several supervisory discussions with Pieter during the time of voluntary work.

In the last programme, Pieter has undergone an enormous change which gave him more confidence in himself and in the things he can do. Of course, there were times when he was depressed but he does know where to find the people that can help him to get back on his feet again. He also learnt to distinguish when to talk about his sexual abuse and when not. But it was most important to be able to tell his story anyhow.

His voluntary work has been extended from 12 to 20 hours per week but he could cope with more.

The possibility for paid work in the future was an extra motivation to keep going when, once or twice, things were difficult.

After six months, the counsellor and Pieter are united in the conclusion that paid work is achievable. The counsellor will look for a reintegration organization that is prepared to find work for Pieter and take his particular situation into account.

6.3 Miep's mediation programme

Intake and assessment

Miep reported to the case manager and the counsellor for a discussion of her own accord. She is filled with distrust. She talks about the different problems she comes across. She wants to bring some order into her life: another place to live, something to occupy her and get her out of the house. Her aspiration is to have her youngest son back with her. This is an important motive for her to bring some changes into her life. She has a good contact with the budget guidance council that supports her with her debt repayments.

95

The counsellor visits Miep at home for a second discussion. The reason for this is that you will get to know a person better in his/her own environment and you can also have a more private discussion.

Miep lives on the ground floor where everything is neat and well looked after. She never goes to the first floor anymore where she has boarded up the windows so that nobody can get in. She talks about her distrust and how other people view her. This is all a result of her disappointments, the way her family in which she grew up was viewed by society and by her way of living.

The counsellor realizes that Miep's distrust (he translates this as paranoia) is deeply rooted and must be taken into account during the programme realization. He translates this as 'working in a small team', not too many colleagues so that they can keep well informed about Miep.

Miep says that she did have a positive work experience in one of the previous work-training programmes. She agrees that the counsellor contacts Piet, the supervisor of that programme, again to see if there is still a chance for Miep. Furthermore, it is also important for her to find other accommodation.

Programme plan

Miep wants to improve her living conditions, find another place to live, something to occupy her and get her out of the house. She especially wants to see her younger son more often, a fact that is a driving force for Miep. However, she is very distrustful and suffers often from delusions. The dilemma that the counsellor and the case manager face is the question if and when they should confront Miep with this. It is initially decided not to do this and to wait and see how this develops during the course of the programme.

In the first phase, the counsellor wants to find and realize a useful daytime occupation for Miep, which is also what Miep wants and it is a realistic and achievable goal at the moment. Furthermore, he wants to specifically focus on the 'distrust' that could possibly occur again at this workplace by way of a structured aftercare programme. At the same time, the other problems must be dealt with, in particular a change of accommodation, achieving the debt restructuring payment and improving the arrangements concerning

access to her youngest son. The case manager, together with the counsellor, can supervise these parts of the programme. This means that programme mediation for a useful daytime occupation and programme counselling (in this case, mediation in care issues) are running at the same time. As this is a complex programme, the counsellor and the case manager are continually working together towards the realization of this programme.

Mediation

96

Mediation for useful daytime occupation

In an exploratory talk, the counsellor learnt from the supervisor of the work-training programme that he knows Miep well. He has no problems to give Miep another chance within the scope of finding a useful daytime occupation but not for work training. During work training, the participant is tested on specific working skills (those that are still unsatisfactory), which are aimed at a paid job. It was decided not to involve Miep in that kind of objectives. The aim of useful daytime occupation is for somebody to do activities out of the house on a voluntary basis, which will be satisfying. This must be arranged via the voluntary organizations. This means that the relationship between Miep and the coordinator of the voluntary organization must first be restored because of the problems she created in the past.

When the counsellor proposes this to Miep she is very willing to cooperate. She starts with a probationary period of a few days and a timetable is defined one week later: one full day and two mornings. Working hours can be changed according to experience. The relationship with the coordinator of the voluntary organization is restored. Miep receives a small but realistic compensation in addition to her benefit.

Mediation in care problems

The counsellor continues to have regular contact with Miep. The two matters that are discussed are:

- Aftercare concerning her useful daytime occupation (see below)
- Realizing a better living situation.

The counsellor's role is important for Miep's contacts with the social workers and agencies involved. He and the case manager have both won Miep's trust by the way they work, by taking her seriously and by actually working towards the realization of her wishes. The counsellor and the network partners discuss the question how Miep can be best approached. This is very important in this case because of the 'distrust', which is continually on Miep's mind (and, consequently, self-excluding behaviour). This means that the counsellor will always contact the social worker in question first, before a meeting with Miep. The counsellor also accompanies the social worker when he/she visits Miep to support the communication. The result of this is that Miep is reassured and not distrustful.

Because of his position, the counsellor is permanently aware of the various problems that occur and how these are connected. He has a complete overview, which the social

workers and agencies involved don't always have. Besides, he and the case manager can offer extra support where it is needed so as to stimulate the continuation of the activities for improvement.

Housing problems

The housing situation causes Miep a lot of stress.

The counsellor discusses the pros and cons of a certificate of urgency with the housing corporation. Soon after, an offer is made to which Miep reacts excitedly: a two-bedroom apartment on the second floor without a lift.

97

There are a number of things in the flat that can be purchased (floor covering, curtain rails, Venetian blinds). Should she need other things, these could be purchased from a second-hand shop. All this cost extra money. The deposit for the new house also causes a problem. Because of Miep's debt repayment procedure (WSNP – dept repayment act for natural persons) she can not take out another loan. The counsellor, in cooperation with the case manager, draws up a report to support a request for 'special gratis benefit' (meaning that the amount does not need to be paid back). This request has been approved and now the move can be arranged.

But then, new problems occur: when surrendering her old house (defects) and the continuing daily rent creates new costs.

The counsellor asks the landlord verbally to cancel the costs but gets a negative reaction. The formal request for cancellation submitted by Miep (with the help of the counsellor) is also rejected which means that she has an extra burden of e 850 debt (see below).

Health problems

Miep has several physical problems for which she needs regular treatment. At some specific time she needs to stay in hospital for a few days to have her nose polyps removed. She tells her case manager that she feels uncomfortable about that; she doesn't have a proper pyjama. This is dealt with.

The case manager visits Miep in the hospital because he knows that Miep will not get any other visitors. This makes a big impression on Miep and gives her even more faith in her programme counsellors. The case manager had also another reason for the hospital visit; he wanted to see how the nursing staff dealt with Miep.

Furthermore, Miep has psychological problems, delusions such as "they have installed bugging devices in my house; they have been in my house and put rubbish in my food". She unconsciously communicates this type of occurring delusions in her contacts with the counsellors. A physician, whom the case manager and the counsellor had first consulted, refers Miep to the GGZ for an examination. Here, she is prescribed some medication so that her delusions will occur less frequently. Since then, Miep is much better. However, care must be taken that she takes these medicines regularly (this can not be taken for granted).

The case manager and the counsellor get in touch with a social insurance physician to arrange for a REA (reintegration act for disabled people)-examination with the intention to obtain a release from the obligation to apply for jobs and a possible termination of the debt repayment. At the same time, Miep's situation can be looked at objectively and it might be possible to call in extra provisions such as social job creation.

Debt repayment problems

98

As a result of the stress caused by the move, Miep clashed with the administrator of the budget guidance council. The counsellor advised Miep not to take any rash decision in her anger but to make amends with her administrator. She agrees to do that.

A new overview of the arisen debt is made together with a proposal of how to deal with matters. This proposal is submitted to the administrator. She receives a buffer from the budget guidance council so that she can make some necessary improvements in her house.

The administrator's reaction to the proposal is negative. Some time later, Miep has to appear in court because of her debt repayment procedure. The counsellor accompanied Miep in this court case concerning her debt situation. The examining judge overruled the WSNP based on the REA-report so that the remainder of the debt is now 'no longer recoverable' and therefore expired. However, an arrangement has been made with the budget guidance council to further support Miep with regard to her budgeting.

Arrangements concerning parental access for her youngest son

After the improved living conditions with a new house, the psychological problems under control and the debt problems solved, the possibilities to arrange parental access for Miep and her youngest son are investigated, for which a lawyer is called in.

Subsequently, her ex-husband emigrated to England together with their youngest son. Miep is relieved by this, which seems strange because from the start she had said that contact with her son was an important motive for her. She thinks that she feels relieved because she realizes that she could probably not cope with the responsibilities and pressures. To make a virtue of necessity, Miep has started a computer course at the community centre so that she can contact her son by email and possibly see each other via a webcam.

Aftercare with regard to voluntary work – running at the same time as the preceding mediation care.

Directly after she started her voluntary work, Miep suffered 'enemy images'. This is probably caused by the new situation and the stress of the public holidays (Christmas time), which she encountered as a single person. It is decided to keep regular contact. One month later the work place is visited again and a discussion between the counsellor, Miep and her supervisor takes place. Everything seems to go well.

One month later Miep visits the counsellor: she has left her work after a conflict. She experienced several problems: with her son, housing problems and physical problems.

All this caused so much stress that she could not cope with the conflict at her work.

The counsellor arranges a meeting with her supervisor for a three-way discussion. During this discussion it becomes clear that the problem is already solved and Miep goes back to work. It is agreed that some extra actions will be undertaken to improve Miep's living conditions.

After six months there is an evaluation. During this discussion it becomes clear that Miep wants to stop because she suffers again from delusions (there are too many spies there invading her privacy). It is decided that she will try and continue for some time longer, after which an evaluation will be made. The supervisor decides to coach Miep in how to deal with the more negative sides of working with others.

99

One month further it appears that it is not practical to continue with the voluntary work. Miep herself wants to stop temporarily. The counsellor doesn't like that because that did not result in an improvement in the past. On the other hand, there are more and more complaints from colleagues about Miep's behaviour.

It is arranged with the supervisor that Miep can come back when she feels able to and can explain her motives. Meanwhile, attention is paid to her other problems (admission to hospital, debt problems)

After a few months, Miep's living condition has improved: she suffers less from delusions because of her medicines, her housing situation has improved and there is a solution for her debt problems.

Miep says that she is getting bored because there is nothing to get her through the day. Two daily periods a week, she attends to a friend who is seriously ill right now and has no help and/or family. The counsellor makes the following agreements with Miep:

- He must discuss this unprompted help with the case manager to avoid problems;
- He will also investigate whether this form of this volunteer aid can be formalised via the voluntary work agency.

The case manager agrees to readjust the reintegration programme to volunteer aid.

Epilogue aftercare

Miep visited the counsellor and the case manager again but at that time it was not possible to have a good discussion. An appointment was made for a discussion for one week later.

Miep is, again, not doing well. She suffers again from many delusions, possibly because she did not take her medicines for some time now. New tensions have occurred because of a visit from her ex-boyfriend and her son. She also stopped with her voluntary work and has no further contact with the GGZ.

Miep comes back after one week and proves to be very approachable. At her own initiative she has started taking her medicines again because she wants to prove that,

even when she uses medicines, there are enemies. The case manager tells Miep “it is not important what the medicines are for as long as they make you feel good”. Miep totally agrees to that.

The counsellor reflects upon this: “it seems that a three-month crisis has been averted.

The last crisis took 20 years so this is a tremendous improvement. Furthermore, she did it herself”

100 In the meantime, new agreements have been made with Miep that she is going to do voluntary work for two daily periods per week in the scope of useful daytime occupation. The GGZ is applying for ‘long-term home care’ so that she can be given made-to-measure (psychological) supervision, if necessary sheltered accommodation. The GGZ will also deal more explicitly with Miep’s occurring anxieties and distrust and how she can better maintain the relations in her surroundings. The case manager talked to Miep about ending her relationship with the budget guidance council so that she can control her own finances again. It is agreed that the case manager will look after Miep for some time and, in particular, will help her with the set up of a simple administrative filing system. Miep likes that very much, especially because she felt very uncertain about it.

6.4 Hetty’s mediation programme

Intake and assessment

The case manager of the social services called Hetty for a talk. She has registered with the CWI and through them was also registered with the social services.

Hetty, the case manager and the counsellor are present at the intake interview. Hetty dearly wants to work so that she can live together with her partner in her own house. She has searched for jobs at the CWI register and an employment agency. She has worked two weeks with an employer who sacked her in the probationary period because of an eye infection. She has applied for jobs several times but without success.

The counsellor later found out that this was because of her disinterested, negative attitude. Because of her lack of success she felt that everyone was against her, that is why she needs support from someone to bring her out of her negative attitude and help her find a suitable workplace.

The counsellor indicates that he will help her “I’ve heard that one before” was her answer. In her intake interview, she talked about her past and the difficulty she had with juvenile welfare work. At the moment she has a good contact with a supervisor of the juvenile welfare centre, a form of voluntary care service that she follows on their advice. Hetty agrees to the counsellor’s suggestion to contact this care worker so that he can get a better picture of Hetty’s case.

The counsellor also wants to know why Hetty is so stressed in the interview; the tension shows in her face, maybe there are other problems

The counsellor hears from the care worker of the many problems in Hetty's past and Hetty herself said how she felt that she was often misunderstood. Last year she was thrown out of the adolescent unit because of so-called drugs use. After a urine test had proven negative they still did not believe her. According to the social worker, Hetty has a strong unconventional personality. She is a 'fighter' that is her strength and her survival mechanism. Because of her many disappointments with assistance, she has little trust in people and feels she has to do everything herself.

The juvenile welfare worker supports the idea that Hetty should live independently and also finds it important that Hetty starts work so that she forms a more positive outlook on the future. Assistance must not only 'dig into the past' but also work on the future. With work and income Hetty can gain a form of independence which she so strongly seeks. The juvenile welfare worker agrees to supervise Hetty personally.

101

Programme plan

Hetty wants to work and have her own wages as quickly as possible so that she can be independent and live with her friend.

Maybe it would be best for her to firstly follow further education, but at the moment she absolutely does not want to do this. The counsellor chooses to comply with her wishes, which is supporting her to get a paid job. Probably there will be an opportunity later to, for example, follow a part time training coupled with work. The counsellor can see the possibility of this, considering her strong motivation, but it will require mediation support because of her negative attitude towards people.

Beside this, it is important that the juvenile welfare centre continues to give her guidance. She remains under guardianship until she is 18 but after that she still needs personal guidance.

Mediation programme

Hetty, in any case, wants to earn a living as soon as possible, without money she cannot go on.

The counsellor discusses with Hetty what kind of work would suit her, and it becomes quickly clear that the kind of work is not important, as she will do any type of work. What are important though are the conditions and the environment of the workplace. Hetty wants most of all to be left alone and not to have too much interference from others.

The counsellor forms a picture of a possible workplace:

- *A small business with not too many people*
- *Unskilled work that is easy to learn*
- *Colleagues that will leave her in peace*
- *An employer who will give her the opportunity to build up the working pace*
- *To start with a short apprenticeship*

The counsellor, using his network, is thinking of a company where he placed someone else a year before. This was an older unskilled woman, not a very talkative type, someone who could support Hetty to fit in. The employer is someone who gives people the room and time to adapt to the work.

The counsellor knows the company and the employer and, in this case, he does not need to make a preliminary exploratory visit. He told Hetty about the type of company. Hetty really wants to go and see if there is work for her and find out what the work conditions are. An appointment for a mediatory discussion is made with the employer by telephone.

102 During the interview, Hetty got to know the company and the work that they do. The employer showed her what she could do and introduced her to the other employees. Hetty indicated that she was willing to try it and the counsellor suggested that she starts with a two-weeks apprenticeship. This will give her a chance to find out if the work suits her, and gives the employer a chance to get to know her and see if she can adapt to the conditions and the work pattern.

The company makes charcoal blocks that are used to light water pipes that are frequently used in Turkish and Arabian communities. This has nothing to do with drugs, but with apple and other sorts of tobacco. Hetty's work is to pack these blocks, sitting at a workbench with the materials at hand. She works alone and can listen to the radio at the same time. During the break she meets a few other employees, who otherwise do not disturb her.

Hetty is very please to do this work, it is dirty work, but that does not worry her; she has a shower in the evening. Most importantly, she is left in peace: "they treat me normally here and they do not interfere". In other places she often used to feel, as is she were 'a case', a pile of paper, a file. "I'm also a person" is her strong message. Here they leave me alone and give me a chance. She now has a rose-coloured image of the future in spite of the 'black' charcoal with which she works.

In a follow-up discussion with the employer the counsellor was told that he was very pleased with Hetty. At first he did not think that such a young girl would want to do that type of work, something without glamour. In the beginning she was certainly unsure, but she got soon into the working routine. She now works 32 hours a week and has her own income. The employer admits that the minimum youth wage is not sufficient for this type of work and he is willing to pay her a little more.

The counsellor later relates some more of his method of job finding.

- *The conditions at the workplace are mostly the deciding factor for a successful placement; he not only has a broad knowledge of businesses and possible employment places, he also knows the atmosphere and conditions in which the work is carried out; this information is of great importance for matching, choosing a suitable workplace that matches the search profile of the participant;*
- *The search is not based on published vacancies, this kind of work is usually not advertised or registered in the labour exchange (CWI) or employment agencies; they are not advertised but filled via informal channels.*
- *Employers can always use new staff, on the basis of natural staff turnover.*

The juvenile welfare worker will continue with her part of Hetty's supervision. Her most important task is to get Hetty to learn to live with her personal problems. She also involves Hetty's friend who, due to his own problems, is also not accepted by others in Hetty's environment. At the moment Hetty chooses her friend's side, reason for the welfare worker to also involve him in the care programme.

The fact that Hetty now has work has a positive influence on her and she can start to look for a house. However, there are still successions of points of attention. Hetty has had many traumatic experiences in her life, the death of her mother, the poor relationship with her father, various problems with the juvenile welfare care, all of which she has not yet been able to deal with, leaving her with mood swings. Because of her fighting spirit, she has been able to conquer most of them, but she must learn not always to show this survival type behaviour as it causes her to lose some important potential contacts. She must develop her independence further in a responsible manner. Juvenile welfare care will focus on these points of attention. The counsellor will stay in contact with the juvenile welfare worker and offer support when these personal developments affect the work. The counsellor will also have occasional contact with the employer and with Hetty.

Appendix

Recommendations for additional literature (mostly in the Dutch language)

105

Methodology

- M. Coenen-Hanegraaf e.a. (1998), *Begeleid werken. Theorie en methodiek van een individuele, vraaggerichte benadering*. Jan van Arkel, Utrecht.
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- Dekker en P.van der Aa (2000), *Methodiek en Beleid van Sociale Activering, een individuele en vraaggerichte benadering*. Elsevier, Den Haag.
- N. van Riet en H. Wouters (2005), *Casemanagement, Een leer-werkboek over de organisatie en coördinatie van zorg-, hulp- en dienstverlening*. Van Gorcum, Assen.

Interaction

- Marshall B. Rosenberg, '*Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*'. Puddle Dancer Press, Encinitas CA, 2003.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984) *Experiential Learning*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall
- D. Ofman, (1998), *Bezieling en kwaliteit in organisaties*. Seville Uitgevers BV, Utrecht
- E. Hoffman (2002), *Interculturele gespreksvoering. Theorie en praktijk van het TOPOI-model*. Bohn Stafleu Van Loghum, Houten.
- P. Watzlawick, J.H. Beavin and D.D. Jackson (1967), *Pragmatics of Human Communication*. Norton, New York.

Mediation

- E. van Doorn, P. van Dijk (2004), *Ontwikkelingsgericht begeleiden in alledaagse situaties*. Soest, uitgeverij Nelissen
- R. Feuerstein, Y. Rand and J.E. Rynders (1988), *Don't accept me as I am*. Plenum Publishing Corporation, New York.

About STAB, Fontys Actief and Stichting Onbenutte Kwaliteiten Rotterdam

STAB supports organizations that use or want to start to use the methodology described in this publication to formulate their vision and mission, to structure their work processes, personnel management, promote professionalism, and to develop their network. They also offer schooling and training in the individual customer-oriented methodology.

107

STAB has also developed this methodology for a number of other disciplines, for instance, psychiatry, social job creation, working with personalized development plans or ability development plans and human resource development policy of companies.

STAB also conducts policy research on the methodology described in this publication in the field of, amongst others, the development of quality criteria for invitation and implementation of tenders, research in processes and results and the development of policy instruments.

Fontys Actief is an independent expertise centre of Fontys University of Professional Education, from where work and social reintegration contracts are executed in connection with knowledge development, innovative projects, training and consultancy. Fontys Actief manages and also conducts the reintegration project Helmond Actief and reintegration contracts for other municipalities. Fontys Actief supports organisations in developing innovative projects and implementing new methods in work mediation, social activation, casemanagement, local community based social policies and projects.

The Stichting Onbenutte Kwaliteiten Rotterdam is the umbrella organization for the implementation of social activation in Rotterdam. It is the network for municipal umbrella and local organizations for welfare, care and employment, and conducts subsidized activation programmes aimed at social participation and activation programmes aimed at work reintegration in reintegration contracts. Important clients are the Rotterdam boroughs, the Rotterdam Department for Social Services and Employment and the UWV. The programmes are conducted in accordance with the methodology 'Unused Qualities' that has been developed in Rotterdam but is now also used in several other municipalities. More than 10,000 Rotterdam citizens have taken part in a programme with Onbenutte Kwaliteiten.

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109

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Social participation

This book contains a practical description of a successful method to guide people that have been standing in the sideline for long periods of time to find them a fitting form of social participation. This can be done through paid or voluntary work, activities aimed at physical of psychological and/or social recovery, or a combination of those.

The method combines supervision and mediation. Supervision aims to enhance people's self-steering abilities. By considering their perspectives and abilities, actual steps can be taken towards a long-lasting form of social participation. Mediation focuses on the involvement of various actors such as employers, social services and social networks, to reach a long-lasting participation. Case studies visualize the diverse people involved, their problems and prospects, the counsellors' methodological approach and reflections and the actual completion of the activation programmes.

The book is aimed at counsellors and mediators in the broad field of social activation, reintegration in the labour market and active support, who deal with people of whom it is generally accepted that they have few chances in the labour market. The book is also of interest to those working in this field from a policy or organizational perspective because it shows insight into the actual functioning of programme supervision and mediation. This knowledge is important for creating the optimal conditions for this working method.

Finally, the book is also of interest to professionals in related areas, such as case managers from the social services, human resource managers, career counsellors, and local and specific social care workers.

- ❑ Organization for the implementation of employed persons insurance schemes – reintegration and temporary income support
- ❑ Regional Institute for Ambulatory Mental Welfare
- ❑ Organization for the implementation of employed persons insurance schemes – reintegration and temporary income support
- ❑ Mental health care and care and treatment of drug addicts

