

FROM CHALLENGE TO CHANGE



TRAINING COURSE FOR YOUTH WORKERS

KNIN, CROATIA, 6 - 11 MAR 2025

TRAINING MANUAL

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.



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Welcome to the journey

“From Challenge to Change” was a 4-day Erasmus+ training course that brought together 22 participants and 2 trainers from 9 partners coming from Croatia, Greece, North Macedonia, Spain, Finland, Portugal, Türkiye and Slovenia. The training course was successfully implemented in Knin, Croatia, between 6 - 11 of March 2025. It is part of the second year of Erasmus+ Youth Accreditation held by Udruga Argonauta, demonstrating the commitment to building capacities in the field of youth work through quality learning experiences.

The main goal was to equip youth workers with leadership and conflict management skills, enabling them to inspire and guide young people, fostering active participation and positive change in their local communities. The experience offered a learning environment in the context of experiential outdoor exploration and personal reflection. Participants engaged in a progression of sessions inspired by the Hero's Journey, encouraging them to navigate personal challenges, develop emotional resilience, and build meaningful connections with others.

Through a variety of methods, from non-violent communication workshops to group challenges and nature-based practices, the course created a safe and dynamic space for participants to reconnect with their inner motivation, share best practices, and return to their local contexts empowered to take action.

This manual captures the learning process, methodologies, and key insights from the journey. It is designed as both a memory of the experience and a practical resource for youth workers seeking to apply similar approaches in their work.



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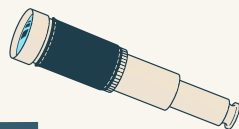


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Objectives



This training course was designed to support youth workers in developing key competences that empower them to take initiative, lead with awareness, and foster youth participation at the community level. It aimed to enhance the competences of youth workers through four structured learning modules. Each module was aligned with a key objective of the training course.

Module 1: self-awareness & leadership

→ Objective 1: help youth workers develop confidence and practical tools for leading teams and activities effectively.

This module focused on building a solid foundation in personal leadership, self-awareness, and facilitation. Through reflective tools and hands-on exercises, participants explored their leadership styles and how to support others with clarity.

Module 2: communication & conflict management

→ Objective 2: strengthen conflict management skills, equipping the participants with techniques to handle and resolve conflicts in youth work settings.

Participants developed skills in non-violent communication, active listening, and conflict transformation through experiential workshops and real-life simulations.

Module 3: empowering youth to take initiative

→ Objective 3: empower youth workers to motivate and support young people in creating community-based initiatives.

This module offered inspiration for guiding young people in shaping and implementing their ideas. It encouraged mentoring attitudes and shared success stories of local youth-led actions.

Module 4: integration & action planning

→ Objective 4: encourage knowledge-sharing and cross-cultural cooperation to strengthen international partnerships.

In this final module, participants reflected on their learning, exchanged practices across cultures, and planned follow-up initiatives to sustain international cooperation and bring impact to their local realities.

From Challenge to Change was based in non-formal education, emphasizing experiential learning, reflection, emotional intelligence, and peer exchange. Across four working days, participants engaged in a variety of methods carefully chosen to match the learning objectives and rhythm of the training.



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Experiential learning & reflection

At the heart of the program was the learning-by-doing approach. Participants were consistently invited to experience, reflect, conceptualize and apply what they learned. Both individually and in groups. Throughout the training, we experimented with the timing of reflection sessions, holding them both at the end of the day and the following morning. This allowed us to explore the difference between reflecting when impressions are fresh (but energy is lower), and when the mind is rested (but details may be fuzzier). This simple shift brought awareness to how emotional state and physical readiness influence learning and integration.

The Hero's Journey as a narrative framework

The structure of the training followed the arc of the Hero's Journey, allowing participants to see themselves as protagonists of their own development. This metaphor was embedded in all stages: from the "call to adventure," to facing challenges, transforming through new insights, and returning with knowledge to apply at home.

Nature-based & outdoor activities

Outdoor tasks using a map and teamwork in a natural setting, away from digital tools. These nature-based experiences fostered team bonding, problem-solving, and introspective awareness, valuable competences in youth work and leadership.

Non-violent communication & conflict resolution

Dedicated sessions focused on assertive communication, roleplays with difficult group dynamics, and techniques to resolve conflicts while maintaining trust and empathy. These were central to building emotional competence and leadership.

Interactive team-building & simulation games

Structured games like the Bricks Challenge (builder-architect-messenger roles) helped explore communication in teams, delegation, and problem-solving. These methods offered fun yet deep insights into group dynamics and self-awareness.

Peer learning & open space

The final days included open space workshops and informal networking tools. Participants led their own sessions and exchanged experiences and needs from their organizations—reinforcing the value of horizontal learning and cooperation.

Creative tools for integration

From the Wheel of Life to writing a letter to one's future self, creative tools helped participants connect the dots between their personal and professional lives, and identify clear takeaways and future commitments.



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Below a list of methods that were used during the training course and that will be described later in this manual:

- Getting to know each other games - Flash cards containing Get-to-know questions.
- City game - A type of hunt with challenges and questions about Knin.
- Personal SWOT analysis - participants reflected on their strengths, weaknesses and challenges.
- Wheel of life - A circle divided into different parts of life, animating the participants to reflect.
- Reflection map - The map contained several states that represented the participants' mood.
- Intercultural evening - An informal gathering where participants shared their cultural background through music, food, history and games.
- Outdoor orientation challenge - Challenge to find a specific location without internet. The participants had some pre-informed guidelines and should find their way by using signs on the road, printed maps, or asking the locals for directions.
- Cooperation through communication - Groups were divided into the roles of "architects", "messengers" and "builders". The task was to give each other precise information to successfully build an object.
- Role play - Participants had to act out different roles, such as being rude, passive, or overly enthusiastic. They were challenged to use non-violent communication in difficult scenarios.
- Bono hat dynamic - A way to assess a situation by adding layers, such as thinking about it objectively, then adding emotions, context, and solutions.
- Outdoor teambuilding activity - A mini olympics where the participants were divided into three teams and had to compete in different challenges.
- Open space - An opportunity for participants to share their knowledge about topics related to training objectives.
- Planning initiatives - A reflection about challenges faced by the youth and coming up with ideas on how to tackle these issues in our local communities.



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Module 1: Self-awareness & leadership

Linked objective

Help youth workers develop confidence and practical tools for leading teams and activities effectively.

Description

This module invited participants to reflect on their personal journey as youth workers and explore the foundations of leadership. Through activities focused on self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and group dynamics, they began identifying their individual roles and strengths within teams.

The sessions helped participants assess their current balance in life and work, uncover inner resources, and understand how their own leadership impacts others. It laid the groundwork for authentic facilitation and meaningful connections with young people.

Key competences developed

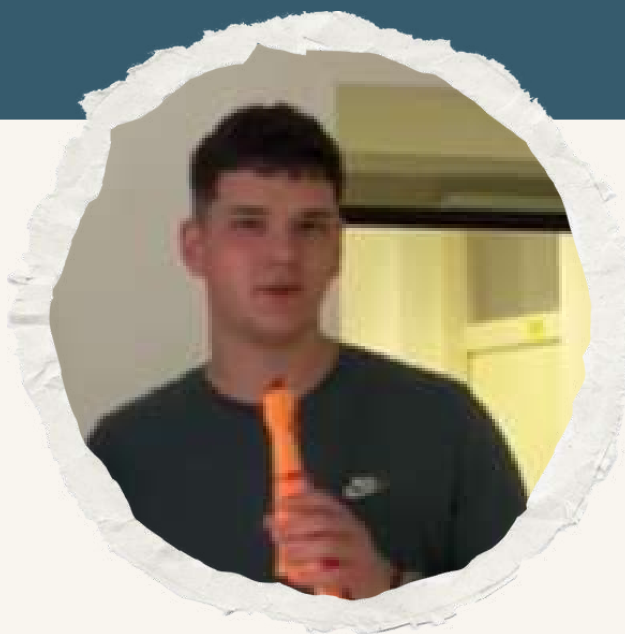
- Self-awareness & reflection
- Personal leadership styles
- Emotional literacy
- Confidence and communication in group settings

Highlighted activities

- Wheel of life: a personal mapping tool to reflect on areas of growth and balance.
- Claiming leadership: group discussions and sharing on leadership challenges.
- Team-building activities: interactive exercises to explore group roles, trust, and collaboration.

Participant reflection

"I want to become a facilitator in the future, to learn how to work with youngsters."
— Participant from North Macedonia



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Module 2: Communication & conflict management

Linked objective

Strengthen conflict management skills, equipping the participants with techniques to handle and resolve conflicts in youth work settings.

Description

This module focused on building emotional intelligence and mastering key communication skills necessary for working with young people and teams. Through hands-on experiences and simulations, participants learned how to handle interpersonal tensions, navigate misunderstandings, and engage in dialogue with clarity and empathy.

The sessions also explored the importance of emotional regulation, assertiveness, and the role of non-verbal communication in youth work contexts.

Key competences developed

- Conflict resolution
- Non-violent communication
- Active listening and empathy
- Emotional regulation under pressure

Highlighted activities

- NVC workshop: introduction to non-violent communication and practice with real scenarios.
- Bricks challenge: a fun yet revealing exercise on communication, misunderstanding, and roles.
- Conflict roleplays: group work on identifying conflict sources and practicing constructive dialogue.

Participant reflection

"I have learned so many things, most important one being patient."

— Participant from Türkiye



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Module 3: Empowering youth to take initiative

Linked objective

Empower youth workers to motivate and support young people in creating community-based initiatives.

Description

This module focused on strengthening the role of the youth worker as a motivator, guide, and mentor. Participants explored how to support young people in shaping ideas, turning challenges into opportunities, and developing initiatives that respond to real needs in their communities. Through both structured inputs and open space exchanges, the group shared tools and experiences that inspire youth participation, while also reflecting on what support and encouragement looks like in practice.

Key competences developed

- Motivational coaching
- Facilitation of youth initiatives
- Understanding participation models
- Inspiring responsibility and ownership

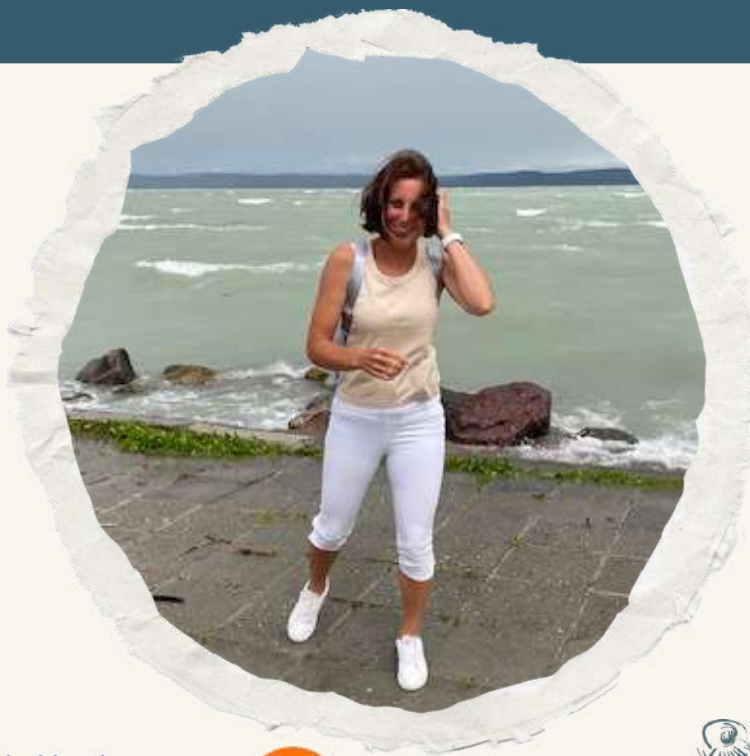
Highlighted activities

- Claiming leadership: exploration of barriers and motivators young people face when taking initiative.

Participant reflection

“It’s all about trust, bonding, engagement and positive communication skills.”

— Participant from Slovenia



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Module 4: Integration & action planning

Linked objective

Encourage knowledge-sharing and cross-cultural cooperation to strengthen international partnerships.

Description

This final module focused on connecting the dots between learning, future action, and collective impact. Participants reflected on their individual growth during the week, identified lessons to take home, and exchanged strategies for collaboration across borders.

Sessions were designed to consolidate the experience, encourage continued cooperation, and support participants in applying what they learned to their youth work realities. Youthpass and personal commitments provided closure and direction for what comes next.

Key competences developed

- Reflection and integration of learning
- Strategic planning and follow-up
- International cooperation
- Self-assessment and recognition of competences

Highlighted activities

- Hero's journey: guided reflection on personal transformation during the training.
- Action planning: group planning on how to transfer the learning to local communities and future projects.

Participant reflection

"This training will help me connect better with my students at EPAL Nafpaktou every day. I'll use cool, hands-on activities to get them involved, solve conflicts like a pro, and make sure everyone feels included and pumped to take charge."

— Participant from Greece



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Daily overview



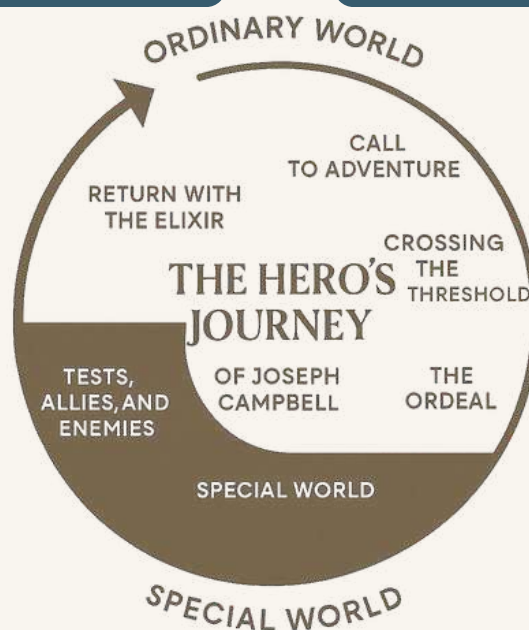
In the following graphic daily overview is shown the four main working days of the training course, without reflecting the arrivals and departures days.

DAY 1. THE ORDINARY WORLD

The training began with self-awareness activities and personal reflection. Sessions about self-perception and the Wheel of Life helped participants map their origins and explore their role as youth workers.

DAY 2. CALL TO THE ADVENTURE & CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

Challenging outdoor activities with map navigation, crossing the web and the bricks challenge invited participants to practice teamwork, leadership, and communication under pressure.



DAY 3. THE ABYSS & TRANSFORMATION

Non Violent Communication and conflict resolution workshops deepened their conflict management skills. They exchanged practices through Open Space and supported each other in mentoring roles.

DAY 4. THE RETURN

With new confidence and tools, participants focused on how to empower young people. The Hero's Return and commitment letters closed the journey and prepared participants for their next steps.



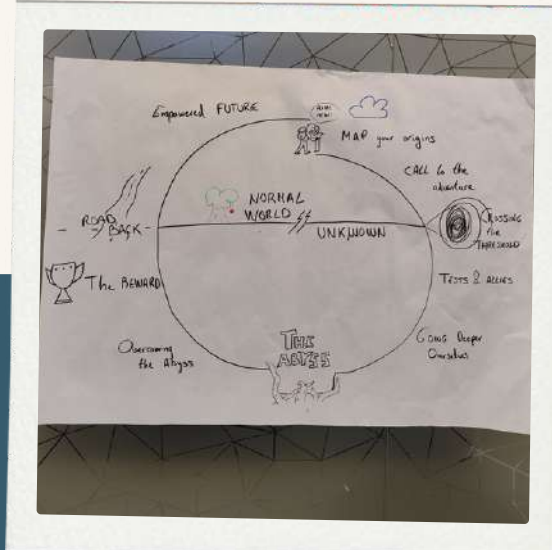
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The Hero's notebook - starting the Journey

Module: 1 – Self-awareness & leadership

Duration: 90 minutes

Group size: individual reflection

Materials: A5 blank notebooks (one/participant), colored markers/pencils, Hero's Journey visual

Objectives: introduce the concept of the Hero's Journey as a metaphor for personal and professional growth. Encourage deep reflection on participants' roles, strengths, and self-perception. Lay the foundation for ongoing personal documentation throughout the training. Stimulate creativity, vulnerability, and self-awareness through visual expression.

Instructions:

1. Introduction to the Hero's Journey: briefly present Joseph Campbell's structure using a visual map. Explain how this narrative arc mirrors transformation, and how this training will follow a similar path.
2. Give each participant a blank A5 notebook. Explain that this will be their Hero's Notebook. A personal space to reflect, sketch, write, and track their evolution throughout the training.
3. Invite participants to create the first page with the theme: "Who am I before the journey?"
4. Encourage them to draw or describe themselves as heroes, including: their current roles in youth work and in personal life, their strengths and resources, their insecurities or weaknesses, their fears, hopes, and expectations
5. Allow 30–40 minutes of calm, silent time with soft music. Encourage a playful but honest tone. The outcome can be symbolic, literal, abstract, or metaphorical.
6. Participants may (voluntarily) share their pages in pairs or in a closing circle.

Debriefing questions:

- How did it feel to visualize yourself as a hero of your journey?
- What surprised you in your self-perception?
- What do you already know about your strengths and challenges?

Encourage participants to keep this notebook with them at all times and use it after each session for reflection, sketches, or processing emotions.

Facilitator tips:

Frame the exercise gently to avoid judgment: it's about exploration, not perfection
Reassure participants that the notebook is personal — only shared if they choose



The Wheel of Life

Module: 1 – Self-awareness & leadership

Duration: 60–90 minutes

Group size: individual reflection + group sharing (any size)

Materials: blank wheel templates, pens, colored pencils

Objectives: to increase self-awareness by evaluating personal balance across key life areas.

Instructions:

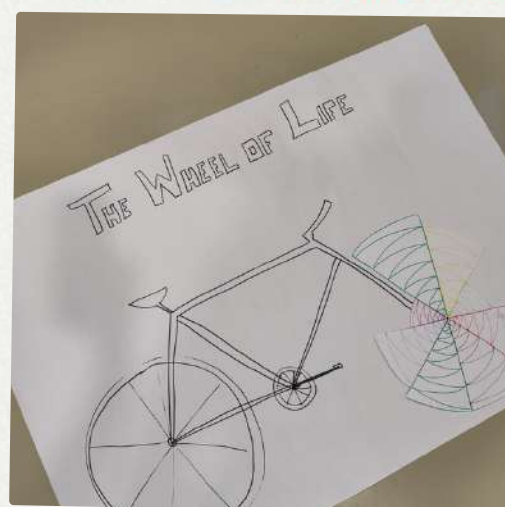
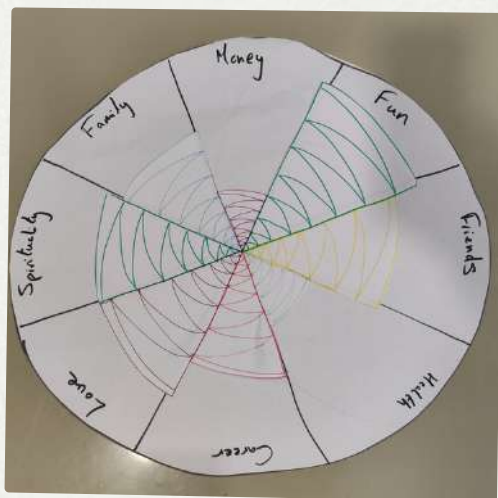
1. Introduce the 8 life categories: health, career, love, spirituality, family, money, fun, friends. Can be adapted to youth work with other categories like learning, creativity, contribution, etc.
2. Participants rate each area from 1–10 and shade the wheel.
3. Reflect individually, then share insights in small groups.
4. Set personal objectives to improve those areas with low rate.

Debriefing questions:

- What did your wheel reveal about your current balance?
- Were there any surprises?
- How does this influence your role as a youth worker?

Facilitator tips:

Offer calming music or nature setting. Emphasize this is not about judgment but awareness.





Call to the Adventure

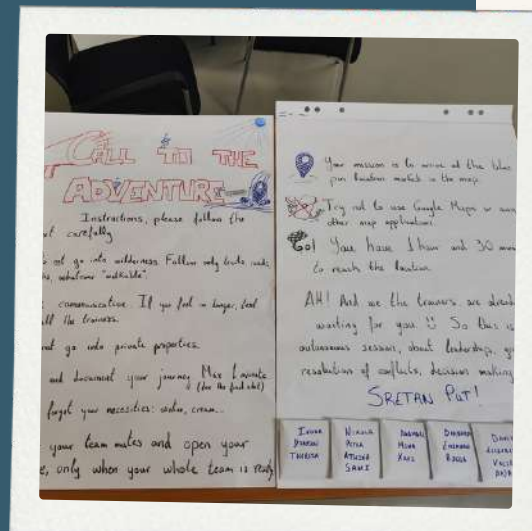
Module: 2 – Communication & conflict management

Duration: ~3 hours (including preparation, hike, and debriefing)

Group size: small teams of 3–4 participants

Materials: pre-marked paper maps, sealed envelopes with team assignments and instructions, camera/smartphones for filming, markers on the map (blue pin), comfortable clothes and hiking essentials

Objectives: foster group leadership, communication, and autonomous decision-making. Encourage reflection on team dynamics and conflict resolution under pressure.



Instructions:

1. At 09:00, participants arrive in the dorm common area. Trainers are not present. Instead, a creative visual titled "The Call to Adventure" is displayed in the center, accompanied by:
 - a. Sealed envelopes with team assignments (predefined, mixed nationalities and roles)
 - b. Paper maps marked with a destination near a cascade (blue pin)
2. Inside each envelope:
 - a. A printed message of the challenge and safety instructions
 - b. Rules:
 - i. Do not use GPS/Google Maps unless truly necessary
 - ii. Follow only visible paths (no wilderness or private property)
 - iii. Contact trainers in case of emergency
 - iv. Create a 1-minute video documenting the journey
 - v. Bring necessary personal items (water, sunblock, etc.)
 - vi. Only open the envelope when all team members are present
3. Participants must then:
 - a. Organize themselves in teams
 - b. Read the instructions
 - c. Navigate the route autonomously to the destination where trainers wait
 - d. Capture moments of the hike for their team's final 1-minute video summary



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Debriefing questions:

- Who took initiative in your team? Did that change along the way?
- How did your team make decisions and resolve disagreements?
- What strategies worked best when navigating without digital tools?
- How did you deal with uncertainty or stress during the hike?
- What did this experience teach you about yourself and your leadership role?

Facilitator tips:

Clearly mark the destination on all maps and check that all groups have the same instructions

Ensure all safety precautions are reviewed ahead of time

Be available via phone/text in case of emergency

Have a first-aid kit at the final destination

Offer music, snacks, or reflection tools at the cascade to enhance the closing atmosphere





Crossing the threshold - The spider web challenge

Module: 2 – Communication & conflict management

Duration: 60 minutes

Group size: full group (8–20 people) working as one team

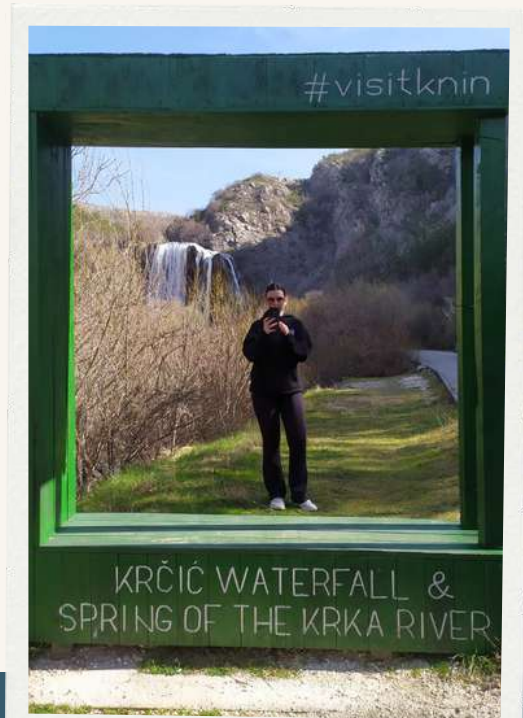
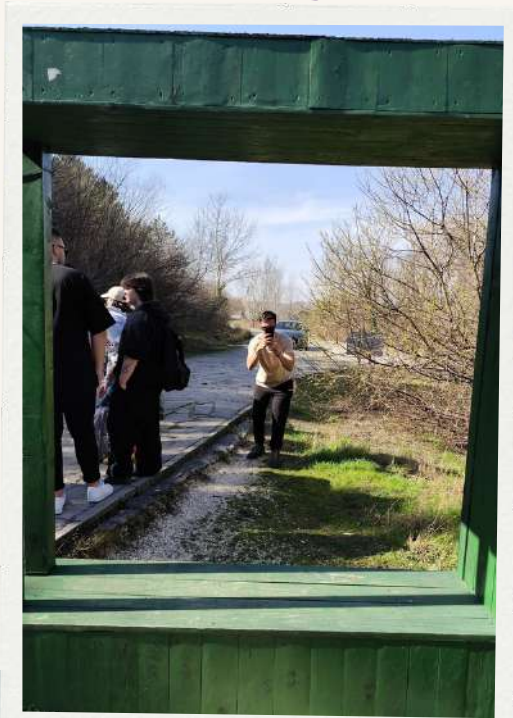
Materials: rope/string to create a “spider web” between trees or poles

Objectives: build group trust, cooperation, and mutual support. Emphasize the symbolic step of “leaving the known world” and entering a space of growth. Practice communication and coordination in physical teamwork.

Instructions:

1. Tie ropes between two trees or poles to form a web-like structure with multiple holes of different sizes and heights. Each opening should be passable by a person – but each hole can be used only once.
2. Introduce the activity as a symbolic moment: “Now you are crossing the threshold into the unknown – a world of growth, challenge, and transformation.”
3. The whole group must get to the other side of the web without touching the ropes and without reusing holes.





4. Rules:

- Touching the rope = the person must go back and the team must choose a new strategy
- Participants must pass through the holes, not under or around
- The group decides the order, strategy, and roles (e.g., lifting, catching, guiding)

5. Let the group take full ownership. Do not interfere unless safety is at risk.

Debriefing questions:

After everyone has passed through the web, guide a group reflection.

- How did you feel at the beginning? During? After succeeding?
- What did you learn about trust and teamwork?
- Who took leadership roles? Did they shift?
- What does this activity symbolize for your journey here?
- How is this threshold similar to challenges you face in your real life or youth work?

Facilitator tips:

Prioritize safety: ensure the structure is stable and soft landing zones are clear

If necessary, provide support spotters for higher or more complex holes

Debrief using Hero's Journey language: this activity represents leaving the safe zone, relying on others, and stepping into the "adventure"

Optionally, invite participants to name one quality they are taking with them into the unknown before passing through the web



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The bricks challenge

Module: 2 – Communication & conflict management

Duration: 60–90 minutes

Group size: teams of 3 people

Materials: sets of identical building bricks, instructions/blueprints for the final structure (only seen by one role), physical divider (sheet, curtain, tables, rooms)

Objectives: explore the impact of communication styles and barriers. Experience the importance of clarity, active listening, and feedback. Reflect on frustration, misunderstandings, and the value of each group role.

Instructions:

1. Divide participants into teams of 3 and assign roles:
 - a. Architects – see the final model (blueprint), must describe it to Messengers.
 - b. Messengers – receive information from Architects and pass it to Builders.
 - c. Builders – reconstruct the structure based only on Messenger instructions.
2. Set up physical barriers between groups: Architects cannot see Builders. Builders never see the original model.
3. Rules:
 - a. No writing or drawing.
 - b. Communication happens in fixed intervals (e.g. 3 mins speaking, 1 min break).
 - c. Total time: 25–30 minutes.
4. Once time ends, compare the built version with the original model.

Debriefing questions:

Gather all teams to reflect in plenary or small groups.

- What was your role and how did it feel?
- What made communication easy or difficult?
- Where did confusion happen, and how did your team react?
- What parallels can you draw to youth work/your organization?

Facilitator tips:

Use a model that's complex enough to challenge the teams but not impossible

Debrief deeply—this activity triggers rich discussion about roles, assumptions, frustration, and team dynamics

Optional twist: switch roles and play again to reveal how perspectives shift



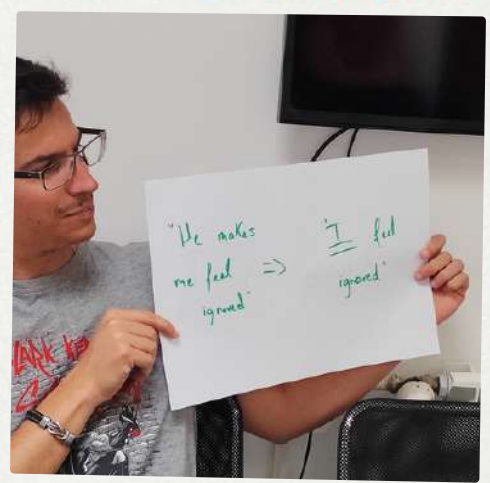
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Practising assertive communication

Module: 2 – Communication & conflict management

Duration: 90 minutes

Group size: whole group with breakout teams of 3–5 people

Materials: flipcharts or slides introducing NVC, handouts with the 4 steps of Nonviolent Communication, scenario cards

Objectives: introduce participants to the core principles of Nonviolent Communication (NVC). Practice assertive phrasing and emotional self-regulation.

Instructions:

1. Begin with a short explanation of assertive communication and the importance of clear expression in youth work. Present the 4-step model of Nonviolent Communication (by Marshall Rosenberg):
 - a. Observation – what I see/hear (without judgment)
 - b. Feeling – what I feel (emotionally)
 - c. Need – what I need or value
 - d. Request – what I'm asking of the other person, clearly and respectfully

e. Example: "When I see that the task hasn't been completed (observation), I feel frustrated (feeling) because I need reliability (need). Would you be willing to meet later today to work on it together? (request)"
2. Role-play challenge. Each group receives a real-life scenario and prepares a 2-part role-play: first, show how the conflict would unfold in a non-assertive way, then, re-do the scene using assertive / NVC techniques. Encourage creativity, humor, and realism in the performances.

Debriefing questions:

After each role-play, open a short discussion:

- What did you notice in each version of the scene?
- How did tone and body language affect the outcome?
- What makes assertive communication difficult in moments of conflict?
- Can you recall a real-life situation where NVC might have helped?
- What small step can you take to apply this in your youth work?



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Facilitator tips:

Prepare realistic youth-work conflict examples (e.g., “a volunteer ignoring group agreements”, “tension between two participants during an exchange”)

Use humor to soften the atmosphere – some scenarios will be emotionally charged

Tool introduced in this session: De Bono's six thinking hats

It is an effective group method to analyze situations from multiple perspectives. Reduce emotional bias and personal attachment during conflicts. Each hat represents a different type of thinking. Participants “wear” one hat at a time to focus their input, helping the group navigate complex issues or tensions constructively:

- Yellow Hat (Optimism) – What are the benefits? What's the potential?
- Black Hat (Caution) – What could go wrong? What are the risks?
- Red Hat (Emotions) – How do I feel about this, instinctively or emotionally?
- White Hat (Facts) – What information do we have? What do we still need to know?
- Green Hat (Creativity) – What are alternative ideas, solutions, or perspectives?
- Blue Hat (Process/Control) – What is the objective? How are we thinking about the problem?

After cycling through all hats, summarize insights and ideas using the Blue Hat (meta-thinking) to organize and evaluate decisions.



Yellow Hat **Optimism**

What are the benefits?
What's the potential?



Black Hat **Caution**

What could go wrong?
What are the risks?



Red Hat **Emotions**

How do I feel about this,
instinctively or emotionally?



Facts **Facts**

What information do we
have? What do we still
need to know?



Creativity **Creativity**

What are alternative ideas,
solutions, or perspectives?



Process/Control

What is the objective?
How are we thinking
about the problem?



Tool introduced in this session: guidelines for assertive communication in 4 steps.

Observation → feelings → needs → requests

1. When... (something happens)

We describe what happened in an objective way.

2. I feel...

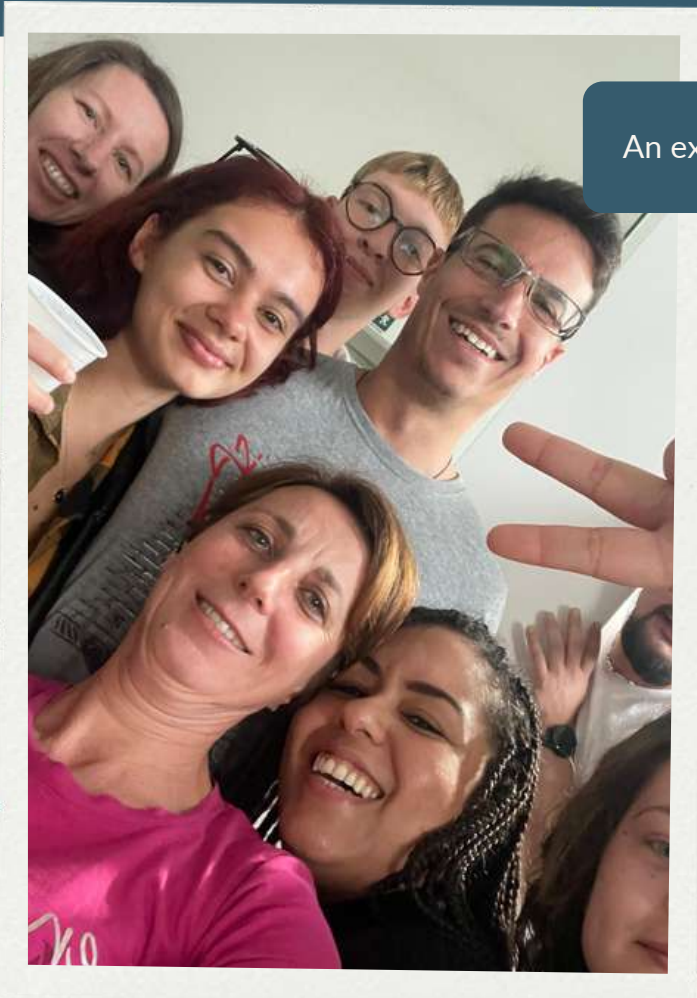
We express our feelings.

3. Because I need...

We explain our needs.

4. So for the next time, what if...

We add a request in the end for the future.



An example of overly enthusiastic participants



Overcoming the emotional abyss - role play on group dynamics

Module: 2 – Communication & conflict management

Duration: 90 minutes

Group size: few act as facilitators, the rest as participants

Materials: scenario cards

Objectives: strengthen youth workers' ability to manage emotional and behavioral challenges in group settings. Practice non-violent and assertive communication in emotionally charged or unbalanced dynamics. Reflect on how different personalities impact facilitation strategies.

Instructions:

1. Split participants into two roles: few of them act as facilitators and will lead a short energizer activity. The rest are participants that will act out assigned behavioral traits in three different rounds:
 - a. First round: rude (disinterested, interrupts, undermines)
 - b. Second round: passive (disconnected, unresponsive, doesn't engage)
 - c. Third round: overly enthusiastic (interrupts, overreacts, distracts)
2. The goal is to maintain composure, keep the group engaged, and respond assertively and inclusively.
3. After feedback and a short debrief, switch roles so everyone tries both perspectives.

Debriefing questions:

- What worked? What didn't?
- How did different personalities challenge the facilitator?
- What responses were most effective in engaging difficult participants?
- Which behaviors were hardest to handle, and why?
- As a facilitator, how did you feel emotionally during the challenge?
- What communication tools helped you stay centered and lead?
- How do you respond to such behaviors in real youth work settings?

Facilitator tips:

Encourage participants to commit to their roles fully, but avoid crossing into disrespectful or harmful territory.

Pause the role-play if a group needs support or feels overwhelmed.

Capture insights on a flipchart titled: "How to lead diverse groups".



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METHODS

FOR DEALING WITH DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARTICIPANTS

① RUDE

- setting limits (in the beginning)
- kill them with kindness $\longleftrightarrow$ instructing
- ask „What do you need?“
- find allies in the group (analyze the group)
- group consequences

② PASSIVE

- teenagers: come close to their interests
- adults: remind them why they're here
- build connection to the group
- energizers
- talk to people individually
- learning agreement, group agreement, rules

③ ACTIVE

- order of talking
- chill activities
- time limits
- assign roles to passive participants to be active



The reward - Tiny olympics

Module: 1 – Self-awareness & leadership

Duration: 90 - 120 minutes

Group size: 3 teams of 6-8 participants

Materials: cones, stopwatches, balls, rope, bar for hanging, whistle, water, score sheets, prizes

Objectives: celebrate progress and boost team spirit after intense reflection and learning. Practice leadership through physical coordination and shared responsibility. Reinforce collaboration, strategy, and fair play in a fun and dynamic way. Provide a “reward moment” that mirrors the Hero’s Journey structure.

Instructions:

1. Divide participants into 3 mixed-nationality teams, balancing energy levels and leadership traits. Allow them to choose a name and cheer for their team.
2. Explain the Spirit of the Games. Emphasize fun, support, and camaraderie over pure competition. The goal is to enjoy and celebrate the group’s collective energy.
3. Organize the challenges (adapt or expand depending on time & materials):
 - a. 200m sprint – one runner per team races, others cheer
 - b. Bar hang – longest time wins, encourage grit and support
 - c. Basketball toss – score points by shooting a ball into a basket
 - d. Balance relay – balance beam race
 - e. Obstacle race – one running up a ladder while the others cheer
4. Use a scoreboard or poster to track points. Optional: simple symbolic medals or certificates.

Debriefing questions:

- What did you notice about how your team worked together?
- Did anyone step into leadership unexpectedly?
- What was your favorite part of the challenge? Why?
- How does it feel to celebrate after several days of work and self-reflection?

Facilitator tips:

Create a hype playlist and play upbeat music throughout

Ensure accessibility for all participants



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Open space - Learning from each other

Module: 4 – Integration & action planning

Duration: 90 - 120 minutes

Group size: full group, divided into self-organized smaller sessions

Materials: projection, flipchart or board to post session proposals, markers, paper, open indoor/outdoor space

Objectives: empower participants to share their knowledge, skills, or interests. Encourage peer-to-peer learning and horizontal facilitation.

Instructions:

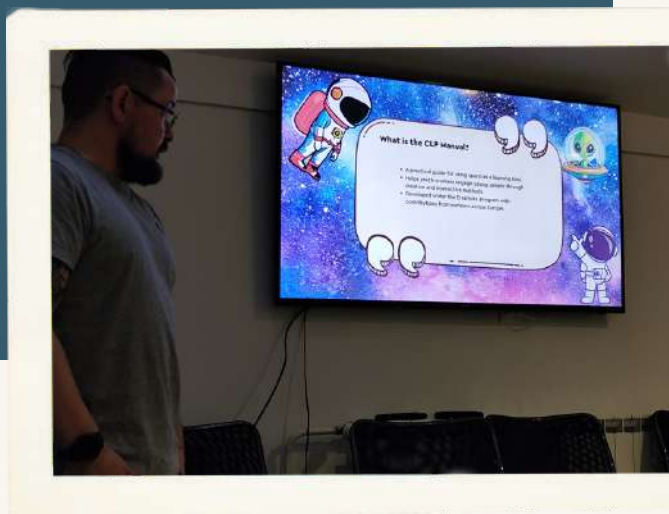
1. Facilitators introduce the method briefly. Anyone can propose a session/workshop/activity. Everyone chooses freely where to go. Participants can move between sessions if they wish
2. Propose & schedule: invite participants to write their session idea (title + short description) on a flipchart or sticky notes. These can be:
 - a. Workshops (e.g., yoga, drawing, storytelling, coaching tips)
 - b. Discussions (e.g., inclusion in youth work, burnout prevention)
 - c. Games or energizers
 - d. Skill-sharing (e.g., journaling, language exchange, cultural activities)
3. Place them into a simple schedule grid (time slots + available locations).
4. Participants split into small groups and attend the sessions they're most interested in. Facilitators stay available in case of technical or space needs but avoid leading – this is the participants' space.

Debriefing questions:

- What did you learn from others during this space?
- How did it feel to lead your own activity?

Facilitator tips:

Reassure those who feel nervous: even a small discussion, game, or movement session is valuable



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Claiming leadership

Module: 3 – Empowering youth to take initiative

Duration: 90 minutes

Group size: full group divided into stakeholder teams (4–6 people each)

Materials: flipchart papers, markers, stakeholder role cards, scenario brief

Objectives: develop participants' leadership voice and active citizenship mindset. Simulate real-life youth-related decision-making processes. Empower youth workers to guide young people in claiming leadership in their own communities.

Instructions:

1. Introduce the Challenge Wall. The participants will brainstorm about realistic youth-related issues.
2. Divide them in smaller groups with the same interest depending on the topics.
3. Each group discusses:
 - a. Core challenge of their topic
 - b. Key stakeholders
 - c. What can youth leaders do?
 - d. What obstacles might raise?
4. Each group presents their position in a 3-minute pitch and responds to questions or challenges from others.

Debriefing questions:

- How can youth claim more space in decision-making in real life?
- What would you do differently as a youth leader in your community?

Facilitator tips:

Ensure every voice is heard, especially those who might not usually speak in group settings

Use the simulation to spark conversations about real-life youth advocacy and civic involvement



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A letter to your (future) self

Module: 4 – Integration & action planning

Duration: 45 minutes

Group size: individual reflective activity (can be shared optionally)

Materials: pens, their notebooks, calming background music, candles or nature setting to create atmosphere

Objectives: encourage deep personal reflection and internalization of learning outcomes. Connect early self-assessment (Wheel of Life) with personal growth across the week. Clarify personal and professional commitments for the future. Create a meaningful, lasting anchor of the experience and transformation.

Instructions:

1. Set a calm, introspective mood using soft background music, candles, or being outdoors. Invite participants to bring their Hero's Notebook or other personal notes.
2. Remind participants of their journey: their starting point (Wheel of Life), the challenges they overcame, the growth they've experienced, their commitments (Claiming leadership)
3. Encourage them to think about:
 - a. What values or goals are they taking with them?
 - b. What do they want to remember in six months? One year?
 - c. What will help them stay on track when motivation fades?
4. Each participant writes a personal letter to their future self, freely and privately. They can include: encouraging words, reminders, and personal truths. Warnings or advice to themselves. Concrete action steps and dreams. A summary of their growth and new perspectives.

Debriefing questions:

- How did it feel to write to yourself?
- What was the most important message you wrote?

Facilitator tips:

Respect emotional safety, make clear that sharing is voluntary

Use this moment to signal the emotional closure of the journey

If combined with a Youthpass session, this letter can complement the recognition of competences



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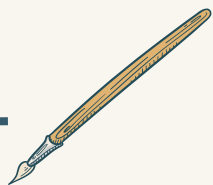


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Testimonies



Why did you decide to attend this training course?

“To meet some different opinions and make different experiences.”

- Participant from Spain



What has been the most interesting discovery?

“The idea that we can actually have similar understanding of topics and methods. Also, to use the nature and environments to work with young people”

- Participant from Finland

What was your favorite session?

“The walk to the waterfall. It was cool to hang out with people and find our way without the use of digital help.”

- Participant from Portugal



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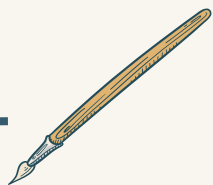


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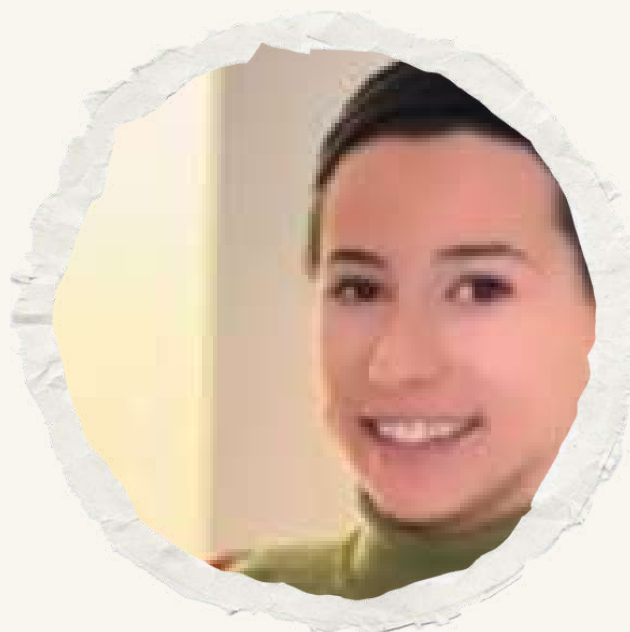
Testimonies



What was your favorite session?

"It's really useful for me that we have some time to just be quiet, until someone wants to participate"

- Participant from Spain



What could be improved in this training course?

"This Training Course could be a little bit longer, because we need to learn a lot of stuff"

- Participant from Portugal



What could be improved in this training course?

"One activity that could be improved, is the roleplay game of facilitators and participants, to come into the role slowly."

- Participant from Croatia



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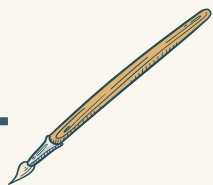


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