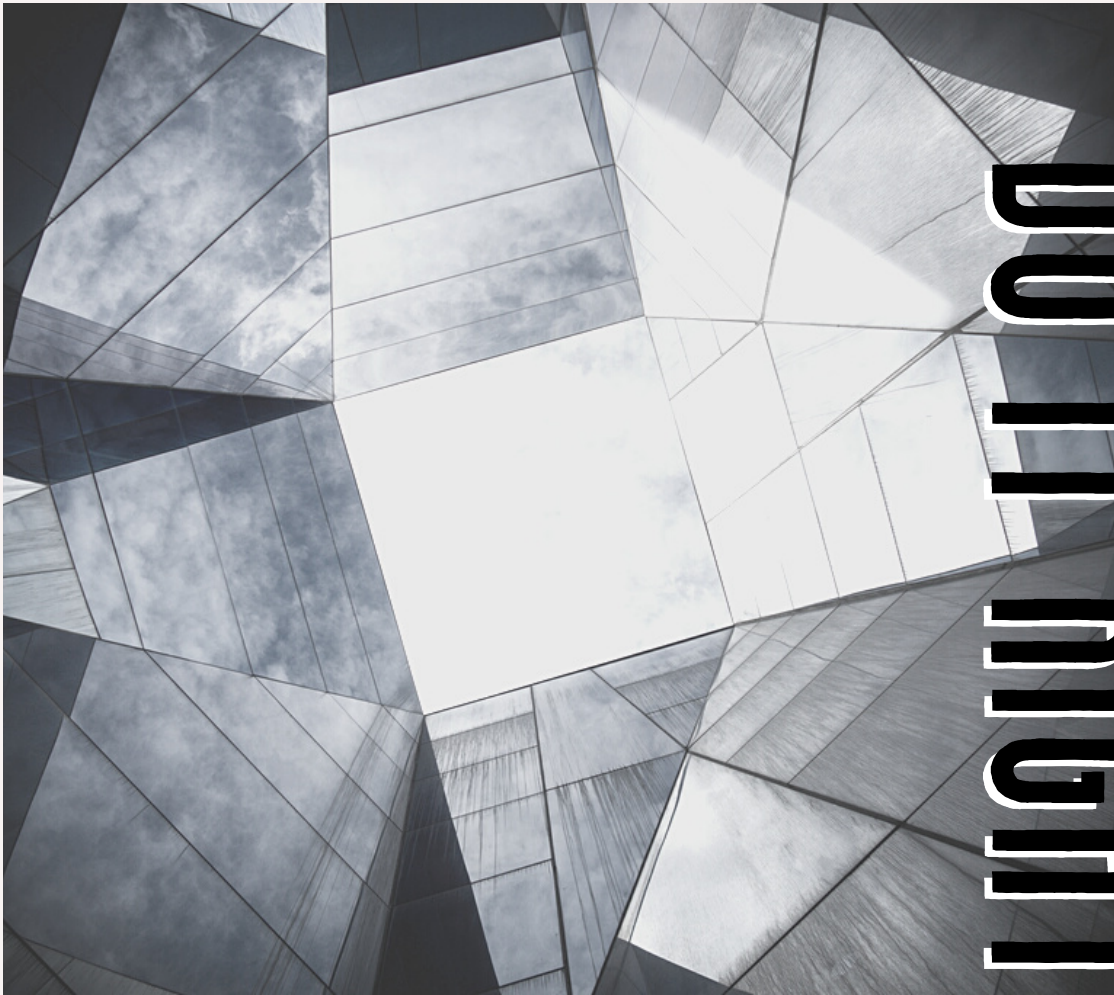


REFLECTIVE LEARNING IN QUALITY YOUTH WORK



**DO IT
RIGHT!**

Training course
Methods and Tools handbook

EDITORS:

Tamar Aydinyan, Tatevik Abrahamyan, Madina Yakubova

Special thanks to all participants who contributed with their workshops, active participation and support in handbook development:



dialogos }



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DEAR READERS,

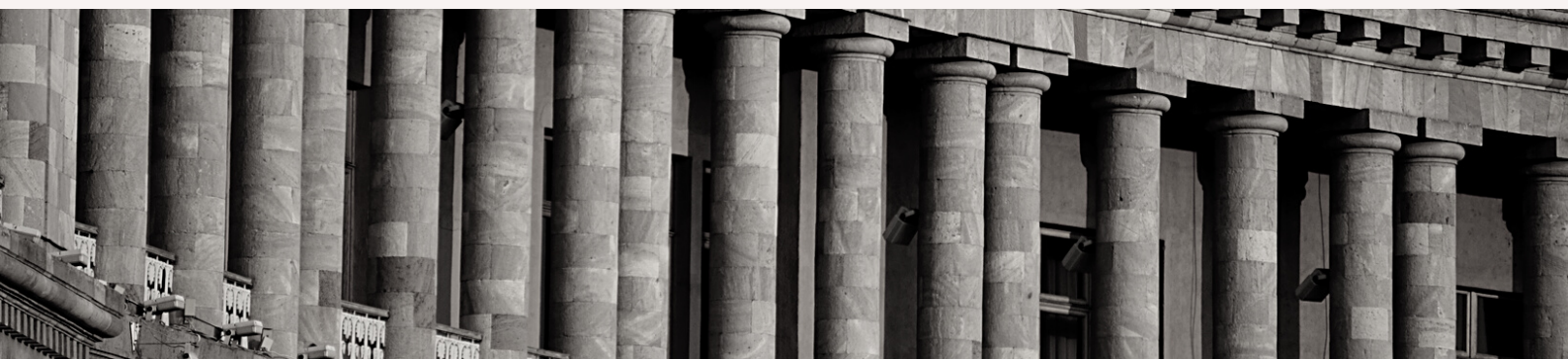
This small manual will take you to the world of reflection and will give practical tools and methods that we implemented during the training course “Do It Right!- Reflection design in quality youth work” which took place in Tsaghkadzor, Armenia between 20-27 August 2022.

The project was organized in the framework of the Erasmus + Programme of the European Union and involved 26 participants from 6 countries: Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Germany, Portugal, Romania.

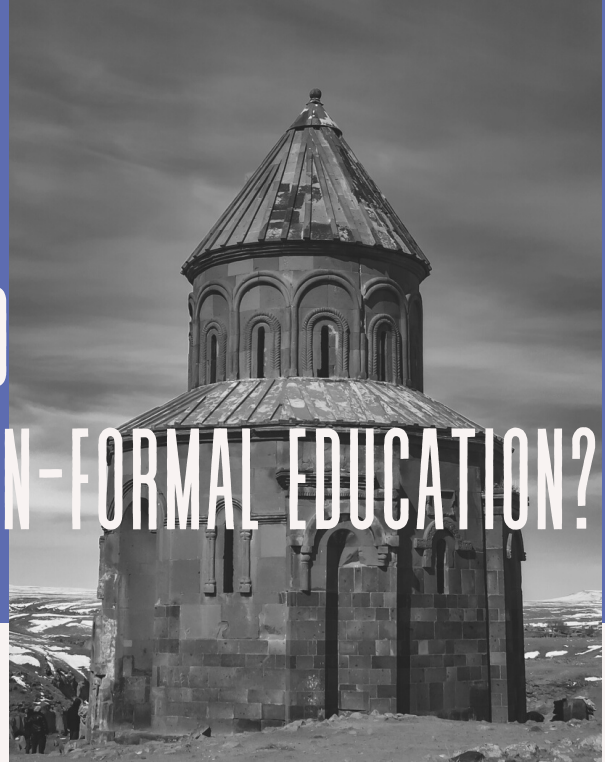
The proposed TC’s main goal was to develop youth workers’ professional competencies by equipping them with skills and tools to support reflective learning, which highly improved their work quality.

The TCs educational model was conceptualized from a synthesis of diverse approaches including sustainable education, transformative learning theories, placed-based learning, and experiential learning. To ensure that participants make the best use of their skills, abilities, and knowledge, all the sessions were designed in a way to encourage their active participation and provide them with an opportunity to share their expertise and to contribute with their skills and knowledge of the proposed topic.

We hope by reading this book you will learn something new and discover activities you can further use in your daily work with young people.



WHAT IS REFLECTION AND WHAT IS ITS VALUE IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION?



There is a crucial link between youngsters learning quality and youth workers' skills and knowledge of supporting their learning process. Hereby, staff for the youth-serving organization is a critical ingredient as the crux of learning progress occurs during the reflection process, where young people challenge their assumptions, try to make sense of experience, and instead of being passive receivers of external knowledge, they become active creators and co-creators of their own knowledge, integrating theory and practice.

Considering the above mentioned from youth workers competence perspective, it's essential for them to act as reflective practitioners since youth programs and youth work itself within non-formal education framework often attribute their success to youth workers ability to support the learning process. We don't learn from experience, but we learn from reflecting on the experience, thus, regardless of the target group and field, any youth worker needs a toolkit of reflection process design in the first place.

In their daily work, they use different techniques enabling critical thinking and fostering learning and although, every youth worker knows reflection techniques, yet not everyone can make it strategically placed with the conspicuous accent on important details. It is also easy to fall into the trap of applying the same techniques and approaches repeatedly.

Therefore, as every youngster responds according to his existing knowledge and experiences, it is important for youth workers to routinely evaluate their reflective practice competencies and consider whether they can be improved to ensure effective support of their target groups.

Furthermore, youth workers are responsible for applying the reflective process to their own roles and supporting the development of reflective skills among young people.

Reflection design combines technical competencies and knowledge of psychological standpoints and peculiarities of the learning process, which enables design, redesign, and adjustment and monitoring of the reflection process and used tools according to learning needs and situations.

Moreover, reflection tools in organizing the non-formal learning process at youth work can have multiple applications. Depending on the certain goal of implementing the backward design process can be used for emphasizing different aspects of learning outcomes such as knowledge reframe, problem-solving, integration of skills, etc., meanwhile, regardless of the topic also acting as a tool of developing reflectivity itself, thus making its utility to extend beyond.

LEVELS OF REFLECTION IN YOUTH WORK

Reflection in youth work can refer

- to youth workers in terms of their personality and their role;
- to their work competencies in organizing the reflection on the learning process of their target groups.

In our TC we equally focused on both and in this handbook are presented tools and techniques youth workers and leaders can use in their daily work and life.

During the daily work youth workers also conduct activities on individual and group level and here again depending on each target group peculiarities their needs and learning aims reflection can be designed on different levels

- individual reflection;
- peer to peer reflection;
- group reflection.

PRINCIPLES OF REFLECTIVE LEARNING DESIGN



The theory of reflective learning says that learning derives from our experiences and can be constantly updated through the process of recording and thinking about the experiences we have. A very important aspect of reflective learning is that it is a process in which we can learn about ourselves.

Being a reflective learner allows you to step back from what you are learning and develop your critical thinking skills by analyzing your experience and improving on your future performance.

Gibbs' reflective cycle identifies 6 stages of reflection which help to make sense of our learning experiences

Thus, designing the reflection of any learning experience should be done with these key principles and questions should sequentially refer to each stage.

SELF-AWARENESS AS A FIRST STEP

COMPETENCY MAPPING

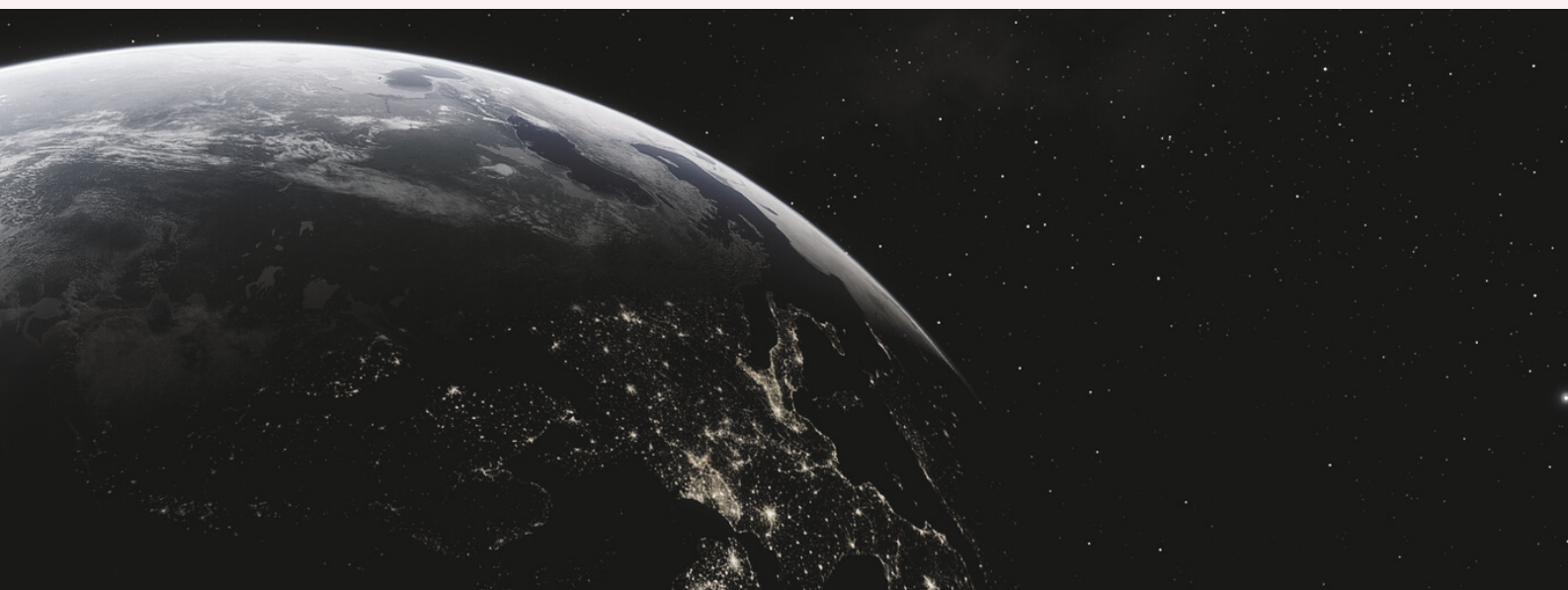
Competency mapping is a process that allows us to identify qualities and features necessary to be successful and effective in a particular field. Competency maps often are referred to as competency profiles.

During our TC we used competency mapping as a method that allowed participants to brainstorm on qualities and features that are defining a person as a youth worker (in terms of both professional and soft skills)

Instructions:

At the beginning, there is a plenary discussion on who is a youth worker for them, how all of us see the concept of the youth worker, and what associations come to our mind. Write on flipcharts all the associations that group members have

This is followed by a small input on what is competence and what are its 3 components. Iceberg and circle models of competencies are introduced, where each competence is a combination of certain knowledge, skills, and attitude, and personality traits are the core for competency formation (around 15 min).



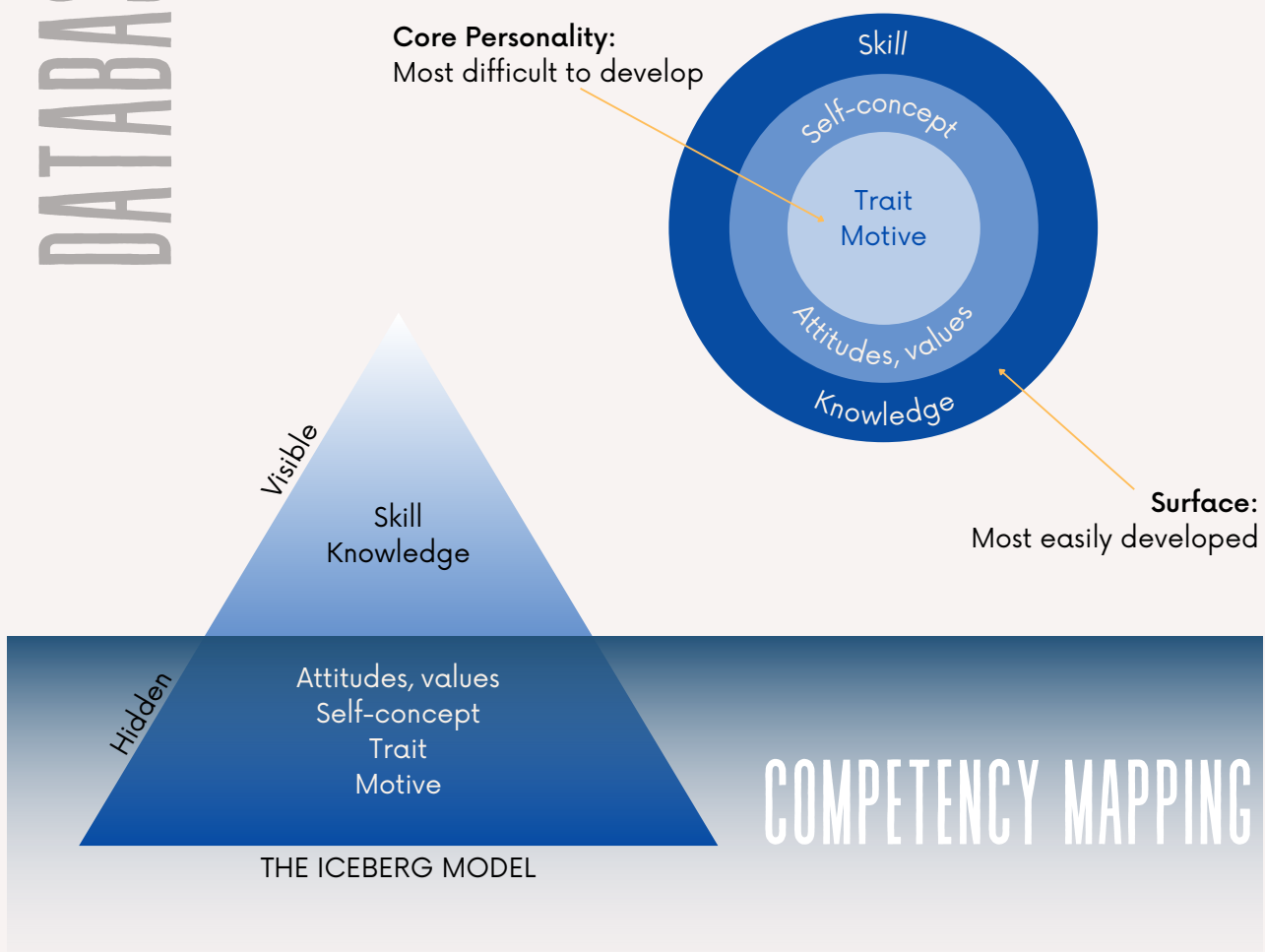
Participants divide into small working groups where they are asked to write down on paper the competencies of a youth worker. They need to discuss in their groups and together create maps of competencies and present them afterward.

Depending on an aim you can go to the second round of activity where participants are invited to self-reflection where they can assess to which extent they have the competencies that were revealed. (you can choose an assessment tool yourself numbering 0-10, drawing a chart, etc)

Discussion can be done in pairs in small groups or with a whole group depending on your group dynamics and needs.

Needed materials:

Flipchart papers, pens, color pencils, markers.



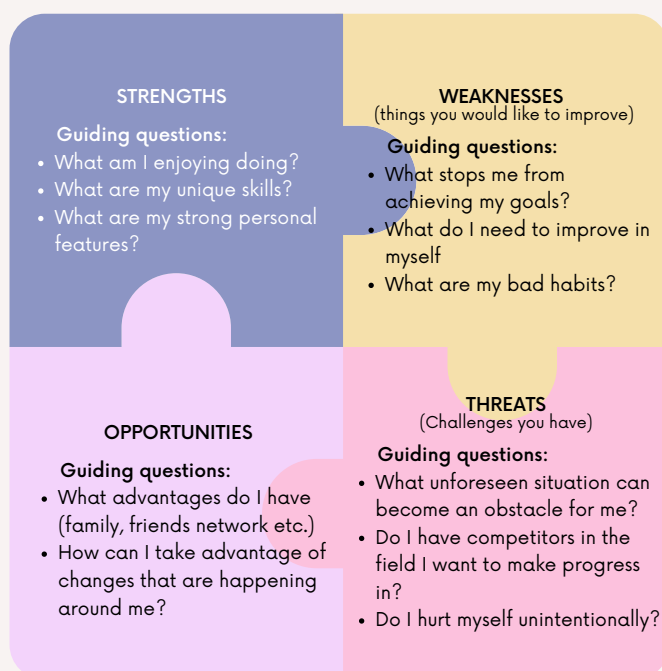
COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT

SWOT analysis on personal level

A personal SWOT analysis is a method of individual assessment. It can be done at any stage in life, whether to determine self-improvement, educational choices, career paths or career growth opportunities. You can use a personal SWOT for self-assessment or social comparison. When it comes to significant changes in your life, it involves a lot of information gathering, thinking and analyzing. Conducting a personal SWOT analysis can help you avoid unforeseen mistakes because it requires you to address your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Instructions:

Find a comfortable place for you and during the next 30 min reflect upon the following:



After individual work participants are invited to make pairs and share their SWOT results with each other to the extend they feel comfortable.

Reflection and evaluation questions in plenary with trainers can be

- What was the hardest part of the individual task?
- How does it feel when you confront yourself?
- Did you have insights?
- How it felt sharing with your pair?
- How did you feel while listening to the other person?
- Did you have any change of perspective?

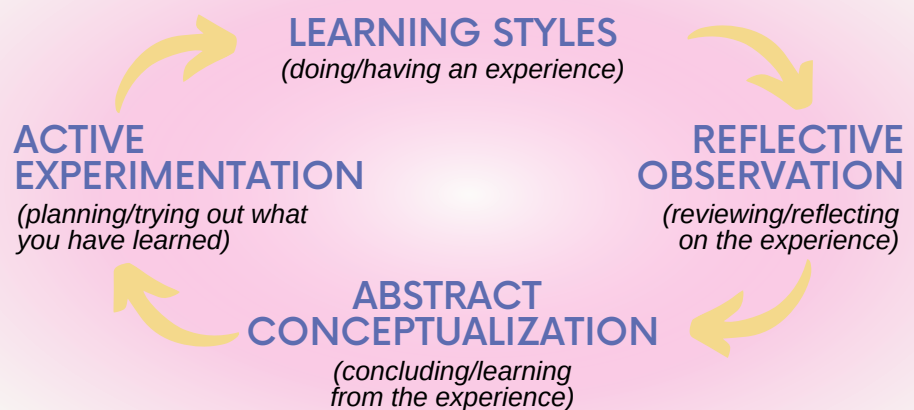
Needed Materials:

Papers, pens.

HOW DO WE AND OTHERS LEARN?

LEARNING STYLES

Learning styles are based on the model presented by D. Kolb. The model is called "The cycle of experiential learning". D. Kolb published his learning styles model in 1984 from which he developed his learning style inventory. Kolb's experiential learning theory works on two levels: a four stage cycle of learning and four separate learning styles. Much of Kolb's theory is concerned with the learner's internal cognitive processes. Kolb's experiential learning cycle is represented by four stages that learner going through while getting new knowledge.



1. Concrete Experience - a new experience;
2. Reflective Observation - exploration of new experience;
3. Abstract Conceptualization - a new idea or a modification of an existing abstract concept;
4. Active Experimentation - the learner applies new experience in his/her environment.

In the cycle we can notice the learning styles based on the above mentioned processes. Here are the **learning styles**:

1. Diverging (feeling and watching)
2. Assimilating (watching and thinking)
3. Converging (doing and thinking)
4. Accommodating (doing and feeling)



Instructions:

To deepen their understanding on learning styles participants are divided into 4 subgroups. Each subgroup has one new experience that should be explored in 20 minutes by cycle stages:

- How to prepare the Armenian national dish Tolma;
- How to learn playing basketball;
- How to learn Armenian history;
- Non verbal, picture based game with Armenian instructions.

After working in the subgroups each group should present their new experience to other groups (15-20minutes). The discussion on learning styles and stages is done with the whole group.

Questions for general discussion at the end can be:

- Is there the best learning style?
- Do learning styles change the course of persons' life?
- Do learning styles change according to the topic of teaching?
- How can we use the 4 learning styles in our work?

Needed Materials:

Papers, pencils, markers, flipchart with 4 learning styles written on it, instructions on a paper for each group (not obligatory).



EDUCATIONAL SCAFFOLDING

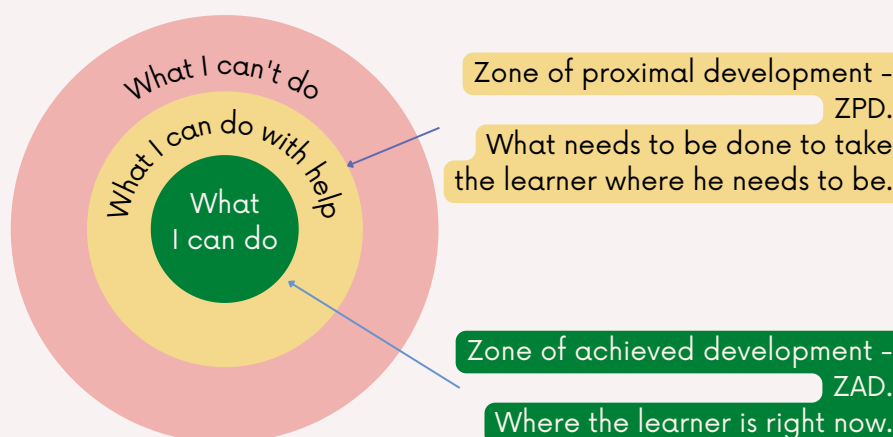
Scaffolding refers to a method where educators offer a particular kind of support to learners as they acquire and develop a new concept or skill. In the instructional scaffolding model, an educator may share new information or demonstrate how to solve a problem, then gradually steps back and lets learners practice on their own. It also can involve group practice.

The model of instructional scaffolding is also sometimes described as "I do. We do. You do." During the process of scaffolding we:

- observe;
- give hints;
- give a feedback.

To be able to do this we need to be aware of previous experiences and backgrounds of our target groups

Scaffolding idea was developed from the concept of ZPD (zone of proximate development) proposed by L. Vigotsky.



Instructions:

To understand the concept and practice participants were invited to a small self-reflection session where they had 30 min to reflect upon 3 questions

- What can I do on my own without anyone's help?
- What can I do with help or guidance?
- What I can't do yet but would like to learn?

After individual work participants are invited to share in pairs or in small groups of maximum 4 people.

Plenary discussion with trainers is to be followed.

Needed Materials:

Papers, pencils, pens.

REFLECTION VS EVALUATION

We **reflect** and **evaluate** our experience to propel ourselves forward. The word itself combines two words, "re" which means "back" and "flexion" which means "to bend." Together, the word literally means to bend back.

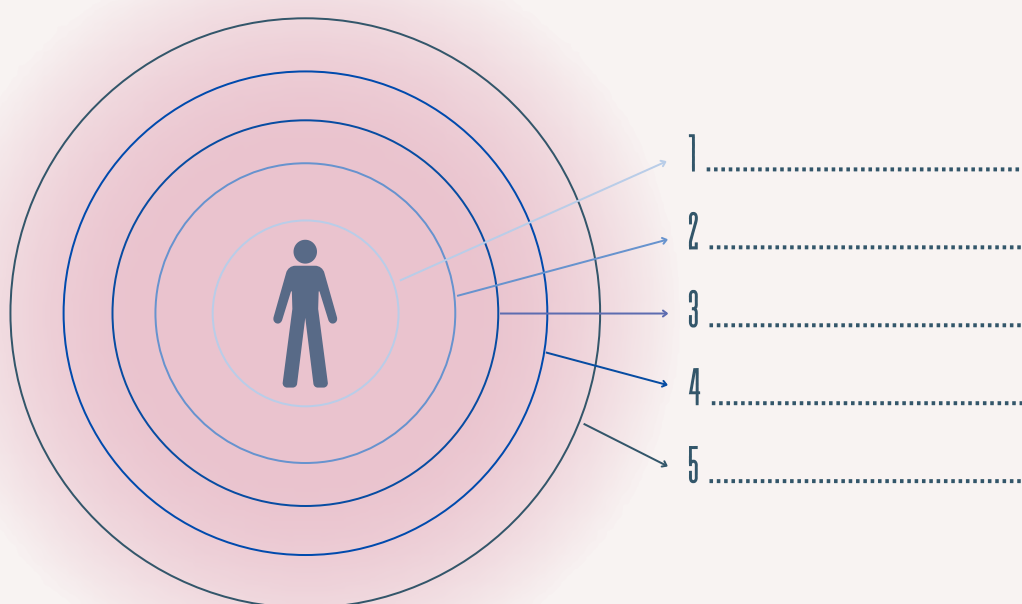
Evaluation, on the other hand, is about appraising something or someone. The word comes from the French, "evaluer," which means, "to find the value in." So when you're evaluating, you're literally trying to find the value in that experience.

Though they may seem similar, they're not the same thing.

Question to think: **Is that possible to reflect without evaluating and evaluation without reflection?**

Instructions:

In order to practice these two process participants are invited to experience "Onion method" Who am I? What am I? In identity there are many aspects to it, some hidden, some visible. One way of looking at this could be to imagine yourself as an onion (even if you don't like to eat them). Each layer corresponds to a different part of your identity. What are the most important things which make up your identity or events that made you who you are? Write them next to the numbers 1 -5, with number 1 being the most important to you.



Guiding questions while working individually.

Reflection questions can be:

- What happened? What did that make me to think about?
- How did I feel about what happened?
- Why did I feel that way?
- What actions did I take?
- What was the result?

Here we recall events, action emotions and its absolutely fine to have negative feelings here.

Evaluation questions can be:

- What was challenging, difficult or easy?
- How is it new or different from what I have experienced or known before?
- What's the value of the experience?
- What lesson did I learn?
- What is the outcome I'll take into consideration and go on
- Can I be grateful for this experience?

Here we make judgements and give value to our experience trying to reveal its importance

After individual work is done participants are invited to find a pair they would feel comfortable to share.

Questions for general reflection & evaluation of the activity:

- How do you feel about this work?
- What was the easiest and hardest part to identify?
- Is there any point that you wanted but didn't mention
- Did you think about the characteristic that was somehow surprising for you?

Needed Materials:

Papers, pencils, pens.



HOW TO SUPPORT THE LEARNING PROCESS

ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is a communication skill that involves going beyond simply hearing the words that another person speaks, but also seeking to understand the meaning and intent behind them. It requires being an active participant in the communication process. The purpose of active listening is to ensure the speaker feels heard and understood.

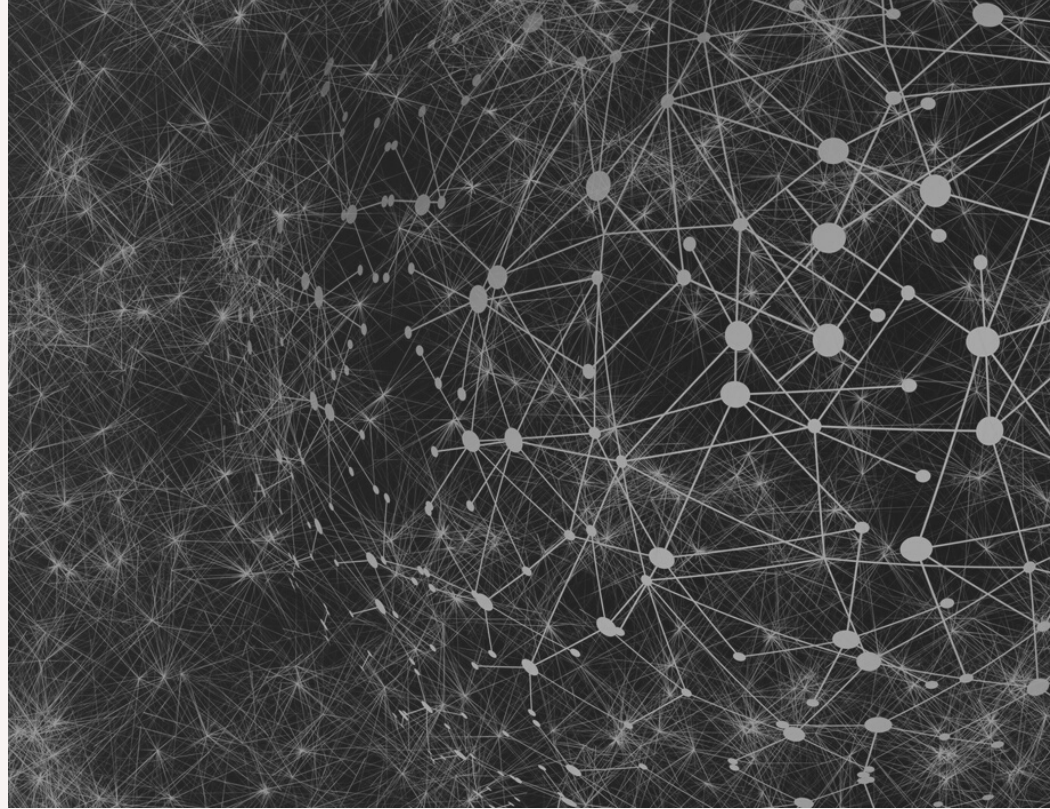
There is also another term called "**Reflective listening**" It encompasses all that is active listening but goes a step further. The listener pays special attention to the content, feelings, and meaning behind the message and reflects back to the speaker to demonstrate understanding and clarify the message. The purpose of reflective listening is to act as a mirror or reflection of the speaker, helping the speaker realize and discover new things about themselves. Reflective listeners use all of the techniques of an active listener, but also make effort to mirror the body language, posture, and facial expressions of the speaker.

Instructions:

Participants are invited for a small simulation game. Split the group in pairs. Each pair should choose N1 & N2. During the first round N1 is talking for 1 min and N2 task is to listen to as carefully as possible. When 1min passes they switch the roles. During the second round N1 is talking for 1 min again but N2 has a task not to listen at all. When time is over the pair changes the roles again.

Discussion of the exercise in plenary with the following questions:

- How does it feel when somebody is listening to you (focus on feelings);
- Does this happen to you in real life?
- Are you doing this to other people (active listening);
- How does it feel when somebody is not listening to you (focus on feelings);
- Does this happen to you in real life?
- Are you doing this to other people (not listening).



After reflection on these topics there is an input on Active listening key parts which are presented in the picture below.

COMPONENTS Paying attention Context of conversation No judgment Clarifications Rebriefing	PROCESS Receiving Understanding Evaluating Responding
TECHNIQUES Eye contact Pauses Repeating Paraphrasing	COMPARING Reading thoughts Giving advices Arguing Destruction Filtration Judgment

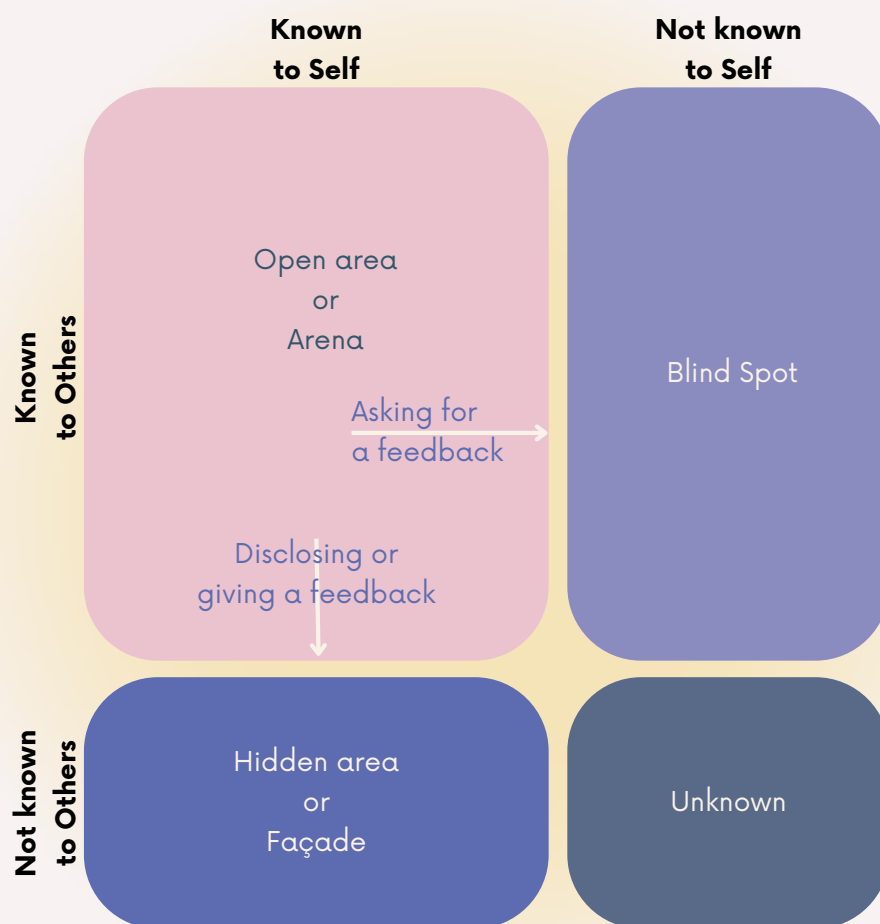
After discussion participants are back to their pairs and have around 30 min to practice active listening with the key parts in their mind. Reflection & evaluation of the activity.

Needed Materials:

Flipchart or whiteboard, markers.

JOHARI WINDOW FOR GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

The Johari window model is used to enhance the individual's perception of others. This model is based on two ideas- trust can be acquired by revealing information about you to others and learning yourselves from their feedback. Each person is represented by the Johari model through four quadrants or window panes. Each four window panes signifies personal information, feelings, motivation and whether that information is known or unknown to oneself or others in four viewpoints.



Instructions:

Participants get questions regarding 3 areas (Arena, Blind Spot, Façade). You can give printed questions to each participant or just write down the questions on the whiteboard. Participants will have 30 min for self-reflection. Question can be like:

Arena

- What topics/family, work, relations, fears, ambitions, dreams etc./you can easily discuss with people?
- What features for you are appreciated most in your environment?
- What habits and personal features do you reveal to others during the communication?

Façade

- What topics/family, work, relations, fears, ambitions, dreams etc./are hard for you to open up with people?
- What would you like to change in yourself?
- What are the features that only very close people notice in you?
- What features you wouldn't like to show to people?

Blind Spot

- What kind of feedback do you get from people about you?
- Do you learn something new about yourself from others?

After individual work there is a small input on giving and receiving the feedback (you can add or modify):

GIVING A FEEDBACK	RECEIVING A FEEDBACK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of your motive • Be respectful • Be specific • Be constructive and result oriented • Talk in a tactful way • Feedback is about behavior and process not the personality • It should be done timely and paced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be perceptive • Don't be defensive • Be open minded • No denial • Know and show your limits • Be an active and reflective listener

Next participants are invited to share and discuss in pairs their self-reflection outcomes with the tips they got previously regarding the feedback.

Reflection & evaluation in plenary is encouraged (for guiding questions see the respective section in this handbook).

Needed Materials:

Papers, pens, flipchart papers or whiteboard, markers.

EMPATHY DEVELOPMENT

Empathy is the ability to emotionally understand what other people feel, see things from their point of view, and imagine yourself in their place. Essentially, it is putting yourself in someone else's position and feeling what they are feeling.

The role of empathy in supporting learning is significant because it helps youth workers and educators understand and connect with young people better and see the world from their perspective. This is especially important while working with vulnerable young people and those with disadvantaged backgrounds. Sometimes youth workers and educators face situations when it's hard to put aside their personal assumptions and attitudes towards certain things.

Instructions:

Participants make pairs. 1 Each pair will get a paper with a role to play. Pairs can decide themselves who will be the player and who the active listener with an empathic approach.

Roles examples we used during are as follows:

1. Student, who failed his/her exams.
2. Refugee.
3. Displaced (because of the war) young woman.
4. Drug addicted young man who wants guidance.
5. Mother, who is very tired of her kids.
6. Young man who has no job.
7. Young man, who feels all alone in the world.
8. Woman, who is not believing in herself
9. Adolescent who cannot talk to his parents about his bad feelings.
10. Man, who is unhappy in his marriage.
11. Friend, who left his parents in a nursing home.
12. Woman, who made abortion.

After work in pairs participants are invited to the circle for the reflection and evaluation of the activity.

Needed Materials:

Roles printed or written down in small papers.

MY PATH (reflection design tool)

This is a very powerful technique for self-reflection on a deep level. It enables people to reflect upon their life experiences and learning outcomes.

As it can open up very personal and sensitive things, thus it's highly recommended to use it with the next method of "Inner helpers". In this way, after briefing a person is still not left with refreshed tense emotions but also dives deep inside again to get connected to their own resources.

This technique also can be used in a group if you want participants to reflect upon the group dynamics, achievements, and key moments.

Instructions:

Time 20-30 min on individual work, afterward 30 min for briefing (you can choose individual discussion with participants, make discussion in pairs or in a small group).

Draw a path of your life, from your first memories up to today. It can be in the form of the line going up and down, you are free in your drawings. In your line put the marks on important dates that were life-changing for you in a certain way. (can be age, specific date, etc) These should be things that had an impact in your life small or big, just put marks like milestones of what comes to your mind.

Questions for self-reflection:

- What happened?
- What did you feel at that moment?
- Why that was/is important for you?
- What did you learn from that experience?
- How do you feel about it now?

Discussion in pairs, in a small group, or the educator, giving the participants an opportunity to share their thoughts freely sharing also answers to the above-mentioned questions.

Needed Materials:

A4 papers, colored pencils, pens.



INNER HELPERS (reflection design tool)

If you make someone reflect upon personal hard topics, always give them resources. Never open something you can't close!

Instructions:

Inner helpers are imaginary figures that represent a role or a virtue that is a part of our deepest being. Think of them as the helpful sources of your soul. It can be wisdom, compassion, comfort, or support. If you can imagine it, it means you have it in you! Inner helpers only give shape to what you have inside, they become an "other" side of us, who can meet our needs.

Try to imagine the following, draw them:

- your strong feathers
- your hobbies
- imaginary friend
- wizard
- child
- attitude or credo

Once you did, answer these questions:

1. What are the features that make me a strong person?
2. What do I do when I feel stressed and frustrated? What helps to clear my mind and gain my strength back?
3. What is the life credo that helps me?
4. What my favorite grandfather (grandmother) would advise me when I need support?
5. What would a 5 yo child would advise me? (or me as a child)

Participants are free to draw an inner helper that is not in your list.

After individual work, ask the participants to make pairs and share their inner helpers with another person to the extent they feel comfortable.

You can have a plenary discussion afterward to see how participants feel if while sharing they got insightful feedback or learned about a new inner helper.

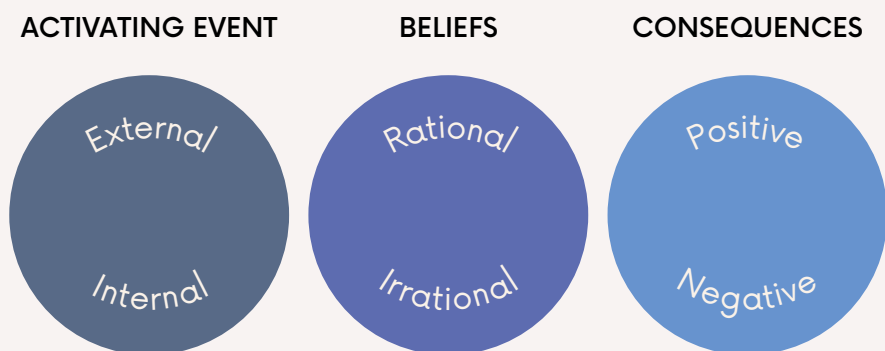
Needed Materials:

A4 papers, pen, color pencils, also would be nice to have inner helpers cartoon drawings.

CAUSE-EFFECT CHAIN; CINQUAIN METHOD (reflection design tool)

The ABC model is a tool used in cognitive behavioral therapy to recognize irrational events and beliefs. It stands for antecedents, beliefs, and consequences. The goal of the ABC model is to learn to use rational thinking to respond to situations in a healthy way. ABC model is based on the idea that emotions and behaviors are not determined by external events but by our beliefs about them. The idea behind the ABC model is that a person doesn't necessarily have to change their environment to feel better; instead, they can acknowledge and change their reactions to their environment. The trainers explain the main structure of ABC and the connection between three main components.

1. Antecedents- an activating event, which prompts the reaction
2. Beliefs - Obvious and underlying thoughts about event
3. Consequences - Emotional or behavioral changes



Instructions:

After the discussion of ABC model and cause-effect chain , participants are introduced to a method of a cinquain. A cinquain is a five-line poem that was invented by Adelaide Crapsey. She was an American poet who took her inspiration from Japanese haiku and tanka. Later it became a part of art therapy and many psychologists use it on individual or group work for reflecting upon the relation of our thoughts and emotions. Also, it can use a method of changing perspective and attitude shift.

One example is given by a trainer (you can find it below) to show how the method works and afterward, participants are asked to work individually on the topic they would like to and practice the technique on the spot. A small discussion should be followed.

In this technique in the...

- 1st line there is 1 noun (**activating event**);
- 2nd line there are 2 thoughts describing the noun (**beliefs about the event**);
- 3rd line there are 3 emotions that you have when there is the noun (**emotional consequences**);
- 4th line there are 4 actions that occur after the line above (**behavioral response**);
- 5th line synonym for the noun of the 1st line (**new experience**).

Example:

1. Unemployment;
2. Worthless, loser;
3. Sadness, self-pity, anger;
4. Crying, breaking things, arguing, self-distancing ;
5. Depression.

Here we try to change the 2nd and 3rd lines and see how the 4th and 5th lines are changed.

Example:

1. Unemployment;
2. Responsibility, education;
3. Motivated, excited, hopeful;
4. Self- educating, searching, networking, applying;
5. Opportunities

After this, give a person in a group time to work individually and reflect on situations in their life when one of their actions caused a change in their environment (starting from small things, like giving a compliment or helping someone to cross the street to things with wider impact, also starting from childhood to present days.

/20min max/

When participants are done they discuss their cause-effect chains in pairs to extend they feel comfortable sharing.

The main briefing hint to be given to participants is to reflect upon the connections of our thoughts/beliefs and emotions.

Needed Materials:

A4 papers, pens.



STORY TELLING (reflection design tool)

The word storytelling pretty much speaks for itself. Storytelling is about telling stories. It is about using stories to engage your audience, or to make something more clear.

Stories have always been a way to communicate. Before people learned how to write, they would tell each other stories. Stories are much easier to remember than simple facts.

Storytelling is the social and cultural activity that can be with photos, pictures, digital tools sometimes with improvisation, theatrics or embellishment.

During our TC we used different storytelling tools for different purposes. The ones here were aimed at reflection on a personal level and in terms of cooperation in teams. If you want participants on certain topics (self-development, cultural sensitivity, xenophobia etc you can prepare the thematic cards and give them materials directed by you beforehand).

Instructions:

Make participants form 4 small groups each group has 1 task to complete but which will have given different materials for that.

1. Group has Dixit cards (we also had Armenian illustrative cards Persepio) in front of them and each member can pick up one card that resonates with them. As a group their allowed discuss and together chose 1 additional card;
2. Group has random real pictures (people. nature, culture etc.) in front of them and each member can pick up one card that resonates with them. As a group their allowed discuss and together chose 1 additional card;
3. Group has both random real pictures and illustrative cards in front of them and each member can pick up one card that resonates with them. As a group their allowed discuss and together chose 1 additional card;
4. Group has no cards; they have a structure of creating a story.

Structure:

- Once upon a time... (the context)
- There was... (the protagonist)
- which had to / who needed to... (the mission)
- against... (the antagonist)
- with the help of... (help, support)
- and despite... (unexpected obstacle)

They have 45 min to complete the task and are free to chose the way they wanna present (with posters, performance etc.)

Reflection questions on activity in a plenary can be:

- How did you come up with the story?
- Is there something of you in the hero (heroes)?
- How did you choose your card (groups who had it)
- Did you have a leader?
- Did everyone contributed to the story creation?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of illustrative card and photos?

Needed Materials:

Illustrative card (Dixit or similar ones), printed photos, color pencils, markers, flipchart papers, color papers, glue, stickers, scissors.

