Knowing myself and the others

**Summary:** Using LEGO® bricks can be really useful to promote inclusion, a sense of belonging, and also to enhance communication and language skills. But, in particular, it can make us understand a lot about ourselves: the colors we pick, the way in which we assemble the blocks, the orientation of the action figures, have specific meanings and are significant because during the process we tend to make decisions without even thinking about it. As a consequence, very often while building with bricks, people discover aspects of themselves they were not aware of. At the same time, listening to other people's descriptions of their works, it’s important to get to know them.

**Key words:** LEGO®, bricks, self-knowledge, sharing, skills.

**Aims:** Enhancing self-awareness, self-confidence and teamwork; practicing the L2 and improving speaking and listening skills; promoting social inclusion, mutual understanding and cultural exchange.

**Participants:** Trainers, teachers and students of all school levels.

**Description:** This activity consists in two stages:

1. How I see myself in the new country/community;
2. Teamwork.

In both cases the participants can use all the bricks they want and there are no rules or restrictions. In order to enhance their language skills, they can only use the L2 to describe their works. For the first activity, they will have to create a scene that represents how they see themselves in the new community: it can be a representation of a specific experience they have had or an imaginary situation, or simply a description of how they feel (for example if they feel integrated and accepted or alone). The facilitator will ask some questions to each one of the participants to make them share their feelings and emotions. After the facilitator, also the participants can ask questions (in the L2 of course) to the other members of the group, to make them explain some aspects that have aroused their curiosity. When everyone has made his description, the second phase will start. In this case the participants will work together and will have to build something that addresses the following topic: what can be done to enhance social inclusion? The participants will have to learn to express their ideas, to compromise and to follow each other’s leads. At the end of the activity, two of the participants will be chosen to describe the output and all together will provide suggestions to find solutions and ideas to the above mentioned problem.

**Material:** Number of LEGO®bricks sufficient for all the participants.

**Method:** Learning by Doing; Cooperative Learning; Active Learning.

**Advice for Facilitators:** The aim of these activities is to enhance social inclusion and to make the participants feel part of something, but the topics addressed are really delicate and it is possible that they will give rise to uncontrollable emotional reactions.

**Contributor:** School administration, refugee institutions, youth welfare institutions, migrant associations.