



European *Generation* Link

Promote European Citizenship
through Intergenerational and Intercultural
Learning

Multiplier Seminar, Baden, September 2008



Gender sensitive guidance and counselling as a method for promoting gender equality

- Visible seminar in Austria

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Progressed gender equality laws, but highly gendered segregations

- The gender equality is rather well progressed in both levels of ideology and educational opportunities in Finland.
- Despite of good laws and norms education, professions and working life are strictly divided according to genders.



Gender socialization

- Gender socialization starts early.
- That's why gender sensitive teaching and counselling should start early too.



Gender socialization





Gender socialization





Gender sensitive counselling

(Juutilainen 2003)

- Gender sensitive counselling emphasises processes increasing the awareness of the social order of gender.
- It means occupational counselling that identifies gendered structures and processes in society, as well as how they affect to men's and women's lives.



Gender sensitive counselling...

- Gender sensitive counselling emphasises not only the female point of view but also men's opportunities to become aware of how their thinking and actions may be governed by stereotypes.



Gender sensitive counselling...

- Gender sensitive counselling - like counselling in general - aims to improve customers' ('clients' / 'guidance seekers') well being and their ability to take action in questions related to their choices in life.
- The term 'empowerment' is often mentioned in this connection: it refers to the process through which people can live in a better balance with their environment and follow bravely their own goals.



Counselling means...

- Time, attention and respect!



Gender sensitive counselling...

- A very central point in gender sensitive counselling is awareness and creation of new meanings.
- Discussions with the counsellor about one's life situation and opportunities, can help to take a critical view of her/his gender-related values, beliefs and attitudes (for example dealing with work life).



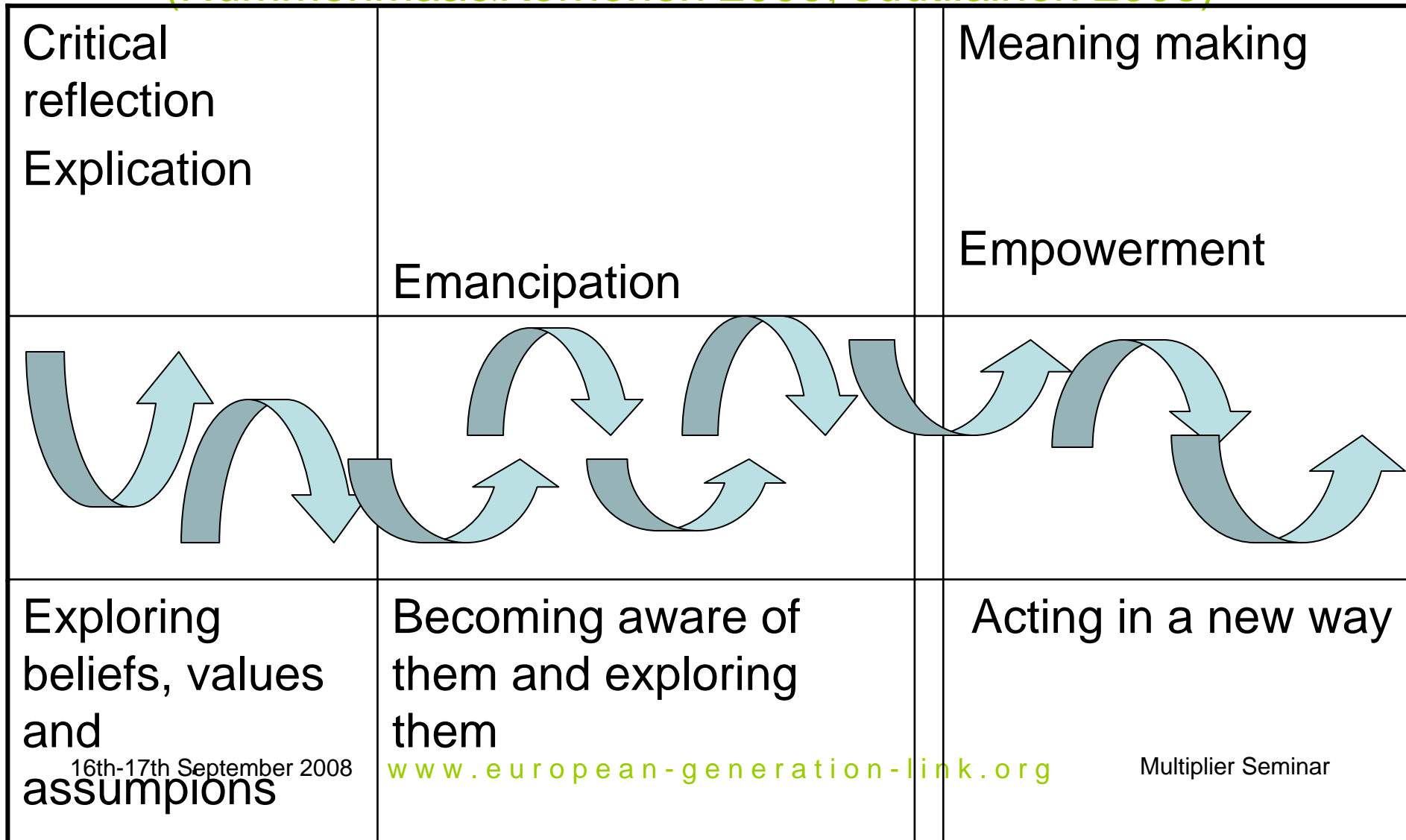
Gender sensitive counselling...

- It may be, for example, that a (female) customer/client has, at some point, formed a very negative picture of one's (her) abilities to learn technical skills or mathematics, although such an image might have no foundation in reality.



Deconstructing and reconstructing process

(Nummenmaa&Korhonen 2000; Juutilainen 2003)



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? ? ?

- What, then, does gender sensitivity mean in terms of occupational skills and activities?



The skills of gender sensitive counsellor (Juutilainen 2006)

- First, it means that the counsellor has a theoretical knowledge of gender socialisation and gender system
 - She/he knows equality law and non discrimination legislation and other norms.



The skills of gender sensitive counsellor...

- The counsellor is aware of those contexts that have been guiding the men's and women's history
 - Different role expectations and demands
 - Action and interaction among and between women and men in every day life
 - The concept of generation (Mannheim 1928/1952) is very important in this context.



The skills of gender sensitive counsellor...

- The counsellor understands that the world is, in many ways, a different place for men and women.
- She or he is aware of the visible and invisible barriers of women's and men's lives – which quite often are both psychological and contextual.
- The counsellor is aware of the processes that produce gendered constructions and actions.



The skills of gender sensitive counsellor...

- The counsellor has skills to analyze "the reality" and to reflect his/her own behavior, gender-related beliefs and assumptions.
- She/he recognices the gendered elements in language and discourses and speaks in the way which respects diversity.





The skills of gender sensitive counsellor...

- The counsellor also takes into consideration how his or her own actions affect the counselling process and other occupational interaction.
 - Only from such a basis can a counsellor encourage customers to engage in a critical evaluation process, in which they analyse their own actions and underlying assumptions.



The skills of gender sensitive counsellor...

- Gender-sensitive counselling helps the student to make sensible choices about studying and to plan her/his life from her/his own starting points.
- The important task of counselling is to support especially those who have chosen a line of work untypical to their gender and to empower students to turn to professions that are untypical for their gender.

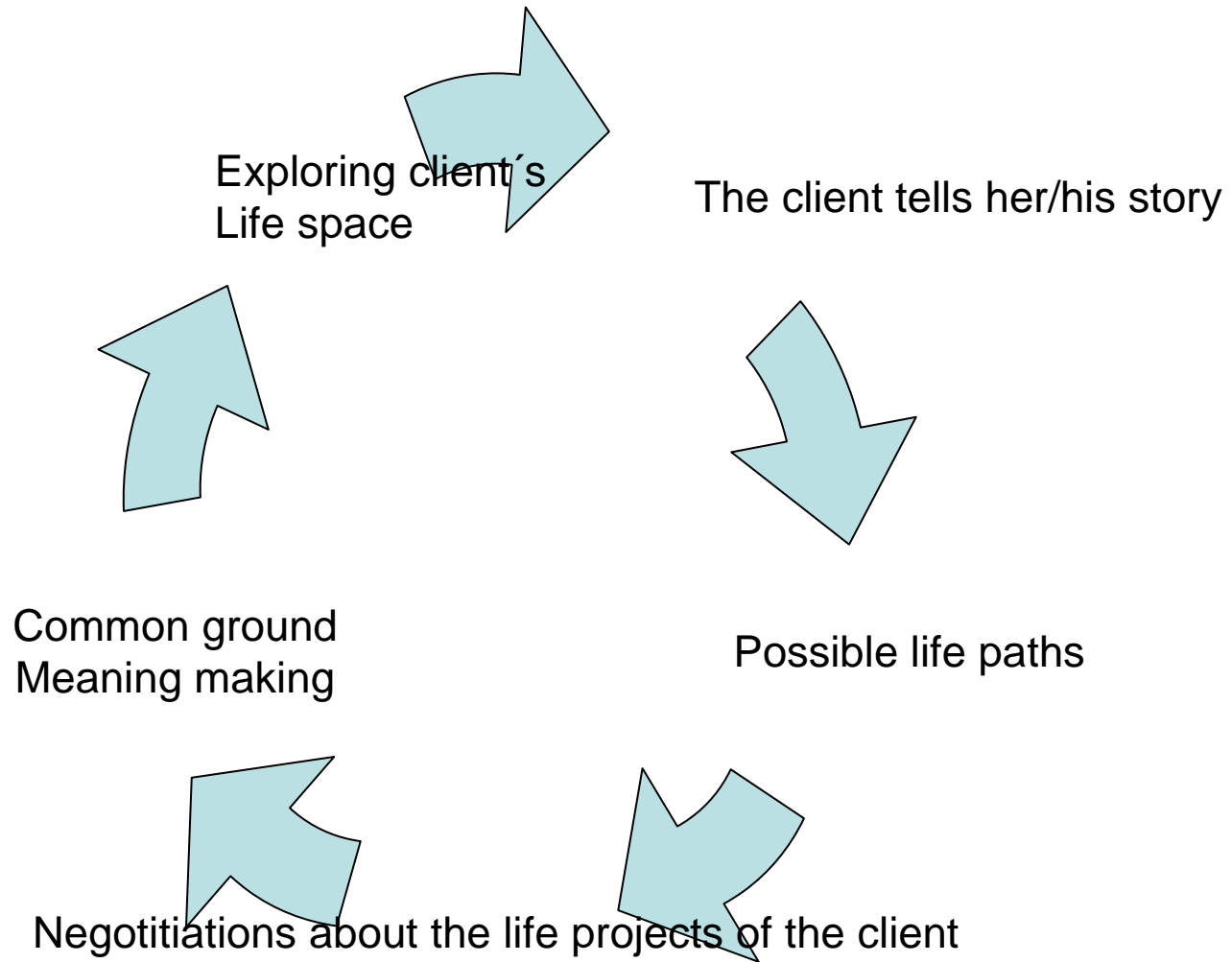


The competences of the counsellor

- Theoretical knowledge
- Methodological skills
- Social/contextual knowledge -
"here and now"



Counselling process (Spangar 2000)





The holistic counselling

- It's important that the counsellor let the customer / client make her or his life space visible - as much as she or he wants.
- The holistic counselling process include three levels (Kasurinen 2004):
 - to guide studies and promote one's learning or coping skills and strategies
 - to support psycho-social development
 - to promote life planning > counselling towards future.



- “We don’t see the things
as they are.
We see them as we are.”
Anais Nin



Thank you for your attention!

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