

## **Philosophizing about the competent and responsible use of digital media as part of the project "Pornography - competence in everyday social work"**

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### **PREFACE**

In their training, social workers acquire a broad and well-founded knowledge in the field of social and vocational education. But the profession of social work is changing. Digital media is part of people's everyday lives and so the range of tasks of social workers and youth workers is also expanding into the digital world.

In this project we want to expand the acquisition of theoretical knowledge relevant to the profession and support the transfer and implementation in practice. The main focus is on developing the personal skills of youth workers and social workers in the field of digitalization.

Internet - that means games, fun, entertainment, communication, networking and information. But it also carries risks and dangers. For this reason, social workers must also learn to accompany children and young people in the use of the Internet, to advise them, to sensitize them, to educate them and to strengthen young people holistically. The Internet as a new field of action in social work poses new challenges for social workers.

The project "Pornography - Competence in Everyday Social Work" deals with the consequences and problems of Internet pornography and sexting in everyday social work. Through the spread of the Internet, images of eroticism, sexuality and pornography are accessible to a broad public. Pornography can be consumed at any time and social taboo, grey areas of legality and fear of discovery resonate.

Studies<sup>1</sup> point out that about 48 percent of Internet users between 11 and 16 years have seen porn, because children and young people are also increasingly getting into porn sites when they are not surfing the Internet in a targeted manner.

"There is much speculation about the sexual behavior and experience of young people in offline and online worlds, especially with regard to risks and dangers. Alarmist public debates are contrasted with rather de-dramatizing key data on youth sexuality. Many detailed questions on how young people of all genders deal with the diverse sexual development tasks in their respective environments, and above all which conditions and resources (online and offline) they experience as particularly helpful and beneficial for their sexual well-being, have so far been empirically open".

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Although the sexuality of adolescents has hardly changed in principle in recent decades, digital media can also have a great influence on the sexual development of young people.

Young people have an open and curious attitude and on the net they usually receive quick answers to burning questions. Sometimes they are confronted with "sexual violence", "grooming" and "sexting" through easy access to pornographic materials.

Youth workers and social workers are therefore increasingly called upon to deal critically not only with Internet addiction, the problem of excessive use of online games, cyberbullying, but also with Internet pornography and sexting. The need for advice is high. Specialist skills are essential to support young people and disadvantaged population groups in particular, so that they can exploit the opportunities and possibilities of the digital media world more effectively and to enable them to deal responsibly with new technologies.

The aim of this project is to strengthen youth workers and social workers in order to be able to competently fulfill the new tasks and challenges in the field of new

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/2016/i-wasnt-sure-it-was-normal-to-watch-it/>

<sup>2</sup> Döring, Nicola: Jugendsexualität heute: Zwischen Offline- und Online Welten. <http://www.nicola-doering.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/D%C3%B6ring-2016-Jugendsexualit%C3%A4t-heute-YOLO.pdf>

technologies and to assume responsibility, especially when it comes to taboo issues such as pornography.

This handbook provides materials, discussion plans and exercises and supports social workers by incorporating suggestions from this handbook into their work.

Building sustainable relationships between social workers, youth workers and the people who look after them are fundamental and very important for social work.

But how can relationships in the context of social work be consciously established or shaped, especially when it comes to taboo issues such as Internet pornography? Which attitude, which previous knowledge and which competences are needed on the part of the youth workers in the safe and critical handling of the digital technologies, which are used for information, communication and problem-solving strategies in all areas of life?

Prerequisites for this are an open-minded attitude, the curiosity to learn and try out new things, as well as the willingness of young people to learn. Appreciation, acceptance, empathy are necessary and the know-how must be discussed in depth.

The better the children and young people's basis for talking to adults and the more they know about potential risks, the better they are protected. Philosophical dialogue offers a good opportunity for this. It is also about strengthening the personality and promoting autonomous thinking. The aim is to promote critical, creative and sensitive ("caring thinking") thinking and thus enable a safe, critical and responsible use of digital technologies.

How can one's own personality be strengthened, especially among children and young people, so that adolescents are critical and not so easily influenced and find their own way in the digital society? How can active participation be encouraged? How can the promotion of pornography-related media competence be put into practice?

Philosophizing can, for example, help to relate with young people, to find access even in the case of sexist sayings and cross-border behavior. It is about taking young

people seriously and also dealing with the contents of their statements; it is an approach and a thematization in a language appropriate to their age. Respectful interaction with one another is central.

Finally, philosophy also helps to prepare procedural debates in order to make clear to those involved the prerequisites and consequences of their own positions. If this succeeds and those addressed in this way find a consistent and well thought-out position, this can lead to a lasting change.

The fact that young people are given a voice and the emphasis is placed on the discussion and exchange of ideas within the framework of philosophical dialogue helps to strengthen their critical attitude and self-confidence. By strengthening their social and reflective skills, their self-protection factors and their ability are promoted.

Philosophical dialogue is part of a holistic method of health promotion that actively supports prevention messages that can be initiated as part of early prevention.

"Sexual health is inextricably linked to overall health, well-being and quality of life. It is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality and not just the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity.

Sexual health requires a positive and respectful attitude towards sexuality and relationships and the possibility of having a pleasant and safe sexual experience, free from coercion, discrimination and violence. Sexual health can only be achieved and maintained if the sexual rights of all people are respected, protected and fulfilled.

Much remains to be done to ensure that health policies and practices recognize and reflect this."<sup>3</sup>

Youth workers see the goals of sexual health by an increasing pornography of juvenile life worlds in danger.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.euro.who.int/de/health-topics/Life-stages/sexual-and-reproductive-health/news/news/2011/06/sexual-health-throughout-life/definition>  
Accessed 04.06.2018.

This handbook "Living together" contains materials to support social workers in interaction, communication and counseling and to show them various possibilities of intervention. The aim is also to give the most diverse impulses that make this possible and deepen relationships through interaction.

In order to promote pornography competence among social workers and youth workers, however, a very individual translation and concretization is required - adapted to the context and target group.

"Living together" contains exercises, discussion plans and collections of films, pictures, poems, songs, articles and comics on the respective topics: Responsibility, respect, feeling, body, transgender, queer, love, empathy, reality vs. virtuality, power, equality, friendship, language, perception,

## EMPATHY

Empathy is the ability and willingness to recognize and understand the feelings, thoughts and emotions of another person and to put oneself in the position of the other person. Based on recent research by psychologist Paul Bloom, this can also lead to empathic reflexes, i.e. empathy can lead to feelings of revenge and empathic empathy motivates us to help people who are similar to us rather than people who are different from us, e.g. have a different skin color. For this reason, Bloom distinguishes between empathy and compassion: "Empathy means: I feel what another person feels. Compassion means: I take care of the other, I take care of him."

The international Code of Ethics, which is part of the basic understanding of social work, point 5.4 states: "Social workers should act in relation to the people using their services with compassion, empathy and care". The demand is therefore: "Social workers should treat those who use their services with compassion, empathy and mindfulness."<sup>4</sup>

### Discussion plan: Empathy and compassion

- What is empathy?
- What is the difference between empathy and compassion?
- What does compassion and empathy mean?
- How do you develop empathy?
- Can you be more sensitive? If so, how?
- What are empathic reflexes?
- What is the connection between mindfulness and empathy?

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bewaehrungshilfe.de/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Internationaler-Code-of-Ethic.pdf>  
Accessed 04.06.2018

### Exercise: Empathy - giving positive feedback

- The participants of a group sit in a circle of chairs. Each person takes an A4 sheet (landscape format) and writes his or her own name on it. In one sentence, everyone in the group gives a positive feedback. Attention will be paid to concrete formulations, e.g. "I like about you that you always lend me your pen". "What I like about you is that you never laugh at me."
- The section of paper that has been written is folded like an accordion so that it cannot be read by the next person.
- The aim of this exercise is to express appreciation and giving positive feedback to each person and to formulate one's own feelings or judgments in one sentence.

### Put yourself in the position of another person

Putting oneself in the position of other people means, among other things, trying to understand the wishes, problems and needs of other people. Empathy is the ability to empathize. Empathy helps us to understand feelings such as fear, grief, the pain of others and the likelihood of helping in such situations is higher than creating such situations ourselves. Is there a connection between the ability to empathize and problematic use of the Internet?

In order to understand others better, to assess them and to recognize the reasons for their actions, we also pay attention to non-verbal communication: looks, posture, gestures etc. Non-verbal communication is an important part of social interaction and can signal to other people: "I understand you without words" or "I feel how you feel." But how is that on the Internet?

### Discussion plan: Put yourself in the position of another person

- Can you imagine what it would be like to be someone else?
- How well can you put yourself in the mood of your fellow human beings?
- If you can put yourself in someone's position, is that enough to find a common solution in conflicts?

- The "golden rule" is, "Treat others the way you want them to treat you." What does this mean with regard to interpersonal communication on the Internet?
- Does excessive use of online media reduce empathy, or, conversely, does a lack of compassion lead to excessive use of online media?

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## FRIENDSHIP

For many people, friendship is a word they don't want to use with levity. Friends are the few people we trust in. That's why many people are bothered by the fact that in social networks like Facebook you can "make friends" only with one click. Nowadays, friendships can be found on the Internet too. Here and there people talk about the devaluation of friendship. But there are also positive aspects: People, for example, who get to know each other via online gaming share common interests, they do not have to see each other.

### Discussion plan: Friendship

- What kind of friendship do you know?
- How do the different types of friendship differ?
- What is the difference between virtual friendship and real friendship?
- What distinguishes a friend from a "Facebook friend"?
- What do you expect from a friend?
- What makes a good friendship?
- What is the difference between friends and family?
- What is a friend?
- What is the difference between friends and acquaintances?

### Activity: Friendship

To identify a relationship as a friendship, you can think about certain qualities of friendship.

- a) Create a list of qualities for friendship
- b) Draw "Friendship"

Compare the lists and drawings and try to find differences and similarities together.

## Exercise: Types of friendship

Try to characterize 3 different types of friendships and think carefully about differences.

### Activity: The true friend

Discuss the contents of the poem. Consider whether you expect your friend to always tell you the truth.

The true friend  
He's my friend who always shows me the mirror,  
won't hide the slightest stain,  
warns me nicely, seriously scolds me,  
if I don't do my duty.  
This is my friend - as little as er's seems!  
But the one who always flatters me,  
praises me everything, never what reprimands.  
Making mistakes by my hands,  
and forgive me, eh` I regret  
that is my enemy -  
as friendly as he seems!

*Christian Fürchtegott Gellert ( 1715 - 1769) German narrator, fable and song poet. Translation by Camhy, Daniela.*

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## FEELINGS

### Having feelings and showing feelings

There are millions of people using the Internet and most of them also have multimedia relationships. The Internet influences people consciously or unconsciously. Feelings are part of it. But why are we emotionally influenceable in the internet. Does the internet represent the everyday life? How can people be influenced in their everyday life and how can they be influenced online?

### Discussion plan: Feelings

- What is a feeling?
- What is the difference between feelings and emotions?
- How can we tell if it is a thought or a feeling?
- Can you think without feeling anything?
- Can you feel without thinking?
- Are feelings judgments?
- To what extent do social media have something to do with our emotional world?
- Can the Internet influence feelings?
- How can feelings on the Internet be influenced?
- Is it possible to feel for a person even though you have never met her/him personally?
- How can you recognize your feelings?

### Discuss the following quotes:

- "A feeling is a commitment that goes beyond the moment"  
*Simone de Beauvoir*
- "It is harder to hide the feelings we have than to feign the ones we do not have"

## *La Rochefoucauld*

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## BODY

For centuries, scientists, philosophers and academics have dealt with the connection between body and mind and asked themselves endless questions. The French philosopher René Descartes believed that the brain as the highest authority controls the body. He represented the theory of body and soul as separate units, so thinking is also possible without a body.

The French philosopher Michel Foucault sees the body as determined by social power structures. "The human body enters a machinery of power that permeates, dissects and reassembles it. The discipline thus fabricates subjugated and practiced bodies, submissive and docile bodies." For Foucault, the body is the surface on which power inscribes itself.

According to the philosopher Judith Butler, physical reality is also shaped by how we talk about something, so body and mind are subject to cultural norms. Butler, a feminist herself, rejects the dualism that links in with Descartes, between supposedly unchanging nature (sex) and culture (gender) - in other words, ultimately between body and mind. This upholds the separation between "man" and "woman" and the associated power relations. The body is thus never an autonomous body capable of acting, but always dependent on discourse and its norms. Who falls out of the norms and does not fit into the matrix cannot be an (intelligent) subject. For them it's about rethinking our bodies.

The question of physicality is a completely new one today, since surgical interventions or other technologies have made it possible to change the body in a way that was previously unimaginable. How do I perceive my body? Can body perception and awareness learn to build a safe and positive relationship with one's own body and to feel comfortable in one's own body?

The new media also raises the question of what role the body plays on the Internet.

### Discussion plan: Body

- Are the body and the "I" one and the same?
- Can knowledge of consciousness and mind be gained through the exploration of our body?
- Can thoughts influence our body?
- How do we deal with our body?
- How important is our body to us?

### Discussion plan: Body and Internet

- What role does the body play on the Internet?
- Do the majority of users make a difference between real and virtual bodies?
- What does the Internet do with our body?
- Is it possible to visualize the body through linguistic condensations and emotions on the Internet?
- Do real representations of the body predominate on the Internet?
- Does the body function as a medium of self-expression in cyberspace?
- Is the virtual being preferred to the real being?
- Since people equip themselves with virtual avatars, do they distance themselves from their biological physicality/ body?
- Can one recreate oneself in parallel worlds?
- Does the user of the Internet have a body?
- Can sexuality be detached from the real body on the Internet?
- What is the significance of personal identity in virtual space?
- What is the meaning of personal identity in the Internet?
- What is left of the body in the Internet?

### Activity: Find a new physical appearance for yourself

Human beings can make statements through their physical appearance. Characteristics are not only clothing, style, colors, jewelry or tattoos, they can serve as carrier, signals this also applies to the sex.

Is it possible to separate from your body on the Internet? Does the biological sex also determines how the person acts and is perceived in society?

In online worlds such as Second Life, the possibilities of real possibilities of expression are often increased - spaces, forms and possibilities are found through which one can distance oneself from one's biological physicality and recreate oneself in a virtual parallel world.

Not only external changes of the body play a role, but also new inventions in the social context - virtual worlds are an opportunity for the finding of identity of the user. This may include a change of sex to avoid stereotypical opinions. Reinvent yourself; draw an avatar, draw yourself as a fantastic character on the Internet.

### Discussion plan: Body

- Can thoughts influence our body?
- - What does the Internet do to our body?
- - What is the significance of personal identity in virtual space?
- - What is left of the body in the Internet?

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## LOVE

Love has been dealt with not only in literature, art, philosophy, sociology, and psychology, but also in many other scientific disciplines. Love is a highly complex subject and each of us directly links our own experiences with it. It includes topics such as: sexuality, friendship, Eros, family, relationship and much more. But what is love?

### Discussion plan: Love in the Internet

- Why should you be careful in the internet?
- How do you feel about online dating?
- Why should you be critical?
- How likely is it to find your true love on the Internet?
- Dating, sex and relationship on the net - what do you think?
- Is the Internet changing our perception of love?
- How does love in virtual space differ from love in real space?

### Exercise: Love

- "It is what it is, says love" is the refrain of a poem by the poet Erich Fried (1921-1988).
- Write down your thoughts to the poem.
- What do you think Erich Fried wants to tell us about love?
- What does the poem tell you?

### Erich Fried - "What it is"

It is madness  
says reason

It is what it is  
says love

It is unhappiness  
says caution

It is nothing but pain  
says fear

It has no future  
says insight

It is what it is  
says love

It is ridiculous  
says pride

It is foolish  
says caution

It is impossible  
says experience

It is what it is  
says love."

Fried, Erich. It is what it is. I. In: It is what it is. Love poems - fear poems - anger poems. Klaus Wagenbach publishing house 1996.

### Activity: Your idea of love

o - Write down your ideas of love. What do you mean with love?

OR

o - Draw your own cartoon: Love is.....

### Discussion plan: Love on the Internet

- More and more people are going online in search of love. Nowadays, many people get to know each other in chat rooms, communities or forums. Some fall in love on the Internet. But the Internet is dangerous. You can never be sure if the person you're in contact with is really who he or she is. Some

people exchange sexual matters with other chat partners.

- What should you pay attention to?
- Why should you be critical?
- How likely is it to find love on the Internet?
- Dating, sex and relationship on the net - what do you think?
- Is the Internet changing love?

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## RESPECT

The word respect has many different meanings. We can think about different types of respect and work out the differences. So you can have respect for nature, you can respect a person or an agreement. What does it mean to have respect for a person? How do you show respect?

### Discussion plan: Respect

- When do you respect someone or something?
- - What is respect?
- - What does respect mean?
- - How is "to be respected" expressed?
- - Do you respect yourself? Why- yes/no?
- - How do you express respect?
- - Can respect also be expressed in communication on the Internet?
- - How does disrespect manifest itself?
- - Can you respect people if you don't respect yourself?
- - Can you respect yourself without respecting others?
- - What can be respected?
- - Can you respect something too much?
- - Why should everyone be respected?
- - What is the difference between respect, tolerance and acceptance?

### Exercise: Respect and disrespect

Do the following terms express respect or disrespect? Choose the appropriate answer and give reasons for your answer!

	Respect	Disrespect
to accept	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to make fun of someone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to insult	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to always tell the truth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to do something against the will of the other person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to assert oneself against the other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to inquire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
not to question something	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
not to agree with the other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to appreciate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to communicate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
not to communicate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to compare/to compete with someone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
cheating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
be caring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
not telling the truth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to trust	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
fighting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
not to include	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Exercise: Respect

Participants are asked individually or in groups to write down on a flipchart a word or statement for each letter that expresses the meaning of the concept of respect.

R

E

S

P

E

C

T

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## RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility is increasingly being discussed in connection with the Internet. In his book *The Imperative of Responsibility* subtitled *In search of an Ethics for Technological Age* in 1979, the philosopher Hans Jonas is concerned with the re-foundation of ethics for our age. With all the power that technology gave back then, according to Jonas it was no longer enough to consider only his living fellow men in many considerations. According to Jonas, one must also think of the future: of those fellow human beings who still will be alive. Responsible action therefore means taking into account the fundamental interests and rights of future generations.

In a democratic society, it is essential to promote the ability to reflect and to enlighten in order to enable each individual to orientate themselves in life through self-thinking rather than authoritarian guidelines.

### Discussion plan: Responsibility:

- What does responsibility mean?
- Are you responsible for your actions?
- Can responsibility arise voluntarily?
- Is everyone responsible for the outcome of his/her actions?
- What is the difference between responsibility and the feeling to be responsible?
- Is everyone responsible for the consequences of his/her actions?
- What is responsibility based on?
- Can responsibility be limited?
- Is it possible that a person does not have to take responsibility for his actions?
- Does a person also bear responsibility when he does not act?
- What is responsibility based on?

### Activity: What does responsible action on the Internet look like?

Who can take responsibility for actions on the Internet and in what way? And what does responsible action on the Internet actually look like?

Interview three different people!

### Exercise: When and for what does a person bear responsibility? Reasons!

- For the rain
- For the mess in the room
- For chain letters
- For a pet
- For the earthquake
- For an omitted action
- For a product
- What is happening on the Internet
- The conscious purchase
- State laws

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Accessed on 2018.5.21.



## VIRTUALITY

What meaning do forms of life in reality and forms of life in Internet have for human beings and their development?

What are the chances and what are the risks in modern communication in the digital world? How can we cope with the risks? What are the dangers? Does the virtual world have an impact on the people who are online? How do boundaries between reality and virtual reality blur?

### Discussion plan: Virtual Reality

- What is real and what is virtual?
- What is the difference between dream, imagination and fantasy?
- Is a dream "virtual reality"?
- Is everything possible in "virtual worlds"?
- How do relationships change within the virtualization of our world?

### Activities:

Consideration: Where does virtualization of life processes occur?

- Make a list and think about the consequences!

Consider: Virtual worlds and virtual reality:

- From where?
- Why?
- Where?

## Literature

Buermann, Uwe: Kinder und Jugendliche zwischen Virtualität und Realität. In: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Hg.): Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte (39/2008). Bonn 2008. 34-40.

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## IDENTITY

It is important to distinguish between the different philosophical concepts of identity. As a formal characteristic and relation, e.g. in philosophy of language and mathematics or whether regarding the identity of a person, as in psychology and social sciences, where it concerns e.g. psychological identity, sexual identity, cultural identity, national identity, online identity, gender identity etc., but also different concepts of identity policy.

The question of personal identity is a well-known philosophical problem and essentially consists of two different but closely related questions: Firstly, what are the essential characteristics that make human beings or living beings to persons and secondly, how is the identity of these persons - even over time - ensured or constituted.

As a relation between two given quantities, identity means they are one and the same thing, or *identical* to each other. This means: A is identical to itself if it remains the same in different situations and circumstances, so that it can be identified as the same. But what does it mean for an object to be considered the same, even with changes in time? Theseus' ship is a well-known philosophical paradox that raises the question of whether an object loses its identity after many or all of its parts have been replaced in succession. The term identity raises many philosophical problems and questions, e.g. when it comes to change and personal identity.

What about identity in the virtual world?

### Discussion plan: Identity

- How does identity develop?
- How does identity develop on the Internet?
- What is identity?
- What is the basis of the development of identity?
- What does identity mean?

- Do you want to serve the Internet unknown? Why?
- What is it like to build a new identity?
- What do you associate with “patchwork identity” of today's human being?
- Can you protect your identity?
- Is it possible to look at the digital identity separately from the individual person?

### Who am I?

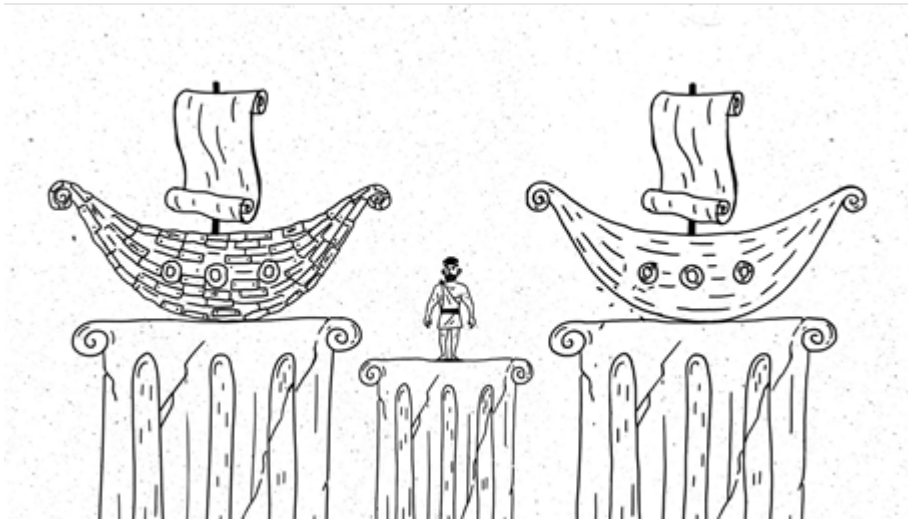
The question "Who am I?" is a difficult philosophical question and various great philosophers in the history of philosophy have made very different reflections on the question. The "I" can be experienced through thinking, through feelings, through perception, through action.

### Discussion Plan: Who am I?

- Does your mind tell you who you are?
- Does your appearance affect who you are?
- Does your profile on the Internet tell you who you are?
- Is it possible to become someone else or something else?
- Do you have the same identity on the Internet as in real everyday life?
- Do you sometimes do something that someone else wants you to do?
- If you change your profile on the Internet, are you another person?

### Exercise: The Ship of Theseus

Who am I? Why am I me? And how can I stay "I" if I am constantly changing? One of the best-known thought experiments in philosophy deals with questions of identity:  
The Ship of Theseus



SRF Kultur: Plutarchs Gedankenexperiment. Das Schiff des Theseus. 2015.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zl8j7eq-ls/>  
Accessed on 2018.5.22.

### Exercise: Thought Experiments

Are you still you,

- ...if you speak another language?
- ...if you use a foreign image for your profile on the Internet?
- ... if you give yourself another name?
- ... when you chat with someone on the Internet?
- ...if you had another face?
- ...if you had another body?
- ...if you had other friends?
- ...when you pretend to be another person?

## Literature

Kundera, Milan: Identity. Harper Perennial. 1999.

Deutschlandfunk: Buchbesprechung. Milan Kundera. Die Identität. 1999  
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## TRANSGENDER / QUEER -GENDER -IDENTITY

The scientific debate on gender is multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary. Sociologically, gender is a structural category. According to this, our social positioning is determined by our gender allocation or affiliation, linked to this is the socio-psychological level, according to which gender constitutes a central part of our identity (gender identity). Gender also includes biological (sex) and social aspects (gender) as well as sexual desire.

In contrast to this normative gender order, adult education must assume a diversity of gender and gender identities and a diversity of desires. This requires knowledge about Gender Studies.

People whose gender identity does not correspond to their physical sexual characteristics are called transgender. The corresponding behavior or sensation is also defined as transgender. Man-to-woman is called transwoman and woman-to-man transman. However, transgender people also prefer not to be assigned to any category and insist on the general term transgender. Transgenders normally do not include intersexual people who have both male and female sexual characteristics. Intersexuality refers to people who, genetically or anatomically and hormonally, cannot be clearly assigned to the female or male sex.

The presupposed binary (sexual) determines the distinction between "sex" and "gender", which was important in order to show that the corresponding gender identity does not necessarily follow from the biological gender, i.e. that these two terms are not coherent, a male body, for example, can also feel like a woman, i.e. a female gender identity must not be destiny.

The philosopher Judith Butler points out that a binary appearance of the biological sex cannot be interpreted as an equally binary gender identity. She writes consciously "appear" because she is convinced that the anatomical sex was also produced discursively. This means that the body is not recognized as a subject without attributing a gender by means of language; the linguistic inscription of a

gender in a body describes only the perception that is socially necessary for it to exist as such, but it does not correspond to the truth.

### Discussion plan: transgender

- What is a person?
- What does the term "gender" mean?
- What is the difference between sex and gender?
- Which gender identities do we perceive?
- What does gender identity on the Internet mean?

### Exercise: Discuss the following thesis

Very early in the debate about gender, Simone de Beauvoir emphasized that gender is a socially constructed category

“One is not born a woman, but becomes one.”

*Simone de Beauvoir 1908 -1986, French writer and philosopher*

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Beauvoir, Simone de: The second Sex. Vintage 2011. First Publishing 1951.

Butler, Judith: Gender trouble. Routledge, 2006.

Gerstendorfer, Elisabeth: Transgender. Wenn Kinder ihren Körper hassen. In: kurier.at. 2018.

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Kreienbrink, Matthias: Queer in Videospiele. In: Der Tagesspiegel. 9.1.2016.



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