Child's Play: Cooperative Games as Tools of Deradicalization

A Media Ecology & Strategic Analysis (MESA) Group

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Research on radicalization is more robust theoretically than research on deradicalization. While there are several workable theoretical systems explaining radicalization, no theory of deradicalization exists (Koehler, 2017).

The most commonly discussed characteristic in theories on radicalized individuals is the loss of pluralization of political concepts and values that ultimately lead to violence as a valid course of action. That is to say, radicalization is notably correlated to a reduction in the number of perspectives a person is able to consider.

It has been proposed that by reversing this reduction of considered perspectives and introducing a 're-pluralization' of political concepts and values, a path of deradicalization emerges. This process of re-pluralization includes, "a growing perception of alternative options to solve a decreasingly important (ideologically defined) problem" (Koehler, 2017, p. 81).

"[The] *task of working with young radicalized individuals [is] nothing other than engaging with an extreme state of self-centeredness*" (Weilnböck, 2014, p. 5).

Deradicalization efforts that focus on re-building, or "re-socializing," a sense of self-identity that includes relationships with others seem the most promising. Certain techniques of reflection on narrative identity are designed intentionally to help contextualize action by accounting for as much complexity on the environment as possible. Exercises that allow for, and reflect upon, the co-creation of meaning within narratives and narrative roles help individuals tolerate, value and ultimately seek complexity.

Proposed Action

We propose using gaming exercises as intentional tools of narrative reflection among youth at risk of radicalization. These games provide opportunities for an examination of self-identity in relation to the various environments encountered and co-construction of meaning with others. An additional benefit is the cost-effectiveness of the games selected, ease of implementation, as well as the adaptability of these games to differing environmental contexts. This project offers a variety of such gaming exercises for CENTCOM to consider adapting toward various deradicalization initiatives.

Summary

The first objective of this research study was to assess current deradicalization programs and identify how these programs intentionally (or not) incorporate narrative reflection techniques in their programming. Researchers examined deradicalization programs, academic material, and other secondary deradicalization data for ways in which narrative reflection techniques were incorporated and discussed.

The second object of this research was to identify examples of easily adaptable, cost-effective gaming exercises in promotion of narrative reflection that could be used to

mitigate, or even prevent, radicalization among refugee youth. Researchers examined the designs of various cooperative gaming exercises for those that illicit narrative construction, perspective sharing, and reflection opportunities.

Key Learning Component in De-Radicalization Programs:

1. Focus on principles of *group-dynamic based learning*- where participants share their personal narratives and accounts of events that have occurred either in their biographies and/or their social environments.
2. Attempt to develop central personality competencies among radicalized (and vulnerable to radicalization) youth, including emotional intelligence, empathy, the ability to build trust, the ability to form relationships, and, most importantly, tools for personal reflection; often taking the form of exercises where participants are taught how examine their own actions in relation to others. Narrative stimulates personal appraisals of violent acts, develops abilities to empathize and evoke moments of retrospection.
3. Have an emphasis on the pedagogical roots of radicalization, education risks and protective factors that can be identified relevant to prevention and symptomatic treatment. Teach early detection practices, prevention activities, interventions (community empowerment and engagement, family support and alternative narratives) and exit strategies as learning modules.
4. Focus on the role of civil society in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization. Youth are key civil society actors in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization. Dialogue facilitation is identified as a critical practical approach.
5. When implementing deradicalization exercises, it is important to account for the contextual nuances of the radicalizing environment and the local environment of the participants. This means exercises must be custom-tailored for the specific circumstances they are deployed.

Key Element of Narrative Reflection in De-Radicalization Programs:

6. Narrative reflection can manifest itself in participants learning to take an interest in what others do, as well as understanding points of similarities and differences in other people's paths.
7. Narrative reflection can be used as a tool aspiring to "awaken participants' attention to what is experienced and narrated, and for the subtleties, contradictions and biographical influences that the worldview of each and every person displays."
8. Narrative reflection can be considered as the "importance of open and reflective communication for guiding adolescent youth in their search for meaning and identity, commitment to society, dealing with diversity and conflicting values…there must be room for critical reflection."
9. "Dialogue facilitation … provides opportunities for reflection and constructive debate on themes such as personal and societal development, education, independence, justice, honor, identities, gender norms, belonging and post-conflict reconciliation, etc."

10. Narrative reflection is a potential mechanism for contextualizing radicalizing environment and local environment in deradicalization.

Games as Tools in Promotion of Narrative Reflection

11. Games and mental exercises are fundamental tools at developing our identity. We are in many ways brought closer together when we share experiences, victories, hardship and growth through one another.
12. It is through proper counsel and the use of tools such as games and exercises that youth can come to a greater understanding of themselves and the world around them and fulfill their psychological needs.
13. Game and exercise examples from: the Youth Counselling Against Radicalisation (YCARE) toolbox, Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) toolbox and Maheshvarananda's (2017) book *Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World*.

CENTCOM QUESTION

How to break the cycle of radicalization, particularly with children who know no other social system/model of governance? Are there possible graduated steps to deradicalization, i.e., judicial efforts, penal efforts, religious efforts, familial efforts, treatment efforts, that can be applied?

Introduction

Research in the field of countering violent extremism (CVE) has grown significantly in the last few decades. Many government, intergovernmental and nongovernment organizations have made it a priority to focus on counterterrorism programs. For example, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed the Resolution 2178 (in 2014) that urges the member-states to establish rehabilitation measures for returned fighters from Iraq and Syria, and the Resolution 2396 (in 2017) that calls for specific measures to counter terrorism and conduct CVE activities, including counter-narrative campaigns and rehabilitation programs. In 2016, the UNSC presented the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism to the UN General Assembly, which includes over seventy CVE recommendations, such as "disengagement, rehabilitation and counseling programs for persons engaged in violent extremism" (United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, 2016). The European Union revised its counter-terrorism strategy in 2014 with a strong emphasis on "disengagement and exit strategies" (Revised EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism, 2014).

Many CVE programs and research studies focus on counter-narratives in the deradicalization process. For example, the European Commission and the Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN) funded the action research project "European Platform of Deradicalization Narratives" (EDNA). The EDNA project aims at countering extremist story-telling on the internet and evaluates which kinds of narratives work to deradicalize vulnerable youth, as well as instill sustainable personal development and pro-social attitudes. The challenge of this project and other similar initiatives rests in their inability to create counter-narratives that work.

An extremist counter-narrative is defined as "an effective comprehensive message that dismantles and counter-argues against every dimension of the extremist narrative" (Weilnböck, 2013, p. 2). There are various misconceptions and fallacies of the approach of creating counter-narratives, as identified by Weilnböck (2013). First, some believe that creating straightforward counter-narratives using credible information and sources (such as former extremists, victims, family members, social work practitioners) are a key to success (Weilnböck, 2013). This method ignores individual differences among radicalized members and ignores the complexity of facilitating sustainable deradicalization processes. Second, first-line practitioners maintain that arguing, contesting and countering methods produce results opposite to desired. They are ineffective against radicalized individuals because they "further provoke and harden them, since radicalized individuals feed on being 'countered'" (Weilnböck, 2013, p. 3). Finally, Weilnbock argues that what we generally refer to "extremist narrative" is not really a narrative at all, because it does not include "a process of exchanging first-hand, personally lived-through experiences" (Weilnböck, 2013, p. 3), as a narrative definition maintains. Considering the ineffectiveness of deradicalization and counter-narratives, this research project proposes to study narratives as tools of reflections on self-identity designed intentionally to help contextualize and account for as much complexity of the environment as possible.

This report is structured as follows. We will first provide our theoretical understandings of radicalization theory, deradicalization theory and narratives (and their role in our lives). Then, we will discuss narratives as they relate to extremist ideology. Further, we propose how narrative reflections may serve as a deradicalization tool. At the end, we will include a discussion on sample exercises (games) that can be used as deradicalization tools.

Radicalization and Deradicalization Theory

Research on radicalization is more robust from the theoretical standpoint than research on deradicalization (Koehler, 2017). A number of radicalization models have been identified over the years that identify phases and steps involved in violent radicalization. For example, the NYPD model was developed in 2007 based on case studies of jihadist-motivated radicalization in Western countries. The four-step model started with the pre-radicalization stage, followed by the self-identification, indoctrination and jihadization stages (Silber & Bhat, 2007).

In 2005, Moghaddam introduced the staircase model to terrorism. It is conceptualized by a ground floor and a series of five higher floors, each characterized by particular psychological processes: perceived deprivation, search for opportunities, frustration and fears, moral commitment, "us versus them," and the terrorist act (Moghaddam, 2005). The benefit of this model is that it allows for multiple starting points of motivations to become a member of terrorist organizations, including both positive (such as honor and morality) and negative (such as revenge) factors.

Another model, developed by Marc Sageman includes relevant factors for radicalization, which do not necessarily follow in one sequence. These factors include: moral outrage

(such as reacting against killings of Muslim civilians in Syria), specific interpretation or worldview (such as interpretation of these killings to be a part of the global struggle against Islam), contextualization with personal experiences (such as discrimination and racism as a proof of the struggle), and, finally, mobilization through interactive networks (Sageman, 2004, 2007).

These theories provide steps to radicalization, so it is possible to assume that by reversing these steps, one can develop a theory of deradicalization. Unfortunately, this is not the case, and no theory of deradicalization exists (Koehler, 2017). One commonality among the discussed radicalization theories is the process of 'de-pluralization' of political concepts and values that ultimately lead to violence as a valid course of action. It has been proposed that by reversing this process and introducing 're-pluralization' of political concepts and values, a path of deradicalization emerges (Koehler, 2017). The process of re-pluralization includes "a growing perception of alternative options to solve a decreasingly important (ideologically defined) problem" (Koehler, 2017, p. 81). Re-pluralization can often be triggered by rational decision making processes (such as cost-benefit analyses), doubt and uncertainty about the correct course of action, external events that are capable of opening alternatives to violence and/or external interventions (Koehler, 2017). External interventions are of particular importance, and they must satisfy two criteria. First, to be successful, external interventions (various deradicalizations programs) must be hand-tailored to the individual radicalization process and psychological factors behind a person's commitment (Koehler, 2017). Second, these interventions must either introduce radicalized individuals to alternative values, political concepts, definitions and options for behavior, or diffuse the individual's conviction of the absolute priority of the ideologically framed problems (Koehler, 2017). Narrative reflections address both criteria for the success of deradicalization programs.

Theoretical Understandings of Narratives

Narratives are defined as "story-telling accounts of first-hand experiences and actions that an individual has personally lived-through and/or committed" (Weilnböck, 2013, p. 3). In all of our reflections on self and identity, we are forced by the human mind to think of ourselves in terms of story. This is because stories are the basis by which trajectory and the rank order of things to achieve and desire are positioned; without such ordering, life, and the objects encountered within that life, would be a meaningless assortment of random encounters. Stories, and the overarching narratives guiding them, weave together the random assortment of objects we encounter into some kind of structured, sensible web. Even if that web is hastily constructed to justify an action in the moment, a story is still formulated when explaining the unfolding sequence of actions.

This requirement of story to rank order actions in relation to the environment presents significant limitations. First and foremost, false, misleading, and completely random objects, actions and activities encountered are still woven into our realities by mere contact. This places an extraordinarily high burden on the individual to know how to properly order the experiences of reality they live, reflect and act on. It is an important consideration that the rank ordering of the external world offered through story can be

quickly learned, assumed, and dismissed. How quickly and dramatically the elements of the external world are ranked and reranked through mental role of adoption and incorporation depends upon perceptions related to stability of environmental roles and control of role assignment. Driving and altering how an individual understands themselves within the various roles they assume are factors related to environmental mastery (stabilities and efficiencies), which require various types of practiced and learned reflections on story.

There are considerable drawbacks to this requirement. The practical realities of existence mean the stories we tell about ourselves are not often reflected upon. When reflection does occur, it is often done in expedience, with nothing more than simple fragments cobbled together to satisfy the dilemma of the moment. We are bound by necessitates of achievement, both for survival and for attainment, that our particular set of circumstances outline. We are limited in our exposure to ways of thinking about ourselves and our actions. We are limited in our exposure to other interpretations of narrative roles and actions within our environment. And, perhaps most importantly, it seems more logical to use our time in the pursuit of external tangibles rather than searching within ourselves. The result is that the human mind relies upon justifying actions in reality through an assignment of broadly understood narrative roles. The results can be, and are, widely problematic for how human beings treat the environments around them.

Narratives and Extremism

When we discuss extreme actions, it is important first to note we are speaking of a disagreement in an interpretation of the ordering of actions between individuals whose interpretations of reality will necessarily vary to some degree based on differing points of exposure and reflection. In the case of violent extremism, we are speaking of a widely, non-normative, ordering of the environment by an individual or group or individuals with harmful intentions toward portions of that environment. This variance occurs either as an intentional assumption of a narrative role and/or through an inconsideration of the potential narrative role interpretations. That is to say, extreme action occurs because the individual has intentionally decided to act out such role toward the environment and/or the individual is oblivious to other rank orderings of the environment. Violent extreme action has as its intention to harm elements of the environment seen in opposition to one's invested narrative role.

Some individuals face existential crises more directly and more frequently than others, and they are forced to reconcile their understanding of narrative role and narrative interpretations of reality more regularly and in ways that will vary by factors of speed, ability, and intention. Without an education into how to properly reflect upon such required re-rankings and re-orderings associated with narrative role transition, an individual becomes susceptible in particular toward violent extremism.

It is not difficult to understand why young, refugee children would be susceptible to violent extremist ideologies. Violent extremism offers a clear foundational ordering of role assignment and perceptions of control over that role assignment. It can help to order a chaotic environment quickly. It provides convenient and broadly interpretable narrative

trajectories of victimization, villainization, and righteousness toward intelligible and justifiable actions.

While these are significant strengths, the adoption of violent extremism is foundationally rooted in having some oppositional external system it functions against. That is to say, the violent extremist narrative could not functionally exist without the commitment of overcoming some system. There is an element of justifiable revenge and/or righteous justice in the destruction leveled against the system to be overcome. What allows the destructive action to be justifiable and intelligible is the extraordinarily low rank order given to the oppositional system within the narrative. The simplicity of the narrative elements allows for a clear and extreme spectrum of goods and evils to emerge. It is important to note that violent extremist narrative roles are adopted because of the conveniences and stabilities afforded, not because the narrative has survived techniques of reflection.

Narrative Reflection as a Deradicalization Tool

The simplicity of narrative elements and the clear dominance of the one narrative over others is often linked to the self-centeredness of an individual. Researchers claim that self-centeredness is a key feature of any extremist state of mind (Weilnböck, 2014), and first-line practitioners agree that the..

> task of working with young radicalized individuals [is] nothing other but engaging with an extreme state of self-centeredness. In some cases this preoccupation with oneself – and some key identity issues – may be so severe that almost any concept of the other and of the self-in-relation-to-the-other has been lost (Weilnböck, 2014, p. 5).

Deradicalization efforts that focus on re-building or "re-socializing" the sense of the self and others seem the most promising. Certain techniques of reflection on narrative identity are designed intentionally to help contextualize action by accounting for as much complexity on the environment as possible. Cultivating this kind of narrative reflection is necessary to defeat extremist ideologies. Exercises that allow for, and reflect upon, co-creation of meaning within narratives and narrative roles help individuals tolerate, value and ultimately seek complexity. Complexity in this sense is refers to additional, outside, information and opinions on one's environment, how that environment operates, and how the interdependences of that environment are made manifest. They stress a contextualization of the environment through an awareness and examination of one's role within an ever-complex system rather than as an individual in opposition to one. Practitioners tend to agree that the approach that is most beneficial for facilitating change in self-preoccupied ideologically-extreme young people be a "dialogic, open-process, and non-directional" (Weilnböck, 2014, p. 5).

We propose that such approach includes narrative reflection - an examination of self-identity in relation to the various environments the person encounters. As an individual learns to recognize the various roles they assume they learn to tolerate, appreciate, and ultimately value the variances within themselves. And, because the human mind thinks in

story, it forces a grander macro-narrative of self to be constructed. The value of this added understanding of self is eventually transferred over to how the individual views the environment around itself.

An individual learns to value and understand complexity though repeated examination and awareness of one's own narrative roles. This increased self-awareness and awareness of the environment is valuable because it reveals interdependencies of self to others. Once awakened to these connections, the idea of self is expanded and the process is amplified.

The first step toward self-recognition is patterned and intentional introspection aligning action to identity. That is to say, one must develop the practice of assessing why a particular action is done over an alternative one. This is ultimately a question of goodness posed to oneself over and over and over again. Inherently, the repetition of that question forces an account to be taken of how others might view that same action from an alternative perspective. This process extends the sense of self beyond the self and in so doing a bird's eye vantage point of self becomes increasingly evident. In other words, a more concrete story of self begins to emerge.

Previous research found a positive change in explanatory self-narratives to be an important aspect in desistance from crime (Maruna, 2004). This finding was then applied to several deradicalization programs that incorporated teaching participants about self-awareness and self-confidence:

> *As many active offenders and extremists portray their own involvement and criminal activities the result of uncontrollable external forces, fate, or personality, critical debates, participation in explanatory workshops, group discussions, biographical analysis, and narrative reframing have been used to alter the way participants see themselves and their efficacy in regard to change* (Koehler, 2017, p. 230).

This research study moves beyond just self-awareness and self-reflection to understand narrative reflections, examinations of self-identity *in relation to the various environments* the person encounters.

Methodology

The first objective of this research study was to assess current deradicalization programs and identify how these programs intentionally (or not) incorporate narrative reflection techniques in their programming. Researchers utilized a snowball sampling technique to get a sample of five deradicalization programs that incorporate narrative reflection techniques in their programming. First, initial materials were identified through an open search using relevant keywords (such as "deradicalization," "countering extremism," "CVE," and "radicalization counter-narratives"). In addition, several academics in the field were contacted to share the materials. For some programs, researchers were able to acquire primary data materials (manuals, reports, guidelines, training tools, exercises, etc.). For other programs, researchers relied on secondary data (programs were assessed by other researchers/professionals in the field).

We will first provide a brief overview of each selected program, highlighting elements of narrative reflection within these programs. Then, we will discuss a list of exercises (games) that can be used in the field to promote narrative reflections.

Deradicalization Programs
Cultures Interactive

Cultures Interactive is a nongovernment organization based in Germany that works on issues related to right-wing-extremism, fundamentalism and adolescent violence among youth. One of the methodological tools and underlying assumptions of the project is the principle of *group-dynamic based learning*. The module of thematically-open conversation round is run as a self-awareness group, where participants share their personal narratives and accounts of events that have occurred either in their biographies and/or their social environments (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011). The topics of these conversations are outlined in very broad terms, and are often derived from civic education modules or introduced by facilitators and even participants themselves. Some examples of these sessions include:

> *This narration might begin in the thematic area of the peer group, for example: what is so fascinating about particular leisure and youth cultural styles; the fact that you used to be rightwing and in certain respects still are; and above all, how [did] it all come to happen, what concrete persons, scenes and experiences played a role* (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011, p. 6).

Another example:

> *What [does] it means to be a Muslim and to have "honor", and in what directly experienced situations [has] this come to be an issue for you; more generally, who or what [do] you love or hate and where [do] you think that comes from; and also what films and songs [do] you watch and listen to and what [do] you like about them, what films you'd like to watch with the group, so you could talk about them afterwards; what exactly goes on in the politics of the clique and how you experience that; how and where [do] emotions arise, etc.* (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011, p. 6).

The narrative reflection manifests itself in participants learning to take an interest in what others do and to understand points of similarities as well as differences in other people's paths. Participants also learn to listen better and to inquire about things they would have previously avoided because of perceived uncertainty they caused.

Violence Prevention Network (VPN)

The goal of the VPN is to change the behavior of ideologically vulnerable people and violent offenders with extremist views through deradicalization efforts. The program aims to develop central personality competencies among radicalized (and vulnerable to radicalization) youth, including emotional intelligence, empathy, the ability to build trust, the ability to form relationships, and, most importantly, tools for personal reflection (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011). The VPN values group-based approach and places a special emphasis on narration (as opposed to discussion, argumentation and description). The program employs methods for generating narrative used in biographical therapy, such as life-

historical partner interview, drawing/illustration of a personal lifeline, and generation of a genogram (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011). Another critical component of the VPN program is the so-called "violence sessions," where participants share the details of the violent acts they committed with the group. These sessions are designed not only to stimulate personal appraisals of violent acts but also to develop abilities to empathize and to evoke moments of retrospection for those who take part, assist or follow the process.

This program clearly utilizes narrative reflection as a tool since it aspires to "awaken participants' attention to what is experienced and narrated, and for the subtleties, contradictions and biographical influences that the worldview of each and every person displays" (Baer & Weilnböck, 2011, p. 13).

Youth Counselling Against Radicalisation (YCARE)

YCARE was founded with an aim to effectively combat cross-border radicalization and terrorism. It assists educators and social services staff in efforts that are directed towards young people who are vulnerable to radicalization or who have already been radicalized. The organization's emphasis is on the pedagogical roots of radicalization and on education risks and protective factors that can be identified that are relevant for prevention and symptomatic treatment (Meere & Lensink, 2015). Based on the "staircase to terrorism" model, this program conceptualizes the stages a radicalizing person goes through, including the "trigger factors" which are concrete events that initiate identifiable radicalization or deradicalization. Program's modules include early detection practices, prevention activities, three different kinds of interventions (community empowerment and engagement, family support and alternative narratives) and exit strategies.

In YCARE manuals, we clearly see signs of narrative reflection elements. For example, the manual states the "importance of open and reflective communication for guiding adolescent youth in their search for meaning and identity, commitment to society, dealing with diversity and conflicting values" and "there must be room for critical reflection" (Meere & Lensink, 2015, p. 15).

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Fifty seven participating states established the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) with a goal to address a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism and economic and environmental activities ("OSCE | Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe," n.d.). One of the goals of this organization is to develop a multidimensional approach that focuses on the prevention of violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. In August 2018, OSCE published a report on the role of civil society in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization. In this report, a particular emphasis is placed on youth as key civil society actors in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization. Dialogue facilitation is identified as a critical practical approach, which is closely aligned with our understandings of narrative reflections as a deradicalization tool. According to the report,

Dialogue facilitation … provides opportunities for reflection and constructive debate on themes such as personal and societal development, education, independence, justice, honor, identities, gender norms, belonging and post-conflict reconciliation, etc. Other themes to explore, which warrant assistance from professional counselors, include dealing with post-traumatic stress, discrimination, intolerance and domestic violence, among others (The Role of Civil Society in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism, 2018, p. 28).

Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)

Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) is a network of frontline or grassroots practitioners from around Europe who work daily with people who have already been radicalized, or who are vulnerable to radicalization ("Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)," n.d.). It is essentially a platform for practitioners, researchers and policymakers to pool expertise and experience to tackle radicalization.

Narrative Reflection Exercises

This section includes descriptions of several narrative reflection exercises. Games and mental exercises are fundamental tools at developing our identity. We are in many ways brought closer together when we share experiences, victories, hardship and growth through one another. Games throughout history have served as an integral part of us from a very young age, they serve an important biological and developmental purpose. It is through proper council and the use of tools such as games and exercises that youth can come to a greater understanding of themselves and the world around them and fulfill their psychological needs. The exercises are selected from the Youth Counseling Against Radicalisation (YCARE) toolbox, Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) toolbox and Maheshvarananda's (2017) book *Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World*. For a more detailed description of these and other exercises, their purposes and key reflection points, refer to Appendix A.

- <u>Around in Circles</u>. This exercise seeks to encourage participants to consider how their radical behavior and tendencies could affect their lives on a personal, interpersonal and global level, to examine the psychological and social effects of their radicalization and to re-evaluate their radical beliefs and ideas. The exercise gives participants the opportunity to reflect on the impact radicalization has had on their lives and relationships.
- <u>Auntie Agony Exercise</u> allows participants the opportunity to practice their listening, communication and counseling skills. Most importantly, participants take time to reflect on the common problems facing their age group today and to develop solutions to these problems.
- <u>CV Exercise, My Story</u>. This exercise asks participants to think of their lives to date, reflect on the skills and experiences they have acquired and think about putting together a CV of these experiences. Next, they are asked to think of where they would like to be and what efforts they need to make to get to where they want. The purpose of this exercise is to encourage participants to start thinking about and planning their future, away from radicalism.

- <u>Mapping My Community</u>. It is essential for any young (vulnerable, non-vulnerable and radicalized) people to get knowledge about the existing supportive environments as alternatives to extremist groups. Through this exercise, young people will put down roots strengthening their identification with their close environment and thus be in contact with social action groups that offer them opportunities in response to their curiosity and concerns without the need to make use of violence. Getting young people closer to their neighborhoods enables them to know the social reality where they live, and they can reflect on the role they play as agents of change in their surroundings.
- <u>Sculpting Stones… Finding My Place</u>. Sometimes it can be difficult to get young people to open up and express what is going on for them. This may be for a variety of reasons, sometimes a fear of being judged or excluded or just a general lack of confidence in their own abilities. The sculpting stones exercise is a novel way of getting participants to talk about themselves and the issues of relevance to them in a safe and creative manner. The idea is to get to the heart of participant's beliefs about themselves as these can provide a frame that shapes their world-view, and can be powerful motivators.
- <u>Strengthening Roots</u> This exercise allows participants to share their past and say a little about what has formed their outlook on life. Using the power of imagery and symbols, the facilitator encourages the participants to work without words in order to convey some powerful messages about their lives so far.
- <u>What Culture Is</u>? Culture is neither static nor changeless and it is necessary to understand that diversity is one of the key factors in its development. Each person is a melt of his/her culture (or cultures), own characteristics and experiences and the fact of being aware of our own plurality will improve common knowledge about the group and its diversity.
- <u>The Friend Game</u>. A common theme outlined within this game is: as you think so you become. The objective of this game is ultimately self-reflection. Two participants form a pair and write down words that describe each other. Then, the first participant reads his/her list aloud, and the partner considers whether he or she thinks those things to be really true. When all pairs are finished, partners switch lists and replace their names with their partners' names. This is a game of truth and reflection, what we see in others is something that was always inside of us. Because we see through our own eyes we see through our own thoughts.

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Appendix A

Exercise Name and Source	Group size	Duration	Purpose(s)	Key reflection points
Attitude Towards Conflict (YCARE)	Individual, small, medium	30 min – 1 hour	- Develop the ability to analyze different kind of conflicts and identify common points regarding the persons implicated, the interests which are involved and the solutions to be found. - Identify the behaviors we adopt to face conflicts. - Develop the attitude of negotiation towards a conflict.	- Reflection on conflict-solving strategies to achieve an agreement between two parties (negotiation) without using coercive and/or violent conduct. - Group brainstorming session about conflicts.
Automatic Thoughts (YCARE)	Individual, small, medium	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	- To know and detect the three components of emotions that emerge in conflict situations. - Identify automatic thoughts which affect self-concept, self-confidence and how we perceive the events from our environment. - To know and practice cognitive strategies to cope with automatic thoughts.	- Brainstorming session on concept of emotions - Organize the components of emotion and present these findings and strategies related to automatic thoughts. - Reflect on the difficulty of the task
Becoming Journalists (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	- Have a reflection on one's own social concerns and also be aware of others' concerns. - Know the work of several entities and organizations in the social area and strengthen the construction of a counter-narrative to the extremist speech.	- Locate community groups by drawing maps, present the map and locate organizations in that area. - Role-play as a journalist and formulate questions for the organizations in those areas.

Exercise Name and Source	Group size	Duration	Purpose(s)	Key reflection points
			- Develop the capacity to move from general concerns towards concrete questions. - Promote young people identification and engagement with the Community.	
How are you with Self-Confidence (YCARE)	Individual, small, medium	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	- Screen the level of self-confidence. - Think about the influence of self-appraisal on our behavior and the way we perceive our environment. - Identify characteristics associated with a low/high self-esteem.	- Fill out a questionnaire with an enumerated scale of self-confidence, turn it into instructor who will then distribute them randomly for others to correct.
My Project of Life (YCARE)	Individual	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	- Introduce the concept of project of life and motivate young people to reflect about their values, interests and available resources. - Develop the capacity to establish goals in the short, medium and long term inside the same action line. - Identify the main resources needed in the near future to achieve the established goals.	- Motivate participants to interview each other to learn more about themselves. - Create a chart with two columns discussing things they like/dislike about themselves - Imagine their future life, how they would accomplish this and short-term objectives to get there. - Discuss difficulties of the exercise.
Mapping My Community (YCARE)	Small, medium	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	- To know the main organizations and groups of their close environment. - To know the social reality of the neighborhood and communities where they live in. - To be aware of the active role they have inside their community and encourage them to be part of it.	- Identify characteristics of their neighborhood and expose this to other participants - Print and research their neighborhood to identify new organizations and share results

Exercise Name and Source	Group size	Duration	Purpose(s)	Key reflection points
			- To work in group to identify the characteristics and important issues of their community.	
Put on the breaks, is turning red (YCARE)	Individual, small	1 hour	- Identify and analyze the three components of emotions (physical, cognitive and behavioral) and develop the ability to perceive them (emotional self-awareness). - Analyze emotions through own experiences and share it in group in order to facilitate the identification and cohesion. - Know some self-control patterns to manage adverse emotions.	- Brainstorm about what emotions are - Organize components of emotions in groups and eventually roleplay them - Present the traffic light technique to manage emotions
What Culture Is? (YCARE)	Individual	30 min, 45 min, 1 hour	- Be conscious that identity is multiple, complex and changeable. - Improve common knowledge about the group and its diversity. - Reinforce the feeling of belonging to the group. - Know and think about concepts related with culture and cultural identity.	- Brainstorm concept of culture and collect examples of cultural elements that have been imported. - Compare answers in groups of 3-4 - Fill out the worksheet that helps participants identify their identity and share these impressions in small groups
Strengthening Roots (YCARE)	Small	1 hour	- For participants to share their life experience - For participants to reflect on and share (if comfortable) their motivation for getting involved in radical type behavior	- Teach participants about how a tree can represent personal life experiences and have them sketch the "roots," which are their family background and situation born into. - Have them share their trees and ask what they learned about themselves

Exercise Name and Source	Group size	Duration	Purpose(s)	Key reflection points
			- To provide opportunities for bonding within the group - To focus on what groups members, have in common with the peers in their group and discover the areas of common experience that have led them to where they are today - Identify positive and negative qualities participants feel they have developed in response to their own life situations	- Have them visualize their trees budding, and explain that is their future
Around in Circles (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	- To encourage participants to critically examine the consequences of their involvement in radical activities - To help participants understand the effects of their radicalization from a psychological and social perspective - To challenge participants to question the validity of their old ideals - To nurture the development of healthy alternative attitudes	- Use a worksheet exercise that discusses personal development and their past radical activity. - Discussing how they feel looking at their past and toward the future
CV Exercise; My Story (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	- To get participants to reflect on the lives they are living at present, is it a fulfilling happy life or a less than desirable existence? - To encourage participants to make value judgements about if where they are currently at is where they want or need to be	- Introduce the Latin phrase meaning "the story of life." Allowing them to take stock of their lives and focusing on their futures. - Take down key points in their life that paints a picture of them. - Create a fantasy CV that captures themselves

Exercise Name and Source	Group size	Duration	Purpose(s)	Key reflection points
			- To help participants start to look to the future and explore the various avenues that may have the potential to take them where they need to get to	
Sculpting Stones…Finding my Place (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	- To give participants the opportunity to offer support and encouragement to each other as they move forward in their journeys. - To challenge participants to really look at their own perceptions of themselves and their relationships - Sometimes the depth of sharing brought about through this type of exercise can lead to real bonding within the group which can only enhance the potential of any future sessions they participate in	- Invite participants to choose a stone that represents them and share why. Repeat exercise with stones that represent family and the future. - Stones will be placed near each other relative to real-life closeness with the family, group or person.
Agony Aunt Exercise (YCARE)	Small, medium	1 hour	- To demonstrate the potential for group problem solving - To highlight the level of knowledge and skills that already exists within the group - To show participants that their opinions are heard and their contributions are valued	- Participants role-play as 'Auntie Agony' and help others work through their emotions after reading the letters they wrote to her. They are then asked for their feedback on the exercise.

Exercise Name and Source	Group size	Duration	Purpose(s)	Key reflection points
BOUNCE resilience tools (RAN)	n/a	n/a	- To build resilience in youngsters and their networks, allowing them to interact with an aware environment.	- By engaging in a mix of action and reflection, participants consolidate and hone a wide range of skills and competences, linking them to their personal experiences. Youngsters learn to bounce back and bounce up when dealing with challenges.
GOT (Getting On Together) (RAN)	n/a	n/a	- To counter intolerance and extremism through independent and critical thinking - To facilitate knowledge and understanding of the non-violent message of the Islamic faith - To reduce prejudice and discrimination across all cultures, faiths and creeds - To promote integrated and cohesive communities	- Creating safe spaces that facilitate challenge and debate on extremism through critical thinking -
POLRAD – the Power Of Local Role Models (RAN)	n/a	n/a	- To achieve mutual understanding across different groups, communication between these groups is necessary.	- A great deal of time is devoted to exercises exploring how to tell one's (own) story.
Expedition Friend & Foe (RAN)	n/a	3 days	- To give (young) people, students and their teachers tools to handle conflict in a constructive manner, in their personal life and in society at large	- Together with trainers, students search for (new) ways to no longer think in contradictions – friends or foes – and to find ways to deal constructively with diversity.

Exercise Name and Source	Group size	Duration	Purpose(s)	Key reflection points
			- To actively prevent the spreading of xenophobia and radicalization, social exclusion, discrimination and bullying within Dutch society.	
Narrative group work in schools (RAN)	10-13	45-90 minutes	- To build narrative, social and emotional skills, in particular the ability of sharing personal experiences in a group, listening to others regardless what they share, and maintaining a respectful and confidential space for inter-personal dialogue - To improve self-awareness and self-confidence by making personal stories heard and being valued - To strengthen democratic values and preventing group hatred, (right-wing) extremism as well as discriminative, intolerant and violent behaviour by reflecting on and discussing current socio-political issues and related grievances from the point of view of the young peoples' own everyday experiences and biographical events that are at the heart of their world view	- Narrative groups provide an open space in which young people are free to talk about whatever is important to them from a personal point of view. - The facilitators do not set any topics but solely aim at maintaining a safe and confidential space and, most importantly, encourage attendants to trustfully share personal experiences and observations.

Exercise Name and Source	Group size	Duration	Purpose(s)	Key reflection points
Extreme Dialogue (RAN)	n/a	n/a	- To build resilience to radicalization among young people through a series of open-access educational resources and highly engaging short films.	- This exercise encourages dialogue on non-violent approaches to tackle extremism and build community cohesion.
Namaskar Game (Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World)	Small, Large	n/a	- To release feelings of resentment towards others and to forgive. - To demonstrate that everyone possesses a physical, mental and spiritual potential. - To teach nonjudgement, compassion, forgiveness and unconditional love.	- This exercise provides a projection of self onto others. Parallel to the way one has their own imperfections and evils everyone has hopes, dreams and the capacity to do good within them. - By looking at another without judgement they realize everyone is not all that different.
The Friend Game- (Cooperative games for a Cooperative World)	Small, Medium	n/a	- To demonstrate how one is connected to everyone and everything - To teach non-judgmental observation	- This exercise teaches that the things one sees in others is a reflection of themselves.
Good Grief- (Cooperative Games for a Cooperative World)	Small, Medium	n/a	- To teach thinking, non-attachment and overcoming fear by facing it. - To teach how to detach from things that are out of our control - To realize what is most meaningful in life. - To teach that non-attachment means to love fully and unconditionally, yet to also be willing to let that object go.	- This exercise encourages one to consider the things that bring value to their life. Through identifying identities, items of sentimental or physical value and the people they love and respect, it helps to mentally prepare for what would happen were one of those things to disappear.