

Medis 5 & Corona

Medis 5 is a cultural activity at Södermalm in Stockholm where 24 people with functional variations work with music, art and film. Wednesday, before Easter holidays, we found out that we were going to close the next day because of Corona. This meant that we had to prepare and train all participants by telephone to be able to continue our work!

See You Zoom!

During spring 2020 we have really learned to think creatively and in new paths. We decided to use Zoom as our working tool and it took two weeks before everyone could join in on the zoom meetings. We worked with one participant at a time. Every single person had their difficulties and obstacles to be overcome. And this goes for both staff and participants! Our goal was to meet all participants together three times every day on zoom; morning gym, information and a coffee break where a participant or staff had prepared a quiz or some music to the coffee break. In between, we worked individually or in small groups.

Ipads To Everyone

Thanks to a project, "Cookies and Clouds", with another NGO for adult education and the Heritage Fund, Medis 5 lent Ipads to everyone who worked at home.

Each iPad was made as accessible as possible where all icons except the mailbox were removed. Three times a day, an email comes with a zoom link. Between each meeting, all emails are deleted so there is always just one email in the mailbox.

Classical Adult Education Methods

During this spring, we have really been working with methods of classical adult education. In order for everyone to be able to work digitally and at their homes and not leaving a single person behind, we have met each person where they are and step by step guided them towards finally being able to work and meet on zoom.

Some knows how e-mails work, others have no idea. Some have Wifi, some don't know what it is.

The digital part has taken a lot of time, but has really been able to solve. Now all participants meet and work everyday on zoom.

The Biggest Problem

However, we have noticed that many participants suffer from the isolation. Many turn the clock and find it difficult to maintain a structure during the days. The most important thing for us during the quarantine has not been to perform our tasks just like before, but to sustain a feeling that you belong to a context and that you can meet digitally. Next step is to produce a good piece of work.

- *This is worse than the Black Death*, says Robert Carlsson.

- *I have come up with a technique to reach some positive thinking*, Kent Sidvall says. *I imagine the worst possible disaster scenario. A world where everything has ceased to function. By thinking of the worst, I appreciate what have, instead of worrying what may happen. It is important to enjoy what you have.*

Digital Democracy

It has become clear for us how the opportunities to work and meet digitally is a matter of democracy and belonging. Some lack smart phones and they do not have Wifi at home. Many people with functional variations lack both knowledge and equipment. This is a golden opportunity for classical adult education to really make a difference and offer study circles in basic digital knowledge.

Digital skills vary widely from person to person. There are many different courses that we are having with the participants right now. Each person needs an individual training in how to work digitally. Here lies the biggest, most time-consuming effort. We started with a scan of the level of digital knowledge and equipment among our participants and staff.

1. Is there a basic computer knowledge?

For those who lack this, it is incredibly difficult to learn it in distance courses. In order to have digital communication like zoom you need to go the ABC course

in basic digital knowledge in real life. We solved this with home education, often out doors.

Does the person have the required equipment? Many of our participants lack a smart phone, a computer or an Ipad. Through a collaboration with another NGO working with adult education we have borrowed Ipads that we have prepared to make it as easy as possible for the user.

2. Do the participants have access to wifi?

Those who don't have internet at home, got a SIM card loaded with 5 Gb. There is also an opportunity to buy a mobile broadband.

So Many New Words

Another difficulty is that the participants can't read directives on the screen e.g. up dates and other stuff that pops up.

We also noticed a lack of knowledge in basic terminology. What is... "address bar", "wifi", "web reader", "web based", link", "save", "router", "web browser"?

1st Class pedagogues!

The process of teaching all participants to be able to work digitally takes staff with really good patience and pedagogic skills.

Be patient! Work slowly! There are a zillion things to learn. New problems occur all the time. The Ipad turns black! What to do?

How we got to meet at Zoom

We decided that all participants are equipped with an Ipad or computer at home. They have been instructed in how to create an e-mail account. Three times/day they receive an email from medis5@sensus.se with a zoom link to a meeting.

In between we communicate via telephone (and messenger for those who have it).

Each person receives personal guidance in being able to access the e-mail and how to click the link.

It is much more difficult than one might think.

It is important to:

Only teach one thing at the time, like getting an e-mail account, opening an e-mail, clicking a link. These are three different courses and each one of them takes time to digest.

Have continuous close contact with follow-ups and rehearsals.

At Medis 5 we quickly noticed that some pedagogues are more skilled with this super thorough method in the basics while others developed new digital teaching materials and methods. This meant that we divided the tasks among staff according to skills and lust.

Have a look at our job!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJWq7ddJA5g>