

THE MIRROR OF COLOUR

Prosocial dynamics to prevent violence in
football

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What is it?

The mirror of colour is a tool used to carry out a working dynamic in order to activate prosocial behaviours in training sessions and football matches. It is a Tangible and Plural Prosocial Dynamic. It is composed of tangible elements with a total of 24 coloured pieces.

It is rectangular and each of its faces has a different colour. All pieces have a magnetised area on the sides so that they can be joined together. In addition, each piece has a central washer that serves as a counterweight so that it does not fly in the wind, bearing in mind that it will be used outdoors. For this reason, it is made of plastic, so that it is impermeable; in addition, and thanks to this lightweight material, each piece or the whole dynamic can be easily transported (images 1, 2 and 3).

Image 1: Colour piece 1



Image 2: Piece (profile)



Image 3: Colour piece 2



When the 24 pieces are placed together, they form a tapestry and the phrase “WE LEARN BY PLAYING” can be read. If we turn the tapestry around, the sentence “WE PLAY BY SMILING” appears.

The main objective of this dynamic is to work on the prevention of antisocial behaviour and criminal behaviour both in training scenarios and football matches. It has been conceived as a tangible and plural dynamic appropriate for children, but it is equally valid for adults with the idea that children see prosocial behaviours in a game as close to them as football is. Thus, if these young players watch adults perform, it could also be a way of preventing violent behaviours in the game.

Through this dynamic, we seek a change in the symbols that society links with sports, specifically with football. Values such as commitment, effort, solidarity and fun are highlighted. These are far from others such as competitiveness, aggression, tension, and the frustration that comes along, and which are becoming more and more present nowadays. This shows that the symbolic values of what sports should be are dissolving and less beneficial behaviours for individuals and for the society as a whole are being established.

How does it work?

Players are placed in a circle. There is a number on each of the pieces of the mirror of colour. Players place them in order to see the sentence that results once the sequence of 24 pieces is completed. The mirror remains in the middle of the circle.

What does it intend to convey?

Our goal is to convey the idea that they are all part of the same matrix that is the group (mirror) and that each piece is a part of the mirror where the whole group is reflected. When a piece is missing, the reflection of reality fails. All the pieces of the mirror are equally important because it is impossible for the absence of any piece to go unnoticed. We can see, on the one hand, the relevance of each member of the group and, on the other, how each member of the group is stronger when united. The mirror is the sum of all, and it is broken if someone is not cared for by the other little mirrors.

The game's objective is for participants to have fun and learn together. The first lesson is that, if I take care of my teammate, I am indirectly taking care of myself. If we share the fun and the learning experience, it means that we spend time reinforcing our self-esteem and that of others. Generosity and solidarity are key to ensure that the game is played properly.

Guidelines for training and matches

Training: Before practice, the whole team and the trainer will form a circle and each member will have a numbered piece of the mirror of colour (if there are not enough pieces, two members of the team can take turns and share the pieces).

Both the players and the coach will place them in an orderly manner. In addition, one of the players, appointed by the coach, will represent the viewers (a volunteer may be requested beforehand).

Once the tapestry is in place, the phrase "We learn by playing" will be read aloud. Later, it will be collected by everyone and each person will put their piece in the bag in an orderly manner. Taking care of the material is fundamental because, if it is not treated as a necessary element of the game, its use will cease to make sense. The game lasts between five and ten minutes.

After training, the same dynamic will be repeated, but, this time, the tapestry will read the following phrase: "We play by smiling".

Matches: If only one of the teams has a "mirror of colour", the steps to be followed will be those indicated in "Training", and it will be held on the field if possible, although the other team will be informed of the dynamic.

If both teams have the "mirror of colour", they will form a circle with their coaches before the match, on the field, and each member will have a numbered piece of the mirror (if there are not enough pieces, two members of the team can take turns and share the pieces).

The home team will put the pieces of the tapestry that says "We learn by playing" and the visiting team will put the pieces of the tapestry that reads "We play by smiling".

Both the players and the coach will place them in an orderly manner. In addition, one of the players, appointed by the coach, will represent the viewers, (a volunteer may be requested beforehand).

Once the two tapestries have been placed in order, both phrases will be read aloud by the referee. Afterwards, the game will be collected by everyone, and each person will put their piece in the bag in an orderly

manner. Taking care of the material is fundamental because, if it is not treated as a necessary element of the game, its use will cease to make sense. The game lasts between five and ten minutes.

Participants' necessary training

There will be an explanatory session about the "mirror of colour" taught by the author of the dynamic and by colleagues who participate in the study. The targets of this training are players, coaches, referees and family members (the viewers).

Proactive involvement of the participating subjects

The possibilities of obtaining a successful outcome are determined by a good training that manages to sensitise all subjects who participate in the game of football in one way or another and to stimulate prosocial behaviour by preventing violent conducts.

It is essential to convey the fact that the game implies a commitment to respect others and that team sports means improving the physical and psychological well-being of the group.

Players, coaches, referees and viewers must be aware that violent behaviour causes dysfunctions that are difficult to readjust and that each of them is capable of contributing to the game with corrective and prosocial elements.