

# The ReExploration Manual



Explore  
Your Potential



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idei și proiecte  
pentru  
tineri activi



State Probation Service  
Republic of Latvia





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Your Potential



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A manual dedicated to  
professionals who work with  
young people at risk of social  
exclusion and at risk of offending



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Your Potential



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# Introduction

'Explore your Potential' is an Erasmus+ initiative in the field of youth launched in 2021 by a consortium of three organizations from EU countries. The coordinator of the project is IPTA from Romania, and the implementing partners are YOMN from Spain and The State Probation Service of Latvia. The project is a Strategic Partnership financed by the Romanian National Agency for Erasmus+, and promotes a set of best practices for stimulating the social reintegration of young offenders, young people who are at risk of offending and those at risk of social exclusion. The present manual is the final outcome of the project and incorporates the efforts of three teams of specialists in various fields of work such as youth work, non-formal learning, probation services, psychology and psychotherapy, social work, linguistics, formal education, community development, international cooperation, research in youth policies and organizational transformation.

With this project we plan to engage with young adults aged 21-30 living in various social contexts: young offenders or at risk of offending, young addicts or at risk of developing addictive tendencies, but also young people at risk of social exclusion.

Initially the project targeted mainly young offenders who are probation clients. Following the multiple local testing activities with teenagers who are at risk of offending, we understood that this manual is suitable also for the younger people who are at risk of committing crimes as a consequence of their living environment. In this view, we consider that this manual and the collection of methods are suitable for young people who developed or are prone to develop unhealthy habits and to engage in harmful activities.

The manual follows three main perspectives, namely preventive education on substance addictions, preventive education on violence, and human rights education. With this collection of 35 educational methods, we aim at reducing the propensity of social exclusion among the youth at risk of offending and re-offending. We created this manual based on the principles of NFL (Non-Formal Learning) for professionals who work with these target groups. We hope that the users of this manual will find it useful in their efforts to accelerate the inclusion in the society of youth at risk of re-offending, by developing healthy relationships in their communities.

The manual is structured in three parts: recommendations for a better understanding of the methods and guidelines for using the methods, 35 ready-to-use methods dedicated to professionals, and a section dedicated to local interventions for organizing campaigns on social reintegration. Each method was tested multiple times with a relevant audience in Romania, Latvia and Spain during an experimental phase that covered almost 14 months. We worked with young people from NGOs, schools, probation services, youth clubs, social facilities - a process which was possible due to the extensive contribution of the local stakeholders from each partner country.

We want to emphasize that the manual is an instrument for practitioners who are involved in preventive work and support services for young people and should not replace the professional intervention of specialists in various fields (psychologists, psychotherapists, medical staff, law enforcement representatives, clinicians, addictologists, etc.).



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We received consistent positive feedback from professionals who work in these areas, feedback which was a great validation of our work. However, the users of the manual are advised to deliver these methods in a multi-disciplinary team, especially when they intend to extend the complexity of the intervention.

We take this opportunity to send our message of gratitude to those who offered their time, resources, creativity, ideas and expertise in designing the content of this manual.

We would like to acknowledge the consistent support received from local NGOs, schools, public bodies and private organizations from every partner country. We benefited from the support of these organizations for testing the manual with the proper number and profile of beneficiaries, and we received valuable feedback from them. We want to express our consideration for ANPCDEFP, the Romanian National Agency for Erasmus+ Programme, who supported this beautiful initiative.

### ***Explore Your Potential* project team**



## Part I: Guidelines for using the manual

The first part of this manual is a set of recommendations, tips & tricks and insights about how to use the methods that are detailed in the second part of the manual. We highly advise the reader to go carefully through this content prior to using the methods, as it could ease the overall understanding of our approach.

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## Section A. Guidelines for using the manual

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### Overall considerations

The project is an initiative dedicated to professionals and organizations that are engaged with young people on a permanent basis, mainly young offenders and young people who are at risk of offending or at risk of social exclusion. Therefore, we would recommend the use of the manual for programs delivered on a continuous basis. For this reason, the most effective way of working with the methods is by delivering them through regular meetings with the same beneficiaries, in groups or individual sessions. By being enrolled in an intensive program of social reintegration, an individual is more prone to develop healthy attitudes towards human rights, better behaviors and healthier relationships with society and ultimately with themselves.



The impact is reinforced with every new session which might reduce the risk of engaging in unhealthy or illegal activities. This is especially relevant for young persons who are exposed to such dangers in their living environment.

Definitely, the methods can also be delivered as one-time intervention to introduce or to refresh some considerations about the topic addressed. However, in this setting, the users of the manual might not observe consistent impact or reduced risk of offending because there is little or no follow-up for this type of intervention.

Regarding the professional background and the individual preparation, the manual is dedicated to professionals active mainly in the field of youth. While there is no official academic requirement for those who will use the manual, an academic and professional background in youth work, psychology, education, social sciences, law or related fields will ease the work with the manual.



In addition to this, the use of the manual will be more effective for those who have a good command of the principles of NFL (Non-Formal Education) prior to using the methods with their beneficiaries. The level of difficulty for each method is different, therefore we advise the users to get familiar with these principles. There are multiple online resources that describe the particularities of NFL and we invite you to explore as much as possible the materials developed by organizations with relevant expertise in the field. We recommend one material created by the Council of Europe in collaboration with the European Union through the Youth Partnership, available online.



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## How to read the manual and what goals can be achieved through the use of the manual

As a general set of working recommendations, we advise each user of the manual to read and use the methods in line with their professional experience and in accordance with the profile of the beneficiaries. Depending on this last point, only some elements of a method could be suitable, while additional elements might be needed for better results.

The main goal of this manual is to support the users with the (re)integration of young offenders and young people who are at risk of offending or at risk of social exclusion. It is a tool that complements practices already validated for similar goals. Working with these target groups, the users can aim at achieving a wide spectrum of goals, mainly addressing the occurrence of unhealthy and abusing tendencies related to addictions, violence, violation of human rights, ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences), and liminality in social exclusion.

### From text to facilitation: how to use the methods for group work and for individual work

We took into consideration the practice of various organizations and professionals who tested the methods in multiple local workshops with beneficiaries. Following their feedback, we concluded that the manual needs to have dual applicability, for both group and individual work. In this view, each method includes two versions.

#### A. Group work

By actively managing and enhancing group dynamics, groups with youth at risk of offending or social exclusion can become a space where participants feel supported, motivated and empowered to make positive changes in their lives. Remember that each participant is an individual with unique experiences and needs. Flexibility, empathy, and a genuine commitment to their rehabilitation are key components of a successful work.

Group dynamics in youth at risk groups play a crucial role in fostering a positive and supportive environment for them. Here are key aspects of group dynamics and strategies to enhance them in groups.

##### 1. Build Trust and Support

- Create a supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere.
- Get to know each participant and try to understand their unique needs and challenges.
- Use open-ended questions to encourage them to share their experiences.

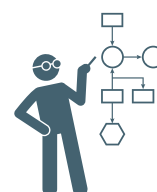


##### 2. Establish Clear Expectations:

- Clearly communicate the rules and expectations of the program from the beginning.
- Reinforce the importance of participation and adherence to guidelines.

##### 3. Structured Sessions:

- Plan structured and engaging sessions.
- Formulate clear objectives.
- Include a mix of activities, discussions, art, body based tasks and skill-building exercises to keep participants involved.



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#### 4. Culturally Sensitive Approaches:

- Be aware of and sensitive to cultural differences among participants.
- Adapt your approach to be inclusive and respectful of diverse backgrounds.



#### 5. Encourage Peer Support

- Foster a sense of community among participants.
- Encourage peer support and collaboration through group activities and discussions.

#### 6. Participation and Engagement:

- **Encourage Active Participation:** Create opportunities for all members to actively participate.
- **Varied Activities:** Incorporate a variety of activities to maintain engagement and interest.

**Group size** Keep group sizes manageable to ensure effective supervision and interaction. A smaller group size allows for better engagement and control. A recommended size might range from 4 to 12 participants.



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#### Location



- Choose a safe and neutral location for group meetings, preferably within the probation service's facilities or in a community center with appropriate supervision.
- Ensure the environment is conducive to productive discussions and activities, free from distractions or potential triggers, confidentiality can be assured.
- Consider the accessibility to the toilet, water and fresh air

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#### Language



- Use easy, clear and respectful language at all times, avoiding slang or jargon that may be misunderstood or trigger negative reactions.
- Encourage open communication and active listening among group members, fostering a culture of mutual respect and understanding.
- Provide language support if necessary, especially for participants with limited proficiency in the primary language used during the sessions or participants with mental health issues.

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#### Materials:



- Select appropriate materials and resources for group activities, ensuring they are safe and relevant to the participants.
- Use informative materials with clear and easy language, easy to understand for youth with mental health issues.
- Avoid items that could be used as weapons or pose a risk of harm, such as sharp objects or hazardous substances.
- Provide clear instructions on the safe use of space, materials and tools, emphasizing the importance of responsible behavior.

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#### Emergency Procedures



Establish clear emergency procedures and protocols in case of accidents, conflicts, or other unforeseen events.



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## B. Individual work



When possible, individual work and group work could be complemented for the same participant, leading to a greater impact. The dynamics of individual work with youth at risk involve a personalized and collaborative approach to address the unique needs and challenges of each individual. By focusing on individualized needs, strengths, and collaborative goal-setting, the facilitator can create a dynamic and effective framework for engaging with youth at risk or young offenders on an individual basis. This approach contributes to the overall success of rehabilitation efforts and reduces the risk of problematic behavior.

### Some Aspects of Individual Work:

#### 1. Assessment and Goal Setting:

- Conduct a comprehensive assessment to understand the individual's background, strengths, risk factors, and specific needs.
- If possible, before work starts, set realistic and achievable short-term and long-term goals of the work together with youngsters.

#### 2. Work and Support:

- Establish a trusting and supportive relationship.
- Provide emotional support and guidance to address personal challenges and concerns.

### How to read the methods

The methods included in the manual are the result of a combined work of the three partners from Latvia, Spain and Romania that designed, adapted and tested a number of 35 tools suitable for their beneficiaries. We developed the methods following a protocol that ensures consistency and relevance of this manual.

- **Designing of the method.** This initial step included either designing a method from scratch, or adapting methods that the partners already used with their beneficiaries.
- **Initial testing phase.** We organized two international training courses with 36 youth workers from Latvia, Romania and Spain. Each training course included six working days, a space where the participants experienced the methods and planned the local testing.
- **Local testing.** The participants who attended the initial testing phase organized local workshops in their countries and tested the methods. They provided consistent feedback for the methods, including observations and recommendations.
- **Additional testing.** As we understood the need to additionally test the methods with an extended number of youth workers and professionals in education, social work and probation services, we tested the methods in other local and international (Erasmus+) activities.
- **Feedback integration.** Following the testing phase, we included the feedback received from the youth workers in the final version of each method.





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## Section B. Relevant Topics

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This section provides a set of insights from the perspective of the authors of the manual, based on their practice in probation work, youth work and therapy. The recommendations may be incorporated in activities delivered to both groups and individuals.

### Trauma and young offenders



Young offenders and young people at risk of offending or relapsing often have complex relationships with trauma, as many have experienced significant adversity and adverse childhood experiences.

Trauma, whether it stems from abuse, neglect, violence, or other forms of trauma, can profoundly impact their psychological, emotional, and behavioral well-being. For some, trauma may be a root cause of their offending behavior, influencing their coping mechanisms, decision-making processes, and ability to regulate emotions.

Others may have developed maladaptive coping strategies, such as substance abuse or criminal activity, as a means of numbing or escaping from the pain of their trauma. The stigma and discrimination associated with their involvement in the criminal justice system can exacerbate feelings of shame, guilt, and isolation, compounding the trauma they have experienced. Understanding the complex interplay between trauma and offending behavior is essential for designing effective interventions and support systems that address the underlying causes of their behavior.

For young offenders recovering from trauma, the process of healing often involves letting go of the burdens of the past and clearing the present to pave the way for a different future. This journey begins with acknowledging and confronting the painful experiences that have shaped their lives, allowing them to release repressed emotions and confront unresolved feelings. Through supportive interventions, they learn to get in touch with their feelings, and cultivate forgiveness, both for themselves and for those who may have caused them harm.



By embodied experiences, they connect with their bodies and bring awareness of the present-moment, they gradually untangle themselves from the grip of past trauma, learning to live fully in the present without being haunted by past events. This process of letting go and clearing the present is not easy; it requires courage, resilience, and support from caring individuals and supporting communities. However, as young offenders gradually shed the weight of their past traumas, they discover newfound freedom, resilience, and hope for a brighter tomorrow.



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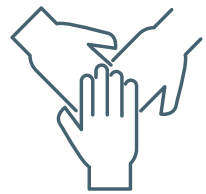
## The importance of bringing awareness through reflection processes.



Without the processes of awareness and reflection, fostering positive change and rehabilitation among young offenders becomes significantly more challenging.

These are some of the expected outcomes:

- **Understanding Root Causes:** Awareness and reflection enable young offenders to delve into the root causes of their actions and behaviors. Many of these young offenders have experienced trauma, abuse, or adverse circumstances that have shaped their lives and identity towards delinquency. Bringing awareness of their past experiences and encouraging reflection on how these experiences have influenced their choices in life, the facilitator can help young offenders to let go of repressed emotions, low self esteem that make the possibility of change difficult.
- **Promoting Responsibility:** Through reflection, young offenders can take ownership of their actions and their consequences. Through the process of introspection and reflecting on their past behaviors, they can develop a sense of responsibility for their actions that is essential for change, as it empowers them to recognize the impact of their choices and take steps towards positive change.
- **Building Self-Awareness:** By encouraging them to reflect on their experiences and explore their inner selves young offenders can develop a deeper understanding of themselves and their deeper motivations that are normally based on uncovered needs from early childhood. This self-awareness is crucial for liberating from the past and having the opportunity to see themselves with kinder eyes from which to build a lighter future.
- **Facilitating Healing from Trauma:** by exploring their feelings, they can process their past traumas and begin this healing process of past experiences. This healing journey is essential for rehabilitation, as it allows young offenders to address the underlying issues that may have contributed to their delinquent behavior and start to forgive themselves.



- **Developing Emotional Regulation Skills:** Many young offenders struggle with emotional regulation, often experiencing intense emotions such as anger, frustration, or anxiety. Through NFE methods and approaches, we help them learn to recognize and manage their emotions in healthy ways, encouraging them to reflect on their emotional responses and identify their triggers, and learn to develop effective coping strategies to build emotional resilience.
- **Encouraging Goal Setting and Planning for the Future:** By helping them reflect on their past experiences and envision a positive future for themselves, we can empower young offenders to take control of their lives and work towards their goals. This forward-thinking approach is crucial for rehabilitation, as it allows them to focus on their futures and move beyond their past mistakes.



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## Be prepared for resistance



As a facilitator working with young offenders or young people at risk of offending or relapsing, it's important to be prepared for various forms of resistance that may arise during the sessions. Here's how to address different types of resistance:

- **Defiance or Opposition:** When participants openly challenge activities or the facilitator, it's essential to respond with empathy and understanding. Acknowledge their feelings of anger or frustration and validate their experiences. Try to uncover the underlying reasons for their resistance through open dialogue and active listening. Encourage them to express their concerns and perspectives, and work together to find common ground.
- **Disengagement or Withdrawal:** If participants disengage or withdraw from activities, approach them with patience and compassion. Create a supportive and non-judgmental environment where they feel safe to express themselves. Offer opportunities for individualized engagement, such as one-on-one discussions or alternative activities tailored to their interests. Provide positive reinforcement and encouragement to help re-engage them in the group process.
- **Fear of Vulnerability:** Some participants may resist engaging fully in activities due to a fear of vulnerability or exposing their emotions. Foster an atmosphere of trust and safety within the group by setting clear ground rules that emphasize confidentiality and respect. Model vulnerability and openness as a facilitator, sharing your own experiences when appropriate. Encourage gradual exposure to challenging topics or activities, allowing participants to build trust at their own pace. Offer support and reassurance to help them feel more comfortable expressing themselves.
- **Negative Self-Perception:** Participants struggling with low self-esteem or negative self-perceptions may resist engaging in activities. Provide positive reinforcement and validation to counteract these negative beliefs. Encourage participants to recognize their strengths and accomplishments, no matter how small. Use strengths-based approaches to highlight their unique qualities and contributions to the group. Offer opportunities for personal reflection and goal-setting to help build confidence and self-awareness.
- **Peer Pressure or Influence:** Participants may resist engaging in activities due to peer pressure or the influence of others in the group. Create a supportive group dynamic that encourages collaboration and mutual respect. Address instances of peer pressure or negative influence promptly and assertively, reminding participants of the ground rules and expectations for respectful behavior. Encourage positive peer interactions and teamwork to counteract negative influences.

By addressing resistance with empathy, patience, and flexibility, facilitators can create a supportive and empowering environment that encourages participation and growth for all participants.



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## Humor and play

When working with young offenders, integrating humor and play is crucial. Despite the seriousness of their situations, infusing some fun and playfulness can have a significant impact. Humor helps to create a connection between facilitators and participants by lightening the mood and fostering the bond. Play allows everyone to explore, be creative, express themselves freely, and connect with each other. There are several benefits to incorporating humor and play:



**Engagement and Motivation:** Humor and play makes learning more enjoyable and engaging, especially for young offenders who may have negative associations with traditional educational settings. By integrating these elements into activities, facilitators can capture participants' interest and motivate them to actively participate.



**Social Connection and Communication:** Shared laughter and playful interactions help build connections with others and strengthen relationships within the group. For young offenders who may struggle with social skills, engaging in playful activities provides opportunities for positive social interactions and collaboration.



**Stress Reduction:** Many young offenders experience high levels of stress and anxiety, whether due to involvement with the criminal justice system or personal circumstances. Humor and play serve as powerful tools for reducing stress and creating a relaxed learning environment. Laughter triggers the release of endorphins, which helps participants feel more relaxed and at ease.



**Creativity and Innovation:** Playful activities encourage participants to think creatively and explore new ideas. By tapping into their imagination and sense of playfulness, young offenders can approach challenges with a fresh perspective and come up with innovative solutions. Play also fosters curiosity and exploration, allowing participants to discover new interests and talents.



**Emotional Expression and Regulation:** Play provides a safe outlet for emotional expression and regulation. Through playful activities, young offenders can express their emotions in a non-threatening way and learn healthy coping mechanisms for stress and frustration. Playful interactions also promote emotional intelligence by helping participants recognize and understand their own emotions and those of others.



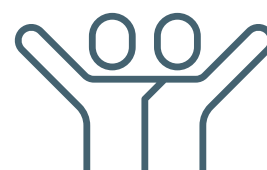
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## Healthy Relationships

The term 'relationships' is used to describe a wide spectrum of human interactions that are part of our daily life. The complexity of our relationships brings us the sense of purpose and the inspiration to move forward. Or it could bring us the urge to escape a place, to close a phase of our life, and even to switch to a different professional path. The high variety of life scenarios is generated mainly by the spectrum of relationships that we build around us. The relationships shape every person's decisions, goals, living context, wellbeing and overall, the quality of our life. Whether we are able to control this aspect or not, we strive to make sure that the people who surround us can fulfill our needs and improve the way we fill in our environment.

We invite you to consider **six main ingredients** of healthy relationships (inspired from [aaci.org](http://aaci.org)):

- Functional communication
- Mutual support
- Respect and equality
- Personal freedom
- Consent and boundaries
- Safety and trust



When we promote these ingredients in our work with young people, we stimulate them to build assertiveness, non-conflictual communication, self-esteem, emotional literacy, resilience, and personal growth. Once these factors are understood and worked through, the young people are ready to address and confront the relationships which are dysfunctional or toxic. For teenagers and young adults, resilience is a key ingredient for addressing peer pressure and environmental shortcomings. Increased levels of self-esteem, resilience and decisional autonomy lead to a more functional critical thinking process and, consequently, to a reduced risk in engaging in unhealthy and risky activities.

### Some considerations about preventive education



"Healthy relationships" is a recurring theme in this manual, as its relevance became obvious to us while working with teenagers whose capacity to critically examine their social interactions was limited or non-existent. The development and reinforcement of the abusive behavior patterns, including addictions, occur primarily among those adolescents who either lack a critical perspective regarding the substances or habits in question, or own reduced assertiveness when confronted with peer pressure.

We consider that there are two major ways for developing an addiction for a teenager: spontaneous and gradually. These two can be combined or separated.

The first one is a result of an unexpected event that incorporates a heavy emotional load, in most of the times this being a traumatic experience. When talking about childhood, these moments are called ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and are some of the most frequent roots of unhealthy behavioral patterns. These moments can occur also later, when the young person faces a heavy emotional pressure to make a decision or when is a victim of violence (with an emphasis on emotional violence). In the absence of healthy support from others (as indicated at the ingredients of healthy relationships), the victim could resort to easier ways of relieving the pain, and the addictive substances have this power. For some young people, a single dose is enough to 'taint' the body towards that strong painkiller, namely the addictive substance, no matter which is that.



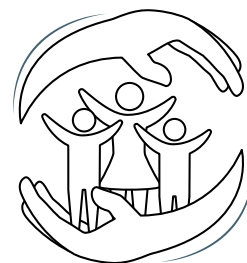
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The second one, gradual development of the addiction, could originate also in the previous way (spontaneous), but usually it is a ritualic way of fulfilling emotional discomfort and distress with little (usually not visible) gestures of accepting and validating the role of an addictive substance as part of the daily routine. Also, the permanent presence of the substance in the surroundings of the person plays a very important role.

The goal of preventive education is not abstinence, but balance. This manual promotes an approach that helps young people to understand why they choose one alternative or another regarding addictive substances, what is the impact on themselves and on others, and on society.

The youth worker has the tools and knowledge to support young people in understanding the reasons that are behind their actions related to the addictive behavior, to analyze with more accuracy their own living environment so they can recognize and deal with those factors that fuel their unhealthy routines. For the clients who are diagnosed as severe addicts, the methods designed in this manual could work, nevertheless we do not advance this hypothesis, considering that we tested the methods mainly with young people who did not face such situations.

When planning to work with potential or former addicts, we advise the youth workers to initiate joint preparation with professionals from other related fields, such as psychologists, therapists, social workers, medical personnel or law enforcement staff. Based on the feedback received from psychologists and therapists, the methods could be used in working sessions with addicts or former addicts. We encourage you to test the methods with groups and individuals who you know already at least partly.



In addition to these considerations, we recommend some valuable resources that will increase the quality of the work delivered, along with a better professional preparation for each individual.



One such resource is the ETS Competence Framework for Youth Workers developed by SALTO, a model that expanded in the last years and became part of the Youthpass competence model for professionals in the field of youth. A complete version of the resource can be found on the [SALTO website](#), with the caveat that updated versions might be published later.

Another relevant resource is the collection of tools included in the [repository](#) of EMCDDA, a comprehensive set of educational materials. The tools that are included here are validated by professionals with extensive experience in addictology, education, non-formal methodologies, public campaigns and many other directions.

Last but not least, we invite you to consult one resource created by IPTA Romania, the coordinator of this project, namely a manual of preventive education on addictions based on the principles of non-formal education. The [manual](#) is the main result of the Erasmus+ project 'Prevention++' and includes a number of 40 methods and guidelines for delivering effective sessions for teenagers on topics related to preventive education on substance addictions. We highly recommend you to access this resource, as the goal and style are compatible and similar to this manual.



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## Human Rights Education – some considerations



The spectrum of educational activities related to the topic of HRE (Human Rights Education) is broad and explored by a wide variety of organizations, professions and experts. In time, HRE became a central interest also for international organizations and countries, with national strategies created around the importance of promoting and preserving human rights for all the social groups in a community and country. In this view, the considerations that are mentioned here are brief and mainly tailored to the concept of this manual. Considering the multiple research and papers created in regard to defining what HRE is, we want to indicate some notes and the references that back our work in this manual.

The main references are the explanations created by the CoE (Council of Europe) and incorporated in the 'Compass – Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People'. Out of all the multiple definitions on what HRE is, we work with the one described in the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which defines HRE as 'education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower learners to contribute to the building and defence of a universal culture of human rights in society, with a view to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms'.

In line with the definition, the manual follows the tri-dimensional approach of HRE throughout all the methods, as follows:

- **Learning about human rights** through educational activities that build knowledge and awareness of the diversity of this concept.
- **Learning through human rights** by experiencing what it means to benefit from these rights and how life unfolds when human rights are violated.
- **Learning for human rights** through the development of attitudes and values that change persons' perspective on their actions towards other individuals and social groups. Also, this dimension should empower the learners to promote HRE in their communities as agents of change and stability, safeguarding the rights of those who cannot or don't know how to take action.

When delivering the activities included in the manual, we advise the users to permanently check with their clients and beneficiaries what is their perspective and understanding of human rights. A wide spectrum of crimes are a direct result of the violation of human rights, when analyzed from this perspective. In this light, promoting HRE constantly can build more awareness for young people who are at risk of offending, especially when it is delivered in conjunction with preventive education on addictions and violence and integrated with the importance of healthy relationships.





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## Section C. Our Approaches

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### Embodied learning and teaching approach rooted in Gestalt principles



This approach represents a paradigm shift in education that is particularly significant for young offenders or individuals at risk of offending or relapsing as it acknowledges the profound connection between the mind, body, and learning process, understanding that experiences are not solely intellectual but deeply rooted in physical sensations and in emotional responses.

For these individuals, who have faced adversity and trauma, traditional educational methods often fail to address their holistic needs and may even exacerbate the already existing challenges. Embodied learning offers a new opening from conventional approaches by recognizing the body as an active participant in the educational journey. It values movement, physical engagement, and sensory experiences as essential components of learning, allowing young participants to engage with knowledge on a corporal level.



By immersing themselves in experiential activities, they can not only comprehend information intellectually but also internalize it emotionally and physically.

This approach transforms learning environments into dynamic spaces where creativity flourishes, and diverse perspectives are embraced. It fosters exploration, experience that brings opportunities for self-awareness and self discovery in new ways for young offenders, giving them the opportunity to discover themselves with new eyes, recreating new possibilities to navigate their educational and personal development journeys from spaces of confidence and building inner resources of resilience.



In essence, embodied learning and teaching signify a shift towards a more holistic, inclusive, and empowering educational paradigm—one that honors the interconnectedness of mind, body, and spirit, and recognizes the transformative potential of experiential learning for young people in vulnerable situations.





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This approach includes the following aspects:



**Holistic Approach to Learning:** Embodied learning acknowledges that education is not just about acquiring knowledge but also about personal growth and development. For young offenders or at-risk individuals, this holistic approach is crucial as it addresses their complex needs beyond academic achievement, including emotional regulation, self-awareness, and social skills development

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**Integration of Mind, Body, and Emotions:** Young offenders or at-risk individuals often experience challenges related to emotional regulation and self-expression due to past traumas or adverse experiences. Embodied learning recognizes the interconnectedness of mind, body, and emotions, providing a platform for young participants to explore and understand these connections. This integration fosters a deeper level of self-awareness and emotional intelligence, which are essential for rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

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**Alternative to Traditional Methods:** Traditional classroom settings and academic subjects may not effectively engage young offenders or at-risk young people who struggle with conventional learning approaches. Embodied learning provides an alternative method that values movement, physical engagement, and sensory experiences, catering to diverse learning styles and preferences. By offering hands-on, experiential learning opportunities, embodied learning enables participants to actively engage with the material, fostering deeper understanding and retention.

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**Holistic Integration:** emphasizes the interconnectedness of mind, body, and emotions, recognizing that they cannot be separated in the process of learning and personal growth. Embodied teaching and learning activities encourage young offenders to integrate their physical sensations, emotions, and cognitive insights into a cohesive whole. Facilitators guide participants in exploring the connections between their bodily experiences, emotional responses, and cognitive patterns, promoting holistic integration and self-discovery.

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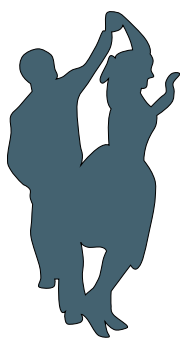
**Trauma-Informed Practice:** Many young offenders have experienced significant trauma, which can impact their ability to engage in traditional learning environments. Embodied learning acknowledges the impact of trauma on learning and behavior, offering a trauma-informed approach that prioritizes safety, empowerment, and choice. By providing opportunities for sensory integration and somatic experiencing, it supports individuals in processing trauma and building resilience.

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**Creative Expression and Exploration:** encourages creative expression and exploration as pathways to self-discovery and personal growth. In educational settings for young offenders or at-risk individuals, embodied teaching and learning activities incorporate expressive arts, improvisation, and creative problem-solving exercises. Participants are invited to express themselves through movement, art, music, and drama, tapping into their innate creativity and imagination to explore new perspectives, emotions, and possibilities.



**Physical and Emotional Expression:** Many young offenders or at-risk individuals face difficulties in expressing their emotions or coping with stress in healthy ways. Embodied learning encourages physical and emotional expression through movement, creative activities, and sensory experiences. By providing a safe and supportive environment for expression, embodied learning helps participants release pent-up emotions, reduce stress, and develop coping strategies, promoting emotional well-being and resilience.



**Emotional Regulation and Coping Skills:** Gestalt approach offers practical tools and techniques for managing emotions, coping with stress, and building resilience. Embodied teaching and learning activities incorporate Gestalt-based interventions such as breathing exercises, body scans, and guided imagery to promote relaxation, emotional regulation, and self-soothing. Participants learn to identify and express their feelings in constructive ways, developing healthy coping skills and resilience in the face of adversity.



**Relationship and Group Dynamics:** places a strong emphasis on the therapeutic relationship and group dynamics as catalysts for change. In educational settings, embodied teaching and learning activities focus on building trust, fostering collaboration, and promoting healthy interpersonal relationships. Facilitators create a safe and supportive environment where participants can explore relational patterns, practice effective communication skills, and develop empathy and compassion towards themselves and others.



**Integration of Theory and Practice:** emphasizes the integration of theory and practice, recognizing that true learning occurs through direct experience and reflection. Embodied teaching and learning activities bridge theory and practice by providing opportunities for participants to apply theoretical concepts to real-life situations and experiential exercises. Facilitators guide participants in reflecting on their experiences, identifying insights and learning points, and integrating them into their daily lives and interactions.

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## Gestalt Approach

These are the main gestalt principles in which our work with young offenders sustains:

- **Here and Now:** the importance of being present in the moment and exploring their current thoughts, emotions, sensations and actions, related to their ways of relating, also related to substance abuse and their relationships with conflict and violence. Through creative and experiential activities and mindfulness exercises, they can get in contact with “what is in the moment”, and let go of painful mechanisms and memories that are printed in the body, and that maintain conflict and suffering.
- **Bringing Awareness:** to help them become fully aware of their internal processes, including feelings, sensations, and patterns of behavior. This principle involves facilitating self-exploration and insight generation regarding the underlying causes of substance abuse and violent behavior. By bringing awareness to their motivations, traumas, and unmet needs, youth can start to understand the root causes of their actions and start making new decisions in their life, based on conscious decisions instead of being driven by unconscious reactive mechanisms.
- **Taking Responsibility:** helps them realize what specific actions or habits keep them trapped in the cycle of addiction or conflict. They can start asking themselves "What do I do that keeps me in this situation?" This introspection encourages them to examine their thought patterns, triggers, and avoidance strategies that contribute to maintaining problematic behaviors and reactions. It also empowers them, as they recognize underlying needs, and can take proactive steps to cover them and make healthier choices.
- **Exploration of Polarities:** the awareness of conflicting polarities within themselves, such as aggression vs. tenderness or control vs. impulsivity, fear vs trust. By exploring these inner polarities, they realize and understand the internal tensions that contribute to their uneasy and risky behaviors. By allowing, accepting and embracing these polarities, youth can develop more acceptance and compassion towards themselves and others, and start learning to forgive themselves and their past painful experiences.
- **Integrating the Shadow:** these are disowned or hidden aspects of ourselves. To get in touch with repressed emotions, traumas, and negative self-perceptions that fuel the use of substance abuse and violent behavior, it's already the first step of self-transformation. By bringing these shadow aspects into awareness, without judgment and with full acceptance, youth can start to heal deep wounds, looking at themselves with compassion and kindness, creating inner space to recover and heal. Realizing that behind the shadow there is a wound and vulnerability that is trying to be protected to survive, let's go to a false identity to meet a truer part of ourselves.
- **Gestalt Cycle and Closing the Gestalt:** unresolved issues can serve as triggers, leading to relapse or regression into old patterns of behavior. By helping youth close unfinished cycles that are still active internally, they can face and deal with underlying emotions and beliefs that contribute to their unhealthy habits and reactive behaviors. These closings will reduce the risk of relapse and empower them to take positive actions and more rooted changes, supporting them building resilience and making them ready and available to start anew.



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## Good Life Model

The Good Lives Model (GLM) is a therapeutic framework that focuses on helping individuals, including young people at risk and young offenders, pursue a life that is personally meaningful and fulfilling. Developed by Tony Ward and colleagues, the Good Lives Model integrates principles from positive psychology, human rights, and offender rehabilitation. It emphasizes the importance of addressing not only life and behavioral risk factors but also promoting the development of positive life skills and values.

Applying the Good Lives Model involves a holistic and person-centered approach that recognizes the importance of positive life goals, individual strengths, and the pursuit of a meaningful and fulfilling life. By emphasizing personal agency and positive human goods, the Good Lives Model contributes to the rehabilitation and reintegration of young people with risk behavior and young offenders into society.



Here are key elements and considerations for applying the Good Lives Model in working with young people at risk of social exclusion and young offenders:

### 1. Human Rights and Dignity:

- **Foundational Principle:** The GLM is grounded in the belief in the inherent dignity and human rights of individuals, including young people with risk behavior.
- **Application:** Recognize and respect the rights of youngsters, fostering an environment that promotes their dignity and worth.

### 2. Positive Human Goods:

- **Focus on Positive Goals:** Encourage young people with risk behavior to identify and pursue positive human goods, such as meaningful relationships, education, employment, and personal growth.
- **Personalization:** Tailor interventions to align with the individual's unique aspirations and values.

### 3. Needs and Values Assessment:

- **Holistic Assessment:** Conduct a comprehensive assessment that goes beyond offending, violent and risk behavior to include the identification of positive needs and values.
- **Collaborative Assessment:** Involve young people with risk behavior in the assessment process, allowing them to contribute to the identification of their own needs and values.

### 4. Strengths-Based Approach:

- **Leveraging Strengths:** Identify and leverage the strengths and capabilities of young people with risk behavior in the development of their Good Live Plans (see page. 88).
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Reinforce and celebrate their achievements and positive behaviors.

### 5. Development of Personal Goals:

- **Collaborative Goal-Setting:** Engage young people with risk behavior in collaborative goal-setting processes that align with their aspirations and contribute to a positive and fulfilling life.
- **Short-Term and Long-Term Goals:** Establish both short-term and long-term goals, recognizing the importance of incremental progress.

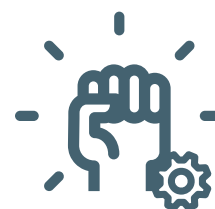


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## Strengths based approach

A strengths-based approach is a positive and empowering framework that focuses on identifying and leveraging an individual's strengths, resources, and capabilities. When applied to working with young people with risk behavior and young offenders, this approach emphasizes their potential for positive change and resilience.

A strengths-based approach in work with youngsters at risk not only focuses on rehabilitation but also contributes to the overall well-being and positive development. It recognizes that individuals possess inherent strengths and resilience, and by building on these strengths, the potential for positive change and living into society without hurting others is enhanced.



Here are key elements and considerations for implementing a strengths-based approach:

### 1. Positive Relationship Building:

- **Emphasis on Trust:** Establish a trusting and supportive relationship with youngsters, emphasizing their strengths and potential.
- **Acknowledgment of Efforts:** Regularly acknowledge and reinforce their efforts, progress, and positive behaviors.

### 2. Strengths Assessment:

- **Comprehensive Assessment:** Conduct a strengths assessment through dialogue and questions to identify the unique strengths, skills, interests, and positive attributes of each youngster.

### 3. Empowerment and Autonomy:

- **Empowering Decision-Making:** Empower youngsters by involving them in decision-making processes related to their lives, behaviors and logical consequences of behaviors.
- **Encouragement of Autonomy:** Encourage autonomy and self-efficacy, allowing them to take ownership of their life journey.

### 4. Cultivating Resilience:

- **Strengths in Adversity:** Emphasize and explore how youngsters have demonstrated resilience in the face of challenges.
- **Resilience-Building Interventions:** Implement interventions that specifically aim to build resilience and coping skills.

### 5. Strengths-Based Communication:

- **Positive Framing:** Communicate in a strengths-based and positive manner, focusing on what youngsters can achieve rather than solely on their challenges.
- **Active Listening:** Practice it to understand their perspectives, experiences and aspirations.

### 6. Cultural Competence:

- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Be culturally sensitive when identifying and leveraging strengths, recognizing the unique cultural strengths and assets of each youngster.

### 7. Strengths-Based Language:

- **Positive Language Use:** Utilize positive and strengths-based language in interactions with youngsters, emphasizing their capabilities and potential for change.



---

## Positive reinforcement

Positive reinforcement is a behavioral concept that involves the presentation of a rewarding stimulus following a desired behavior, with the intention of increasing the likelihood of that behavior occurring in the future (Nelson-Jones, 2016). In the context of working with youngsters, positive reinforcement can be a valuable tool for promoting positive behavior, to teach, sustain and expand positive behavior. Applying positive reinforcement in settings for youngsters involves tailoring strategies to the individual needs and preferences of each person. It is essential to create a supportive and empowering environment that fosters positive change and encourages a commitment to learning.

Here are key considerations for applying the positive reinforcement concept:

### 1. Identifying target behaviors



- **Define Positive Behaviors:** Clearly identify and define the positive behaviors that you want to encourage among youngsters. These may include attendance at sessions, completion of educational or vocational programs, or participation in community activities, or just to try to be and act kind to others.

### 2. Selecting Reinforcers:



- **Individualized Approach:** Understand the unique preferences and motivations of each youngster. Choose reinforcers that are meaningful to them, recognizing that what is reinforcing for one individual may not be as effective for another.

### 3. Types of Reinforcers:



- **Tangible Reinforcers:** Concrete items or privileges (e.g., gift cards, some sweets, stickers, music, books etc.).
- **Social Reinforcers:** Positive attention, praise, or acknowledgment from facilitator or peers.
- **Activity Reinforcers:** Opportunities to engage in preferred activities or events (e.g., recreational activities, group outings, longer breaks).

### 4. Consistency and Timing:



- **Consistent Delivery:** Reinforce positive behaviors consistently and promptly to establish a clear connection between the behavior and the reinforcement.
- **Immediate Reinforcement:** Provide reinforcement immediately following the occurrence of the desired behavior to strengthen the association.

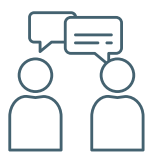
### 5. Gradual Shaping of Behavior:



- **Stepwise Reinforcement:** Initially reinforce small steps or improvements toward the target behavior, gradually increasing the criteria for reinforcement as progress is made.



## 6. Communication:



- **Clear Communication:** Clearly communicate the specific behaviors that are being reinforced and the criteria for earning reinforcement (such as arriving at a session on time).
- **Positive Feedback:** Provide positive and constructive feedback to young offenders, emphasizing the connection between their positive actions and the reinforcement.

## 7. Group Reinforcement:



- **Group Recognition:** Implement group reinforcement strategies, such as recognizing and rewarding positive behaviors collectively within the youngsters group.
- **Peer Support:** Encourage peer support and positive reinforcement among youngsters.

## 8. Incorporate Incentive Systems:



- **Point Systems:** Implement point systems where youngsters can earn points for positive behaviors, which can be exchanged for rewards.
- **Level Systems:** Graduated levels of privileges or responsibilities that are contingent on positive behavior.

## 9. Skill Development:



- **Positive Skill Acquisition:** Reinforce the acquisition of new skills, whether they are related to education, employment, or interpersonal relationships.
- **Success Celebrations:** Celebrate and reinforce successful completion of skill development tasks.

## 10. Balancing Reinforcement and Accountability:



- **Maintain Accountability:** While reinforcing positive behaviors, maintain clear expectations and consequences for non-compliance. Strive for a balanced approach that includes both reinforcement and accountability.

## 11. Flexibility:



- **Adapt Reinforcement:** Be flexible in adjusting the reinforcement plan based on the changing needs and progress of individual youngsters.

## 12. Cultural Sensitivity:



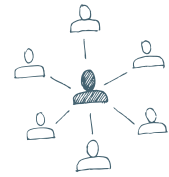
- **Culturally Relevant Reinforcers:** Consider cultural factors when selecting reinforcers to ensure that they are culturally relevant and meaningful to the youngsters.





## Social learning

The social learning concept plays a significant role in working with youngsters with risk behavior. Social learning theory, developed by Albert Bandura (Bandura, 1977), emphasizes the impact of observational learning, modeling, and reinforcement in shaping behavior. When applied to the context of working with youngsters, the social learning concept can inform intervention strategies and programming. Here are the key considerations:



### 1. Modeling Positive Behavior:

- **Concept:** Individuals learn by observing others, particularly those they view as role models.
- **Application:** facilitators and interventions can model positive behaviors, attitudes, and coping strategies to provide youngsters with alternative ways of handling challenges.



### 2. Social Reinforcement:

- **Concept:** Behavior is influenced by the consequences, whether positive or negative, that follow it.
- **Application:** Reinforce prosocial behaviors through positive reinforcement, acknowledgment, and rewards. Conversely, address and redirect behavior problems with appropriate consequences.



### 3. Observational Learning:

- **Concept:** People learn by observing the behaviors and outcomes experienced by others.
- **Application:** Utilize case studies, testimonials, and real-life examples to illustrate the consequences of aggressive behavior and the benefits of positive choices. This can be incorporated into training sessions.



### 4. Cognitive Processes:

- **Concept:** Cognitive factors, such as attention, memory, and motivation, mediate the learning process.
- **Application:** Incorporate cognitive-behavioral interventions that address distorted thinking patterns, encourage self-reflection, and promote cognitive restructuring. Help youngsters to develop positive cognitive skills for decision-making.



### 5. Prosocial Peer Influence:

- **Concept:** Peers have a significant influence on behavior, and positive peer relationships can promote prosocial behaviors.
- **Application:** Facilitate group interventions that encourage positive peer interactions, cooperation, and the development of a supportive social network.





## 6. Positive Role Models:

- **Concept:** Positive role models can inspire and guide individuals toward prosocial behavior.
- **Application:** Introduce youngsters to positive role models, whether within the community or through sessions and tasks. Showcase individuals who have successfully dealt with problems in their lives and reintegrated into society.

In summary, incorporating the social learning concept into activities for youngsters involves creating an environment that promotes positive role modeling, reinforces prosocial behavior, and addresses cognitive and environmental factors contributing to risky behavior. Interventions should be holistic, focusing not only on changing behaviors but also on fostering positive socialization and providing opportunities for personal growth and development.

## Professional competences for working with young offender individuals and groups



Working with youngsters, both individually and in groups, requires a diverse skill set and specific competences:



### **One of the main competencies is understanding of youth development issues:**

A comprehensive understanding of adolescent development, including physical, cognitive, emotional, and social aspects, is crucial for tailoring interventions and support to meet the unique needs of young individuals.



**Communication Skills and emotional intelligence:** Effective communication skills, including active listening, empathy, and the ability to convey information clearly and respectfully, are essential for building trust, fostering rapport, and facilitating meaningful interactions with young people.



**Competence of professionals to identify strengths (analytic thinking),** challenges, and underlying factors influencing young people's behaviors and circumstances.



**Cultural Competence and Diversity Awareness:** Cultural competence and sensitivity to diversity are critical for recognizing and respecting the diverse backgrounds, identities, and experiences of young people from various cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Professionals should be able to adapt their approaches and interventions accordingly to ensure inclusivity and equity.



**Skills to use positive youth development strategies:** This includes fostering healthy relationships, nurturing talents and interests, and providing opportunities for skill-building and personal growth.



**Group Facilitation Skills:** Such as creating a supportive environment, managing group dynamics, and promoting participation and collaboration, is essential for leading effective group sessions and promoting peer interaction and learning.





**Conflict Resolution and Mediation skills:** Proficiency in conflict resolution strategies and mediation skills enables professionals to address conflicts and disagreements that may arise among young individuals or within group settings, promoting peaceful resolutions and constructive communication.



**Trauma-Informed skills:** Understanding the impact of trauma on young people's lives and behaviors.



**Ethical Practice and Boundaries in communication:** Adherence to ethical guidelines and professional boundaries is essential for maintaining trust, confidentiality, and integrity in interactions with young people.

## Section D. Practical approach

### Our Methodology: a short introduction to our approaches

#### Art Therapy

Art therapy can be a valuable tool throughout the rehabilitation process with youngsters with risk behavior:

- intellectual issues, especially low verbal intellect between youth at risk affects work effectivity with them;
- youngsters are at a development stage which includes the desire to express oneself and art can give a safe and creative way of doing it;
- art can give safe space individually and in groups to open oneself and speak about challenging life events and different struggles;
- art provides a non-verbal means of expression, allowing youngsters to communicate feelings that may be difficult to articulate verbally.

It can be incorporated at various stages, including:

**Assessment:** Use art therapy during the initial assessment phase to gather insights into the individual's emotions, thoughts, and experiences.

**Skill Building:** Integrate art therapy as a component of skill-building activities, helping individuals develop emotional regulation and communication skills.

**Crisis Intervention:** Utilize art therapy during times of crisis or heightened emotional distress to provide a non-verbal outlet for expression.



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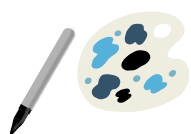
**Self-Reflection:** Encourage self-reflection through art-making, allowing individuals to explore their identity, values, and personal narratives.

**Goal Setting:** Use art therapy to visually represent and reinforce personal goals, fostering a sense of motivation and accomplishment.

### How to Implement Art Therapy

Art therapy involves various creative modalities and techniques. Here's how it can be implemented:

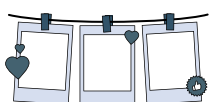
#### Art-Based activities:



Offer a range of art materials, such as paints, markers, clay, or collage materials.  
Provide structured art activities or allow for free expression, depending on the goals.

---

#### Guided Imagery:



Combine guided imagery with art-making, prompting individuals to create visual representations of their thoughts and feelings inspired by a specific scenario or narrative.

---

#### Therapeutic Metaphors:



Use art as a metaphorical tool to explore issues and challenges.  
Discuss and interpret the symbolic meaning of the created art with the individual.

---

#### Collaborative Art Projects:



Facilitate collaborative art projects within the group setting to promote teamwork and social skills.  
Encourage discussion about the process and outcomes of the collaborative creation.

---

#### Art-Based Relaxation Techniques:



Integrate art into relaxation techniques, such as pattern coloring or repetitive patterns, to promote stress reduction.

---

#### Narrative Art:



Support the creation of narrative art that allows individuals to visually tell their stories and explore personal narratives.



---

## Body based Methods.

Body-based methods have a range of modalities and techniques that focus on body movement and body expression enhancing self-awareness and well being.

Here are some ways body-based methods can be implemented:

**Body Movement:** It refers to the physical actions and gestures using different parts of the body, such as the arms, hands, legs, head, and torso. These movements can convey a wide range of messages, emotions, intentions, and meanings.

### Examples of Body Movements:

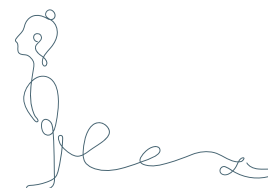
- **Gestures:** Hand gestures like pointing, waving, or thumbs-up.
- **Posture:** Standing tall, slouching, leaning forward or backward.
- **Facial Expressions:** Smiling, frowning, raising eyebrows, squinting.



**Body expression:** use the body to express emotions, thoughts, ideas, and experiences. It goes beyond basic movements and involves the intentional use of body language to express messages or create artistic and meaningful expressions.

Examples of Body Expression:

- **Acting:** Portraying emotions, characters, and narratives through body language in theater, film, or storytelling.
- **Dance and Choreography:** Creating movements and sequences that express themes, concepts, or emotions in dance performances.
- **Mime:** Using gestures, facial expressions, and body movements to convey stories or concepts without words.
- **Body Art:** Using the body as a canvas for artistic expression through body painting, tattoos, and performance art.
- **Emotional Expression:** Hugging to show affection, crossing arms to indicate defensiveness, standing confidently to express assertiveness.



**Breathwork Techniques:** Various breathwork practices can be used to calm the mind, increase oxygenation, and connect with the body's natural rhythms.



**Massage and Bodywork:** can help release physical tension, improve contact in relationships, and promote relaxation, leading to a greater sense of body awareness and well-being.



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## Theater and improvisation

**Theater and improvisation** can be a powerful tool for personal and social development, fostering creativity, communication skills, empathy, and critical thinking.

Here are several types of theater we commonly used in non-formal education:

**1. Gestalt theater Improvisation:** (link to page 16 of this manual, gestalt principles)

Gestalt theater often incorporates improvisational techniques that promote spontaneity, creativity, and authenticity. Participants engage in improvised scenes, dialogues, and situations that foster awareness in the here and now moment, allows emotional expression, invites the exploration of interpersonal dynamics, the exploration of polarities and the integration of shadow aspects.

**2. Theater of the Oppressed:** Developed by Brazilian theater practitioner Augusto Boal, is a participatory and interactive form of theater that addresses social and political issues. It often involves techniques like Forum Theater, where participants engage in scenes related to oppression and they explore ways to overcome difficulties and represent positive change.

**3. Forum Theater:** it involves the audience participation and engagement, exploring social issues, conflicts, and solutions. These forms of theater invite dialogue, critical thinking, and active citizenship in relation to human rights education to promote social justice, diversity, and community commitment.



**4. Storytelling:** is a powerful tool for sharing experiences, cultural heritage, and life lessons. Storytelling performances, workshops, and story circles provide opportunities for participants to express themselves, connect with others, and learn from diverse narratives.



---

## Mindfulness



**Mindfulness** is a practice that involves being fully present in the moment, aware of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surroundings without judgment, observing and maintaining a kind attitude during the process.

Here are some ways mindfulness can be implemented:

**1. Mindful Breathing:** Focusing on your breath as it flows in and out of your body, noticing the sensations of each inhale and exhale.

**2. Body Scan:** Paying attention to different parts of the body from head to toe, noticing any tension, discomfort, or sensations without trying to change anything. This helps in developing body awareness and relaxation.

**3. Visualization technique:** imagining peaceful scenes, positive outcomes, or desired experiences. Guided imagery sessions can lead you through visualizations that change your inner reality, bringing new ways of feeling and thinking.

**4. Walking:** Paying attention to different parts of your body from head to toe, noticing any tension, discomfort, or sensations without trying to change anything, is helping in developing body awareness and relaxation.

**5. Mindful sensing:** smell, taste, see, hear, touch with different and rich experiences.

**6. Meditation:** Set aside time for formal meditation, where you sit comfortably and focus on your breath, a mantra, or a specific sensation.

**7. Listening:** Setting aside for formal meditation involves sitting comfortably and focusing on your breath, a mantra, or a specific sensation.

**8. Activities:** Engaging in everyday activities with full awareness involves noticing the sensations, movements, and actions involved.

Implementing mindfulness involves a consistent practice of observing, allowing, accepting and non-judging what it is. Transformation occurs from this space and takes care of itself.



---

## Perspective of partners (probation, youth work, therapy): experience and background.



### State Probation Service, Latvia

State Probation Service of Latvia (SPS) is a public organization under the Ministry of Justice. SPS began its work in 2003. The probation system is developed to deny using punitive instruments as the basic instruments for achieving the objectives of criminal justice – more attention is paid to clarifying the reasons of offending, the needs of offenders, this system supports the offenders in a way that helps them to integrate in the society and to live without breaking the law.

Mission: To encourage probation clients to refrain from committing offenses.

Vision: The State Probation Service implements and uses scientifically based work methods that meet the needs of modern public safety, taking into account the interests of the victims, which promote the social inclusion of probation clients and refrain from committing offenses.

Main goal: Probation clients are active in social life, study, work and pay taxes, take care of their family members and contribute to the socio-economic growth of the country.



### Youth Matters Now, Spain

We are a team specialized in Body movement, Gestalt theater, and mindfulness, utilizing embodied methodologies to forge connections between the body and mind. Through this approach, we enhance self-awareness and self reflection to dismantle automatic unconscious patterns, and pave the way for the emergence of healthier ways of being and the opening of opportunities that foster well-being.

Our expertise in psychotherapy encompasses a range of humanistic approaches, with a particular focus on Gestalt therapy. By integrating arts, theater, body movement and body expression, and mindfulness techniques, we provide pathways for young people to tap into their innate resources and core values. By exploring, allowing, accepting and embracing emotional experiences, young people become more resilient. This empowers them to confront life's challenges, transform traumas into opportunities for growth, and cultivate internal resilience. Through recognizing their strengths, reframing life circumstances, and addressing underlying needs, they embark on a journey toward greater well-being, purpose and newfound life opportunities.



### IPTA, Romania

“Idei și Proiecte pentru Tineri Activi” (IPTA) is a youth organization focused on programmes dedicated to teenagers, mainly related to preventive education on addictions and unhealthy behaviors. The topics covered by IPTA include youth empowerment, healthy relationships, emotional literacy, effective and non-conflictual communication, addictive behavioral patterns, peer pressure, self-esteem, inclusiveness and self-acceptance, decisional autonomy, sense of wellbeing.

The methods used are based on holistic facilitation, with a balanced emphasis on emotional introspection, cognitive processes and kinesthetic exploration, art-based tools, body expression and movements, emotional introspective methods, techniques of mindfulness and reflective processes, case studies, creative writing, decision-making simulations, methods inspired from experiential theater, Earthing and nature-oriented techniques.





Here we are! Ready to explore the methods developed for you and your beneficiaries?

35 methods dedicated for groups and individuals are ready to be used in your daily work! The methods are divided in three main categories, nevertheless we advise you to see their high level of transferability to other topics.

We wish you a wonderful journey in the universe of preventive education on addictions, violence and human rights education.

Enjoy!





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# Walk in the space



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Warm up activity



## Overall description:

This method is based on improvisation and it's a great warm up to start any activity. It helps to ground participants in their bodies and connect with the present moment, it connects the group and wakes up the body and raises motivation. It's based on exploring different ways of walking and relating to each other.



## Objectives:

- Brings relaxation, activation and engagement to the main activity.
- Boosting interactivity with other participants.
- Development of creativity and spontaneity.
- Boost self-expression and develops Non-verbal communication skills.
- Stimulating connection with the body.

Group work version



**Duration:** 30 minutes

## STEP 1: (5 MINS)

**Introduction to Gestalt Theatre.** The facilitator starts the activity by explaining the benefits of improvisation.

### *Principles we follow in our approach:*

- A humanistic approach that believes we have the inner resources to thrive.
- Explore and experience without judgement.
- Self-discovery is an inner journey to know ourselves deeper.
- We work on what is "here and now", becoming aware of our bodies, emotions, and beliefs.
- We take responsibility for ourselves. Realising what I feel, I think, and I do. It's my responsibility what I do with these findings.

### Notes for the facilitator:



We suggest here different ways of exploring the space with the group. You can select only some of them and decide how much time you want to allocate to this warm-up, depending on the activities that you are going to implement afterward.

At least 15 minutes of warm-up, exploring the space, sensing the body, and relating in a playful way with the group will be helpful and recommended to prepare participants for the activities that will follow. This warm-up is especially important if the activities you plan to do are body or theatre-based.



## STEP 2: (10 MINS)

Explore walking in the space. The facilitator invites participants to walk in the room.

### Body awareness: connect with your body here and now.

The first intention of this activity is to increase awareness of your body sensations. Begin by focusing on your feet, paying attention to how you walk, observing each step, and noticing if you step more on one side than the other.

A

Gradually expand your awareness to the rest of your body, including stretching different parts as needed such as legs, hands, shoulders, head, and waist. Name each part and encourage participants to stretch them while walking. This practice helps participants connect with their bodies and promotes a mindful approach to movement.

### Awakening the body.

The facilitator invites the group to activate different parts of their bodies by introducing specific situations:

B

1. Try to reach the sky with your hands as you walk.
2. Imagine you are in a jungle, and you need to remove the plants in front of you with your hands as you move forward.
3. Walk as if you have a hurdle around your waist that you must keep from falling.
4. Find a situation to move each part of the body: feet, legs, waist, chest, hands, head.



## STEP 3: (5 MINS)

### Playing with the speeds in different situations.

Walk at your normal speed as if you were taking a walk in the park. Then, play at different speeds, varying from faster to slower. For instance:

1. Imagine you are a very old person, and walk very slowly.
2. Picture yourself as a slow turtle, moving at a leisurely pace.
3. Now, pretend you are late to catch the bus to work, and walk faster than usual.
4. Finally, imagine that you are excited to attend a concert you really like, and walk briskly.



### Notes for the facilitator:

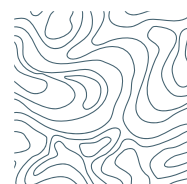
1. Ask participants to walk in various directions, not only in circles or automatic patterns.
2. Transition them back to normal speed periodically, or move from one situation to another while changing speeds.
3. Bring awareness to their physical sensations by asking questions.
4. Ask them about their breathing during certain moments.
5. Suddenly stop them and direct their attention to their body sensations. Ask them to share a word that describes what they are feeling in their body at that moment, such as **active**, **pulsing**, **warm**, etc. They can answer out loud with a word that resonates with their current experience.



#### STEP 4: (5 MINS)

**Ground textures.** The facilitator can also introduce different textures on the ground to enhance the sensory experience and deepen the connection with the environment. For example:

- **Walking on the Moon:** Encouraging participants to imagine they are astronauts walking on the moon. Emphasising the softness and lightness of each step, as if they are defying gravity.
- **Barefoot on Wet Grass:** Feel the sensation of walking barefoot on wet and fresh grass. Encouraging them to connect with the earth beneath their feet, feeling the coolness and moisture of the grass.
- **Walking in Thick Mud:** Creating a scenario of walking through thick mud, simulating the resistance and heaviness with each step. Embodying the effort required to move through the mud.
- **Walking on Ice:** Asking participants to imagine they are walking on a slippery icy surface. Asking them to adjust their walking style to mimic the cautious steps needed to maintain balance on ice.
- **Walking in the Sea:** Transporting participants to a beach scene where they are walking along the shoreline or wading through shallow water. Encouraging them to feel the ebb and flow of the waves and the buoyancy of their movements.



#### STEP 5: (10 minutes)

##### **Becoming: 4 elements.**

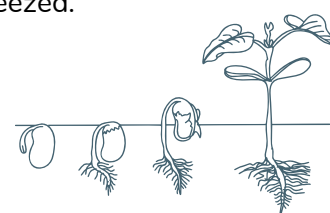
Now, the facilitator can take it a step further by inviting participants to embody various elements and entities from nature and everyday life. Encouraging them to explore the essence and characteristics of these elements through movement and imagination.

##### **1. Elements of Nature:**

- Water: Encouraging participants to flow smoothly like water, adopting fluid movements.
- Fire: Inviting them to embody the intensity and energy of fire.
- Wind: Having them express the gentle breeze or powerful gusts of wind through their gestures.
- Stone: Encouraging participants to embody stillness and solidity, as if they are solid rocks.

##### **2. Nature Scenes:**

- Tree in a Windy Day: Participants can sway their bodies like trees in the wind.
- Squeezed Lemon: Inviting them to embody the sensation of being squeezed.
- Rabbit: Encouraging quick and agile movements.
- Worm: Exploring slow and undulating movements.



##### **3. Objects and Concepts:**

- Washing Machine: Encouraging rotational movements and vibrations.
- Organ in the Body: Inviting them to explore internal movements.
- Substance: Encouraging participants to embody qualities of different substances, such as flowing like water, solidifying like ice, or evaporating like steam.



Facilitator should tailor the objects and concepts based on the group's interests or themes you wish to explore. This playful approach allows participants to tap into their creativity, imagination and physical expression while embodying a wide range of elements and entities.



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## STEP 6: (10 MINS)

### Imitating roles:

The facilitator invites participants to embody various personality traits and emotions, encouraging them to exaggerate these qualities to explore their full range.

### Personality Traits:

- Most Elegant: maintaining posture and gestures that reflect elegance and refinement.
- Smartest: confident and purposeful strides, as if they know the answer to every question.
- Strongest: with the power and assertiveness, expressing physical strength and confidence.
- Most Powerful: to embody authority and control, with commanding movements and gestures.
- Perfectionist: reflecting perfection, being perfect.
- Sexiest: seductive movements, expressing allure and charisma.
- Most Peaceful: radiating inner peace and tranquillity.
- Greediest: encourage exaggerated gestures that depict selfishness and a desire for possession.



### Emotions:

- Most Insecure: invite them to reflect feelings of doubt and vulnerability.
- Angriest: embodying frustration and aggression.
- Exaggerated Emotions: Explore a range of emotions like joy, sadness, fear, and surprise, encouraging participants to exaggerate facial expressions and body language.

### Role Playing and Stereotypes:

- Explore various roles and stereotypes related to these traits, such as the bossy leader, the shy introvert, the carefree artist, or the strict teacher.
- Encourage participants to find a sentence that embodies the essence of each trait or role, such as "I demand respect" for the authoritative role or "I am always unsure" for the insecure trait.

## STEP 7: (10 MINS)

### Meeting in small groups: name and instruction.

This is a good dynamic to learn names in a new group. Work with small groups, in pairs, groups of 3 or 4 people, and give them different instructions each time. For example:

- Find a group of 3 people, introduce your name and describe something you really love.
- Form a group of 5 people, say your name and something you fear. Take a walk together.
- Form a group of 5 people, share your names, and talk about a dream you have for the future.
- Share something interesting or unusual about your life.
- What do I like most about myself?
- What do I value in my friends?
- Talk about a recent trip or adventure you had.



## STEP 8: (5 MINS)

**Equidistant from each other, playing with the space.** Facilitator invites the group to maintain a distance of 1 metre from others in the space, playing with the distance. This activity helps create awareness of personal space boundaries and can be particularly relevant in certain contexts. Facilitator can also pair them up and have them move around the room without losing visual contact with each other. This activity enhances non-verbal communication skills and fosters a sense of connection.



## STEP 9: (10 MINS)

**Passing Cushions with names and receiving them.** This is a nice dynamic to help a new group learn each other's names when they don't know each other.

4-6 cushions should be provided to the group, inviting them to pass the cushions to others while saying the name of the person they are throwing it to. With multiple cushions around the room, participants will be receiving and sending cushions while recalling the names of others in the group.

When you receive a cushion, you say the name of the person and pass it to next. When your name is called, you catch the cushion and then name another person to pass it to. This interactive game helps reinforce everyone's names while adding movement and fun to the activity.

The facilitator can introduce a timer with a challenge. This adds a sense of urgency and makes the activity more dynamic. Additionally, specific rules can be assigned, such as passing the cushion only to someone who hasn't received it yet or passing it in a specific order (clockwise or counterclockwise).



Note for the facilitator:

### Some tips to support the group reflection process:

- Invite them to talk about themselves, using "I" instead of "you" or "us".
- Invite them to avoid generalization.
- Ask questions to help them self-inquire and avoid judgments on right or wrongs.
- Stimulate as much as possible self-exploration.
- Value their engagement and participation.

## Reflection (10')



Facilitator joins the group and asks some meaningful questions about what they took from the activity:

What were the most meaningful moments for you?

What emotions did you feel?

What did you realise about yourself during the activity?

What difficulties did you face?

What was easy for you? What were your strengths?

What touched you the most?

Did you observe any automatic patterns?

Did you become aware of any hidden beliefs while improvising?

Were there any stereotypes that came up?

What is helpful for you? In which ways? (you can talk about the guiding questions during the improvisation).

Individual work version



Duration: 20 minutes

## STEP 1 (5 mins)

Reproduce this step from group work.





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## STEP 2: (15 MINS)

### Explore walking in the space.

The facilitator invites the participant to walk around the room. It could be very helpful if the facilitator joins the participant.

### Body awareness: Connect with your body here and now.

The first intention is to become aware of your body sensations. You can start by paying attention to your feet, the way you are walking, observing your step, if you step one foot on one side then the other. Start sensing the rest of your body, stretching parts of your body that you need, such as legs, hands, shoulders, head, and waist. Just name each part and invite the participant to stretch them while walking.

**Awakening the body.** Facilitator invites the participant to activate different parts of the body by introducing situations. For example, try to reach the sky with your hands. Or imagine you are in the jungle and need to remove the plants in front of you with your hands.

Now walk as if you had a hurdle around your waist that you don't want to fall.

Find situations to move each part of the body: feet, legs, waist, chest, hands, head.

### Play with speeds in different situations.

Walk at your normal speed as if you were taking a walk in the park. Now play at different speeds, from faster to slower. Imagine you are a very old person, and you walk very slowly. Now pretend you are a very slow turtle. Imagine you are late to catch the bus to work. Walk faster than normal because you are going to a concert you really like.



#### Note for the facilitator:

- Invite the participant to walk in various directions and not just in circles or automatic patterns. Occasionally, bring him back to normal speed or transition from one situation to another, changing speeds accordingly.
- During these movements, ask awareness questions to gauge how he feels in certain moments. For example, inquire about his breathing at that moment.
- Periodically, suddenly stop him and bring awareness to his body sensations. Ask him what he is feeling in his body at that time. Encourage him to share a word or phrase out loud that describes his sensations, such as **active**, **pulsing**, **warm**, etc. This exercise can help him connect more deeply with his bodily experiences and enhance overall mindfulness during the activity.

### Other practices that can be adapted from the group work version:

The facilitator can also incorporate playing with **different textures on the ground** during the activity. For instance, imagine scenarios like walking on the moon's surface, walking on wet and fresh grass with bare feet, or walking in very thick mud. Allow time for the participant to explore these sensations and encourage him to express them through their body movements.

Additionally, facilitator can introduce scenarios such as walking on ice or walking in the sea. Each scenario can evoke distinct sensations and movements, enriching the overall experience and enhancing participant's connection with the body and surroundings.



### Becoming: 4 elements.

Now facilitator can invite him to embody water, fire, wind, or a stone. Play with the elements and nature in various situations. For instance, he can imagine being a tree on a windy day, a squeezed lemon, a rabbit, a worm, or a dog. Facilitator can also experiment with objects such as becoming a washing machine, an organ in the body, or even representing a substance. If the participant is interested in exploring a specific topic, you can suggest objects related to that topic.

### STEP 4: (5 MINS)

#### Imitating roles.

Facilitator invites him to explore personality traits. Walk as if you are the most elegant person in the room, or the smartest, the strongest, the most powerful one. The most perfectionist, the sexiest, the most peaceful person in the room. The greediest person in the room. (get more ideas from the group version)

The facilitator invites him to embody these qualities and to exaggerate them, taking them to the extreme in some moments. The one who knows better than the rest.



Play with both polarities, exploring both "positive" and "negative" traits. Imagine being the most insecure person in the room or the angriest person. Also, play with representing emotions, encouraging him to exaggerate them.



Facilitator can play with roles, stereotypes, to explore these characters or qualities and find inner resources that come from it.

Participant can be invited to find a sentence that can define that trait. For example, for the perfectionist, it could be something like "I am always right," facilitator should ask him to say it out loud.

The facilitator can give him these instructions:

- What do I like most about myself?
- What do I value in my friends?
- Do I have any animals?
- Share something interesting about my life.



Then, facilitator invites him to embody that trait or characteristic. Facilitator asks him to consider how he would walk or behave from the perspective of that trait.

### Reflection (10')



We encourage to use the same questions as for the group version:

- What did you realise about yourself by doing it?
- What was easy for you? What were your strengths?
- Did you become aware of any hidden beliefs while improvising?
- What is helpful for you? In which ways? (you can talk about the guiding questions during the improvisation).
- What were the most meaningful moments for you?
- What emotions did you feel?
- What did you realise about yourself during the activity?
- What difficulties did you face?



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## Preparation

Facilitator has to prepare the topics to explore.

Facilitator prepares playlist of instrumental music that supports the process.

### List of materials:

- Wi-fi
- Speakers
- Music in case you want to use music as a support of the dynamic.



## Change course of action



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

The method aims at developing competences on addressing conflictual situations that might be part of real life. The activity is based on improvisation and brings the participants in the shoes of characters who face difficult situations regarding substance abuse disorders.



### Objectives:

- Increased awareness of the impact of substance abuse on the quality of life.
- Raised awareness of the importance of well-being and healthy relationships.
- To raise self awareness on roles, limitations and hidden beliefs.
- To explore and activate unknown internal resources.
- Consolidated empathy towards others.

Group work version



**Duration: 70 minutes**

### STEP 1 : (10 MINS)

The activity starts with the participants seated in a circle. The facilitator describes that the activity is based on improvisation and scenarios. The participants will be part of some simulated situations that could lead to a conflictual development.

Notes for the facilitator:



Before starting the improvisations, give clear explanations on:

#### 1) Guidelines on how to improvise:

- **Conflict:** Maintain the conflict by accepting what is proposed by someone in the improvisation. For example: "you stole my watch" should NOT be followed by: "I didn't, it was my sister", but it should be accepted, such as: "Do you have any proof? It's not your business anymore, that watch!". The participants should accept this situation as true and improvise from it, finding real mottos that would justify why you had to do that.
- **Authenticity:** Try to act from a place of truth and not from a character, this means stay connected to yourself while improvising. You can act in ways that you would never dare to do in real life. It is important to give yourself permission to explore what you normally don't allow yourself to do or say.



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## 2. The rules in Gestalt/Forum theater:

- There can be **no physical harm** of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes).
- They **cannot hurt themselves** either.
- They **cannot break or destroy anything** in the space (curtains, windows ...). The rule 'who broke it, pays' is applied.

The facilitator divides the group in formations of 4 people, as each small group will work on a different case. The scenarios are based on conflict situations related to substance abuse.

The facilitator describes that the scenarios include:

1. The four roles.
2. The conflict situation that is occurring here and now, a situation that needs an urgent solution.
3. The relationship between the people involved in the scene. For example; brothers, parents, drug dealers, partners, etc.

### STEP 2: (10 MINS)

The facilitator describes the flow of the improvisation:

- A

Each group performs at a time the conflict situation given, not simultaneously. While the first group performs, the rest of the participants will watch the scene unfolding (**make sure you reintroduce briefly the rules**).
- B

The group on the stage receives a scenario from Appendix 1. In their group, the participants decide on the distribution of the roles. The scene will be played by improvising and maintaining the conflict. Each group has max. 5 minutes to develop the situation.
- C

Just before the improvisation, the facilitator notifies the participants that a bell (sound) will be played at a certain moment that will stop and freeze the scene. At that moment, the facilitator will ask some questions that support the participants to explore feelings and thoughts, decisions and reactions.
- D

No previous preparation is allocated, just 10 seconds before the improvisation starts. Ask the audience to be a respectful observer and to hold their reactions, invite the 'actors' to get ready to perform, play some music that suggests suspense and Action! The play is unfolding!

### STEP 3 (40 MINS)

After introducing the flow of the activity, the facilitator invites one of the groups to get ready for the performance. They receive the scenario and the roles, and have 10 seconds to get in the situation. Once the time is up, the facilitator says "ACTION!" and the play starts.





### Notes for the facilitator:

Don't forget to stop the performance when the intensity of the conflict is rising. Ask some introspection questions:

- How are you feeling right now?
- What would you need?
- What is your difficulty?

After this freezing moment to bring awareness, the facilitator tells the performing group to continue the scene from where they were.



The facilitator can also whisper in the ear of one or more actors and guide them to act in a certain way that would take them out of their comfort zone, opening them to explore and experience new ways of acting and being.

For example, if a person is too emotional, the facilitator can take this person to explore being more indifferent.

The facilitator rings the bell one more time and asks the actors to freeze the scene, especially at a moment when the situation seems to 'boil'. The last indication: "Now, try to find a solution for the conflict".

Maximum one more minute is allocated for a final resolution of the play. Each improvisation could take between **5 to 10 minutes**.

After the group ends the improvisation, the facilitator invites the group to have a sit. The facilitator asks some debriefing question:

- What was your way of solving the conflict?
- How did you feel to be in the shoes of the presented characters?
- How well do you think you solved the given problem?
- How new are these situations to you?



The other participants, who were observers, are invited to ask questions.

The facilitator asks the observers some questions too, with the aim of observing how well the play was understood and how satisfied they are with the way the task was solved.

Once the discussion is completed, the facilitator invites the group to de-role from their characters by walking slowly for some seconds, shaking hands and feet, 'cleaning' the body from the words and attitudes, coming back with a hug for the others and reconnecting as colleagues.

The flow of the repeats for other groups, which are invited to get ready for the performance.

If the time is not enough to go through all the groups, the performance can be done based with only 2-3 scenarios and following the voluntary intention of those who want to explore this tool.



## Reflection (10')



After completing all the presentations, all participants are asked to sit in a circle in order to have a general moment of reflection on the activity. The facilitator can open this space by asking for main insights, important moments during the activity:

- What did you feel before, during and after the improvisation?
- How did you feel to change the initial course of action?
- Have you ever experienced such a situation?
- What emotions were present during the play?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How did you feel when you tried to solve the conflict?
- Are you satisfied with the result you achieved?

## Individual work version



Duration: 40 minutes

### STEP 1 : ( 5 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the session's topic, namely substance abuse and conflicts.

The facilitator initiates a short discussion with an opening question: 'If I say substance abuse, which are the substances that come into your mind?'

The facilitator describes the format of the session, which is based on scenarios. The participant receives a scenario that indicates a situation where a person abuses a certain substance, that person being at a critical point in life. The participant is invited to solve the case by finding a solution for the persons who are part of the scenario.

As indicated in Appendix 1, there are 5 scenarios, but the facilitator can be flexible with the number. **At least 3 scenarios should be discussed.**

### STEP 2 : (10 MINS)

The facilitator reads out loud one scenario and, if needed, hands it to the participant.

The facilitator explores the participant's perspective on the scenario:

- Imagine this situation as you are the main character: maybe you have experienced something similar in your life.
- Find/think the best solution for the main character. What do they really need (physically, emotionally, practical, socially)?
- Find/think the best solution for other persons in the scenario. What can they do? What should they do and should not do to get the best out of this situation?
- If you were the main character, what would you want or need to achieve the best solution? What support would you need?

The facilitator tries to be non-judgmental, supportive, and to help with additional questions.



### STEP 3 : (20 MINS)

The facilitator repeats the previous step with the next scenarios. The facilitator can choose scenarios that match the participant's life experience.

When all the scenarios have been discussed, the facilitator explores some additional aspects:

- How difficult was it to find a solution for the scenarios?
- How did you feel to be in the shoes of the presented characters?
- How well do you think you solved the given scenarios?

#### Reflection (5')



The facilitator can open this space by asking the main insights, important moments during the activity:

- Was it easy for you to imagine these scenarios?
- How did you feel when you found a solution for the proposed scenario?
- What emotions were present during the discussions?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- Did you find any connection between the study case and your present actions, your life?

### Preparation

To have a minimal understanding on how to organize improvisation-based activities and to hold the reactions of the audience. It is important that the facilitator experienced multiple workshops as a participant with improvisation-based tools before delivering this activity.



It is highly important to have good command of the reflection process, as some participants could open up life experiences that are traumatic. Theoretical preparation in Gestalt Theatre is desirable.

### List of materials:

Papers, pens, any other objects that might help the participants in their play - if they ask for them.

An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.

### Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated by the level of engagement in the improvisation, and mainly be the capacity to maintain the conflict. Also, it is important to observe the participants' ability to shift the scenario from a conflictual perspective towards a resolution that brings some benefits to all the parties.





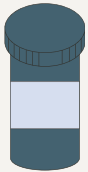
## Appendix 1 - Study cases

### CIGARETTES / NICOTINE



**Paul's** seventeen year old brother has just discovered vaping at a friend's gathering. Two weeks later, and he is still using his electric cigarette on an almost daily basis. Knowing his family's history of lung disease, **Paul** debates on telling his parents.

### OPIOIDS / PAINKILLERS



**Mariah** has a chronic pain condition, and she's been keeping her pain medication in the home's medicine cabinet for several years. Recently, she's noticed that some pills have been disappearing from the bottle. **Mariah** has two teenagers living in her home.

### ALCOHOL / PEER PRESSURE



**Gigi** and his friends are going to a party. When they arrive, **Gigi** sees the "popular" people "doing shots" of hard liquor. They ask him and his friends to join them. **Gigi's** friends immediately join in. He is hesitant to participate. **Gigi** hears someone say, "Everyone is doing it! It's fun! Don't be a wimp!".

### PRESCRIPTION DRUGS



**Manuel** asks Laura about getting a prescription for a stimulant that can help him perform better in school. He says that he's tried his brother's ADHD medication a few times and that it really made a difference in how much he was able to get done. Based on **Manuel's** medical history, Laura knows that he does not have ADHD or any other condition that makes this drug medically necessary.

### NARCOTICS



Because of his depression, **Andy** has a very hard time keeping up with his peers and school tasks. Due to this, **Andy's** been getting increasingly worse mood swings and seems to withdraw from his previous activities. During the week, his friends notice **Andy** researching on heroin and even talking to the school's drug supplier.



## Cartesian coordinates



**Initiator:**  
State Probation Service, Latvia

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

This method is dedicated to youth workers who deliver educational programs on preventive education against addictions to their beneficiaries. Through this method, the participants can recognize past experiences, thoughts and emotions that are associated with a risky behavior related to substance abuse.

The method stimulates group work, but also individual introspection processes aiming at observing what happens at a personal level when addictive substances are used. The activity also stimulates the individuals to express their perception on how they could manage risks of using different addictive substances (such as alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, hallucinogens, stimulants, etc.).

This method increases self-compassion so that participants can be more compassionate towards themselves, and in relation to their current and future needs.



### Objectives:

- Raising awareness of the complexity of substance abuse disorders.
- Recognizing the risks associated with substance abuse.
- To develop empathy and compassion towards one's self.
- To develop self-confidence in expressing personal thoughts, ideas, opinions.
- Understanding what are the inner strengths that could help one in building a healthy life.

Group work version



Duration: 90 minutes

### STEP 1: (15 MIN)

The participants are seated in a circle. In the center of the room four boxes/bowls are placed and labeled with the four cartesian coordinates ([Appendix 3](#)).

The topic of the activity can be introduced by the facilitator with a discussion about myths and truths about substance use and addictions included in the [Appendix 1](#). At least 3 myths/truths about addictions are discussed in the plenary.

The discussion can be extended up to 7-8 myths about substance use and addictions, it depends on the dynamic of the group. After each myth, the facilitator indicates the facts. The participants can also be asked to provide their own examples of myths on substance use and addictions.



## STEP 2: (15 MINS)

The facilitator divides the participants in groups of 4. The first group task consists of drafting a definition for addiction for a maximum of 15 minutes.

After completing the task, the facilitator provides the participants a handout with 4 official definitions of addictions, as issued by some of the largest organizations active in addiction research ([Appendix 2](#)). Working in the same groups, the participants are asked to read the definitions and discuss them, while comparing them with their own definition.

## STEP 3: (10 MINS)

After this step, the participants are invited to come back in the plenary circle. A quick reflection on the definitions of addictions is guided by the facilitator with 4-5 questions:

- Did you have a clear understanding of the definition of addictions before this task?
- What are the main keywords of these definitions?
- Which could be considered the signs of an addiction?
- How easy is it to identify the differences between a vice and an addiction?
- What is the brain-reward mechanism?



A 5 minutes Q&A moment can be introduced if the time is enough. The facilitator should be prepared to answer all the questions coming from the participants.

## STEP 4: (20 MINS)

After this plenary, the facilitator invites participants to imagine how their life could be impacted if they would abuse an addictive substance. The participants are invited to think about an addictive substance that is present in their life or, if that is not the reality, to imagine that an addictive substance is part of their daily life. The facilitator guides this reflection moment with simple questions and examples. In the end, the facilitator introduces and describes the four boxes placed in the middle of the room.

1. What WILL happen in my life if I continue to... (use alcohol, drugs etc.)?



2. What WILL happen in my life if I stop... (using alcohol, drugs etc.)?



3. What will NOT happen in my life if I continue (using alcohol, drugs etc.)?



4. What will NOT happen in my life if I stop (using alcohol, drugs etc.)?



Four small papers (or sticky notes) and pens are provided to all the participants. They are invited to reflect on a specific impact related to that substance in their life and to write one example for each of the four boxes.

The participants are given 10 minutes to work individually. Once they are done, they should place the papers in each of the four boxes accordingly.

#### STEP 4: (20MINS)

Once all the participants added their papers in the boxes, the facilitator starts a discussion by inviting participants to read out loud the notes from the first box. For each box/bowl, the facilitator invites one participant to read the notes. In case of a large number of answers, the participant may read 4-6 papers.

The moment is followed by a discussion guided by the facilitator:



- Did you become aware of something related to yourself in the last 10 minutes?
- Are there any risks or resources for you in this box?
- What do you think about this box when you read out loud all your thoughts?
- The facilitator asks the participants to rate how much they think that the use of the substance is a problem in their life. Try to use a 0 - 10 scale (0 - not a problem at all; 10 - critical problem).
- What would you say to a 15 years old person if you would have the opportunity to offer some advice?

#### Reflection (10')



The activity is closed with a set of reflection questions:

- How do you feel?
- What new information did you discover in this activity?
- What did you discover about yourself in this activity?
- What were the main insights and main meaningful moments?
- What do you think about substance abuse and their impact on your life? Pluses and minuses of their presence in your life?
- Answer with a score: to what extent are you ready to change something? (0 - not ready at all, 10 - completely ready).

Individual work version



Duration: 45 minutes

#### STEP 1: (10 MIN)

The topic of the activity is introduced with a short discussion about myths and truths related to substance abuse and addictions. The facilitator should introduce at least 3 myths as an introduction of the activity.

The facilitator can say out loud the myth, and then ask the participant what he thinks about this statement, is it true, or is it a myth? After each answer, the facilitator can indicate the facts. Use Appendix 1 for this moment.



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In conclusion, the facilitator could describe that it's not easy to have objective information about substance abuse, even more because this is a hard and painful topic.

The facilitator invites the participant to think more about his own life and different substances in his life (drugs, alcohol, nicotine etc.). The facilitator asks to rate, using a 0-10 scale, how much is substance abuse and addiction a problem in his life? (0 - not a problem at all; 10 - critical problem). The facilitator records the answer on a paper to remember it.

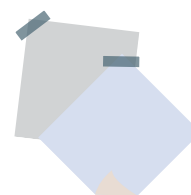
### **STEP 2 : (10 MIN)**

The facilitator invites the participant to imagine his life as being impacted by the abuse of an addictive substance. The participant is invited to think about an addictive substance that is present in his life or, if that is not the reality, to imagine that an addictive substance is part of his daily life. Guiding questions and examples could be provided by the facilitator, so the participant immerses in this projection. After some minutes, the facilitator introduces and describes the four cartesian coordinates placed in the middle of the room or on the table (use the Appendix 3 for crafting the labels for the boxes).

Check the group version of the method, the labels are identical.

The facilitator provides the participant a pen and at least 16 small papers or sticky notes that will be used for writing the answers for each box.

The participant is invited to write as many thoughts that would answer the question indicated on the first box and to place all the answers in the box. The process continues for each question, and after the participant adds answers in all four boxes, the session continues with a guided discussion.



### **STEP 3 : (10 MIN)**

The facilitator continues with a discussion by asking the participant to read out loud the notes from the first box.

The facilitator guides the process with several questions:

1. Are there some risks or resources for you in this box?
2. What do you think about this box when you read out loud all your thoughts?

This process is repeated with the other three boxes.

After the participant finishes to read all notes from all 4 boxes, the facilitator asks him again to rate how much does the participant think that substance abuse is a problem in his life, using the same scale (0 - not a problem at all, 10 - critical problem). Discuss the differences between the first score (at the beginning of the activity) and this one.



At the end of discussion, the facilitator could ask some additional questions:

- What would you say to yourself at the age of 15, if you would have the opportunity to offer advice ?
- What resources does a young person need to develop inner strength to resist substance abuse?



#### STEP 4 : (5 MINS)

After discussion, the facilitator offers the participant one A4 white paper and a pen.

The facilitator invites the participant to write on the paper three strengths and three risks that are present in their life and that are related to substance abuse.

This can serve as a reminder for understanding that self-compassion is important. In every failure or suffering, remember your strengths. This does not mean that you will never make mistakes again, but it means that the mistakes you make do not erase your strengths.

Alternative way of implementing the activity:



In the case you don't have boxes or you have limited resources, use the worksheet from [Appendix 4](#). Invite the participant to write his thoughts and then facilitate a discussion based on the questions described above.

#### Reflection (10')



The session ends with a set of reflection questions:

- How do you feel? What emotions did you experience during the activity?
- What were the main insights and main meaningful moments?
- How was this activity for you?
- What did you discover about yourself during the activity? Your risks and strengths?
- What do you think about substance abuse and their impact on your life? Pluses and minuses of their presence in your life?
- Answer with a score: to what extent are you ready to change something? (0 - not ready at all, 10 - completely ready).

#### Preparation

Detailed knowledge about the roots of addictions and codependency is desirable. Knowledge of the effects of different substances on the body is required as well: alcohol, cannabis, amphetamine, heroin, ecstasy, etc.



#### List of materials:

Pens, four little boxes or bowls, small sticky notes/small papers and the Appendixes.

#### Evaluation of the activity

The activity's effectiveness can be evaluated by the number of answers provided for each of the four coordinates. The most difficult one is the fourth one and might reduce the focus of participants, hence additional support might be needed for answering this one.



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## Additional resources

Materials available online, useful for better understanding the concept of addictions:

### What is an addiction?:

<https://www.asam.org/quality-care/definition-of-addiction>

<https://psychiatry.org/patients-families/addiction-substance-use-disorders/what-is-a-substance-use-disorder>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/addiction-support/addiction-what-is-it/>

### Substance abuse disorder:

<https://psychiatry.org/patients-families/addiction-substance-use-disorders>

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/substance-use-and-mental-health>



## Appendix 1 - Cartesian coordinates - Myths about substances

### 1. Myth: "I'm not addicted, I can quit anytime I want!"

People who use drugs "rarely" tend to believe that they can stop using them at any time. This view is related to the myth that drugs in small doses cannot harm a person or cause addiction.

**Actually:** Many narcotic substances quickly cause psychological dependence. The formation of such an addiction is difficult to notice, and the person believes that he can quit at any time. In reality, quitting drugs is much more difficult than quitting smoking, for example.



### 2. Myth: "Marijuana is not harmful!"

Many people think that marijuana is much safer than tobacco and that its use should even be legalized.

**Actually:** Marijuana is just as dangerous as other drugs. It has been shown to be psychologically addictive. If tobacco harms a person's physical health, marijuana causes memory impairment and personality changes. In addition, since marijuana is most often used together with tobacco, the harm caused is even greater. Chronic marijuana smokers are often apathetic and indifferent.



### 3. Myth: "Everything is known about drugs, many have tried them."

Many young people believe that their friends know everything about drugs, have tried them all, know their effects and can trust what they say.

**Actually:** There is a lot of inaccurate or false information about drugs, even among people who have used them themselves. Even those who have used drugs for a long time are surprisingly often too little informed about these substances and their effects.



### 4. Myth: "Willpower is all one needs to beat addiction."

A popular belief is that a young people just needs to decide to quit and this will be enough.

**Actually:** Addiction is considered a brain disease, as substance use alters the way the brain's functions.





## Appendix 2 - Cartesian coordinates - Definitions of addictions

### American Society of Addiction Medicine



**ASAM** American Society of Addiction Medicine

Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual's life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences.

### American Psychiatric Association



Substance use disorder (SUD) is a complex condition in which there is uncontrolled use of a substance despite harmful consequences. People with SUD have an intense focus on using a certain substance(s) such as alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drugs, to the point where the person's ability to function in day-to-day life becomes impaired. People keep using the substance even when they know it is causing or will cause problems. The most severe SUDs are sometimes called addictions.

### US National Institute of Mental Health



A substance use disorder (SUD) is a mental disorder that affects a person's brain and behavior, leading to a person's inability to control their use of substances such as legal or illegal drugs, alcohol, or medications. Symptoms can range from moderate to severe, with addiction being the most severe form of SUDs.

Individuals who experience a substance use disorder (SUD) during their lives may also experience a co-occurring mental disorder and vice versa. Co-occurring disorders can include anxiety disorders, depression, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), bipolar disorder, personality disorders, and schizophrenia.



**1. What WILL happen in my life if I continue to... (use alcohol, drugs etc.)?**

**2. What WILL happen in my life if I stop... (using alcohol, drugs etc.)?**

**3. What will NOT happen in my life if I continue (using alcohol, drugs etc.)?**

**4. What will NOT happen in my life if I stop (using alcohol, drugs etc.)?**



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## Appendix 4 - Cartesian coordinates - Individual worksheet

1. What WILL happen in my life if I continue to... (use alcohol, drugs etc.)?

2. What WILL happen in my life if I stop... (using alcohol, drugs etc.)?

3. What will NOT happen in my life if I continue (using alcohol, drugs etc.)?

4. What will NOT happen in my life if I stop (using alcohol, drugs etc.)?



## Three chairs



**Initiator:**  
State Probation Service, Latvia

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addiction



### Overall description:

This method helps participants recognize experiences, thoughts and emotions that are present when interacting with addictive substances.

The method stimulates individual introspection processes aiming at observing what happens in interpersonal situations, when different substances are present. The activity can stimulate the participants to express their perception on how they could manage risks of using different addictive substances, and what is his inner power to resist the substance abuse.

This method helps build self-compassion so that participant can be more compassionate towards himself, towards his future, his needs.

This method stimulates inner decision-making processes. There is an opportunity to look versatile to the addictive substance, but also to the preventive approach towards it.



### Objectives:

- To raise awareness on the complexity of substance abuse problems;
- To develop the capacity of identifying and categorizing different risks and inner strengths regarding risky substance abuse.
- To develop critical thinking;
- To detect hidden particularities of certain situations or actions when different substances is present;
- To develop empathy and compassion towards himself;
- To develop self-confidence in expressing personal thoughts, ideas, opinions;
- To increase self-awareness of one's own role in healthy life.

Group work version



Duration: 65 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the participants to the topic of addictions, substance abuse, actuality of substance abuse in young adulthood through an ice-breaking discussion:

- What is a substance that leads to the development of an addiction? (collect all answers from participants and make a list);
- What is addiction? (collect all answers from participants and make a list).



### STEP 2: (5 MINS)

Facilitator asks to rate: How much is this a problem in each participants' life, substance abuse and addiction? The scale 0-10 (0 - not a problem at all; 10 - huge problem) could be used as a simple measurement tool. Participants write this individually on paper or in their notebooks.

### STEP 3: (5 MINS)

The facilitator asks participants to think of critical situations they faced in their everyday life where friends or acquaintances with addictive behaviors needs a support:

- intoxication
- overdose
- aggressive behavior while intoxicated
- impaired decision-making ability
- etc.



If the participants wish and agree, the discussion can explore personal critical situations they faced in their life where they abused addictive substances.

Write down these situations through a short description on flip chart.

### STEP 4: (5 MINS)

**The facilitator invites the participants to form pairs for the following activity.** In pairs, they decide who is person A and B. Each pair has 3 cushions or seats to explore three different roles during the activity. Person A starts, and person B observes from outside.

Person A is invited to immerse in one of the critical situations indicated above (intoxication, overdose, aggressive behavior, impaired decision-making). They could relate to their own past experience or to imagine a friend's experience in that situation. Persons A are invited to take some time to get in the sensations, feelings, and thoughts of the situation chosen.

If the participant feels comfortable, then they could close their eyes, while the facilitator guides them with some questions to explore the situation:

- feel yourself in this role;
- what do you think;
- what do you feel;
- what your life looks like, your strengths and resources;
- what you wish.

### STEP 5: (15 MINS)

The activity is realized using "role chairs". Person A goes through all three steps of the activity, while person B observes the reactions, without sharing the observations between the rounds:

1

**First Cushion and role.** While sitting in the first chair/cushion, the participant embraces the sensation of an addicted person and tries to explore which are the emotions, thoughts, sensations, beliefs at this moment. They are invited to adjust their body position according to this first role;



2

**Second Cushion and role.** The participants are invited to move to the second chair/cushion and to immerse into the role of a person who no longer continues the dependent way of life. They are invited to go through the same observation as in the previous round, as well to adjust their body position to that one that reflects their current experience;

3

**Third Cushion and role.** Moving to the third chair/cushion, the participants are invited to listen to their wise inner voice, the deepest and most benevolent part of themselves. The facilitator takes the participants on this stage, to a state of listening to the advice of the wise men (himself) - the advice for future life. How can life continue without the addictive substance? This third chair can be understood as a resource for building self-compassion and for fueling inner strengths.



As an optional step here, the facilitator can invite the participants to draw their strengths on a paper with an assertive statement on it. The card can be a reminder in their everyday life situations from the wisest part of themselves.

#### STEP 6: (5 MINS)

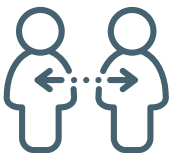
##### Reflection in pairs.

At the end of the task, person B shares with person A what they observed during each of the three chairs.

#### STEP 7: (15 MINS)

After person A has finished, person B proceeds with the same process. In the end of the process, person A shares what they have seen from outside while observing the whole process.

#### Reflection (10')



The facilitator concludes the session with the following questions:

In pairs:

- How do you feel? What emotions appeared during the activity?
- What were the main insights and main meaningful moments?

In the plenary, with all the group:

- How was this activity for you?
- What did you discover about yourself during the activity? Your risks and strengths?
- What do you think about different substances and their impact on your life? Pluses and minuses of their presence in your life?
- Scale: To what extent are you ready to change something? 0-not ready at all; 10-completely ready. Each participant writes it on paper or his notebook.
- How would you describe this activity in some keywords?



## Individual work version



Duration: 50 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the participant with the topic of addictions, substance abuse, actuality of substance abuse in young adulthood through an ice-breaking discussion:

- What is a substance that leads to the development of an addiction? (collect all answers from participant and make a list);
- What is addiction? (collect all answers from participant and make a list).

### STEP 2 : (5 MINS)

Facilitator asks to rate: How much is this a problem in participants' life, substance abuse and addiction? 0-10 (0-not a problem at all; 10-huge problem). Facilitator writes down the participant's answer.

### STEP 3: (5 MINS)

Facilitator ask participant to think of critical situations\* he faces in his everyday life where youngsters (friends or acquaintances) with addictive behaviors needs a support:

- intoxication
- overdose
- aggressive behavior while intoxicated
- impaired decision-making ability
- etc.

If the participant wishes and agrees, he can think of critical situations he faces in his everyday life where he is in risky substance abuse.

Facilitator writes down these situations (short descriptions)!

### STEP 4: (5 MINS)

The Facilitator will guide the participant to feel in three roles taking one of the critical situations given above\*.

Participant is invited to immerse in one of the critical situations indicated above (intoxication, overdose, aggressive behavior, impaired decision-making). He could relate to his own past experience or to imagine a friend's experience in that situation. Participant is invited to take some time to get in the sensations, feelings, and thoughts of the situation chosen.

Facilitator will lead participants with questions/texts in each chair and role. If the participant feel comfortable, then he could close his eyes, while the facilitator guides him with some questions to explore the situation:

- feel yourself in this role;
- what do you think;
- what do you feel;
- what your life looks like, your strengths and resources;
- what you wish.

### STEP 5: (15 MINS)

The activity is realized using "role chairs":



1

**First chair and role.** While sitting in the first chair, the participant assumes the image of an addicted person in this critical situation\*. The facilitator asks questions written above.

After all questions have been answered, the participant opens his eyes and moves to another chair/cushion.

2

**Second chair and role.** While sitting in the second chair, the participant assumes the image of a person who no longer continues the dependent way of life and facilitator asks the same questions again.

After all questions have been answered, the participant opens his eyes and moves to another chair/cushion.

3

**Third chair and role.** May be used where the participant sits and speaks from the position of the inner "intelligent" (benevolent self). The facilitator takes the participant on this stage into a deep process where he turns to the deepest, wisest and most benevolent part of himself. The client tries to listen to the advice of the intelligent part of the wise men (himself). The facilitator asks questions in addition to those written above: What would be the advice from the wise men for your future life? How to continue living, what to do?



Third chair can help as a reminder that self-compassion is important. In every failure or suffering, remind yourself about your strengths and deepest wise men.

The facilitator is trying to hear the most important answers from the third chair and record them. This is necessary to remind the participant afterwards so that he can create his own strength card.

#### STEP 6: (5 MINS)

Facilitator can help participant to draw and write down his strength card with assertive statement on it. But it is important that participant do it by himself.

Card can be a reminder in everyday situations about participants' wisest part. Card must fit in participants' pockets.

#### Reflection (10')



Debriefing and reflection session - the facilitator can use the following support questions:

- How do you feel? What emotions appeared during the activity?
- What were the main insights and main meaningful moments?
- How was this activity for you?
- What did you discover about yourself during the activity? Your risks and strengths?
- What do you think about different substances and their impact on your life? Pluses and minuses of their presence in your life?
- Scale: To what extent are you ready to change something? 0-not ready at all; 10-completely ready.

After discussion the facilitator will close the session by saying thank you for sharing your thoughts.





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## Preparation

It is highly desirable that the facilitator has a minimum knowledge of the types of addictive substances and their effect on the human body, at least the main categories: alcoholic, nicotine, opioids, stimulants, hallucinogenes.



It is recommended to prepare a space where the three cushions or chairs could be easily placed so the participants do not interfere during the activity.

**List of materials:** Pen, pencils, papers A4 and flipcharts, chairs or cushions, background music.

## Evaluation of the activity

The effectiveness of the activity can be assessed during the transition between the three chairs. The facilitator can observe which are the main changes in terms of body posture and how authentic the transition is.

Also the activity is evaluated through the engagement of the participant in fulfilling the tasks, especially the part that requires working in pairs.

The closing reflection moment is highly relevant, as the facilitator can channel the discussion towards specific unhealthy activities, with an emphasis on addictive behavior patterns, a topic that is relevant for the target group of this activity.

## Additional resources

Theoretical part:

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page8795.aspx>

<https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugs-brains-behavior-science-addiction/drug-misuse-addiction> <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/assertiveness>

Latvian: <http://esibrivs.lv/lv/atrkariba>



# Dance for freedom



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



## Overall description:

This activity is an improvised and spontaneous “dance” based on body expression and movement. The intention is to explore inner resources coming from the body and find a path for freedom. This freedom can be set in general, or with a more specific focus; on my freedom from substance abuse, from any dependencies, inner aspects of myself. The activation of resources and capacities will come from both, performing and observation of others dance.



## Objectives:

- Raise self-awareness
- Develop creativity and spontaneity
- Self-expression
- Active listening
- Develop Empathy
- Develop non- verbal communication skills.
- Foster connection to the body and presence.
- Develop self-confidence and uncover hidden strengths

Group work version



Duration: 90 minutes



## Recommendations:

We recommend conducting this method when the group has already established trust and feels safe in the space together. It's a deep body exploration activity that requires trust within the group. We suggest having prior body movement activities before implementing this method so that participants can progressively delve deeper into body awareness work."

## STEP 1: (10 MINS)

### Make groups and order of performance.

Participants will express their journey for freedom through a dance using their bodies and moving in the space, accompanied by music. They will wear a blindfold mask during this dance. The rest of the group will observe in silence, holding the space with their focused attention on the person performing. The intention is to allow the body to express and improvise movements that symbolize the journey to freedom from a place of body wisdom.



The facilitator invites participants to explore and to listen to their needs. The guidelines that facilitator is giving are not fixed. For example, if someone needs to have their eyes open during the performance, invite them to do so. (Push a bit their boundaries to take them out of the comfort zone and enable learning, but without taking them into a panic zone.)



The facilitator asks participants to form groups of three people and assign numbers from 1 to 3. Participants with number 1 will start their dance, followed by those with number 2 and then 3, taking turns one at a time.



#### TG Rules:

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes);
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows ...). The rule who breaks, pays is applied.

### STEP 2: (10 MINS)

#### List of blocking situations, people or characteristics in my life.

Facilitator invites participants to write a list of sentences that represent people, situations, personal traits, or anything that they feel as limiting in their lives.

### STEP 3: (10 MINS)

#### Body Sculpture of Limitations

The facilitator invites participants to use their body expression to create a sculpture that represents those situations, people, or characteristics that they feel limited by. Facilitator encourages them to take some time to create their sculpture independently until they have the final representation. Giving them a moment to embody it and remember it well, as they will need to recreate it during the activity.

The facilitator will provide instructions for each step as needed, to ensure the process is followed correctly.



Instruct each group to maintain distance from each other while performing to avoid interference between performances.

### STEP 3: (10 MINS)

#### Dance for freedom

The facilitator explains the steps of the dance for freedom:

- A. They will lay in a fetal position on the floor.
  - The group will give them a bath of healing sentences.
- B. They will move to Represent the body sculpture of their limitations.
  - The group will ask him/her how they want to be tied with a soft rope as a symbolic act.
  - They will perform blindfolded their dance for freedom
  - They will end up on a new body sculpture.
- C. Sharing in small groups.

First person performing will lay down in a fetal position on the floor.



Healing voices of the group; In silence and with low lighting in the environment, the group will start calling out the person's name in different tones, volumes, and ways while gently touching the person's body. They will help open the body from a fetal position to an open position on the floor, facing upwards.



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The rest of the people from their group will gather close and start touching parts of their body while saying healing sentences one at a time. For example, one person can put their hand on the chest and say, "You can do it," "You are perfect," "You are kind." In the second round, they will repeat the sentences one more time without touching the person, but remaining close, and say them randomly one after the other.

B

After the bath of healing voices, person 1 will start by representing their body sculpture of their limitations while blindfolded. The rest of the group will put a rope around them that will represent the trap of these limitations.

Once they are representing their body sculpture of limitations with the symbolic rope around them, the group will move away and prepare to watch their dance for freedom. Music will start playing, and the dance, understood as body movement and body expression, will begin.

The person will then remove the mask and start sharing their main insights with the group.

### Group Reflection (10')



- What were the most meaningful moments?
- How was your final sculpture? What did it represent?
- What were the main emotions involved in the process?
- What helped you the most?
- Where can you see or find your strengths?
- How did you feel in the different moments during the process?

From the blocking sculpture, dancing your freedom, new sculpture, to hearing the healing voices.

The rest of the group can share what they observed, including any meaningful moments that caught their attention or how they felt while watching.

Encourage them to be objective in their sharing, using phrases like "I saw when you were doing this..." or "I felt when you were doing this..." to provide specific feedback.

## STEP 5: (30 MINS)

**Change of roles:** Person 2 and after person 3 will perform their dance.

In the same small group, we will repeat the same steps and the same process until all participants perform their dance for freedom.

### Plenary Reflection (10')



Sharing some main insights with the whole group, impressions etc.

- How do you feel at this moment?
- What were the most meaningful moments? What did you realize?
- What surprised you or impacted you the most?
- What main awareness do you take with you from the activity?
- How did you feel with the healing voices? Could you take them in?



**TTG Rules:**

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes);
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows ...). The rule who breaks, pays is applied.

**STEP 1: (10 MINS)**

The participant will express their journey for freedom through body movements in the space, accompanied by music. They will be blindfolded with a mask during this dance. The facilitator will observe in silence, maintaining focus and attention on the participant's performance to support the space. The purpose is to use body wisdom to convey a journey towards freedom, allowing for improvised movements and expressions.

**STEP 2: (10 MINS)**

Here are the instructions for the participant:

"Please take a moment to write down a list of sentences that represent people, situations, personal traits, or anything else that you feel limits you in your life."

**STEP 3: (10 MINS)****Body sculpture of limitations.**

"Please take a moment to find with your body expression a body sculpture that represents those situations, people, or characteristics that you feel limited by. Take some time to represent it on your own until you have the final sculpture. Feel free to embody it fully and remember how it feels, as you will have to represent it again during the activity."

**STEP 4: (10 MINS)****Dance for freedom**

Explain the steps of the dance for freedom:

- A. They will lay in a fetal position on the floor.
  - The facilitator will give a bath of healing sentences.
- B. Represent the body sculpture of their limitations.
  - The facilitator will tie them with a soft rope as a symbolic act.
  - They will perform blindfolded their dance for freedom
  - They will embody a freedom sculpture at the end.



A

The participant will start lying down in a fetal position on the floor.

- The healing voices of the facilitator:

In silence and with low lighting in the environment, the facilitator will start calling out the person's name in different tones, volumes, and ways while gently touching the person's body. They will help open the body from a fetal position to an open position on the floor, facing upwards.

The facilitator will continue by touching parts of their body while saying healing sentences one at a time. For example, putting their hand on the chest and saying, "You can do it," "You are perfect," "You are kind." In the second round, the facilitator will repeat the sentences one more time without touching the person, but remaining close.

B

"The participant will start representing the body sculpture on limitations, blindfolded with a mask (only if they feel comfortable, if not they can do it with eyes open) The facilitator will gently wrap him with a soft rope representing these limitations. the facilitator can ask where in the body he/she feels this limitations, and do part this together.

Once the participant is holding this body sculpture, the facilitator will play the music and step back to watch their dance for freedom. When the music starts playing, the participant will express himself through body movement and expression, symbolizing his journey to freedom."

### Reflection (10')



The participant will remove the mask and start sharing their main insights with the facilitator:

- What were the most meaningful moments?
- How was your final sculpture? What did it represent?
- What were the main emotions involved in the process?
- What helped you the most?
- Where can you see or find your strengths?
- How did you feel in the different moments during the process? From fetal position hearing your name, dancing your freedom, to hearing the healing voices.

"The facilitator can share what he observed, meaningful moments that caught his attention, or how he felt while watching the participant's dance. It's important for the facilitator to be objective in what he shares, such as 'I saw when you were doing this...' or 'I felt when you were doing this...' This approach ensures clear and constructive feedback from the facilitator."

### STEP 5: Closing.

"Sharing main insights with the participant, such as impressions and observations, is important. Additionally, discussing together the transferability and adaptations of the experience to their everyday life can be very beneficial. This discussion allows for reflection on how the lessons and experiences from the activity can be applied practically and effectively in different contexts."



## Preparation

Some basic notions on group facilitation, on body work and expressive movement.

Suggestion for music:

Epic Orchestral:

- "Freedom Fighters" by Two Steps from Hell
- "Victory" by Really Slow Motion & Giant Apes
- "Heart of Courage" by Two Steps from Hell

Cinematic/Emotional Instrumentals:

- "Time" by Hans Zimmer (from the Inception soundtrack)
- "Rebirth" by Tony Anderson
- "Final Frontier" by Thomas Bergersen

Piano/Classical:

- "Nuvole Bianche" by Ludovico Einaudi
- "Clair de Lune" by Claude Debussy
- "River Flows in You" by Yiruma

Electronic/Modern Instrumentals:

- "Odyssey" by Hi-Finesse
- "Arrival to Earth" by Steve Jablonsky (from the Transformers soundtrack)
- "Elevate" by Epic North

World/Global Instrumentals:

- "Conquest of Paradise" by Vangelis
- "Mombasa" by Hans Zimmer (from the Inception soundtrack)
- "Spirit of the Ancestors" by Future World Music



## List of materials:

- Speakers and WIFI to play music.
- Playlist music
- Blindfolded masks
- Working room with enough space
- Ideally, a comfortable floor to dance and be without shoes.
- soft elastic rope to represent the limitations



## Evaluation of the activity

### Group work

This will be explored throughout the entire process, especially during the sharing moments in small groups and in the plenary session. We will collect feedback from participants about their experience during the activity, their main insights, and how they can apply these insights to their everyday life.

### Individual work

This will be explored during the whole process, and especially the sharing moments.

We will collect feedback from the participant on his experience during the activity and main insights, discussing together the transferability of the experience to their everyday life can be very beneficial.



## From me to the society



Initiator:  
IPTA, Romania

Tags: Human rights  
education



### Overall description:

This activity is based on drawing and aims to increase awareness of the impact one individual can have in the society, but also on the impact that society can have on the individual. By exploring more the specifics of this relationship (me and my society), one can creatively reflect on their place in society and how this relationship can be improved in order to develop a common benefit of it.



### Objectives:

- Raising awareness of each person's role in the society based on his/her needs.
- Increased capacity of recognizing the links and relationships between an individual and society.
- To build self-acceptance of one's capacity to influence the community.
- Increased ability to recognize and classify societal problems by placing them in a broader context.

Group work version



Duration: 45 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MIN)

The facilitator introduces the activity by describing the objectives of it and by making a short introduction about the importance of each individual in the society.

The facilitator provides an A4 paper and a pencil to each participant and will invite them to fold it into 3 parts. The participants will work **on the exterior side of the paper**.



### STEP 2 : (20 MIN)

The facilitator introduces the flow of the activity:

1

Using the top part of the paper, the participants are invited to answer this question, but by drawing their answer: '**What do I give to society now?**'. The participants have 5-6 minutes to draw the answer. Introspective music can be played in the background.





2

Once they are done, the participant are asked to connect the drawing with the second part of the paper, the middle one, by dragging two lines.

The second question is: **'What society needs from me?'** As before, for 5-6 minutes, the participants draw the answer to the question.

3

Finally, on the last part of the sheet, the participants are asked to answer this question: **'What can I do to give society what it needs from me?'** The same time is allocated to finish the drawing.

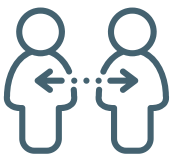
### STEP 3: (10 MIN)

After everyone finishes their drawings, the facilitator invites the participants to create pairs and to share their conclusions.

Before the closure of the activity, the participants are invited to write inside the folded paper a message for themselves, describing how do they see themselves in one year from now on in their community. This moment can be guided by the facilitator with several questions:

- Who are the people surrounding you?
- What is your main occupation?
- What does the community needs from you?
- What are your main contributions to the society?

### Reflection (10')



The activity ends in the plenary, with a set of reflection questions:

- Let's describe the activity with a keyword.
- How challenging was it to answer each question?
- What about the activity stood out to you the most?
- How do you see yourself in your society now?
- What are the differences between the first and the last drawing?
- Did you identify a co-existing principle between you and the community around you?
- What did you realize about yourself?
- How often do you think about the complexity of a situation?
- What have you learned from this activity?

The facilitator will ask for further questions if needed. The facilitator can prioritize the questions that are more suitable to the profile of the participants and also based on time availability. At the same time, other questions might be addressed.

### Individual work version



Duration: 40 minutes



The activity follows the same steps as for the group work version. The only difference is that the reflection process is conducted together with the facilitator.



## Preparation



The facilitator should have a basic knowledge of the local conditions of the participants, particularly if they all reside in the same area. The facilitator should investigate the fundamental tenets of regional community development, but also the way communities are organized, the main institutions, societal architecture and stakeholders in a community, community dynamics.

Also needed: the ability to hold the space, comprehend the group dynamics of the beneficiaries, permit emotional expression, and foster a mindset of curiosity and discovery as a means of raising awareness and learning are all basic skills in the facilitation of reflection groups.

## Evaluation of the activity

The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participants, the relevance of their answers related to the activity objectives, etc. The facilitator also can evaluate the session based on the complexity of the third image.

## List of materials:

A4 paper sheets, pencils. It is highly recommended to facilitate the activity in an open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.



## Additional resources

Materials available online, useful for working with assertiveness and self-esteem:

New World Encyclopedia: <https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Society>



## Sensing journey



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

This activity is an inner journey through the senses while being blindfolded and guided by another person. An experience of becoming present by sensing; smelling, touching different shapes and surfaces, hearing different sounds. Experiencing life not through thinking or understanding, but by opening our body to perceive the reality that is around us, becoming fully present for a short space of time.

The activity raises awareness of the way we relate to others while guiding or being guided; how we feel when becoming responsible for others, how do we feel when we let go of control and trust others. Also, being present helps us to be more connected with our bodies and our needs and to self-regulate. Being present and mindful helps us learn to cope with reality as it actually is, not how we perceive it.



### Objectives:

- Develop active listening and non-verbal communication skills.
- Being present and in contact with reality.
- Becoming bodily connected.
- Arising self-awareness.
- Becoming creative on exploring.
- Building trustful relationships.

Group work version



Duration: 70 minutes

### STEP 1: (10 MINS)

#### Introduction to Mindfulness.

What is it? Why is it important? Its benefits? These questions are addressed by the facilitator in the plenary, with the participants being in a circle.

The ability to be present and connected with the senses here and now it's important for mental health and this supports us in staying far from unhealthy habits, such as addictions.

After introducing the topic of mindfulness, the facilitator provides some space in the group for sharing more at personal level in pairs. Some questions to open the discussion could be:

- Do you have any doubts regarding the benefits of mindfulness?
- How mindful are you in your daily life?
- What makes you be outside the present moment?



### Notes for the facilitator:



Introduce some rules that will maintain a safe space for everyone:

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with.
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows ...). The rule 'who breaks, pays' is applied.

## STEP 2 : (15 MIN)

### Exploring with the senses.

The facilitator introduces the concept and flow of the session.

- This activity will be done in pairs and in SILENCE. The participants are invited to pair up.
- One of the participants starts the journey blindfolded and the other one is guiding.

Those who are guiding are invited to provide the blindfolded person in the pair a sensorial experience on their four senses, as the sight will not be used. In this way, the activity should enhance the perception of other senses that we don't normally use so much. In light of this intention, those who are guiding are invited to provide the others a experiences of smells, flavors, sounds, and touches of different shapes and surfaces available in the space.

Before the activity, tell participants that there will be a moment during it that you will clap hands (or ring a tingsha bell) and ask them to freeze and close their eyes for a couple of seconds. Ask them a couple of questions to help them self-inquiry.



Don't ask too many questions at a time, rather give the participants time to feel and find the answer internally. Try to guide them in this process of becoming self-aware during the process of what is happening to them.

At the moment of this break, the facilitator can address some self-inquiry questions:

- What are you feeling at this moment?
- Where do you feel it in your body? Sense it fully.
- What emotions do you? Try to name them in your mind or loudly.
- What difficulties are you facing?
- How is your level of trust or fear at this moment?
- Do you feel connected to the other person?
- Do you feel connected to yourself?
- Do you have any needs at this moment? What are your needs?



### Alternative way of implementing the activity:



The facilitator can play music in different moments and explore how this has an impact on participants. The music could be various as genre, instruments (drums, violin, harpe, flute, piano, cello, guitar), or music that stimulates introspection.

Invite the participants to continue the exploration and to cover as many sensations. The activity can be facilitated also outdoor. Slowly invite the pairs to find a place where they will stop and invite the guided participants to open their eyes once they have stopped.



### STEP 3: (10 MINS)

Before changing the roles, the pairs have 5-10 minutes moment to share the experience.

Some questions for reflection could be:

- How did you feel when guiding? Name some emotions.
- How did you feel being guided? Name some emotions.
- Did you have any difficulties or fears? In which moments? What happened? How did you react?
- What was your level of trust in the other and in yourself?

### STEP 4: (15 MINS)

**Change roles in the same pair.**

The roles are switched in the same pair and the pair follows the same action as in STEP 2.

### STEP 3: (10 MINS)

After changing the roles, the pairs have 5-10 minutes moment to share the experience.

Some questions for reflection could be:

- How did you feel when guiding? Name some emotions.
- How did you feel being guided? Name some emotions.
- Did you have any difficulties or fears? In which moments? What happened? How did you react?
- What was your level of trust in the other and in yourself?

#### Reflection (10')



The activity is closed with a set of questions:

- Anything meaningful that you would like to share?
- What resources did you see in yourself?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- How can you take this experience to your everyday life?
- How can it help with your addiction?

#### Individual work version



Duration: 20 minutes

The individual version is identical to the group work. The only adaptation is that the participant is guided by the facilitator in the first round, and they switch the role.

#### Reflection (10')



After the tasks are done, the facilitator can ask the participant the main insights, important moments from the exercise:

- How do you feel?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How did you feel when guiding? Name some emotions.
- How did you feel being guided? Name some emotions.
- Did you have any difficulties or fears? In which moments? What happened? How did you react?
- What was your level of trust in the facilitator and in yourself? Did his/her role as facilitator affected you in any way?
- What do you realize about yourself acknowledging this?



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## Preparation

This activity can be done in nature. In case it is done in a working room, provide different materials with different textures, sounds, smells (oils), even flavours, play with the taste, if possible (raisins, nuts, chocolate, etc.).



Basic knowledge of sensorial-based activities is much needed.

**List of materials:** Masks to blindfold the participants.  
Different materials to stimulate the sensorial journey.  
Music of various genres and instruments, speaker.

## Evaluation of the activity

### Group Work:

At the end of the activity, you can evaluate In the plenary circle, the impact and determine if the main objectives of the method have been achieved.

### Individual work:

The main evaluation form of the activity is by observation. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participant, the relevance of the answers during the reflection.

The reflection moment is really important, where the facilitator pays attention and analyses the answers provided by the participant, taking notes on relevant information that appeared related to aspects like trust, responsibility, control etc.

## Additional resources

Mindfulness and addictions:

<https://www.hazeldenbettyford.org/articles/5-mindfulness-practices-to-step-up-your-recovery>

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/bjpsych-advances/article/mindfulness-in-addictions/40A1A7E8A761A48F74172A24A113D50A>

<https://www.silverliningsrecoverycenter.com/mindfulness-in-recovery/>



## Changing perception on beliefs



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

This method is effective in raising awareness of unconscious and negative beliefs that influence our lives and lead to stressful emotions and destructive behaviors. Through self-inquiry, we can discover how our thoughts contribute significantly to the suffering we experience. By practicing this method and realizing the falsehood of many of our stressful thoughts, we can liberate ourselves from them and begin to experience a new reality.

The author of this method is Byron Katie, and we will work on it for prevention on addictions.



### Objectives:

- Raise self-awareness on beliefs, emotions and behavior.
- Reduce levels of suffering.
- Personal empowerment through self-inquires.
- Connection with a deeper self.
- Changing stressing perceptions
- Taking responsibility

Group work version



Duration: 70 minutes

### STEP 1: (10 MINS)

#### Introduction

This “work” is a kind of meditation on questioning the truth of our thoughts . It’s about self-awareness, it’s not about trying to change our mind. We ask the questions and then contemplate, take the time and go inside, and wait for the deeper answers to surface.

Before facilitating, use and practice this meditative work on questioning your thoughts. You will only be able to guide the other in this process if you have yourself realized.



Most of our suffering comes from believing our thoughts and living them as truths. This “work” helps us to question the truth of our thoughts, to realize that “it is what we think that makes us suffer the most”, and that we can realize the trap, and can choose to step out from it. The work brings us back to what is real in this moment, letting go of a lot of unneeded suffering sustained by unquestioned thoughts.



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These are the guides the facilitator can use to enter participants in the work of self inquiry.

- Dispose the group in pairs.

Person A in the pair can start inquiry one thought, and B can ask the questions.

- Once they inquiry the 4 questions, they can change roles in the same pair and follow the same steps and process.

## STEP 2: (10 MINS)

### Looking for the thoughts to inquire.

A

#### **Who or what upsets you? Why? Recall a specific situation.**

To begin, all participants are instructed to relax and be still. Ask them to travel in their mind to a specific situation where they were angry, hurt, sad, or disappointed with someone. The facilitator guides them to witness the situation, asking them to be present at that moment. They are encouraged to notice, name, and feel the emotion they were experiencing at that time. The participants are invited to find the reason they were upset.

B

#### **Capture their stressful thoughts on the Worksheet using short, simple sentences.**

Staying anchored in the situation, at a specific moment in time, tell participants to write down their answers in the questions on the Worksheet, using short, simple sentences. And to write without censoring themselves. Invite them to be as judgmental, childish, and petty as they were in that moment. This is an opportunity to discover the cause of their stress and emotions at that moment.

C

#### **Isolate one thought and ask the four questions, allowing the genuine answers to arise.**

To begin, isolate a statement for self-inquiry and apply the four questions. Tell them to begin by repeating the original statement, then to ask each question. This Work is a meditation practice. It's like diving into oneself. Invite them to contemplate the questions, one at a time, to drop into the depths of themselves, listen, and wait. The answer will meet the question.

They start working in pairs, "A" will inquire about the stressful thought, and "B" will ask the questions and the instructions that follow to help "A" get into the situation.

## STEP 3: (20 MINS)

### The Four Questions to inquire.

Q1

#### **Is it true?**

The answer to the first two questions is just one syllable: either yes or no.

"Be still and find your honest yes or no as it arises to meet the question. If your answer shows up as a 'yes', move to question two. If it's 'no', then experience that no for a moment and then move to question three".





Q2

**Can you absolutely know that it's true?**

If your answer to question one is YES, ask yourself: "Can I absolutely know that it's true?" Take this opportunity to look again. Shine the flashlight on that moment in time again, and see what reveals itself to you.

Q3

**How do you react, what happens, when you believe that thought?**

Close your eyes and witness the feelings, body sensations, and behaviors that arise when you believe that thought. Notice and report the answers to any of the following:

What images do you see, past or future, and what emotions or physical sensations arise as you witness those images?

- How did you treat the other person?
- How did you treat yourself?
- Do any obsessions or addictions begin to appear when you believe that thought?

Q4

**Who would you be, without that thought?**

Closing your eyes, return to the situation. Take a moment to reflect, observe, and experience the situation again, this time without the thought. Who or what you would be without the thought? How would you see or feel about the other person? Drop all of your judgments. Notice what is revealed.

Q5

**Turn the thought around.** Is the opposite as true as or truer than the original thought?

To do the turnarounds, find opposites of the original statement on your Worksheet. Often a statement can be turned around to the self, to the other, and to the opposite. Not every statement has as many as three turnarounds. Some may have just one or two, and others may have more than three. Some turnarounds may not make any sense to you. Don't force these.

**Finding opposites:**

The Original Thought: "Paul doesn't listen to me", turns around to:

I don't listen to myself.

I don't listen to Paul.

Paul does listen to me.



**Turn around my thinking:**

As you do The Work on subjects such as the body, disease, career, or God, when you come to the turnarounds, substitute the words "my thinking" for the subject. Example: "My body should be strong, flexible, and healthy" turns around to "My thinking should be strong, flexible, and healthy." Isn't that what you really want—a balanced, healthy mind? Has a sick body ever been a problem, or is it your thinking about the body that causes the problem?





### Finding examples of turnarounds:

Consider how each turnaround you find is as true as or truer than the original judgment. Find at least three specific, genuine examples of how each turnaround is true for you in that situation. This is not about blaming yourself or feeling guilty. It's about discovering alternatives that can bring you peace.

### Avoid the mistake of turning around a turnaround thought again:



The original statement "He shouldn't waste my time" may be turned around to "I shouldn't waste my time," "I shouldn't waste his time," and "He should waste his time." Note that "I should waste my time" and "I should waste his time" are not valid turnarounds; they are turnarounds of turnarounds, rather than turnarounds of the original statement.

### STEP 4: (20 MINS)

#### Changing Roles.

Once A has inquired the 4 questions, they can change roles in the same pair and follow the same steps and process.

### Reflection (10')



#### Group reflection.

- What was more meaningful for you during the exercise?
- What did you realize about yourself?
- Did your perception of your reality change?
- How do you feel now regarding your thoughts?
- What was more difficult for you during the exercise?
- Did you become aware of your needs?
- What are the permissions you gave yourself?
- Can you find this practice useful to deal with beliefs regarding conflict and addiction

### Individual work version



Duration: 30 minutes

The same instructions will be followed for individual work.

Follow step 2 & 3.

The facilitator will ask the questions, and the participant will inquire into the thought. There will be no change of roles.

### Preparation

Have done the work on changing beliefs following the 4 questions and additional ones on yourself to be familiar with the process and changes that result from doing the meditation through the self-inquiry questions in the work.



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**List of materials:** Pen to write and Worksheets with the 4 questions to do the work on changing beliefs.

Print additional materials in appendix  
List of examples of most common beliefs.  
List of emotions

## Evaluation of the activity

The activity will be explored during the implementation of the exercise with self-inquiry questions explained above that will invite self-awareness.

At the end of the exercise, some questions can open the sharing with the whole group, sharing the main insights. The facilitator can ask and register from the answers of participants, how much the objectives have been achieved.

## Appendix - Worksheets

There you will find the worksheets to change beliefs and additional resources like videos, books, podcasts, events etc.

Instructions on how to do the work:

[https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/instr\\_en\\_18jul2019\\_ltr.pdf](https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/instr_en_18jul2019_ltr.pdf)

Working on one belief:

[https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/obaat\\_en\\_mod\\_6feb2019-r.pdf](https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/obaat_en_mod_6feb2019-r.pdf)

## Additional resources

The Work homepage:

<https://thework.com/instruction-the-work-byron-katie/>

List of emotions:

[https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Emotions\\_List\\_Ltr.pdf](https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Emotions_List_Ltr.pdf)

List of universal beliefs:

[https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ub\\_en\\_17jul2019\\_ltr\\_r1a.pdf](https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ub_en_17jul2019_ltr_r1a.pdf)

The little book on the work of Byron Katie:

[https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/English\\_LB.pdf](https://thework.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/English_LB.pdf)



## Appendix 1.A - One-Belief-at-a-Time Worksheet

### One-Belief-at-a-Time



On the “Belief” line below, write down a stressful belief. It could be a statement from a Judge-Your-Neighbor Worksheet, a stressful belief about someone (alive or dead) whom you haven’t forgiven 100%, or any stressful thought at all. Allow yourself to mentally revisit the specific situation. Then question the concept in writing, using the following questions and turnarounds. When answering the questions, close your eyes, be still, and witness what appears to you.

Belief: \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Is it true?** (Yes or no. If no, move to question 3.)

2. **Can you absolutely know that it’s true?** (Yes or no.)

3. **How do you react, what happens, when you believe that thought?**

- What emotions arise when you believe that thought?
- What images of past and future do you see when you believe the thought?
- How do you treat yourself and others when you believe the thought?

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## Appendix 1.B - One-Belief-at-a-Time Worksheet

Belief you are working on: \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Who would you be without the thought?

Who or what are you without the thought?

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### Turn the thought around.

Example of a statements:  
He hurts me.

Possible opposites:

I hurt **me**.

I hurt **him**.

**He** didn't hurt **me**.

**He** helped **me**.

Contemplate how each turnaround is as true or truer in that situation.

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The handouts are part of the the work of BYRON KATIE.



## Meeting the effects



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

The method aims to raise awareness regarding the effects of substance abuse on people's lives, by 'placing in contact' a substance and an organ.



### Objectives:

- Raising awareness of the impact of substance abuse on our health.
- To understand how to pay attention to our own needs.
- Raising awareness of the relationship between wellbeing and addictive substances.
- To raise body awareness and be more connected with emotions and needs.
- To become grounded in the present moment.

Group work version



**Duration:** 50 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MINS)

The facilitator divides the group in two two straight lines (A and B), participants standing one behind the other, with an equal number of participants in both lines. The participants are role assigned, as follows:

**For column A**, the roles are human organs, such as: kidneys, lungs, brain, liver, bladder, heart, stomach, pancreas, etc.

**For column B**, the roles are substances, such as: tobacco, alcohol, psychoactive substances, cocaine, heroin, marijuana, etc.

The roles are written on small sheets of paper. The facilitator will provide the papers with the roles, together with paper clips, so each role will be attached on the clothing of participants (collar or neck of the shirt), so they will not be aware of their roles in the beginning. Besides the role, each participant will receive a blank paper and a pen for collecting some information during the activity.

Before proceeding with the next step of the activity, the facilitator asks the participants if they consent to be touched and to touch others during the task, explaining that it is highly needed for visibility and impact of the method.



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## STEP 2 : (30 MINS)

After each participant has the role attached, they are invited to start walking inside the room for 30 seconds, by observing the others' roles. Background music can be played.

Some guidance can be given from the facilitator to get into the role of the organ or drug while walking: realize how you feel? How do you walk? What thoughts come to you? How do you feel with others?

The facilitator stops the walking and asks the participants to pair up in a way that each drug works with an organ. When forming an organ-drug pair, the participants are asked to embody the interaction between these two elements and to express it through a kinesthetic reaction.

An example can be provided by the facilitator with one participant: "heart" and "cocaine". The "cocaine" could act very intrusive and aggressive, while the "heart" could react very hectic and hyper-vigilant. Another example, in one of the pairs that could be "the liver" and "the alcohol". Both participants will move spontaneously at the same time just following their body sensations. One can fall to the floor, the other one can get close and do something to the other and will let the movements unfold until the facilitator indicates the time it's over. The facilitator indicates that the movement should not go into an extreme manifestation: safety first!

The pairs will try to immerse in their bodies and follow any body movement that comes to them. It's an exercise of sensing and expressing what the body feels. After this body movement in pairs, they have some time to share the experiences and main insights. For another 3-4 minutes, they are invited to brainstorm on the effects of that substance on the organ and to write the conclusions on the paper received in the beginning.

The exercise is repeated for 3-4 rounds, everytime with a different partner (organ-drug) and following the same flow: follow the authentic body movement between them, and then some time to share the experience and main insights, research and write the effects of the substance on the organ.

This will continue for as many rounds as time allows, depending on the number of participants. Ideally, each "organ" will meet every "drug" by the end of the activity.

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### Reflection (15')



REFLECTION TIME! When the facilitator decides to close the process, the participants are asked to form a plenary circle. A moment of reflection will follow-up on the task, focusing on the experience of interaction, but also on the information explored. The facilitator can open this space by asking for main insights, important moments during the exercise:

- What did you feel before, during and after the experience?
  - Did you feel connected to your body in any way?
  - What did your body express?
  - What happened in the interaction with your partner?
  - What emotions appeared during the activity?
- 





- What difficulties did you face? What do they say about you at this moment?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- Did you find any connection between the experience and your present actions?
- How did you feel to face a past reality if it is the case? How did you feel when you began to deal with it productively?
- Let's see some examples of new information that you collected during your short research with your colleagues.
- How new are these information for all of you? How can we explore this information, in what ways?
- How would you describe the whole activity in one word?

### Individual work version



Duration: 45 minutes

#### STEP 1 : (5 MINS)

The facilitator can start small discussion about the topic: substance abuse and health. Example facilitator can ask: Have you noticed opinions about drug abuse and physical health in your everyday life, among friends or on social media? What are these opinions? What do you think about those opinions?

The facilitator will show cards with names of organs and substances to participant. With an equal number of cards on both topics. The cards are arranged in two piles.

A and B cards can be in different colors or shapes, so that the participant can see the difference.

**For pile A** the human organs, such as: kidneys, lungs, brain, liver, digestive system, heart, stomach, immune system, etc.

**For pile B**, the substances, such as: tobacco, alcohol, cocaine, heroin, marijuana, ecstasy, LSD, Spice, hallucinogens etc.

#### STEP 2 : (30 MINS)

Facilitator introduces the task:

- We will play cards! Let's see who is stronger! The participant receives the cards with substances, and the facilitator has the cards with the organs (if appropriate, the participant may be allowed to choose a pile of cards.).
- The facilitator adds one card on the table (with the name of one organ) and the participant chose one of his cards (with substances);
- The facilitator asks the participant to think which of the cards is stronger? Why? (Stronger means who would prevail in real life?)
- The facilitator invites the participant to think about what could happen when these two elements meet in real life and interact for a long time, who would be in control, how would the interaction look like, what would happen in their relationship? What would happen to each of them?





- The facilitator invites the participant to think about what could happen when these two elements meet in real life and interact for a long time, who would be in control, how would the interaction look like, what would happen in their relationship? What would happen to each of them?
- What effects does the substance have on the organ? Participant should make a decision, which of the card is stronger?

When finished with the first cards, the facilitator puts the next card on the table. Facilitator repeats this with all cards!

You can use some humor and imagination for guiding the discussion, also touching a bit the reality of using that substance.

If the participant needs to inform about the effects of the interaction between the two cards, he can use any source of information available, including online information.

When finished with the last cards, make small discussion, example facilitator can ask: do you have any questions?

### Reflection (10')



This moment will focus on the impact of the task and also on the novelty of the researched information.

- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- What did you discover about yourself during the activity?
- What emotions have you experienced during the activity?
- What do you think about substance abuse and your health now?
- Have you ever noticed some changes in your health after substance abuse?
- What do you think about different substances and their impact on your life? Pluses and minuses of their presence in your life?

### Preparation

It is highly desirable that the facilitator has a good knowledge of the types of addictive substances and their effect on the human body. Basic knowledge on guiding activities based on body movement is desirable as well.

Higher attention is needed if the method is delivered to vulnerable groups, mainly by not channeling the reflection discussion into traumatic personal experiences and domestic violence related to substance abuse.



The physical interaction in pairs is not mandatory for this method, so it won't trigger any escalation to acts of violence. The facilitator should permanently monitor the dynamic in the pairs.



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**List of materials:** Papers, pens, cards with the roles (organs and substances), phones or other digital devices that might help the participants to research.

An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting in some steps of the activity.

Cardboards with organs and substances - [Appendix 1](#)

### **Evaluation of the activity**

An important evaluation element is the reflection time and the diversity of the information the participants explored. Another important evaluation criteria is the type of engagement during the research moments: try to observe and listen if the participants explore the topic in a knowledgeable way or in an ironic manner.



Appendix 1 - Meeting the effects - Cardboards with organs and substances

ORGANS	SUBSTANCES
kidneys	nicotine
lungs	alcohol
brain	inhalants
liver	cocaine
bladder	heroin
heart	marijuana
stomach	caffeine
pancreas	ecstasy
skin	LSD
teeth	Spice
eyes	hallucinogens



## The carrousel of values



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

The method stimulates individual and group introspection and observation on how personal values could be affected by the interaction with an addictive substance. Participants will express in a visual way how they perceive their future or present when substance abuse disorder occurs and takes an important role in their life.



### Objectives:

- To increase the awareness of the impact of substance abuse on one's personal values.
- To increase the understanding of what life values are.
- To increase self-awareness of one's own values and priorities.
- To stimulate self-empathy and acceptance.
- To build critical thinking in relation to addictive substances.

Group work version



Duration: 70 minutes

### STEP 1 : (15 MIN)

Participants are seated in a circle on chairs or cushions. The center of the working space could be filled with cards indicating personal values ([Appendix 1](#) - the cards will be used in the activity).

The facilitator could do a brief introduction on values and addictions by asking the participants to indicate some examples of values.

Then the facilitator will invite the group to work in pairs. One will ask a set of questions, and the other one will take the time to answer them, just letting the answers appear, taking the time to go deep inside instead of answering from the information we have in our mind. The person asking the questions will also collect part of the answers given by his pair.

The questions are written on a piece of paper ([Appendix 2](#)):

- What do you value in your life?
- How do these values make you feel?
- What values drive your life at this moment?
- How do you cherish your values?
- Do you feel that your environment supports you to cherish your values or not?



- What habits and actions derail you from following your values and priorities? (for this question the facilitator could channel the discussion to substance abuse disorders and addictions).
- If talking about addictions, what is the main impact they have or could have in your life?

After answering the questions, the person asking and taking notes of the answer will say back what they have written so that the answers can be heard again. There will be no need to comment on it.

Participants will be seated again in the circle.

Each participant receives a paper (it would be ideal A4 size) and a pencil.



The facilitator introduces the working steps:

- A** Each participant will work individually and will follow the instructions without communicating with others. Background music is recommended, so the participants immerse in the process faster.
- B** After each round, participants will pass the paper to the neighboring colleague (the facilitator invites a volunteer to decide in which direction), in the same direction. Each round will take 5-7 minutes
- C** In each round, after receiving the paper from their neighbors, the participants will continue drawing on the same page, adding on the previous draw the elements indicated by the facilitator. The facilitator recommends the group to express as much as possible what they feel, rather than focusing on the quality of the draw and the technique itself. Another recommendation is to fill the paper as much as possible, extending the drawing to the center and edges of the paper.
- D** The facilitator again introduces the cards with examples of personal values that are in the center of the space so the participants could get inspired if they are not identifying any example of value.

## STEP 2 : (35 MINS)

**First round.** Imagine yourself and illustrate it on the paper. Also illustrate the most important value of your life. Write in a corner of the paper the value. Paper is passed to the neighbor.

**Second round.** Illustrate the most common addictive substance used in your community. Paper is passed to the neighbor.

**Third round.** How is the relationship of the person with their value in the scenario that the person starts abusing that substance? Paper is passed to the neighbor.

**Fourth round.** Illustrate how the relationships with others are affected by substance abuse. Paper is passed to the neighbor.

**Fifth (and last) round.** Let's imagine that the person abuses the substance on a regular basis for one year already. Illustrate how the initial value is affected and if it was replaced by another value or priority. Paper is passed to the neighbor.



---

The facilitator invites the participants to observe all the elements on the paper and to identify what was the evolution of the illustration. They are invited to observe how familiar they are with the illustration and how many common elements they recognize. A short plenary discussion is initiated by the facilitator on these aspects.

### STEP 3 : (5 MINS)

Eventually, the facilitator invites the person to hand the paper to the initial owner, the person who is at the center of the illustration. Once the papers are returned, each participant is invited to observe the same aspects: how familiar they are with the illustration and how many common elements they recognize. The participants are invited to make a wish and to write it on the paper.

#### Reflection (15')



The session ends with a group reflection guided by the facilitator with some questions:

- How easy is it for you to identify the most important value in life?
- Is it usual that people neglect their values when abusing substances?
- What is the role of education in preventing substance abuse in our lives?
- How easy was it to draw the impact of the substance abuse on others' drawings?
- How can we protect ourselves against substance abuse in general?
- How can an individual know that they might have developed an abusive tendency towards a substance?
- How helpful is this activity for you?
- What for do you think we had this session?

#### Individual work version



Duration: 40 minutes

### STEP 1 : (10 MIN)

The facilitator introduces the method's theme and the cards with the values (Appendix 1). For example, today we will talk about your individual values, and to make it easier, we will use cards, you can see them on the table.

The center of the working space or table could be filled with cards indicating personal values (the cards will be used in the activity).

The session starts with introduction questions, discussion about the concept of values (to help the participant, he can answer the questions by looking for inspiration in the images of the cards). Facilitator asks these questions indicated in Appendix 2.

After addressing these questions, the facilitator hands the participant a paper (it would be ideal A4 size) and a pencil and introduces the flow of the main part of the activity:

- The participant will work individually and will follow the instructions from the facilitator.



- The participant will draw several elements on the same page, adding following the instructions provided by the facilitator. The facilitator recommends the participant to express as much as possible what he feels, rather than focusing on the quality of the drawing and the technique itself. Another recommendation is to fill as much as possible the paper, not to limit to basic visual symbols.
- The facilitator channels the participant's attention to the cards placed on the table, in order to explore examples of personal values. This is helpful, in case that the participant cannot indicate any personal value.

## STEP 2 : (15 MINS)

**Me.** Imagine yourself and illustrate it on the paper (it can be a realistic or symbolic drawing). Also illustrate the most important value of your life. Write in a corner of the paper the value.

**My community.** Illustrate the most common addictive substance used in your life or community (anywhere on the page).

**Value alteration.** What changes regarding the value that you mentioned if you start abusing that substance? Try to illustrate that.

**Relationships.** Illustrate how the relationships with others are affected by substance abuse.

**Closing.** Let's imagine that you abuse the substance on a regular basis for one year already. Illustrate the importance allocated by you to the initial value and how this was replaced by another priority.

The facilitator asks the participant to observe all the elements on the paper and to identify what was the evolution of the illustration.

Notes for the facilitator:



This could be a good moment to ask some support questions:

- what do you see in this drawing?
- what is the story in this drawing between your value and substance abuse?
- what do you see in this drawing about your relationships with others?

## STEP 1 : (5 MIN)

After closing the drawing and the discussion, the participant is invited to make a wish and to write it on the paper.

### Reflection (10')



The session ends with a some reflection questions:

- How easy is it for you to identify the most important value in life?
- Is it usual that people neglect their values when abusing substances?
- What is the role of education in preventing substance abuse?
- How easy was it to draw the impact of the substance abuse?
- How can we protect ourselves against substance abuse in general?
- How can an individual know that they might have developed an abusive tendency towards a substance?
- How helpful is this activity for you?



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## Preparation

The facilitator should have good knowledge on how substance abuse disorders might occur and what is the difference between prevention and intervention. Basic knowledge on personal introspection tools used for educational purposes is desired.



Prepare a playlist with 5-6 songs that stimulate introspection, reflection, exploration.

**List of materials:** Papers, pencils, an open space with chairs, benches, cushions or any surface that might be used for sitting.

Cards with examples of personal values - Appendix 1 (can be handwritten as well) and the list of questions that are addressed in the opening of the activity - Appendix 2.

The examples of values indicated in Appendix 1 are imported from an online web sources, namely [saturdaygift.com/core-values-list](https://saturdaygift.com/core-values-list).

## Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation form of the activity is by observation. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing mainly on the complexity and relevance of the illustrations.

The reflection process is as well, very important for understanding the engagement in the process.





Appendix 1 - The carrousel of values - Values - page 1

VALUE	VALUE
Abundance	Balance
Acceptance	Beauty
Accomplishment	Boldness
Accountability	Bravery
Accuracy	Self-development
Achievement	Calmness
Self-respect	Capable
Adventure	Careful
Affection	Caring
Alertness	Certainty
Ambition	Challenge
Assertiveness	Charity
Spirituality	Cleanliness



Appendix 1 - The carrousel of values - Values - page 2

VALUE	VALUE
Authenticity	Respect
Awareness	Clever
Statuss	Excellence
Dedication	Excitement
Dependability	Experience
Determination	Expertise
Devotion	Exploration
Dignity	Fairness
Discipline	Faith
Diversity	Fame
Efficiency	Family
Empathy	Fearless
Endurance	Fidelity



Appendix 1 - The carrousel of values - Values - page 3

VALUE	VALUE
Energy	Fitness
Enjoyment	Focus
Enthusiasm	Success
Equality	Forgiveness
Humility	Knowledge
Humor	Lawful
Imagination	Leadership
Order	Independence
Organization	Individuality
Originality	Inner Harmony
Learning	Passion
Logic	Patience
Love	Patriotism



Appendix 1 - The carrousel of values - Values - page 4

VALUE	VALUE
Innovation	Loyalty
Insightful	Mastery
Inspiring	Maturity
Integrity	Meaning
Peace	Intelligence
Playfulness	Honesty
Wealth	Joy
Positivity	Justice
Moderation	Power
Motivation	Productivity
Teamwork	Professionalism
Openness	Prosperity
Kindness	Optimism



Appendix 1 - The carrousel of values - Values - page 5

VALUE	VALUE
Purpose	Comfort
Commitment	Friendship
Communication	Fun
Community	Generosity
Compassion	Giving
Competence	Goodness
Confidence	Grace
Consistency	Gratitude
Freedom	Stability
Growth	Honor
Contribution	Happiness
Control	Hard Work
Cooperation	Harmony



## Appendix 2 - The carrousel of values - Questions

What do you value in your life?



How do these values make you feel?



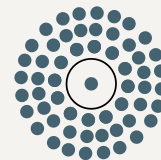
What values drive your life at this moment?



How do you cherish your values?

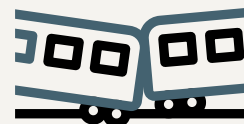


Do you feel that your environment supports you to cherish your values or not?



What habits and actions derail you from following your values and priorities?

\* the facilitator could channel the discussion to substance abuse disorders and addictions



If talking about addictions, what is the main impact they have or could have in your life?



## The timeline of my time



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

The method proposes a goal-oriented introspection process, as it supports the participants to understand the concept of 'time' as a resource, for improving their life quality by influencing their living environment. Time can be easily disregarded as a key ingredient in shaping one's life when engaging in unhealthy activities that may lead to harmful behaviors, including here the abuse of addictive substances. Time is usually not perceived as a limited resource, especially when psychoactive substances are involved: the cognitive processes are altered, hence creating in youngsters' minds the perception that they will have enough time to recover physically and to complete their activities later. With this method, we intend to support participants to visualize the mid-term and long-term time related effects in relation to the abuse of addictive substances.



### Objectives:

- To increase the importance of 'time' in the individual system of values.
- To build self-confidence in breaking unhealthy behaviors or tendencies.
- To calibrate the perception of 'time' to the living realities of the participants.
- To channel additional inner resources and attention for supporting the changes that need to be done in order to address the unhealthy behaviors.

Group work version



Duration: 90 minutes

### STEP 1 : (15 MINS)

The activity starts with the group arranged in a circle. A quick round the table of names and age is recommended. The facilitator introduces the workshop by describing that the activity will explore the recent past, decisions and activities that participants made, and they should be ready for emotional and thoughts exploration in order to understand how effective we are at using our own time.

The facilitator invites the participants to an exercise of introspection by addressing a question: How often do we check our feelings, thoughts, concerns, plans or decisions we want to make?

Working individually, participants are given the [Appendix 1: Timeline of my time](#) and invited to focus on the central part of it and to describe for 5-10 minutes what are the dominant feelings at this moment, what are the most active and present thoughts and concerns, and what decisions they plan to make. During these minutes, the facilitator reinforces the importance of staying in the present moment and to explore these elements, to check each' emotional 'big-picture', the major concerns'they experience.



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**STEP 2 : (25 MINS)**

After these 10 minutes, participants are invited to form trios and the facilitator continues with a short speech: Let's look at the last 90 days of our lives. Do you remember what we have done every single day of these 90 days? Let's look at the last 30 days and ask ourselves the same question. And then, let's try to remember the last 7 days, the last 3 days, and yesterday. Can you remember what actions you made in every moment? It is almost impossible, as a large part of our actions are deeply embedded in our daily routine or are organically connected with our physiological needs, therefore we proceed almost unconsciously in those moments. We tend to forget about those actions almost instantly once we get a dose of satisfaction, no matter how that looks. We are here, time passed anyway, no matter how we feel at this moment and what has changed in our life, irrespective of what we decided, time flew, and we are here.

Next, the facilitator guides the participants with the following indications: Let's look at our papers for a few seconds. What have you done in the last 30 days, so you are here, with these emotions and thoughts that you wrote? Can you indicate which were the most important concerns you had 30 days ago? Can you also name what decisions you wanted to make in order to support your actions and to tackle those concerns? Using the left side of the handout, let's do this exercise for the next 20 minutes: for the first 10 minutes, write them individually, and for the next 10 minutes, share at least one element in your trio.

The facilitator gives the space to the participants for the next 10 minutes, permanently checking the individual progress. After the 10 minutes of individual work, the group is announced that they can start sharing their contribution.

**STEP 3 : (25 MINS)**

The facilitator invites the participants to stay in the trios and to continue the work with the last question of the left side of the handout: How did you use this time? What slowed your process of making decisions? Can you name some specific actions or behaviors that keep you far from your intentions?

The facilitator can elaborate the question, by exemplifying what could hinder the decision-making and the initiatives of someone, indicating the substance abuse and other addictive behavioral patterns, unhealthy relationships, lack of professional perspectives, etc. This step of the session covers 20 minutes in the same format: 10 minutes of individual work, and 10 minutes for sharing in trios.

**STEP 4 : (10 MINS)**

After this step, the facilitator introduces the right side of the handout, which unfolds the perspectives of the upcoming 30 days, with mirroring questions.

The facilitator invites the participants to read in silence again the elements described for the current moment, for now (what they wrote in the middle of the handout). Depending on the time available for the facilitators, the activity can continue in the same format, with two additional rounds related to the future, as indicated in the handout. If there's not enough time left, the work in trios can end by answering a question: what can slow my process for the next 30 days? In this case, the handout can be promoted as homework for participants.





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At the end, each participant will make a commitment with themselves so that they take it with them after the workshop. “I commit myself to... for this week”.

### Reflection (15')



The facilitator invites the participants to close the work in trios and to return in the plenary for a closing discussion:

- How easy it was to explore the current feelings and concerns?
- How about those concerns that were present 30 days ago? Are any of them still present?
- How do you think that time is usually perceived in our society?
- How do you relate to the concept of ‘time’?
- How much time will you allocate for the habits that you consider unhealthy?
- How much influence have our unhealthy behaviors have on using our time?
- How much time can we channel to other productive activities that could support us in having a better life?
- Can you foresee or estimate how you will use time for the next 30 days? Or longer?
- Please describe this activity in some keywords.

The facilitator can prioritize or change these questions according to the profile of the participants.

### Individual work version



Duration: 60 minutes

#### STEP 1 : (15 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the workshop by describing that the activity will explore the recent past, decisions and activities that participant made, and he should be ready for emotional and thoughts exploration in order to understand how effective we are at using our own time.

The facilitator invites the participant to an exercise of introspection by addressing a question: How often do we check our feelings, thoughts, concerns, plans or decisions we want to make?

The facilitator gives the participant the [Appendix 1: Timeline of my time](#), to write on it for the next 5-10 minutes, to describe how he/she feels at this moment, what are the most active and present thoughts and concerns, and what decisions he plan to make (middle part of the Appendix). During these minutes, the facilitator reinforces the importance of staying in the present moment and to explore these elements, to check the emotional ‘big-picture’, the major concerns experienced by the participant.



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## **STEP 2 : (25 MINS)**

After these 10 minutes the facilitator continues with a short speech:

Let's look at the last 90 days of our lives. Do you remember what we have done every single day of these 90 days? Let's look at the last 30 days and ask ourselves the same question. And then, let's try to remember the last 7 days, the last 3, yesterday. Can you remember what actions you made in every moment? It is almost impossible, as a large part of our actions are deeply embedded in our daily routine or are organically connected with our physiological needs, therefore we proceed almost unconsciously in those moments. We tend to forget about those actions almost instantly once we get a dose of satisfaction, no matter how that looks. We are here, time passed anyway, no matter how we feel at this moment and what has changed in our life, irrespective of what we decided, time flew, and we are here.

Next, the facilitator guides the participant with the following indications:

Let's look at your paper for a few seconds. What have you done in the last 30 days, so you are here, with these emotions and thoughts that you wrote? Can you indicate which were the most important concerns you had 30 days ago? Can you also name what decisions you wanted to make in order to support your actions and to tackle those concerns? Using the left side of the handout, let's do this exercise for the next 15 minutes: for the first 10 minutes, write them individually, and in the remaining 5 minutes, you will share it.

## **STEP 3 : (25 MINS)**

The facilitator invites the participant to continue the work with the last question of the left side of the handout: How did you use this time? What slowed your process of making decisions? Can you name some specific actions or behaviors that keep you far from your intentions?

The facilitator can elaborate the question, by exemplifying what could hinder the decision-making and the initiatives of someone, indicating the substance abuse and other addictive behavioral patterns, unhealthy relationships, lack of professional perspectives, etc. This step of the session covers 15 minutes in the same format: 10 minutes of individual work, and 5 minutes for sharing.

## **STEP 4 : (10 MINS)**

After this step, the facilitator introduces the right side of the handout, which unfolds the perspectives of the upcoming 30 days, with mirroring questions.

The facilitator invites the participant to read in silence again the elements described for the current moment, for now (what he wrote in the middle of the handout). Depending on the time available for the facilitator, the activity can continue in the same format, with two additional rounds related to the future, as indicated in the handout. If there's not enough time left, the work can end by answering a question: what can slow my process for the next 30 days? In this case, the handout can be promoted as homework for participant.

**At the end, participant will make a commitment with himself so that he takes it with him after the workshop. "I commit myself to... for this week".**



## Reflection (15')

The facilitator invites the participant to close the work and involve in discussion:

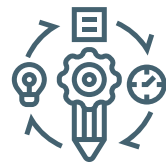


- How easy it was to explore the current feelings and concerns?
- How about those concerns that were present 30 days ago? Are any of them still present?
- How do you think that time is usually perceived in our society?
- How do you relate to the concept of 'time'?
- How much time will you allocate for the habits that you consider unhealthy?
- How much influence have our unhealthy behaviors have on using our time?
- How much time can we channel to other productive activities that could support us in having a better life?
- Can you foresee or estimate how you will use time for the next 30 days? Or longer?
- Please describe this activity in some keywords.

The facilitator can prioritize or change these questions according to the profile of the participant.

## Preparation

The facilitator should know the profile of the participants, so any past traumas to be addressed in a gentle way, if it occurs. The facilitators should own basic understanding of personal introspection tools used for educational purposes, and to avoid stepping in a therapeutic process with the participants.



**List of materials:** Handout, writing tools, speakers.

A playlist with 5-6 songs that stimulate introspection, reflection, exploration.

An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.

## Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated through the complexity of the answers indicated in the handouts, mainly for the questions that explore the reasons that slow personal development. As well, it is highly relevant the complexity of the description for the current feelings and concerns.

The closing reflection moment is as well, highly relevant, as the facilitator can channel the discussion towards specific unhealthy activities, with an emphasis on addictive behavioral patterns, often being incident for the people of concern of this activity.



## Appendix 1 -The timeline of my time

Concerns	Concerns	What decisions and actions I want to make?
What decisions and actions I wanted to make?		
30 days ago	NOW	30 days from now on
How I've used my time?	Feelings:	What can slow my process for the next 30 days?
What slowed my process?	Feelings:	



# Good wolf, bad wolf



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



## Overall description:

This activity stimulates critical thinking processes for the participants. As a methodology, it combines improvisation and script-based performances and underlines the concept of polarities that one could experience under peer pressure or emotional pressure.

\*\*\* This activity is based on the similar method developed by IPTA under the Erasmus+ project Prevention++, accessible in this [file](#) at page 95. Following the success and impact of the method, we decided to insert it in this manual with an adaptation to the target group of this project.



## Objectives:

- Understanding the way peer-pressure can impact our decisions.
- To raise awareness of the complexity of decision-making processes in vulnerable emotional moments
- Developing assertive communication towards the abusive tendencies
- Consolidating critical thinking towards substance use and abuse.

Group work version



Duration: 90 minutes

## STEP 1 : (15 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the topic of the session by asking the participants how they make decisions under pressure, what criteria they follow when there are difficult decisions to make. After collecting some answers, the facilitator explains to the group that decision making processes are complex and it is very common that people choose one option without being aware of the reasons behind their choice. In order to get into more details about this topic, the facilitator invites the group to watch a movie that describes the inner process of a person behind making a decision under pressure.

The facilitator projects a real-life scenario movie with a man who suffers from severe binge eating disorder. The movie is accessible [here](#). Once the movie ends, the facilitator debriefs some symbols and elements that are relevant for the whole activity:

- What symbols or metaphors are easy to observe in the movie?
- What is the main message of the movie?
- What happened to the main character as he developed this addictive tendency? What are the roots of it?



- What happened to the main character as he developed this addictive tendency? What are the roots of it?
- How could this person reduce the risk of developing the eating disorder?
- How often are we in the situation of making decisions under a powerful emotional impulse?

The facilitator should direct the debriefing process towards the metaphor of the two wolves fighting and to conclude with the key phrase of the movie: 'the wolf that wins is the one we feed'.



Alternative way of implementing the activity:

In case you cannot project the movie for various reasons (projector, internet, laptop, subtitles), you can use one of the scenarios described in [Appendix 1.A and 1.B](#).

## STEP 2 : (10 MINS)

The facilitator describes the flow of the activity and introduces a minimum set of rules.

- There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes).
- They cannot hurt themselves either.
- They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows ...). The rule 'who breaks, pays' is applied.

The facilitator explains that the participants will work in trios and will go through an activity based on improvisation, following some given scripts. The flow is described in simple way:

- The participants will form trios in a random way.
- Each trio receives a scenario that describes a situation based on real facts. The scenarios are detailed in [Appendix 1.A and 1.B](#). The scenarios used can be similar for all the trios or different.
- In every trio, there are three characters: 'Bad wolf', 'Good wolf' and the Person (the Protagonist of the scenario).
- Participants will read the scenario and will decide in their groups the allocation of these three roles.
- The goal of the 'Wolves' is to persuade the Person to decide in their favor, so at the end of the performance, the Person should choose which of the wolves wins.
- The task for the Person is to immerse as much as possible into the role of the character described in the given scenario, to understand the background of that person, the living context, life perspectives and challenges, the current situation, health condition, values, life goals, who provides support to this person, which persons have more influence in their life, what would that person decide in that moment.



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### STEP 3 : (10 MINS)

The facilitator describes how the performance will unfold:

- The Person sits in the middle, and the Wolves on the side, facing each other.
- The Wolves can talk to each other, to the Person, or just having a monologue. The Wolves are allowed to use any persuading tactic, but no violence is allowed. They should act like they are two voices in the Person's head, not as characters of the scenario.
- The Person cannot talk or react during the improvisation with the Wolves, cannot have a monologue and cannot respond with any words or gestures.
- The play should end in a maximum of 5 minutes.
- After 5 minutes, the Wolves stop and the Person has a maximum one minute to digest the dialogue of the Wolves and to make a decision.
- The Person verbalizes the decision and describes which are the reasons behind it. The trio reveals the scenario and indicates which are the characters.
- The spectators are invited to comment on what they observed during the play and which were the reactions of the Wolves and the Person.
- Each trio will follow the same flow of the process.

The facilitator can organize a quick demonstration on different situations with two volunteers or with other facilitators, so the participants understand what is the flow of the performance. Examples of situations: buying an ice cream with chocolate or vanilla, cheating at the exam or not, skipping the class in the school or not.

- Participants are announced that they will have 10 minutes to draft individually on their tactic as good as possible, without preparing a script or talking with each other in this time.
- After this preparation, each trio will perform on the 'stage' in front of the others, with a debrief discussion after each trio.

### STEP 4 : (45 MINS)

Preparation of the performance, individual work: 10 minutes.

When the time is up, the facilitator invites the first trio to the stage.

Notes for the facilitator:



Advise the audience to follow the performance without reacting loudly and without interfering with the process by advising the Person or the Wolves on what to say.



Each performance ends with a short discussion:

- For the Person. How did you feel during the Wolves' dialogue?
- How often do you face this inner discussion?
- For the Wolves. Which was your tactic?
- For the Person. How did you make this decision, what criteria did you follow?
- How was the dialogue of the Wolves? Was there any compromise?
- What happens inside us when these two Wolves are screaming at each other?
- For all: would you act differently if you would switch the role?

After the discussion, the next trios continue with their performances.

### Reflection (10')



Plenary discussion/reflection in the big group (possible questions to be asked by facilitator):

- How does peer-pressure affect our relationships with others?
- How can we connect this experience with the concept of inner conflict?
- If you changed your mind during the process, what made you do so?
- Where do you search for support when we are under peer-pressure?
- What happens with the Wolf that is not fed now?
- How can we feed both Wolves? What would be the result of feeding both Wolves?
- What would bring more peace to ourselves? A fight of the Wolves or an integration of their presence?
- How do we relieve stress in such situations?
- How could you describe this activity in some key words?

Individual work version



Duration: 60 minutes

### STEP 1 : ( 10 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the topic of the session by asking the participant how they make decisions under pressure, what criteria they follow when there are difficult decisions to make. After collecting some answers, the facilitator explains that decision making processes are complex and it is very common that people choose one option without being aware of the reasons behind their choice.

In order to get into more details about this topic, the facilitator invites the participant to watch a movie that describes the inner process of a person behind making a decision under pressure.







### Alternative way of implementing the activity:

Similar to the group version, in case you cannot watch a movie or if you want to make the session a bit shorter, use one scenario from [Appendix 1.A](#) and [1.B](#).

The facilitator projects a movie with a man who suffers from severe binge eating disorder. The movie is accessible [here](#). Once the movie ends, the facilitator debriefs some symbols and elements that are relevant for the whole activity:

- What symbols or metaphors are easy to observe in the movie?
- What is the main message of the movie?
- What happened to the main character as he developed this addictive tendency? What are the roots of it?
- How could this person reduce the risk of developing the eating disorder?
- How often are we in the situation of making decisions under a powerful emotional impulse?

The facilitator should direct the debriefing process towards the metaphor of the two wolves fighting and to conclude with the key phrase of the movie: 'the wolf that wins is the one we feed'.

### STEP 2 : ( 10 MINS)

The facilitator describes the flow of the activity. The facilitator explains that the participant will play three different roles based on the same script.

The flow is described in simple way:

- The participant receives a scenario that describes a situation based on real facts. The scenarios are detailed in [Appendix 1.A](#) and [1.B](#). The facilitator reads the scenario together with the participant.
- The facilitator uses a paper to draw the positions of the three characters (the Wolves and the Person) or places three objects on the table/floor.
- There are three characters: 'Bad wolf', 'Good wolf' and the Person (the Protagonist of the scenario). The participant will embrace every character for 3-5 minutes.
- The goal of the 'Wolves' is to persuade the Person to decide in their favor, so at the end of the performance, the Person should choose which of the wolves wins.

### Notes for the facilitator:



The facilitator helps participant to immerse as much as possible into the role of the character "person". Participant can close his eyes and imagine this "person's" life, character. The facilitator can make short dialogue with participant in this role: How old are you? What is your name? Tell me about yourself?



- 
- The task for the Person is to immerse as much as possible into the role of the character described in the given scenario, to understand the background of that person, the living context, life perspectives and challenges, the current situation, health condition, values, life goals, who provides support to this person, which persons have more influence in their life, what would that person decide in that moment.

### STEP 3 : ( 20 MINS)

The facilitator describes, step by step, how the performance will unfold:

- In the first round, the participant will embrace the role of the Good Wolf and will have a monologue as he would speak to the Person or to the Bad Wolf.
- In the second round, the participant switches the role and embraces the Bad Wolf, again with a monologue trying to persuade the person
- In the third round, the participant takes the role of the Person and makes a decision based on what he listened from the Wolves.
- Each monologue should end in a maximum of 3 minutes.
- After the Wolves stop, the Person has a maximum of two minutes to digest the dialogue of the Wolves and to make and verbalize a decision.
- The Person describes which are the reasons behind the decision.

The facilitator can simulate a quick demonstration on different situations by embracing all the three roles, so the participant understands what is the flow of the performance. Examples of situations: buying an ice cream with chocolate or vanilla, cheating at the exam or not, skipping the class in the school or not.

The participant has 5 minutes to draft the monologue for each of the Wolves and three minutes to explore the Person's background as good as possible. After this preparation, the performance will start.

#### Notes for the facilitator:



- make sure that the participant switches the place (changes the body position at each round).
- take notes that will help you in the debriefing part.
- you can play the role of the other Wolf or the Person during the activity, to enhance the sensation of reality.
- avoid any reaction to the monologue of the participant.
- in the end of the performance, validate the work and collect the effort in a positive note.



#### Alternative way of implementing the activity:

The facilitator can be part of the activity by embracing the role of one Wolf. If there is enough time, you can switch roles.



## Reflection (5')



The session ends with a reflection with some of the following questions:

- How can we connect this experience with the concept of inner conflict?
- How does peer-pressure affect our relationships with others?
- Where do you search for support when we are under peer-pressure?
- What happens with the Wolf that is not fed now?
- How can we feed both Wolves? What would be the result of feeding both Wolves?
- What would bring more peace to ourselves? A fight of the Wolves or an integration of their presence?
- How do we relieve stress in such situations?
- How could you describe this activity in some key words?

## Preparation

Basic understanding of how peer pressure works is really needed for the facilitator, as well as understanding how coping mechanisms work. Good understanding of substance abuse disorders is important. Focus on emotional triggers that fuel substance abuse disorders and addictive tendencies.



**List of materials:** Pens, papers, projector, sound system.

Scenarios for the trios.

An open space to improvise a little stage, three chairs or pillows.

## Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated by observation, through the level of engagement of the group during the performance. An important indicator is the complexity of the answers during the reflection process, especially if the participants can identify the importance of integrating the voices of the Wolves, so they could reduce the risk of inner conflicts.

## Additional resources

Materials available online:

[Example of movie with a story with a person who suffers from binge eating disorder:](#)

[youtube.com/watch?v=NPgHu2Lup94&ab\\_channel=WebMD](https://youtube.com/watch?v=NPgHu2Lup94&ab_channel=WebMD)

[Signs of binge eating disorder:](#)

[nationaleatingdisorders.org/learn/by-eating-disorder/bed](https://nationaleatingdisorders.org/learn/by-eating-disorder/bed)



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## Appendix 1.A - Working scenarios

**Mike, 19.** Tuesday afternoon, Mike returns home after another day at job, nothing new today, every day is similar. At the bus stop, Mike is checking social media while waiting for the bus. There's one more man who is ready to embark the bus that arrives in the station, but the bus is not the one Mike is waiting for. When the other man boards the bus, Mike observes that the man's wallet falls from his pocket, but the man doesn't notice. Mike's eyes are gazing at the wallet. From time to time, Mike checks if the man will return to search for his wallet. Mike looks at the timetable of the bus, it will leave in 3 minutes. The wallet is still on the ground, nobody else in the station, the man sits on a chair in the bus, no signs that he will return for the wallet. Mike needs money for the rent, it's a critical situation for him as he lost most of his money at the casino last evening, and that wallet could provide some cash. Will Mike take the wallet, wait for the bus to leave. or will he return the wallet to the man?

**3 minutes: what will Mike do?**

**John, 18.** There's one more day until school ends. John will somehow graduate high school and will access the final exams. Nevertheless, John knows how to find troubles, as his friends in the school are used to creating interesting situations in the school. In one of the breaks, John receives a message to join some of his friends in the backyard of the school, like in many other days. He meets them and observes something different, this time. They are smoking a strange cigarette, different from the regular ones. As there's one more day before graduating, his friends decided to celebrate a bit earlier with some weed and John is invited to this 'ceremony'. It's the last day, so what could happen? John doesn't feel it and wants to stay a bit away from trouble. Too late: one of the friends, who is known as the leader of their 'brotherhood', asks him to puff the joint at least once, as part of the ceremony. John smiles, tries to joke about his refusal, and wants to excuse himself. The other friends are looking suspicious at John and invite him to do it, it's the last day when they can have this in the school. John smiles again and this time he says that he would prefer not to take it. The friends are a bit surprised and not in a good way. There are 4 more minutes from the break, and they will have to return to the classroom. John understands the moment: if he takes it, he will continue to be part of the group. If not, his friends could get really suspicious.

**What will John decide?**



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## Appendix 1.B - Working scenarios

**Ana, 19.** It's Saturday evening, the shopping center will close soon. Ana and her friend, Mia, are visiting some shops, just hanging out a bit. As living far from the city center, Ana doesn't have many close friends, especially now, when she needs to take care of many family aspects. Mia checks her mobile and notices that she's invited for a party this evening, and the host asks her to buy some drinks. Ana needs to arrive home this evening, as her younger brother needs some help with the homework for the school. Mia doesn't want to hear about this: it's either the party, or no more hanging out with her from now on. This is not the first time when this happens and Mia is tired of convincing Ana every weekend to come to parties. The younger brother could wait till tomorrow, and school is not that important in this society, Mia says. Ana knows that she needs to go home and help her brother, her family cannot afford private classes. At the same time, she never has time for hanging out with people of her age and to make new friends.

**Anyway, 4 more minutes before the shop closes: will Ana join Mia at the party or will she go home?**

**Lora, 18.** What an eventful month for Lora! She graduated highschool and she's ready to tackle the national exams, her 18th birthday was amazing and she received a summer holiday voucher from her friends, for a common vacation. On top of all these, she just got her driving license three days ago. What a month! There's one thing missing in her life, she does not receive much validation and appreciation from the parents, as they are too busy with their business, and this keeps them away from home very often. They haven't even been at the graduation ceremony and they even forgot to congratulate her for the driving license. She spends most of her time with the friends, as they are really into parties and social gatherings.

It's Friday, late evening, Lora and her friends are at one of her friend's house, out of the city, they have a little party with generous amounts of alcohol and smoking. Lora stayed sober all the evening, as she drove her car here and tomorrow early morning she has private lessons for the exams. They play truth or dare, and the challenges are more and more spicy. In one round, Lora matches with one of the boys from the party, who she has a crush on. She picks 'dare' and the boy asks her to try one cigarette which seems different from regular cigarettes. The other friends encourage her to do it, Lora refuses as she could not drive the car this evening if the cigarette has drugs (she could be caught by police), but she is too shy to ask what is in the cigarette. The boy insists, the group starts to make fun of her, she is confused, she doesn't know what to do.

**What will Lora do?**



# The daily dose of wellbeing



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



## Overall description:

The method addresses one of the key pillars of preventive education on addictions, namely the desideratum of achieving a permanent state of wellbeing in all aspects of one's life: emotional, physical and mental. The activity promotes an easy-to-follow process of checking the actions and habits people do in order to attain the sense of wellbeing in a smooth way.

Our daily routines can hinder us from allocating even some minutes to our wellbeing and this is valid for many youngsters who are distracted by unhealthy behaviours, addictive tendencies being included.



## Objectives:

- To enhance the development of automatic daily healthy routines of a person.
- To expand the comfort zone of a person by developing healthy routines.
- To demonstrate how easy it is for an individual to replace unhealthy routines with healthy and easy-to-grab actions.

Group work version



Duration: 100 minutes

## STEP 1: (10 MIN)

The activity starts with the group of participants arranged in a circle. The facilitator introduces the session by asking the group what is their 'inner weather', mainly inviting participants to describe their state of being at that moment through a natural phenomenon. The discussion continues with a series of short questions about the concept of 'wellbeing':

- What comes to your mind when you hear 'wellbeing'?
- What are the main sources of wellbeing and how can we preserve them?
- Who is responsible for our own wellbeing?

The facilitator completes the answers with some reasons that could reduce the sense of wellbeing for a young person and how accessible are the distractions that could lead to this, such as addictive substances and behaviours, toxic relationships, poor nutrition, inadequate sleeping time, sedentarism, limited engagement in education.



## STEP 2 : (10 MIN)

After collecting these answers, the facilitator introduces the activity by telling the group that they will go through different tasks in small groups, in pairs and individually.

Notes for the facilitator:



- The facilitator should have the [Appendix 1: Group Work](#) with the tasks and to start with the first one. A quick demonstration on how to fulfil the tasks might be needed.
- The timeframe is set for maximum 40 minutes and the facilitator indicates a sound that marks the start or the end for each activity (tinghsa bells or a soft whistle).

## STEP 3 : (40 MIN)

The tasks have a specific time limit, as indicated. The facilitator introduces the tasks that are considered as suitable for the group as long as they fit in a maximum of 40 minutes. Permanent check with the participants is needed, mainly by exemplifying answers that could not be easy to think of. After each task, the participants are asked to prepare for the next one.

Even if the facilitator may select any of the tasks, it is recommended that the tasks are introduced in a smooth sequence:

### Support

Invite a colleague and describe a difficult moment you had in the last days and ask for advice. After 3 minutes, switch the roles.

### Hydration

Did you drink water today? Let's have some more! (The task can be delivered if the participants have bottles of cups with water in the working space).

### Creativity

Working individually, you are invited to draw for the next 5 minutes how are you feeling at this moment. After 5 minutes, invite a colleague and describe your emotions to that person. Keep the paper, we will use it soon.

### Gratitude

For the next 3 minutes, write what you are grateful for at this moment. Then share your thoughts with one colleague.

### Hug session!

Giving and receiving makes our life better. So let's do that by hugging everyone in the room!

### Contact

Eyes are the gate to our souls. Find a partner and let's have a 30 second eye gazing moment.

### Sports

Find two colleagues and let's have 9 minutes of sports! Each one of you will lead a 3 minute session and then, switch to the second and the third one.

### Nutrition

Write on a paper what you ate in the last week and ask some advice for healthier alternatives for the next week.

### Gift time!

Form pairs with one colleague, prepare a small gift for your colleague in the next 5 minutes, offer it and describe why you chose this gift.



### STEP 5 : (10 MIN)

After completing the list of tasks, the facilitator invites the participants to have a seat where they are and to reconnect with the concept of 'wellbeing'. They are asked to reflect on the whole process and on their daily routines in attaining a state of wellbeing.

The facilitator invites the participants to write on the paper they used for drawing their emotions what they need to ensure they build and continue a daily or weekly routine around these tasks.

#### Reflection (10')



The facilitator invites participants to end the session in a circle for a set of reflection questions. The facilitator can prioritise or change these questions according to the profile of the participants:

- How often do we think of wellbeing in our daily routine?
- Is it difficult to find ways of improving the level of wellbeing?
- Who are the persons who can have an impact on our wellbeing?
- When should we check our inner wellbeing?
- What is the relationship between addictive tendencies and our wellbeing?
- In what way could education promote wellbeing among young people?
- If you could recall a moment of your childhood, how often were you checking the level of wellbeing?
- What will wellbeing mean in the upcoming years to you?
- Who is responsible for your wellbeing?
- Please describe this activity in 2-3 keywords.

#### Individual work version



Duration: 65 minutes

### STEP 1 : (10 MIN)

The facilitator introduces the session by asking the participant what is his 'inner weather', mainly inviting the participant to describe their state of being at that moment through a natural phenomenon. The discussion continues with a series of short questions about the concept of 'wellbeing', similar to the group version.

- What comes to your mind when you hear 'wellbeing'?
- What are the main sources of wellbeing and how can we preserve them?
- Who is responsible for our own wellbeing?

The facilitator completes the answers with some examples of reasons that could reduce the sense of wellbeing for young persons in general, illustrating how accessible are the distractions that could lead to this, such as addictive substances and behaviours, toxic relationships, poor nutrition, inadequate sleeping time, sedentarism, limited engagement in education.

### STEP 2 : (5 MIN)

After collecting these answers, the facilitator introduces the activity by telling the participant that he will go through different short tasks together with the facilitator, while other activities are part of an individual homework.





### STEP 3 : (30 min)

The tasks have a specific time limit, as indicated in the **Appendix 2: Individual Work**. The facilitator introduces the tasks that are considered suitable for the participant as long as they fit in a maximum of 30 minutes. When needed during the session, the facilitator provides answers that could support the participant. After each task, the participant is asked to prepare for the next one. It is recommended that the tasks are introduced in a smooth sequence.



The facilitator can choose which tasks are more suitable to be fulfilled during the session, and which to be introduced as a homework, according to the profile of the participant. We recommend the following tasks to be performed during the session: **Support, Hydration, Creativity, Gratitude, Sports, Nutrition.**

The other tasks could be proposed as a homework for the participant: **Hug session!, Contact, Gift time!**

### STEP 4 : (10 min)

After completing the list of tasks, the facilitator invites the participant to reconnect with the concept of 'wellbeing'. He is asked to reflect on the whole process and on his daily routines in attaining a state of wellbeing. The facilitator invites the participant to write on the paper what he needs in order to build a daily or weekly routine around these tasks.

#### Reflection (5')



The facilitator invites the participant to end the session with some questions:

- How often do we think of wellbeing in our daily routine?
- Is it difficult to find ways of improving the level of wellbeing?
- Who are the persons who can have an impact on our wellbeing?
- When should we check our inner wellbeing?
- What is the relationship between addictive substances and wellbeing?
- In what way could education promote wellbeing among young people?
- If you could recall parts of your childhood, how often were you checking the level of wellbeing?
- What will wellbeing mean to you in the upcoming years?
- Who is responsible of your wellbeing?
- Please describe this activity in 2-3 keywords.

### Preparation

The facilitator should have basic knowledge of various practices of wellbeing, how they are used and which of them is compatible with the profile of their participants. The facilitator should have a basic understanding of personal introspection tools used for educational purposes, as well good command of conflict resolution, in case the participants might engage in verbal disputes.



A playlist with 5-6 songs that stimulate introspection, reflection, exploration is desirable.



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## List of materials:

### For group work:

Appendix 1, writing tools, speakers, papers, coloured pencils, pens.

An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.



### For individual work:

Appendix 2, writing tools, speakers, papers, coloured pencils, pens.

## Evaluation of the activity

The activity is evaluated through the engagement of the participant in fulfilling the tasks, especially the tasks that require working in pairs.

The closing reflection moment is highly relevant, as the facilitator can channel the discussion towards specific unhealthy activities, with an emphasis on addictive behaviour patterns, a topic that is relevant for the target group of this activity.



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## Appendix 1 - Worksheet for group work\*: The daily dose of wellbeing

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### Support

Invite a colleague and describe a difficult moment you had in the last days and ask for advice. After 3 minutes, switch the roles.

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### Hydration

Did you drink water today? Let's have some more! (The task can be delivered if the participants have bottles of cups with water in the working space).

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### Creativity

Working individually, you are invited to draw for the next 5 minutes how are you feeling at this moment. After 5 minutes, invite a colleague and describe your emotions to that person. Keep the paper, we will use it soon.

---

### Gratitude

For the next 3 minutes, write what you are grateful for at this moment. Then share your thoughts with one colleague.

---

### Hug session!

Giving and receiving makes our life better. So let's do that by hugging everyone in the room!

---

### Contact

Eyes are the gate to our souls. Find a partner and let's have a 30 second eye gazing moment.

---

### Sports

Find two colleagues and let's have 9 minutes of sports! Each one of you will lead a 3 minute session and then, switch to the second and the third one.

---

### Nutrition

Write on a paper what you ate in the last week and ask some advice for healthier alternatives for the next week.

---

### Gift time!

Form pairs with one colleague, prepare a small gift for your colleague in the next 5 minutes, offer it and describe why you chose this gift.

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\* Adapt the order and content of the tasks to the profile of the participants if needed.



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## Appendix 2 - Worksheet for individual work\*: The daily dose of wellbeing

### Tasks recommended to be fulfilled during the session

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#### Support

Describe a difficult moment you had in the last days and ask for advice. The facilitator provides an advice. Let's switch the roles after 3 minutes.

---

#### Hydration

Did you drink water today? Let's have some more! (The task is suitable if the participant has a bottle or a cup with water).

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#### Creativity

Let's play with our creativity. You are invited to draw for the next 5 minutes how do you feel at this moment? After 5 minutes describe your emotions to the facilitator.

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#### Gratitude

For the next 3 minutes, have a paper and write what you are grateful for today. After this moment, share this with the facilitator.

---

#### Sports

Have you done any sports today? Let's have 6 minutes of stretching. Each one of you will lead a 3 minute session: the facilitator and participant.

---

#### Nutrition

Write on a paper how your nutrition was in the last week and ask some advice for healthier alternatives for the next week.

---

#### Gift time!

Form pairs with one colleague, prepare a small gift for your colleague in the next 5 minutes, offer it and describe why you chose this gift.

---

### Tasks recommended to be introduced as homework

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#### Hug session!

Giving and receiving makes our life better. Just offer a hug to someone close to you! And ask that for yourself as well!

---

#### Contact

Eyes are the gate to our souls. Find a friend or colleague and try to have a 30 second eye gazing moment.

---

#### Gift time!

We become better when we give something to others. It's the time for gifts! For 5 minutes, prepare a small gift for a friend or colleague, offer it and describe why you chose this gift. You can also draw the gift.

---

\* Adapt the order and content of the tasks to the profile of the participants if needed.



## Visualization for healthy life



**Initiator:**  
State Probation Service, Latvia

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

This method aims to contribute to the development of one's healthy life and be aware of addiction topics or unhealthy habits.

The aim is to engage participants in a creative process focused on addiction prevention.

Aim is to create a visual material, participants will visualize his aspirations for a healthy and fulfilling life, reinforcing positive behaviors and coping strategies to prevent addiction or unhealthy habits.



### Objectives:

- To improve awareness regarding the healthy life and unhealthy habits or addictions;
- To improve better self-awareness, control and responsibility;
- To understand better the relationship between addictions or unhealthy habits and decision-making process;
- To express and manage feelings;
- To improve awareness of personal strengths.

Group work version



Duration: 70 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MIN)

The facilitator can open the topic by asking to the participants in big group:

- Do you think that you have some healthy habits in your life? What kind? (If participants cannot think of any, facilitator can give an example: walking long distances; enjoying fresh air, reading, drinking lot of water etc.)
- Do you think that you have some unhealthy habits in your life? What kind?

Introduction to task:

- The facilitator introduces the activity: creating a vision board for healthy living.
- The facilitator explains that the vision board will serve as a visual representation of their goals, aspirations, strengths and strategies for maintaining a healthy lifestyle and preventing addiction or unhealthy habit.





Note for facilitator: if participants don't have any addiction, then ask mainly about some bad, unhealthy habit in their life. Each participant can choose one the most disturbing bad habit of his life for visual board.

## STEP 2: (10 MIN)

Reflection and Goal Setting in pairs:

- The facilitator begins by engaging the participants in a reflective discussion in pairs about current lifestyle, habits, and any challenges they may face related to addiction (be aware also of caffeine, e cigarettes etc.).
- The facilitator encourages the participants to identify and articulate personal goals for maintaining a healthy lifestyle and avoiding substance abuse.
- The facilitator guides the participants in setting specific, achievable goals related to physical health, emotional well-being, relationships, hobbies, and personal growth.

Questions for discussion in pairs:

- What is my current lifestyle, my habits, and any challenges I face related to addiction (be aware also of caffeine, e cigarettes etc.).
- My personal goals for maintaining a healthy lifestyle and avoiding substance abuse.
- What are my goals: specific, achievable goals related to physical health, emotional well-being, relationships, hobbies, and personal growth?

## STEP 3: (20 MIN)

Image Selection individually:

- Participants should be provided with a selection of magazines, newspapers, or printed images related to health, wellness, and positive lifestyle choices and visual materials with topics of different addictions and unhealthy habits.
- The facilitator instructs the participants to browse through the images and select those that resonate with their struggles and goals, and aspirations for a healthy life.
- The facilitator encourages the participants to choose images that inspire and motivate them, representing activities, habits, and experiences they wish to incorporate into their lives.

## STEP 4: (20 MIN)

Creation of Vision Board:

- Once participants have selected their images, the facilitator should provide them with a poster board or thin A3 format paper and scissors.
- The facilitator instructs the participants to arrange the selected images on the board in a visually appealing and meaningful way. Participants are asked to think about their resources and struggles.
- The facilitator encourages the participants to use markers, crayons, or colored pencils to add additional elements, such as drawings, symbols, or affirmations, that reinforce their vision for healthy living.
- Participants should be reminded to leave space for any written reflections or intentions they may want to add later.

## STEP 5: (5 MIN)

The facilitator makes again the same pairs of participants.

The facilitator instructs them to ask open-ended questions to each other to encourage self-reflection and deeper exploration, such as:

- What do the images on your vision board represent to you?
- How do these images relate to your goals and aspirations for a healthy lifestyle?
- What strategies or coping mechanisms can you use to prevent addiction and maintain your well-being?





If possible, and group members are familiar, they can kindly offer each other some additional resource that each other has noticed in each other, or that could strengthen the other's story and goals.

### Reflection (10')



After completing the discussion in pairs, the facilitator invites the participants to reflect on the process and the meaning behind their choices in big group:

- How do you feel?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How was it for you to think about your habits?
- What was most difficult for you during the activity? What do you realize about yourself acknowledging this?

The facilitator listens attentively to the participant's responses and offer validation and support for their efforts.

Closure:

- Thank the participant for engaging in the activity and for his openness and creativity.
- Encourage the participant to display his vision board in a prominent place where he can see it regularly as a reminder of his commitment to healthy living and addiction prevention.

Offer any additional resources or support that may be helpful for the participant's ongoing journey toward well-being.

## Individual work version



Duration: 60 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MIN)

The facilitator can open the topic by asking to the participant:

- Do you think that you have some healthy habits in your life? What kind? (If participant cannot think of any, facilitator can give an example: walking long distances; enjoying fresh air, reading, drinking lot of water etc.)
- Do you think that you have some unhealthy habits in your life? What kind?

Introduction to task:

- Introduce the activity: creating a vision board for healthy living.

The facilitator explains that the vision board will serve as a visual representation of his goals, aspirations, strengths and strategies for maintaining a healthy lifestyle and preventing addiction or unhealthy habit.



Note for the facilitator:

If the participants don't have any addiction, then ask mainly about some bad, unhealthy habit in their life. Each participant can choose one the most disturbing bad habit of his life for visual board.



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## STEP 2: (10 MIN)

### Reflection and Goal Setting:

- The facilitator begins by engaging the participant in a reflective discussion about his current lifestyle, habits, and any challenges they may face related to addiction (be aware also of caffeine, e cigarettes etc.).
- The facilitator encourages the participant to identify and articulate his personal goals for maintaining a healthy lifestyle and avoiding substance abuse.
- The facilitator guides the participant in setting specific, achievable goals related to physical health, emotional well-being, relationships, hobbies, and personal growth.

## STEP 3: (15 MIN)

### Image Selection:

- The facilitator provides the participant with a selection of magazines, newspapers, or printed images related to health, wellness, and positive lifestyle choices and visual materials with topics of different addictions and unhealthy habits.
- The facilitator instructs the participant to browse through the images and select those that resonate with their struggles and goals, and aspirations for a healthy life.
- The facilitator encourages the participant to choose images that inspire and motivate them, representing activities, habits, and experiences they wish to incorporate into their lives.

## STEP 4: (20 MIN)

### Creation of Vision Board:

- Once the participant has selected his images, the facilitator provides him with a poster board or thin A3 format paper and scissors.
- The facilitator instructs the participant to arrange the selected images on the board in a visually appealing and meaningful way. Participant can be asked to think about his resources and struggles.
- The facilitator encourages the participant to use markers, crayons, or colored pencils to add additional elements, such as drawings, symbols, or affirmations, that reinforce his vision for healthy living.
- The participant should be reminded to leave space for any written reflections or intentions he may want to add later.

### Reflection (10')



After completing the vision board, the facilitator invites the participant to reflect on the process and the meaning behind his choices:

- How do you feel?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How was it for you to think about your habits?
- What was most difficult for you during the activity? What do you realize about yourself acknowledging this?





## Reflection (10')



The facilitator asks open-ended questions to encourage self-reflection and deeper exploration, such as:

- What do the images on your vision board represent to you?
- How do these images relate to your goals and aspirations for a healthy lifestyle?
- What strategies or coping mechanisms can you use to prevent addiction and maintain your well-being?

Listen attentively to the participant's responses and offer validation and support for their efforts.

Closure:

- Thank the participant for engaging in the activity and for his openness and creativity.
- Encourage the participant to display his vision board in a prominent place where he can see it regularly as a reminder of his commitment to healthy living and addiction prevention.
- Offer any additional resources or support that may be helpful for the participant's ongoing journey toward well-being.

## Preparation

It is highly desirable that the facilitator pay attention to the sensitivity of this method, and have basic knowledge about harmful unhealthy habits and addictions of youngsters..

### List of materials:

Pen, poster board or thick A3 paper, magazines, newspapers, or printed images, scissors, glue or tape, markers, crayons, or colored pencils, inspirational quotes or affirmations (optional).



## A

## Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation form of the activity is verbally, by the end of the session in the reflection moments, but also by observation during the whole activity. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participant, how many strengths and examples the participant can think, to his non-verbal language, the relevance of his answers related to the activity objectives, etc.

By the end of the activity, the facilitator will analyze the answers provided by participants, in order to improve the activity's particularities and better adapt it to the target group.



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## Additional resources

Theoretical information about different drugs and influences:  
<https://positivechoices.org.au/resources/drugs-a-to-z/student/>



## Galaxy of relationships



Initiator:  
IPTA, Romania

Tags: Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

This activity helps the participants to visualize the relationships they have in life and to better understand how fluid is the concept of 'relationship'. We initiate, feed and close relationships on a permanent basis, nevertheless we do not reflect on how dynamic these interactions are. The method is a powerful tool for scanning how healthy are our relationships with others, how close or far are some the people we are (or were) in contact with, and it's a very powerful tool of reflection on how are we perceived by others.



### Objectives:

- Understanding the importance of healthy relationships in our lives.
- Boosting confidence in others and understanding that a person is not alone.
- Raising awareness of the dynamic of relationships and the fluidity of this concept.
- Developing assertive communication.
- Developing emotional literacy and relational congruence.

Group work version



Duration: 100 minutes

### STEP 1 : (10 MINS)

- The participants are standing in a circle. The facilitator introduces the topic of the activity by inviting the participants to close their eyes and, with a set of guiding questions, to start thinking and visualizing various places: a park with no persons walking around, a crowded boulevard, a noisy pub, a walk in a windy day on the beach with few people around, a house with people having dinner, etc. It's important that in each place, the facilitator indicates how many people are there and what they are doing.

### STEP 2 - part 1: (20 MINS)

After this visualization, invite the participants to open their eyes and explain the next step: they will walk randomly in the space with different speeds (2-3-4 minutes each speed), and will visualize again those places, with a transition between them.

- **Very slow walking speed (speed 0), even stopping from time to time. Walking next to the lake in the park:** soft raindrops are falling in the water, little waves hitting the shore, some birds flying by, no one around. Observe your thoughts, emotions, what are you thinking about when being in this speed, who are the people who you would talk with now? What would you share with them?



- 
- **Normal walking speed (speed 1). Walking in a park with not many people around:** observe the elements around you, the smell, the wind, the trees, your thoughts, emotions, what are you thinking about when you walk with this speed, who are the people who you would share these thoughts, who would you like to have around or who should not be there, what would you tell these people when walking with this speed?
  - **Normal walking speed. Walking back in the park with more people around:** slowly, we will leave the park and will go in the city.
  - **Walking a bit faster (speed 2). Walking on the street, out of the park, more people around, some cars, more noise.** You received a message to meet a friend at a cafe, nothing urgent, and you want to be there in time, but nothing happens if you are a bit late, so you can enjoy this walk. However, you need to reach there. Who could be that person who is waiting for you? Again: observe thoughts, emotions, details around you, who could be other people to join you in this walk on the street? What would you share with them? Who should not be there?
  - **Walking even faster (speed 3 and 4). Walking on the street, busy street, rush hour.** After the meeting with this friend, you are heading to the job/university, you are a bit late. You know that you have to reach that place, so you have to be there. Choose one spot in the room and go to that spot in a straight line, avoiding the collision with others in the room. Once you arrive there, choose another spot and go there, and again, and again. Observe again the details, thoughts, emotions, who are the people who you are talking with now, what do they want from you and what would you want from them, what is the relationship you have with them, why do they rush? What would happen if you are not on time?
  - **Walking very fast (speed 5 - not running yet). Walking on the street, very busy street, need to catch the bus.** While walking to the job, you receive a different message, this time from another person, who needs you immediately for an urgent situation. Who would that person be, what is your relationship, why are you the one called? Observe details, observe your surroundings, other people around you, how much attention can you pay to these details? Observe your body reactions and emotions, thoughts, how much risk do you take to reach that point? Permanently choose one spot in the room and go in that direction, once you are there, choose another one and go again, and again. Not running, yet, but very soon: it's an urgent matter.
  - **Walking really fast (speed 6 and 7 - could be running now). Arrived at the place where this person needs you, could be the university, a shop, a bus station, the job place, you have to be there in the next 30 seconds.** This is the highest speed, it could be running with a lot of attention, so to avoid collisions and accidents, permanently choose another spot in the room and go there, then another one and again. Who is the person? Can you identify another person who needs you there immediately? What is their role in your life, what is your relationship? Is it personal, professional, are you close to each other, what are the things that connect you? Observe your body reactions and emotions, thoughts. How much risk do you take to reach that point? 10 more seconds, you can increase the speed more, the door is closing, the bus is leaving, the person has to depart now, go there now!



- **Walking really fast (speed 6 and 7 - could be running now).** Arrived at the place where this person needs you, could be the university, a shop, a bus station, the job place, you have to be there in the next 30 seconds. This is the highest speed, it could be running with a lot of attention, so to avoid collisions and accidents, permanently choose another spot in the room and go there, then another one and again. Who is the person? Can you identify another person who needs you there immediately? What is their role in your life, what is your relationship? Is it personal, professional, are you close to each other, what are the things that connect you? Observe your body reactions and emotions, thoughts. How much risk do you take to reach that point? 10 more seconds, you can increase the speed more, the door is closing, the bus is leaving, the person has to depart now, go there now!
- **STOP!! (speed 0).** Stop where you are now and close your eyes. Ask participants to stop where they are, to close their eyes and to recall the moments they went through and to visualize again the persons who came to their mind. Replay parts of the playlist, starting with the song that was played at speed 1, without moving to the next song. Slowly, invite the participants to open their eyes and to pair up with one person.

Notes for the facilitator:



- This warming up is very important for the participants to start connecting with the diversity of the people they have in their lives.
- Allocate 2-3-4 minutes to each speed and ask participants to keep the space silent.
- Have a look at the instructions included at the method Walk in the Space.
- It is very important to prepare an adequate playlist for each walking speed.
- If you feel that the group is comfortable, you can include also gentle touches at speed 2-4, such as tapping on the shoulders.

To attain higher engagement in this phase, start with little body stretching moves and then walk around in a very relaxed way, invite those who are more reluctant to join the process and address this aspect when you feel that some participants might 'hijack' others to stay on the side - this is very contagious and could easily create reactions such as irony, laughter, labelling.

## STEP 2 - part 2: (10 MINS)

The facilitator provides the participants a small paper (A5 size) and a pen and invites them to share in pairs the sensations they had during the first part, to verbalize the emotions and the thoughts they experienced. For five minutes, invite participants to work individually in silence and to write on the paper all the persons who came to their mind at every speed. If they feel comfortable, they can share this with their peers.

They are invited to come back in the plenary circle and to share a word about this experience.



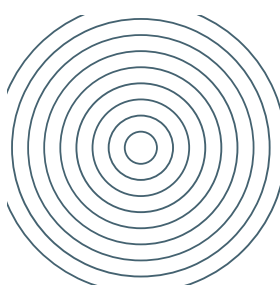
### STEP 3 : (40 MINS)

This is the main component of the activity. The facilitator debriefs shortly the first part of the activity, by describing that we have a multitude of relationships in our life and we are not always aware of how strong or close is the connection with all these people. The next step of the activity is an individual one, in deep silence, an opportunity for each participant to create the galaxy of relationships in their life and to visualize a complex set of aspects about themselves.

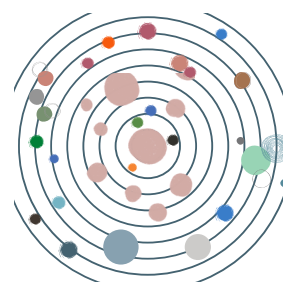
The facilitator invites the participants to follow the instructions, as this will be a drawing-based activity.

The facilitator will draw an example of the galaxy while explaining the task.

- On an A3 paper, draw a little (filled with color) circle in the middle of the page. This is YOU, you are in the center of your galaxy of relationships.
- Then add one circle that surrounds YOU. In this first circle, indicate the persons with whom you consider as having the most intense relationship. Indicate them with a symbol, as you feel (a square, a triangle, heart, star, leaf, fruit, etc.), and add the first letter of their name, so you will recognize who they are.
- 'Intensity' is the indicator that will tell you where to place each person in the galaxy. By 'intensity' we understand **Attachment x Frequency**. We can feel very attached to a person who we don't see very often, nevertheless this person is in our very small (intimate) circle.
- Then add another circle that includes the previous one. Here you will add persons with whom you consider that the relationship is very intense, but maybe a bit less than the first circle. Again, add symbols and initials of the name.
- Then add another circle, and another one and as many as you consider. At least three. These circles represent different levels of intensity of the relationships with people who are in your life.
- The last circle is open, the edges of the circle exceed the margins of the paper. This last circle is dedicated to persons who are still in the galaxy and might exit for all, or for persons who are just entering the galaxy.
- In addition to this, add some arrows next to each person, arrows that indicate the direction of the intensity: is it going to the middle of the paper (meaning that these persons become closer to you) or they are going to the outer circles (meaning that the intensity is lowering)?



The participants are invited to take one A3 paper and colors, to find a place where they could work individually in deep silence, without interference. They have 25 minutes to creating their galaxy.



#### STEP 4 : (10 MINS)

After the participants conclude the galaxy, the facilitator invites them to have a look at the paper and visualize who are the persons they can rely on, what they could tell them, what are the main ingredients of healthy relationships they can see there.

The facilitator invites them to go through three more small actions (allocate 3 minutes for each of these moments):

- Choose one person from the circle with the highest intensity (the closest to you circle). Flip the paper on the other side and write this person a small message in which you describe what's next in the relationship with this person.
- Choose one person from a circle that is in the middle of the paper: write this person a message that starts with: "What keeps me far from you is ...".
- Choose one person from the last circle: write this person a message, as you consider.

Invite the participants to conclude this step by taking their paper and coming back to the plenary circle.

#### Reflection (10')



A reflection moment is conducted by the facilitator:

- How do you feel?
- Have you done this exercise ever before?
- Are there any aspects that you did not expect to see?
- What were the hardest parts of this activity?
- What are the biggest takeaways from this activity?
- Is there any commitment you have for yourself after this activity?
- How could you describe this activity in some key words?

Individual work version



Duration: 65 minutes

#### STEP 1 : ( 10 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the topic of the activity by saying that the session addresses the topic of relationships we have in our lives, how they are built, how we cherish and close them. The participant is invited to close his eyes and, with a set of guiding questions, to start thinking and visualizing various situations and spaces:

- **You are slowly walking in a park**, not many people walking around. Observe the elements around you, the smell, the wind, the trees, your thoughts, emotions. What are you thinking about when you walk in this place?



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- **You are slowly walking in a park**, not many people walking around. Observe the elements around you, the smell, the wind, the trees, your thoughts, emotions. What are you thinking about when you walk in this place?
- **You are walking on a windy day on the beach** with few people around, little raindrops falling on your shoulders. Who are the people who you would share these thoughts with, who would you like to have around or who should not be there?
- **You walk next to a house with people having dinner**, they smile and have a good time. Who are the people who you would like to spend such time with? What would you tell these people when having dinner together?
- **You are walking on a crowded boulevard**, people walk in different directions, but you are not in a rush, you have to meet a friend for a coffee. Who could be that person who is waiting for you? Again: observe thoughts, emotions, details around you, who could be other people to join you in this walk on the street? What would you share with them?
- **You are walking towards the city center**, to a busy pub or restaurant, to meet some people. They are really waiting for you not to be late, it's really urgent. Or maybe you are walking on a crowded street, you receive a message that **you need to arrive in the other part of the city**. You really need to go there. Who is the person? Can you identify another person who needs you there immediately? What is their role in your life, what is your relationship? Is it personal, professional, are you close to each other, what are the things that connect you? Observe your body reactions and emotions, thoughts. Can you visualize yourself in this moment? How much risk do you take to reach that point?
- To attain higher engagement in this phase, play some music before the session starts and welcome the participant in that space.
- Keep the atmosphere as relaxed as possible and don't be afraid of failure.
- The transition between these places is a bit faster than in the group version.





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Notes for the facilitator:



- This visualization moment is very important for the participant, as the activity could not unfold smoothly without a proper introduction.
- It's important that in each place, the facilitator indicates how many people are there and what they are doing.
- Make sure that the participant is comfortable with the process (check these guidelines for additional preparation).
- Guide the process for approx. one minute for each place.
- It is very important to prepare an adequate playlist for each walking speed.
- If you feel the participant is fine with the approach used in the group version (walking in the space, feel free to try that).

**STEP 2 : ( 10 MINS)**

After this moment, invite the participant to open the eyes and initiate a short discussion about this experience:

- Which are the persons that you visualized in the first place, and in the second and the others?
- What do you think that triggered their image to your mind in that specific place?
- If there is only one or two persons who you could visualize, what is the reason for which you consider them as being that important to you?
- What type of relationships do you have with the persons who you saw? Are they personal, family, professional, community or business relationships? Did you see friends?
- Are there persons who you maybe did not want to see?
- How often do you communicate with the persons who you could visualize?
- What makes you close to them? What keeps you far from them?

The participant is invited to have some minutes and to write on a paper the persons who came to his mind and to indicate what type of relationship he thinks he has with those people.

**STEP 3 : ( 25 MINS)**

Identical with STEP 3 from the Group version. The overall time is shorter, as there is not space arrangement needed or group dynamic to be checked.

Don't forget about the background music.



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#### STEP 4 : ( 10 MINS)

Identical with STEP 4 from the Group version. The overall time is similar, as there is no group conclusions at this moment. shorter, as there is no space arrangement needed or group dynamic to be checked.

##### Reflection (10')



A reflection moment is conducted by the facilitator:

- How do you feel?
- Have you done this exercise ever before?
- What is surprising in your galaxy?
- What were the hardest parts of this activity?
- What are the biggest takeaways from this activity?
- How difficult or easy was it to write the messages to those three persons?
- Who would you like to share these thoughts with at this moment?
- Is there any commitment you have for yourself after this activity?
- How could you describe this activity in some key words?

##### Preparation

The facilitator needs to have a good understanding of the concept of relationships, how young people interact in online and offline environments, and what are the ingredients of a healthy relationship.



Also, the facilitator should have a good command of playing with the space, guiding the participants in the walking process and holding the space with adequate pace and volume of the voice.

It is highly recommended that the facilitator owns at least basic understanding of the Motivational Interview OARS question, so the conclusions of the activity are channeled towards a constructive commitment of the participants. Permanently pay attention to the emotional reactions of the participants and try to anticipate if there is any particular situation that needs one-to-one support in fulfilling the task.

**List of materials:** Sound system.

A3, A5 papers, clipboards, colors and pens (optional, they can write with the colored pencils).

Open space with pillows or chairs so the participants do not interfere.



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## Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated through the complexity of the galaxy illustrated by each participant. A relevant indicator is also in the first part of the activity, when the participants are invited to walk the space with various speeds: it is important that a high number of the participants are engaged in this step.

## Additional resources

Materials available online:

Healthy relationships:

<https://aaci.org/healthy-living-blog-signs-of-a-healthy-relationship-during-quarantine-part-1/>

Motivational Interview OARS question:

<https://www.flindersprogram.com.au/wp-content/uploads/OARS.pdf>



## Will we negotiate?



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Preventive education on  
violence and conflict resolution



### Overall description:

The method aims to raise self awareness of the importance of communication and negotiation skills in order to know how to reduce conflicts that may arise between participants in communication (rising awareness of emotions and hidden beliefs that are influencing my communication skills).



### Objectives:

- To improve the communication and negotiation skills.
- To improve relationships with others through effective communication.
- To improve awareness regarding the relevance of communication in order to avoid conflicts.
- To raise awareness on emotions that rise during communication and how to deal with them.
- To diversify ways of communication delivery.

Group work version



Duration: 55 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MINS)

The facilitator will introduce the theme of the method, referring to the principles of negotiation, giving the participants the 3 main principles of negotiation:

1. showing willingness;
2. showing desire to exchange ideas and reciprocity;
3. showing relevance;

The facilitator will split participants into groups of 3. All groups of 3 participants will do the exercise at the same time following the clear instructions of the facilitator.

Each participant will take a role to start.

1. PRO
2. AGAINST
3. JURY/JUDGE



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## STEP 2 (15 MINS)

The exercise will be done so that everyone in the group will rotate and explore the 3 different roles (pro, against, jury/judge).

All the groups will receive the following scenario:

(You can choose any situation that is relevant for the topic you are working on)

“You stole food from the shop. You have to defend why you have done it”.

- **The role PRO** - will add arguments to support its position. Why did you do it?
- **The role AGAINST** - will add arguments on their side.
- **The role of JURY/JUDGE** - must analyze and anticipate both potential positive and negative arguments. The JURY/JUDGE will give feedback at the end. The JURY/JUDGE will also prepare a list of questions for the two teams. These questions should help the JURY/JUDGE to challenge both teams, but also to get a plan to make the best decision: whether or not to pass the law.

Before each role is improvised in each group, 5 minutes will be given for all to get in the role and explore ideas. This can be done by playing some soft instrumental music and giving participants some free time in the space, to get prepared in the way they want and need; taking time to write in a paper some ideas, walking around the space and reflecting on ideas.

This couple of minutes of time will be given again after each change of role.

## STEP 3 (20 MINS)

The PRO and AGAINST are invited to present one at a time their arguments.

20 minutes will be given in total for each round of presentations - organized by the facilitator with a bell to change times; 5 mins - PRO, 5 mins - AGAINST, and again, 5 mins - PRO, 5 mins - AGAINST).

**Freezing moment;** In the second 5 mins left for each presentation - PRO and AGAINST - the facilitator will introduce (tingsha bell) a freezing moment that will stop the scene momentarily, and will ask participants to close their eyes and ask some questions to foster self exploration and self awareness: How do you feel in this moment? What thoughts are arising in you? Are you following a strategy? What do you need at this moment? Where is your focus?

After the 20 minutes debate, the JURY/JUDGE is encouraged to start asking questions out of curiosity to both members of the group, one at a time. And at the end of the questions, the jury will give feedback on what he saw from outside from both expositions and will take a couple of minutes to decide if the law passed or not and will argue for his choice.

After this first debate, maintaining the same group of 3 people, roles can be changed until participants play and explore each role: PRO, AGAINST, and JURY/JUDGE.



After each group has gone through each role, a reflection time in plenary can be opened to share main insights, feelings and moments of awareness and learning.

### Reflection (15')



The facilitator can open this space by asking for main insights, important moments during the exercise, and main realizations that want to be shared with the rest of the group.

A set of questions that can be addressed to participants during this reflection process:

- How do you feel? What emotions appeared during the activity?
- What were the main insights and main meaningful moments?
- How was this activity for you?
- What did you discover about yourself during the activity?
- Did you respect the principles of negotiation during the debate?
- What did you observe about the others during the activity?
- What do you think about the process of negotiation now?
- Did you detect an automatic way of functioning? which one?

### Individual work version



Duration: 45 minutes

#### STEP 1 : (10 MINS)

The facilitator will introduce the theme of the method, by asking participant to think and say out loud: How do you understand, what is negotiating and what is a quarrel? What are the differences?

Facilitator referring to the principles of negotiation, saying the participant the 3 main principles of negotiation:

1. showing willingness;
2. showing desire to exchange ideas and reciprocity;
3. showing relevance;

Facilitator asks the participant, does he understand these three principles?

In next steps the facilitator will ask the participant to think in two ways about one situation: PRO and AGAINST.

The facilitator gives participant A4 paper and says that participant will need to prepare arguments, write them on paper and present them to the facilitator.

But for facilitator there are two options how to do the discussion part:

- First and main option: The facilitator listens and participates in the discussion by clarifying, etc. Participant is reading his arguments.
- Second option: The facilitator takes the active role in discussion, feels in the role AGAINST and makes a dialog with the participant. During the discussion, the arguments written by the participant are taken into account, and new arguments may be added.



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## STEP 2 : ( 20 MINS)

Facilitator can print scenario or read it out loud to participant.

Facilitator asks participant to listen carefully to scenario:

### The scenario:

The Parliament of your country wants to pass a law through which to reduce the legal drinking age to 14 years.

Facilitator asks participant to write on the A4 paper:

- The PRO: participant should find at least 5 arguments to support this position for the adoption of this law.
- The AGAINST: participant must find at least 5 arguments to oppose this law.

Facilitator asks participant to try to make the best decision: whether or not to pass the law. When the participant finishes, he reads his arguments out loud and says his final decision: whether or not to pass the law.

## STEP 3 : ( 10 MINS)

Next part of the task is about information trustworthiness.

Facilitator ask if the participant had the opportunity to obtain additional information to make a good decision. So which sources of information would he trust and why? Which information sources he sees as believable in his life?

In the next step, the facilitator introduces participant with different information sources. Facilitator reads information source and information one by one, and after each asks questions (it would be good to go through all resources):

- Participant must say whether this source could be used in the discussion at all, and if it could, whether it would support or refute the argument?

Information source: Facebook

Headline (title): Drinking wine can improve brain performance by 10%

Information source: Local news portal

Headline (title): Drinking alcohol leads a group of young people to demolish the neighborhood



Information source: Twitter

Headline (title): The negative effects of alcohol are overrated! I drink all my life and make millions.

Information source: Podcast with university lecturer, who is interested in addictions

Headline (title): The earlier alcohol consumption begins, the more irreversible effects it has on the human brain.

Information source: Forwarded message from a friend

Headline (title): Give young people the opportunity to decide their own lives. Taking responsibility at a young age is essential for a successful life. Sign up for an alcohol sales permission from the age of 14

The facilitator can say that "Filtering out" information is a big problem for today's young people in order to be able to have a full and reasonable discussion. And ask the participant, what's for him the most difficult in this topic?

### Reflection (10')

A set of questions will be addressed to the participant by facilitator. The facilitator starts discussion:



- How do you feel? What emotions appeared during the activity?
- What were the main insights and main meaningful moments?
- What did you discover about yourself during the activity?
- What did you observe about the others during the activity?
- What do you think about the process of information trustworthiness now?

### Preparation

To study to a minimal level the basics of communication process and the principles of negotiation with some examples to be illustrated.





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**List of materials:** Papers and pens.

An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.

**Evaluation of the activity**

Observation, discussions, reflection time.



# My boundaries



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Preventive education on  
violence and conflict resolution



## Overall description:

This method helps participants become aware and recognize feelings and emotions that are present in the body and raise awareness on how they relate with others exploring their personal boundaries.

It also helps to understand how personal physical boundaries work and how this relates to feelings of safety or danger in the body and how we manage them in certain situations



## Objectives:

- Raise self-awareness on personal boundaries.
- Understand how boundaries are related to safety and danger.
- Raise body awareness and sensibility.
- Recognizing and labeling emotions.
- Expressing and managing feelings.
- Learning to set limits.

Group work version



Duration: 95 minutes

## STEP 1 : (10 MIN)

The participants are seated in a circle.

### Notes for the facilitator:



Introduce some rules that will maintain a safe space for everyone.

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with.
  - 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
  - 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows ...).
- The rule who breaks, pays is applied.

This activity needs a totally quiet area. Any noise can unbalance the good progress of the activity. The activity starts with a warm up experiment: working in pairs, one participant is blindfolded or has the eyes closed, while the other one guides him/her in the space in exploring different sensations: walking, touching the walls and various objects, producing sounds with the objects, touching others, etc. After 5 minutes, they switch and the process starts over.

The activity can be done also outdoor, in a space that fits the group size, with little noise.



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### Notes for the facilitator:



- Follow each step progressively respecting the process of respecting boundaries or not and allowing contact or no contact.
- Regulate the group and express and allow the possibility of taking action on setting safe boundaries in case needed at any time.
- Stop at any moment (use a tingsha bell) to bring awareness of what is happening, asking how the people on boundaries are feeling and what are the needs arising. Let them cover that need if it's important. If people from outside the boundaries are not respecting, to stop and bring awareness will help them realize and regulate. Try not to be judgemental, act with limits and bring awareness on how they are feeling.

### STEP 2 : (10 MIN)

After the previous step, the facilitator gets participants grounded within the body. Some good options are a body observation or mindfulness exercise or a short walk-in nature and in silence, with the instruction of exploring nature opening our 5 senses to perceive it.

### STEP 3 : (10 MIN)

The facilitator should take some time to build up a safe environment in the group. The facilitator makes a circle holding hands and ask participants to close their eyes (if they feel comfortable doing so) and guides them on focusing their attention on hearing the environment around: what do you hear, what do you smell, what do you sense on your skin, surrounding temperature, humidity, vibrations, etc.

Then, the facilitator asks the group to focus on their bodies. The facilitator guides them through a short body scan asking them to notice their body posture: how are their feet positioned on the floor, how are their knees, how is their back, shoulders and neck, how is their breathing, how are their hands, any sensations, any tensions etc.

The facilitator asks them to slowly open their eyes and focus their gaze on the floor about 1/1.5 meter in front of them, keeping the attention partly on the breath. After a while and when participants are ready, tell them to make eye contact with most of the other participants of the circle. Finally invite them to send out smiles while encountering others' eyes.

### STEP 4 : (5 MIN)

The facilitator divides the participants in two groups of equal size.

The participants from Group 1 will take an individual spot on the floor, maintaining enough distance between each other. The facilitator asks each of these participants to draw their 'personal space' around their body on the floor. The facilitator explains that the personal space is the physical space where you feel safe and where you usually don't want others to come in. The personal spaces should not overlap, but can touch each other.

To mark the space on the floor you can use a blanket, a large paper, a T-shirt, a string or rope, chalk or just draw a line in the sand - be creative.



### STEP 5 : (10 MIN)

The facilitator asks the participants from Group 1 to stand firmly in their personal space facing a direction that feels secure. When they are ready, they are asked to close their eyes. If available, the facilitator can provide them sleeping masks for covering their eyes.

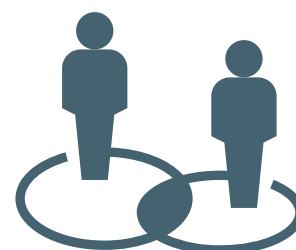
The participants from Group 2 are invited to walk around the floor where Group 1 has marked their personal spaces, without entering the personal space that is marked on the floor. The whole group stays silent.

As the facilitator, you can ask questions during the exercise to the participants in group 1 and 2 about how they are feeling, and invite them to label those emotions arising. These questions will facilitate self-awareness.

After 2 minutes of exploring the space, Group 2 is invited to create a non-touching contact with those from Group 1, without entering their personal space. This contact could be created with softer or louder sounds, without invading the personal space.

### STEP 6 : (10 MIN)

After 2 minutes of walking, the facilitator can invite Group 2 to walk around on the floor entering the personal spaces of Group 1 without making body contact. The aim is to make the participants in Group 1 experience what happens in their body when people enter their personal space.



As a facilitator, you can guide the participants in Group 1 to ask questions about their experiences during the exercise:

how do you feel, how is your body posture now (knees, back, neck, feet, hands, etc.), how is your breathing, what do you feel in your body, what do you smell, what thoughts appear, what emotions appear.

(Take time between one question and another, be slow so there's time to self-explore).

If they feel anything remarkable, ask them to investigate this feeling: where is the feeling located? What is its shape? What is the color? What is its weight, texture? Remind participants they don't have to change anything, just observe what is present in their body.



Now the facilitator gives Group 2 permission to have body contact (in case they want to) with Group 1. Group 1 will still keep their eyes closed.

The facilitator gives time for the different situations to unfold. Questions during this part:

- What type of contact did I search for?
- How do I feel about this contact?
- What do I do with this contact?
- What I don't allow myself to do?
- What do I really need?

After 2-3 minutes, the facilitator can invite Group 1 to open their eyes and give some time to explore the situation with eyes open. Does something change with open eyes?



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### STEP 7 : (5 MIN)

After 2 minutes, ask the participants of Group 2 to free the area where Group 1 is positioned and give them back their spaces. **Ask Group 1 again how they feel now they have their personal spaces back and ask more questions if you feel appropriate. It's important that you invite the participants to reclaim their personal space.**

They should get rid of any built-up tension in their body in the way they want to - allow them some time to do this. They can shake off some tension, take a few deep breaths and get grounded again in their bodies (guide them if you think this is needed).

### STEP 8 : (25 MIN)

Repeat steps 5-7 now with Group 2 standing on the floor with their personal boundaries and do the same as with Group 1.

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#### Reflection (10')



Close the activity by gathering in a plenary circle again, holding hands for a few moments. It's important to get all participants grounded in their bodies again and offer some brief guidance **like you did in Step 3**. This can take up to 2-3 minutes depending on the needs of the group.

Invite participants to share in the plenary their experiences with the activity.

- What was more meaningful for you during the exercise? (Both setting boundaries, or stepping into others boundaries).
  - What did you realize about yourself?
  - What was more difficult for you during the exercise?
  - Did you attend to your needs?
  - What were the permissions you gave yourself?
  - How can this activity be related to security or violence?
- 

Individual work version



Duration: 40 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MIN)

The facilitator will introduce the topic and mention that we will discuss about your personal boundaries: physical and emotional. Also, the facilitator mentions that the discussion will be about healthy and unhealthy boundaries in the participant's life.

The facilitator asks the participant:

- How do you understand what personal boundaries are?
- How close do you stay to other people when you speak with them.
- How far is your comfort zone?



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## STEP 2 : (10 MIN)

The facilitator gives to participants one white paper and marker (flip chart sheet or at least A3 size). The facilitator asks the participant to mark his location on the large sheet (draw figure or symbol, place a real figure or otherwise).

The participant can think some time about what his representative figure looks like and where it stands on the page.

Then the facilitator gives the participant a second task.

The participant is asked to think and draw around the figure which represents him on the large sheet, what his boundaries look like (they can use pencils, pens, scotch tape, or anything else the participant wants). They can first imagine their boundaries and then represent them on the paper next to their figure.

## STEP 3 : (10 MIN)

When the participant finishes drawing their boundaries, the facilitator introduces the next task. The facilitator invites the participant to think about the people the participant meets most often in their life, the people who are around them. The participant can write people's names down on a small piece of paper to remember more easily.

The facilitator asks them to create, choose, or draw on a small paper a representative figure/picture for each of these people. When the images are ready, the facilitator asks the participant to take the first step:



**The first step** is to place all the figures on the paper, showing how physically close they are to the participant's physical boundaries in everyday life. Perhaps someone is pushing their physical boundaries and getting too close. **REALITY.**

Every figure should have his place closer or further from the participant's figure.



The facilitator initiates a brief discussion:

Which of the figures are closer? Why? Was it easy or hard to decide where to place the figures? What were the main thoughts during this process?



**In the second step**, the facilitator asks participants to consider how close they would like each person to be to their physical boundaries. **WISHES.**

The facilitator asks participants to move the figures on the paper to represent where they would like each person to be in their life — how close or how far they are.

Afterwards, the facilitator initiates a brief discussion:

- Which of the figures are now closer? Why?
- Was it easy or difficult to rethink and relocate the figures?
- What were the main thoughts during this process?



The facilitator asks questions after the second step is completed:

- Where are the biggest differences between reality and wishes?
- Which figures show these differences, and why?
- What happens, and what changes in the participant's thoughts and emotions if we move a figure very close to the participant's boundaries or beyond them?

The facilitator can ask the participant to move some figures beyond their boundaries and to explore this further.

Alternative way of implementing the activity:



Perform experiments on paper using different figures representing people, and ask the participant to move them around. Observe the participant's reactions, emotions, and thoughts during this activity to understand their perception about the changes.

#### STEP 4 : (10 MIN)

The next important part of the activity is to ask the participant to place the figures on the paper according to how close they are **emotionally** to the participant's emotional boundaries in everyday life. Maybe someone is pushing his emotional boundaries and getting too close. **REALITY**.

In this way, every figure should have its place closer or further from the participant's figure.



The facilitator initiates a discussion:

- Which of the figures are closer to you? Why?
- Was it easy or hard to think where to place the figures?
- What were your main thoughts now?

In the next step, the facilitator asks participants to think how close the participant would like each person to be to his emotional boundaries: move figures on the paper. **WISHES**.

The facilitator asks some questions after this step:

- Where are the biggest differences between reality and wishes? Why?
- What happens, what changes with your thoughts, emotions, if we move a figure very close to the participant's boundaries or beyond them?



Try this on paper with different people (figures representing them) ask the participant to move them and observe what happens to him, how he feels, what he thinks.

#### Reflection (5')



The facilitator can explore the main insights observed during the activity:

- How do you feel now?
- What were the most meaningful moments during the activity?
- How was it for you to think about your boundaries?
- Is there some struggle to set healthy physical or emotional boundaries with a concrete person?
- How can this be related to security, violence, healthy relationships?
- What are some specific actions you can take to improve your physical and emotional boundaries?



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## Preparation

The facilitator should have a good understanding of the concept of personal boundaries (too rigid, too porous, etc.), as additional guidance will be needed during the activity.



Music is optional for this activity, as the participants are invited to find inner resources that would stimulate their creativity and engagement in an organic way. Nevertheless, in order to stimulate the body's expressivity and to immerse faster in the process, the facilitator can also experiment the session with music that stimulates personal introspection.

## List of materials:

### For group work:

Materials to create the boundaries: blankets, string, chalk, wooden sticks  
- be creative if there's none of these examples. Masks to cover the eyes.



### For individual work:

Materials to create the boundaries, self and other representations: A3 or large flip chart sheet, scotch, pencils, markers.

Be creative: figures, plasticine, balls, self-drawn pictograms or pictures can be used to represent persons and boundaries.

## Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation form of the activity is by observation. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participant, the relevance of the answers related to the activity objectives, how committed he was in exploring his personal boundaries, how he contributed to finding the emotional and physical boundaries, etc.

The reflection moment is really important, where the facilitator pays attention and analyzes the answers provided by participants, taking notes on what can be improved, what has worked or not. Look how many people the participant sees in his life, how he creates his boundaries.





## Back to my childhood



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Preventive education on  
violence and conflict resolution



### Overall description:

The method aims to raise awareness of the relevance of past experiences for our present actions. Once being aware of these experiences, one can reflect more on conflicts and other tensioned or even violent situations in order to reduce them.



### Objectives:

- To improve awareness regarding the relation between past-present actions;
- To improve relationships with others through better self awareness;
- To raise awareness on emotions that rise during the reliving of some traumas and how to deal with them.

Group work version



Duration: 70 minutes

### STEP 1 : (3 MINS)

The facilitator will introduce the topic: we will work on a method with a certain emotional intensity based on image theater.

All participants will be seated in a circle.

They will have to think of a word/sentence to describe a happy childhood.

Each of them is asked to say the word they thought of.

The facilitator will write down everyone's words on a piece of paper.



### STEP 2 : (15 MINS)

The facilitator will choose from 3 to 6 words (depending on how many participants are present) to form groups of 4 people. Each group will receive one of these words. Based on this word, each group is invited to create a scenario that reproduces a situation from their childhood where one person was deprived of the concept described by the given word.

The participants are asked to illustrate this scenario in a static image that includes **4 roles**: an aggressor and a helper for the aggressor, a victim and a helper for the victim. This image will be presented to the audience, namely the rest of the participants in the group. The facilitator indicates that the image should illustrate with accuracy the relationship of the characters, the conflict and the emergency of the situation. The participants need to illustrate the picture with as many body and facial expressions, so the audience will easily understand all the elements.



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### STEP 3 (12 MINS)

After all the groups have completed the creation of the image, each group will perform the image to the audience. The facilitator indicates that every group will illustrate the image for approximately 30 seconds, while the audience can stand up and walk for better observing the elements of the scenario.

During the performance, the facilitator will touch one by one each person from the scene asking them some of these questions to raise awareness in the scene:

- How do you feel? (feelings);
- What thoughts appear in you at this moment? (thoughts);
- Is there anything you want or need to do? (actions).

The facilitator can also ask the rest of the group watching:

- what they see in the scene;
- how does the scene make them feel;
- where do they feel it in the body;



Alternative way of implementing the activity:

An adaptation to this part of the method consists of a transition to an improvisation that takes a couple of minutes and starts from the static image.

### STEP 4 (25 MINS)

After completing the first round of presentations, the participants are asked to present again, but this time, when they present a group, the other spectators are invited to enter the presented image and change something, so that in the end they have a version in which the scenario should indicate an empathetic, positive situation. It is necessary for the facilitator to tell the participants that they can only intervene to make one move at a time, and with the exception of the fact that they cannot change the aggressor's position at all.

After the desired image is obtained;

The facilitator will touch one by one each person from the scene asking them some of these questions to raise awareness in the scene; how do you feel? (feelings); what thoughts appear in you at this moment? (thoughts), is there anything you want or need to do? (actions).

The facilitator can also ask the rest of the group watching; what they see in the scene; how does the scene make them feel?; where do they feel it in the body?.

From the static theatre image, we could have a second part where they will improvise the scene for a couple of minutes.

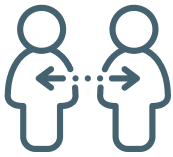
Finally, we would have a debate session on change of image, using the following questions:

- What did you see in the modified image?
- How did you feel to change this situation?
- Have you ever done interventions of this kind in such a situation?

After all the groups have finished, there will be a reflection session.



## Reflection (15')



The facilitator can open this space by asking for main insights, important moments during the exercise:

- How do you feel? What emotions appeared during the activity?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How was it to recall a not very pleasant moment from your childhood?
- Did you find any connection with the present actions?
- How did you feel to face a past reality? How did you feel when you began to deal with it productively?
- How do you think these past experiences influence our present actions?
- What did you discover about yourself during the activity?
- What might be some of the underlying issues behind all of this?
- Are you happy with the result you achieved after you changed the image in front of you?

Individual work version



Duration: 45 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MINS)

The facilitator will introduce the topic.

Facilitator can tell the participant: Today we will work on a method with a certain emotional intensity, I will ask you to remember your past experiences. And I'm going to ask you to think about how your past experiences have affected who you are now.

Facilitator can use small ice breaker, example:

Facilitator asks the participant to think and say out loud one knowledge or lesson that he learned in childhood (for example, from his family or a teacher), but continues to use even now: for example, don't do to others what you don't want them to do to you.

The facilitator gives the participant time to think, and can also ask leading questions: Maybe you have a vivid memory from some occasion? It can be both positive and painful.

When a participant gives an answer, the facilitator says: I will ask you to think of a words to describe your childhood: painful memories and positive memories.

### STEP 2 : (10 MINS)

The facilitator gives participants an A4 white sheet.

The facilitator asks the participant to divide the page into two parts.

- On one side, the facilitator asks to write words associated with painful memories from participants' childhood.
- On the other side, the facilitator asks to write words associated with positive memories from participants' childhood.



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It can be individual words, phrases that just come to mind. There are no right or wrong answers here, ask to write the words that come to participants' mind.

The facilitator gives some time to participant to think and write the words.

### STEP 3 : (5 MINS)

When the participant finishes, the facilitator asks to read these words out loud.

The facilitator asks to choose one word from each side and underline it with a different color. **For example:** the word which holds the most emotions, or word to which attention returns. But only one word from each side.

In the next step the facilitator invites the participant to remember one situation from his childhood, which is very vividly described by this word (one for positive, one for painful). It should be two specific and concrete situations.

### STEP 4 : (10 MINS)

When the participant is ready in the next step, the facilitator says (it should be an empathetic discussion): I will ask you some questions about these both situations. Firstly about emotionally painful situation and then about positive situation.



#### About painful situation

- Please tell me what happened in this painful situation?
- How did you feel then?
- Which of your needs were not met? (Facilitator can give examples from the need list below. List of basic human needs, these are the bare necessities for anyone's survival and wellbeing).  
When a participant says out loud these needs, the facilitator can write them on the paper.



#### About positive situation

- Please tell me what happened in this positive situation?
- How did you feel then?

Which of your needs were met? (Facilitator again can give examples from the need list below. List of basic human needs, these are the bare necessities for anyone's survival and wellbeing). When a participant says out loud these needs, the facilitator can write them on the paper.

**Needs: safety, love, acceptance, certainty, growth, attachment and security, freedom to express, express his important needs and feelings, boundaries, spontaneity, fun and play, sleep, food etc.**

### STEP 5 : (10 MINS)

In the next step, the facilitator will ask participant to think about nowadays, this moment.

The facilitator invites the participant to think: Now when you are an adult, what can you do to meet these basic human needs that were not met in your life as a child?

Facilitator gives participants a new white A4 paper.



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We will make together a real **action list** (facilitator can help participant with encouragement) but it is written by the participant himself. The facilitator reminds which of the participant's needs were not met in his past and asks to think real actions what can participant do to meet his basic human needs now with his own strength:

1. Action
2. Action
3. Action
4. ....etc.

Participant should think about a minimum of 4 activities/actions. The goal is to discuss real, feasible actions, activities which the participant can do himself or with the help of his relatives/friends.

### Reflection (5')



Debriefing and reflection time. Once the action list is finalized, the facilitator can ask participant to sit comfortably to share main insights. Some questions to open up this sharing space could be:

- How do you feel? What emotions appeared during the activity?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How was it to recall a not very pleasant moment from your childhood?
- Did you find any connection with the present actions?
- How did you feel to face a past reality? How did you feel when you began to deal with it productively?
- How do you think these past experiences influence our present actions?
- What did you discover about yourself during the activity?
- What might be some of the underlying issues behind all of this?

### Preparation

Basic knowledge of the image theater concept is desirable. It is advisable that the facilitator knows what is the background of the group they will work with, hence either avoiding sensitive topics that might touch adverse childhood experiences, or preparing to contain the emotional expression of the clients.



**List of materials:** Papers and pens - just if it is asked by the participants.

An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.



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## Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated by observing the level of engagement of the participants in the creation and transformation of the image. The transformation process can be evaluated by the number of changes needed to achieve an image that improves the condition of the victim and also influences the attitude of the aggressor.

## Additional resources

Materials available online:

<https://positivepsychology.com/self-esteem-boost-exercises/>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-self-esteem-2795868>



## Boost my self-esteem



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Preventive education on  
violence and conflict resolution



### Overall description:

This method aims to contribute to the development of one's self-esteem, by involving all participants in the activity equally.



### Objectives:

- To improve awareness regarding the relevance of a low and high self-esteem and our actions;
- To improve relationships with others through better self awareness;
- To understand better the relationship between self-esteem and decision-making process.
- To develop creative thinking.
- To express and manage feelings.
- Building self-confidence and creating trustful bonds in the group.
- Developing gratitude and openness mindsets.

**Group work version**



**Duration:** 30-60  
minutes

Before the activity starts, the participants are asked to bring a gift with them, using any object they have at their disposal (tips: it can be a writing object, a notebook, a flower of any kind, etc.) All participants will be seated in a circle.

### STEP 1 : (5 MINS)

The facilitator will introduce the topic: we will work on a method which involves an exchange of good 'practices' with our colleagues and we have to focus on the best things we noticed or we know about them.

The facilitator will give a small paper and a pencil to all the participants and ask them to write their name. The facilitator will collect all the papers with everyone's name in a hat (a box or any other kind of similar object is alright also).

### STEP 2 : (20 -40 MINS)

The facilitator will ask for a volunteer. He/She will start the activity by choosing a name from the hat.

After choosing the name, the participant will have to say out loud the name of the one chosen and afterwards he/she will indicate something he/she noticed about him/her or something he/she already knows (the best thought he/she has can transmit), along with an assumption.



**For example:** “I noticed that John is gifted at playing the guitar and it's amazing to listen to him play. I imagine it is because he loves and feels the music.

After expressing this, the person making the declaration will thank the one who received the words and will hand the gift to that person. Some time in silence will be given before passing to the next person, during this moment each person will write a sentence in their notebooks that has been evoked in them from what has been said. Maybe it can be the first sentence that comes to your mind. Following the previous example, this could be: “Music touches my soul and gives happiness to my life”.

Next, the one who receives the statement will choose another ticket and thus will continue the activity following the steps described before.

To conclude the activity, there will be a reflection session

### Reflection (15')



The facilitator can open this space by asking for main insights, important moments during the exercise:

- How do you feel at this moment?
- How did you feel when you received your best thought from someone? What's the predominant emotion you felt? What does that say about you and how you receive things?
- How did you feel when you heard the best thoughts for the others?
- What does what you said to others say about you?
- Can you find in yourself the compliments that were said to others?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- What was most difficult for you during the activity? What do you realize about yourself acknowledging this?
- How was it for you to receive such a declaration from one of your colleagues?
- How was it to give a declaration to one of your colleagues?

Individual work version



Duration: 35 minutes



### Overall description:

This method aims to contribute to the development of one's self-esteem, by also involving the case manager or supervisor (facilitator).

### STEP 1 : (5 MINS)

Facilitator can say, for example: I will ask you one interesting question, I ask you to be open to it!

Before the activity starts, the participant is asked to choose an object from his belongings or from the room he is in, it can be any object which represents him:

- an object that has an appearance or quality similar to him;





- an object that looks like him etc.

When the participant chooses an object, the facilitator can say: thank you for the involvement in this first task. The facilitator will introduce the topic and say: we will work on a method which involves an exchange of good 'practices' and we have to focus on the best things we noticed or we know about you.

## STEP 2 (10 MINS)

Facilitator asks to tell a little bit about the object, which was chosen by the participant: what object did you choose and why?

Next facilitator gives participant A4 white paper and asks the participant to write down:

- all the good qualities that the object has (be creative while thinking);
- all the possibilities where it can be useful and help;
- strengths of the object.

While the participant writes, the facilitator makes his own list on A4 white paper: facilitator writes these subject characteristics, which are also participant good characteristics: especially thinking about what he has observed in the participant. Participants strengths, good qualities etc., which is represented in this object.

## STEP 3 (10 MINS)

Next step is to combine object and participant qualities.

When the participant finishes a list of characteristics, the facilitator asks to read out loud what the participant has written.

After that, the facilitator also reads out loud what he has written about the object.

The facilitator can ask the participant: What from this characteristic list can you apply to yourself and your life? Which of these characteristics do you recognize in yourself?

The facilitator gives his list to the participant, so the participant can think of characteristics from both lists.

You can use worksheet to do this part of the task (participant fills it) - [Appendix 1](#)

MY good qualities	Where with who I can be useful
MY strengths	What I know what I can



#### STEP 4 (5 MINS)

When participant finish worksheet:

A

The facilitator asks to read out loud all his qualities;

B

The facilitator asks worksheet and add by writing his thoughts and observations about participant (in different color);

C

The facilitator reads out loud what he has written about the participant, his observations and thoughts about participants' good qualities.

#### Reflection (10')

This moment will focus on the impact of the task and also on the novelty of the researched information.



- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- What did you discover about yourself during the activity?
- What emotions have you experienced during the activity?
- What do you think about substance abuse and your health now?
- Have you ever noticed some changes in your health after substance abuse?
- What do you think about different substances and their impact on your life? Pluses and minuses of their presence in your life?

#### Preparation

To pay attention to the sensitivity of this method, to control the group, to keep a relaxing and intimate atmosphere;



**List of materials:** Papers/notebook and pens.

An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.

#### Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated by the level of openness of the participants in making assumptions about their colleagues without expressing conflictual and insulting thoughts.

#### Additional resources

Materials available online:

<https://positivepsychology.com/self-esteem-boost-exercises/>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-self-esteem-2795868>



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## Appendix 1 - Worksheet for individual work

MY good qualities	Where, with who I can be useful
MY strengths	What I know, what I can



# Heroes



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Preventive education on  
violence and conflict resolution



## Overall description:

Participants will explore, embody and activate their internal qualities and capacities through the representation of a hero or heroine. This representation will help the participants to get in touch with their inner resources in order to overcome existential challenges, consequently helping them to believe more in themselves.



## Objectives:

- Increased creativity and spontaneity: breaking automatic neurotic patterns.
- To develop the ability to make decisions in a conflictual situation.
- Boosting self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Developing conflict resolution skills.
- To find and activate internal resources and strengths.
- Developing awareness of personal psychological functioning mechanisms and behavioural patterns.

Group work version



Duration: 60 minutes



This activity is best used once the group has established strong bonds and created a safe environment. Doing some movement or body expression activities, followed with some basic improvisation exercises, serves as essential preparation before its implementation. This preliminary work ensures that the group is not only emotionally connected but also physically in tune, ensuring the ground needed to go into a deeper level of improvisation that the activity requires.

## STEP 1: (10 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the activity with a series of questions about superheroes:

- How would you define a superhero?
- Where do we find our superheroes?
- Why do we like superheroes? Do we need superheroes in our lives?

Give participants some time to think and choose a superhero, it could be a character from cartoons, movies or a real person they consider as having a powerful positive influence in their life.

Participants are advised to think of a superhero they already know, not to create a new one.

Neutral music plays in the background while they are finding the superhero.



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Additional time is allocated writing down what dominant powers their superhero/character has. The facilitator will guide this process through a series of questions:

1. What powers does the character have? (Physical, intellectual, emotional)
2. What is the character's vulnerable point?
3. What moves this character to be who he/she is?
4. Is there anything that scares you?
5. What inspires you about this character?



It is important to remember the four GT rules:

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes);
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows etc). The rule, who brakes pays, is applied.

## STEP 2: (20 MINS)

**It's time to start bringing the character to life.**

Again, you can play neutral (or heroic) music that stimulates movements and interaction, so that they get into the role. The participants are standing in a circle, while the facilitator can guide them to get into the character by imagining how this character walks, how he/she looks at others, how he/she feels. Participants can include a phrase that this character might say. Tell them to relate to these traits of the character.

## STEP 3: (10 MINS)

**We leave the character behind for some minutes.**

Participants will work in pairs, each pair will imagine a quick-impro scenario that will be given to another pair. They will also decide what roles the others will have, along with the first phrase that will start the conflict. For example: couple- "why do you lie to me? I feel I cant trust you anymore", flat mates- "You are putting the music too loud and I cant study", Father - "I haven't see you study during the last 3 months "

The facilitator indicates the working principles:

- the relationship between the protagonists has to be clear;
- the conflict has to be urgent, to be solved now and cannot be postponed;
- the participants have to accept the conflict, not to run away from it;
- the conflict has to start with that sentence;
- no violent escalation is accepted.

Each pair has a maximum of 10 minutes to elaborate the scenario that will be given to another pair. Meanwhile, the facilitator will validate with each pair the elements of the scenarios following the above-mentioned principles. It is highly important that the scenarios embed an urgent situation, besides the other elements.



After each pair creates their scenario, they will give the scenario to the other pair. A simple way of arranging the work is to place the pairs in a circle, so each pair will receive and give a scenario. The facilitator indicates that the activity is totally improvisation based, the participants cannot elaborate and prepare a script or an order of the replies. Participants should act by being themselves and believing that the situation is happening to them. They don't have to play a role or a mask. They can be themselves and at the same time explore different ways of reacting, from a place of truth.

#### STEP 4: (10 MINS)

**The facilitator invites the first pair to perform their scenario.**

During the play, the facilitator helps the participants to connect with their emotions, stopping the scene at certain moments: how do you feel? Do you notice tension in any area of your body? Take your hand there and let the area speak - what does it say?

The questions refer to the person, and not to the superhero character. The performance continues again, until it's stopped by the facilitator.

In the moments of a higher intensity of the play, the facilitator stops the scene again and invites the participants to close their eyes and visualise the superhero they choose in Step 2. They are invited to embody again the characteristics of their superhero by reconnecting with its dominant characteristic. When the facilitator makes a signal, participants will continue with the conflict they were having. They should solve and end the conflict as the superhero/heroine would do this.

The facilitator should remind participants that the performance must include three key elements: conflict, relationship and urgency.

This process repeats with at least two other pairs, so the participants will better understand different behavioural patterns revealed during the process.

#### Reflection (10')

The facilitator will close the session with a series of questions.  
Facing the conflict being yourself:

- How did you feel in the conflict before becoming the hero?
- What were your difficulties and beliefs about yourself?



Facing the conflict being your superhero:

- How did you feel? What did you do? What was your attitude?
- What resources did you discover in you when you became the hero?
- Do you see those qualities present in you? Do you normally use them?
- What was most surprising for you?
- What is your main insight from this improvisation?
- What learnings do you take with you about yourself?

Individual work version



Duration: 45 minutes

**STEP 1: (10mins) The facilitator introduces the activity with a series of questions about superheroes:**

- How would you define a superhero?
- Where do we find our superheroes?
- Why do we like superheroes? Do we need superheroes in our lives?





It is important to remember the four GT rules:

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes);
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows etc). The rule, who brakes pays, is applied.

### STEP 1: (10mins)

The facilitator introduces the activity with a series of questions about superheroes:

- How would you define a superhero?
- Where do we find our superheroes?
- Why do we like superheroes? Do we need superheroes in our lives?



For this method, the facilitator can prepare cards or images featuring a fictional character, hero, or heroine. These cards or images must include the name of the superhero/heroine and an image of the heroic character. The cards are then spread out on the table.

In case the facilitator doesn't have superhero cards, they can simply give participants some time to think and choose a superhero. If suitable, participants can then draw this superhero or its symbol and write down its characteristics.

1. Give the participant some time to think and **choose a superhero**.

It could be a character from cartoons, movies, or a real person they consider as having a powerful positive influence in their life. Participants are advised to think of a superhero they already know, rather than creating a new one. Neutral music plays in the background.

2. Additional time is allocated for participants to **draw and write** down the dominant powers of their chosen superhero/character. The facilitator guides this process through a series of questions:

- What powers does the character have? (Physical, intellectual, emotional)
- What is the character's vulnerable point?
- What motivates this character to be who he/she is?
- Is there anything that scares you about this character?
- What inspires you about this character?

### STEP 2: (10 MINS)

**It's time to start bringing the character to life.**

The facilitator can guide participants to embody the character by considering how the character walks, looks at others, and feels. Participants can also include a phrase that the character might say and are encouraged to relate to the character.

The facilitator can say: "Please close your eyes and imagine this superhero. How does he stand, move, feel about himself? What does he think and want? How does he view the world?

After approximately two minutes, the facilitator asks participants to open their eyes.



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### STEP 3: (5 MINS)

**The facilitator then guides participants to leave the character behind for a moment.**

Participants are asked to recall a conflict situation from the recent past. For example: couple- “why do you lie to me? I feel I cant trust you anymore”, flat mates- “You are putting the music too loud and I cant study”, Father - “I haven't see you study during the last 3 months ”.

Participants are prompted to describe one concrete situation, including what happened, what was done, and what was said.

### STEP 4: (10 MINS)

**Participants are instructed to close their eyes again and visualise the superhero they chose earlier.** They are asked to imagine themselves as this superhero. The facilitator then guides them to revisit the conflict situation in their imagination. Participants are encouraged to retell the conflict they described earlier, but this time they should resolve and end the conflict as the superhero/heroine, considering the characterization of the superhero.

The facilitator can say: "Now that you are a superhero and find yourself in this conflict situation, what can you say? What can you do to resolve this situation in a positive way? How do you see this situation now? Which of your superpowers can help you solve this situation?"

Once all the questions are discussed, the facilitator asks the participant to open their eyes.

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#### Reflection (10')



The facilitator will close the session with a series of questions:.

Facing the conflict as yourself:

- How did you feel in the conflict before becoming the hero?
- What were your difficulties and beliefs about yourself?

Facing the conflict as your superhero:

- What resources emerged within you when you became the hero in the story?
- How did you feel? What did you do? What was your attitude?
- Do you see those qualities present in you? Do you normally use them?
- What was most surprising for you?
- What learning do you take with you about yourself?

DEBATE AND REFLECTION additional questions:

Questions about improvisation (imagination):

- What happened before you became the superhero/heroine?
  - What happened when you solved it as the hero/heroine?
  - What did you realise?
- 





## Preparation

The facilitator can prepare some cards/images with fictional characters, hero/heroine, as many as there are people in the group at least. These cards must consist of the name of the superhero/heroine and the image of the heroic character. It would be ideal that participants will come up with their own superheroes, nevertheless this preparation could ease the transition to Steps 3 and 4.



## List of materials:

Personal notebook, pens.  
Neutral and hero music.  
Superhero cards/photos/images.



## Evaluation of the activity

### Group work

The method can be evaluated by observing the usefulness of Step no. 4, when the participants are invited to embody the superheroes. The facilitator can ask what stuck them to embrace the character fully or what characteristics of it were not accessible.

Another evaluation criteria is the engagement in the conflict improvisation and to what extent the participants accepted the conflict: was it in a fun way or in an authentic manner, was it connected to the topic or was it avoiding and escaping the reality of the scenario? These questions could indicate the facilitator if the method was perceived as a functional one or not that much.

### Individual work

The main evaluation of the activity is conducted verbally at the end of the session during the reflection moments. However, evaluation also occurs through observation throughout the entire activity. The facilitator observes the way the activity unfolds from start to finish, paying attention to various aspects such as the participant's engagement, their ability to imagine a superhero, how they transform their conflict situation, their non-verbal cues, the relevance of their answers concerning the activity objectives, and more. These observations help assess the effectiveness and impact of the activity on the participant.

By the end of the activity, the facilitator will analyse the answers provided by participants, in order to improve the activity's particularities and better adapt it to the target group.

## Additional resources

Training on Gestalt Theater: <https://www.teatrogestalt.com>

Article: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344417967\\_Gestalt\\_Theatre\\_-\\_Integration\\_of\\_Applied\\_Drama\\_into\\_Gestalt\\_Therapy](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344417967_Gestalt_Theatre_-_Integration_of_Applied_Drama_into_Gestalt_Therapy).



<https://www.ideascentregroup.com/superheroes-cards/>

[https://www.eslprintables.com/reading\\_worksheets/comics/superheroes/Comparatives\\_and\\_superlatives\\_\\_780641/](https://www.eslprintables.com/reading_worksheets/comics/superheroes/Comparatives_and_superlatives__780641/)



## Let's start with the strengths



**Initiator:**  
State Probation Service, Latvia

**Tags:** Preventive education on  
violence and conflict resolution



### Overall description:

This method aims to contribute to the development of one's self-esteem. It stimulates motivation towards making positive changes in life and stimulates individual introspection processes, aiming at observing what happens in personal situations and life experiences.

This method helps participants to build self-compassion, so that they can be more compassionate towards themselves, towards their future and needs. It also stimulates one's inner decision-making processes, towards finding inner resources and understanding how these really work or help their life.



### Objectives:

- To improve awareness regarding the relevance of a self-esteem and our strengths.
- To improve relationships with others through better self-awareness.
- Better understanding of the relationship between self-esteem and decision-making.
- To express and manage feelings.
- Developing gratitude and openness mindsets.

Group work version



Duration: 65 minutes

### STEP 1: (15 MIN)

All the participants will be asked to recall a real scenario from their lives, in which they felt compelled to do something. The scenario should have only two possible answers (e.g. one would ask their colleague to skip a class lesson, one would ask their colleague to steal a ball from the shop, one would persuade their colleague to drink alcohol, etc.). The facilitator will introduce the chain of consequences and will illustrate how the participants should use the method. The facilitator picks one example and shows which were the consequences of answering in a way or another.

To help the group get a feel for the task, the facilitator can use, for example, Power Animal cards at the beginning. In this case, the facilitator puts all the cards in a visible place. The facilitator asks each participant to take the card that represents his strength. If the group is small up to 10 people, then everyone can express themselves in the large group. If the group is larger, it can be divided into pairs. Participants answer the question: 'what does the card say about me and my strength?'



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Participants are helped to identify their strengths: Inner strengths. People who give me strength, Transpersonal power, Things I am proud of, The strength I draw from the systems around me.

In plenary, the facilitator can ask participants how do they understand all of these **types of strengths** and can provide some examples to be discussed together. The facilitator can use the Appendix - Worksheet for the group. Cut the worksheet and put strengths around the working space. Ask participants to mention how they understand each of the strengths and initiate group discussions.

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**Inner strength**

honesty, sense of hope, concern for others, my ability to stay alive, my sense of justice towards myself and others

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**People who give me strength**

family, friends, colleagues, people around me, social workers/ probation officers, etc.

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**Transpersonal power**

belief system / religious faith / spirituality / places that give me strength / animals

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**Things I'm proud of**

work, education, social achievements, hobbies, any achievements I can be proud of. What am I good at? It doesn't matter how 'small' the achievement is - by all means list it

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**Strength I get from the systems around me**

workplace; charity that provided me with furniture / food / other support; educational institution; local library; my local authority; wider society that funds this program and enables me to change

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**STEP 2 : (20 MIN)**

**Worksheet individually**

After sharing in plenary the strengths, the facilitator will give participants around 10 minutes to reflect alone their strengths in a worksheet (Appendix - 'Worksheet Let's start with the strengths').

After the reflection process alone, filling in the worksheet, the facilitator tells participants to find a peer to work with (they can stay with the same person from the first task with cards, if they worked in pairs). In pairs, one person will start sharing while the other will just listen. At the end, the person listening can ask questions regarding the strengths shared. They switch the roles.

During the first part, they will listen without intervening. And at the end, they could ask questions about the strengths that had been shared to him/her.

Each person will have 10 minutes to share, this means 20 minutes in each pair. After sharing in pairs, participants can take 5 minutes to put additional strengths in their cards, if they think of some new strengths in discussion.



### STEP 3 : (20 MIN)

#### Bath of strengths

The facilitator will tell each pair to find another 2 pairs and make groups of 6 (or groups of 4). The first participant will sit in a chair in the middle of their group with eyes closed. They can use a blindfolded mask.

All the strength cards of the person will be around the floor in a way they can be read.

- You are...
- You have...

The rest of the group will be reading out loud the strengths of this person close to their ears, without stopping and changing words at each time. They can repeat the same strengths or change them. The person in the center will have a bath of their strengths from the rest of their group with eyes closed. This will be done for a couple of minutes (2-3 minutes).

This will be repeated for each participant from the small groups.

#### Reflection (10')



The group sits in a circle and share the main insights, the important moments during the activity:

- How do you feel? Describe it with one emotion.
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How was it for you to think about your strengths?
- How was it to hear from the group about your strengths and good features?
- What was most difficult for you during the activity? What do you realize about yourself acknowledging this?

#### Individual work version



Duration: 40 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MIN)

The facilitator introduces the participant with the topic of work. He can tell when a person is facing a challenge in their life or struggling to see some hope, it is helpful to give yourself a starting point by focusing on your strengths. Knowing your strengths helps you prepare for life's challenges and the process of change.

The facilitator can invite the participant to explore their strengths:

To help you identify your strengths, I will give you worksheets that list 5 types of strengths:

- Inner strength
- People who give me strength
- Transpersonal power
- Things I am proud of
- The strength I draw from the systems around me.



The facilitator can ask the participant: do you understand all of these types of strengths? Can you tell me how you understand each of them? The facilitator can explain to the participant if he does not understand some of the concepts:

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**Inner strength**

honesty, sense of hope, concern for others, my ability to stay alive, my sense of justice towards myself and others

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**People who give me strength**

family, friends, colleagues, people around me, social workers/ probation officers, etc.

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**Transpersonal power**

belief system / religious faith / spirituality / places that give me strength / animals

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**Things I'm proud of**

work, education, social achievements, hobbies, any achievements I can be proud of. What am I good at? It doesn't matter how 'small' the achievement is - by all means list it

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**Strength I get from the systems around me**

workplace; charity that provided me with furniture / food / other support; educational institution; local library; my local authority; wider society that funds this program and enables me to change

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**STEP 2 : (20 MIN)**

The basic way to do this activity is to give one strength description at a time. Then the facilitator must print and cut out each strength card separately.

The facilitator gives the participant the 1st card **Inner strength** and says: all strength cards focus on the strengths that are important to you. You may need to remind yourself of these strengths if the world ever becomes too difficult, painful, or complex. Try to identify these strengths, even if they don't seem that important. Over time, you may find or create another one.

As you go through the 1st card **Inner strength**, give to participant 1-2 examples of inner strengths and 1-2 examples on how this strength can work in participants life, such as what you get from a being honest: people trust me more, or how an inner strength helps you do something: it helps not give up in some situations. Ask participant to think of at least 3 of his strengths and for each of the strengths a concrete example of how it helps in his life.

When the participant finishes the 1st card, he reads it out loud to the facilitator and facilitator if appropriate, then asks questions: is it easy to recognize this strength in yourself every day and apply it?



When finished with the 1st card facilitator gives to participant 2nd card **People who give me strength** and do the same steps. And so on with all 5 strength cards.

Notes for the facilitator: help the participant to understand how a particular strength has helped him in the past or could help him in the future.



Alternative way of implementing the activity:

The facilitator can give the participant the whole worksheet with the five types of strengths so the participant can fill it in and think about his strengths as a whole.

### STEP 3 : (10 MIN)

When the task is completed, the facilitator reads out loud all of the participant's strengths by saying:

- You are...
- You have...

This gives the participant the opportunity to hear his resources out loud and then express his opinion about what he thinks when he hears it all.

### Reflection (10')



After the tasks are done, the facilitator can ask the participant the main insights, important moments during the exercise:

- How do you feel?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How was it for you to think about your strengths?
- How was it to hear from me about your strengths and good features?
- What was most difficult for you during the activity? What do you realize about yourself acknowledging this?

### Preparation

Pay attention to the sensitivity of this method, basic knowledge about self-esteem (what it is, how it develops) is mandatory.



**List of materials:** Pens, worksheet for individual work, papers-cards for writing the strengths (20 each).

### Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation form of the activity is verbally, by the end of the session in the reflection moments, but also by observation during the whole activity. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participant, how many strengths and examples the participant can think, to his non-verbal language, the relevance of his answers related to the activity objectives, etc.

By the end of the activity, the facilitator will analyze the answers provided by participants, in order to improve the activity's particularities and better adapt it to the target group



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## Additional resources

Materials available online, useful for working with assertiveness and self-esteem:

[psychologytoday.com/us/basics/assertiveness](https://psychologytoday.com/us/basics/assertiveness)  
[positivepsychology.com/self-esteem-boost-exercises](https://positivepsychology.com/self-esteem-boost-exercises)  
[verywellmind.com/what-is-self-esteem-2795868](https://verywellmind.com/what-is-self-esteem-2795868)



Power animal cards (example):

[tavasmetodes.lv/e-veikals/item/126349/speka-dzivnieks-asociativas-kartis](https://tavasmetodes.lv/e-veikals/item/126349/speka-dzivnieks-asociativas-kartis)

## Appendix 1 - Worksheet for group

Inner strength	honesty, sense of hope, concern for others, my ability to stay alive, my sense of justice towards myself and others
People who give me strength	family, friends, colleagues, people around me, social workers/ probation officers, etc.
Transpersonal power	belief system / religious faith / spirituality / places that give me strength / animals
Things I'm proud of	work, education, social achievements, hobbies, any achievements I can be proud of. What am I good at? It doesn't matter how 'small' the achievement is - by all means list it
Strength I get from the systems around me	workplace; charity that provided me with furniture / food / other support; educational institution; local library; my local authority; wider society that funds this program and enables me to change



## Appendix - Worksheet for individual work : Worksheet Let's start with the strengths

<div> <h3>Inner strength</h3> </div> <p>honesty, sense of hope, concern for others, my ability to stay alive, my sense of justice towards myself and others</p>	<div> <h3>How does it help me</h3> </div> <p>give examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1....</li> <li>2....</li> <li>3....</li> </ol>
<div> <h3>People who give me strength</h3> </div> <p>family, friends, colleagues, people around me, social workers/ probation officers, etc.</p>	<div> <h3>How does it help me</h3> </div> <p>give examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1....</li> <li>2....</li> <li>3....</li> </ol>
<div> <h3>Transpersonal power</h3> </div> <p>belief system / religious faith / spirituality / places that give me strength / animals</p>	<div> <h3>How does it help me</h3> </div> <p>give examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1....</li> <li>2....</li> <li>3....</li> </ol>
<div> <h3>Things I'm proud of</h3> </div> <p>work, education, social achievements, hobbies, any achievements I can be proud of. What am I good at? It doesn't matter how 'small' the achievement is - by all means list it</p>	<div> <h3>How does it help me</h3> </div> <p>give examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1....</li> <li>2....</li> <li>3....</li> </ol>
<div> <h3>The strength I get from the systems around me</h3> </div> <p>workplace; charity that provided me with furniture / food / other support; educational institution; local library; my local authority; wider society that funds this program and enables me to change</p>	<div> <h3>How does it help me</h3> </div> <p>give examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1....</li> <li>2....</li> <li>3....</li> </ol>





## Complete the picture



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Preventive education on  
violence and conflict resolution



### Overall description:

This method is based on improvisation. One by one, participants in the group will create an image together. They will take turns jumping into the centre of the circle and physically expressing different elements or situations that will collectively build a scenario through improvisation. These elements could include objects, emotions, situations, people, and anything else that the imagination of each participant can bring forth.



### Objectives:

- Raise self-awareness on automatic patterns.
- Detecting ways of relating with others.
- Stimulating creativity and spontaneity.
- Stimulating self-expression and development of active listening.
- Consolidating the skills related to non-verbal communication.
- Developing social skills, connection with others and empathy.
- Increasing the skills related to conflict resolution.

Group work version



Duration: 50 minutes

### STEP 1: (5 MINS)

Introduce the TG (Gestalt Theatre) rules and briefly explain the activity and show an example so that the process is clear.



### GT Rules:

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes);
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows ...). The rule who breaks, pays is applied.



Encourage participants to avoid using external objects, emphasising that representations should be done solely through body expression. Focus on situations, emotions, and other internal elements. Invite the group to observe each other's postures carefully. Encourage participants to let go of control and give themselves permission to express freely without overthinking or self-judgment. The intention is to uncover unconscious patterns, increase awareness of them, and understand deeper needs and motivations.



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## STEP 2: (10 mins)

### The first improvisation.

1. Create a circle and invite one person to stand in the middle. This person is invited to represent a state of mind, an emotional state, a person engaged in an action, or a situation of their choice. For instance, they might choose to portray a happy mother who has just had a baby.
2. Then, invite another person from the circle to join in the middle of the circle and to represent one element related to the initial portrayal. For example, they might act as a nurse in the hospital taking care of the new mother.
3. Next, a third person joins and adds another element to the scene, such as being the father cuddling the baby.
4. Afterward, the first two participants exit the circle, leaving the third person as the sole representation. They should repeat aloud what they are portraying to the group.
5. Begin a second round from this point. Another person enters based on the new scene, in this case, a father cuddling the baby, and adds another element.
6. Continue this process with different participants contributing to the evolving scene in each round. After each round, the last person jumping in the scene repeats aloud what they are representing. This cycle continues as long as desired.

## STEP 3: (10 mins)

### Possible variations

1. You can use a **problem-solution-problem-solution image**. This means the first person will create a problem, and the others will respond with a solution or add to the problem to build the scene in that way. For example: a man having a panic attack (problem), a friend giving a bag to breathe in (solution), an ambulance arriving (solution), the wife fainting (problem), and so on.
1. You can also **use topics to guide the scenes**, such as climate change, racism, bullying at school, addiction, human rights education (HRE), etc. Choose relevant topics you want to explore during the activity.

## STEP 4: (10 mins)

### Group impro

There can be more than 3 people stepping inside the circle and completing the image. You can continue building the image until it naturally stops, meaning no one else joins or the whole group is involved.

You can also suggest creating the image of a scene working with the whole group to represent it. For example, a plane crash or a score in a football game at the stadium. Each person will take on a role and an action in the picture to create the scenario you have proposed. For instance, in a plane crash scenario, one person can be the pilot, another the passengers, another the mountain they will crash into, and another can represent the feelings of fear, etc. They can step into the circle one by one, saying what they represent, so that the image is built progressively between the whole group.



### Interim Reflection (10')



After going through the experience of improvising the different scenarios, the reflection process is vital to raise self-awareness in our reactions, the emotions that are involved and hidden beliefs or stereotypes we hold. Only through awareness can we be able to change something.

#### Journaling:

Ask participants to recall the images they created and the roles they took during the improvisation. Encourage them to reflect on why they chose those roles and what it reveals about them and their current life situation.



1. What were the most meaningful moments for you during the improvisation?
2. What emotions did you feel?
3. What did you realise about yourself while doing it?
4. What difficulties did you face?
5. What was easy for you? What were your strengths?
6. What touched you the most during the activity?
7. Did you detect any automatic patterns in your actions or reactions?
8. Did you become aware of any hidden beliefs or stereotypes while improvising?
9. What aspects of this activity were helpful for you, and in what ways?

### Reflection (10')



Gather the entire group and pose meaningful questions about what they took from the activity. Provide tips to support the group reflection process:

- Encourage participants to speak about themselves using 'I' to express their thoughts and feelings.
- Encourage participants to avoid generalisations and speak from personal experience.
- Ask open-ended questions to promote self-inquiry and avoid judgments of right or wrong.
- Encourage self-exploration as much as possible.
- Value and appreciate their engagement and participation in the activity.

Individual work version



Duration: 30 minutes

Introduce the GT Rules: The same rules from the group work version are applied.



### STEP 1: (5 mins)

The participant will start the activity by representing a state of mind, an emotional state, a person performing an action, or a situation of their choice. It should be something personal to them. For instance, they might choose to portray a happy mom with a baby, saying, "I am a joyful mom who has just had a baby." The facilitator then joins in and adds something related to the scene, such as, "I am a nurse in the hospital taking care of the mom," assuming the role of the nurse.

In the second round, the participant transforms their presentation into a new scene, such as "a father cuddling the baby," and adds a new element. The facilitator continues to participate and build upon the playful improvisation with their own ideas.



Suggest the participant to avoid using external "objects"; representation should be done with body expression. The preference is to focus on situations, emotions, etc. Invite the participant to carefully observe the postures of others. Also, encourage the participant to let go of control and give themselves permission to express whatever comes to mind without overthinking or judging themselves. The intention is to bring out unconscious patterns and become aware of them so that we can realize what drives us on a deeper level and detect deeper needs.

### STEP 2: (10 MINS)

Possible variations

- You can create a problem-solution-problem-solution image. This means the participant will create a problem, and the facilitator will respond with a solution or add something to the problem, building the scene in that way. For example:
  1. Problem: A man having a panic attack.
  2. Solution: A friend gives a bag to breathe into.
  3. Solution: An ambulance arrives to provide medical help.
  4. Problem: The man's wife faints due to stress.

You can change roles during this exercise. Participants can also think about solutions to further explore the scenario.

- Using topics is another approach. You can create images or scenes based on topics like climate change, racism, bullying at school, addiction, human rights education (HRE), and others. Choose relevant topics that you want to explore and use them as prompts for the improvisation activity.

### Reflection (10')



After going through the experience of improvising different scenarios, the reflection process is vital for raising self-awareness about our reactions, the emotions involved, and the hidden beliefs we hold. It is through this awareness that we can begin to understand and potentially change our responses and behaviors. Reflection allows us to delve deeper into our own psyche and understand the underlying factors that influence our actions and perceptions.



### Journaling:

Encourage the participant to recall the images they have created and the roles they have taken in the improvisation. Ask them to reflect on why they took those roles and what it says about them and their life situation at this moment. Reflection on these aspects can provide valuable insights into their thoughts, emotions, and perceptions, leading to a deeper understanding of themselves and their current circumstances.



1. What were the most meaningful moments for you during the improvisation?
2. What emotions did you experience?
3. What did you realize about yourself through this activity?
4. What difficulties did you face?
5. What aspects were easy for you? What strengths did you notice in yourself?
6. What touched you the most during the activity?
7. Did you notice any automatic patterns in your behavior or responses?
8. Did you become aware of any hidden beliefs or stereotypes while improvising?
9. How was this activity helpful for you, and in what ways did you find it beneficial?

### Reflection (5')



#### Tips for facilitation on reflection:

1. Encourage the participant to speak about himself, using “I” to express personal experiences and insights.
2. Advise him to avoid generalizations and focus on specific aspects of his experience.
3. Use questions that facilitate self-inquiry and avoid judgments about right or wrong responses.
4. Encourage deep self-exploration and introspection during the reflection.
5. Acknowledge and value his engagement and active participation in the activity.

### Preparation

Basic understanding on how to facilitate activities based on improvisation is needed.

Prepare specific music for certain scenes (a plane just about to crash, a park, a forest, sea side, crowd area, etc.).



### List of materials:

- Speakers and Internet connection.
- Appropriate music.
- Working room with enough space.



# Emotional reactions



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Preventive education on  
violence and conflict resolution



## Overall description:

This method is implemented in small groups, where participants come up and imitate emotional reactions that should be expressed with their bodies and voice, without using words, and following the instructions given by the facilitator.



## Objectives:

- Recognize emotional reactions.
- Increase body awareness and body expression.
- Express emotions.
- Become aware of stereotypes.
- Break free from automatic patterns.

Group work version



Duration: 60 minutes

## STEP 1: (10 MINS)

### introduction to the exercise.

Add a brief input on emotions and the importance of being able to express them.

An "emotional reaction" is a gesture using the body and the voice that expresses something to others. This exercise can explore 5-6 different emotional reactions.



First, show an example to the group so that the exercise is clear to everyone.  
End this method with an emotional reaction that leaves the group with a positive feeling.



It is important to remember the four GT rules:

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes);
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows etc). The rule, who brakes pays, is applied.



### Create groups.

- Tell them to form groups of 4 people to work with.
- Number each person from 1 to 4 to establish the order of who goes first.
- An emotional instruction will be given to start the first emotional reaction (for example, “anger”).
- Person 1 starts with the first emotional reaction (Anger), creating their own emotional impulse using their body and voice. The other three members of the group—either all together or one by one—will imitate that same emotional reaction.
- When person 1 finishes, person 2 starts to give their own emotional reaction for “Anger,” and the rest—one by one—will imitate their gesture.
- Continue this process for a complete round with the first emotional reaction (Anger) until the last person finishes. In this way, all members of the group perform an emotional reaction for “anger” that is imitated by the rest of the group.

### STEP 2: (10 MINS) Next emotional reaction.

Continue to a second round with the next emotional reaction and repeat the same process again.

Some examples of “Emotional reactions” can be:

1. Masculine
2. Feminine
3. Disgust
4. Anger
5. Compassion
6. Fear
7. Empathy
8. Hypocrisy
9. Tenderness

### Reflection (10')



After each person has taken a turn to express the different emotional reactions, you can give each group some time to share their experiences together. Some of the reflective questions you can ask them are:

- What emotional reaction surprised you the most?
- Which reaction was more difficult for you to express?

### STEP 5: (10 mins)

#### Circle plenary

As a final step, you can gather the whole group in a circle for a plenary session and ask them to share the main insights that helped them become more aware of themselves.

- What emotional reaction surprised you the most?
- Which reaction was more difficult for you to express? What did you realize about yourself regarding this emotion?
- Did you notice any stereotypes in the emotional reactions you did or imitated?
- Do you allow yourself to express all emotions?
- Did any judgements appeared? which ones?



**STEP 1: (10 mins)****Introduction to the exercise.**

Add a brief input on emotions and the importance of being able to express them.

An “emotional reaction” is a gesture using the body and the voice that expresses something to others.

This exercise can be done exploring 5-6 different emotional impulses. First, show an example to the participant so that the exercise is clear to them. End this method with an emotional reaction that leaves the participant with a positive feeling.



It is important to remember the four GT rules:

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes);
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows etc). The rule, who brakes pays, is applied.

**Task; decide who will start first, the participant or the facilitator.**

- An emotional instruction will be given to start the first emotional reaction (for example, “anger”).
- Person 1 starts with the first emotional reaction (Anger), creating their own emotional impulse by using their body and voice. The 2nd person will imitate that same emotional reaction.
- When person 1 finishes, person 2 starts to give their own emotional reaction for “Anger”, and person 1 will imitate their gesture.

**STEP 2: (10 MINS)****Next emotional reaction.**

Continue to a second round with the next emotional reaction and repeat the same process again.

Some examples of “Emotional reactions” can be:

1. Masculine
2. Feminine
3. Disgust
4. Anger
5. Compassion
6. Fear
7. Empathy
8. Hypocrisy
9. Tenderness





## Reflection (10')



After the participant has taken a turn to express the different emotional reactions, you can give them some time to share their experience. Some of the reflective questions you can ask them are:

- What emotional reaction surprised you the most?
- Which reaction was more difficult for you to express? What do you realize about yourself regarding this emotion?
- Did you find stereotypes in the emotional reactions you did or imitated?

## Preparation

Prepare the topics you want to explore to take participants out of their comfort zone.



**List of materials:** No music is needed.  
Space to move and express.

## Evaluation of the activity

### Group Work:

At the end of the activity, you can ask questions to see the impact and if the main objectives of the method have been met.

Did this activity helped you to, to recognise and express emotions? to increase body awareness and body expression? To become aware of stereotypes?

### Individual work:

The main evaluation form of the activity is by observation. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participant, the relevance of the answers during the reflection.

The reflection moment is really important, where the facilitator pays attention and analyses the answers provided by the participant, taking notes on relevant information that appeared related to the expression of emotions; what was easy or difficult to express?. This will give information on what emotions we need to work on expressing. For example, for youth at risk, tenderness could be more difficult to express than anger.

## Additional resources

paper on expressing emotions:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234155533\\_Emotional\\_Expression\\_and\\_Health](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234155533_Emotional_Expression_and_Health)



## Hands in action



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Preventive education  
on addictions



### Overall description:

This method is based on improvisation using only “one hand” as a way of relating to another, and gives us the opportunity to express and become aware of our automatic patterns while relating with others. It also shows us the impact the environment has on our emotions, ways of thinking, and behaviors.



### Objectives:

- Raise self-awareness of automatic patterns.
- Stimulate self-regulation.
- Detect ways of relating to others.
- Develop creativity and spontaneity.
- Improve self-expression and active listening skills.
- Enhance non-verbal communication skills.
- Develop social skills, connection, and empathy.
- Increase understanding of conflict resolution approaches.

Group work version



Duration: 60 minutes

### STEP 1: (5 MINS)

#### Explanation of the activity.

This method is based on improvising with “one hand” as a way of relating to another. It provides us with the opportunity to express and raise awareness of our automatic patterns while relating with others. It also reflects the impact the environment has on us, including our emotions, ways of thinking, and behaviors, allowing us to learn to use this impact in our favor.



It is important to remember the four GT rules:

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes);
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows etc). The rule, who brakes pays, is applied.



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During this activity, the group will work in pairs.

The activity will be conducted in silence and without speaking.

A 'stage' will be represented by a cushion or another object (such as a chair, small table, folded blanket, A3 or larger paper, etc.) that will delimit the space where the improvisation will be played in pairs.

The improvisation will be performed using ONE hand from each person at a time. The hand of person A will initiate a movement, and the hand of person B will follow with a different movement.

Person A will start with a spontaneous movement that will have a beginning and end (stop-movement-stop), and person B will react to this moment with their hand, using another movement that also has a beginning and end. This action-reaction process will continue one after the other, creating a story together with both hands, one from each person. Initially, a pause between each movement of each hand will be maintained.

This pause encourages active listening between each other while creating the story.

## **STEP 2: (10 MINS)**

### **first improvisation.**

The first improvisation will be done without music.

Person A will take action and pause, person B will react to this action and pause, and this will continue spontaneously for 6 minutes or the time the facilitator decides.

Before the improvisation, you can inform them that there will be a moment during the improvisation when you will clap hands (or ring a tingsha bell). Ask them to close their eyes and freeze for a couple of seconds to ask them 2 or 3 questions for self-inquiry, one at a time.

Avoid asking too many questions at once; instead, give the participants time to feel and find the answer internally. Guide them in the process of becoming self-aware during the activity and help them understand what is happening to them.



These are some self-inquiry questions you can address during the pause created during the improvisation:

- What are you feeling at this moment?
- Where do you feel it in your body?
- What are you trying to achieve?
- Are you using any strategy during the improvisation to get what you want?
- Where is your focus?
- Do you feel connected to the other person?
- Do you feel connected to yourself?
- Do you have any needs at this moment?

After the pause/freezing self-awareness moment, instruct them to continue the improvisation from where they were.

Give each improvisation around 5-8 minutes, sensing with the group the time that is needed depending on the flow of the activity. Adjust the duration as necessary to ensure a meaningful and engaging experience for the participants.



## Reflection (5')



At the end of each improvisation, allocate a couple of minutes for pairs to share their experience and discuss the most meaningful moments. Provide space for sharing after each improvisation and before transitioning to the next one. This allows participants to reflect on and process their experiences in the improvisation activities.

- What story did we create together? What was it about?
- What was your way of relating? What emotions were involved?
- How was your attachment on the story? What does this say about you?
- What was most meaningful for you?
- What resources did you have?

## STEP 3: (30 MINS)

### Improvisation with music

The improvisations continues with the same pairs, now creating different scenarios by introducing different music.

Follow the same process described in Step 1 and 2, now introducing one piece of music at a time during each improvisation and following the process:

- 1.Improvisation - now with music.
- 2.Pause with closed eyes- self inquiry questions.
- 3.Continue the improvisation
- 4.Reflection in pairs.



At some point during the 3rd improvisation, ask participants to eliminate the pause between the movement action-reaction. They will not need to pause anymore, allowing for a more dynamic communication in the pair between both hands.

Introduce progresively different pieces of music you would like participants to explore during the second improvisation. You can use original music from films for this purpose.



- 1.Soft instrumental music.
- 2.Very powerful and intense music. (ex. superheroes)
- 3.Scary music.
- 4.Romantic music
- 5.Happy music.

Prepare a playlist with the music you are going to use.  
Try to always end with some positive music.



## Reflection (10')



The facilitator invites participants to end the session in a circle for a set of reflection questions. The facilitator can prioritise or change these questions according to the profile of the participants: After sharing in pairs, give some time to the whole group to share in plenary.

- What differences did you experience with the different music?
- How did your emotions, thoughts and behavior change?
- What do you realize with this activity?
- What did you see about yourself in your way of behaving in the different improvisations?
- Was there a pattern that you repeated?

Individual work version



Duration: 30 minutes

### STEP 1: (5 MINS)

#### Introduction to the activity.

This method is based on improvisation with “one hand” as a means of relating to another. It provides an opportunity to express and raise awareness of our automatic patterns while relating to others. It also reflects the impact the environment has on our emotions, ways of thinking, and behaviors, allowing us to learn to use this impact to our advantage.

During this activity, participants will work in pairs with the facilitator taking an active role.

- Person A represents a participant.
- Person B represents the facilitator.

The activity will be conducted in silence without speaking. A ‘stage’ will be represented by a cushion or another object (chair, small table, folded blanket, A3 or larger paper, etc.) that will define the space where the improvisation will take place. If space is limited, participants can sit or stand comfortably during the improvisation.

The improvisation will involve using ONE hand from each person at a time. Person A (participant) will initiate with a spontaneous movement that will have a defined beginning and end (stop-movement-stop). Person B (facilitator) will react to this movement with their hand using a different movement that also has a beginning and an end. This action-reaction process will continue sequentially, creating a story with both hands, one from each person. Initially, a pause between each movement of each hand will be maintained, encouraging active listening while building the story.

### STEP 2: (5 MINS)

#### Improvisation with music.

The first improvisation.

This first improvisation will be done without music.

Person A will take action and pause; person B will react to this action and pause, and this will continue spontaneously for 6 minutes or the time the facilitator decides.

Before the improvisation, you can inform the participant that there will be a moment during the improvisation when you will say STOP, and ask them to close their eyes and freeze for a couple of seconds. Then, ask them 2 or 3 self-inquiry questions, addressing one at a time.





Don't ask too many questions at once; instead, give the participant time to feel and find the answers internally. Try to guide them in the process of becoming self-aware during what is happening.

Here are some self-inquiry questions you can address during the pause created in the improvisation:

- What are you feeling at this moment?
- Where do you feel it in your body?
- What are you trying to achieve?
- Are you using any strategy during the improvisation to get what you want?
- Where is your focus?
- Do you feel connected to me?
- Do you feel connected to yourself?
- Do you have any needs at this moment?

After this pause or freezing self-awareness moment, instruct the participant to continue the improvisation from where they were.

Give each improvisation around 5 minutes, sensing the time needed based on the flow of the activity.

### Reflection (10')



At the end of each improvisation, allocate a couple of minutes to share the experience and discuss the most meaningful moments with the participant. Provide space for sharing after each improvisation and before moving on to the next one.

- What story did we create together? What was it about?
- What was your way of relating? What emotions were involved?
- How was your attachment on the story?
- What was most meaningful for you?
- What resources did you have?

### STEP 3: (30 MINS)

#### Improvisation with music.

The improvisations will continue with different scenarios and introducing different music.

Replicate the same process described in Steps 1 and 2, now introducing one piece of music at a time during each improvisation and following the process accordingly.

1. Improvisation - now with music.
2. Pause with closed eyes- self inquiry questions.
3. Continue the improvisation
4. Reflection.

Introduce one of the different pieces of music in the second improvisation that we would like the participant to explore. We can use original music from films.

1. Soft instrumental music.
2. Very powerful and intense music. (ex. superheroes)
3. Scary music.
4. Romantic music
5. Happy music.





At some point during the 3rd improvisation, ask participants to eliminate the pause between the movement action-reaction. They will not need to pause anymore, allowing for a more dynamic communication in the pair between both hands.



Prepare a playlist with the music you are going to use.  
Try to always end with some positive music.

### Reflection (10')



Take some time to share the experience.

- What differences did you experience with the different music?
- How did your emotions, thoughts and behavior change?
- What do you realize with this activity?
- What did you see about yourself in your way of behaving in the different improvisations?
- Was there a pattern that you repeated?

### Preparation

Create a Playlist with the music you want participants to explore during the activity. Some suggestions;



1. "Jurassic Park Theme" - John Williams
2. "Interstellar Main Theme" - Hans Zimmer
3. "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring Main Theme" - Howard Shore
4. "Inception: Time" - Hans Zimmer
5. "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone: Hedwig's Theme" - John Williams
6. "Gladiator: Now We Are Free" - Hans Zimmer and Lisa Gerrard
7. "The Dark Knight: Why So Serious?" - Hans Zimmer and James Newton Howard
8. "Star Wars Main Theme" - John Williams
9. "The Lion King: Circle of Life" - Hans Zimmer and Lebo M.

**List of materials:** Speakers and WIFI to play music.

A cushion or "something" that can create the space to be a scenario for both hands to improvise.



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## Evaluation of the activity

### Group Work:

At the end of the activity, you can evaluate the following questions.

And ask the participant;

What was a repeated pattern you can see reflected in your way of relating?

What emotions are involved? What is your reaction to them? What do you realise about your way of relating?

Finally, with the comments you can evaluate if the main objectives were achieved and to what extent, and make any adaptations for further implementations of the activity.

### Individual work:

The main evaluation form of the activity is by observation. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participant, the relevance of the answers during the reflection.

## Additional resources

Training on Gestalt Theater: <https://www.teatrogestalt.com>

Drama based activities and mental health

recovery: <https://www.northernhealthcare.org.uk/news-resources/how-drama-therapy-can-assist-with-mental-health-recovery/>

Facilitating reflection: <https://www.reflecting.eu/projects/>





## The invisible meaning



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Human rights  
education



### Overall description:

This activity aims to increase awareness in groups on the importance of human rights education, by working on various human rights violations and learning ways to tackle them.

The activity consists in working individually and within the group on various literary texts, namely fables, which will be used in order to reveal and reiterate the human values and positive emotions around which we can build healthy societies, starting with raising awareness in each individual that forms it.



### Objectives:

- To raise awareness on the importance of human rights education.
- To better understand different types of human rights violations and ways of tackling them.
- To extend their knowledge regarding human values and their role in society.
- To better understand their emotions and ways of expressing them.
- To realize about the hidden beliefs that sustain some emotions in time.
- To develop auto-observation, and self reflection.
- To develop critical thinking.
- To develop empathy and compassion.

Group work version



Duration: 75 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MIN)

**The facilitator will introduce the activity by explaining the following:**

The participants work individually on various literary texts, namely fables, which are used to reveal and reiterate the human values and positive emotions around which we can build healthy societies, starting with raising awareness in each individual that forms it.

The facilitator places randomly in the working space various fables or texts to work with. Each participant walks around and chooses a text to work on.

Also an Appendix of human rights ([Appendix 1](#)) is given to each participant, so that they are able to identify the 'rights' during the activity.

Next, the facilitator asks participants to find a comfortable place somewhere in the working room, within a distance from each other. They are asked to individually read the text multiple times before starting to actually work on it. If participants cannot read, the facilitator will read the text for them.



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### Notes to the facilitator:



The facilitator ensures that each participant will have some time to read the text and to understand it.

Some instrumental soft music can be played during this process to favor creativity and concentration, until they start sharing between them or presentations of the activity take place.

### STEP 2: (20 MIN)

The participants are asked to identify the following in the text and to write it down on a paper:

#### Part 1:

- Who are the characters from the text?
- What kind of human rights are violated?
- Which is the lesson of the text?

#### Part 2:

- Change sentences from the text in order to improve the situation of the victim, but without changing that of the aggressor.
- Put both the initial text and the final form of the text which (will include the changes) in two vivid images by drawing them.

Represent the scene in silence. Some soft music can be played in the background.

### STEP 3: (10 MIN)

The facilitator invites the participants to find a partner and share these questions.

Working in pairs, one participant asks the question and the other one responds.

After 5 minutes, the facilitator invites the participants to switch roles, so the one asking the questions will respond and the other way around.

#### Questions to explore in pairs;

- Why did you choose this fable? What does it say about you?
- In which way do you feel this human right has been important in your life?
- What did your victim do to change the fable? What does this say about you?

### STEP 4: (25 MIN)

The facilitator asks the participants to form groups of 4 or 6 (depending on the group size). The participants are encouraged to share, in short, within the group, the fable each one has chosen. After that, each group must choose together one fable, represent it in **small body sculpture** and present it to the extended group.

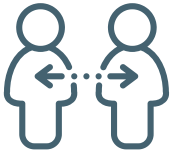
The facilitator gives the following instructions:

You must represent with a body sculpture the victim **BEFORE**, and with another body sculpture the victim **AFTER** the changes you made in the story. Go slowly and take your time to discuss and let your body find a position to express it, from point A to point B.



### Reflection (10')

After first group is finished, the facilitator will guide a small discussion in the extended group:



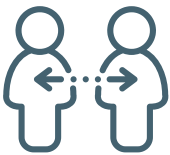
- What did they see? How they feel about both stories. Did they have some questions for the small group?
- Which human rights were violated before, what is the lesson behind it and which is the change they did in order to improve the situation of the victim?

After all the groups finish their work, the participants are asked to come back and sit in a semicircle next to their colleagues. To loosen the atmosphere, the facilitator will make a short debrief, without expecting details from the participants:

- How was this activity useful for you? What did you realize or became aware of by doing it?

### Reflection (10')

Reflection of all session. The facilitator can use the following support questions:



- How do you feel at the moment?
- How would you describe this activity in a sentence?
- Was it difficult to find the characters from the text?
- How did you feel to explore the character's actions&behaviour?
- During reading, did you make any connections with everyday life?
- Did you meet this kind of human right violation in everyday life?
- How did you feel after you made the change in the text and, therefore, in the image?
- What does the change you did in the fable say about yourself? Your needs etc.
- To what extent can you say you realized something new about yourself today?

After everyone finishes taking the floor, the facilitator will close the session.



## Individual work version



Duration: 40 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MIN)

The facilitator introduces the activity by explaining what he/she will do:

I will ask you to work individually on various literary texts, namely fables, which will be used in order to reveal and reiterate the human values and positive emotions around which we can build healthy societies, starting with raising awareness in each individual that forms it.

Facilitator can ask the participant: Do you know what values are? Please name some examples of your values?

Facilitator can ask the participant: Do you know what human rights are? What human rights do you know? Example: to get education; to feel safety.

### STEP 2 : (5 MIN)

The facilitator places randomly on the table printed various fables or texts to work with.

Next, the facilitator asks the participant to choose a text to work with. The participant can choose by chance or can read texts and choose deliberately.

Also a printed list of human rights will be given to participant ([Appendix 1](#)), so that he/she is able to identify them when doing the activity.

The participant is asked to find a comfortable place somewhere in the working room. He is asked to read the text multiple times before starting to actually work on it. If participant cannot read, the facilitator will read the text for him/her.

The facilitator ensures that the participant has sufficient time to read the text and to understand it.

### STEP 3 : (20 MIN)

After the participant reads the text and is ready, he/she is asked to identify the following in the text and to write it down on a paper:

#### Part 1:

- Who are the characters from the text?
- What kind of human rights are violated (the participant will have the Appendix of human rights list [Appendix 1](#))?
- What is the lesson of the text?

#### Part 2:

Then facilitator asks the participant to think and say out loud:

- Think and change sentences from the text in order to improve the situation of the victim, but without changing that of the aggressor.



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### Part 3:

- put both the initial text and the final form of the text which will include their changes in two vivid images-by drawing them.

The participant is provided with paper and is asked to draw two images: a vivid image from the initial text and another vivid image from the final text.



After the participant finishes the drawings, the facilitator asks him/her exploratory questions.

Questions to explore in dialog:

- Tell me about your drawings.
- Why did you choose this fable? What does it say about you?
- In which way do you feel this human rights has been important in your life?
- What did your victim do to change the fable? What does this say about you?
- Is there something you can learn from this fable or take with you?

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### Reflection (10')



Debriefing and reflection session - the facilitator can use the following support questions:

- How do you feel at the moment?
- How would you describe this activity in a sentence?
- Was it difficult to find the characters from the text?
- How did you feel to explore the character's actions & behavior?
- During reading, did you make any connections with everyday life?
- Did you meet this kind of human right violation in everyday life?
- How did you feel after you made the change in the text and, therefore, in the image you portrayed?
- What does the change you did in the fable say about yourself? your needs etc..
- To what extent can you say you realized something new about yourself today?

After the discussion, the facilitator closes the session by thanking the participant for sharing his/her thoughts.

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## Preparation

The facilitator should have a basic knowledge of the background of the participants - who can read and who cannot - so that in each group to be a person who can read. The facilitator has to know the texts he will use, so that he can provide minimal assistance if it is needed to understand the text. The facilitator also should have basic knowledge regarding what is a fable and how the text is structured.



The facilitator should have a basic knowledge of the background of the participants - who can read and who cannot - so that in each group to be a person who can read. The facilitator has to know the texts he will use, so that he can provide minimal assistance if it is needed to understand the text. The facilitator also should have basic knowledge regarding what is a fable and how the text is structured.

The facilitator can use the same text in two groups to see the diversity of how to stage it, but he/she can also use different texts that violate different human rights.

Also basic knowledge on facilitation of reflection groups; learning to hold the space, allowing emotional expression, providing a non-judgmental attitude and a mindset on curiosity and exploration as a way of raising awareness and learning.

**List of materials:** Printed texts, paper, pencils.

An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.

## Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation form of the activity is verbally, by the end of the session in the reflection moments, but also by observation throughout the whole activity. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participants, from the way they transfer the text in the vivid images, to their non-verbal language, the relevance of their answers related to the activity objectives, etc.

By the end of the activity, the facilitator will analyse the answers provided by participants, in order to improve the activity's particularities and better adapt it to the targeted group.

## Additional resources

Theoretical part: What is a fable?: <https://www.britannica.com/art/fable>  
Fables in latvian: search Ēzopa fabulas



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## Appendix 1 - Human rights list

- All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
- Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
- Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person.
- No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.
- No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation.
- Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
- Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.
- Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.
- Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.



# Walk to the other as if



**Initiator:**  
Youth Matters Now, Spain

**Tags:** Human rights  
education



## Overall description:

The exercise is theater based. Participants will be set in pairs and will “walk to the other person as if...” (following a situation that is given by the facilitator). Through this process, they will explore their body memories and their emotions while music is supporting the process to get in the situation. Unsolved emotions can arise and could be integrated in this process.



## Objectives:

- Recognise emotions and integrate emotions.
- Arise body awareness and body expression.
- Improve self-expression and active listening.
- Enhance non-verbal communication skills.
- Develop social skills, connection, and empathy.

Group work version



**Duration:** 60 minutes

## STEP 1: (10 MINS)

### Invite the participants to find a partner.

Ask them to stand in two rows on opposite sides of the room, one in front of the other, facing their pair.

The exercise is “to walk to the other person as if...” and follow the situation given.

Select a music that goes along well with the given situation.

Start with an easy situation.

### First situation: “You are going to confess your love to the other” (love music)

One person starts to walk very slowly towards the other person, expressing the given situation using their body and gestures, feeling it in the body as if it's truly happening, so that they explore this situation through the body.



It is important to remember the four GT rules:

- 1) There can be no physical harm of any kind to the person they are working with. This also includes that they cannot use real life arguments in the scenes that could harm their partner (for example, if one of the characters, in real life, has a physical disability, it would be totally forbidden to use that disability as an argument in the scenes);
- 2) They cannot hurt themselves either;
- 3) They cannot break or destroy anything in the space (curtains, windows etc). The rule, who brakes pays, is applied.





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## STEP 2: (5 MINS)

### Change role in the same pair

Repeat the same process with the other person from the pair, that will now 'walk as if to the other...' Stay with the same partner and with the same situation and music, so that each person in the pair goes through the same experience.

At the end, give a couple of minutes to share what they have experienced; what has happened to me? Did I become aware of something? If I found difficulties, where did I find them?



Invite participants to go very slow, to take the time needed to feel what arises related to that particular situation. It is possible to stop the music in the middle, and ask a question to help them self-inquire: "What I am feeling at this moment?"

Even if they are not feeling anything, it's also an important piece of information that they get from it, that they are not connecting. And they can also ask themselves, what happens to me in this situation?



At the end, and before stepping into some other activities, invite participants to "shake" emotions away.

The same pairs can stay together for the whole activity if you want to go deep on an emotional level.

### Change pairs:

If you don't want to go so deep, invite participants from one of the rows, to move one person to the right and change the pairs before the new instruction or sentence is given.

## STEP 3: (30 MINS)

### Give a new situation to walk to the other as if.

Reproduce each step explained before, now with the new given situations.

Choose your own situations. Look for situations that young people could relate to and that can be useful to explore with them.

Some situations that you could explore with the group are;

2. You are very sorry for something you did (sad music)
3. You are going to say goodbye (sad music)
4. You will claim what he/her has taken from you (stronger music)
5. You are going to meet someone you love (sensual music).
6. You are going to get an award for something you did. (celebration music)

Always finish with a positive situation, to leave participants in a positive mood.

(For music recommendations see preparations)



## Reflection (5')



Tell them to journal on some of this questions;

- How do you feel at this moment?
- What emotions did you feel? In what parts of the body did you feel them? How did you relate with those emotions? Did you allow yourself to feel them?
- Were you able to express those emotions with your body?
- Describe how your body language? What did you do?
- Were there any beliefs appearing?
- What "walk" was more difficult for you? Do you know why?
- What "walk" was easier?

## Reflection (10')



Share in plenary.

Give time to the group to share main insights.

Ask important questions that would raise self awareness.

- What were the most meaningful moments? and why?
- What impacted you the most?
- What main awareness do you take with you from the activity?

## Individual work version



Duration: 30 minutes

### STEP1: (5 MINS)

#### Introduce walk as if.

You can say to the participant that you will work in pairs. Ask them to stand on the opposite side of the room, facing each other.

The exercise is called "walk to the other person as if..." and follows a situation given by the facilitator.

Select music that complements the given situation. Start with an easy situation:

1. You are going to sell a puppy (energizing music).

One person starts to walk very slowly towards the other person, expressing the given situation using their body and gestures, feeling it in their body as if it's truly happening. This allows them to explore the situation through their body and emotions.

### STEP 2: (5 MINS)

#### Change role in the same pair

Do the same exercise again, but this time, the facilitator will 'walk as if...'.

After completing the exercise, allow a couple of minutes for sharing experiences. Encourage participants to reflect on what they experienced: What happened during the exercise? Did they become aware of something new? If they faced difficulties, where did these difficulties arise?

Encourage participants to move very slowly and take the time needed to feel what arises related to that particular situation. You can also stop the music in the middle and ask a question to help them self-inquire, such as "What am I feeling at this moment?" This self-inquiry process can provide valuable insights even if they are not feeling anything intense.

Before moving on to other activities, invite participants to "shake" their emotions away, allowing them to release any residual feelings or tensions from the exercise.



### STEP 3: (15 MINS)

**Give a new situation to walk to the other as if.**

Reproduce each step explained before with the new given situations. You can invite participants to think about situations for the activity.

Other situations that you could explore are;

2. You are very sorry for something you did (sad music)
  3. You are going to get an award for something you did. (Celebration music)
  4. You will claim what he/her has taken from you (stronger music)
  5. You are going to fight with her/him (strong music).
  6. You will give a present to her/him (joyful music).
- Always finish with a positive situation, to leave participants in a positive mood.

#### Reflection (5')



- How do you feel at the moment?
- How would you describe this activity in a sentence?
- Was it difficult to get into the characters?
- Were there differences between positive and negative characters/situations?

#### Preparation

Prepare some basic knowledge on theatre improvisation, how to hold and accompany emotional processes, how to facilitate a group reflection processes.



Create a playlists:

Sad music:

- Ludovico Einaudi - "Nuvole Bianche"
- Max Richter - "On the Nature of Daylight"
- Yiruma - "River Flows in You"
- Hans Zimmer - "Time" (from the movie Inception)
- Ólafur Arnalds - "Near Light"

Love music:

- Ed Sheeran - "Perfect"
- John Legend - "All of Me"
- Adele - "Make You Feel My Love"
- Elvis Presley - "Can't Help Falling in Love"
- Alicia Keys - "If I Ain't Got You"
- Michael Bublé - "Everything"
- Bruno Mars - "Just the Way You Are"
- Whitney Houston - "I Will Always Love You"
- Jason Mraz - "I'm Yours"
- Norah Jones - "Come Away with Me"





Strong music:

- 1. Hans Zimmer - "Time" (from the "Inception" soundtrack)
- 2. Two Steps From Hell - "Heart of Courage"
- 3. Immediate Music - "Surrender to Hope"
- 4. Audiomachine - "Guardians at the Gate"
- 5. Really Slow Motion - "Suns And Stars"
- 6. Epic Score - "I Still Have a Soul"
- 7. Position Music - "Time to Die"
- 8. Future World Music - "Victory of Life"
- 9. Brand X Music - "World Without End"
- 10. Mark Petrie - "Richat"

### List of materials:

Playlist, mp3 player, speakers.



### Evaluation of the activity

#### Group Work:

At the end of the activity, you can evaluate the following questions by writing them in flipcharts and placing them in the space. And ask participants to go around and add their comments in each one of them.

From this activity:

What worked for you?

What did not work for you?

What was the impact on you?

Finally, with the comments you can evaluate if the main objectives were achieved and to what extent, and make any adaptations for further implementations of the activity.

#### Individual work:

The main evaluation form of the activity is by observation. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participant, the relevance of the answers during the reflection.

### Additional resources

Training on Gestalt Theater: <https://www.teatrogestalt.com>

Managing strong emotions: <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/OH-196.20-Managing-strong-emotions.pdf>

Drama based activities and mental health recovery: <https://www.northernhealthcare.org.uk/news-resources/how-drama-therapy-can-assist-with-mental-health-recovery/>



## Walk in my shoes



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Human Rights  
Education



### Overall description:

This activity aims to raise awareness about the diversity of people around us and their backgrounds, as well as to underline how prejudices and stereotypes can trigger actions that could harm others. The activity encourages participants to express their reactions based on their beliefs, while also encouraging reflection before engaging in actions that could impact others' rights. It fosters a deeper understanding of the complexity of human interactions and promotes empathy and informed decision-making.



### Objectives:

- Raising awareness of the diversity of social roles and how people relate to them without proper knowledge of one's background.
- To develop critical thinking skills.
- To appreciate human nature in all its diversity.
- Developing self-confidence in expressing thoughts and opinions.
- To raise awareness of body and movement.
- Uncovering hidden beliefs and biases.
- To develop empathy and compassion towards others.

Group work version



Duration: 70 minutes

### STEP 1: (10 MINS)

Inform the participants that each of them will be given a character to explore themselves through. Introduce the concept of exploration as a method of learning; encourage observing what arises with awareness and without repressing or judging those observations.

Use a deck of playing cards or individual papers written with the following characters:

- The president of an NGO.
- 24 years old alcohol addict.
- Single unemployed mother.
- Male local bank manager.
- Student in an university.
- Chinese immigrant who runs a successful fast-food business.
- 22 years old soldier in the army.
- Young man in a wheelchair.
- Young woman running a successful travel company.



- Young artist who is addicted to drugs.
- 19 years-old male worker in a farm living in a remote mountain village.
- 27 years-old homeless man.
- Member of the Parliament.
- Candidate for mayor in your city.
- Retired worker in a shoe factory.
- 17-year-old girl who never finished primary school.
- 24-year-old refugee from Afghanistan.
- University graduate who has a high qualification.



Arrange the participants in a circle, seating them on chairs, benches, pillows, or on the floor. Provide a paper with a role to each participant and instruct them not to reveal the role to others. Ask them to silently read the role written on the card and to place themselves in that role. If any participant cannot read or understand the role, provide clarifications in a discreet manner that does not disclose the role to others.

## STEP 2: (10-15 MINS)

Play some music that eases personal introspection and ask the participants to close their eyes. Begin guiding them through a meditation using a slow and soft tone of voice, allowing enough time for participants to imagine after each instruction. Assist participants in stepping into the shoes of the character they received.

During the guided meditation, invite participants to imagine their character by using the following prompts:

- How does it feel to be who you are?
- Visualize your environment. Where do you live? What activities do you engage in?
- Do you have friends? Who are they? What are they like?
- Describe your family and your relationship with them.
- What are your daily routines and activities?
- Reflect on the resources available to you, both external and internal.
- Explore your feelings about your life.
- Consider the experiences that led you to this point in your life.
- Identify your needs and desires.



## Now, invite the group to project their future from this character.

“Now you will look at your future, what is to come for you”:

- How do you see yourself in the future?
- What do you expect to come?
- What difficulties or challenges do you see?
- What are your fears or worries?
- What are your hopes and dreams for the future?



After 10-15 minutes, ask participants to slowly open their eyes. Invite them to embody and feel they have become this character.



### STEP 3: (10 MINS)

Play instrumental soft music and ask participants to stand up and start walking randomly in the room. Give instructions one by one, allowing enough time after each instruction for participants to explore their character:

A

Exploring the character given:

- How does this character walk?
- How is his/her body posture? explore different parts.
- What part of the body is more tense?
- Which part of the body is more relaxed?
- How does he/she feel in his/her body?
- What are his thoughts about life? His /her beliefs?
- Explore anything that comes to you about this character?
- What are his/her fears?



B

Start looking around you, at the other people in the room:

- How does this character relate with others?
- How does he/she see others?
- With whom does he/she feel comfortable in the room?

The pace of the walk, as well as all other instructions are given by the facilitator. At first, ask participants to walk slowly, then faster, then slower, so they get used to the movement. To warm up the group, play with different speeds putting the group in different situations:

- How is the normal speed of this character when he/she walks?
- How does this character walk when is very relaxed in a park?
- How does he walk when he/she is very stressed and he/she is very late to work?
- How does he walk when he/she feels depressed?



### STEP 4: (10 MINS)

Invite participants to perform different actions either walking or freezing as a statue.

**After each action ask them to stop performing and to keep walking normally:**

- walking: adopt a facial expression that their character would show in public.
- statue: adopt a body posture that reflects the social status of their character.
- statue: express and repeat a gesture specific to their character.
- walking: illustrate with their hands how happy they are in their life.
- statue: adopt a body posture when they feel threatened by people living around them.
- walking: to find at least two people they think they can interact pleasantly with.
- walking: to smile at someone they might consider a potential friend.
- walking: winking at someone who they feel that are on the same social level.
- statue: taking by the hand a person they would go out to do something fun.

The pace slows down towards the end, and slowly the participants are asked to sit down.

Notes for the facilitator: after each action, invite participants to continue walking as their character would walk normally.



## STEP 5: (10 MINS)

Participants gather in small groups of 4-5 and share any insights and meaningful moments. Ask them not to reveal their characters yet:

- What was most meaningful for you during the activity?
- What was more difficult for you to perform?
- What did you realize about yourself?

Alternative way of implementing the activity:



Feel free to create your own characters and situations, adapting them to your country and to the young people you are working with, choosing those situations that you think would be more realistic for them. Choose those situations that are more frequent in your region regarding the conflicts and stereotypes that youth normally encounter.

A warming up short moment or an intermediary moment after the participants start walking could be added in the body of the method.

### Reflection (15')



Participants are asked to come to the plenary for a group reflection. At first, without revealing their roles, they are asked how they felt about the character they received, if they had ever met such a person, or if they would like to meet them in the future. A quick round of sharing is desirable.

Further, the participants are asked to disclose their character and the facilitator addresses some of the following questions:

- Was it difficult for you to embrace the role you were given?
- How did you portray your role? In what current and future context?
- What did you think of when you started following the facilitator's indications?
- How did you perceive others from your character's position?
- How did you feel others perceived you?
- Have you thought about the possible roles of those around you?
- On what criteria did you choose which two you thought you could be friends with?
- Who did you wink at and why?
- Did you have any feelings that aroused your prejudice or stereotype for others?
- Have you ever thought that others might not suspect anything about your role?
- Were you able to guess the role of those around you?
- How did you feel thinking that others probably don't know what role you play?
- What have you learned from this activity?
- If you were to name one thing you discovered about yourself, what would it be?
- Do you think that we need to think twice before reacting to those around us?
- How would you evaluate this activity in a word?

Prioritize the questions that are more suitable to the profile of the participants and also based on time availability. At the same time, other questions might be addressed.





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The activity is closed with a short de-role moment. Participants stand up, close their eyes, and they are invited to travel back in the present space and time, as individuals who are in a self-exploration experience. They are invited to take the key learning points from this activity with them and to reflect on them.

For this closing, play relaxing instrumental music and guide a meditation to come out from the character taking with them all the experiences, insights and learnings from the activity.

**The guided meditation could be the following:**



“Stand up, close your eyes. Connect for the last time with your role. Let go of anything you need to let go regarding this role, any emotions, situations, thoughts. Do it while you take off your jumper (or the shoes), as a representation of leaving behind what does not serve you from this role in your life, what you don't want to take with you.

And now think of those situations, emotions, encounters and insights that you want to take with you in your life. Take the jumper and put it on, as a representation of what you are taking with you from this experience.

Now find a word or sentence that would express your journey with this character, and share it randomly with the group as a way of closing the activity”.

**Individual work version**



**Duration: 55 minutes**

**STEP 1: (5 MINS)**

Introduce the participant to the topic of "Stereotypes": explain what prejudices and stereotypes are.

The facilitator could describe that "a stereotype is a generalized belief about a particular category of people. It is an expectation that people might have about every person from a particular group. The type of expectation can vary; it can be, for example, an expectation about the group's personality, preferences, appearance, or abilities. Stereotypes are sometimes overgeneralized, inaccurate, and resistant to new information, but they can sometimes be accurate. While such generalizations about groups of people may be useful when making quick decisions, they may be erroneous when applied to particular individuals and are among the reasons for prejudicial attitudes."

The facilitator asks the participant to name stereotypes they know, providing examples about gender, specific groups, or individuals. This leads to a small discussion with the participant about stereotypes and their impact.

**STEP 2: (10 MINS)**

Give the participant a printed scenario to become acquainted with it. The participant reads the scenario ([Appendix 1](#)).



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### STEP 3: (15 MINS)

After the participant reads the scenario, facilitate a discussion about it. Recommended questions:

- Was it easy for you to imagine such a situation?
- How did you perceive these roles in the scenario?
- Why do you think each character said what they did?
- Did any feelings arise that might have triggered prejudice or stereotypes about any of those characters?
- These questions can help participants reflect on their own perceptions, biases, and understanding of the scenario and the characters involved.

### STEP 4: (15 MINS)

The facilitator hands the participant the printed cards (or papers) from [Appendix 1](#) with additional information about each character one by one. The participant reads the first card, and then the second card, and so on.

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#### Reflection (10')



After reading all the four cards, the facilitator initiates a discussion:

- Did you change your mind about the characters after getting more information?
  - What have you learned from this activity?
  - If you were to name one thing you discovered about yourself, what would it be?
  - Do you think that we need to think twice before reacting to various situations and those around us?
- 

#### Preparation

Have a basic knowledge of the background of the participants to adapt the roles used (new roles may be introduced or others may be removed, depending on how much the learning outcomes could be improved). The facilitators should have basic knowledge regarding what is a stereotype, prejudice, social construct etc. (see Additional resources).

Have all the needed materials as playing cards roles – they can also be written on a piece of paper.



Also, basic knowledge on facilitation of reflection groups; learning to hold the space, allowing emotional expression, providing a non judgmental attitude and a mindset on curiosity and exploration as a way of raising awareness and learning.

#### List of materials:

- Playing cards with the roles for the participants or small papers with descriptions printed.
- An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.



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## Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation form of the activity is by observation. Notice the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participants, the relevance of their answers related to the activity objectives, how much they went into their role, etc. Also, the biggest emphasis is on the reflection part: pay attention and analyze the answers provided by participants, taking notes on what can be improved, what has worked or not regarding the objectives of the activity.

## Additional resources

### 1. Stereotype and prejudice info:

<https://open.maricopa.edu/culturepsychology/chapter/stereotypes-prejudice-and-discrimination/>

<https://kidshelpphone.ca/get-info/understanding-stereotypes-prejudice-and-discrimination/>

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0002764296040002008>

### 2. Social constructs info:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/social-construction>

<https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=770186>



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## Appendix 1 - Walk in my shoes

### Case description.

At the police station:

“They all hate us; this is the second time my cafe has been demolished and robbed,” screams Chin, a Chinese immigrant who runs a successful fast-food business. “Put him in jail,” he yells and points a finger at Peter, a 24-year-old alcohol addict.

Peter broke into Chin's cafe to steal money and buy another bottle of alcohol. He is young, but not the first time he has been arrested and has come to the attention of the police. “I didn't do it because of hatred against you; I just needed money,” Peter said.

“Let him go, he is not guilty,” said Peter's mother. She is a single unemployed mother who shouts angrily and runs across the room. “You always blame my son,” she points to the police officer and starts to cry. “I do my duty,” the policeman says angrily and takes Peter away.

#### Chin



Arrived in the country when the gang in his village destroyed his home. Chin made great efforts to complete college and open his own cafe. When his cafe was first robbed, it was because of Chin's ethnic appearance as an immigrant, which made him stand out in the community. Chin is actually a very calm person on a daily basis, so his anger is atypical. All the money and savings were stolen from the cafe by Peter, so Chin does not know how to pay the employees or repair the cafe.



## Appendix 1 - Walk in my shoes

### Peter



He started drinking after his father died when he was only 16 years old. He repeatedly tried to cure the addiction, but without success. He always lacked support and motivation.

Also, this is not Peter's first time being detained, as he is always in trouble due to alcohol. When Peter understands what he has done, he regrets his actions, but it is too late.

### Peter's mother



She is unemployed because she was injured at work a few years ago and can no longer work. Only now, without a job, does she realize that Peter is addicted and that addiction needs to be addressed as soon as possible.

She had never thought that Peter had such an alcohol problem. She never supported her son to solve them. She regrets her actions, but Peter is the only child and she is afraid of losing her son. She always defends him, no matter what Peter's offense.

### Police officer



The officer has known Peter since the death of his father. He worked actively with him and offered him treatment for his addiction, but Peter's mother believed that Peter had no problem.

Therefore, Peter did not receive her support and was not cured of the addiction. The police officer is being attacked for the second time today for simply doing his job.



# Juggling



**Initiator:**  
State probation service, Latvia

**Tags:** Human rights  
education



## Overall description:

The activity stimulates the participants' understanding of their needs and desires, and supports them in choosing the most appropriate priorities and time frame. The activity provides a different, yet realistic perspective of what priorities mean in our life, how we can 'play' with them, and what is the impact of making the right decisions when we plan our time.



## Objectives:

- To strengthen the ability to formulate individual goals and achieve them.
- Develop the ability to design a plan and implement it.
- Reduced tendency to engage in unhealthy activities.
- To help the participant understand the relationship between life goals and time.

## Group work version



**Duration:** 70 minutes

### STEP 1 : (5 MIN)

The facilitator initiates the activity with a positive body-based moment: invite the participants to freely walk in the room and to imagine:

- It is early morning, 5am: how do you feel, how do you walk at this time, follow this image;
- It is middle of the day, you have eaten your lunch and rested a little bit: feel it and walk like that;
- It is end of the day, you have finished all your work: walk with that feeling;
- It is late evening, 8pm, and it is time to party: imagine it and walk like you feel it.

The facilitator invites the participants to form pairs and to sit in a comfortable place.

### STEP 2 : (20 MIN)

The facilitator addresses a question: "Only 24 hours in a day, how do you spend them?"

The facilitator invites the participants to think about a day before the meeting: the facilitator can use the [Appendix 1: 24 hours of my life](#). The participants have time to think how they spent the last 24 hours of their life. Guide this process with some questions:

- What is important for you in your life? What is the first thing that comes to your mind?
- What are your values, what do you value the most in your life?

As a closure, for some minutes, they share in pairs what they wrote in the worksheet.



---

Coming back in the plenary, the facilitator invites the participants to answer two questions:

- What you noticed in your day activities, what was important for you?
- Where do you spend most of your time?

### STEP 3: (25 MINS)

The activity continues with a metaphor comparing life to juggling: “It is popular to compare everyday life with juggling. We need to be able to juggle with 4 balls, namely family, friends, study/work and sleep. Sometimes you have to reduce the number of balls, because you cannot cope with them all. You sacrifice sleep because studying/working is too demanding or interesting, while family and friends are also important.”

The facilitator can also provide some examples with unhealthy activities related to addictions, alcohol ect. that takes part of everyday life and impacts the available daily and weekly activities.

The facilitator can ask if somebody in the group can juggle, or want to try it? Facilitator introduces 6 small juggling balls as a challenge. If the facilitator has the skills, a short juggling moment can be provided with 2, 3, 4 balls. A short discussion about the difficulty of this can be initiated.



The participants receive the [Appendix "Juggling"](#) and are invited to complete it. The facilitator supports them if needed. The facilitator can provide a simple example, so the participant could relate to a clear avenue of work. The flow of the work is described in simple steps.

1

Record in each of the balls those activities or spheres of life (for example, sleep, friends, family, 1. Write in each of the balls those activities or spheres of life (for example: sleep, friends, family, work, sports, tussles, beloved partner, addictions) to which you allocate your time. If necessary, draw additional balls.

2

Think and write down why you need each of them, why do you allocate your time to those activities?

3

If you do not have enough time for all this, then which balls do you give up, or what do you spend less time on? (stain those balls).

### STEP 4 : (10 MIN)

The facilitator creates groups of 3 or 4 participants and invites them to share what they wrote on the worksheets. Some guiding questions for this moment:

- If they can't handle everything, what are they giving up?
- What are the short-term consequences of this?
- What are the long-term consequences of this?
- Why don't young people give up other balls?
- Do you see the need to devote more time to one of the areas?
- If so, at the expense of which area?
- What could be the short-term consequences of this, and what are the long-term consequences?



## Reflection (10')



After completing the discussion in pairs, invite the participants in the plenary to reflect on the process and the meaning behind their choices. The facilitator can add other questions and adapt them to the profile of the participants:

- What was important for you in this activity?
- Was it easy to think about your goals and everyday life?
- Which are the hardest decisions in your life?

If the participants' plans are constructive, realistic and supportive praise them. If the plans do not lead to the future without committing delinquent acts, then ask what the consequences will be, to what directions this can lead the participants in their lives.

## Individual work version



Duration: 45 minutes

The activity follows the same logic as for the group work, with two little differences:

- STEP 1 is not used in the individual work, so you may start directly with STEP 2.
- The time allocated for each step is shorter, as there is no need to facilitate the group dynamic.
- The reflection includes additional questions.

## Reflection (10')



The session is closed with a set of reflection questions:

- What was important for you in this activity?
- Was it easy to think about your goals and everyday life?
- Which are the hardest decisions in your life?
- What keeps you far from fulfilling your plans?
- How could you build healthier routines in your daily life?

The facilitator can add other questions and adapt them to the profile of the participant.

## Preparation

A good understanding of the impact of addictive tendencies on the quality of life is needed. Basic understanding on the most common drug-related crimes is desirable, as well basic knowledge of the impact of several substances on the brain's development.



### List of materials:

Appendix for individual work, pens (can use different color pens), felt-tip pens or pencils. Juggling balls - optional.





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## Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated through the complexity of the life goals indicated by the participants and through their mentions about ways to achieve them. Also, an important focus should be placed on the way the participants use the handouts, mainly on the participants' ability to divide positive and negative ways how to achieve his life goals.

The ending part of the session, the reflection moment, is also highly relevant, mainly through participants' personal examples of his life management.



## Appendix 1 - Worksheet: 24 hours of my life

### 24 HOUR TIME

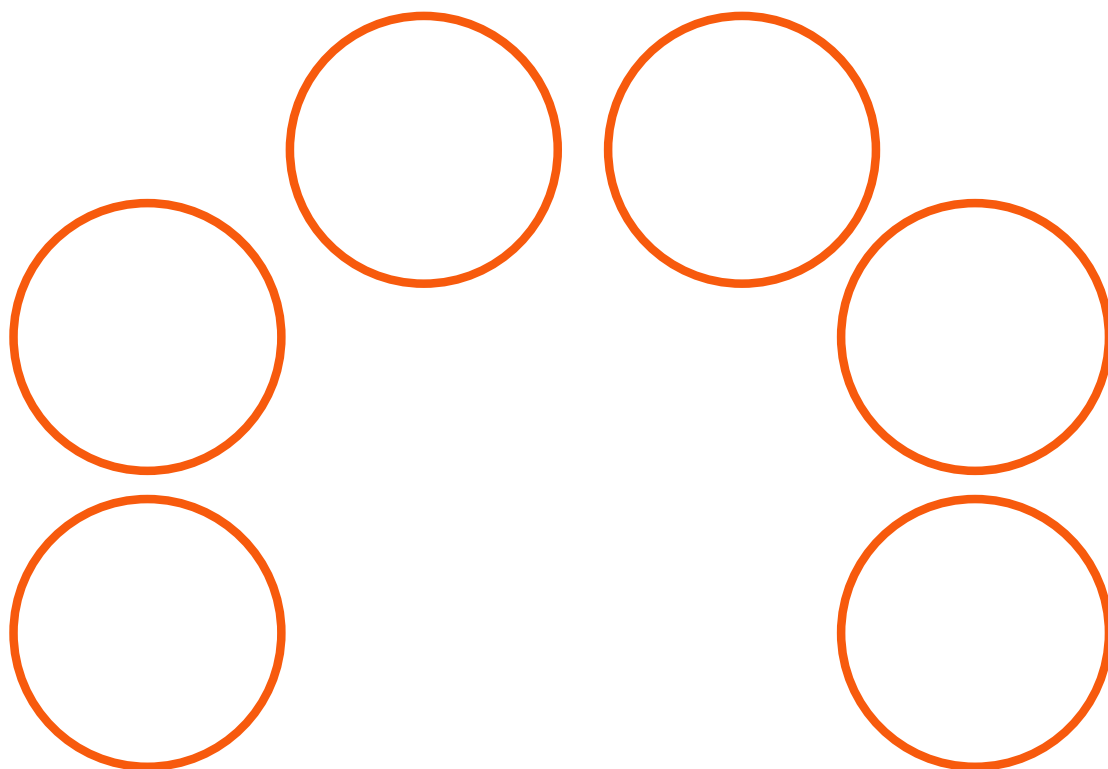
HOW I SPEND MY DAY AND WHERE I SPENT MY TIME

7.00		19.00	
8.00		20.00	
9.00		21.00	
10.00		22.00	
11.00		23.00	
12.00		00.00	
13.00		01.00	
14.00		02.00	
15.00		03.00	
16.00		04.00	
17.00		05.00	
18.00		06.00	



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## Appendix 2 - Worksheet: Juggling



WHY I NEED EACH OF THEM, WHY DO I ALLOCATE MY TIME FOR THEM?

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	



## Footprints and hands



Initiator:  
IPTA, Romania

Tags: Human rights  
education



### Overall description:

The method stimulates individual and group introspection processes, focusing on how personal traits can enhance interpersonal cohesion within the group. The activity should stimulate participants to express their perception on how they could contribute to a smoother interaction with their peers, based on personal perceptions and values, limiting the stereotypes they might have towards each other.



### Objectives:

- To deepen the understanding of each person's role in a group.
- To raise self-awareness of one's own traits and needs.
- To stimulate empathy towards others' needs and individual traits.
- To consolidate self-confidence through with visual-based learning tools.
- To develop self-expression and body awareness.

Group work version



Duration: 70 minutes

### STEP 1 : (15 MINS)

The facilitator invites the group to create a circle where everyone can see each other, sitting (on chair, benches, pillows or on the floor). A quick introduction with names and age could ease the process. The group is invited to split into working groups of four participants and to find a separate place, without interfering with the other groups.

- **The first part** of the activity is individual: the facilitator asks the participants to write on a piece of paper (or to indicate them to a person who can write) the most relevant **20 characteristics** that define themselves. These characteristics could represent anything that one considers relevant: skills, knowledge, physical appearance, social status, origin, mindset, beliefs, values, behaviors, attitudes, knowledge. It's important to underline that these are not subject to others' evaluation, even more the facilitator should advise that participants could write both 'positive' and 'negative' characteristics.



- 
- **The second part** consists of individual work as well. After all or most of the participants explored 20 characteristics, the facilitator invites each one to divide these characteristics in two categories: **hands and feet**. The characteristics linked to (symbolized by) 'hands' are connected to socialization, interactivity, what one gives and receives, skills and talents one considers that one has. The characteristics linked to (symbolized by) 'feet' are connected to roots, traces that one makes in one's life and in others', stability, structure, territoriality, presence, connection with the ground, journey.

The facilitator provides papers and scissors. The participants are invited to cut the shapes of feet or hands for the common characteristics, according to the symbol that they indicated previously. Each participant will write on the paper 'foot' or 'hand' the characteristic indicated as visible as possible. Different colors to be used by the facilitators, if possible.

## **STEP 2 : (30 MINS)**

From here, the activity can go two ways:

**ONE WAY:** From this list of 20 characteristics, each participant will select only one characteristic, the most relevant in this moment of their lives. The facilitator invites each person from the group to present his/her characteristic by expressing it with a statue. The others will try to guess the characteristics. The person presenting from the group will not speak during the presentation, will just express within a sculpture. Building on this, with all the 4 characteristics on body gestures selected from each participant, the small group will create a choreography together and will put a title to it that would represent the group. They will have to perform the choreography to the other groups and give a title of it at the end. The presentations will be one group at a time, while the rest of the groups stand as viewers of the choreographies. After each group has done its performance, the facilitator gives some space for the members of the group to thank the work done together, as an ending moment, and before another group performs.

**ANOTHER WAY:** From this list of 20 characteristics, the participants are asked to select 4 of their characteristics and to discuss them in their groups (reasons for choosing it, why are important, etc.). In the end, each participant is asked to select only one characteristic (4 in total, in each group) which are common to that group and can define it, and to write them on a paper which to cut according to the shape of the hand or foot, depending on which category that feature belongs to. To finalize the activity, the participants are invited to fill the working space with the 'hands' and 'feet' that indicate the characteristics. The facilitator should invite the group to use as much space as possible, so it generates a wider visual impact.

The participants are invited to walk in silence in the space and to observe what are the common and different characteristics and personal traits that could connect them more as a group. After some minutes of observation, they are invited to create a circle around the 'hands' and 'feet' and to have a quick round of eye contact with each person in the room



## Reflection (15')



Sitting in the circle, the participants are asked to share in one word how they feel at this moment. They are also invited to start a discussion facilitated by the facilitator, based on the following questions:

- How familiar are you with exploring what defines you?
- How difficult is such a process?
- Did you feel any limitations in exploring yourself?
- Are the characteristics identified by you observed by others?
- How easy is it for you to tell others the characteristics that define you the most?
- Were you honest when you indicated the characteristics that could connect you in the small groups?
- You chose one characteristic that defines you the most and one that you consider that could connect the group more. Is it the same? If they are different, why do you think that it is like that?
- How did you feel others perceived you?
- Have you observed any patterns among the characteristics?
- How different are the people in this group?
- In which way do you find this activity relevant?
- How would you evaluate this activity in a word?
- How was it for you to express the characteristic with your body in the sculpture?
- What was your main insight or awareness moment during this activity?

### Notes for the facilitator:



The facilitator can prioritize the questions that are more suitable to the profile of the participants and also based on time availability. Other questions might be addressed as well.

The activity can be closed within a short moment. The participants stand up, close their eyes, and they are invited to count out loud, individually not as a group, from 1 to 10 in a way that they don't say the same number simultaneously. Should two or more participants overlap, the counting starts over. The moment ends after a maximum of 3 minutes. The session ends with the facilitator thanking all for the involvement and active participation.

Individual work version



Duration: 30 minutes

### STEP 1 : ( 10 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the topic: today we will work on different human characteristics, starting with an example, for better understanding.

**Example:** can you answer this question for me: How would you describe yourself? You can start with words: I am... or I like..



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The facilitator starts the activity:

First, the facilitator gives the participant an A4 paper and invites him/her to write down the most relevant 20 characteristics that define him/herself.

Next, the facilitator indicates that these characteristics could represent anything that the participant considers relevant: skills, knowledge, physical appearance, social status, origin, mindset, beliefs, values, behaviors, attitudes, knowledge.

The participant is advised to write both 'positive' and 'negative' characteristics.

### **STEP 2 : ( 10 MINS)**

The second step consists of individual work as well. It starts when the participant finishes writing his/her characteristics.

The facilitator invites the participant to divide these characteristics in two categories: hands and feet. The characteristics linked to (symbolized by)

- **'hands'** are connected to socialization, interactivity, what one gives and receives, skills and talents one considers that one has.
- **'feet'** are connected to roots, traces that one makes in one's life and in others', stability, structure, territoriality, presence, connection with the ground, journey.

The facilitator provides two A4 papers, one with the shape of feet and second with shape of hands for the common characteristics, according to the symbol that they indicated previously. The participant write on these papers - [Appendix 1 - Footprints](#); [Appendix 2 - Hands](#).

- The facilitator asks the participant to write on the paper 'foot' the characteristic indicated, as visible as possible.
- The facilitator asks the participant to write on the paper 'hand' the characteristic indicated, as visible as possible.

Different colors to be used by the facilitators, if possible.

### **STEP 3 (5 MINS)**

When the participant finishes to work with "foot" and "hand" sheets, the facilitator asks the participant to think and underline his/her characteristics that helps or limits his/hers positive interaction with others.

The participant takes two bright color pencils and underline:

- His/her qualities that help to build good relationships and communication with others.
- His/her qualities that hinder or limit good relationships with others.
- The facilitator can ask, to read out loud these characteristics and ask if there is something the participant can and want to change in these characteristics?



## Reflection (10')

The participant is asked to share his thoughts and feelings. The facilitator starts discussion with the following questions:



- How familiar are you with exploring what defines you?
- How difficult is such a process?
- Did you feel any limitations in exploring yourself?
- How easy is it for you to tell others (to tell me) the characteristics that define you the most?
- Have you observed any patterns among the characteristics?
- In which way do you find this activity relevant?
- How would you evaluate this activity in a word?
- What was your main insight or awareness moment during this activity?

## Preparation

The facilitators should own basic understanding of personal introspection tools used for educational purposes, and to avoid stepping in a therapeutic process with the participants.



The facilitator should be briefed about the dynamic of the group, if there is any previous experience.

The facilitator should know if there are any active conflicts in the group as well, so the interaction will not be forced from the beginning.

It might be added in the body of the method: a warming up short moment or an intermediary moment after the participants start walking.

**List of materials:** Papers, scissors, colored writing tools, pens.

A playlist with 5-6 songs that stimulate introspection, reflection, exploration.

An open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.

## Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation form of the activity is by observation. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participants, the relevance of their answers related to the activity objectives, how committed they were in exploring their personal characteristics, how they contributed to finding the common characteristics, etc.





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The reflection moment is really important, where the facilitator pays attention and analyzes the answers provided by participants, taking notes on what can be improved, what has worked or not.

### **Additional resources**

Materials available online:

Self-introspection questions:

<https://positivepsychology.com/introspection-self-reflection/>

<https://solancha.com/7-tools-for-introspection-to-boost-self-awareness/>

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/all-tools>



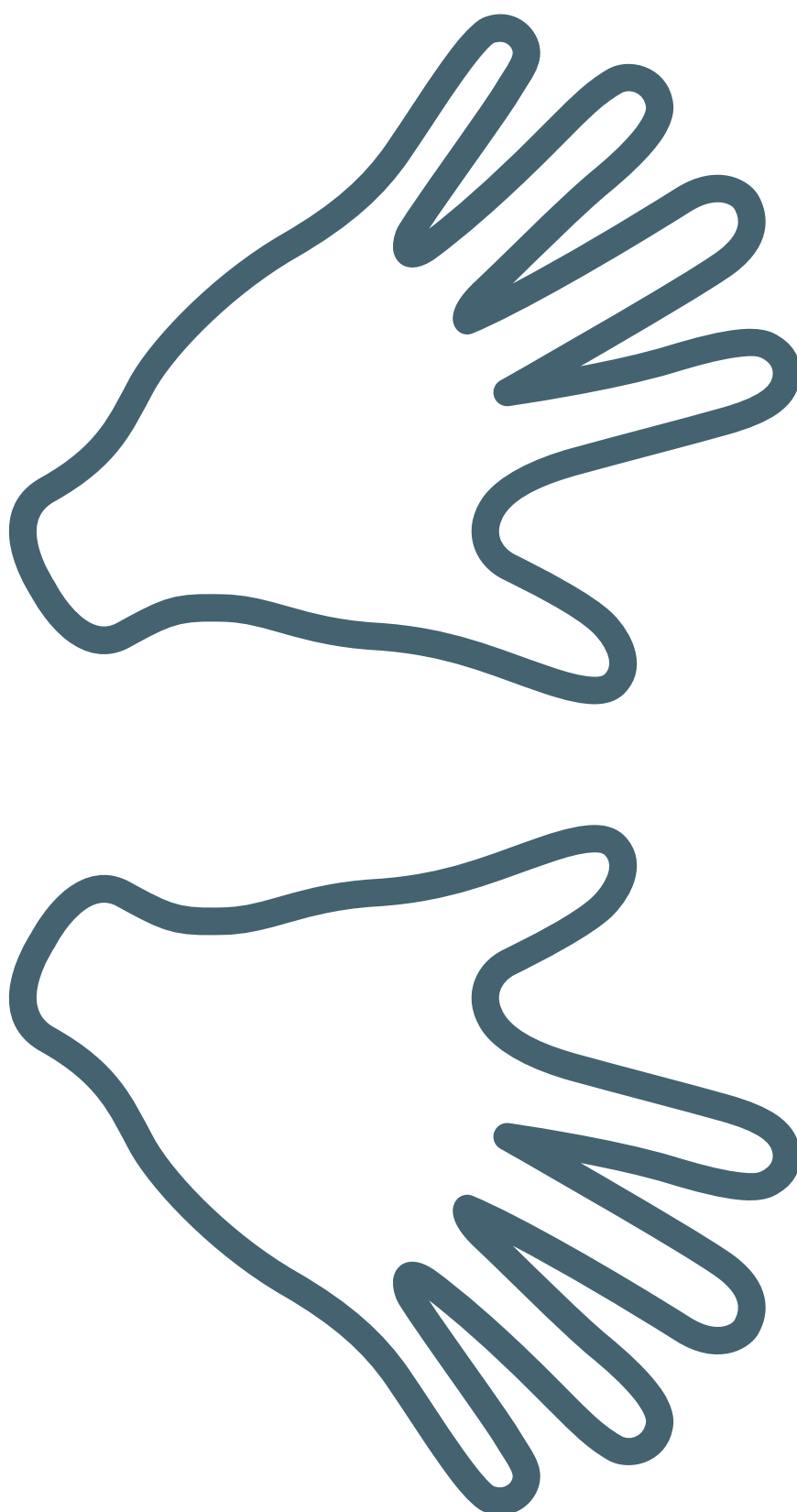
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## Appendix 1 - Footprints



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## Appendix 2 - Hands



## Is there any empathy scale?



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Human rights  
education



### Overall description:

The method aims to raise awareness of the levels of empathy we have for others. On the one hand, the method has an experiential component, through which participants can explore their reactions and reflect on the level of empathy in various contexts (work, family, school, groups of friends, with strangers, etc.) and on the other hand, the method has a prominent dimension of shaping attitudes towards people in need.



### Objectives:

- Exploring empathy as an ability to understand the feelings of another.
- Developing an attitude that is non judgemental that fosters exploring and learning.
- Increasing the level of empathy towards others' needs and individual traits.
- Building deeper connections between people.
- Revealing emotional ways of supporting other people.

Group work version



**Duration:** 70 minutes

### STEP 1 : (15 MINS)

The facilitator invites the participants to randomly form groups of 3 and to create a semicircle.

The facilitator explains that the activity is based on improvisation, following different scenarios which will be provided to each trio. The scenarios are based on situations that can turn conflictual and the participants are invited to accept this experience as a learning opportunity.

The facilitator introduces some important rules for improvisation:

1. Relate to all the people in the scene.
2. Accept the conflict as it would be true, don't accommodate it.



#### Example:

- **A: You are ignoring me!**
- **B: Well, can't you see I am busy with other things? Instead of: no, I am not ignoring you...**





3. Don't use objects that do not exist, focus on relating.
4. If you laugh or feel ashamed etc, included as part of the scene.
5. Act connected with yourself without overacting.
6. Don't harm anyone or anything.



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In the trios, each person has a specific role in that scenario. The participants are asked to decide who is person A, B and C. All the scenarios describe a particular context of society, work, family, school, etc. and underlines the concept of empathy.

The facilitator describes the flow of the improvisation:

-  Group by group (in trios), the participants will come on the stage, standing in front of the audience. They will receive a scenario from the facilitator with a situation that could turn conflictual (**make sure you reintroduce briefly the rules**).
-  The facilitator will describe which is the role for each person (A, B, C). The performance and the scenario starts with a sentence. In all the scenarios, person A starts the dialogue.
-  The trio will start the performance straight away, with no time to think or prepare. Each group has 5 minutes to play the scenario. The time can be adjusted to max. 7-9 minutes. The essence of this moment is the impact that certain developments of the improvisation have on a person, concentrating on spontaneous reactions.
-  The other groups will be observers. After each performance, a short debrief moment is planned, mainly for concluding what the audience observed and to summarize what the 'actors' felt and observed about themselves.

## STEP 2 (35 MINS)

The scenarios are described in [Appendix 1](#) (**make sure you have them printed with you**).

After introducing the flow of the activity, the facilitator invites one of the trios to get ready for the performance. Introduce some additional guidance here:

- **Indicate that one of the participants (in each trio) is the initiator, person A, person B is the one who accepts the conflict, and person C is 'you' (that means that person C acts as they would act naturally in such a scenario).**
- **The participants will improvise in several possible ways, as they choose:**
  - **Not being not empathetic at all (valid for persons B).**
  - **Being very empathetic (valid for persons A and B).**
  - **Naturally improvising (valid for person C).**



Just before providing the scenario to the first trio, tell the participants that you will use a bell or clap hands to stop or freeze the play at certain moments. This intervention is meant to address questions for the participants, a moment that ease their self exploration and helps them to observe emotions and behavior patterns.

The first trio is on the stage, the audience is invited to be an active listener to this moment and to observe and memorize the most notable moments.

The first trio has some seconds to embrace the role, the facilitator says the sentence that will open the conflict. and Action! The performance starts.





#### Notes for the facilitator:

Do not forget to stop the play when there is a situation that could allow participants to explore more aspects about themselves. For this moment, use simple introspection questions:

- How are you feeling now?
- What would you need to do right now?
- What would you never do in this situation?

The trios are invited all on the stage, as much as the time allows this. Should the time limit be exceed too much, the facilitator can decide to invite on the stage only some of the trios, based on their intention to try this experience.

Each performance is closed with a de-role moment, with shaking the body, closing the eyes or a short walk in the room, so the participants leave behind the character and the scenario and return as a group of colleagues.

#### STEP 3 : (10 MINS)

Before closing the session with the reflection, the facilitator invites the participants to write on a paper some answers to these questions:

- What do I need to build more empathy towards others?
- How do I ask for more empathy from others?
- How open am I to receive empathy from others?
- In what type of situations am I more prone to be empathetic towards myself? When I want something from others or when others need something from me?
- How do I react when I see people who need empathy?

#### Reflection (10')



Close the session with a set of questions:

- How did you feel during the improvisation?
- Did you feel the need to give up on yourself in order to share something with others?
- Did you feel the desire to show empathy to others?
- How did you feel and what happened to you when you were too empathetic? And when you were not empathetic at all?
- Where did you feel more comfortable?
- How was it to be in the role of the observer?
- Do you think empathy is just about others or about yourself as well?
- What surprised you the most while hearing other scenarios?



## Individual work version



Duration: 55 minutes

### STEP 1 : ( 5 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the concept of empathy with a small discussion on self-oriented empathy, and empathy oriented towards others:

- What is empathy?
- Where do you meet it in your everyday life?

After this introduction, the facilitator can introduce some additional details:

Empathic communication has three parts:

- Careful listening
- Recognizing the feelings experienced by the other person
- Talking to the person about how you perceive these feelings

To understand another person's emotions:

- Look at the other person
- Listen at what the other person is saying
- Think about how the other person might feel
- Think of ways to show that you understand how he feels
- Decide what would be the best way and do it



### STEP 2 : ( 20 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the first part of the working task, which is about self-oriented empathy towards and empathy towards others.

The participant receives two A4 papers. The facilitator invites the participant to draw his hand on one page, and the other hand on the second page (trace the palm on the paper):

- On the drawing of one hand, write on each finger how you practically show empathy towards yourself. Concrete practical examples from your life.
- On the other hand, write on each finger how you practically show empathy towards others (work, family, school, entourage of friends, strangers, etc.). Concrete, practical examples.



The facilitator invites the participant to read out loud his thoughts. The facilitator might explore further the answers, if the time allows.

### STEP 3 : ( 5 MINS)

The facilitator explains that the participant will receive different scenarios. All scenarios describe a particular context from society, work, family, school, etc. and will focus on exploring empathy.

The participant has time to read all the scenarios and to answer some questions addressed by the facilitator after each scenario. It is important that the participant provides a quick answer, without allowing too much time to think, but rather concentrating on spontaneous thoughts.



#### STEP 4: ( 20 MINS)

The facilitator or the participant reads out loud the 1st scenario and then answers two questions:

1. What do you think and feel when you read this scenario? Try to imagine it.
2. What does the main character of the situation think and feel?

After the 1st scenario, read the 2nd one and continue with at least 3 scenarios. The scenarios are included in [Appendix 2](#).



The second way to ask questions is: For participants with higher cognitive capacities, the facilitator can address more detailed questions, as indicated in [Appendix 3](#):

- What do you think and feel when you read this scenario and try to imagine it?
- What does the main character of the situation think and feel?
- Different and common feelings and thoughts? If so, then why are there differences? What you feel and think can be called empathy? Why Yes or No?

#### Reflection (5')



The facilitator thanks the participant for his/her engagement in the session. The session ends with a set of questions:

- How did you feel during the activities?
- Do you feel the need to give up on yourself in order to share something with others in everyday life?
- Do you think empathy is just about others or about yourself as well?
- What surprised you the most while doing the activities?

#### Preparation

The facilitator needs to have a good command of improvisation-based activities. It is highly recommended to have basic experience in working with script-based performance.

A minimum knowledge about the mechanisms of empathy and compassion is desirable, but also about group facilitation and how to lead reflection sessions.



#### List of materials:

Scenarios printed or sent via a message, an open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.

#### Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation is by observation. The facilitator may focus on how the participants can find inner resources for being empathetic towards themselves in a way that they don't harm others. The reflection moment is highly relevant, especially the 2nd question.





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## Additional resources

Materials available online:

On empathy:

<https://cbt-therapist.net/en/sho-take-bazovi-emocijni-potrebi>

<https://www.goodlivesmodel.com/information.shtml#General>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-empathy-2795562>

[https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/empathy\\_](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/empathy_)

[https://lesley.edu/article/the-psychology-of-emotional-and-cognitive-empathy\\_](https://lesley.edu/article/the-psychology-of-emotional-and-cognitive-empathy_)



## Appendix 1.A - Scenarios. Group work

### Scenario 1



You are with your partner walking in the park and you see someone who feels sick in front of you.

#### Roles given:

A: the sick person (initiates the sentence\*)

B. your partner

C. you

**A says: "I feel really bad, I am very sick..."**

### Scenario 2



Your boss is arguing with one of his employees because he thinks the employee made a mistake. You assist the whole scene.

#### Roles given:

A: the boss (initiates the sentence\*)

B. the employee

C. you

**A says: "Are you stupid, what did you do with the folder of the project?"**

### Scenario 3



A fire broke out at the house of one neighbor, the second neighbor (who doesn't like the one whose house is on fire) sees this.

#### Roles given:

A: the first neighbor (initiates the sentence\*)

B. the other neighbor

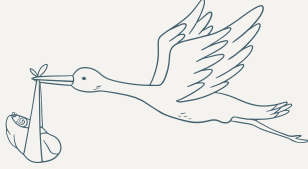
C. you

**A says: "Help me, my house is burning!"**



## Appendix 1.B - Scenarios. Group work

### Scenario 4



The mother and the daughter have a tense discussion. The daughter found out recently that she is pregnant and doesn't really want to keep the baby. The mother wants to force her to keep the baby.

#### Roles given:

- A: the mother (initiates the sentence\*)
- B. the pregnant daughter
- C. you

**A says: "You are going to have this baby!"**

### Scenario 5



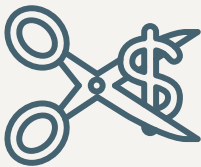
You go to the store. An old man appears in front of you asking for money for food.

#### Roles given:

- A: the old man (initiates the sentence\*)
- B. the seller
- C. you

**A says: "I am sorry, I need to eat ...."**

### Scenario 6



You just got to work, and your boss is having a bad day and is yelling at all the employees, especially at one of them, complaining about how unhappy he is with the way you work.

#### Roles given:

- A: the boss (initiates the sentence\*)
- B. the employee
- C. you

**A says: "I will cut your salary for bad results!"**



---

## Appendix 2 - Scenarios. Individual work

1) You are with your spouse and you walk in the park. You see someone who feels sick in front of you.

2) Your boss is arguing with one of his employees because he thinks the employee made a mistake. You assist the whole scene.

3) You just found out that a fire broke out at the house of some neighbors you don't like.

4) You are with a friend who has just found out that she will have a child she did not want.

5) You go to the store. An old man appears in front of you asking for money for food.

6) You just got to work, and your boss is having a bad day and is yelling at all the employees, complaining about how unhappy he is with the way you work.



### Appendix 3 - Scenarios. Individual work: additional questions

Scenario	Your thoughts and emotions	A character's thoughts and emotions	Different  Common
1) You are with your spouse and you walk in the park. You see someone who feels sick in front of you.			
2) Your boss is arguing with one of his employees because he thinks the employee made a mistake. You assist the whole scene.			
3) You just found out that a fire broke out at the house of some neighbors you don't like.			
4) You are with a friend who has just found out that she will have a child she did not want.			
5) You go to the store. An old man appears in front of you asking for money for food.			
6) You just got to work, and your boss is having a bad day and is yelling at all the employees, complaining about how unhappy he is with the way you work.			



## Diagram of my world



**Initiator:**  
State Probation Service, Latvia

**Tags:** Human rights  
education



### Overall description:

This method aims to give participants the opportunity to represent the significant connections in their lives that affect them both positively and negatively. This activity helps participants' to focus on their basic needs (rights): family, friends, work, interests, spiritual, cultural needs.

The method stimulates participants' introspection processes, aiming at observing what connections he has in his life.

This method helps participants to build self-compassion.



### Objectives:

- Understanding which of the basic human needs are fulfilled in the participant's life.
- Understanding which of the basic human needs are not met in the participant's life and what effect this has on the participant's emotions, well-being and thoughts.
- Improving relationships with others through better self-awareness;
- Expressing and managing feelings.

Group work version



Duration: 80 minutes

### STEP 1: (5 MIN)

The facilitator can start the activity with an energizing exercise: the participants are asked to walk around the space, feel free, feel light. Just walk and relax.

After 3 minutes walking, the participants are asked to find a pair. They can use only their eyes, without words.



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## STEP 2 : (10 MIN)

### Introduction to main activity.

Implementing The diagram of my world activity.

"Who Am I? and what impact our environment has on who we are.

In this session, the participants will delve into the exploration of self-identity and gain awareness of how each person's environment influences them, constructively or non-constructively.

By engaging in this process, the participants can deepen their understanding of themselves and make informed choices about the influences they allow into their lives.

### Notes for the facilitator:



- The facilitator reminds the group that this is a safe and supportive space, and each individual's experiences and perspectives are valuable.
- The facilitator underlines, that this group dynamic session serves as a catalyst for personal growth and development. Each participant's journey is unique, and the experience of sharing and learning together can foster self-awareness and cultivate environments that nurture each authentic selves.

## STEP 3: (5 MIN)

### Self-Exploration "who am I"

The facilitator will begin by giving each participant a few minutes to reflect individually on the question, "Who am I?" Encourage them to explore their identities, values, beliefs, and aspirations.

They journal this self-inquiry process in a notebook using automatic writing.

## STEP 4: (10 MIN)

### Sharing Personal Narratives in pairs

The participants are invited to share, in pairs, their personal narratives, taking turns in a supportive and non-judgmental environment. Each participant can take about 10 minutes to share their journey of self-discovery, focusing on significant events, relationships, and experiences that have influenced their sense of self, in a constructive and destructive way

## STEP 5 : (20 MIN)

### Creating the connections in their life: both constructive and destructive.

The facilitator guides the participants to reflect on the influences of their environment (e.g., family, friends, culture, media, education) that have shaped their identities. The participants are encouraged to consider both constructive and non-constructive influences. They can write down key points and examples.

Participants can jot down "who they are" on a piece of paper using different materials in a creative process, and start making connections to people, places and things they feel connected to and that influence their life; This can include personality traits, people, pets, places, things that give strength, spiritual values, hobbies, groups, beliefs, books, music, etc. Everything that is important to their values and life.

After they write down "who they are", the participants are asked to **add positive and negative influences** in their life and draw them.



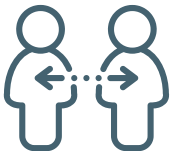
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Notes for the facilitator:



- Encourage group members to identify both the positive links that are resources and the negative links that are associated with difficulties, substance abuse or offending.

### Reflection (20')



#### Reflection in pairs

In the same pairs as before, the participants share the diagram of their world that they have created, and the positive/constructive and negative/destructive influences. The focus is on:

- Detecting emotions, beliefs and behaviors.
- Detecting your needs.
- How could you cultivate a more positive and supportive environment? Identify actions they can take to align your environment with your personal values and growth aspirations.

#### The group reflection

The group sits in a circle and share the main insights, the important moments during the activity. A reflection moment is conducted by the facilitator:

- How do you feel?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How was it for you to think about influences in your life?
- What was most difficult for you during the activity? What do you realize about yourself acknowledging this: positive and negative influences?
- How do you distinguish between constructive and non-constructive influences?
- How have these influences impacted your sense of self and personal growth?
- When you think about negative influences in your life: what effect do they have on your emotions, well-being, the quality of your life and thoughts?
- When you think about positive influences in your life: what effect they have on your emotions, well-being, the quality of your life and thoughts?
- What strategies can we employ to cultivate a positive environment and minimize negative influences?

Notes for the facilitator:



- In the closing remarks, the facilitator emphasize the significance of self-awareness and the ongoing process of understanding oneself. Encourages participants to support each other beyond the session and continue exploring their identities and environmental influences constructively.





**STEP 1 : (10 MIN)**

The facilitator introduces the participant with the topic of the activity: In order to understand today's topic, I will ask you one question. Please write your answers on a paper.

**The question is: Who are you?**

The facilitator can guide the participant by saying:

Feel free and let your thoughts flow, write on the page everything that comes to your mind. There are no right or wrong answers.

When the participant finishes, the facilitator asks him/her to read outloud what is written on the page. After, the facilitator can say the following: who you are, how you look at the world, what is important to you and what is not, all this is influenced by the people and the environment in which you live.

In today's task, I will ask you to think about what are the things that have influenced you in your life or are influencing you now, which have made you the way you are!

To help you identify and visualize connections in your life, I will give to you paper and drawing materials.

The facilitator can ask the participant: do you understand the topic? Can you tell me how you understand the topic? And the facilitator can explain to the participant if he does not understand.

**STEP 2 : (30 MIN)**

The facilitator gives the participant paper (it can be A4 or bigger paper) and asks him to draw himself in the center, he can depict himself however he wants.

After the participant finishes to draw himself, the facilitator can say: Now I will ask you to think and draw all positive and also negative influences, what you see as important in your life.

These influences include people inside and outside participants' family circle. It also includes work, cultural and spiritual values, places, objects, music and things that are important to the participant. This is an opportunity to visualize those things that affect the participants in positive and negative ways.

The facilitator asks the participant to think about the people, places and things he feels connected to and that influenced his life positively. This can include people, pets, places, things that give strength, spiritual values, hobbies, groups, beliefs, books, music, etc. Everything that is important to his values and life.

The participant can use symbols, words, lines, drawings to represent different influences and the connections between themselves and them.

The participant is asked to pay attention to the distance between himself and the depicted objects. Closer to what affects his life the most, and further away what has the least effect on his life.



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The facilitator points out that there is no one correct model for how to draw it, each diagram will be unique.

When the participant finishes the task, the facilitator asks the participant to think about the negative influences in his life and draw them the same way as positive (in the same picture, participant can use different color or drawing material): people, places and things he feels connected to and that influence his life negatively. This can include people, places, negative values, hobbies, groups, beliefs, books, music, substances, some negative experiences etc.

Notes for the facilitator:



The facilitator encourages the participant to identify both the positive links that are resources and the negative links that are associated with difficulties, substance abuse or offending.

### Reflection (10')



The facilitator encourages the participant to share all of his life's negative influences:

- Today, during the first activity, you said that You are...( the facilitator names the things that the participant wrote about himself in the introductory activity).
- Tell me about the negative influences in your life, how they affect you and who you are?
- Which of the influences is closer and why?

Next, encourages the participant to share all of his life's positive influences:

- Tell me about the positive influences in your life, how they affect you and who you are?
- Which of the influences is closer and why?

Further, the facilitator asks the participant:

- To talk about the diagram of his world, how the objects on it affect him and how he is related to them.
- What emotions were brought up while doing the task?
- When you think about negative influences in your life: what effect do they have on your emotions, well-being, the quality of your life and thoughts?
- When you think about positive influences in your life: what effect they have on your emotions, well-being, the quality of your life and thoughts?

The facilitator helps the participant to detect emotions, beliefs and behaviors:

- Detect participant's needs.
- How could you cultivate a more positive and supportive environment? Identify actions he can take to align his environment with his personal values and growth aspirations.



## Reflection (10')



Finally, the facilitator can ask the participant what were the main insights, important moments during the exercise:

- How do you feel?
- What were the main meaningful moments during the activity?
- How was it for you to think about influences in your life?
- What was most difficult for you during the activity? What do you realize about yourself acknowledging this: positive and negative influences?

## Preparation

The facilitator has to pay attention to the sensitivity of this method, has to have basic knowledge about human needs and rights.



**List of materials:** A4 or A3 format sheets, markers, crayons, any convenient drawing tools

## Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation of the activity is verbally, through the end of the session - in the reflection moments, but also by observation, throughout the whole activity. The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out, from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participant, how many positive and negative influences and examples the participant can think and draw, to his non-verbal language, the relevance of his answers related to the activity objectives, etc.

By the end of the activity, the facilitator will analyse the answers provided by participants, in order to improve the activity's particularities and better adapt it to the target group.

## Additional resources

Materials available online about human rights:

<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>



# Domino of my decisions



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Human rights  
education



## Overall description:

The method uses the concept of the domino effect, where one decision triggers impact in other people's life to an extent that is not easy to determine at the moment of that decision. The method could be used also to underline the concept of the 'butterfly effect' or the 'chain-reaction' effect, but we also propose a handout that includes a domino card, as they are well known and could be easily replicated by the facilitators.

We all know that a decision could impact the life of other persons to an extent or another, but we don't really understand what impact is caused by that decision until we visualize it. When a decision is directly linked to the human rights of others and there is a risk of violating one's basic human rights, the impact could be harmful and lasting, with consequences that are less visible, but with implications in multiple aspects of life.

Through this method, we intend to emphasize the 'red line' of the consequences triggered by a personal decision that violates the basic human rights of another person.



## Objectives:

- To broaden the understanding of the concept of human rights.
- To calibrate one's decisional processes to the inviolability of others' human rights
- To develop personal values around the concept of human rights.
- To raise awareness of the link between committing a crime and the violation of basic human rights.

Group work version



Duration: 120 minutes

## STEP 1 : (15 MINS)

### Introduction, human right cards

The activity starts with the participants standing in a circle. In the middle of the room, on the floor is a 'cloud' of cards with different human rights as indicated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The facilitator introduces the topic and launches an open question about what 'human rights' means to the participants. After collecting a number of 3-5 quick answers, the facilitator splits the group in working formations of 3-5 participants.

Each group is invited to select one card from the floor with one human right they will work on. The first task consists of a short non-guided discussion in the groups about the selected human right and about the actions that could lead to a violation of that human right.



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## STEP 2 : (30 MINS)

### Create a story

In the working groups created; After 4-5 minutes of discussion, they are invited to create the story of a person of their age (they can select one person from the group) who is a victim of a violation of that human right. Through a very simple situation, they should imagine/decide on an intentional crime that led to a violation of that human right. It is important to emphasize the volitive type of the crime, as the intention of the offender is conscious. The situation should bring together at least two persons and a clear reason for committing that crime, as well as a clear description of how human rights are violated. If the crime violates more than one human right, the participants are asked to focus on that one they selected from the floor.

**EXAMPLE:** The facilitator can provide a simple example of how this story creation goes. One group might select the right to equal access to medical care (art. 25 in the UDHR). John is a 22 y.o. football player who got a severe injury during training. The coach calls the ambulance and when they arrive, the medic observes that John is not a native of the country, but a foreigner and decides to address the case superficially, by not taking John to the hospital, even if this case would legally require this medical action. What happened to John? Which was the crime? How were human rights violated? Now let's go a bit further: what could happen to John from now on? Let's see an immediate consequence, maybe not that severe and then let's imagine a more severe one and to develop this scenario to an extreme consequence.

Note for the facilitator:



It is very important that the facilitator describes the exact moment of that crime, as the activity explores the immediate consequences of that action.

Working in their groups, the participants are asked to think of 5 to 7 consequences that could be triggered by that crime (the intentional action) and try to imagine a chain of consequences that starts with an immediate one and progresses to consequences that might happen in the next 2-3 days for their chosen character and for society. For example, in the case of a drug trafficking crime, the immediate consequence for the person would be that he/she is at risk of being charged with the crime, while for the society the immediate consequence is the risk that the person who bought the drugs broke his/her values and healthy self-esteem, while a consequence that might happen in the next hours is that this person could harm his/her health.

They have 20 minutes to imagine a scenario based on these indications.

## STEP 3 : (35 MINS)

### Domino chain reaction

Once they have drafted the scenario with the consequences, they are given a set of 6 domino pieces and the **handout from the Appendix**. They are invited to place the domino pieces standing on the small marks on the central parts of the handouts.



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They add the same number of domino pieces as the number of consequences previously discussed and write or stick on each domino piece a paper with that potential consequence from the one that might happen in the first minute to the one that could happen in 2-3 days from the crime. On each consequence, they try to add more details and even illustrations with their character. They arrange the domino pieces that could create the chain-reaction based on the story they imagined by collapsing the domino pieces. Not more than 10 minutes is allocated for the creation of the setup.

Once they consider that they are ready, the last step of this part is the collapse of the domino pieces by pushing the first one against the next one. It is important that each piece is not stuck to the paper, so it can collapse. The visual effect is powerful and describes the rapid pace of propagation of effects at individual and society levels. Before collapsing the domino pieces, the facilitator invites the group to observe closely the domino-reaction and to analyze their own feelings and body reactions when the domino pieces are falling.

### STEP 3 : (15 MINS)

#### Solidify a domino piece

Right after the collapse of the domino pieces, the participants are invited to analyze the image and to discuss about the unfolding effect of the consequences in society.

For the next step, the participants are invited to rearrange the domino pieces in the initial position and to choose one consequence that they consider it could be stopped. They are invited to describe what actions could they do in order to prevent the development of that consequence. Then, they will take out that piece of domino from the line and will collapse again the first piece, observing that other pieces did not collapse.

In this way, they understand how much effort is needed to support a person whose human rights are violated by committing a crime. Also, they can observe how fragile human rights are, to what extent the damage can go and how many resources are needed to bolster them. Also, they can observe what it means to work with a person who faced any type of violation of human rights.

For this second simulation, they will have a maximum of 10 minutes.

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### Reflection (15')



The facilitator closes the session by regrouping the participants in the plenary. Some reflection questions are addressed:

- Have you ever thought about the consequences of your decisions?
- When was the last time you talked about human rights?
- How difficult or easy is it to violate one's human rights?
- How easy is it to fix the consequences of a decision that creates a damaging impact in society?
- How often do you think of other's decisions in your life?
- Which could be the easiest way to prevent the violation of human rights?
- How often do you consider fixing the decisions you made and might cause a negative impact to others?
- Please describe this activity in some keywords.



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\*\*\*The facilitator can prioritize or change these questions according to the profile of the participants.

## Individual work version



Duration: 90 minutes

### STEP 1 : (15 MINS)

The activity starts with the participant looking at the cards:

In the middle of the room, on the floor (or on the table) is a 'cloud' of cards with different human rights as indicated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The facilitator introduces the topic and launches an open question about what 'human rights' means to the participant.

After collecting a number of 3-5 quick answers, the facilitator invites the participant:

- to select one card from the floor with one human right he will work on. The first task consists of a short non-guided discussion with the participant about the selected human right and about the actions that could lead to a violation of that human right.

### STEP 2 : (30 MINS)

After 4-5 minutes of discussion with the facilitator, the participant is invited to create the story of a person of his age who is a victim of a violation of that human right. Through a very simple situation, he should imagine/decide on an intentional crime that led to a violation of that human right. It is important to emphasize the volitive type of the crime, as the intention of the offender is conscious. The situation should bring together at least two persons and a clear reason for committing that crime, as well as a clear description of how human rights are violated. If the crime violates more than one human right, the participant is asked to focus on that one he selected from the floor.

The participant is asked to think of 5 to 7 consequences that could be triggered by that crime (the intentional action) and try to imagine a chain of consequences that starts with a less damaging one and progresses to an extreme situation or condition for his chosen character.

The facilitator can provide a simple **example** of how this story creation goes. The participant might select the right to equal access to medical care (art. 25 in the UDHR). John is a 22 y.o. football player who got a severe injury during a training. The coach calls the ambulance and when they arrive, the medic observes that John is not a native of the country, but a foreigner and decides to address the case superficially, by not taking John to the hospital, even if this case would legally require this medical action. What happened to John? Which was the crime? How were human rights violated? Now let's go a bit further: what could happen to John from now on? Let's see an immediate consequence, maybe not that severe and then let's imagine a more severe one and to develop this scenario to an extreme consequence.

Participant have 20 minutes to imagine a scenario based on these indications.



### STEP 3 : (25 MINS)

Once participant has drafted the scenario with the consequences, he/she is given a set of materials he/she could use to create a domino-chain reaction: papers, cardboards, wood, plastic, etc., materials that are solid and cannot break or cause injuries to participant as they collapse or touch the floor. He/she is invited to create some blocks that can stand, similar to domino pieces. The blocks can be of different sizes as well, according to the consequence they represent.

The participant builds the same number of blocks as the number of consequences previously discussed and writes on each block that potential consequence. On each consequence, he/she tries to add more details and even illustrations with his character. He/she arranges the installation and creates the chain-reaction based on the story he/she imagined. The installation could go in a single direction or it can have branches. No more than 20 minutes is allocated for the creation of the installation.

Once the participant considers that he/she is ready, the last step of this part is the collapse of the blocks by pushing the first block against the next one. It is important that each block is not anchored in the floor, so it can collapse.

### STEP 4 : (10 MINS)

The participant analyzes the blocks a bit and tries to bolster at least one block with ingredients that could make the block more solid, so he understands how much effort is needed to support a person whose human rights are violated. By this, he/she can observe how fragile human rights are, to what extent the damage can go and how many resources are needed to bolster them. Also, he/she can observe what it requires to work with a person who faced any type of violation of human rights. The participant re-arranges the installation to the initial shape (as much as possible) and tries to collapse it again, but with the aim of stopping the collapse through bolstering one of the blocks.

For this second simulation, the allocated time is maximum of 10 minutes.

#### Reflection (10')



The facilitator closes the session with some reflection questions:

- Have you ever thought about the consequences of your decisions?
- When was the last time you talked about human rights?
- How difficult or easy is it to violate one's human rights?
- How easy is it to fix the consequences of a decision that creates a damaging impact in society?
- How often do you think of other's decisions in your life?
- Which could be the easiest way to prevent the violation of human rights?
- How often do you consider fixing the decisions you made and might cause a negative impact to others?
- Please describe this activity in some keywords

The facilitator can prioritize or change these questions according to the profile of the participant.





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## Preparation

It is very important that the facilitator knows the profile of their participants, especially in relation to the human rights selected for the tasks. It is mandatory for the facilitator to read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to select those rights that could be adequate to the profile of the group. It is recommended to select those rights which can expand to practical examples of scenarios.



### List of materials:

Cards with human rights, not more than 10. We will not indicate which human rights to work with, but please consider the advice mentioned in the preparation section. In order to simplify the process, we recommend you to summarize each human right to a maximum 5-6 words phrase.

Speakers for background music, pencils or pens and papers for writing the scenarios.

Domino pieces or materials that could be used to create a domino-chain reaction: papers, cardboards, wood, plastic, etc., materials that are solid and cannot break or cause injuries to any participant as they collapse or touch the floor.

An open space where the domino installations could be placed. A broom and disposable bags for collecting any materials that need to be removed during and after the session.

### Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated by observing the complexity of the scenarios created by each group and by the diversity of consequences imagined.

Another relevant evaluation criterion is the level of engagement in finding ingredients that could stop the collapse of the domino installation, as these are the expression of the participants' contribution to fix their own decisions.

The reflection moment in the end is relevant by assessing how the method might change the perspective of their own decisions.

### Additional resources

Materials available online:

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights)

<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>



Handout – Domino of my decisions

Consequence 6:  
2-3 days)

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The cost for society  
.....

Consequence 5:  
(24 hours)

\_\_\_\_\_

The cost for society  
.....

Consequence 4:  
(12 hours)

\_\_\_\_\_

The cost for society  
.....

Consequence 3:  
(6 hours)

\_\_\_\_\_

The cost for society  
.....

Consequence 2:  
(10 minutes)

\_\_\_\_\_

The cost for society  
.....

Consequence 1:  
(1 minute)

\_\_\_\_\_

The cost for society  
.....



# The sculptor of human rights



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Human rights  
education



## Overall description:

The method is an exercise of creativity and imagination that stimulates the participants to brainstorm about the importance of all human rights in general. The activity enhances the observing skills of teenagers regarding particular human rights that are connected to a healthy society. Human rights are usually considered an abstract concept and are usually not understood as having a clear transferability to a concrete day-to-day situation. There is a strong connection between committing a crime and violating a basic human right, especially when the victim's life is endangered or when the civil rights are oppressed. The activity has a both-ways approach, since the participants will reflect on the impact of violating others' human rights, but also on the impact of being a victim of human rights violation.



## Objectives:

- To emphasize the existence and importance of human rights in general.
- Reduced tendency to neglect or even violate other's human rights.
- Developing an easy-to-create tool that helps one visualize the diversity of human rights in society.

Group work version



Duration: 90 minutes

## STEP 1 : (10 MINS)

### HR puzzle introduction.

The activity starts in an open space, with a circle or any other working arrangement that allows participants to stand up and use the space. The facilitator could opt for two different opening moments for introducing the topic of human rights.

A

**In the first option**, the facilitator creates a puzzle of letters on the floor with this concept (in the national language) and invites the participants to form the correct words. After completing this task, some opening questions are addressed to the group about what they think `human rights` and `civil rights` mean to them. Some of these answers could be added on a flipchart or on a paper and they could be the starting point of the next steps of the activity.

The facilitator selects 3-4 answers indicated by the participants and refines them so they get the phrase of some examples of human rights as indicated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



## B

In the **second option**, the facilitator places randomly on the floor 20-25 papers with various human and civil rights facing the floor (the content of the paper is not revealed for the participants in the beginning). The facilitator invites the participants to walk the space and to slowly reveal the papers, and to keep walking. Meanwhile, some guiding sentences and questions are addressed to the participants:

- to observe the variety of rights and to imagine what they mean to them
- how they impact our life
- who is in charge with securing these rights
- what is our contribution for observing the human rights
- what consequences could happen if we would not observe these rights.

In the end of the exploration, the facilitator invites the participants to comment on which is a minimum **set of human rights** needed for a functional life in society.

### STEP 2 : (20 MINS)

#### Working on a case in groups.

The group is split in formations of 3-4 participants and they are invited to think of the next **scenario**: a person of their age (they can select one person in their group to relate to someone's age) lands on Earth and meets them. The Government assigned them to equip this person with the human rights and civil rights they consider as being needed to have a functional life in their country.

They can write these rights on a paper, in the order they want. An important part of the task is to indicate the rights they consider as needed to have a functional life.

The facilitator mentions that they will craft a sculpture which illustrates the visual identity of this person, and also the human and civil rights they chose.

The facilitator can provide a simple **example** (not limitative to this one), so the participants could relate to a clear direction of work.

"Michael landed on Earth and has no clue about what to do here, the only competence he has at this moment is that he can talk in the same language that they use (as a group). For example, we could provide Michael the right to equal justice and the right to life. What does each one mean? The right to equal justice could be added by drawing a book, the civil or panel code on the back of the sculpture."

The facilitator makes sure to check with the groups what rights they indicate and to channel the discussion to a realistic one, rather than letting the dynamic slide to a non-sense or ironic one.

### STEP 3 : (25 MINS)

#### Create an sculpture.

After this step, the facilitator provides each group some materials they can use in order to create a sculpture of that person and to add to that person's shape all the human rights and civil rights they indicated previously. These rights could be added in a visual way, as creative as possible, either as physical characteristics of the person, or as objects they use or that surround them. The task can be adjusted to the participants' level of comprehension, therefore the facilitator could also ask the groups to select only one right they consider as being the most relevant and to illustrate it through the sculpture.



After all the groups create their sculpture, a short visit of the gallery of sculptures is proposed by the facilitator, so each group presents their statue to the other groups, like in a bazaar. They return to their initial places after 4-5 minutes.

#### STEP 4 : (20 MINS)

##### Handout on one HR

Working in the same groups, the facilitator invites them to choose one of the rights indicated and illustrated and to take it away from the sculpture. They will further work on this example.

Each group receives the '**Handout with rights and consequences**' ([Appendix 1](#)) and is tasked with writing the following elements: in the middle of the handout it is placed the 'right' they decided to remove from the sculpture, in the left side they will describe the consequences of violating that human right, and in the right part of the handout are the actions they could take to fix and to prevent the violation of that human right.

The facilitator describes some **examples of consequences**, such as: limitation to labor market, health risks, damaged reputation, damaged self-esteem, risk of becoming victim of violence, unequal rights in the same organizations, etc. Also, some **examples of preventing** the violation of that right can be introduced: early education, building empathy and assertive communication, learning other's needs, etc.

They have a maximum of 20 minutes for completing this step.

The facilitator invites them to conclude this part of the session by sharing in their small groups the conclusions of this experience.

#### STEP 5 : (5 MINS)

##### Poem on HR.

One option to summarize the session's outcomes consists of writing each conclusion in a poetic way, in a sentence. The facilitator collects all sentences and reads them all together as a final poem of the activity.

#### Reflection (10')



The session is closed with a set of reflection questions:

- What is a human right or a civil right?
- Who do you think that invented these rights?
- When was the last time you talked about human rights?
- How difficult or easy is it to violate one's human rights?
- Why do you think that people violate others' human or civil rights?
- Who should guard civil and human rights of a community?
- How would you describe your contribution to observe and preserve human and civil rights in your community?
- Do you consider that you have ever been a victim of civil or human rights violation? Why do you consider that this happened and how did that make you feel?
- In what way was this session important to you?
- What have you learnt about yourself in this session and how can you use these learnings in future?



\*\*\*The facilitator can add other questions and adapt them to the profile of the participants.

## Individual work version



Duration: 90 minutes

### STEP 1 : (10 MINS)

The activity starts in an open space, with a circle or any other working arrangement that allows participants to stand up and use the space. The facilitator could opt for two different opening moments for introducing the topic of human rights.

A

**In the first option**, the activity starts and the facilitator introduces the topic of `human rights` by creating a puzzle of letters with this concept (in the national language, each letter is printed on the A4 page separately) and invites the participant to form the correct words. After completing this task, some opening questions are addressed to the participant about what he thinks `human rights` and `civil rights` mean to him. Some of these answers could be added on a flipchart or on a paper and they could be the starting point of the next steps of the activity.

The facilitator selects 3-4 answers indicated by the participant and refines them so they get the phrase of some examples of human rights as indicated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

B

**In the second option**, the facilitator places randomly on the floor 20-25 papers with various human and civil rights facing the floor (the content of the paper is not revealed for the participant in the beginning). The facilitator invites the participant to walk the space and to slowly reveal the papers, and to keep walking. Meanwhile, some guiding sentences and questions are addressed to the participant:

- to observe the variety of rights and to imagine what they mean to them
- how they impact our life
- who is in charge with securing these rights
- what is our contribution for observing the human rights
- what consequences could happen if we would not observe these rights.

In the end of the exploration, the facilitator invites the participants to comment on which is a minimum **set of human rights** needed for a functional life in society.

### STEP 2 : (20 MINS)

The participant is invited to think of the next **scenario**: a person of his age lands on Earth and meets him. The government asks him to give this person the human rights and civil rights he considers as being needed to have a functional life in his country.

He can write these rights on a paper, no matter in what order, but to define them, as many as possible.



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The facilitator can provide a simple **example** (not limitative to this one), so the participant could relate to a clear avenue of work:

Michael landed on Earth and has no clue about what to do here, the only competence it has at this moment is to talk in the same language that they use. For example, we could provide Michael the right to equal justice and the right to life. What does each one of them mean? The right to equal justice could be added by drawing a book, the civil or panel code on the back of the statue.

The facilitator makes sure to check with the participant what rights he indicate and to channel the discussion to a realistic one, rather than letting the dynamic slide to a non-sense or ironic one.

### **STEP 3 : (25 MINS)**

After this step, the facilitator provides the participant with some materials he/she can use to create a sculpture of that person, and to add to the person's shape all the human and civil rights he/she previously indicated. These 'rights' could be added in a visual way, as creative as possible, either as physical characteristics of the person, or as objects surrounding the person, or the objects that the person uses. The task can be adjusted to the participant's level of understanding, therefore the facilitator can ask the participant to select only one 'right' he/she considers as being the most important, and to illustrate it through the sculpture of the person.

After the participant creates his statue, he presents the statue to facilitator.

### **STEP 4 : (25 MINS)**

In the next step the facilitator invites the participant to choose one of the 'rights' indicated and illustrated and to take it away from the sculpture. He/she will further focus the work on this human right.

The participant receives the '**Handout with rights and consequences**' ([Appendix 1](#)), and is tasked with writing the following elements: in the center of the handout it is the 'right' he decided to take away from the sculpture, in the left side is the consequence of violating that human right, and in the right part of the handout are the measures he could take to fix and to prevent the violation of that human right.

The facilitator describes some **examples of consequences**, such as: limitation to labor market, health risks, damaged reputation, damaged self-esteem, risk of becoming victim of violence, unequal rights in the same organizations, etc.

Participant have a maximum 20 minutes for completing this step.

The facilitator invites the participant to conclude this part of the session by sharing the conclusions of this experience.



## Reflection (15')



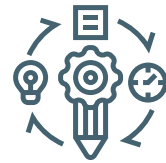
The session is closed with a set of reflection questions:

- What is a human right or a civil right?
- Who do you think that invented these rights?
- When was the last time you talked about human rights?
- How difficult or easy it is to violate one's human rights?
- Why do you think that people violate others' human or civil rights?
- Who should guard civil and human rights of a community?
- How would you describe your contribution to observe and preserve human and civil rights in your community?
- Do you consider that you have ever been a victim of civil or human rights violation? Why do you consider that this happen and how did that make you feel?
- In what way was this session important to you?
- What have you learnt about yourself in this session and how can you use these learnings in future?

The facilitator can add other questions and adapt them to the profile of the participant.

## Preparation

As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a complex instrument, it is highly recommended that the facilitator assimilates the content of it at least at a basic level. Also, the facilitator should select some human rights from the UDHR that could be used immediately as relevant examples in the session (examples that each group can add to the participants' sculptures).



## List of materials:

Speakers for background music, pencils or pens and papers for describing the human rights they would like to add to their 'guest'.

Materials that could be used to create the sculpture: papers, cardboards, glue, tape, scissors, etc., materials that are easy to craft and manipulate.

An open space where the sculptures could be displayed.

Disposable bags for collecting any materials that need to be removed during and after the session.





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## Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated through the complexity of the rights added to the 'guest'. Also, an important focus should be placed on the way participants use the handout, mainly on the measures they consider for preserving the human and civil rights of others.

The ending part of the session, the reflection moment, is also highly relevant, mainly through their personal examples of how they consider as being a victim of human or civil rights violation in the past.

## Additional resources

Materials available online:

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights)

<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>



What can I do to  
fix this?  
What can I do to  
prevent this?

....

....

....

Human or  
civil right

Consequences  
of violation

....

2 ....

3 ....



## My good life



**Initiator:**  
State Probation Service, Latvia

**Tags:** Human rights  
education



### Overall description:

According to the Good Life Model, people commit crimes because they are attempting to secure some valued aspects of their life. In this way, offending becomes the outcome of a desire for something that is inherently human and normal to that person. Unfortunately, the desire or goal is manifested in a harmful and antisocial action, due to a spectrum of personal shortcomings and weaknesses. To this, the living environment of that person plays a major role.

The Good Life Model is grounded in the ethical concept of human dignity and universal human rights. The philosophy of the model gravitates around the individuals' ability to formulate and select goals, to design plans, and to act freely in the implementation of these plans. A closely related assumption is the basic premise that all humans value certain states of mind, personal characteristics, and experiences, which are defined as 11 primary goods.



### Objectives:

- Strengthening the ability to formulate and select individual goals, design and implement plans.
- Reduced tendency to neglect or even violate other's human rights.
- To help participants understand the relationship between their own life goals and offending behavior patterns, in order to avoid harming others in their efforts to achieve their own goals.

Group work version



Duration: 90 minutes

### STEP 1 : (10 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the topic of good life, and the aim of the session that consists of designing a good life plan for the participants.

The activity starts as an open discussion following the next questions. The participants are invited to write the answers in their notebook, at least 4-5 answers for each question.

- What comes to your mind when I say 'good life'?
- What is important for you in your life? What are the first things that come up to your mind?
- What are your values, what do you value the most in your life?



## STEP 2: (10 MIN)

**Introduction to Good life concept.** The facilitator introduces briefly the 11 good life (primary good) goals, a set of concepts detailed in [Appendix 1](#), by describing the title and the key words of each goal: Creativity, Excellence in work, Excellence in play, Spirituality, Inner peace, Life, Relatedness, Independence, Knowledge, Community, Happiness.

It is advisable that you have a printed version of the [Appendix 1](#) or to use this [additional material](#), which details the Good Life Model.

## STEP 3: (20 MINS)

**Working with the the 'Positive way-negative way' worksheet.**

After the previous introduction, the facilitator invites the participants to think of how their values are connected with other important aspects of their life, and how they could be linked to these 11 goals.

For example, let's say that one participant says that he likes to enjoy life and do what he wants. From the Good Life Model, this answer could be connected to Independence and Happiness.

The participants receive the handout 'Positive way - Negative way' ([Appendix 2](#)) and are invited to write the following elements:

- In the second column (Positive way), think of positive ways from your life that help you fulfill that specific good life goal. A positive way means that it was helpful and didn't harm the you or somebody else: for example, relaxing by fishing.
- In the third column (Negative way), please try to think and write down negative means you used for fulfilling that good life goal. A negative way means that you know that it harmed you, or somebody else. For example, relaxing and attaining inner peace by using drugs.



The facilitator can provide a simple example (not limitative to this one), so the participant could relate to a clear avenue of work. Let's consider this life goal: Creativity. A positive way to achieve this goal is by creating making music and arts. A negative way to achieve it is, for example, trying to think of more and more creative ways to buy or sell drugs.

## STEP 4: (10 MIN)

After the participants finished the work on this first worksheet, create pairs and invite them to share some aspects. Guide this sharing moment with some questions:

- What did you observe that is important for you in this activity?
- Was it easy to think about positive and negative ways how you fulfill your goals?
- Which of these two came easier to your mind, the positive or the negative ways?



The facilitator can conclude this step with a short motivational speech: seeking out life goals can be similar to finding our way through a maze: 'sometimes we encounter dead ends and challenges. Instead of trying to navigate our way through the maze, it can be tempting to take shortcuts to get what we want', including doing drugs, committing crimes, and being violent. While these shortcuts might provide us some immediate satisfaction, 'they also bring us many long-term negatives effects that take us further away from our goals and our good life.



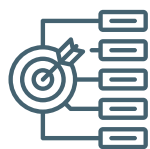
## STEP 5 : (20 MIN)

### Worksheet My Good Life Plan.

The activity continues with the second worksheet, namely 'My Good Life Plan' (Appendix 3). The facilitator invites the participants to create their own Good life plan.

The facilitator might introduce this step by describing that it is important to identify what we want from our new life. These new ingredients of our life can be built on your previous experience, but they can also incorporate new ideas. Once you have identified all these, you will need to outline how you will achieve this – this means setting goals and planning their realisation.

The facilitator introduces the SMART(specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound) approach of setting goals, as a way to attaining higher rates of success. The goals can refer to activities, relationships, jobs, education, training, changes in behavior and attitudes.



The participants receive the second worksheet, namely 'My Good Life Plan' (Appendix 3) and are invited to explore and write the following elements:

- In the second (middle) column, the participants can write rational, practical ways to achieve concrete good life goal;
- In the third column, the participants can write concrete feelings, situations, things, facts that will indicate them that they this goal is reached.

The facilitator may provide some examples of good life goals, such as: being good at play, spending free time in a healthy way, what would you give joy to.

## STEP 6: (10 MIN)

**Embody it.** The facilitator can support the embodiment guiding this process.

The facilitator invites the group to walk around the room as if they have already achieved this life plan, they have already become who they wish to be. Some guiding questions during the walk:

- Walk alone with yourself: how do you feel being who you are now?
- What kind of things do you do?
- What beliefs do you have? What are your values?
- What is your attitude in life?

Invite them to relate to others from this place: How do you feel with others?

### Reflection (10')



The session is closed with a set of reflection questions:

- What means good life to you?
- What do you want in a friendship? Be realistic.
- How are you going to achieve and maintain friendships?
- What are you going to do to cope with loneliness?
- What is inner peace to you? How will you maintain inner peace?
- What means spirituality (purpose/meaning related to a higher power)?
- How will you maintain your own spirituality?
- What kind of work/constructive activity will you start?
- What kind of work/constructive activity will you start and how will you implement it?
- What kind of recreational/fun activities will you do?



- What self-talk or beliefs will you tell yourself to maintain a positive state of being?
- How are you going to maintain your lifestyle so no one gets harmed, including you?
- In what way was this session important to you?
- What have you learnt about yourself in this session and how can you use these learning in future?

The facilitator can add other questions and adapt them to the participants' profile.

## Individual work version



Duration: 55 minutes

The individual version of this method is very similar to the group version. The main differences are:

- the sharing moments are conducted by the facilitator directly with the participant.
- the total time for the facilitation is slightly reduced, as the transition between the steps is smoother and the overall logistics are simplified.
- the final reflection could be shortened and focused on less goals from the Good Life Model.

### Alternative way of implementing the activity:



For the last step, the embodiment of the new goal, if the participant feels that it would not be comfortable with the walking process, you could replace it with a guided meditation, using questions for visualisation:

- How do you see yourself now, with this new goal that is achieved?
- How others see you? How would you like to be seen by others?
- What are the main aspects of your life that have changed?
- Who are the people surrounding you now?
- What do you need to maintain this mood and new reality of your life?

## Preparation

As the Good Lives Model is a structured, strengths based approach, it is highly recommended that the facilitator assimilates the content of it at least at a basic level.



**List of materials:** Appendixes, pens (you can use different color pens). Full descriptions of each primary good for the facilitator, A4 white papers.

## Evaluation of the activity

The activity can be evaluated through the complexity of the good life goals and the ways to achieve them. An important focus should be placed on the way participants use the handouts, mainly on participants' ability to divide positive and negative ways for achieving their life goals.

The ending part of the session, the reflection moment, is also highly relevant, mainly through participants' personal examples of how he will know that he is achieving his Good life goals.



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## Appendix 1 - Descriptions of each primary good (goals) - For facilitator

### Creativity



It is important that we have activities in our lives that we feel good at. In order to feel good about ourselves, we need to have a sense of achievement. This can also help with our self-esteem. This doesn't mean actually being 'the best' in comparison to others, but feeling that we are doing the best we can in whatever we do. This doesn't mean actually being 'the best' in comparison to others, but feeling that we are doing the best we can in whatever we do.

### Excellence in work and play



The excellence in work can also involve feeling like we have 'mastered' activities and skills-training that are important to us in the work place. Additionally, it can include creativity, i.e. being able to create/make new things, come up with new ideas, or be artistic or practical in some way. This can also involve feeling like we have 'mastered' activities and skills-training that are important to us in the work place. Additionally, it can include creativity, i.e. being able to create/make new things, come up with new ideas, or be artistic or practical in some way.

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### Spirituality, Inner peace and Life



This could stem from religion, but it doesn't have to. This could be something like 'being a good friend', 'being a good brother / sister' or contributing to your community in some way. This could be something like 'being a good friend', 'being a good brother / sister' or contributing to your community in some way.

Inner peace is about feeling peaceful and comfortable. It means that we should feel free from difficult feelings, and that we should know how to deal with these feelings if we have them. This also means feeling safe; physically and emotionally.

Life is about how we live our lives in terms of our physical health (exercise, diet, feeling comfortable with our appearance) and emotional health (looking after ourselves inside).

### Relatedness



Relatedness is about having intimate, romantic and familial relationships.



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## Independence



Independence is about feeling like we can manage and control our lives. The ability to make decisions and to feel as though you have a say in your life is very important. This is also about being able to manage the way you behave and the way you feel (e.g. knowing what to do if you have had a bad day). This is also about being able to make decisions and solve everyday problems in life.

## Knowledge



Having knowledge and understanding so we feel informed about our world, so that we feel we understand what is going on around us. Knowledge can come from life experience, what we learn at school, from books or from the media. It does not mean 'being clever', but feeling as though we know what we need to in order to feel ok in the world.

This is about having a sense of belonging and responsibility to the social group you live in. This also includes a sense of fitting in. It is important that we have a group of people where we feel we 'fit'. Belonging might stem from friends, family, colleagues, a religious group or another group of people.

## Community



This is about having a sense of belonging and responsibility to the social group you live in. This also includes a sense of fitting in. It is important that we have a group of people where we feel we 'fit'. Belonging might stem from friends, family, colleagues, a religious group or another group of people.

## Happiness



Feeling good in the here and now.





## Appendix 2 - Worksheet: Positive way - Negative way

GOOD LIFE PRIMARY GOODS	POSITIVE WAY FROM MY LIFE TO ACHIEVE THIS PRIMARY GOOD	NEGATIVE WAY FROM MY LIFE TO ACHIEVE THIS PRIMARY GOOD
1. Life (including healthy living and functioning)		
2. Knowledge (how well informed one feels about things that are important to them)		
3. Excellence in play (hobbies and recreational pursuits)		
4. Excellence in work (including mastery experiences)		
5. Independence (autonomy, power and self-directedness)		
6. Inner peace (freedom from emotional turmoil and stress)		
7. Relatedness (including intimate, romantic, and familial relationships)		
8. Community (connection to wider social groups)		
9. Spirituality (in the broad sense of finding meaning and purpose in life)		
10. Happiness (feeling good in the here and now)		
11. Creativity (expressing oneself through alternative forms)		



### Appendix 3 - Worksheet: My Good Life Plan

MY GOOD LIFE GOAL	WAYS TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL	HOW I WILL KNOW I AM ACHIEVING THIS GOAL
1. Life: living and surviving		
2. Learning and knowing		
3. Being good at play		
4. Being good at work		
5. Personal choice and independence		
6. Peace of mind		
7. Relationships and friendships		
8. Being part of a group		
9. Spirituality/meaning and purpose in life		
10. Happiness: feeling good in the here and now		
11. Creativity		



# The voice behind the photography



**Initiator:**  
IPTA, Romania

**Tags:** Human rights  
education



## Overall description:

This activity aims to improve the capacity of finding solutions to various problems in society, with the purpose of bringing positive change in one's life and in the community. The method is photo-based, therefore a series of images will be used in order to build a conceptual tree, which will cover the following conceptual flow: experience-cause-result-projection.

For example, a student fails an exam, a situation that is caused by the reduced time time dedicated to study. The result, an immediate outcome, is that the student cannot access the next phase of the evaluation. The projection of this, for the student, is that he might not be able to graduate school at all, and consequently will abandon school. But this is something that can easily be addressed and encountered with this activity.

Through this activity, we can explore the community's problems in detail, by deeper understanding the particularities of the context, potential causes, the consequences and the possible solutions. The focus is on empowering the participants to better understand the community they live in, and also the impact of their own actions.



## Objectives:

- Increased awareness of the complexity of community social problems.
- Developed ability to identify and categorize social challenges.
- To detect hidden particularities of certain situations or actions.
- Increased self-efficacy, decision making abilities.
- Develop communication skills.

Group work version



Duration: 90 minutes

## STEP 1 : (15 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the activity by inviting the participants to think about what problems in the society need to be addressed as soon as possible. After collecting some answers, the facilitator invites the participants to provide some potential solutions to these problems in order to bring a positive change in one's life and in the community.

The facilitator forms groups of 4. Each group receives a set of 6 pictures to explore them and the handout from [Appendix 1](#). They have three minutes to observe the pictures. The facilitator provides some guidance. Each picture illustrates an element of a situation, following the conceptual tree: experience-cause-result-projection.



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The facilitator describes in simple words **each concept of the tree**:

- The experience is the concrete event a community goes through.
- The cause is the roots of that experience, the explanation for the happening.
- The result is the outcome of that experience, what happens with the community.
- The projection is the envisaged impact on the whole community. It could be a long-term impact.



### STEP 2 : (25 MINS)

Each group is invited to portrait at least three different situations/events following the conceptual tree, by compiling a story with the pictures and exploring the particularities of each picture. They should choose one compilation which they will work on.

The facilitator invites the participants to write some details on the conceptual tree from the [Appendix 1](#), mainly what they consider as being the experience that this community goes through, the causes for it and the outcomes. At least 3-5 particularities of each element of the conceptual tree are needed for the next step.



An online resource that could be helpful is the Photovoice [gallery](#) of projects. Choose one project from this website and use the pictures. Nevertheless, there are multiple online databases that could help you find sets of pictures for the activity.

Besides pictures, you can opt for illustrative cards that describe a social situation. Irrespective of the tool, use the visual elements for stimulating the participants' imagination.

### STEP 3 : (20 MINS)

Once the conceptual trees are done, the participants receive an A4 paper and a pen, as they are invited to imagine a story of that situation and to write it. The story starts with this sentence: "Once upon a time ...". The final part of the story should be a solution to the problem discovered/imagined through the pictures. For this part of the activity, indicate that they have a maximum of 15 minutes.

The facilitator permanently checks the progress of the work by observing the contribution of the participants and steps in when needed, mainly for channeling the participants' focus to the goal of the activity.



### STEP 3 : (20 MINS)

Once the participants are ready, they are invited to the plenary for a short gallery of stories, to read them. The facilitator invites each group to introduce their stories based on the compilation of photos. After each presentation, the participants are invited to look again at their story and to imagine what could be their role in that community.



## Reflection (10')



The session ends with a plenary discussion. The facilitator builds on the answers collected from the small groups and will address further questions:

- What was most meaningful for you during the activity?
- What did you realize about yourself? What was the most difficult or easy for you?
- How often do you think about the complexity of community problems?
- Did you find yourself in any of the elements of the situation at one point in time?
- If you were to name one thing you discovered about yourself, what would it be?
- Do you think that we need to think twice before reacting to various situations and those around us?
- How would you characterize this session in a word?
- What does the story that we built as a group with the photos say about us/me?

## Individual work version



Duration: 90 minutes

### STEP 1 : (10 MINS)

The facilitator introduces the topics of the activity, namely that they will discuss the participant's strengths and risks. The facilitator describes that the participant will create two drawings, namely two conceptual trees:

1. The tree of your risks in society
2. The tree of your resources in society.

The facilitator invites the participant to reflect on some questions:

- How do I feel in society?
- What and who helps me?
- What could harm me there?



The facilitator concludes this opening moment by describing that during this meeting, they will discuss about personal challenges, stressful situations and resources that the participant can access in such situation.

### STEP 2 : (10 MINS)

The facilitator uses a set of pictures with various difficult situations or experiences, their possible causes and the outcomes for an individual or for a community. The facilitator can use different colorful magazines about different topics, so the participant can cut out the pictures from magazines.

The facilitator invites the participant to choose a picture or, if he wants that, several pictures from magazines that reflect his current most difficult situations (family, school, society).



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The participant is asked to glue these pictures on a paper. The facilitator guides this moment with simple questions:

- What is in the picture?
- How can you relate this with your current life?
- What challenges do you face in this picture?

The participant writes on the page next to pictures what are the causes of these situations in his life and what happens as a result of these situations with him and his life.

### STEP 3: (5 MINS)

The facilitator, after the participant ends writing, asks some questions:

- What happens to you in these difficult situations?
- Why are these difficult situations arising?
- What happens to you in these situations (thoughts, feelings, actions)?
- How do such situations most often end



### STEP 4: (15 MINS)

The session continues with the second part, which is about inner resources. The facilitator describes that it is hard to think only about risks and challenges, and thanks the participant for sharing all these.

The facilitator says that now it is time to think about personal resources. The facilitator asks the participant if he knows what resources mean?

The participant chooses some pictures or some images from the magazines that illustrate his resources / strengths / support received from people.

The participant chooses and/or cut out these pictures and glues them on paper. The facilitator guides this process and invites the participant to reflect on people who are in these pictures, resources they can provide him.

The participant writes on the page next to pictures how he can access all these resources and what is needed to keep the resources in his life for a long term.

#### Reflection (5')



The facilitator can open this space by asking the main insights, important moments during the activity:

- How have you managed to deal with such situations so far?
- What are your strengths?
- What can and cannot you influence in a situation like this?
- Can anyone help you?

You can also use various other questions according to the situation.



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## Preparation

The facilitator should have a basic knowledge of the 'Photovoice' method, it is important to know how to work with photos during an activity. The facilitators should have basic knowledge regarding the way communities are organized, the main institutions, societal architecture and stakeholders in a community, community dynamics.



Also basic knowledge on facilitation of reflection groups is needed; learning to hold the space, to understand group dynamics of the probation clients, allowing emotional expression, providing a non-judgmental attitude and a mindset on curiosity and exploration as a way of raising awareness and learning.

**List of materials:** Printed photos for the group activity. Paper, pencils. Open space with chairs, benches, pillows or any surface that might be used for sitting.

For the individual work: prepared various images, or colorful magazines showing topics of difficult situations, resources and relationships. Pen, A4 white sheet, glue.

## Evaluation of the activity

The main evaluation form of the activity is by observation in the debate and reflection session, where the facilitator pays attention and analyzes the answers provided by the client, taking notes on what can be improved, what has worked or not regarding the objectives of the activity.

The facilitator notices the way the activity is carried out from the beginning to the end, focusing on the involvement of the participant, the relevance of his answers related to the activity objectives, chosen pictures, etc.

## Additional resources

Materials available online:

1. Photovoice info:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4933584/>

<https://photovoice.org/projects/projects-international/>

1. Social constructs info:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/social-construction>

<https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=770186>

<https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/ben/cpd/2014/00000020/00000025/art00007>

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1037/h0087741>



Appendix - Worksheet: Conceptual tree

Projection:  
impact on others

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Results: outcomes  
of the experience

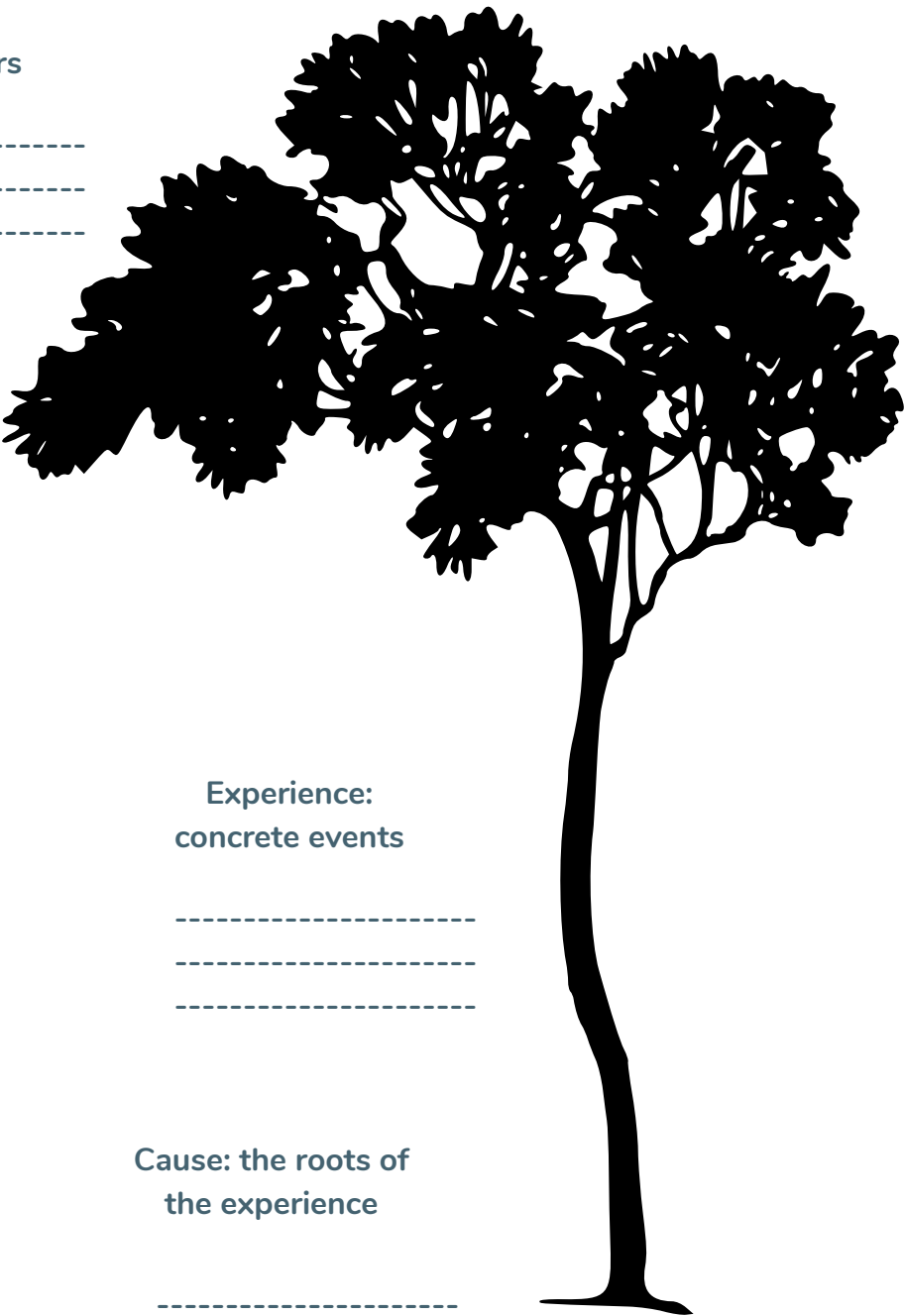
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Experience:  
concrete events

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Cause: the roots of  
the experience

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## Part III: Guidelines on how to run reintegration programmes using non-formal learning methods

This part is a description on the most important elements for initiating, supporting and delivering a public action for reintegration of young inmates or probation clients.

### Index:

1. Theoretical background: The field theory
  2. The goals of the reintegration programmes
  3. Resources needed
  4. Examples and insights from the project partners
  5. Steps to be taken in running a campaign
  6. Conclusions
- 

### 1. Theoretical background: The field theory



The theory of the field, also known as "field theory," is a psychological framework developed by Kurt Lewin, emphasising the importance of understanding individuals within their social and environmental contexts. The field theory suggests that behaviour is influenced by the interplay between various forces within an individual's environment, including social, cultural, and situational factors. For young offenders or at-risk individuals, these forces may include family dynamics, peer influences, socioeconomic status, educational opportunities, and exposure to violence or trauma.

Understanding the complex web of influences that shape their lives is crucial for designing effective interventions and educational programs. By considering the broader context in which young offenders or at-risk individuals operate, educators can tailor their approaches to address specific challenges and barriers they may face. Moreover, the field theory underscores the importance of viewing young offenders as part of larger systems or "fields." This perspective highlights the interconnectedness of various elements within their environment and emphasises the need for holistic interventions that target multiple levels of influence.

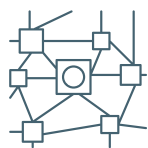
This theory also highlights the idea that we all exist within a dynamic web of relationships and interactions, where everything is connected and interdependent. This perspective encourages a holistic understanding of human experience, recognizing the intricate interplay between individuals. By embracing field theory, we gain insight into the complex systems that shape our lives and the interconnected nature of our relationships and our existence.

The field theory offers several insights that are crucial to consider when creating reintegration programs for youth at risk of social exclusion or at risk of offending:



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### Interconnectedness:



Highlights the interconnectedness of various factors within a young offender and its environment. This means recognizing that their behaviour is influenced by a complex interplay of social, familial, cultural, and environmental forces. When creating reintegration programs, it's essential to understand and address these interconnected factors rather than focusing only on individual characteristics or behaviours.

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### Context understanding:



Reintegration programs should consider the unique circumstances and challenges they face, taking into account factors such as family dynamics, peer influences, socioeconomic status, educational opportunities, and exposure to violence or trauma. By contextualising their experiences, programs can develop tailored interventions that address specific needs and barriers.

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### Holistic Interventions:



Interventions should target multiple levels of influence within an individual's environment. This means going beyond individual-focused interventions to also address systemic and environmental factors that contribute to social exclusion or criminal behaviour. Effective reintegration programs should incorporate a range of interventions, including family support, educational opportunities, vocational training, mental health services, and community engagement initiatives.

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### Long-term Support:



Reintegration programs should provide ongoing support beyond the initial intervention to help participants navigate challenges and sustain positive changes over time. This may involve providing access to resources, mentoring, counselling, and opportunities for continued education.

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## 2. The goals of the reintegration programmes



Initiating, supporting, and delivering a public action for the reintegration of young offenders or youngsters at risk requires careful planning, collaboration, and commitment from various stakeholders. By addressing these key elements stakeholders can work together to empower youngsters to successfully reintegrate into society and lead fulfilling lives.

Using reintegration programmes and non-formal learning methods in probation can be highly effective in strengthening collaboration with probation volunteers and equipping them with the necessary tools to work further with youngsters in the criminal justice system or programmes and methods can help to work as a probation officer with probation clients.

Creating and learning a variety of informal methods can also help the probation connect with NGOs that work with marginalised youth. By incorporating non-formal learning methods into probation programs and providing volunteers with the necessary training and support, you can enhance collaboration, promote positive outcomes for marginalised youngsters, and empower volunteers to make a meaningful difference in their lives.

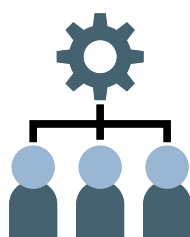
### Goals and examples

- Non-formal learning and reintegration programmes in probation work: various informal, simple activities can be used by probation service employees in individual work with a young client: the goal is to establish contact, a **safe working environment**, and open the young person to conversations.
- Use **relevant non-formal learning methods**: start by identifying non-formal learning methods that are suitable for working with youngsters in probation. These methods can include experiential learning activities, role-playing exercises, group discussions, and interactive tasks.
- Think about specific goals: design non-formal learning activities that **address the specific goals of probation clients**, such as promoting positive behaviour change, developing life skills, and fostering personal growth. Ensure that the activities are engaging, relevant, and age-appropriate for the target group of youngsters. Make them easy to use for probation officers, volunteers, NGO's.
- Pay attention to collaborative learning: **encourage collaboration and peer interaction during non-formal learning sessions**, here can help engagement of volunteers and NGO's. Create opportunities for volunteers to share their experiences, insights, and perspectives with each other and with the youngsters. Foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment where everyone feels valued and respected. If the probation officer works individually with the client, then non-formal methods can help establish contact and foster collaborative engagement further in probation supervision.
- Provide training and support for **volunteers and NGO's**: offer training sessions and workshops to provide volunteers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools to effectively engage with youngsters in the criminal justice system. Cover topics such as communication strategies, conflict resolution techniques, positive reinforcement methods, and understanding youth development. Non-formal methods can help in training and make them joyful and full of play.



- Non-formal learning methods can promote reflection and feedback: Encourage volunteers to reflect on their experiences and learnings from working with criminal youngsters. Provide opportunities for self-assessment and peer feedback to help volunteers identify their strengths, areas for improvement, and strategies for personal and professional development. Strengthening the pool of volunteers is very important. Provide ongoing guidance, supervision, and support to volunteers throughout their involvement in probation work. Offer regular check-ins, mentoring sessions, and debriefing meetings to address any challenges or concerns and to ensure that volunteers feel supported and valued in their roles.

### 3. Resources needed



- **Human Resources:**

- Qualified staff: Trained professionals including psychologists, counsellors, social workers, educators, trainers, and mentors to provide support and guidance.
- Peer support: Establishing peer support networks and mentoring programs where young offenders can connect with and learn from their peers who have successfully reintegrated into society.



- **Financial Resources:**

- Funding: Securing financial support from government grants, to cover program costs, including staff salaries, participant stipends, facility rental, materials, and resources.
- Budgeting: Developing a detailed budget plan to allocate resources effectively, prioritise spending, and ensure financial sustainability throughout the program's duration.



- **Physical Resources:**

- Facilities: Access to suitable facilities and spaces for program activities, workshops, counselling rooms etc.
- Equipment and materials: Providing necessary equipment, supplies, and materials for educational and therapeutic activities, art materials and therapeutic tools.



- **Educational Resources:**

- Educational programs: Offering access to educational resources, and online learning platforms to support young offenders in their personal development.
- Partnerships with organisations; to connect them with job opportunities, internships, and other working or educational pathways.





- **Health Resources:**

- Healthcare services: Ensuring access to medical care, mental health counselling, substance abuse treatment, and wellness programs to address their physical and mental health needs.



- **Community and Social Resources:**

- Community partnerships: Collaborating with local organisations, government agencies, and enhancing community support.
- Social services: Connecting youngsters with social services and support networks.
- Peer support groups: Establishing peer support networks, mentorship programs and social connections for young offenders during and after the program.

#### 4. Examples and insights from the project partners

Name of the program, objectives, number of beneficiaries, duration, stakeholders, resources, results.

##### **The State Probation Service of Latvia (SPS)**

Annually trains volunteers in the following forms of volunteer work:

**Mediation:** <https://www.vpd.gov.lv/lv/izliguma-procesa-starpnieki>

**Mentoring:** <https://www.vpd.gov.lv/lv/lidzgaitnieciba>

**Circles of support and accountability:** <https://www.vpd.gov.lv/lv/atbalsta-un-atbildiguma-apli>

Since 2015, the SPS has been preparing mentors to work with convicts serving criminal sentences in the community. Mentoring proceeds by volunteer providing support to a probation client. Mentoring is long-term work that takes place through regular meetings and mutual cooperation to achieve common goals.



State Probation Service  
Republic of Latvia

A mentor is a volunteer who has completed the mentor's training program:  
<https://www.vpd.gov.lv/lv/jaunums/klusti-par-valsts-probacijas-dienesta-brivpratigo>.

For instance in 2021 in mentoring program 72 probation clients were involved, the vast majority of which were youth. On average, each year in the mentoring program are involved approximately 70 clients. In all 3 volunteering forms SPS has approximately 140 active volunteers.



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## Idei si Proiecte pentru Tineri Activi (Romania)

Annually provides access to preventive education workshops to more than 500 teenagers.

Implemented the Erasmus+ strategic project 'Prevention++. Non formal education and prevention work', a project through which we provided access to prevention education to vulnerable youth exposed to substance abuse disorders, with a focus on tobacco, alcohol and cannabinoids.



Implemented during three years (2019 - 2022), the project reached more than 1.000 teenagers in three countries (Romania, Latvia, Estonia) from various backgrounds, including young people from rural and small urban areas who are at risk of social exclusion and offending.

Through workshops organised in schools and youth NGOs, we increased the awareness of the long-term impact of substance abuse and underlined the risks of engaging in risky or illegal activities related to the use or trafficking drugs. One important outcome of this project is a manual of preventive education on addictions that includes 40 methods based on NFL principles. Along with this, more than 20 teenagers discovered the beautiful world of volunteering and started to promote the importance of preventive education in their communities of young people.

The manual can be accessed [here](#).

## Youth Matters Now (Spain)

We created a comprehensive Training Guide designed for professionals working with young offenders. It was developed as part of the Erasmus+ project, whose idea originated from collaborative efforts at the Campos del Río Prison in Murcia. The project involved delivering diverse educational activities to young individuals detained for various levels of offences, ranging from minor to serious.

Over the course of two years, youth workers from five countries—Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Slovenia, and Spain—came together to exchange their strategies and insights on working with young offenders. Through numerous workshops, the partners integrated their organisational practices, leading to the creation of this manual. The different activities underwent a testing phase with at-risk youth of reoffending, to ensure its effectiveness in reducing offensive acts and rates.



The primary outcome of the project is a manual that encompasses a wide range of tools, methodologies, practices, and approaches that are specifically designed for use with young offenders, ex-offenders, and individuals at risk of offending across various types of institutions, including closed, open, and semi-open settings. The manual aims to achieve several key objectives:

1. Prevent further offences by providing effective strategies and interventions.
2. Offer guidance and advice to young individuals on matters relevant to their interests and needs.
3. Provide mentorship and support to help young offenders navigate challenges.
4. Assist young people on a journey of self-discovery and aid in building resilience.
5. Inspire and empower youth workers who are involved in working with young offenders.

Overall, the manual serves as a valuable resource for professionals and stakeholders involved in the rehabilitation and support of young individuals involved in the criminal justice system.

The manual can be accessed [here](#).



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## 5. Steps to be taken in running a campaign

### Initiating:

- **Needs Assessment** and effective work: conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify the specific challenges, needs, and assets of young inmates or probation clients in the community.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** engage key stakeholders, including government agencies, community organisations, NGO's, employers, educational institutions, and volunteers, to build partnerships and garner support for the reintegration initiative.
- **Goal Setting:** establish clear and achievable goals for the reintegration initiative, with a focus on promoting positive outcomes such as employment, education, housing stability, positive relationships and self narrative, reduced recidivism rates or life quality promotion.



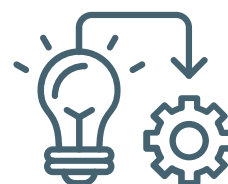
### Supporting:



- **Individualised planning:** develop individualised reintegration plans or specific methods for each young inmate or probation client, based on their unique strengths, needs, and aspirations.
- **Help to find an access to resources:** additionally search and provide access to essential resources and support services, including housing assistance, job training, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and educational opportunities. Youngsters in the criminal justice system mostly have a lot of challenges in different life fields.
- **Mentoring and support:** assign mentors or peer support specialists to provide guidance, encouragement, and practical assistance to young individuals throughout the reintegration process.
- **Community integration:** facilitate opportunities for young inmates or probation clients to engage in positive social activities, community service projects, and civic engagement initiatives to foster a sense of belonging and social connectedness. It will help to change the self narrative of the youngster from troublemaker to someone who can help the community and be a part of the community.

### Delivering:

- **Make a team and collaborations:** implement collaborative work around the youngster, involving probation officers, social workers, counsellors, educators, volunteers and other professionals to coordinate services and support for young individuals.
- **Think about youngsters skills:** offer skill-building opportunities and vocational training opportunities to enhance young individuals' employability and economic self-sufficiency, self reflection and emotional intelligence.
- **Restorative justice practices:** incorporate restorative justice principles and practices into reintegration efforts, emphasising accountability, empathy, and community healing.
- **Continuous evaluation and improvement:** continuously evaluate the effectiveness of reintegration efforts through data collection, outcome monitoring, and stakeholder feedback, make adjustments as needed to improve outcomes and ensure the sustainability of the initiative.



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## 6. Conclusions

The complementarity of the reintegration programmes with other types of educational programmes. is the key success factor for working with teenagers and young people at risk of offending and at risk of social exclusion.

The reintegration of youth requires intense and structured collaboration between different stakeholders and fields, for instance health, social support and education systems. For examples. The State Probation Service of Latvia coordinates this collaboration through a multi-agency cooperation system. It involves different sectors and professionals in order to provide a network for supporting the youth at risk. This approach needs to be followed by all the countries in European Union and not only, as a sources of inspiration and example of good practices.

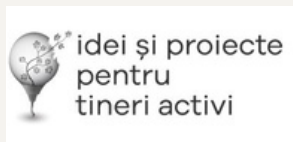






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