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REFLECTOR

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

Reflector is a strategic partnership project in the field of youth work and non-formal education supported by Erasmus + programme and European Solidarity Corps Estonian Agency with the reference number 2020-2-EE01-KA205-078072.

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This book was one of products of the strategic partnership project Reflector. In this project, we were aiming to bring quality improvement to youth work by creating an app that enables faster and more creative reflection on the youth work and nonformal learning in general. This booklet is a complementary document to the app and is offering some deeper understanding of reflection in learning. The main target group we address is youth workers, leaders, facilitators of non-formal learning, school youth work managers (professional and volunteers) and all those who support young people through youth work and non-formal learning.

Within the project will be developed two intellectual outputs:
1. The App REFLECTOR
2. Introduction to reflection and guidelines on how to use the app.

All products were created by an international team of youth workers and volunteers from Estonia, Finland, Italy, Portugal, and Slovenia. We are united by our passion for learning and reflection with young people and would like to share this passion with you!

We wanted to deepen learning within youth projects and activities by supporting youth workers and youth in developing skills to reflect. We tried to show that reflection could be fun, interesting, and needed. In the Guidelines we talk more about theory of reflection and in the App, we gathered different methods that are possible to use within youth projects or individually.

We believe that reflection is needed to recognize learning outcomes and it is a way to know more about ourselves, our needs, and abilities, it helps us to be mindful about our decisions and choices. Reflection in the youth projects and activities leads to the qualitative youth work, which helps us to have a more positive impact on the participants and in our communities as well.

We hope that by using our products you will share our passion for learning and reflection and will enrich your youth projects with reflective activities. Withal your reflection activities will be more mobile, innovative, diverse, and attractive for young people.

We are happy to share the results of our work with you and hope that you will find them useful, applicable, and inspiring for your work or maybe personal learning experience.

Let's go!

Julia Dem
'Reflector' project manager

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ABOUT THE PARTNERS

The partners of this project are well experienced youth work organizations that focus on reflecting learning processes in youth work. Feel free to contact us in case you wish to gain more information.

Vitatiim, Estonia
VitaTiim is non-formal learning centre. The mission of VitaTiim is to create a supportive and inspiring environment so all of us could be a better version of ourselves, discover our own role in the global world and become flexible in an era of constant change and uncertainty.

 @sinuvitatiim @vitatiim

Valo-valmennusyhdistys ry, Finland
Valo-Valmennusyhdistys is a non-governmental organization founded in 2016 by four regional actors, which works to support the most disadvantaged people. The members of the association are Silta-Varmennusyhdistys ry (Tampere), Sastamala region's mental health association, Porin Sininauha ry, Rauman Seudun Katulähetys ry, Invalidisäätiö sr and Y-Säätiö sr. The association works as a service provider in among other things, youth work, youth workshop activities, hobby and leisure activities, employment promotion, education, substance abuse and mental health work, game addiction prevention, food aid, crime prevention and recidivism prevention, homelessness prevention and supporting the homeless on the housing first principle. and as a research and development center.

www.valo-valmennus.fi
 @Valo-Valmennusyhdistys @valovalmennus

Experimentáculo, Portugal
Experimentáculo is a Portuguese organization from Setúbal founded in 2006, that works with Arts and Culture and Youth. Our goal is to empower young people with competences and skills in order to prepare more well-prepared citizens in our society.

www.experimentaculo.org
 @experimentaculo @experimentaculo

Basilikata Link, Italy
Basilicata Link was born in 2012 in the UNESCO world heritage site of Matera, South of Italy. The aim of our NGO is to facilitate young people in their learning and growing process while experiencing new techniques of learning, such as non-formal education. Thanks to the activation of different EU programmes we head for the creation of a more inclusive world, for everyone.

www.basilicatalink.org
 @basilicatalink

Ambitia Institute, Slovenia
Ambitia Institute is a non-profit and non-governmental institute for development of youth work. It has been established in 2012. Our mission is to support young people in their learning process outside of the school. We create products, projects, and programmes which help develop nonformal learning, mostly within youth work. We guide young people and inspire youth workers to create space for their headway. In our work, we fuse different concepts of the youth work to create new methodology and refine the quality of the youth work. We contribute to a better impact on all participating parties in the youth work.

www.ambitia.eu
 @ambitiainstitute @ambitia.institute

HOW TO USE THE APP REFLECTOR

The Reflector App was created with the aim to make reflection in the youth projects and activities more varied, accessible, and mobile. We tried to make the App very visible and intuitive. Something that you have in your pocket and can easily use to record your experience and learning outcomes.

The App could be used in different settings for personal reflection of youth workers, in the youth projects together with young people, by international volunteers and their mentors or maybe just during travel to reflect about experience.

Everything that you feel inside is visible only for you, the same with young people. It is a personal interactive diary, always accessible on your phone.
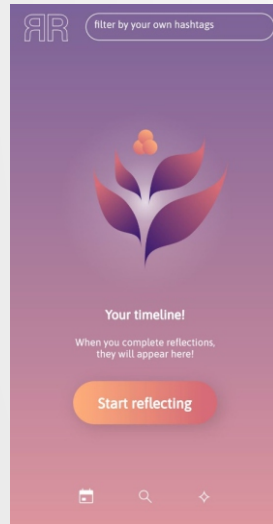
When using it as a group activity, it is possible to share some reflection in a circle, but no one has access to content created by users. Don't worry it is safe and private!

The App welcomes you with invitation - **Start reflecting**

At the button you have 3 icons.
Calendar - timeline, where possible to check previous reflections (available after registration).
Magnifier - to explore reflections in the App
Spark - to see your own progress.

Once you choose your method, you will be asked to register or sign in. In case your forget your password, it is possible to restore it.

When you choose a method, you can start reflecting!
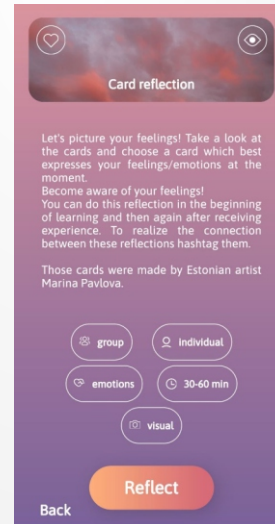
On the top you can see two more icons.
Heart - allows you to save favourite reflections for faster access in the future
Eye - gives you tips on how to facilitate this reflection with the group of young people.

In most methods you can write your thoughts or add a picture from your phone. For each reflection you need to add #, which is name or keyword for your reflection. For example, if you are using the App during the project and may use the name of it and it will be easy to find all your reflections from those particular projects. You can always come back to your reflection in the timeline and add new ones.

This is it!

More about the App -
https://vitatiim.ee/reflectorapp

PART ONE:
INTRODUCTION TO THE REFLECTION IN NON-FORMAL LEARNING

Socrates' famous statement "know thyself" means that we must choose a good life for ourselves through self-reflection and self-awareness. We must understand what we learn throughout life and from others and reflect upon it. Socrates believed we obtain this knowledge through experience and careful reflection.[1]

1   Reflection of Socrates and Plato - 889 Words | Bartleby

INTRODUCTION

Talking about youth workers and reflection points us in (at least) two directions:
1. How can youth workers facilitate and support the reflection of the learner?
2. How can they take care of their own reflection?

Although both questions are valid, the next few pages are dedicated to facilitation and support of the learner´s reflection.

WHAT IS REFLECTION?

Reflection, a word very frequently mentioned in the field of non-formal learning, is a process of thinking and contemplating about our own learning process. A big part of learning, especially at an early age, happens on the subconscious level. It is important that we get conscious of our learning process, so that the outcomes of learning do not stay hidden in our subconsciousness. If we fail to do so, then we will only experience an event or activity, but not the learning.

Imagine doing one of the exercises where you ask young people to find similarities with other participants. This exercise could easily be used as an opener or an energizer, but when you guide participants to reflect on their thoughts, emotions, or the purpose of the exercise, they will realise that maybe they share many more similarities than differences, that culture does not define them etc. Helping the participants to become aware of their thoughts and emotions will enable them to bring the newly acquired knowledge, information, or emotions into the conscious mind. This process is called reflection. The previously mentioned exercise now becomes a learning experience.

It is therefore crucial to guide the learners through the reflection process. Only thus can the learners become (more) aware of themselves, analyse their experiences, make changes based on the analysis of their mistakes, continue doing what has been proven to be successful, and see how far they can get with their further actions.

BASIC MODELS OF REFLECTION

There are several models that try to explain reflection and its importance within the learning process. These models are often summarized under the key word *reflective learning*. Reflective learning promotes deeper learning, as it involves consciously thinking about and analysing a new experience. It enables learners to activate prior knowledge and to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct their own knowledge. Reflective learning involves stepping back from an event or experience to analyse it from different perspectives.[2]

Reflection in this sense involves linking a current experience to previous learning and experiences (a process called *scaffolding*). It also involves drawing forth cognitive and emotional information from several sources: visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, and tactile. To reflect, we must act upon and process the information, synthesizing and evaluating the data. In the end, reflecting also means applying what we have learned to contexts beyond the original situations in which we learned something.[3]

2   Femke Gordijn, Natalia Eernstman, Jan Helder, Herman Brouwer. (Jan., 2018) *Reflection Methods. Practical Guide for Trainers and Facilitators.* Page 12.
3   *Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind.* Edited by Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick. http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/108008/chapters/Learning-Through-Reflection.aspx

Reflection, when interwoven with the learning process like in reflective learning, stimulates the learners to 'own' their learning, which again stimulates the intrinsic motivation to apply the lessons learned.

ERA CYCLE

As one of the most basic models about reflective learning, the ERA cycle was formulated by Melanie Jasper quite late in 2013[4]:
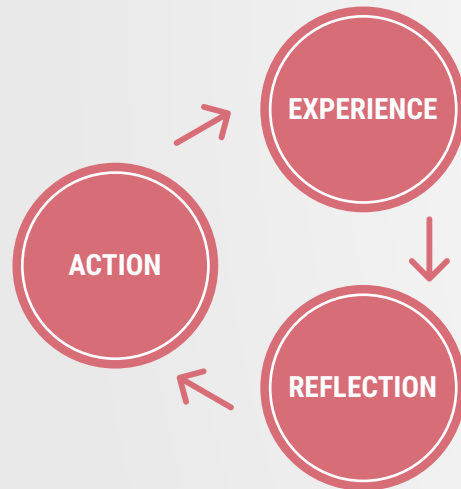
The ERA cycle consists out of three stages:

1. Experience:
The ERA cycle starts with experiencing something. This experience can be something we have gone through before, or it can be something completely new to us. The range of possible experiences is more or less unlimited. It can be emotional or cognitive, good or bad, internal or external initiated, individual or group experience, related to work or leisure time, etc.

2. Reflection:
Once the experience is made, reflection should take place. Thinking through the experience and examining our feelings about what happened, we will be able to make conclusions. As result of our reflection, we can either decide to adjust and modify our action or keep it the same.

3. Action:
Once the decision about future steps is made, we can try adjusting our action. This adjustment will lead to another experience and the ERA cycle will start again. Even if we decide not to adjust our action, the next round of the cycle can inspire new conclusions and adjustments. Maybe some external factors have changed (e.g., same

experience, but change in weather) or the time that has passed since the last reflection changed something inside of us.

WHAT MODEL

Another basic model is the What model. It was formulated by John Discroll in 2007[5], based on Terry Borton´s stem questions from 1970[6]. While the What model consists of the same three stages as the ERA cycle, it focuses on the learning output by asking questions from the learner's perspective:

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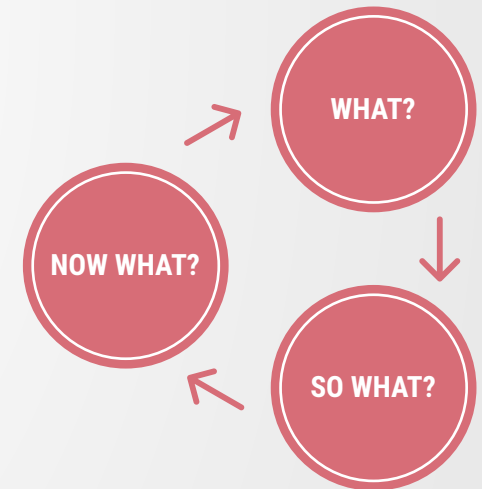
4 Jasper, M. (2013). *Beginning Reflective Practice.* Andover: Cengage Learning.
5 Driscoll, J. (ed.) (2007) *Practicing Clinical Supervision: A Reflective Approach for Healthcare Professionals.* Edinburgh: Elsevie.
5 Borton, T. (1970) *Reach, Touch and Teach.* London: Hutchinson.

1. What (did we experience)?
Starting after an experience, the question ´What?´ helps us to put the situation(s) of the experience into context by describing the experience. This description helps us to get a clear impression about what we are dealing with and in which frame.

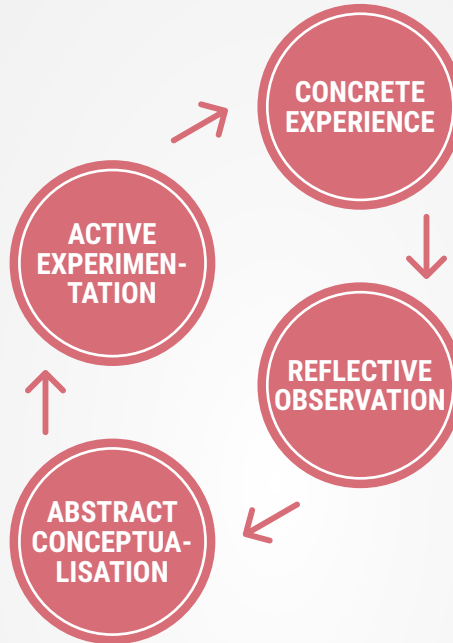**2. So what (did we learn as a result of the experience)?**
Once we have described our experience, the question ´So what?´ focuses on our learning progress and helps us to identify possible adjustments to our future action.

3. Now what (will we adjust in our acting)?
Once we know what we have learnt and what are the possible adjustments to our action (if there are any), the question ´Now what?´ helps us decide which of the possible adjustments to choose. We can then modify our action, try out something completely new or leave everything as it was.

KOLB´S EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE

Much attention is given to the Kolb cycle, formulated by David Kolb in 1994[7]. His approach consists of four stages, whereby the reflection is split into two stages:

CONCRETE EXPERIENCE

ACTIVE EXPERIMEN-TATION

REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION

ABSTRACT CONCEPTUA-LISATION

1. Concrete experience:
Again, starting with the (concrete) experience, the model explicitly defines that an experience can be either a repetition (of a previous experience), a completely new experience, or the same experience with the addition of some new elements.

2. Reflective observation:
In the first stage of observation, we reflect upon our experience and point out what was new for us.

3. Abstract conceptualisation:
Based on our observations, we start the second reflection stage by understanding what had happened and linking this understanding to what we already know. If something unexpected was observed, we try to understand why it happened and what are the other situations in which the same thing might also occur. Based on the new understanding, we develop new ideas on how to act in different situations or adjust the existing ones.

4. Active experimentation:
Finally, we experiment with the new or adjusted ideas by applying them to different situations, thereby gaining new experiences, so the cycle starts again. Often, we cannot apply all our new ideas at the same time (in the same experience), therefore planning what to try out next is also a part of this stage.

Considering our new ideas as a learning outcome, learning becomes a direct result of reflecting our experiences.

7   Kolb, D. (1984), *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development,* Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

WHAT TO REFLECT?

But what to reflect on in a youth project? For your learners, there are four major things that need reflection:

Understanding the experience. Your learners should assess the situation or experience it from a very technical and objective point of view. What has happened in this given experience? Being able to answer that question, they see the situation or experience from external point of view and understand much more about it than just their inner reactions.

Recognising emotions. Your learners should name emotions and feelings they experienced in the situation. What did they feel? By naming emotions, they become more aware of their own inner world as well as the emotions of other people. Recognising their own emotions helps them overcome obstacles that happen because of these emotions. They also understand the function every emotion has.

Recognising thoughts. Your learners should track their thoughts. Where are these thoughts coming from? How do they fit into their value system and their behaviour pattern?

Assessing behaviour. By assessing their behaviour, your learners can set a list of new behaviours. This will help them plan for future actions and future learning.

BENEFITS OF REFLECTION - WHY TO REFLECT?

The question ´Why to reflect?´ goes hand in hand with the question about the benefits of reflection. It is easier to motivate your learners and yourself if there is a clear vision about the added value of reflection.

Too often, reflection is seen as an obligation, as just another task on a to-do list in a learning activity, which needs to be done. But since reflection is an ongoing process, it needs time. Often, benefits of reflection become visible only after a certain period and sometimes it takes more than one round of reflection to feel into the impact of these results.

So, what are the benefits of reflection?

1. Development and promotion of self-awareness.
By supporting your learners to develop self-awareness, you are helping them to get a better understanding about who they are and who they are not. Due to this understanding your learners benefit in terms of discovering their own strengths and weaknesses as well as needs and interests.

The improved self-awareness further helps them to track their development and assess their progress. Furthermore, the more your learners are aware of themselves the more they will be able to see if their own perspective of themselves is similar to the perspective of other people.

2. Encouraged self-expression
The comparison of different perspectives mentioned in point 1 nurtures your learners' interpersonal intelligence, because it enables them to understand that their self-image can differ from how other people see them. This understanding helps them to adjust their self-expression in connection to other people's needs. It also enables them to avoid misunderstandings, communicate more efficiently, and benefit in their personal and professional life by reaching their goals faster.

3. Access to and understanding of emotions.
Recognizing and understanding our own and other people`s emotions is key to avoiding or resolving inner and outer conflicts.

A high level of emotional awareness will enable your learners to regulate their emotions if necessary and use them in beneficial ways. A direct consequence of a well nurtured emotional self-awareness is a boost in intra-personal intelligence that entrains a better sense of well-being as well as a higher influence in group decisions. The ability of being aware of other people´s emotions facilitate development of empathy, compassion, and interpersonal intelligence. Conflicts often start and smoulder in the background. A high awareness of other people´s emotions will help your learners to detect these conflicts, to resolve them, to handle them properly, or in best case to avoid them from the scratch.

4. Improvement of critical thinking.
Critical thinking includes a wide range of skills and competences, many of which can be and should be nurtured by a proper reflection.

The ability to view a situation through different perspectives (e.g., different people, cultures, points in time, aims, values, etc.) will help your learners to handle their tasks in a more multidimensional way, which will enable them to choose from a multi-dimensional set of solutions and achieve more holistic results.

Furthermore, if you use reflection to point out obvious cases, your learners will develop a feeling to distinguish between facts, opinions and fake facts. As a secondary consequence, your learners will learn to recognize facts independently of their own opinions and emotions.

5. Boost of motivation.
A higher level of awareness and understanding of the learning process will, in principle, boost up the motivation for future steps. It will be easier for your learners to accept these future steps if they can recognize the benefits of the previous steps. In case of motivation gaps, the experiences of overcoming such gaps in the past will help them to also overcome them in the future, since motivation is not linear and has its ups and downs.

6. (Re-) directing of their own learning process.
Under the strong influence of formal education, many learners take their own learning process as something given and validated by external authority. We are used to learn a given content in a certain setting on a specific point in time. So, there is a huge degree of standardization in our learning process.

The process of reflection helps your learners understand that their learning brings about better results if they adjust it to their personal needs and interests. It allows them to examine what they have learned and how they have learned it. They have a clearer insight into which learning settings are the most suitable for them. Based on this understanding, your learners take control over their own learning process, (re-)direct it, and benefit from it in future learnings.

WHEN TO REFLECT?

Often, reflection happens at the end of an experience, exercise or activity, at the end of a day, or a project etc. But these are not the only points in time when your learners will need to reflect.

There is a simple cluster, at which points of time the reflection could happen: during an experience, after an experience, or before an experience. These three types of reflection are categorized by:

1. Situational reflection:
As the name suggests, situational reflection happens while in the situation or during the experience. This type of reflection can be …
- … planned – as a (planned) part of the experience for reflections that requires the attention of the moment.

or

• … necessary – because something happened during an experience.

2. Retrospective reflection:

Retrospective reflection happens after an experience and allows your learners to analyse their performance, action or emotions. They get the opportunity to re-think their decisions, find alternatives if needed or validate the right decisions.

3. Perspective reflection:

Perspective reflection happens before an experience and allows your learners to plan their actions in an upcoming experience. They try to choose the most effective methods or to try out new ideas. Based on their choice, a forecast of possible results and consequences is a part of perspective reflection.

WAYS OF REFLECTION

Learning is a very individual and intimate process. Big part of the non-formal learning cannot be objectively measured by someone else. Learning impact can therefore be best reflected upon on an

individual level, by comparing it to our past cognitive and emotional understanding, awareness, and behaviour. When we talk about reflection, we most often think of self-reflection, because it enables that intimate process. Even if the self-reflection is personal, it is very often guided by a youth worker, youth leader, trainer, or other educator. They guide the learners to ask themselves some questions they might not have had asked, simply because it is hard to be objective.

However, the reflection does not necessary happen in an isolated space away from other people. It is really beneficial to reflect on your own, but also to reflect in pairs, smaller or bigger groups. Hearing other people talk about their own reflection often influences your learner´s personal understanding and awareness. Also, this type of reflection gives your learner additional opportunities to learn how to listen and to integrate other people's thoughts into his or her own thinking.

Sometimes, reflection can also happen in a form of peer-to-peer. This looks more like a conversation between you and your colleague, or between different participants in a learning experience. In this case, the reflection will no longer be one-sided; your learners will be encouraged to give each

other some feedback. For sure, this is just another person's opinion and should be taken as such, but even someone's opinion, can open new dimensions for their reflection. Peer reflection also offers them an opportunity for them to learn how to listen and how to properly give feedback.

SUPPORTING REFLECTION

FORMAL VS. NON-FORMAL LEARNING

Formal education within schools has a certain function in people´s life. Formal learning institutions teach us about the world we live in. They teach geography, biology, languages, and many other subjects to determine our position in society and to explain the world to us as objectively as possible. We all learn about these topics to understand the rules of nature and society, to appreciate arts and culture, simply to function in our inner and outer society.[8] Especially during our times in basic formal education like in primary or secondary school, we all learn the same or almost the same, based on a standardized methodology. Formal learning is mainly

8   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDFHONGhwNQ&list=PLouMhF7gglCedgu4a20pbzld-DanpRrU9

focussed on acquiring knowledge. Our progress is tested by teachers and professors and is achieved within a pre-prepared curriculum, which is standardized for each society. What we learn is objective and real because it´s (mainly) based on cognitive understanding.

In non-formal education within youth work, we focus on acquiring competences, although there is more to learn than just that. We enable young people to learn mostly about themselves in connection with and in relation to their environment. Young people reflect on the knowledge they have acquired in school, become aware of their thoughts, observe, and process their emotions, try out and test ideas, and much more. We use reflection as a part of the learning process with the possibility to reflect on every aspect of a selected activity. The learning process comes from within the learner, is tailored to his or her individual needs and interests and becomes an emotional and rational self-assessment about an individual's development and progress. There is no teacher to tell what and how to learn, no tests to check one´s progress, and no obligation to take part. What, if, and how your learners learn is highly personal and individual, and the learning process cannot be standardized, because it is different for all of them.

YOUTHPASS & 8 KEY COMPETENCES

Based on a resolution of the Council of Europe and on behalf of the European commission, Youthpass was developed in the years 2005 to 2007. As an instrument for identifying and documenting learning outcomes acquired in projects under the Erasmus + and the European Solidarity Corps programme, Youthpass …

- … promotes individual reflection and awareness about learning and helps to make learning outcomes visible for the learners themselves as well as for others.
- … aims to reinforce reflective practices in youth work and solidarity activities, thereby enhancing their quality and recognition.
- … supports the continued pathways of young people and youth workers.
- … raises visibility of the value of European engagement.[9]

Youthpass uses the so-called 8 key competences to create a holistic competence profile of the user with focus on identifying and describing the learning outcome. These 8 key competences were

defined in 2006 and partly revised and adjusted in 2018 by the European Union. The actual competence profile used in Youthpass contains the following 8 key competences:

1. Multilingual competence
The ability to use different languages for communication and to understand and express thoughts, feelings, and facts orally or in writing. One would need to know the grammar and vocabulary of a certain language. The ability to learn a language in various ways is also important. Appreciation of cultural diversity and curiosity for intercultural communication are attitudes connected to this competence.

2. Personal, social, and learning to learn competence
The ability to learn to learn, to manage one's own learning and to reflect on oneself. This competence is about time and information management. Social competences include working with others in a constructive way and managing conflicts in a supportive way. Personal competences include resilience, the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity and to show empathy. Ability to support physical and emotional well-being is also relevant for this competence area.

9 https://www.youthpass.eu/en/about-youthpass/about/ (28.03.2022, 16:42)

3. Citizenship competence

The ability to act as responsible citizens and to fully participate in civic and social life, based on understanding of social, economic, legal and political concepts as well as global developments and sustainability.

4. Entrepreneurship competence

The capacity to act upon opportunities and to turn ideas into action that has value for others. It includes taking initiative, creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and problem solving. It requires the ability to work collaboratively and to plan projects of cultural, social, or financial value.

5. Competence in cultural awareness and expression

The understanding of how ideas are creatively expressed in different cultures, through different arts. It involves developing and expressing our own ideas. It requires the knowledge of local, European, and global cultures and the ability to express ideas and emotions in different artistic and cultural forms. Openness and curiosity are important attitudes.

6. Digital competence

The responsible use of digital technologies; communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation, safety, intellectual property related questions, problem solving and critical thinking. It includes the ability to use information via a range of digital technologies, to question available information, curiosity and open-minded attitude.

7. Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology, engineering (STEM)

The ability to use mathematical thinking to solve problems in everyday situations. Competence in science refers to the ability to use knowledge; to identify questions and to base opinions on evidence. It includes the ability to use logical and critical thinking, to handle technological tools and to communicate conclusions and reasoning behind them.

8. Literacy competence

The ability to understand and express thoughts, feelings and facts orally, in writing or in other forms, and to interact with others. It is the basis for further learning. The openness to critical and constructive dialogue and the awareness of the impact of language on others are important elements of this competence.

For more detailed information about the 8 key competences, we suggest reading the following document:
https://www.youthpass.eu/downloads/13-62-420/Leaflet%20-%20revised%20key%20competences.pdf

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10   https://www.youthpass.eu/en/

PART TWO:
COLLECTION OF
SOME REFLECTION METHODS

In addition to some theoretical explanation, we are offering you some of the methods we tried, regularly use and recommend you try during some of your activities. We have described these methods with duration, materials needed, group size and we offer also offline and online tips. Feel free to explore and add more methods to this collection.

- DAILY SILENCE
- I REMEMBER
- THE ONE
- MESSAGE POST BOX
- AT THE END OF THE DAY...
- LABYRINTH
- BICYCLE
- DRAWING
- GIVE IT A SMILE

- THE LANDING
- QUOTES
- PERSONAL BRAND TAGLINE
- EMOJI CARDS
- FISH BOWLS
- 4X4 SOLUTIONS
- EMOTION CARDS
- FEEDBACK JAR
- SCALES AND LINES

DAILY SILENCE

30 mins

Optional: paper and coloring pens

Does not matter

Do not breach the rules. There should be a sign of discipline in this activity such as finishing exercise in exactly 30 minutes, no need to share if you want to and no music.

It might feel bad the first day, because there is a human resistance to the silence, but it will get better with every day.

May not be the best for an online version, as you cannot control distractions in their room.

You may shorten the time for silence.

DESCRIPTION

Invite participants to take their preferred place in the room. They can either sit, lay on the floor or stand, but they should not walk or move around. They can bring their diary or use papers and colors we provide but should not use their phones or music.

Exercise should always last 30 minutes.

First day we ask participants to stay in silence for 5 minutes. They can either write in their diaries or use papers and colors to draw or write. The rest of the 25 minutes should be used as sharing.

Next day we add 5 minutes to this silence, extracting 5 minutes from the sharing.

We repeat adding 5 minutes to silence and extracting 5 from sharing every day. At the end of day 5 participants should be in silence for 25 minutes and have 5 minutes for sharing. This exercise is best used on a training course, youth exchange or seminar, where participants stay together for a few days.

I REMEMBER

🕐 min. 30 minutes

✏️ -

👥 Does not matter

💡 Avoid music or other surrounding noises for everyone to listen.

💡 Can be done the same way but can also be used in written form, in a chat.

DESCRIPTION

Ask participants to find their favorite place in the room or outdoors and take a comfortable position. First, guide them through the programme of the seminar, training course or project.
When you finish your presentation, give them instructions to start sharing their memories, experiences, or insights by starting their sentence with:

"I remember…"

This activity should not be forced.
Allow participants to take time and do it naturally.

THE ONE

🕐 30 – 60 minutes
(depends of the size of the group)

📝 -

👥 Group of more than ten people

💡 Pay attention if some people have not been touched. You touch their shoulders here and there as you are also walking around the circle.

This should be an anonymous exercise.

💡 In an online version it is possible that the participants use a shared space (such as a simple word document or a space on Jam Board) where everyone notes down his name or even adds a picture.

Then the facilitator reads out the above instructions and the participants note down a sign or symbol near the name / picture of the person they want to indicate.

Again, pay attention that everyone gets "touched".

DESCRIPTION

Ask participants to sit in a circle with a bit of space between them. Ask them to take off their shoes and close their eyes for the duration of the entire exercise.

Explain that you will randomly touch two people on their heads, signalizing them to slowly open their eyes and get up.

They will then slowly walk around the circle of participants. While they are walking in the circle, you will instruct them to touch some participants on their shoulders. They will repeat this two times and then slowly return to their place and close their eyes again.

You give following instructions:
"Touch the shoulder of the person that…
… thought them something."
… made them feel good about themselves."
… made them laugh."
… made them reflect."
… gave them an 'AHA' moment."
… positively influenced them."
… supported them in some way."

Feel free to add more similar sentences and make sure everyone gets their turn to walk around. Make sure there are always two people walking around and touching the participant's shoulders at the same time. If the group is big, you can pick three people to walk around at the same time.

You can repeat the sentences, but each walker should touch only one person for each sentence.

MESSAGE POST BOX

- For groups that stay together several days such as Youth Exchanges

- Paper box, small papers and pens

- Medium to large groups

- Make sure you don't judge their messages and don't get angry with the ones that use this channel for fun.

- Unless it is possible to make it anonymously online, this activity cannot be done online.

DESCRIPTION

Set up a box that looks and functions as the Post box in the room everyone can access at any given time during the project. The box can be big or small and it is advisable you make it appealing by making it colourful and fun. Set aside some pieces of paper and pens so people can use it.

In one of the introductory meetings, explain to the participants that this is an anonymous box they can use during the entire project. They can write in their thoughts, emotions, they can draw, post a message for some other person, they can offer suggestions, criticism, advise, request etc. This is their Post box to express anything they wish to share with the group. Instruct them that the whole group will meet every evening to read their messages out loud.

Each evening, after the main programme is finished, meet with the participants. Ask them to form a circle. Open the box and slowly ready all the messages out loud. If the message refers to some individual, read it and pass it to that person. While you read each message, encourage others to give feedback if feedback makes sense. There will be a lot of private messages and fun, but here and there, there will be some really strong opinions and topics you do not wish to miss.

AT THE END OF THE DAY...

🕐 About 30 minutes

✏️ Posters, cards, scissors, glue, tape, markers, photos, colours, etc

👥 Medium to large groups

💡 You can play some happy music.

There should be no more than one topic to reflect on each day.

You can introduce any topic, not just learning reflection. Maybe something happened during the day like a fight or some crisis. Make sure you are mindful of possible emotions and offer help and support if needed.

💡 You can divide participants into smaller groups (if you are using ZOOM) and ask them to use Jamboard or some similar programme.

DESCRIPTION

At the beginning of the project, you create smaller groups (4-6 participants). You instruct them that they are a team for the daily reflection, and they will meet with the others every afternoon for about 30 minutes.

Offer each group a flipchart that belongs to them from now on and tell them that this is their canvas to work on. You offer all sorts of material they can work with every time. Instruct them they can either use it or not during their reflection. Ask all participants to stay in the same (bigger) room for 30 minutes but in the smaller groups. Each day, offer them one topic to reflect on such as:

What was new today?

Who inspired me today?

What would I like to do and what holds me back?

They can talk, dance, write, draw or something else, as long as they don't bother others. If they do decide to use the poster, let them keep the same through the entire time. They will create a nice memory and collage.

LABYRINTH

🕐 2 hours

✏️ String, glue, tape, photos, objects

👥 Medium to smaller group

💡 The more material you will provide, the better this labyrinth will be. Use the music during the activity. Make sure the space is big, long, and rich enough to accommodate all participants or you can even use different spaces (corridor, hallway, main room, etc).

💡 You can make a labyrinth as a PowerPoint presentation or a movie and then put participants in smaller groups (if you are using ZOOM) for sharing and feedback.

DESCRIPTION

This activity is suitable for youth exchanges or training courses as it addresses the time people have spent together.

Make sure you take a lot of photos or even videos during all activities in this project. Also be mindful of which objects were interesting to participants, which music they played during the sessions, if there was a catch phrase used during the project etc. Be as creative as you can and get as many different materials as possible that relate to the time during and in between the sessions. Create a labyrinth and use all this material you have collected during the past days. You can make it in the room, hall or even outdoors. You can print pictures, set up computers with videos, use objects, and be creative!

Here and there in the labyrinth post some questions that lights up their thoughts such as:
What was new to me?
What made me worry?
What made me happy?
Who inspired me?
What do I want to try now?
What is next in my life?
What do I still need to complete this learning?
What is really important to me?
Add or remove questions as you please.

Before entering the labyrinth, invite participants to make a silent circle and ask them to stay silent till the end. They should think of their learning process and the reason they came here. Then ask them to enter the labyrinth individually and leave a bit of space for each participant to enjoy the labyrinth on their own. Let them go through the labyrinth at their own pace and stop at the places that bring the most reflection, memories, and emotions.

BICYCLE

🕐 90 minutes

✏️ -

👥 Small groups

💡 -

💡 (published by: https://www.reflecting.eu/project/bicycle-method/)

DESCRIPTION

The goal is to think about how the group members see themselves as a part of the group. How do they feel about being in the group? Which role do they tend to take during group activities? How do they feel about being in that role? Are they happy, satisfied, stressed etc.?

The method can be used in the process of experiential learning in groups after any group activity set around a collective task.

The exercise can be used in the process of formal and non-formal education which involves group tasks as a part of the educational process.

The task for each participant is to think of a bicycle and choose a part of the bicycle which would represent them and their role in the group during the activity. The participant is then asked to explain why they think and feel this way.

Group members are invited to think for themselves: Which part of the bicycle did they choose and why?

Participants are invited to share their thoughts with the group.

The feedback on the role of the participant can be given from other group members and/or trainers if needed.

DRAWING

🕐 2 to 3 hours

✏️ Papers and markers

👥 Smaller groups

💡 It is possible to do the same activity also online, participants can then show their picture on the camera or make a photo of it and post it in the chat.

💡 (posted on https://www.reflecting.eu/project/drawings/)

DESCRIPTION

The method can be used in the process of experiential learning in groups, especially in later stages of group development; group members must share the experience of working together on tasks and/or activities in groups. E.g., it can be done at the end of the third (or later) day of residential training course or towards the end of the project collectively run by the group.

The task for each participant is to draw a picture of the group or project team and place him or herself in the picture. Participants can choose freely how they are going to depict the group and themselves in the group.

Participants can be asked to prepare for reflection and make drawings throughout the day (using the breaks), or the time can be given for drawing during reflection time, so all members make their pictures at the same time. You will need color pens and flipchart paper for the activity. The person facilitating the reflection should take care of the time and its equal distribution among participants.

Participants present their drawing to the group without commenting on it. Group members comment on the picture: How do they understand what they see? What associations arise for them in connection to the picture? How do group members relate to each other in the picture? Where is the author of the picture and what is his or her relation to others etc.? It is important to instruct participants that they are invited to comment not on the quality of the picture but on the depiction of feelings, roles, and relationships it represents.

The participants explain the picture they made and share how they feel about the comments of the group members.

After all the participants had finished their presentations, their drawings can be put together and the time can be given to walk around and look for repeating patterns and the most obvious differences in the images. The joint feelings and perceptions of the group as a group can be discussed.

GIVE IT A SMILE

10 to 30 minutes

4 papers with the drawing or print of 4 emoticons showing happiness, sadness, confusion and surprise.

Minimum 10 pepole

Adapt the questions to what happened during the last day(s) of activities.

It is possible to use a jamboard or a Word document where the facilitator places the emoticons and participants note down their answer with a symbol.

DESCRIPTION

Place the symbols of the 4 emotions around the room, so everyone can see them. The facilitator asks the participants to stand in the center of the room and then reads out questions, such as:

What was the main feeling that accompanied you today?

What did you feel during the last activity?

How did you like today's lunch / dinner?

How was your engagement and involvement during the activities today?

How did you like the activities with this facilitator?

How much did you improve your skills regarding the topic of this course / activity / project?

The participants move close to the emoticon that represents their answer. Make time for those who want to share their feelings. Also use this space to collect feedback and ask questions.

THE LANDING

🕐 45 minutes

✎ -

👥 25 to 30 people

💡 It is good to leave some space between comments, but you may need to encourage people to keep the rhythm.

💡 Can be done the same way as a chat.

DESCRIPTION

The facilitator introduces "The Landing exercise". Then he asks people to close their eyes and visualize themselves calling back all of their scattered energy to "land" in their bodies to be fully present for this activity.

The tone set by the facilitator is important. Some people tend to be uncomfortable in this setting, so you may need to set people at ease with some reassurance that the value of this exercise will become apparent to them shortly.

The facilitator asks people to consider what it is that they are carrying with them, what they are bringing. Do they carry a gift or a burden or maybe both? Have a moment of silence, then ask people to speak their names and share their gifts and burdens with the group.

QUOTES

🕐 45 minutes

✏️ A hat, small strips of paper containing famous quotes of any kind - you could decide to match the quotes with the topic of the activity or project

👥 Any

💡 The facilitator should not only select quotes that represent the popular view or the view supported by the group, but should offer a mix of quotes that represent different viewpoints or offer multiple interpretations. This will make the reflection and discussion more varied and increase self-awareness.

💡 It is possible to individually send out different quotes via chat, or show the quotes through a shared screen presentation while giving the turn to one participant at a time.

DESCRIPTION

The group sits comfortably in a circle where they can have a good conversation - if necessary, you can divide a big group into smaller groups.

In turns, participants choose a paper out of the hat and read the quote out loud. After some seconds of reflection, the person reading should start with sharing their opinion, ideas, thoughts. Then the group can interact creating a discussion and free sharing.

The facilitator needs to take care of timing and support shy people to interact by creating some space for them.

Examples of quotes you can use:
"Everything has changed, except our way of thinking." Albert Einstein
"I believe we should fight for the unrealistic, rather than defend the unacceptable." Bill Shore, Founder of Share our Strength, a hunger organization
"Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire." William Butler Yeats
I'm looking forward to the time when *"women will change the nature of power, rather than power changing the nature of women."* Bella Abzug, Women's Rights Leader
 "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." Audre Lorde, Writer
"I change myself, I change the world." Gloria Anzaldua, Writer
"If I do not speak in a language that can be understood, there is little chance for a dialogue." Bell Hooks, Writer and Educator.

PERSONAL BRAND TAGLINE

🕐 5 to 10 minutes

✎ Pen and paper

👥 Not important

💡 -

💡 -

DESCRIPTION

Ask participants to write a tagline, like a tweet, to promote themselves, using only 140 characters.

Taking turns, each participant shares with the rest of the group and discusses it.

The idea is to help participants to focus on the essentials and on what is important.

The results can be funny and can also be a feel-good kind of exercise. Can be used as a self-reflection exercise, but also as a marketing and creativity method.

EMOJI CARDS

🕐 30 to 60 minutes

✎ A pack of cards. Each card should have an emoji.

👥 Any

💡 -

🔆 Can be done online by using the emojis in a chat or on a jamboard and participants copy/paste the ones they want to use.

DESCRIPTION

Prepare a deck of cards, where each card has a different emoji. Lay all of the cards randomly on the ground.

Participants should form a circle around the cards. Give them a few moments to become familiar with them.

You can say:
"Looking at the cards laid out before you, I'd like you to pick up just one card which closely reflects at least one of the feelings you experienced during this day of activities".
"Find appreciation in the group and share with them at least one time when you have experienced this feeling in your life".

In pairs, participants should pick up one or two cards which reflect a feeling they experienced during the day or during a certain activity. Participants can share when they had picked up the card and why it was significant to them.

In the end, they can share with the whole group anything significant that they have learned.

The benefit of using the cards in a conversation is that the focus is more on the cards than on the people. This makes it more comfortable for shy people to share their thoughts and feelings.

Create a safe place for this exercise, because you will be dealing with emotions and feelings that might make people vulnerable.

FISH BOWLS

🕐 30 to 60 minutes

✏️ -

👥 Any

💡 In order to process the Fish Bowls, simply allow for all to discuss openly, at the end of all Fish Bowls, any group's observation.

💡 Can be done the same way on chat platforms.

DESCRIPTION

The objective of this activity is to bring the participants to openly discuss an issue, a problem or the day of activities. The facilitator needs to prepare some questions or thoughts about the topic he wants to introduce to the discussion.

Select some participants to sit in a tight circle in the middle of the room. They are in the fish bowl. The rest of participants sit around the room, looking at them.

Provide the first question for fish bowl participants to discuss. The ones observing should keep quiet, observe different perspectives, and take notes and comments.

The main objective of Fish Bowl is to understand that certain people relate in different ways when uninterrupted. Much awareness can be raised by simply hearing what others have to say about a particular topic.

4X4 SOLUTIONS

🕐 30 to 60 minutes

✏️ Paper and pen

👥 Any

💡 -

💡 -

DESCRIPTION

This method is used to brainstorm about ideal solutions for a certain problem or subject. The goal is to find 16 new ideas for a problem or subject and to make participants aware of the variety of approaches that exist and that they can implement them in all sectors of their lives.

The problem or subject becomes a lot clearer if you turn it into a question. Using words what, how, where from? For example: How can we make our youth center a safer place to hang out in? What can we do to help our youth wear masks more often? First, we write the problem or subject in the center of a paper or flap board. Then we make 4 different categories that consist of different points of views or targets to develop, making it look like a mind-map. When these are done, we then write down 4 ideas for each one of them, which gives us 16 new possible solutions to our problem.

EMOTION CARDS

🕐 Depends on the group size, 20 to 40 minutes

✏️ Cards that can express emotions (dixit cards, emoticon cards, etc.)

👥 Any

💡 -

💡 -

DESCRIPTION

Participants can express their current feelings, emotions, or tell a story based on the card they have chosen. Cards can represent different situations or places or can include a word that expresses a feeling.

Cards with either picture or text are spread on the table. Young people gather around the table and start choosing cards.

The idea is to choose a card that expresses their current feeling. After everyone has chosen their card, the facilitator then can ask one by one, why they have chosen the specific card. Different cards with a feeling written on them can include feelings like anger, sadness, admiration, joy, peace, daring, affection or fear. Cards with pictures can include landscapes, events, people, animals, buildings, nature and much more. Cards should be easy to print from the internet and to laminate for later use.

FEEDBACK JAR

🕐 30 to 60 minutes

✏️ Jar, post it notes or paper and a pen

👥 Any

💡 -

💡 -

DESCRIPTION

Feedback jar works as a low threshold reflection method. With it, you can either give positive or negative feedback concerning events or group activity.

Put different colored papers on a table next to a jar. It's easy to use 3 colors, but you can also use more colors to get a wider range of feedback. For example, you could give the instruction that green means someone liked the activity, yellow means it was ok, or that you don't have any opinion about it, and red would mean you didn't like it. Notes or papers can also be written as a comment if the participants want to, but it's not necessary. After sharing the "statistics" about how many papers of each colour have been collected, the facilitator asks for feedback.

SCALES AND LINES

🕐 1 to 2 hours depending on the number of participants

✏️ Paper and pen or tape. Can also be done with Kahoot or similar applications.

👥 -

💡 When working with Scales or lines for a longer period (for example two days or one week in a row), you get to observe your own thoughts, values, feelings etc. And how they change throughout the activity. This is how this method can be used in the end to evaluate your own change of attitude.

💡 -

DESCRIPTION

Scales and lines have the goal to map out current situations. Thanks to this exercise its possible to approach more difficult subjects with greater ease. It also enables the participants to discuss their opinions, values, and feelings on a more concrete base. Scales and lines activity gives an opportunity to take up different angles and discuss them.

Depending on how you are going to deliver, you can either give out pens and paper to participants or tape 5 squared lines on the ground and ask participants to stand in front of a line. If you use an app like Kahoot, you can ask the participants to open their app or download it if they don't have it.

When a line or scale has been introduced, every participant is asked to choose the spot on the scale or line that represents their current feelings, values, opinions etc. It's not essential to compare your own placement in regard to others. Same placement on the scale or line can be felt very differently. That is why the facilitator can interview individual participants about why they chose that particular spot on the line or scale. Facilitators can also ask the individuals where they would see themselves facing perfect success or situation. After this, you can ask questions about how their current situation differs from the optimal situation and what everyone can do to get better results. A good way to concretize the situation for the participants is to ask them how they would know that they have moved one step towards their goal on the scale or line. This is how reaching the goal also gets more concrete with each step.