



## “Friends and family”

“I work in a youth program where I give accompaniment to youngsters who newly arrived in Spain to help them to integrate. Among the youngsters I worked with were three siblings who had arrived to Barcelona a year ago through a family regrouping process. They were Orane (a 14 year old girl), Beni (a 16 year old boy), and a Ines (a 17 year old girl). Orane started dating a boy from a center for unaccompanied minors. Beni, her brother, was really upset about them having this relationship, and they would fight all the time about her dating this boy. After a while, she stopped coming to the youth center.

One day Beni and his friend Maleek were at the youth center, and I saw that Maleek's hand was bandaged. I asked him what had happened, and Beni told me that the day before, in the afternoon, they had come across Orane and her boyfriend and some of his friends, and they had all gotten into a fight. Maleek said that it was Orane's boyfriend who had attacked him.

When I talked to Maleek about what had happened, he said that Beni had gotten really angry, and that he was the one who attacked the other. At one point, Beni had gotten a piece of glass off the floor, and tried to attack Orane's boyfriend and his friends with it, and had accidentally cut Maleek, his own friend. Orane also told me that he also got angry with her at home, and that he checks her mobile, and controls when she leaves and arrives at home.

I want to help Beni change his behavior, but I do not want to betray Orane's trust, since she told me what was going on at home and what had happened on the street confidentially.”

*Barcelona, 2018*

## IDENTITIES OF THE NARRATOR AND THE PERSON(S) TRIGGERING THE SHOCK

### THE NARRATOR

Anna is a Catalan woman. She's a 25 years old youth worker in a center in Barcelona.

### THE OTHER PERSON(S)

Beni is a 16 years old boy, from Morocco. He arrived in Barcelona one year ago with his sisters and he's a participant in the narrator's program.

### SIMILARITIES / DIFFERENCES

What separates them are their ages, their genders, their origins, their status in the center and also the way they apprehend Catalan culture: the narrator is from Catalonia while the other person isn't.

## CONTEXT

### PHYSICAL CONTEXT

They were at a Youth Center in Barcelona

### OTHER PEOPLE PRESENT

There are different people involved in this incident. The most important ones are:

- Orane, the 14 years old sister of the boy who caused the shock
- Orane's boyfriend, a youngster from an unaccompanied minors' institutions, who are under state care, and in general face very harsh social situations, racism and exclusion
- Beni's friend Maleek, whose hand had been hurt

### LARGER SOCIAL CONTEXT

The incident takes place in the youth center, which provides the space for the youth worker to talk to the siblings and to get information about what had really happened.

### PREVIOUS RELATIONSHIP, ANTECEDENTS

# FRAME OF REFERENCES OF THE NARRATOR "ANNA"

INCOMPREHENSION

SAD

IMPOTENT

RESPONSIBLE

Beni fights a lot with his sister about her choice of boyfriend.

Beni's friend showing up to the youth center with his hand cut.

**Physical integrity versus family bonds:** it is more important to assure physical and mental integrity over keeping the family together.

**Representation of relationship:** In the role of a YW the young person attending the center and the relationship itself is a sign of success for the YW, because the relationship itself is the "instrument" used to do the social intervention, in this case accompanying Orane and her siblings to establish in Spain. If she reduces her presence of the YW they feel more limited in their interventions and is a sign of disengagement with the process of integration.

**Participation in the Youth Centre:** However, since attendance to the youth center is not mandatory, she feels she has to be careful to not force her authority on the youngsters. If they decide to stop coming to the youth center she cannot accompany them any longer and this makes her feel she would not be doing her job.

**Romantic love:** choosing a partner has to be spontaneous and consequence of falling in love. It is an individual choice that can only be dependent upon a feeling of sexual and emotional attraction to a person, and this attraction is fruit of an infatuation. Only the couple can be involved in deciding whether or not they want to engage in an intimate relationship. Neither the family nor any other form of interest (money, papers, etc.) are acceptable ways of intervention.

**Assimilation:** when arriving into a new society they will need to adopt the new rules and costumes regarding, the narrator is against this concept, and that affects her because she feels has nothing to offer to them, no model to follow, just "no violence" but she feels she should have something else to offer them as a model how to relate.

**Threat of the professional role:** YW is responsible to create a safe space for youngsters and she feels she is not able to respond to that. She feels trapped in between using her power of YW for instance calling social care services to stop the violence, which she is against of and feeling guilty for not being able to protect them.

**Freedom to choose who to date:** people should be able to choose who to date freely.

**Representation of family:** a functional family is the one that is able to control their young members under the rules expected for young people and where parents are role models, modeling gender relationships and love relationships. Orane's family is not following this model of functional family.



# FRAME OF REFERENCES OF THE PERSON AT THE ORIGIN OF THE INCIDENT “BENI”

Beni fights a lot with his sister about her choice of boyfriend.

Beni's friend showing up to the youth center with his hand cut.

**Dating partner should be chosen by the family:** In a collectivist system the choice of partner is not an individual, but a collective or family decision, that is taken considering many other factors than physical attraction and personal interest.

**Cultural practice of dating:** Is usual in Barcelona for girls to date with Orane age, for Beni this is maybe a contradiction with Beni ideas how is dating in their country of origin, Morocco. It is important to establish that what is important here is his representations of Morocco and not actually how are dating practices in Morocco, because that's what sets the norm for him.

**Preserve the family honor:** there is nothing more important than preserving the family honor. By dating the boy from the unaccompanied minor's center, Orane is disrespecting that honor, and any form is acceptable in re-establishing it. The honor is kept by avoiding the possibility of sexual relationships.

**Preserving cultural identity:** there are certain behaviors and social structures – for example, the fact that Orane is dating – that go against Beni's sense of cultural identity. Accepting it would go against the cultural identity he wants to preserve.

**Responsibility of the brother to the sisters:** Beni thinks that he is responsible to keep Orane protection against dangers like boys and new rules in the new country. They live with their mother at home and father is away working, so he is the male role in the family.

*This document has been created as an Intellectual Output of an Erasmus+ project IRIS, Intimacy, Relationships and Interculturality in Youth Work in 2018.*

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*IRIS project benefited from the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission. The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein*

Co-funded by the  
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