



SELF CARE
for youth

Methods and practices

for stress-management and self care for youth workers and young people

Self-Care. It sounds like a cliché already and only a lazy one doesn't speak about importance of self-care nowadays... How it's essential to take care of yourself if you want to have energy/motivation/inspiration to work/ create and help others.

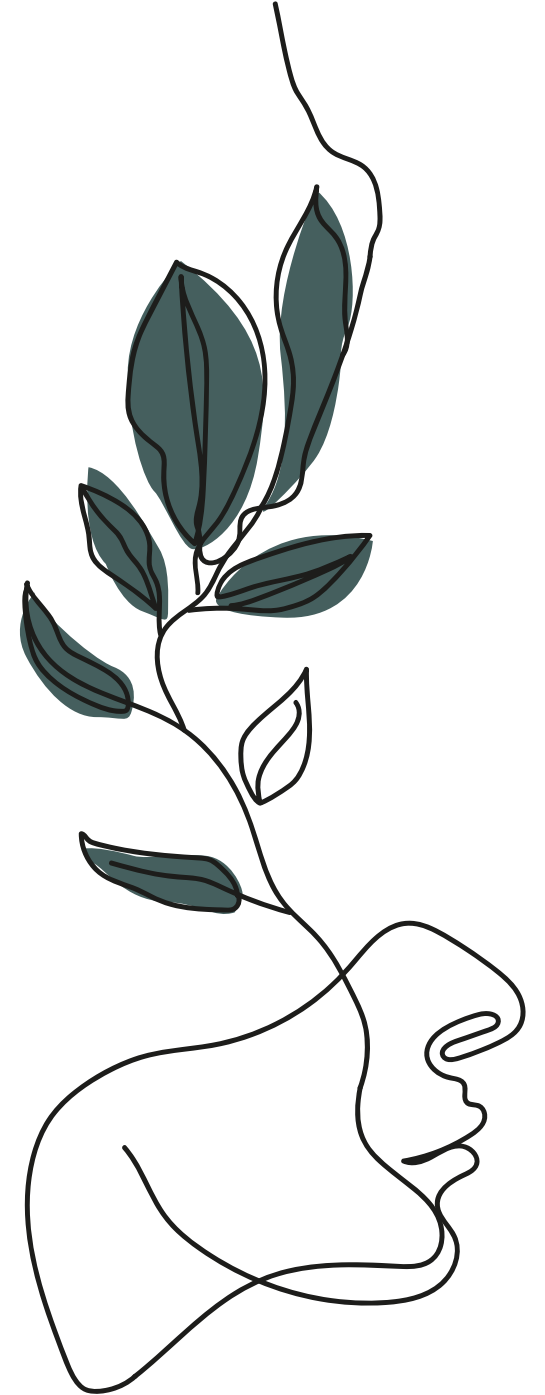
Yet, educators, youth workers, trainers, pedagogues - all those professions which are mostly about service to others and devotion to the work, often forget / do not have time or even do not know how to take care of their well-being and address stress in their personal and professional lives. It often results in high rates of burn-outs in the field of education and training.

The importance of self-care and stress-management is hard to underestimate nowadays when the COVID-19 pandemic and long confinements have changed completely the way we live and work.

Most of youth workers and educators were forced to quickly adjust to the changing realities and move their services online, trying to gain necessary skills and competences for it.

Young people, on the other hand, had to learn to switch their lives completely online, altering their online presence, training their concentration and trying to take more responsible approach to time-management.

During the training course 'Self-Care for You(th)' we focused on the issue of stress among youth workers and focus on development of their well-being in order to address the quality of educational activities they organise. Furthermore, we would like to train youth workers on usage of stress-management tools in their work with young people in order to create a balanced learning environment for them and provide ready-to-use copying mechanisms for challenging life situations.



Objectives

To identify the stress factors which influence youth workers in partner countries

Equip participants with the theoretical knowledge on the nature of stress

Provide educators with the stress-management tools for personal everyday use (physical tools, art tools)

Learn how mindfulness can contribute to eliminating stress and learn about mindfulness based stress reduction techniques

Acquire concrete skills in time-management and learn how it can contribute to dealing with stress

Learn about stress-management tools which can be used in work with young people in order to address their study-related stress and develop their emotional intelligence

Train youth workers in using stress-management tools in youth work in different contexts

Share good practices in stress management in education and youth work.

Nature of stress

Stress is a reaction to change. It can be either positive or negative, and it affects both the body and the mind. Normally, stress stimulates the release of hormones such as adrenaline, quickening the heart rate, accelerating the metabolism and generally preparing the body for emergency action-whether or not the opportunity for action exists.

Popular views on stress:

Eastern philosophies have viewed stress as an absence of inner peace.

Western culture has more recently viewed stress as a loss of control.

It is also viewed as an inability to cope with problems.

Definitions of stress are often based on various disciplines of study (e.g., psychology, physiology, sociology etc.) and, therefore there are many of them.



Discussing the nature of stress

“

Stress is the nonspecific response of the body to any demand placed upon it to adapt, whether that demand produces pleasure or pain.

”

Hans Selye

“

Stress is the inability to cope with a perceived or real (or imagined) threat to one's mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, which results in a series of physiological responses and adaptations.

”

Holistic Medicine View of Stress

There are different categorizations of stress as well. We have discussed about 3 kinds of stress:



1 *Eustress*

or positive stress, has the following characteristics:

- Motivates, focuses energy.
- Is short-term.
- Is perceived as within our coping abilities.
- Feels exciting.
- Improves performance.

2 *Distress*

or negative stress, has the following characteristics:

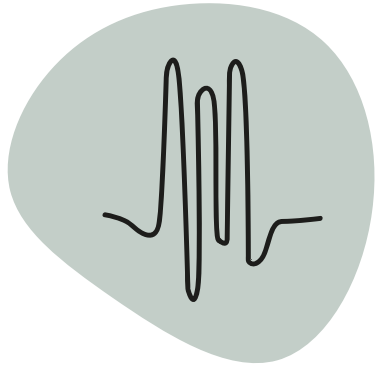
- Causes anxiety or concern.
- Can be short- or long-term.
- Is perceived as outside of our coping abilities.
- Feels unpleasant.
- Decreases performance.
- Can lead to mental and physical problems.

3 *Neustress*

describes sensory stimuli that have no consequential effect, it is considered neither good nor bad. News of an earthquake in a remote corner of the world can fall into this category.

For more info, see the works of Dr. Lazarus and Dr. Selye.

Besides that, it can also be categorized as:



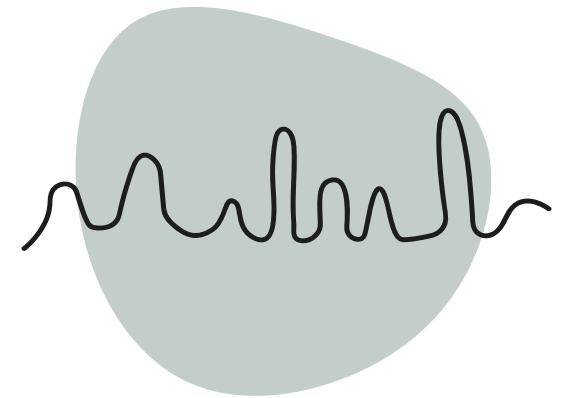
Acute stress

(high intensity, short duration) – It comes from demands and pressures of the recent past and anticipated demands and pressures of the near future. Acute stress is thrilling and exciting in small doses, but too much is exhausting.



Episodic acute stress

Some people experience these mini-crises regularly and live in a state of tension. They may be taking on too much or simply be overburdened by their lives. If you tend to worry, your body will be tense or angry. The symptoms are similar but occur more often and accumulate.



Chronic stress

(low intensity, long duration) While acute stress can be thrilling and exciting, chronic stress is not. This is the grinding stress that wears people away day after day, year after year. It arises from serious life problems that may be fundamentally beyond our control: poverty, war, discrimination.

Activities which might help

with the exploration of stress in educators' lives

Write and discuss

Bring an object that you associate with the stress and share in couples the story why it represents the stress for you. After sharing, form groups of 4 persons and complete the paper divided 3:

Factors of stress from professional life	Factors of stress from personal life
Consequences which stress has on your life and work	



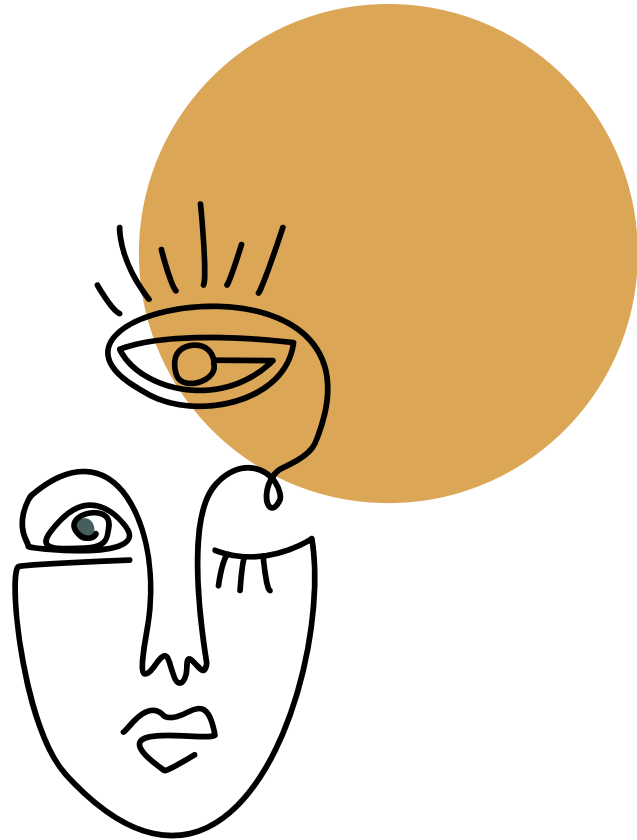
Draw and share

- Participants work in pairs. They are asked to imagine a situation of a very big stress in their lives and create a body posture which would represent it.
- In this posture participant is asked to lay down on the big flipchart.
- Then their partner draws the shape of this posture on a big flipchart using the marker.
- After that, each participant takes his/her/their body posture and colours the portrait indicating the places where, to their mind, the tension is the strongest.
- Volunteers can share their portraits in the group with a short explanation.
- The group is invited to interpret this portrait from the positive point of view.



Drawing a portrait of stress

Stress management



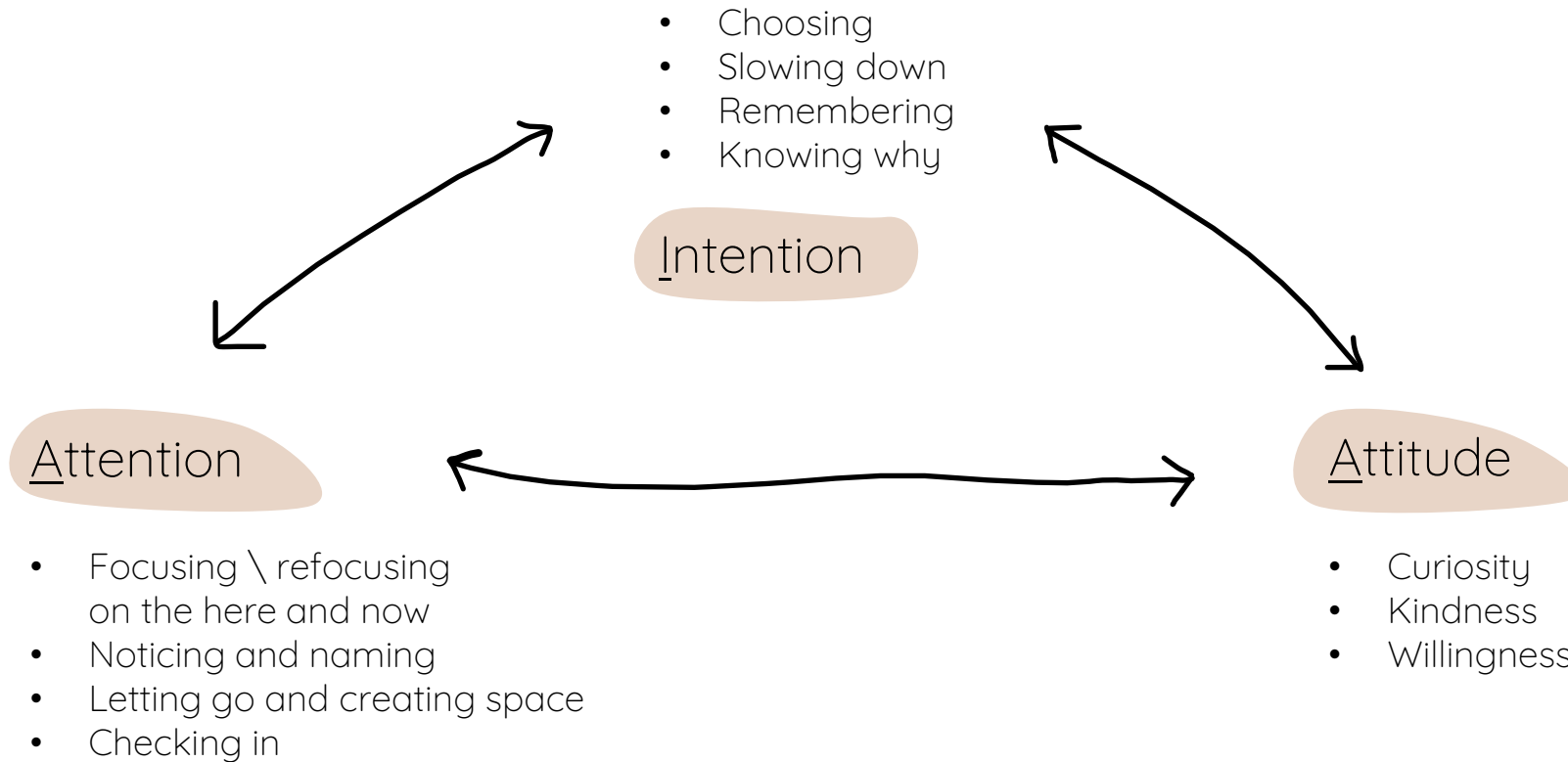
What is mindfulness?

We believe it's important to address the issue of stress in a holistic way, involving our physical, mental, emotional and psycho-spiritual state. The big helper in that could be bringing mindfulness to our lives. The word mindfulness is very trendy nowadays, we see it as

“Bringing one’s complete attention to the experiences occurring in the present moment, in a non-judgmental, accepting way.”

Brown & Ryan 2003
Kabat-Zinn, 1990

Psychoeducation IAA terms



The three Rs of mindfulness

①

Release

the mind
from 'too much thinking'
and/or the struggle against 'what is...'

②

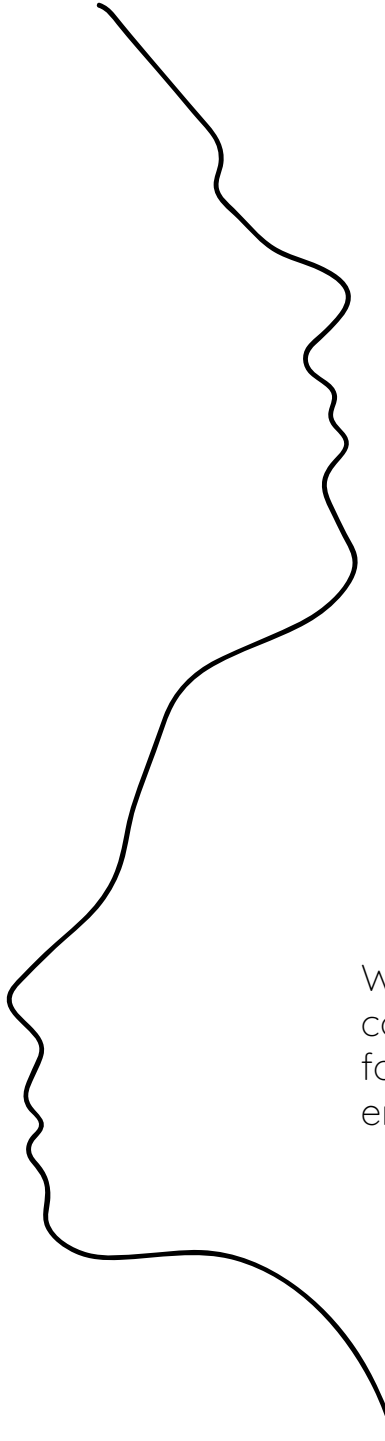
Relax

the body, notice your breathing

③

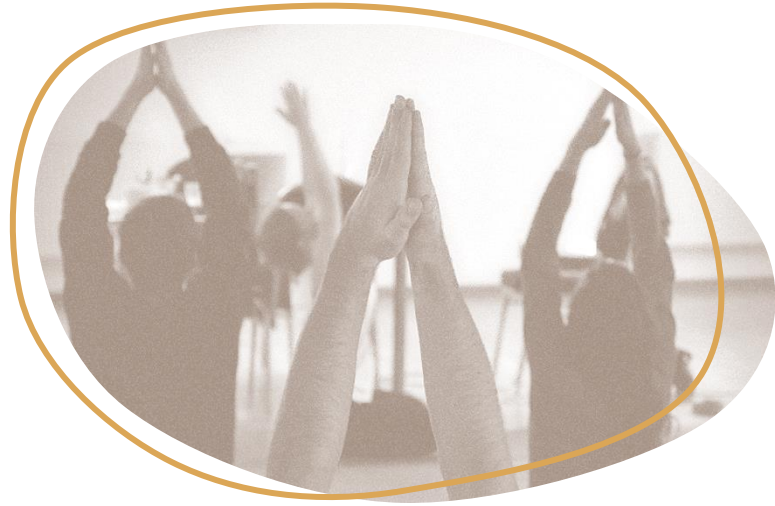
Return

to this moment; where you have
all the resources you need



We believe that some daily practices can contribute to mindfulness and help to bring focus back to ourselves, our body, mind, emotions and the soul.

Daily practices



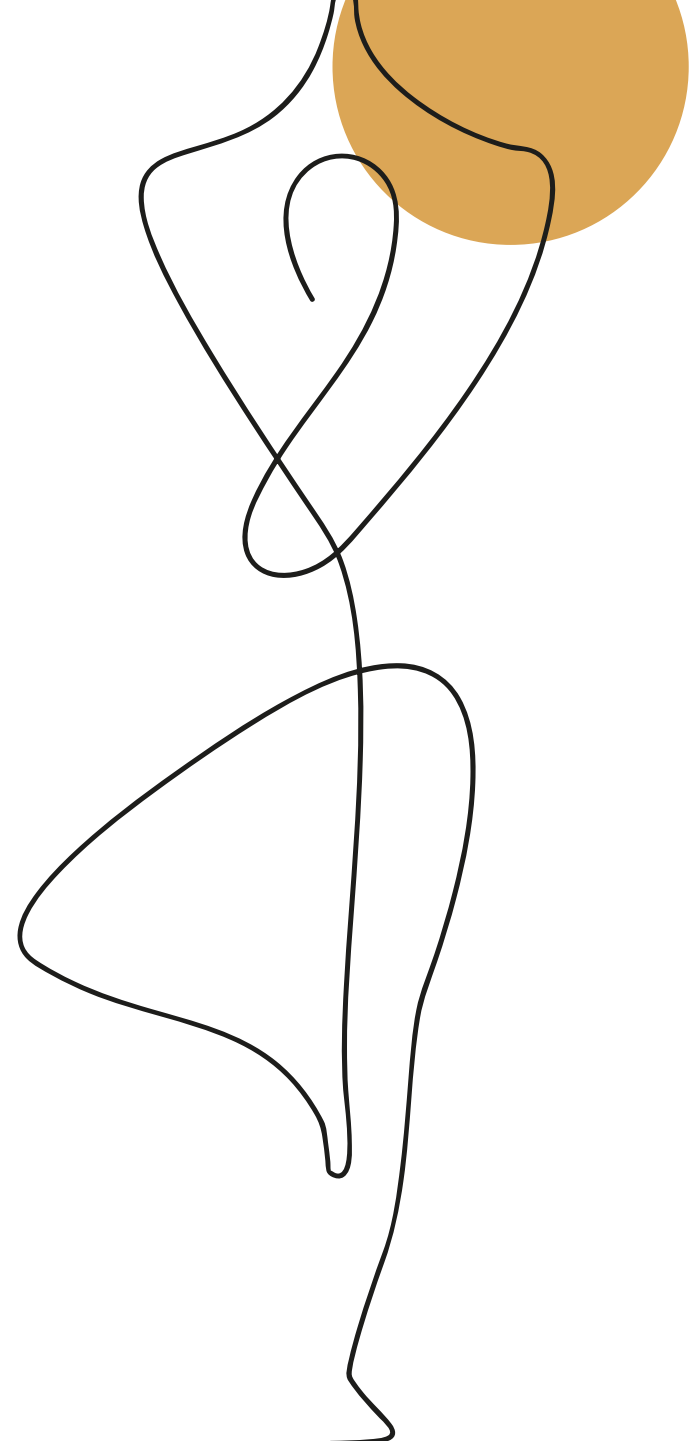
Yoga

Yoga and mindfulness go together because the aim of both is to achieve a higher level of connection, awareness, or union, between the mind, body, and spirit.

In fact, yoga without mindful awareness cannot be yoga. Both yoga and mindfulness aim to quiet the mind, in order to cultivate a deeper connection to and understanding of the self. They both teach you to tune into your breath, pay attention to bodily sensations, and learn to accept reality as it is in that moment.

For more:

<https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-yoga/>



Yet, it doesn't HAVE TO be yoga

It could be a set of physical activities which can help you re-connect with your body and bring your awareness to different parts of your body. After all, it's not about what you do but rather how you do it.

Any activity can become a mindfulness practice, but if it

- Incorporates paying attention to the present moment. But being present alone isn't enough.
- You need to be present and compassionate: paying attention to what's going on in your body and mind without harsh judgment.

We give ourselves permission to be with things as they are, even if they're not ideal.

Jogging, for example, can be another form of exercise which can easily become a mindful practice.



Practicing with the group



Journaling

Journaling is another daily practice which can help to bring the focus back to ourselves and have some time to actually track our thoughts and feelings.

Every morning or evening it's worth to take 10-30 min and write with a pen in the journal.

There are a lot of approaches and techniques on how to do journaling, we would like to suggest you 2, which we used and you can choose the one which is more appealing to you.

How to practice?

- 1** Sit at the table with a journal and the pen.
- 2** Set a time limit for yourself (you can even set an alarm in 10,20,30 min)
- 3** Start writing - everything what comes to your mind. Imagine, that your hand becomes a continuation of your mind, a sort of transmitter between your head and a piece of paper. So you just need to write down everything what's in your mind.
- 4** Even if there's nothing and your mind starts telling you in panic - 'I need to write something, I need to write something' you just write down these exact same words. It is ok and eventually some other thoughts will appear.
- 5** When the time limit is over, stop writing. Then you can read slowly everything you wrote.

Another way to start journaling

Rewind the last the day
in your head.

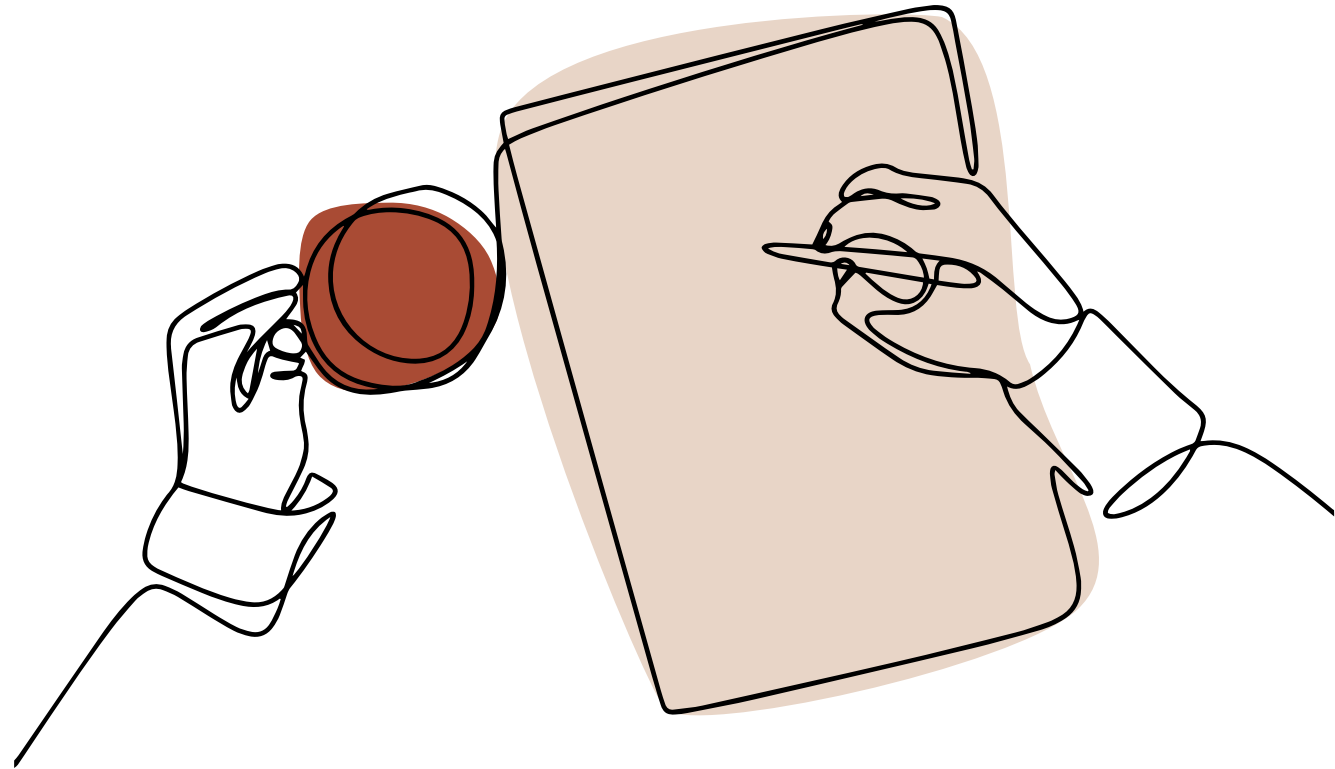


Sit at the table
with a journal and the pen.



Use the journal to reflect and write about the following
(you can focus just on 1 question or tackle few of
them, you can add the ones which are more relevant
to you in this particular day).

- How was I feeling today?
- What I was thinking about?
- How am I now?
- How am I feeling now?
- How can I support myself?
- How can I take care of myself?
- What was good?
- When was the flow?
- What made me feel satisfied?
- Find a reason to be proud of myself today.



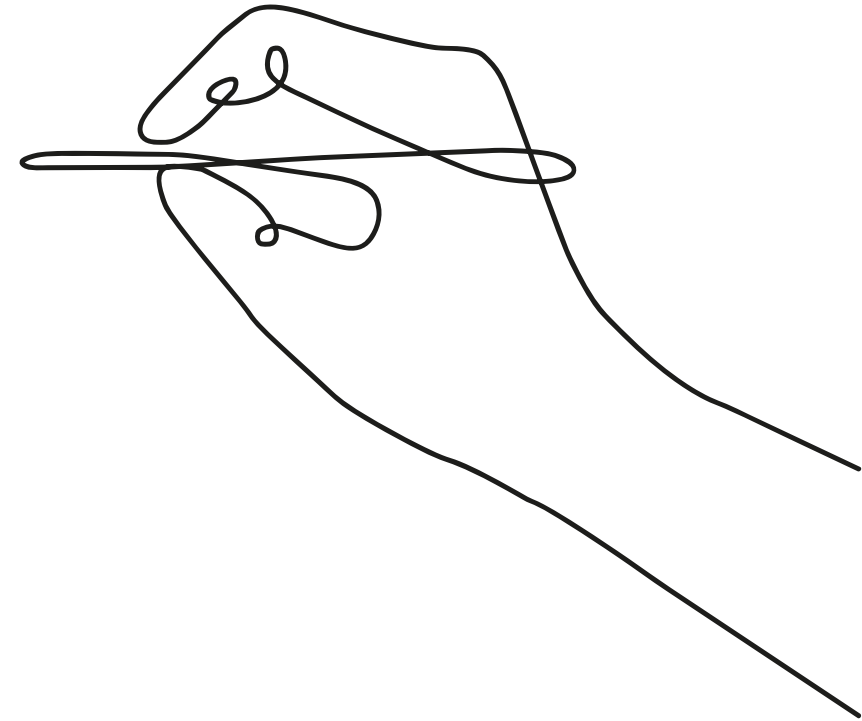
Tips for journaling

Write in the language which comes to your mind in the moment of writing, it can be also a mixture of languages - nobody will read what you write besides you and you will know exactly what you meant.

Don't focus on grammar or being tidy

Try to keep it as a regular practice.

Don't push yourself to do it for a long time, if you feel comfortable with just 5-10 min a day - go for it.





Meditation

Meditation is an ancient wellness practice that focuses on training awareness, attention, and compassion.

In recent years, research has found that meditation can reduce stress and anxiety, improve focus and concentration, and increase feelings of calm and relaxation.

The popularity of meditation is increasing as more people discover its many health benefits.

You can use it to increase awareness of yourself and your surroundings. Many people think of it as a way to reduce stress and develop concentration.

There are a number of various types of meditation and if you're starting a journey with it, we recommend to try out various guided meditations which you can find on YouTube or specially designed apps, for example:

- Headspace
- Meditopia
- Calm

Benefits of meditation

- Reduces stress
- Controls anxiety
- Promotes emotional health
- Enhances self-awareness
- Lengthens attention span
- May reduce age-related memory loss
- Can generate kindness
- May help fight addictions
- Improves sleep
- Helps control pain
- Can decrease blood pressure
- Accessible anywhere

“Create a gap of no-mind in which you are highly alert and aware but not thinking. This is the essence of meditation.”

Eckhart Tolle



The FARE approach



F

Flexibility

accept change, disappointment, and even failure with genuine composure. Accepting does not mean submitting, but it does mean not denying. Trying again or trying something new usually improves the situation. Learn when it is best to walk away from a source of stress.

A

Awareness

Learn to recognize your reactions to stress. Identifying signs of strain and sources of stress is the first step to controlling your stress response.

R

Rest/Relaxation

Relaxation exercises should be a regular part of your day; some forms, such as tension/relaxation stretches and deep breathing, can readily form part of a physical workout. Work on key tension areas, massaging the area between the ear and the jaw, relaxing your facial muscles, and gently rolling your neck in half-circles. You may want to develop a complete relaxation routine; sample routines are outlined below.

E

Exercise

An exercise routine helps reduce anxiety, and it also helps you endure the stress you cannot avoid. Remember not to neglect your general health: sleep is essential; proper diet is crucial. All three exercise, sleep, diet are closely related; a disturbance affecting one spreads to all. Maintain a careful balance.

Creative tools

The positive effect of creative activities on stress-relief has been already proven multiple times by various researches. (e.g. Kaimal G, Ray K, Muniz J. Reduction of Cortisol Levels and Participants' Responses Following Art Making. Art Ther (Alex). 2016.

There are various ways of using different forms of art as a form of therapy. By conceptualizing body, mind, action, and perception as a unity, creative art therapies, such as Music, Dance/Movement, Art, and Drama Therapy, as well as simple arts interventions, use artistic media to approach the client on a creative and nonverbal level.

(Koch S.C., Fuchs T. Embodied Arts Therapies. Arts Psychother. 2011; [CrossRef] [Google Scholar].

But you don't need to be a therapist or go to therapy in order to enjoy the positive effects of arts on the mental health.

Why you should definitely try it

Here's why we personally think using creative tools is good for you and your health:

- It's very relaxing - you can really switch off your mind while trying to draw/ copy/ colour/ glue things
- It gives the feeling of creating something - this unique feeling when out of nothing something made by you appears (which is very important general, and especially in the confinement times)
- It helps to acquire a habit - and even master the skill
It can be a reflective process - capturing the mood of the day or prevailing emotion etc.
- It boosts your creativity and your divergent thinking
- It helps to switch the attention from the result (I need to draw a perfect picture!) to a process (I'm just doing it for the sake of doing it and the result is not important!).

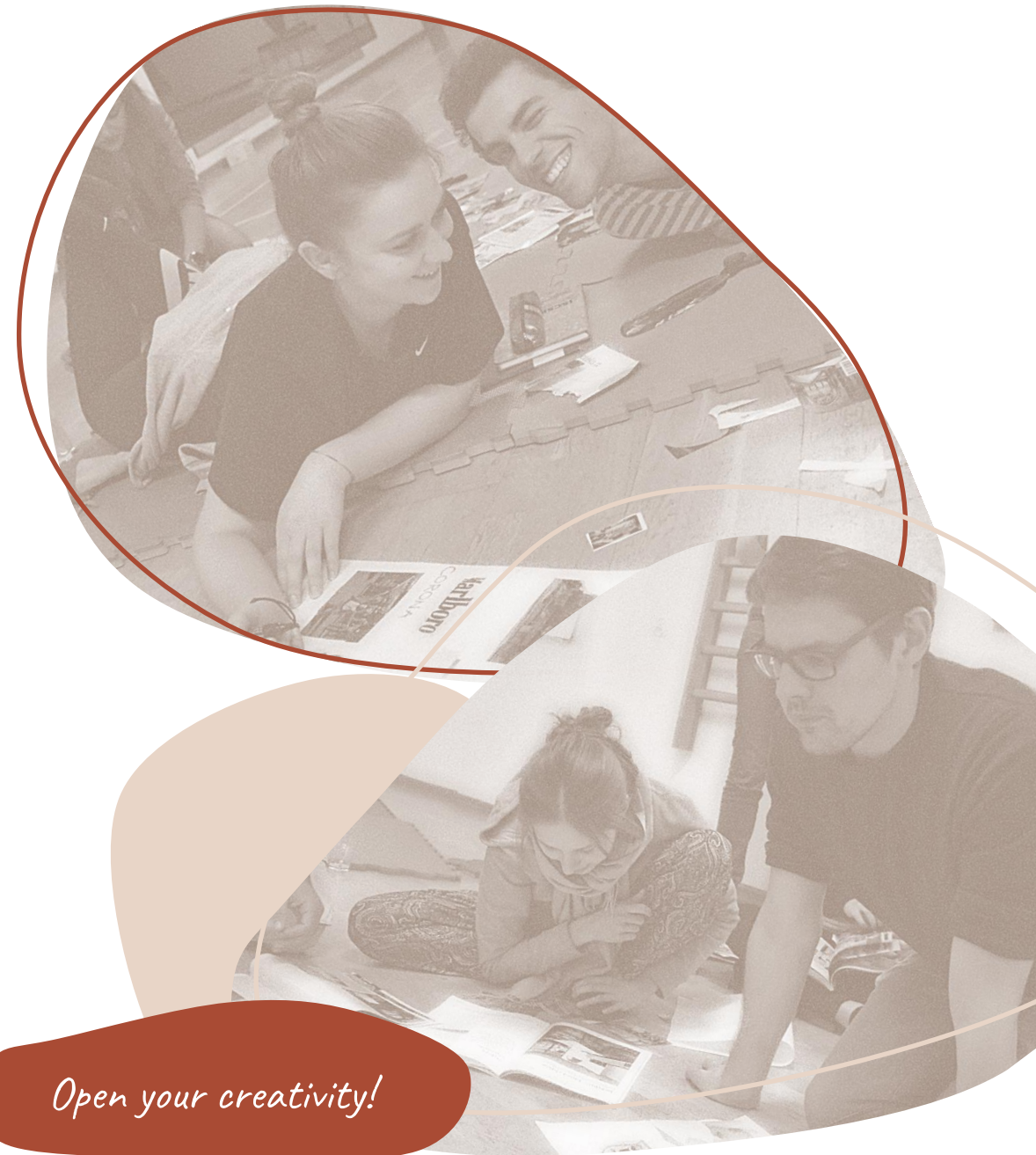
Collage

Take a few old magazines with different images inside, white a4/a3 paper, scissors, glue and a few artistic tools (whatever you have at your disposal - markers, paints, crayons etc.). Create a collage, which would represent something. For the topics, you can vary them the way you want, here are some ideas:

- My year
- My emotional state now
- A postcard which I will never send (choose to whom you will Not send this postcard)
- My image of a healthy relationships
- Me and my work
- Me and COVID-19 pandemic, etc.etc.

If you do this task individually, you can have a look at the result, remember the feelings you encountered during the creation process and any highlights appeared during the work. What could be the learning from the experience you lived through? What are the positive sides in it?

If you do this task in a group, it's worth sharing and analyzing the results of the work with each other.



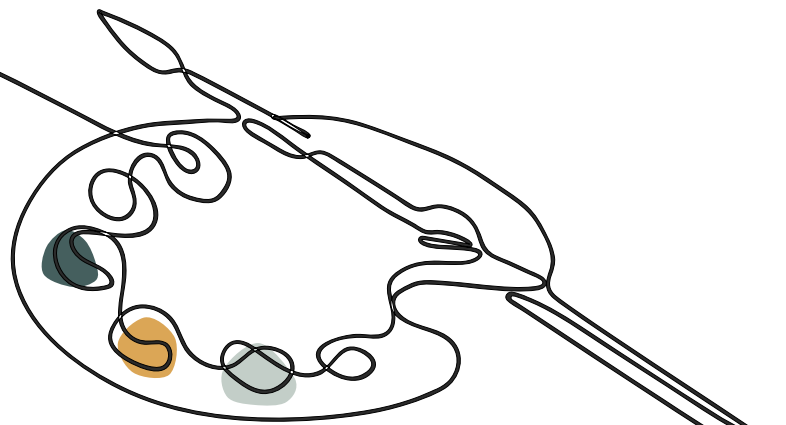
Open your creativity!

Colouring tasks

Colouring mandalas has become a very popular hobby nowadays and, for some, a very effective stress-relief tool. You can easily find colouring books for adults in majority of bookshops or download pages for colouring from open sources.

Colouring can also become a small reflective practice, like this small practice of giving gratitude:

<http://whispersinnature.com/freeheartpage.pdf>



Zentangle

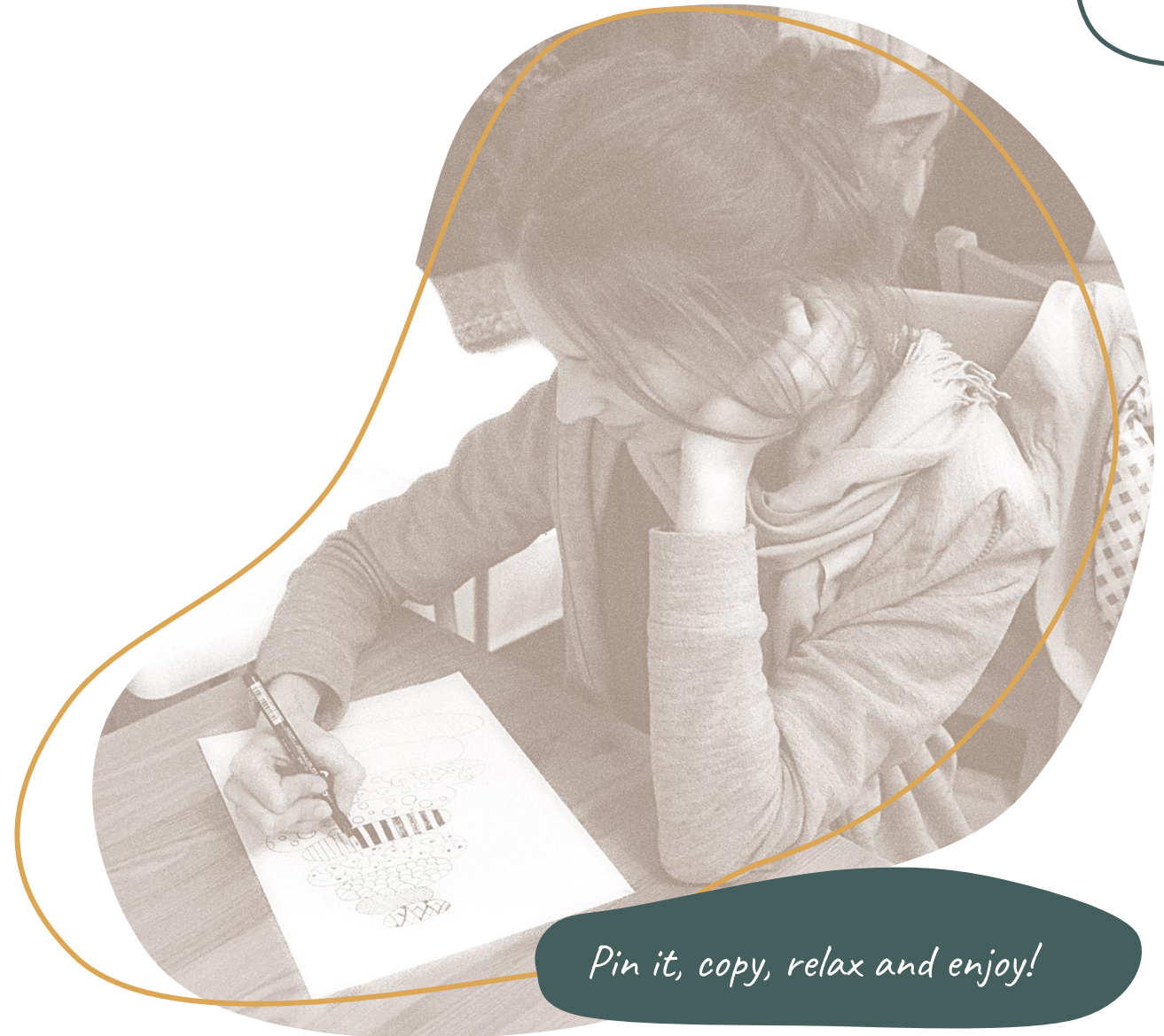
It is a specific practice of creating structured designs through drawing various patterns. It's a specific way to draw various images, most often in black pen on white paper which is based on key steps:

- ① Creating a shape (let's say a square)
- ② Dividing this shape in the smaller 'containers-sectors'. Those sections can be of any shapes.
- ③ Tangle - filling in each of the 'containers' with various patterns

Rick Roberts and Mary Thomas are the originators of the trademarked Zentangle method (see more: <https://zentangle.com>) and they claim that through Zentangle practice you can:

- Relax
- Focus
- Expand your imagination
- Trust your creativity
- Increase your awareness
- Respond confidently to the unexpected
- Discover the fun and healing in creative expression
- Enter a vibrant and supportive world-wide community
- Feel gratitude and appreciation for this beautiful world and all that you can do
- And perhaps most importantly . . . Have fun!

We agree with them and believe that this is a very interesting practice! You can start from copying the simplest shapes and patterns (there's a lot of inspiration on Pinterest!), you can create your own, it's all up to you!



Pin it, copy, relax and enjoy!

Doodling

It is a simple drawing while person's attention is otherwise occupied.

If you ever attended a very boring lecture, had a long exhausting call, listened to an endless audio recording, watched a tv programme and while doing that were putting some images on a piece of paper - you were doodling!

In a way it's drawing in unconscious, unfocused way.

In the past it was often considered a distraction to the main thing and something which actually hampers your concentration on the main action. But numerous researches actually proved that doodling is beneficial in many ways.

Here are some of the benefits of doodling:

①

It can improve your focus and problem-solving skills (for more, watch: https://www.ted.com/talks/sunni_brown_doodlers_unite)

③

It helps to relieve stress and unwind (for more, see <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2076785/?page=1>)

②

It can improve short-term memory. Thus, in one experiment (Andrade, 2010), doodles were found to aid the recall of a conversation, where non-doodlers couldn't recall the conversation as well.

④

It helps to stimulate creativity. According to S.Brown, doodling is thought to stimulate areas of the brain which normally remain dormant when you're just in linguistic mode. This can help you to analyze information differently, have more a-ha moments and come up with new ideas.

How to practice?

Basically all you need is some basic shapes in order to start drawing simple images.

You could start with looking around the room and trying to draw all the objects around in these simple shapes. Or just let your mind rumble and draw whatever comes to your mind - without thinking of how nice it looks.

Alternatively, you can start from getting some inspiration online and copying couple of doodle pictures (Pinterest is a great source) and then moving to your own.

In addition, don't allow your inner critic to get in the way. Nobody has to see your doodle, and you can just crumple it up and throw it away when you're done. Give your mind and hand free rein. You can even try doodling in the dark not to let your inner perfectionist get in the way of your creative process.



Find an author or style that you like best and enjoy copying. Pic Candle Channel is definitely recommended.



Time management

“

"What day is it?" asked Pooh.
"It's today," squeaked Piglet.
"My favourite day," said Pooh.

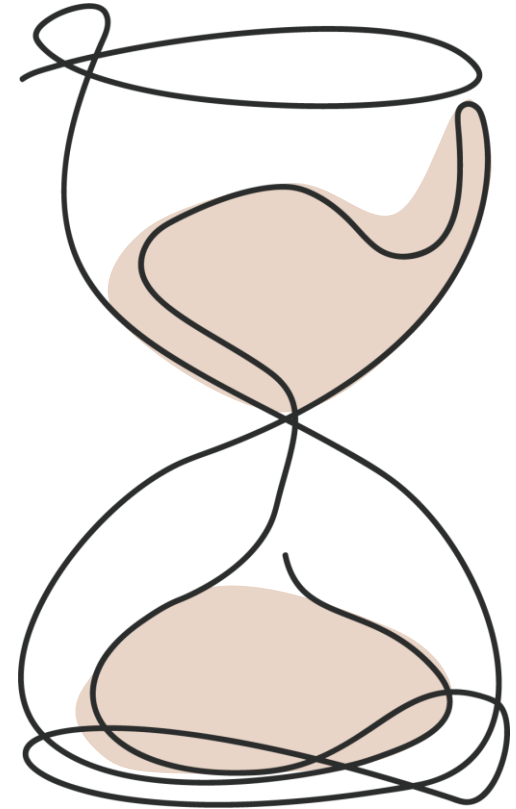
”

A.A Milne

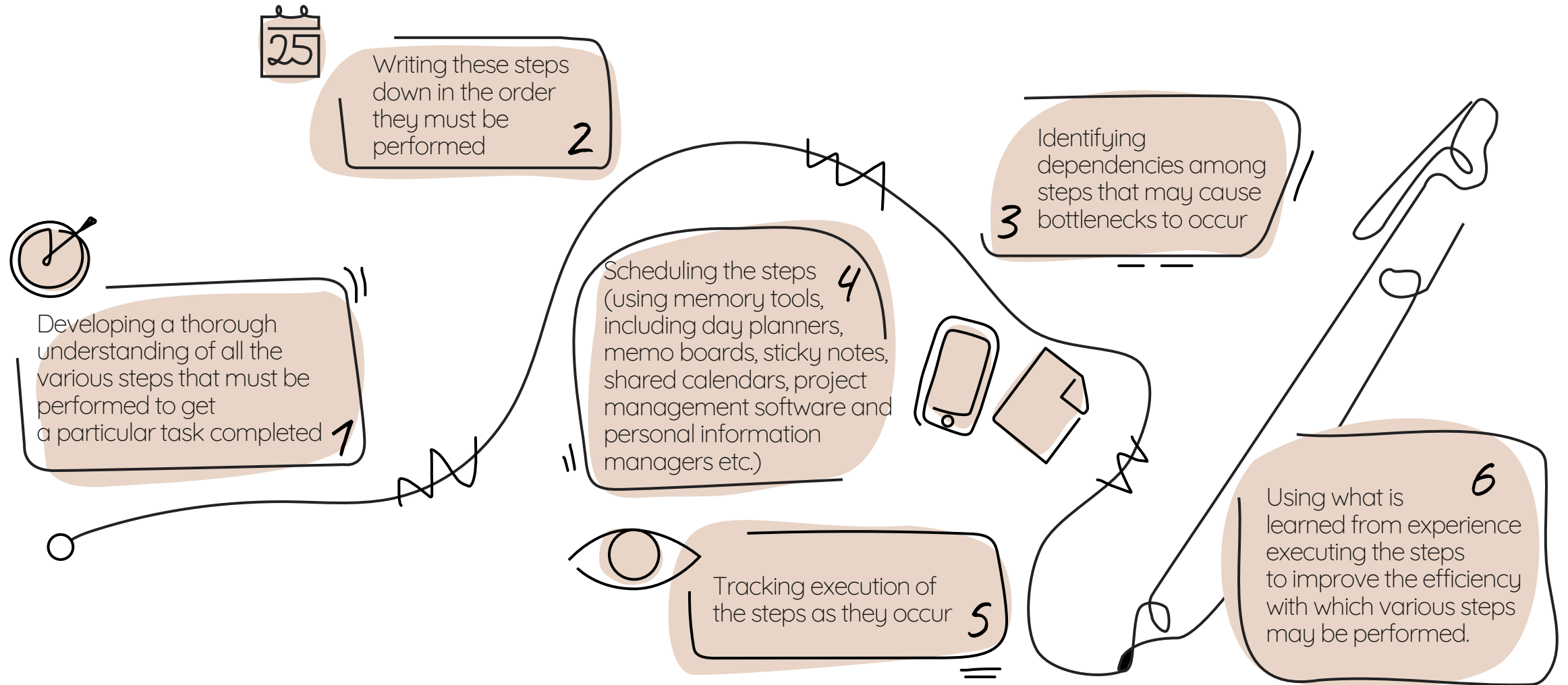
It's not a secret that the 'speed of life' has significantly increased over the last decades and continues to do so.

In nowadays demanding environment full of competition, both youth and educators are bound to jungle with more and more tasks to manage and complete at the same time. This is often one of the main causes of stress.

In order to act preventively it's worth to look at the way we organize our time in a more structured and systematic way. Time management methods involve finding ways to work more efficiently to maximize one's use of time. A variety of techniques and tools for list-making, task analysis scheduling, and task prioritization are typically used for this purpose.



The basic steps of the time management process



1

Do First

First focus on the important tasks to be done the same day

2

Schedule

Important, but not-so-urgent stuff should be scheduled

3

Delegate

What is urgent, but less important, delegate to the others

4

Don't Do

What is neither urgent nor important, don't do at all

Eisenhower Matrix

Prioritizing tasks by urgency and importance results in 4 quadrants with different work strategies

Tips when working with it

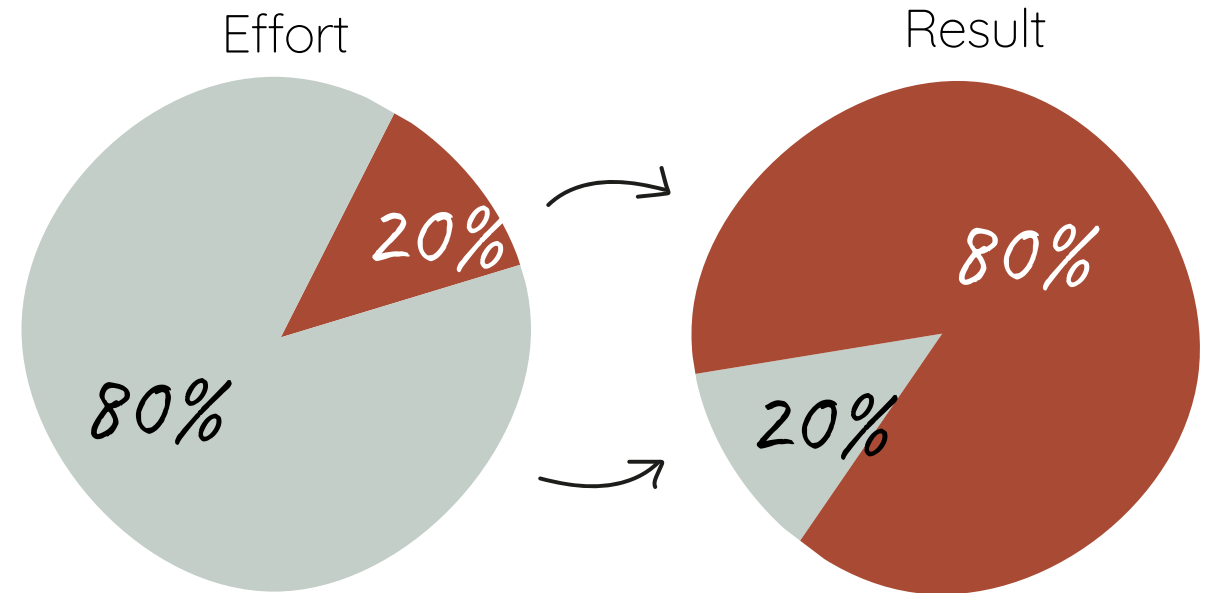
- Putting things to-do on a list frees your mind. But always question what is worth doing first.
- Try limiting yourself to no more than eight tasks per quadrant. Before adding another one, complete the most important one first. Remember: It is not about collecting but finishing tasks.
- You should always maintain only one list for both business and private tasks. That way you will never be able to complain about not having done anything for your family or yourself at the end of the day.
- Do not let you or others distract you.
- Do not let others define your priority.
- Add a splash of color! Color-coding helps give an overview of the categories and quadrants at a glance.
- Plan in the morning, then work on your stuff. And in the end, enjoy the feeling of completion.
- Use special apps, like 4.Do or Todoist
- Finally, try not to procrastinate that much. Not even by over-managing your to-dos.

Pareto principle (80/20 rule)

The 80/20 Rule is one of the most helpful of all concepts of time and life management. It is also called the Pareto Principle after its founder, the Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto, who first wrote about it in 1895.

Pareto noticed that people in his society seemed to divide naturally into what he called the "vital few," the top 20% in terms of money and influence, and the "trivial many," the bottom 80%.

He later discovered that virtually all economic activity was subject to this Pareto Principle as well. For example, this rule says that 20% of your activities will account for 80% of your results. 20% of your customers will account for 80% of your sales. 20% of your products or services will account for 80% of your profits. 20% of your tasks will account for 80% of the value of what you do, and so on. This means that if you have a list of ten items to do, two of those items will turn out to be worth as much or more than the other eight items put together.



 Not important  Important

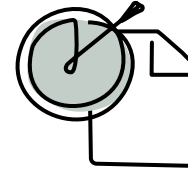
Can you guess on which items the average person is most likely to procrastinate? The sad fact is that most people procrastinate on the top ten or twenty percent of items that are the most valuable and important, the “vital few.” They busy themselves instead with the least important 80%, the “trivial many” that contribute very little to results.

The most valuable tasks you can do each day are often the hardest and most complex. But the payoff and rewards for completing these tasks efficiently can be tremendous. For this reason, you must adamantly refuse to work on tasks in the bottom 80% while you still have tasks in the top 20% left to be done. Before you begin work, always ask yourself, “Is this task in the top 20% of my activities or in the bottom 80%?”

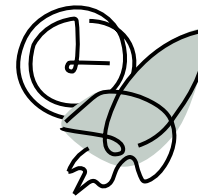


*Text is taken from Eat that Frog by Brian Tracy. We highly recommend reading the whole book.

Exercise



1. Make a list of all the key goals, activities, projects and responsibilities in your life today. Which of them are, or could be, in the top 10% or 20% of tasks that represent, or could represent, 80% or 90% of your results?



2. Resolve today that you are going to spend more and more of your time working in those few areas that can really make a difference in your life and career, and less and less time on lower-value activities.

Kanban method

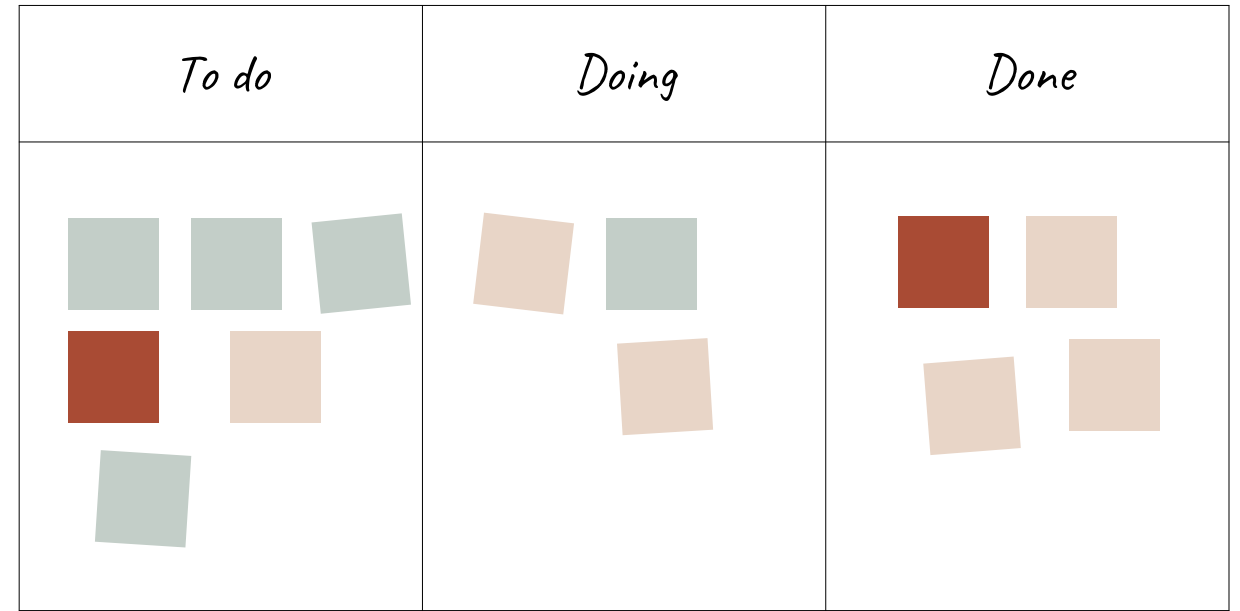
The Kanban method is a visual productivity workflow, using a board and cards, that provides an overview of project tasks, from start to finish, so nothing gets lost in the shuffle.

Unlike traditional task lists, Kanban boards make it easy to visually track work in progress and quickly identify what needs to happen when. While it's particularly effective for collaborative projects with lots of moving parts, it can be equally effective for plotting out your personal goals and keeping them on track.

A Kanban board plots your work items as cards organized into columns that represent distinct phases of a project.

For example, a simple Kanban board can be made up of just three columns: "to do", "doing", and "done". You then move your cards across columns from left to right as the work item progresses through each phase of the project.

More complex projects may have more workflow steps and use unique labels that mirror the chronological steps within a project.



You can choose to do your board with papers or digitally, there are plenty of apps nowadays which use Kanban principle. Example of an app using the principle: Todoist, Trello.

Pomodoro technique

The Pomodoro Technique was developed in the late 1980s by then university student Francesco Cirillo.

It works very well when you are struggling with the focusing on the task you need to do. The method consist of 5 steps:

1

Get a to-do list and a timer.

4

Then enjoy a five-minute break.

2

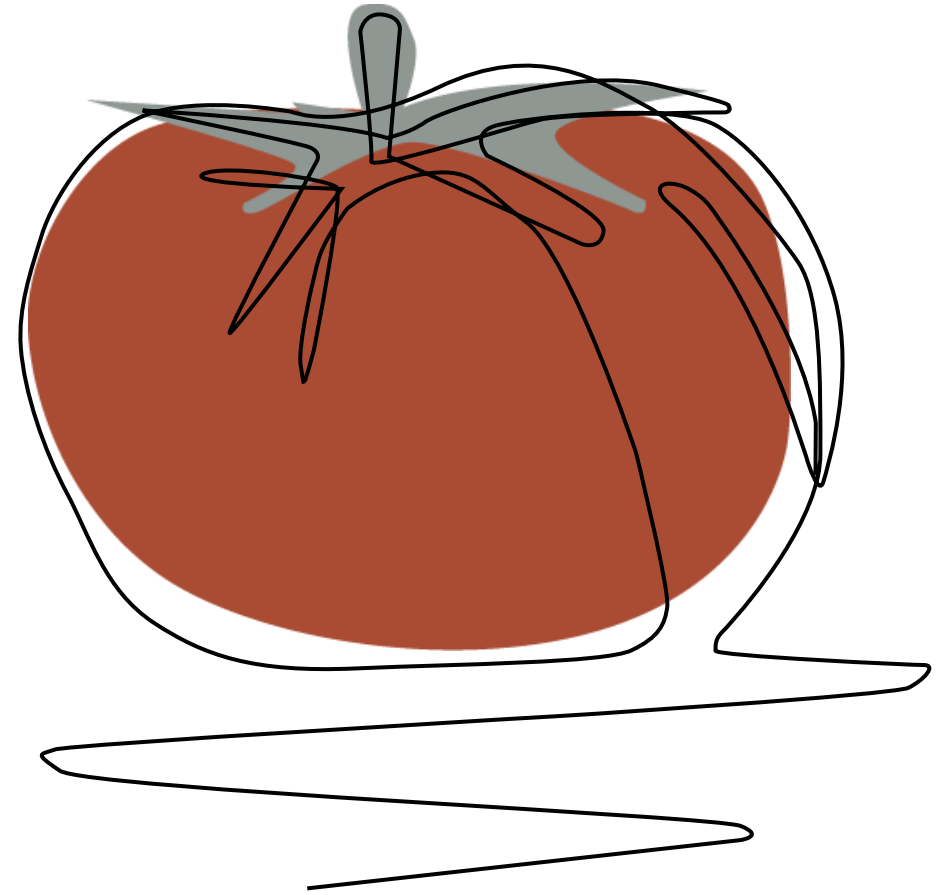
Set your timer for 25 minutes, and focus on a single task until the timer rings.

5

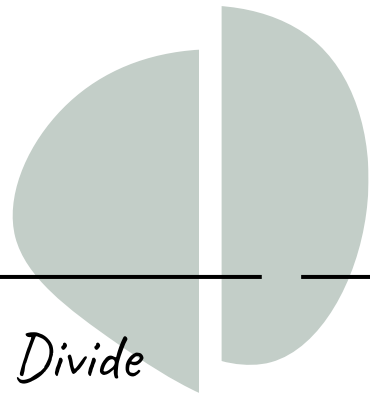
After four pomodoros, take a longer, more restorative 15-30 minute break.

3

When your session ends, mark off one pomodoro and record what you completed.

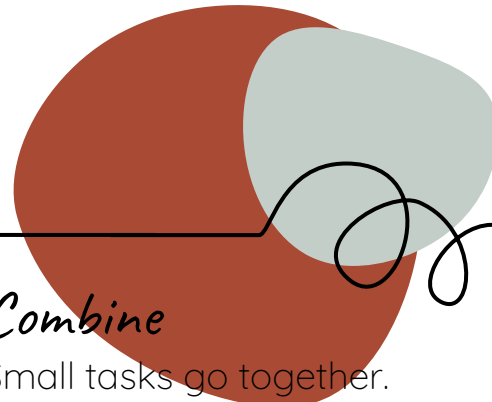


The 25-minute work sprints are the core of the method, but a Pomodoro practice also includes three rules for getting the most out of each interval:



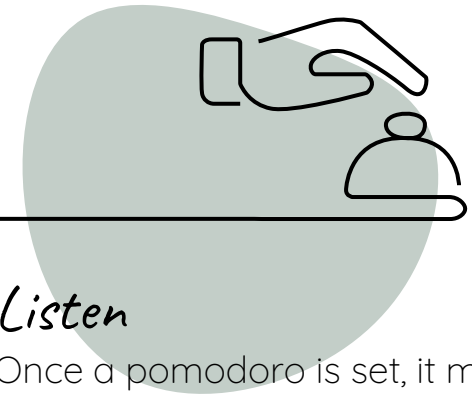
Divide

Break down complex projects. If a task requires more than four pomodoros, it needs to be divided into smaller, actionable steps. Sticking to this rule will help ensure you make clear progress on your projects.



Combine

Small tasks go together. Any tasks that will take less than one Pomodoro should be combined with other simple tasks. For example, "write rent check," "set vet appointment," and "read Pomodoro article" could go together in one session.

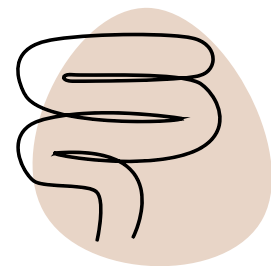
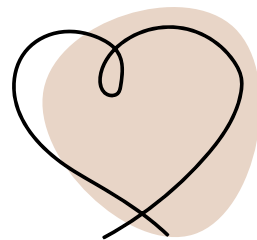
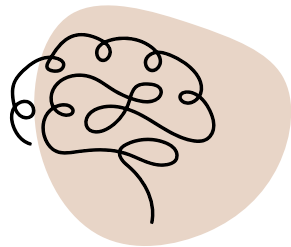
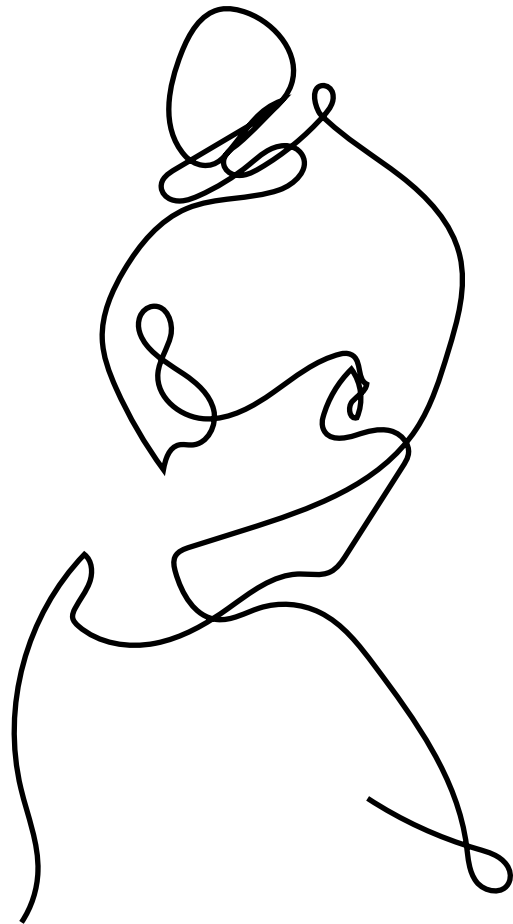


Listen

Once a pomodoro is set, it must ring. The pomodoro is an indivisible unit of time and can not be broken, especially not to check incoming emails, team chats, or text messages. Any ideas, tasks, or requests that come up should be taken note of to come back to later. A digital task manager like is a great place for these, but pen and paper will do too.

In the event of an unavoidable disruption, take your five-minute break and start again. Cirillo recommends that you track interruptions (internal or external) as they occur and reflect on how to avoid them in your next session. Use special apps to practice The Pomodoro practice, like "Forest".

Emotional intelligence



Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and cope with one's own feelings and emotions as well as with the feelings and emotions of other people. In other words, it is the capacity to bring into coherence our thoughts, emotions and bodily sensations.

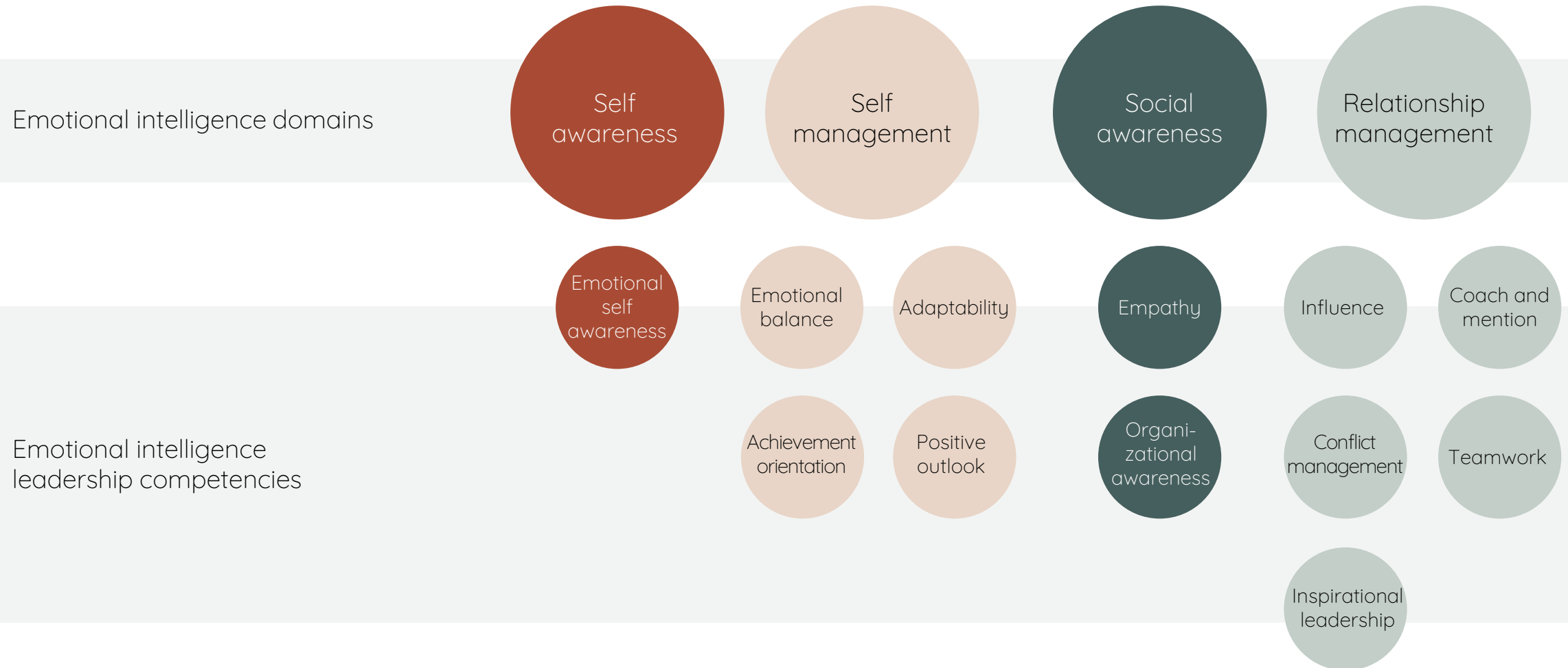
The concept itself derives from what we normally define as brain. According to neuroscience it is an entity with numerous neural connections. The numerous researches discovered that there are centers of neural connections not only in our head (encephalic brain), but also in the region of the heart (cardiac brain) and in the gut (visceral brain).

This proves that it's not only our mind which is responsible for accumulating information, but that thoughts, emotions and body sensations are intrinsically connected. That's one of the reasons why interconnection between the three is the prerequisite for well-being.

Disengaging the mind from the body and the heart leads to the opposite of well-being, that manifests itself on stress and chronic illnesses.

4 main domains of emotional intelligence leadership

According to psychologist Daniel Goleman

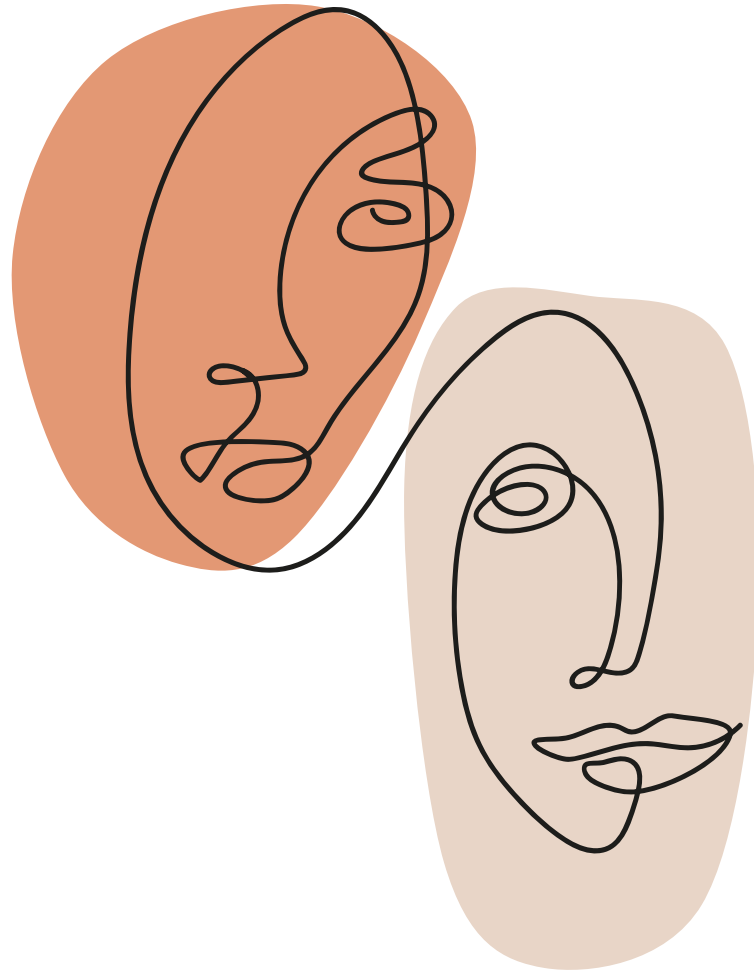


We will not go into detailed description of all the domains and would rather focus on self-awareness as the first step to emotional intelligence.

The truth is that, only by sensing and naming our body's sensations, emotions, and thoughts will we have the possibility to respond and change the perception and impact of them which can eventually help us gain control of our identities and lives.

What can help in achieving higher self-awareness?

- ① Recognizing the sensations in your body in different moments of your daily life (they are important ones! They are signals of certain emotions).
- ② Naming your emotions. The more you are eager to explore what is that you feel in the particular moment, the better you will be able to manage your emotional state. Just remember that all the emotions are legit to arise, there's no such thing as 'good or bad' emotions. The main thing is to recognize them and not deny or avoid them.
- ③ Remember that emotions do not define you and your identity: if you feel anger it doesn't mean you're an angry person. Some professionals advise to use a certain language to avoid merging the personality with emotional state: instead of saying 'I'm angry' you could try to use 'I'm feeling anger' or 'I'm experiencing the feeling of anger'.
- ④ Keep in mind that experiencing and recognizing emotions doesn't make you unprofessional or more vulnerable for others, it just makes you human as all.



In order to address self-awareness as a part of emotional intelligence, it's worth doing some of the practices described above, various embodiment exercises, exercises connecting young people with environment and nature etc.

- explore more about EI: <https://golemanei.com>
- More practices for EI: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BaFYR5E-GmjCxAZblyNhokCsYfB2LX54/view>

“ Be happy in the moment,
that's enough. Each moment
is all we need, not more.”

Mother Teresa

Practical phase

Some sessions developed by participants

Session 1

Prepared and implemented by



Rute De
Sousa Nunes



Girts
Brēmers



Asja
Spasojevic

Learning objectives

- To raise awareness on the importance of self-care in our daily lives
- Improve the connection with our inner-self and being able to express it to others
- Learn to believe in themselves
- Finding meaning in our life goals.



Programme step by step: workshop on self-care

- 1st exercise: life story sharing (sharing a moment through a photo)
 - Looking to a picture on your gallery phone (a really happy or meaningful one), share what you felt on that day and how you feel now when looking back at it in groups up to 3 or 4 people

Time needed: 15 minutes total

- 2nd exercise: journaling: how I overcame a challenge in my life?
 - Which steps you took and what was the successes
 - What was the most difficult part
 - How do I feel about it now.

Time needed: writing 15 minutes and sharing in the group - 5 minutes

- 3rd exercise: find your intention
 - Quote: "I am a big fan of intention. That's because I have learned first-hand the power of setting my intention on my goal and making all decisions based off of that intention"
 - Define your 3 intentions for your daily life (which 3 things would you like to accomplish/live today)
 - Ask the person next to you which are their 3 intentions and tell them yours.

Time needed: 5 minutes for writing and 5 minutes for sharing

Materials and resources used, space(s), digital tools

- Personal phones
- Flipcharts
- Paper and pens or pencils
- Watch to check time

Session 2

Prepared and implemented by



Heba Sami
Sha-Hin



Majnarić Ivan



Supapradit
Rordjaroenpan



Aljona
Bostan

Learning objectives

- communication aims
- the ability to express their opinion
- respect for others' opinions
- practice of Non-Violent Communication technique



Programme step by step: communication

- 1st exercise: energizer

The energizer 1-2-3 for all to be happy and free starts with dividing the group in the pair of two. Make sure everyone found their pair. Tell the pairs that they need to count to three. For example one person will say one and another will say two then first person will say three and then the second person will say one and repeat that few times, they will enjoy and it will be funny. So, when they do that few times, ask them to replace the number three with a clap and let them do it a few times.

Then ask them replace number two with a jump and let them practice with this option. And after that number one replace with a spin. With this changes you will spice a game a little bit and it will be funnier.

- 2nd exercise: art communication workshop

- First you need to divide the group into 2 teams
- The first team goes to one corner of the room with one big white sheet of paper and colored markers and pencils, ask them to draw the most important things in their life in the shape of objects (things related to their daily routine, hobbies, work, or things they enjoy in general), however this task in one sheet of paper but they have to do it individually, every participant take part of the paper for his/her important objects.
- Then ask the other team to go to the other corner of the room and provide them with the same sheet of paper but this time with only black markers and ask them to draw one connected picture in the shape of objects.
- After the two teams finish their paintings, ask them to join you in the middle of the room with their work.
- Then ask the black group to grab their markers and cross the objects which they don't find important for them or for the world in general.
- After they finish crossing the other team's objects ask the following questions:
How do you feel crossing someone's object? How did you feel when you saw your object being crossed?

Do you want to share why is this object important? Although you cross This object could you imagine why would this be important for the person or you just crossed it?... what do you think now after you heard? Did you feel stress seeing your object being crossed? Did you feel stress while crossing somebody's object? If someone unintentionally made fun of something you have or you make, do you try to explain or let it go?

This workshop mainly for group aged between 14-18 years because sometimes we tend to cross people's important objects and feelings not because we want but because we don't understand the value behind it which might cause stress and anxiety and without knowing you build a gap in someone's self confidence.

- 3rd exercise: communication in the plane

Start with summarizing of the previous activity. Ask the participants if they have chance to get the explanation, will they cross the object or not. Be sure that participants are agree that very important:

- Share with others what is important to you and why it's important

- Respect other people opinion, even if you are not agreed with them.

Introduce Non-Violent Communication to the participants and ask them to use this technique for this activity. Now tell the participant „Now I invite you to go to the vacation! You will get your plane ticket, then you will get in the plane and find your seat which is mentioned on your ticket. On your seat you will find the description of your role.

Then give the tickets to the participants and let them find their seat. Give them one 1 minute to read the description of the role and then tell them: „Dear passenger, please fasten your seat belt. Our flight will take 10 hours. During this time, you will communicate with the person next to you. Use the role that you get for the topic of conversation. Try to use Non-Violent Communication and share your points of view using this technique.“

Give participants 5-7 minutes for the conversation. During this time, approach the participants and make sure they understand well the role and task. After that ask if any pair would like to show their conversation in front of the group. Let them show if there are volunteers. After this ask them to sit in circle for final conversation. Ask them their feeling after the conversation, how did it go?

Let them share they impressions. Then ask: „Did you success to use Non-Violent Communication technique?“ “What did you learn from the whole workshop?”

Attachment 1. Roles

Seat 1A You are strict vegan, who think that killing animals is awful	Seat 1B You are meat lover, who like steaks and kebab very much
Seat 2A You are childfree woman, who hate noise and prefer to do work in the plane	Seat 2B You are young mother with her very loud 1-year child
Seat 3A You are the atheist who thinks all religions are bullshit	Seat 3B You are radical Jew
Seat 4A You are feminist woman who fighting for women's rights	Seat 4B You are macho man who thinks that woman place is a kitchen

And than seats C and D could have roles:

Seat 1C You are the atheist who thinks all religions are bullshit	Seat 1D You are radical Jew
Seat 2C You are feminist woman who fighting for women's rights	Seat 2D You are macho man who thinks that woman place is a kitchen
Seat 3C You are strict vegan, who think that killing animals is awful	Seat 3D You are meat lover, who like steaks and kebab very much
Seat 4C You are childfree woman, who hate noise and prefer to do work in the plane	Seat 4D You are young mother with her very loud 1-year child

*If there are more than eight participants, then some couples could receive the same roles.

Try to arrange participants so that couples with the same roles are not side by side.

For example, if you have 16 participants you could put them this way:

1A	1B		1C	1D
2A	2B		2C	2D
3A	3B		3C	3D
4A	4B		4C	4D

Also, you can add any roles for couples with opposite interests by yourself.

Materials and resources used, space(s), digital tools

- 2 white big sheets of papers
- 1 set of black markers
- 1 set of colored markers
- Tickets with seat numbers
- Seat label with description of the roles (attachment 1)
- Place in the room with seats as “in the plane”

Session 3

Prepared and implemented by



Ania
Koźlińska



Joaquim
Contradanças



Kaspars
Zāģeris



Sonja Bozic

Learning objectives

- Decrease stress level
- Release body tension
- Learn useful tools to cope with stress
- Learn to make stress balls



Programme step by step: go with the flow

- 1st exercise: “stressed salad” energizer

Number of stations = number of people in the group minus 1. One person from the whole group does not have a place, while all the others occupy the stations—one person per station. The one that does not have a station has to say something related to stress, e.g. ‘My heart beats faster when I am stressed’. The ones on the stations that share the feeling conveyed by what was said change places amongst themselves, while the person that started out of a station takes one the places. The energizer goes on by repeating this process.

- 2nd exercise: embodied activities go get rid of stress.

Each person in the room stay in a place separated from the others, with enough space to avoid touching the others. Close the eyes and check how you feel. And assess which sensations of your body you can recognize. Figure out if there is any tension—check your shoulders, head, etc. Take a deep breath and focus on your feet, how they touch the floor. Feel them grounded. Imagine your feet are like the roots of a tree. Look around you and try to find red things (as an example)—what is important is that you pay attention to what is around you. Feel your body with your hands. Be aware of your body. Stretch your whole body by moving your hands up and moving your hands to opposite sides of your body (left arm to the right and vice-versa).

Balloon exercise: Stretch your all body by moving your hands up. When you go up breath in and hold your breath for some seconds. Then, release totally by going down to the floor while exhaling. Do it a few times. You can add voice if you want.

Exercise based on Jacobson: Take a deep breath and clench your fist with exhaling. Squeeze and hold breath while clenching and later release during exhalation. Put your shoulders up (tension, hold the breath) and later release with exhalation. Do the same with your face and as the last step combine all of the tree together. Flicking tension from your body like you want to get rid of something that is covering your body (like ash, for example). Shaking parts of your body with voice and later shake off all tension from all your body. Close your eyes and imagine box in front of you. Put in this box all of stressors which you want to get rid of, it could be something symbolical. Later imagine that you have big sword or machete in your hand. And in 1,2,3 you can start to destroy your box. You can add voice.

- 3rd exercise: flow massage

With relaxing music and pleasing smells.

Form groups of 5 people.

One person lays on a mat while the others hold the limbs, head, etc, of this person. There should be only a toucher per part of the body. The “touched” person should be relaxed—like a dead body—, paying attention to their own breathing. The “holders” move slowly and gently the parts of the body they are holding, exploring the different moves allowed by the joints.

- 4th exercise: making stress balls

Get two balloons per person.

Cut out the thinner part of the opening of each balloon. Fill in one of the balloons with rice until it is full. Insert the balloon full of rice in the other one, so that the rice does not come out.

Materials and resources used, space(s), digital tools

- Mats
- Rice
- Balloons
- Scissors
- Relaxing music

Session 4

Prepared and implemented by



Afrodite
Theochare



Marcelo
Yamada



Dania
Ghosheh

Learning objectives

- Raising youth awareness of the impact of societal expectations on their wellbeing and their personal life decisions
- Creating a safe space for youth to share their experiences and their similarities regarding stressful situations
- Understanding the effect of inequality of opportunities on youths choices
- Encouraging youth to use personal storytelling and journaling as a method to learn from oneself and each other



Programme step by step: addressing and coping with social stress

- 1st exercise: video game maze - pre determined life path (15 minutes)

Preparation of materials:

- On A4 papers write words representing different stations. Eg. job, school, house, university, marriage, promotion, pension, exotic holidays, children, grandchildren, exams. Behind the big written words write a note for the person holding the paper to read. E.g. Behind 'marriage' write 'Congratulations! You just got married! Level completed!'. Behind 'children' write 'You just had your first child! Congratulations! Let's go for the next one! Level completed!'
- Place the station papers spread around on the floor.

Execution

- Ask the people to stand where the stations are. One person per paper. And ask them to hold the paper so it is visible. Ask them to read the statement written on the back of the paper when they are touched.
- If there are more people than stations then ask them to be the cheer leaders. When a station is touched.
- One person will be blinded with a paper and need to be guided by the supporter and the restrictor.
- The role of the supporter is to talk things to the blinded person that give him freedom of choice and options to choose in life. The role of the restrictor is to give no options to the blinded person and strictly guide him through all the stations that the society ask to accomplish.
- When the game starts you need to say 'your life begins'. Then one by one the supporter and the restrictor guide this person to move left or right or forward. At the same time each gives comments and statements on how this person should live his life.
- The goal is that the blind person manages to touch all stations. Every time the person touches a station the cheer leaders are cheering!
- Important is to have video game music in the background.

Note. This activity is to explore the societal pressure applied to young people on how to structure their lifestyles. Keywords: Societal pressure, cultural pressure, family and friends pressure, structure of life, lack of freedom, blind guidance, restriction, stress, anxiety, life choices.

- 2nd exercise: walk of privileges (15 minutes)

Here are some tools that clarify this activity ([video](#); [written steps](#)). We have adapted this activity by distributing pre-written roles to the participants, on which they based themselves to position when hearing the statements given by the trainers. At the end, we asked the two first and two last to arrive.

- 3rd exercise: safe space and storytelling (20 minutes)

-Divide the space room into two quadrants.

- Ask participants to stand together in one quadrant

- Give the instructions on the activity:

“I would like you to move into the other quadrant if you relate with the statement I will say, if you do not relate please remain in the same quadrant. I would also like to ask you to look around and pay attention to your peers who share the quadrant with you. Enjoy!”

- Statements included the following examples: “Join the square if you:”

If you struggled to choose what you want to study

If you ended up studying something you do not like

If you studied something your family wanted

If you are waking up every day to do a job you do not enjoy

If the reasons you have this job is financial stability

If you think marriage and age are interconnected and affect each other

If you feel that without marrying and building a family your life will be incomplete

If you are doing what you are expected to do rather than what you want to do

If people around expect a lot from you, much more than you can give

If you had the courage to change your career path

If you dropped out of school or university

If you repeated a school year

If your family does not agree with your choices

- At the end, ask the participants to sit back and distribute sticky notes for the participants to write their reflections on the activity, and write about how they felt”
- Introduce Personal Storytelling: try to elicit information from the participants
- Ask participants to think of a personal story that they would like to share concerning peer-pressure, family pressure, or social pressure.
- Share and reflect.

- Debriefing: space for the group to share their reflection upon the workshop overall (8 minutes)

Some questions to be asked to the group to guide them towards the learning objectives can be:

How did you feel in each activity? And overall?

Are you able to relate each activity to stressful situations you might have gone through in your personal life? How?

How does one’s background affect their life choices?

By taking part in those activities, were you able to evaluate how much do you get stressed by external factors that are out of your control?

- Theory: Suggesting the group to research about Stoicism (2 minutes)

Materials and resources used, space(s), digital tools

- Flipcharts – for presenting some instructions;
- Sticky notes – for participants to write their reflections between each activity;
- Writing tools – pens, pencils and markers;
- Music – for the 2nd activity we used: Super Mario Music)
- Our beautiful energy

Session 5

Prepared and implemented by



Valentina
Torres



Aladdin
Nassr Allah



Mislav
Majnaric

Learning objectives

- Finding out what is the relation between walking in silence with stress management, self care and mindfulness.
- Providing participants with a novel technique of meditation in motion. combination of breathing with focusing on surroundings (sounds, sights, smells etc.) during walking.
- Providing participants with the time for themselves.



Programme step by step: silent walk

First step is to shortly gather all the participants, in the circle preferably, and to acknowledge them with the title of the workshop together with simple rules: walking in silence (no speaking at all) and following the group leader. Also, before the walk ask participants to shortly (30 seconds each) think about their feelings in the very moment and then, on the piece of paper (post-it etc.) try to describe their feelings with one single word and write it down. Divide participants in the small groups having in mind also the current laws and regulations of the municipality regarding COVID 19 (masks, number of people per group etc.).

To each group facilitator should be provided and his/her job is to take care of the walk of the of the group (duration of the walk, walking path etc.) Walk should last at least 30 minutes, so facilitator should have in mind to chose the walking route accordingly. Upon finishing the walk (30 minutes or more) each group should discuss and reflect their experiences during the walk separately (facilitator should ask questions that are preferably prepared in advance in order to open discussion).

Moreover, participants should be encouraged to think again for a moment and write down again on the piece of paper how are they feeling workshop based on now after the walk, and again, it should be summed up in only one word.

Materials and resources used, space(s), digital tools

- Flipcharts – for presenting some instructions;
- Post-its – for participants to write their reflections between each activity;
- Writing tools – pens, pencils and markers;
- A4 papers- where facilitators will prepare their questions for discussions after the walk

After that, facilitator should ask each and every participant if they are willing to share their feelings before and after the walk.

How did you feel before the silent walk?

How did you feel during the silent walk?

How did you manage to express your needs during the silent walk?

How did you communicate together as a group?

How did you feel on the way back?

How did you feel after the end of silent walk?

What is something you learned during the walk?

What were you thinking about during the walk?

Upon finishing within the small groups all of them should unite in a big group and discuss together.

“ We are not there (Where?)
We are here (right here)
Take care of yourself
And also of your peer
Come to the room,
Shoes outside
The session starts soon
Leave now your worries behind!
Do not be negative
Don't you dare!
Welcome to the training Self-care!”

Participants of the project



This project became a reality thanks to

ERASMUS+

The EU programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport for 2014-2020. The “Self-Care for You(th)” project was co-financed through the Erasmus+ programme of the European Commission.

The Erasmus+ programme aims to boost skills and employability, as well as modernising Education, Training, and Youth work. The seven year programme has a budget of €14.7 billion; a 40% increase compared to spending levels between 2007 and 2013, reflecting the EU’s commitment to investing in these areas. Erasmus+ provides opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train, gain work experience and volunteer abroad.

Erasmus+ supports transnational partnerships among Education, Training, and Youth institutions and organisations to foster cooperation and bridge the worlds of Education and work in order to tackle the skills gaps we are facing in Europe. It also supports national efforts to modernise Education, Training, and Youth systems. In the field of Sport, there is support for grassroots projects and crossborder challenges such as combating match-fixing, doping, violence and racism. Erasmus+ brings together seven previous EU programmes in the fields of Education, Training, and Youth. As an integrated programme, Erasmus+ offers more opportunities for cooperation across the Education, Training, Youth, and Sport sectors and is easier to access than its predecessors, with simplified funding rules.