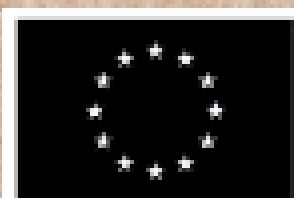


**“ Sometimes, nature is all you need „**



# **SAFELY OUTDOORS**

**Experience pedagogy and safety  
in outdoors in youthwork**



**Funded by  
the European Union**



**LEADER**

**Nouseva  
Rannikkoseutu**



**Deutsches  
Rotes  
Kreuz** Kreisverband  
Heilbronn e.V.

# WHAT WAS IT ABOUT

**The goal of the project** was to increase the skills of employees working with young people to support youngsters growth with the help of experience pedagogy and low profile methods that increase the relationship with nature. The youth workers gained skills on how to plan, prepare and carry out activities safely and how to act in surprising situations in nature.

The training was organized in two parts, focusing on different topics:

**The first** training course took place in March in Vihanti, Finland and it included outdoor first aid, the importance of interaction with nature and different low profile methods of experience pedagogy.

**The second** part was held in August in Heilbronn, Germany at Red Cross's training centre. This training course aimed to provide first aid outdoor skills, targeted support in critical situations and practical exercises in nature.



## INFO



**24 participants**  
from Finland,  
Germany and Spain

**Working language:**  
English

### Participating organisations:

LAG Nouseva  
Ranikkoseutu,  
Finland

Deutches Rotes  
Kreuz Heilbronn,  
Germany

Jarron Club, Spain



# OUTCOMES BY PARTICIPANTS

*"Through the training, I gained knowledge in risk management, problem-solving activities, and group-building tasks. I also had the chance to act as an instructor, which helped develop my leadership skills. But also realized, by stepping back and carefully watching and reflecting my own behavior, how I work in group tasks and how I can improve my attendance.*

*Additionally, I learned about supporting others both emotionally and physically, as well as reflecting on experiences as a tool for personal and group development. I gained practical experience in videomaking and learned how to work constructively with others in challenging situations.*

*I will apply the knowledge in my current role as instructor in the organisation, where I work with children and teenagers during school trips and outdoor activities. Additionally, I plan to use these skills in my future career as a social worker. I also intend to integrate the techniques I learned into mindfulness programs by working with youngsters." **German participant***

*"I learnt how to behave in case of emergency in wilderness, the protocols, how to handle certain situations with groups, and how to assist people in case of wounds or any kind of injury. I will be ready for any situation in my future settings with young people and groups of participants in youth exchanges, training courses, meetings, outdoor activities, etc."*

**Spanish participant**

*It is really good to know and have experience for first aid in a natural environment. I did not have so much expectations towards the training course- I only thought that it has something to do with hiking in wilderness nature. I got a lot of new information of first aid and medical situations in the nature. I was really surprised how much information and practical work with first aid we got in a week! Now I am using my new knowledge and experiences when I am planning trips, hiking events and fishing trips for children. We really need to do very professional security plans before events so for me those are now much easier to do when I gain so much of information about what could happen in a trip with children"*

**Finnish participant**

# WHAT IS ADVENTURE PEDAGOGY?



Based on learning through challenges, group tasks, and outdoor activities.

Emphasizes personal growth and group learning processes.



*If you're interested to learn more about the theory and history of adventure pedagogy read more about Kurt Hahn*



## Key Elements of Experiential Education:

Needs a supportive and respectful atmosphere. Adventure fosters emotions, thought processes, and self-reflection, which lead to responsibility and new skills.

- Basic elements:
- An atmosphere of hope
- Group orientation, aiming to safe group
- Effort, perseverance
- Trust and Confidence
- Constructive pressure
  - Feeling of unfamiliarity / surprising, unexpected situations
- Lack of total control (not total lack of control)
- Imaginable risks
- Lack of information



# PERSONAL GROWTH:

Encourages movement from the comfort zone to a growth zone, where challenges promote learning without overwhelming participants

## ZONES OF PERSONAL GROWTH

### Stretch Zone

- Novelty, oppressive, tiring
- Challenging, stressful
- Desire to turn back
- Feeling out of control

### Comfort Zone

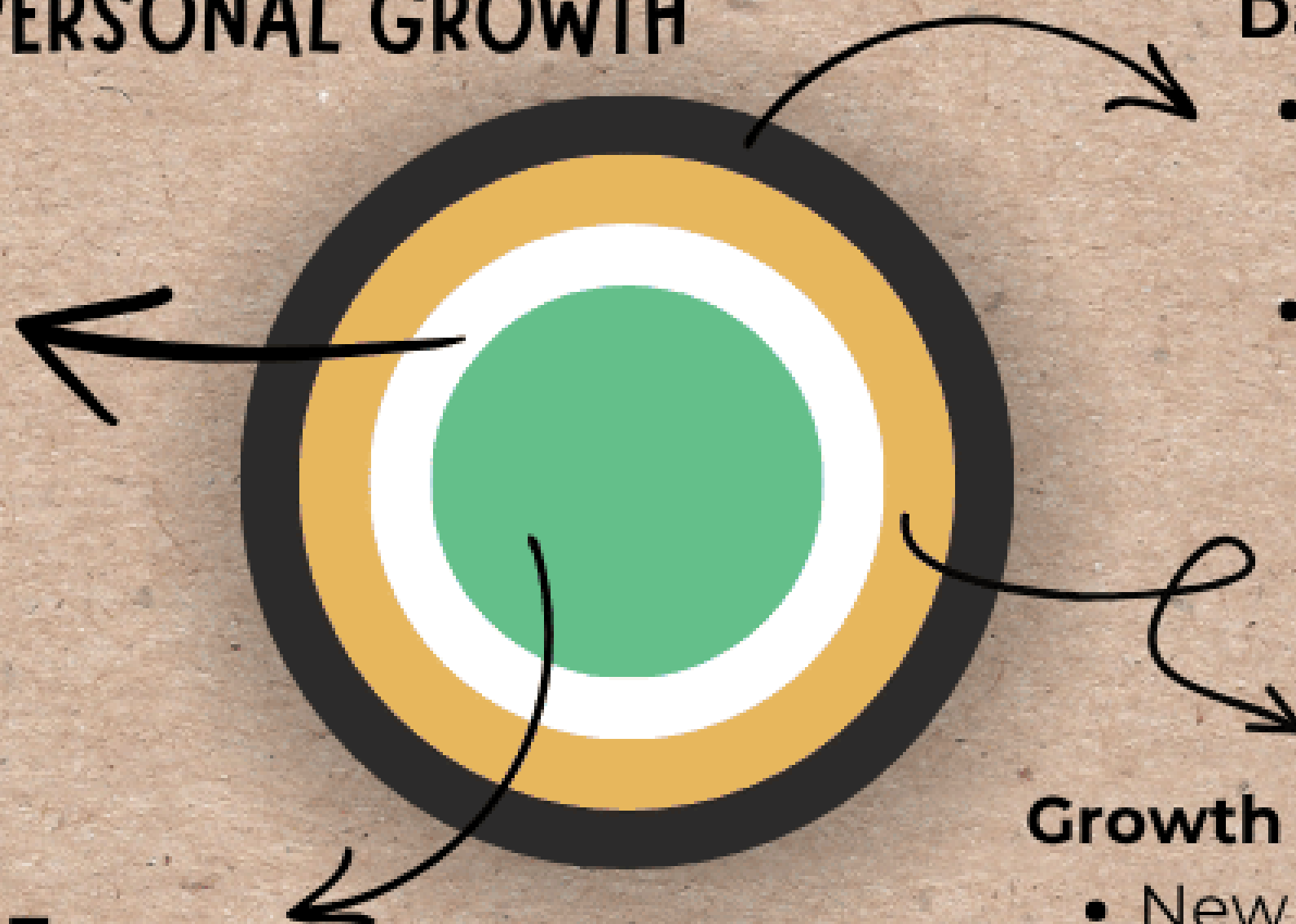
- Safe, feeling of control
- Familiar, old operating models

### Danger Zone

- excessive anxiety, -panic, fear, shame
- Ability to take more risks declines

### Growth Zone

- New sense of mastery
- New skill set



## PHASES OF PERSONAL GROWTH

### Awareness

Own operating models emotions, prejudices

### Personal responsibility

### Experimenting

### Rejection

### Success

new way to think, act, general attitude, etc.



# THE ROLE OF THE INSTRUCTOR:

**Acts more as a facilitator, guiding participants to process their experiences and ensuring safety.**

**Creates an environment for open exploration and non-formal learning.**

Balances authority with creating a trusting, supportive environment.

Focuses on positive reinforcement, individual attention, and maintaining clear boundaries.



## A SHORTLIST FOR ADVENTURE EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS

- Observes and gives space to participants
- Responsible for safety
- Is ready to encourage
- Collect information
- Respond to the group's state of mind and problem behavior
- (If necessary) Intervene
- Give feedback
- In the case of demanding activities;  
Two supervisors, allowing one to focus more on processes while the other is responsible for technical implementation

# HOW TO BUILT A SAFE GROUP?

## STUCTURE

- Know your group in advance
- Mutual agreement and rules
- Highlights the principles of a safe space

## MIX

- Offer icebreakers and warm-ups
- Anyone can work with anyone (pairs, small groups)
- Break down the cliques

## BE A GUARDIAN

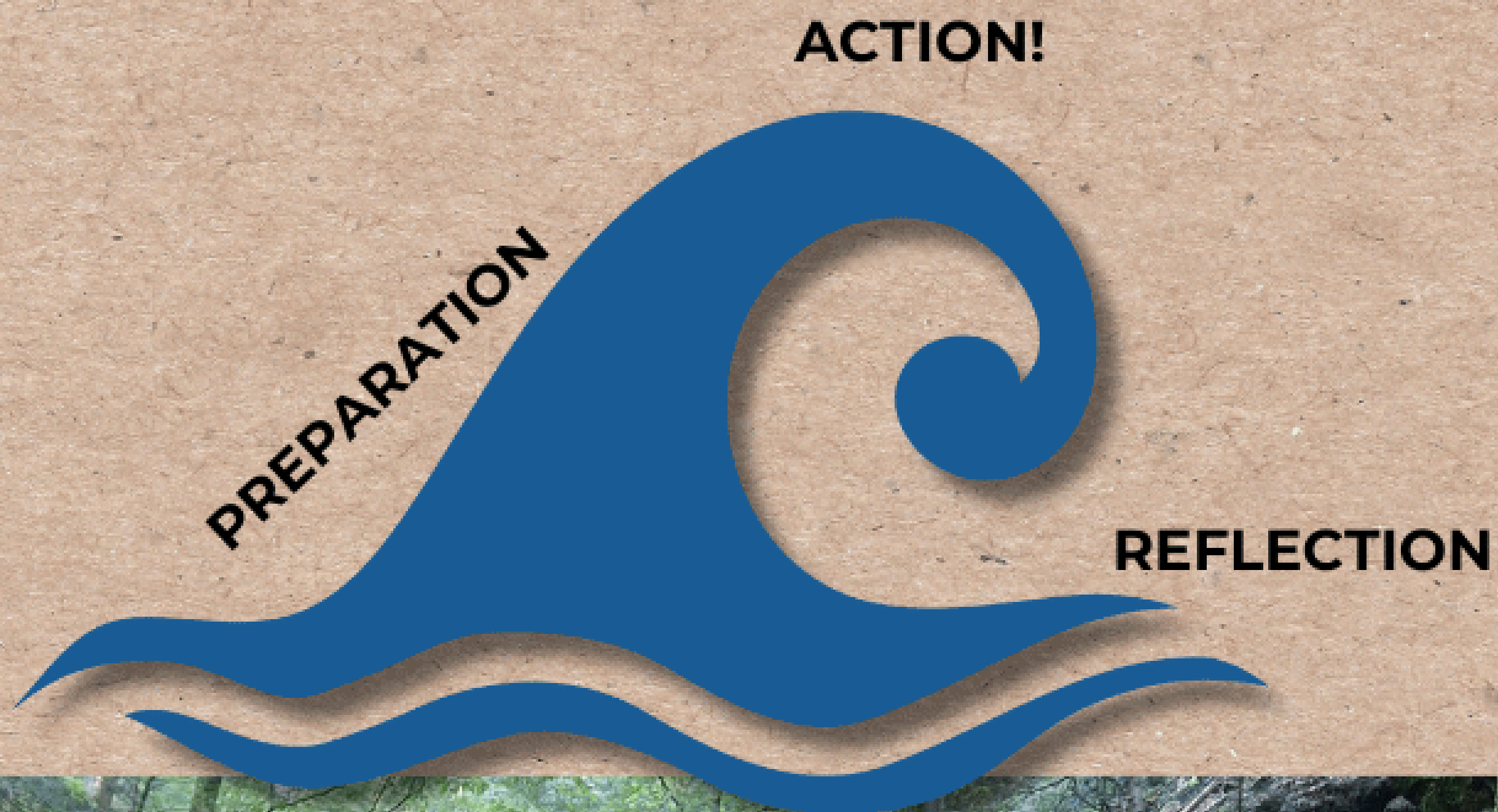
- Be an example of respect and equality
- Maintain boundaries systematically
- Emphasize volunteerism



# PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

- Goal setting - what the group wants to achieve?
- Invitation to adventure
- Awakening the imagination and motivation-  
*create a story!*
- Commitment to working together
- The spirit of the group, tribe, team
- Remind: Participation is voluntary. Courage!

## THE WAVE OF ADVENTURE





# REFLECTION AND FEEDBACK:

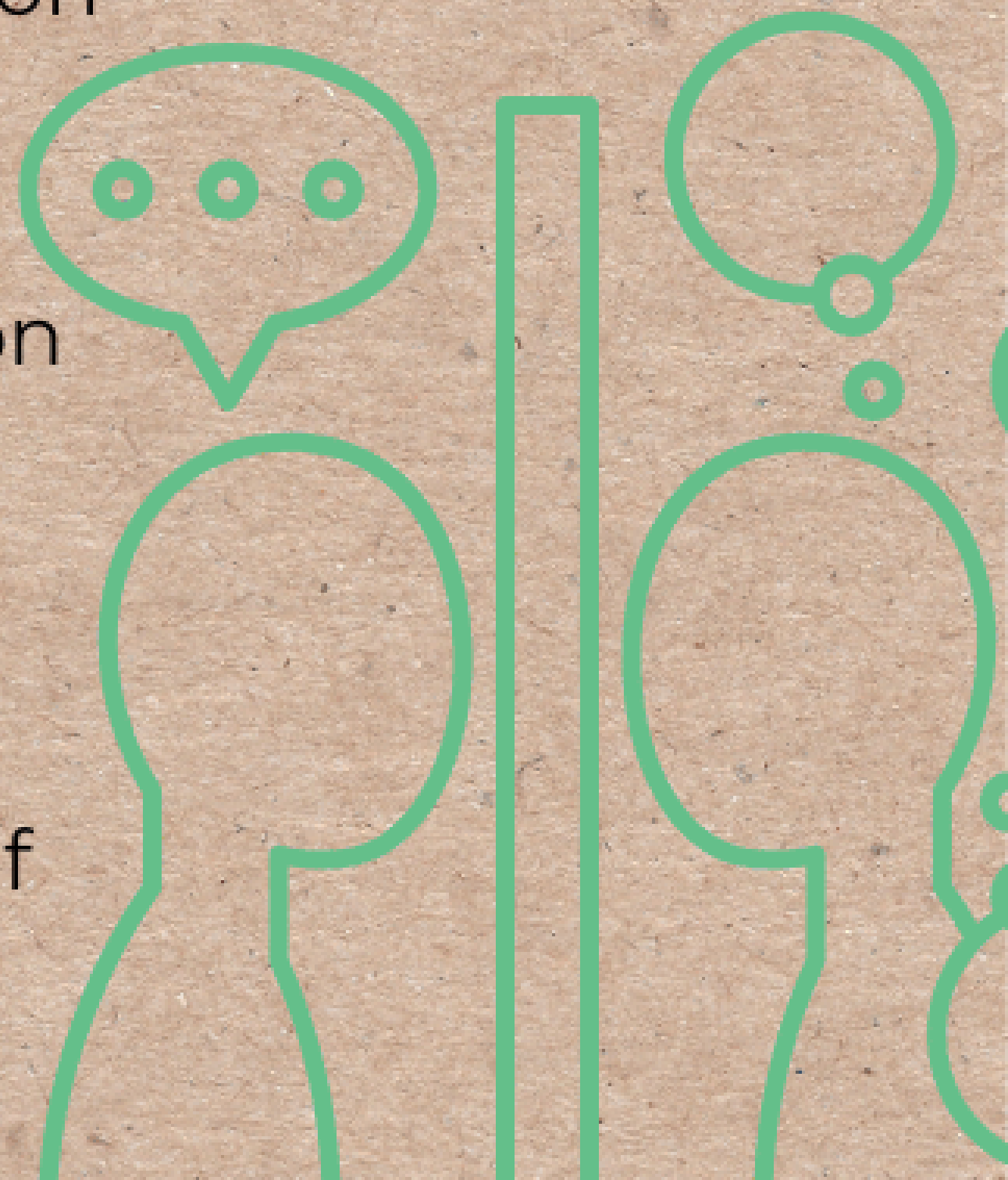
Reflection helps participants internalize their experiences, strengthen self-expression, and improve social and emotional skills.

**Ask right questions!**



## POSSIBLE OUTCOMES AND DEVELOPMENT

- Tension release
- Strengthening self-expression
- Emotional skills
- Social skills and consideration for others
- Strengthening a positive self-image
- Strengthening the feeling of belonging to a group




# RISK MANAGEMENT

Ensures physical, emotional, and social safety through planning, training, and risk assessments.

- **Culture of safety**


 Attitudes, Norms, Law

- **Choosing right activities for right people in right environment with right experience**

 Sufficient training and instructor experience

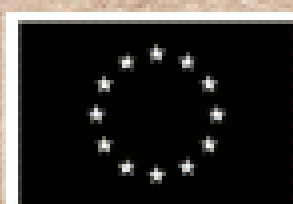
- **Risk assessments of activities**

- **Safety plans and preparedness for incidents and emergencies**

 Equipment and simulations  
Evacuation, back-up resources

**Be  
prepared!**



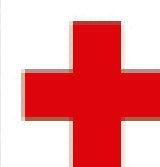


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