

LEVEL UP: COMPETENCES OF THE FUTURE

DIVORCE IN THE FAMILY

SCENARIO 1

Powiatowe Centrum Pomocy Rodzinie in Oświęcim in partnership with

UK- BUTTERFLIES LTD United Kingdom

EDU SMART TRAINING CENTER LIMITED Ireland

Implements the ERASMUS + project, Action 2:
Strategic partnerships for vocational education and training:
„Level up- competences of the future”
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Scenariusz 1 LEVEL UP

Topic: - Divorce in the family

Duration: 3 clock hours divisible into meetings.

Recipients:

The recipients of the meetings are families who experienced a divorce and families in the course of divorce or when there is a crisis situation leading to a divorce. The scenario can be used by social workers, family assistants, family coordinators and all other specialists working with the family who are facing difficulties resulting from divorce.

Participants

The whole family, individual family members, adults without children or adults with children can participate in the meetings, e.g.:

- Mum with a child / children
- Dad with a child / children
- Mum and dad with a child / children
- Mum and dad
- The whole family

In justified cases, people significant to the child / children may be invited to the meeting, e.g. grandmother, grandfather etc.

Work Methods

- Case study
- Psychoeducation
- Mini lecture
- Work in groups
- Individual work
- Relaxation techniques
- Brainstorm

Materials needed for the meeting:

- Work cards
- Felt tip pens
- Crayons
- Markers
- Scissors
- Post-it notes
- Flipchart paper
- A4 paper
- Pens

II. Course of the meeting

The scenario contains exercises and individual work cards for 3 meetings lasting 1 clock hour.

The user decides for himself in which order he will use the proposed content.

Meeting 1

1. The worker introduces himself to the client

The introduction of the leader/s of the meeting. Welcoming the family.

- Full name
- Education
- Work experience
- Interests

2. The worker presents the aim of the meeting.

Aim of the meeting:

The aim of the meeting is psychoeducation of the family regarding forms of assistance in the event of divorce and its consequences for individual members. During the meetings, participants will learn about places where they can get help in the event of a divorce crisis, learn about the forms and procedures for granting help for individual family members. Participants will learn about the rights and obligations of parents and children who are involved in a divorce situation and learn the consequences. They will also learn about the psychological consequences of divorce for the whole family, increase the awareness of the feelings experienced by individuals and gain competences allowing them to reduce the negative effects of divorce.

It is planned that the meeting participants will achieve the following results:

- Acquire knowledge about aid institutions

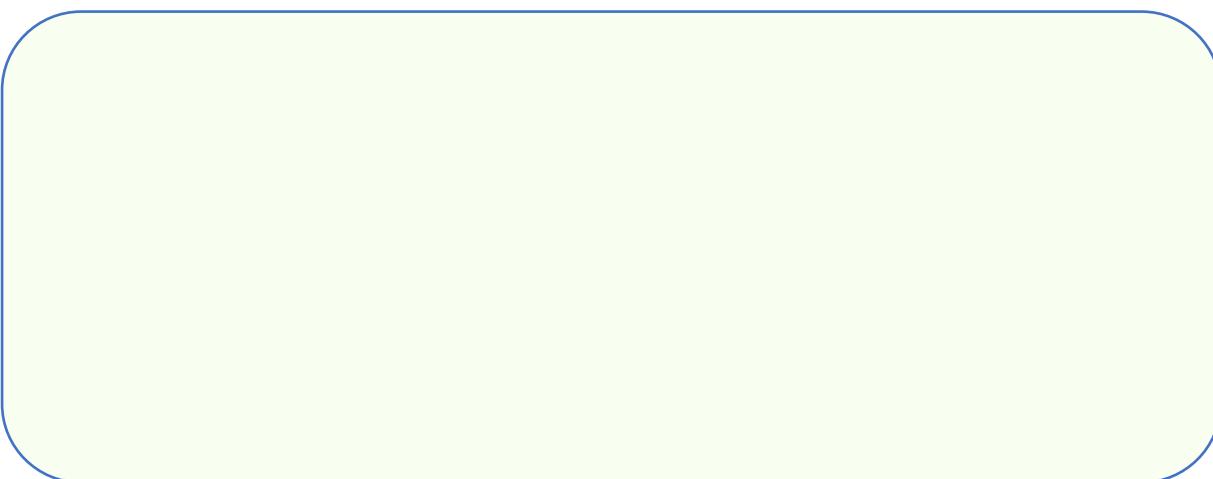
- Understand what divorce is and how to get through it.

Describing the scenario more broadly:

The scenario aims to familiarise participants with the methods of working with the family in which the divorce occurred or there is a crisis which may lead to a divorce. We will learn the main forms of help that we can offer to the family and its individual members, we will try to understand more about what the crisis in the family is about and how to achieve a successful solution. We will focus on learning about the development of the family, its individual phases, to more accurately diagnose the causes of the crisis and to choose support methods accordingly.

Particular workshop tasks will serve to increase understanding of given issues, equip participants with specific tools for working with the family, as well as increase interpersonal competences to better cope with the divorce crisis.

3. The worker then gives the client a card to take notes. After the client completes the Work Card, the worker answers any questions. If the worker does not know the answer to the questions asked, he informs the client about it, indicating the time and manner of answering.



Meeting 2

The client's psychoeducation takes place during the second meeting.

Mini lecture - Divorce in the family - consequences

The functioning of the family has changed noticeably in recent years. One of the most important changes is the ease of dissolving the family. According to GUS data, the number of divorces increases every year, although recently (2018) there has been a slight decrease, it can still be said that about 30% of marriages end in divorce.

THIS would mean that almost every third couple decides to formally part.

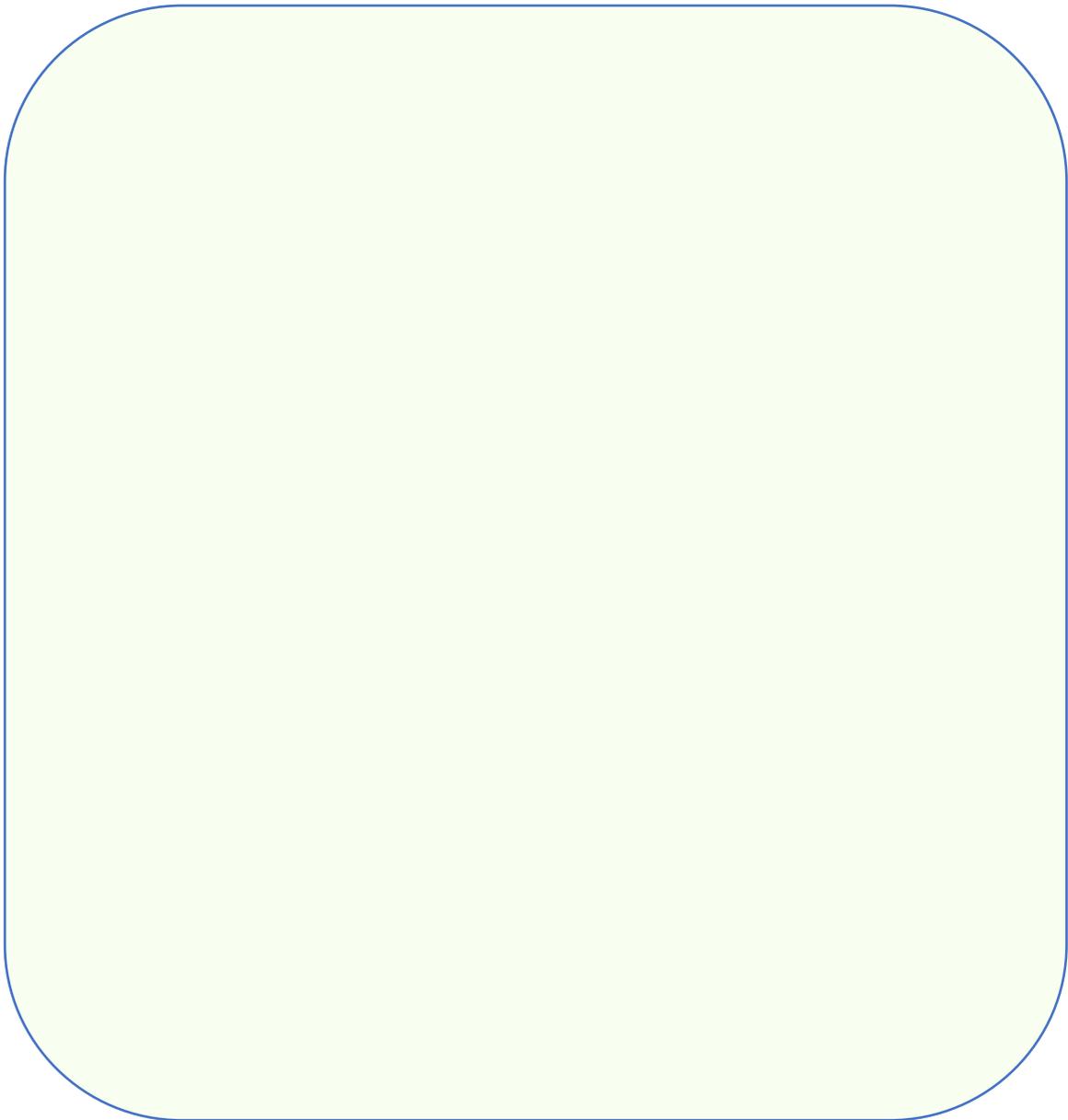
Among the reasons for the breakdown of a marriage, the most common are: lack of marital fidelity, alcohol abuse, blameworthy attitude towards family members, financial misunderstandings, incompatibility of characters. Character mismatch in 2018 accounted for over 43 % of the reasons for divorces in Poland, and in the 1980s it was one in four. In 1980, marital treason and alcohol abuse dominated.

A significant proportion of people dissatisfied with their relationship reach quickly for a radical solution, which is a court decision dissolving the marriage. Only a small number seek help before a crisis in a relationship escalates and destroys most of the family's functions. Systemic family therapy helps to better understand the difficulties that arise in the family. It is not uncommon for parents to bring children who have symptoms that parents do not associate with the divorce to a psychologist. It can be said that through symptoms and difficulties in functioning, the child indicates a crisis that appears in the family. Usually the whole family system needs help then. At meetings, we will try to better understand what kind of help will be needed for the family.

At this point, it's worth taking a moment to understand what functions the human family performs. According to Virginia Satir, in every culture, the family has several key functions to fulfill:

- Organising the sexual life of parents,
- Birthing and raising children,
- Economic cooperation,
- Maintaining boundaries between generations and relationship strategy
- Cultural message
- Social roles of different ages
- Finding yourself in an unknown environment
- Verbal communication
- Nonverbal communication
- Expression of emotions
- Recognising when a family member is not a child and preparing him / her for the adult role,
- Care for parents (grandparents).

Dividing into successive phases is another area helpful in ordering the understanding of processes occurring in the family life cycle. The Duvall (2006) concept is very useful in practical therapeutic work, taking into account the development tasks of individual phases. The worker then gives the client a card to take notes. After the client completes the Work Card, the worker answers any questions. If the worker does not know the answer to the questions asked, he informs the client about it, indicating the time and manner of answering.



The worker gives the client the following information which will be discussed during the next meeting.

Information card

I. Marriage without children	2 years	Mutual attachment
Stage according to Duvall	Optimal/ average length of time	Main goal changes
II. A family raising small children	2.5 years	
III. A family with a child in nursery- reception age	3.5 years	Education of parental roles bringing children to the institution (school, church, sports club ect.) accepting puberty
IV. A family with a child in school age	7 years	(changes in social and gender roles)
V. A family with growing up children	7 years	Experimenting with independence
VI. A family with children leaving home	8 years	accepting an independent role of an adult child
VII. The stage of an "empty nest"	Approx.15 years	accepting leaving – meeting again
VIII. Parents getting older (till the death of both)	10-15 years	Accepting getting older

The characteristics of family life cited above show how a multi-tasking and multi-functional system is a family that undergoes constant change in the process of its dynamic development. Each stage of the family's life has its tasks, and when they are not fulfilled,

tension and imbalance occur. Then a crisis occurs in the family, and its solution depends primarily on the commitment and competence of family members, in particular adults.

Crises are inscribed in the individual development of each family member. The way the spouses solve crises is critical to the success of the relationship and the family. Often, however, this happens by trial and error. However, if the family system has a small ability to adapt - it is either too rigid or too chaotic, and the bonds in the family are weak, communication disorders appear which violate the boundaries of the individual. Instead of transforming the patterns of behaviour necessary to understand the aforementioned family functions. and to transition to the next development phase, there may be a threat of breakdown of the family system. It is often in such deep crisis situations that the idea of solving it with a breakup appears. This decision of one or both parents affects the disruption of the natural life cycle of the family.

It seems useful at this point to look at the divorce situation as a situation of massive loss. Family members experience specific losses: housing, contact with loved ones, financial losses, etc., as well as symbolic losses: often self-esteem, trust in relationships with loved ones, faith in the adequacy of their own choices. They also lose the ways that they knew of entering into relationships and patterns of family behaviour. The family system is falling apart, roles are violated, the structure that gives a sense of security is disorganised.

Even a peacefully carried out divorce is a difficult experience for a child, because the world he knows so far is falling apart. Memories of this period of childhood still evoke vivid emotions in respondents, although many years have passed and now, they have already started families and have children. Parental divorce has many consequences for the child on several levels:

Experienced emotions:

- Feeling helpless - the child has a sense of lack of influence over the situation
- Anxiety and uncertainty about the future
- Feeling embarrassed in front of their peers
- Sadness, confusion.
- Withdrawal - the child is focused on his or her experiences, dealing with the crisis, lacks strength and energy to engage in other areas of life.
- Loneliness, isolation - a child withdraws from contacts, but they can also be less friendly to peers - can behave aggressively, does not pay attention to others, talks about themselves less willingly, cannot invite them to play at home. As a result, others are moving away from the child.

Psychological - divorce can also have far-reaching consequences for functioning in later life:

- Sense of rejection - especially when one parent is removed from their life
- Lowering self esteem
- Problems establishing relationships.

The situations presented above depict the individual drama of the experiences of children and adults involved in the divorce process. Jim Conway (1995), himself experienced divorce and conducted a study of adult children of divorced parents. The following results describe the long-term consequences of parental divorce using statistical data. From among the respondents:

70% felt robbed of their own lives

63% felt that excessive responsibility was required from them

58% felt an internal tear, showing obedience to both mother and father

57% felt emotionally tormented

57% think they have material problems

53% could not cope at school

51% took over the tasks of a parent or counselor for one of their own parents

37% were afraid of meeting the opposite sex or getting married

36% disengaged from their family life

35% took over the tasks of a parent or counselor for one of the siblings

In addition, the examined adult children of divorced or conflicting parents confess that:

72% were unhappy

65% felt powerless

61% felt lonely

52% were afraid

50% felt angry

48% had a sense of abandonment

40% had a sense of rejection

30% felt enmity with their surroundings

30% had no sense of value

Powyższe informacje wskazują, że najboleśniejse obszary związane z rozwdem koncentrują dla dzieci wokół następujących utrat:

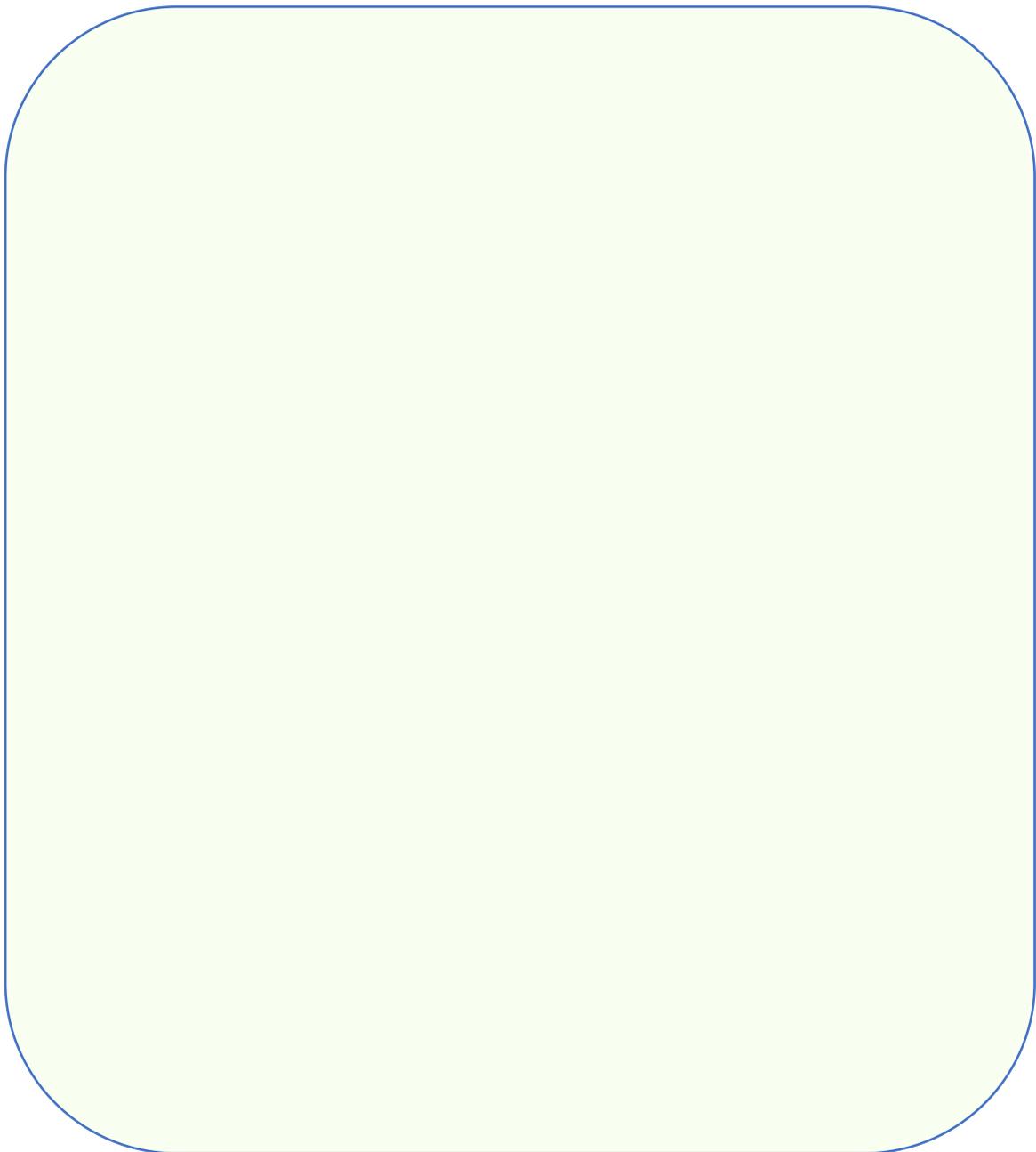
The above information indicates that the most painful areas related to divorce for children ,concentrate around the following losses:

- a safe, stable emotional environment
- parts of childhood
- often material security
- functional patterns of parental roles
- the role of the child in the family
- trust in adults
- self-esteem

And for adults:

- parts of adult life and faith in the ability to self-esteem and adequate selection of a partner
- self-esteem
- often material security, financial resources invested and the ability to safely fulfill parental and marriage roles

Then the worker gives the client a card to take notes on. After the client completes the Work Card, the worker answers the questions. If the worker does not know the answer to the questions asked, he informs the client about it, indicating the time and manner of answering.



Meeting 3

During the meeting, the worker answers all client questions and completes an individual work plan with them (only if the client agrees to further meetings) *

1. CLIENT COPY

S WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU- DESCRIBE IT IN ONE SENTENCE	M How long has it been bothering you for?- give a date	A What do you want? What is your plan to achieve this? Write it step by step.	R Is this plan realistic?	T When do you want to achieve this by? Give a realistic date

What does the client expect from their worker?

S WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU- DESCRIBE IT IN ONE SENTENCE	M How long has it been bothering you for?- give a date	A What do you want? What is your plan to achieve this? Write it step by step.	R Is this plan realistic?	T When do you want to achieve this by? Give a realistic date

What I can offer to the client

3. After completing the SMART plan by the client and the worker, a joint action plan must be completed, to which the client and the worker agree on (agreement must be reached)

S WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU- DESCRIBE IT IN ONE SENTENCE	M How long has it been bothering you for?- give a date	A What do you want? What is your plan to achieve this? Write it step by step.	R Is this plan realistic?	T When do you want to achieve this by? Give a realistic date

Suggestions and notes from both parties

Mutual agreement and action plan – signed by both client and worker

Worker signature

Client signature

Date

Date

.....

.....

The worker thanks their client for cooperation and commitment; praises the client saying that it was a very successful and fruitful meeting. Informs the client about the date and manner of contact regarding further meetings.

Personal notes

A large, empty, light green rounded rectangular area intended for personal notes.