



DISCOVER YOUR

STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS



**METHODOLOGY FROM THE ERASMUS+ KA2 PROJECT
“UNLOCKING FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES – UFO”**



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MONITORING PROGRESS & STAYING MOTIVATED



Unlocking
Future
Opportunities

READY?

Discover your strenghts and interests

Beginning your career journey can feel exciting, but it can also stir uncertainty, pressure, or self-doubt—especially if life has placed extra challenges in your path. These feelings are completely normal. Every young person starts from a different place, and every path forward is valid. This guide was created with that in mind. It is designed for young people from all backgrounds, including those who may be navigating personal, social, or emotional hurdles. Its purpose is to support you in understanding yourself, expanding your options, and building a future that feels meaningful and authentic to who you are.

Whether you are only beginning to think about your future—or you already feel stuck, overwhelmed, or unsure about your next steps—this guide offers gentle structure, encouragement, and practical tools. If you are already facing specific challenges, it provides strategies that help you stay grounded, build resilience, and make decisions that align with your wellbeing. At the heart of this guide are values of inclusion, psychological safety, and growth.

Together, we will explore how to strengthen your confidence, recognize your abilities, and create a realistic plan that supports both your goals and your emotional needs. Remember: you do not have to walk this journey alone. Support is available, and each step forward—no matter how small—matters.



Unlocking
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Opportunities

HERE WE GO

Exploring What Makes You You

Your interests, strengths, and dreams offer important clues about the kind of work that may bring you energy and satisfaction. Career exploration isn't about choosing "the perfect job"—it's about getting to know yourself better.

Here are some simple and meaningful ways to start:

- **Use Inspiration Tools:**

Online quizzes like jobtest.org or blossomup.co can help you uncover careers connected to your personality, strengths, or preferences. These tools aren't meant to decide for you—they simply help spark ideas.

- **Reflect on Your Natural Strengths:**

Think about what brings you joy or a sense of competence. Do you enjoy creating? Problem-solving? Caring for others? Every passion and every skill—even small ones—can become part of your path.

- **Ask People You Trust:**

Sometimes others notice qualities in us that we don't see in ourselves.

Talk to friends, teachers, family, mentors, or youth workers. Ask them what strengths they notice in you or what roles they think might suit you.



Unlocking
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Opportunities

HERE WE GO

Exploring What Makes You You

- **Allow Yourself to Dream and Explore:**

Your imagination is a powerful guide.

Whether you're drawn to helping animals, designing games, fixing things, working outdoors, or starting your own business—let curiosity lead the way.

Researching possibilities is the beginning of discovering what resonates with you.



Building Safety & Self Awareness

Objectives:

- Establish emotional safety and group cohesion
- Help youth connect with themselves and the group
- Introduce self-awareness as the foundation of career development
- Begin reflective, narrative-based identity exploration

1. Grounding Exercise

10 minutes

Purpose:

Reduce anxiety, increase presence, regulate nervous system, prepare for deep reflection.



Building Safety & Self Awareness

Script (you can read it aloud):	Optional therapeutic additions:
1. “Sit comfortably... Feel your feet on the floor.” 2. “Take a slow breath in... and exhale gently.” 3. “Notice the weight of your body supported by the chair.” 4. “Bring attention to your breath without changing it.” 5. “Feel your spine lengthening... shoulders softening.” 6. “Imagine you are arriving fully into this moment.” 7. “Choose one intention for today—something small. Hold it gently.”	-Invite participants to place a hand on their heart ('self-connection touch'). -Short check-in: “One word about how you enter the space today.”



Building Safety & Self Awareness

2. Life Map Exercise	35 minutes
Purpose:	To explore meaningful life moments, identity patterns, and experiences that shape strengths and aspirations.
Materials:	Paper (A3), colored pens, stickers, magazines for collage (optional).



Building Safety & Self Awareness

Step-by-step Instructions

Step 1 Introduction (2 min)

Explain the exercise:
“This is not about perfection or making something pretty. It is a way to understand your story, identity, strengths, and turning points.”

Step 2 Drawing the Life Map (20 minutes)

Participants create a visual timeline with:

- Important memories
- Successes
- Challenges overcome
- Moments of pride
- Influential people (positive or negative)
- Emotional turning points
- Early dreams or forgotten interests
- Cultural/family messages about work or success



Building Safety & Self Awareness

Psychological prompts:

- “Which moments shaped who you are today?”
- “Where did you experience growth or resilience?”
- “Which events awakened interests or strengths?”
- “Which parts of your story still influence your choices?”

For participants with difficult histories:

Offer alternatives:

- Focus only on positive events
- Create a “future map” instead
- Use symbols instead of personal details

Therapeutic stance:

Normalize discomfort:

“It’s okay if your map is messy, fragmented, or unclear. Identity is a living process.”



Building Safety & Self Awareness

3. Reflective Sharing in Pairs	25 minutes
Purpose:	To integrate the experience, build trust, and practice articulation of self-awareness.
Step 1 – Pair work (15 min)	Participants share their map with a partner using the following questions:
Sharing questions:	1. “Which moment on your map is meaningful for you?” 2. “What strengths helped you overcome challenges?” 3. “What patterns do you notice in your experiences?” 4. “What values appear in your story?” 5. “What did this exercise help you understand about yourself?”



Building Safety & Self Awareness

Listening guidelines:	• No interrupting • No interpreting or advising • Use empathy: “I hear you... That sounds important.”
Step 2 – Group debrief (10 min)	Invite volunteers to share insights (optional).
Possible questions:	• “What did you notice about telling your story?” • “What surprised you?” • “What did you learn about your strengths from your own story?”
Therapeutic considerations:	• Validate emotions that arise • Encourage self-compassion • Support meaning-making rather than problem-solving • Protect boundaries if someone shares too deeply



Building Safety & Self Awareness

4. Homework: Strengths Worksheet	5 minutes
Introduce the homework:	Give participants the Strengths Worksheet (which you already have in PDF). Explain: “This worksheet helps you identify your personal strengths, emotional resources, and skills. We will use it in Session 2 to explore your values and identity.”
Psychological framing:	• Encourage them to notice: • Strengths used in the past • Emotional intelligence • Resilience • Quiet strengths (listening, empathy, creativity)
Optional challenge for deeper growth:	“Ask a friend or family member what they see as your strengths. It may surprise you.”



Values & identity

Objectives:	• Help youth identify personal values that guide choices • Explore emotional needs that influence career direction • Offer a gentle Gestalt-based exercise to work with the “Inner Critic” • Strengthen self-awareness, agency, and internal permission to grow
1. Values Card Sorting	(30 minutes)
Purpose:	To help participants clarify what truly matters to them and understand how values shape decisions.
Materials:	• Values cards (40–60 cards with words: Creativity, Freedom, Stability, Learning, Friendship, Growth, Adventure, Peace...) • Or printed list of values • A3 paper for grouping cards



Values & identity

Step-by-step Instructions

Step 1 – Introduction (2 min)

Explain values in youth-friendly language:
“Values are the things that matter most to you—your inner compass. They guide choices, relationships, and career direction.”

Step 2 – First Sorting (5 min)

Participants sort all value cards into:

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not important

No overthinking—fast intuitive choices.

Step 3 – Prioritization (10 min)

From the “Very important” pile, youth narrow down to 10 core values. Then reduce again to Top 5.



Values & identity

Reflection prompts:	• “Why do these values matter to you?” • “Where in your life did you learn that this is important?” • “Do these values support your future goals?”
Step 4 – Linking Values to Identity (8 min)	Participants write each value on A3 paper and add: • Examples from their life • Situations where this value guided them • How the value appears in relationships • How this value could shape career choices
Optional psychological invitations:	• Values are often rooted in unmet needs, wounds, or strengths. • You can have values that contradict each other—this is normal. • Exploring values can reveal hidden identity themes.



Values & identity

Group Debrief (5 min)	Ask volunteers: • “Which value surprised you?” • “Which value feels non-negotiable for your future?”
2. Gestalt Exercise: Dialogue with the “Inner Critic”	30 minutes
Purpose:	To help youth recognize self-critical voices, reduce internal shame, and increase self-compassion. This is a gentle, modified version, safe-for-youth workshop.
Materials:	Two chairs (per pair or group of 3), or paper + pens.



Values & identity

Step-by-step Instructions

Step 1 – Psychoeducation (3 min)

Explain in simple terms:

“We all have an Inner Critic—the voice that says, ‘You’re not good enough,’ ‘Don’t fail,’ or ‘Be perfect’.

This exercise helps you understand that this voice is not YOU, but a part of you trying (not always helpfully) to keep you safe.”

Step 2 – Identifying the Inner Critic Messages (5 min)

Youth write down:

- Frequent critical thoughts
- Situations that trigger them
- Emotions that follow

Examples:

- “I’m not smart enough”
- “Other people are better”
- “I will fail”
- “I shouldn’t try”



Values & identity

Step 3 – Chair Dialogue (15 min)	Participants work in pairs or individually (if group is sensitive).
Chair 1 – The Inner Critic:	Sit and speak from the voice of the critic. Prompts: • “You must...” • “You should not...” • “If you try, then...”
Chair 2 – The Self:	Move to the second chair. Respond with openness: • “I hear you.” • “Maybe you’re trying to protect me.” • “What are you afraid would happen if you stop criticizing me?” -The goal is understanding, not fighting.



Values & identity

Step 3 – Chair Dialogue (15 min)	Participants work in pairs or individually (if group is sensitive).
Chair 1 – The Inner Critic:	Sit and speak from the voice of the critic. Prompts: • “You must...” • “You should not...” • “If you try, then...”
Chair 2 – The Self:	Move to the second chair. Respond with openness: • “I hear you.” • “Maybe you’re trying to protect me.” • “What are you afraid would happen if you stop criticizing me?” -The goal is understanding, not fighting.



Values & identity

Therapeutic notes for facilitator:

- Normalize the critic: “This part exists because it once helped you.”
- Prevent overwhelm – keep it light and safe.
- Invite participants to close the exercise gently:
“Thank you for trying to protect me. I will take it from here.”

Step 4 – Integration (7 min)

Prompts for journaling:

- “What does my Inner Critic want for me?”
- “What does my true self need to hear more often?”
- “How can I support myself when the critic appears?”



Values & identity

3. Pair Work: Exploring Emotional Needs	25 minutes
Purpose:	Help youth identify emotional needs essential for choosing fulfilling career paths: • Autonomy • Belonging • Stability • Creativity • Purpose • Recognition • Exploration • Safety
Instructions:	Pairs take turns answering.



Values & identity

Guided Questions (10–12 min each):

1. “What situations help you feel safe and supported?”
2. “When do you feel most alive or true to yourself?”
3. “Which emotional needs, if unmet, cause frustration or anxiety?”
4. “What do you need in future work or life to feel well?”
5. “Which values connect to these needs?”

Integrative Insight (last 3 min)

- Ask participants to identify:
- One emotional need that must be present in their future career
 - One value that supports this need
- Example:
- Need: Autonomy
 - Supporting value: Freedom / Creativity



Values & identity

Suggested Values List (for Card Sorting & Youth Workshops)

1. Personal Growth & Self-Development

- Growth
- Learning
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Self-discipline
- Independence
- Patience
- Self-awareness
- Mindfulness
- Achievement
- Excellence

2. Emotional & Psychological Wellbeing

- Inner peace
- Stability
- Emotional health
- Self-compassion
- Authenticity
- Balance
- Resilience
- Hope
- Joy



Values & identity

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Suggested Values List
(for Card Sorting& Youth Workshops)

3. Relationships & Community

- Family
- Friendship
- Trust
- Love
- Respect
- Belonging
- Empathy
- Kindness
- Cooperation
- Community
- Connection
- Generosity

4. Work & Career

- Responsibility
- Professionalism
- Competence
- Growth mindset
- Innovation
- Ambition
- Purpose
- Contribution
- Leadership
- Reliability
- Quality



Values & identity

Suggested Values List (for Card Sorting & Youth Workshops)

5. Ethics & Morality

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Fairness
- Justice
- Accountability
- Courage
- Transparency
- Humility

6. Freedom & Autonomy

- Freedom
- Autonomy
- Choice
- Flexibility
- Independence
- Adventure
- Exploration



Values & identity

Suggested Values List
(for Card Sorting& Youth Workshops)

7. Lifestyle & Wellbeing

- Health
- Fitness
- Simplicity
- Comfort
- Safety
- Security
- Stability
- Nature
- Sustainability
- Beauty

8. Spirituality & Meaning

- Spirituality
- Faith
- Compassion
- Gratitude
- Purpose
- Transcendence
- Hope
- Service



Values & identity

Suggested Values List
(for Card Sorting & Youth Workshops)

9. Creativity & Expression

- Art
- Music
- Imagination
- Playfulness
- Expression
- Innovation
- Aesthetics

10. Social Impact & Contribution

- Helping others
- Making a difference
- Environmental responsibility
- Advocacy
- Equality
- Human rights
- Solidarity



Values & identity

Additional Suggested Values List
(for Card Sorting& Youth Workshops)

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Setting a Career Vision

Duration:	90 minutes
Focus:	Motivation, future orientation, internal resources, and meaning-making
1. Opening Grounding	5 minutes
Purpose:	Help participants settle, connect with inner motivation, and create a sense of safety.
Script (leader):	“Close your eyes. Take two deep breaths. Imagine your life as a timeline stretching forward... Whatever your future brings, you have inner strengths that will accompany you. Let your breath soften your body and open your imagination.”



Setting a Career Vision

2. Vision Exploration – Imagining the Desired Future	15 minutes
Psychological focus:	mental imagery, narrative identity, hope, and agency.
Instruction:	Ask youth to close their eyes again and guide them through a future-visualization:
Guided Visualization Script:	“Imagine yourself 10 years from now. Where do you wake up? What kind of work are you doing? How do you feel in your body? What skills have you developed? Who are the people around you? What impact are you making on others?” After a minute of silence: “Notice one symbol or image that represents your future. Hold it.”



Setting a Career Vision

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Participants write down:	• 5 keywords describing their future • 1 symbol or metaphor (e.g. a bridge, a mountain, a compass)
3. Career Vision Board	20 minutes
Tools:	magazines, markers, printed images OR digital (Canva, Padlet).
Instruction:	“You will create a visual presentation of your desired future: work, lifestyle, relationships, skills, emotional atmosphere, values. Focus on meaning—what kind of person you want to become.”
Psychological goal:	• coherent self-narrative • externalizing inner images • strengthening motivation and self-concept



Setting a Career Vision

4. Future Self Interview – Pairs	20 minutes
Instructions:	Youth work in pairs. One plays their Future Successful Self (e.g., “Me in 2035”), the other is the interviewer.
Interviewer questions (printable list):	1. “Who are you today in 2035?” 2. “What are you proud of?” 3. “What challenges did you overcome to get here?” 4. “Which values guided your choices?” 5. “How do you support others with your work?” 6. “What advice would you give your younger self sitting here today?” After 10 minutes, partners switch roles.



Setting a Career Vision

Psychotherapeutic elements:	• strengthens agency • reduces inner critic influence through self-compassionate perspective • activates the brain’s motivational systems (anticipatory reward)
5. Translating Vision into Goals	20 minutes
Step 1: Broad Career Goals Each youth writes 3–5 big goals, for example:	• “I want to work with technology and people.” • “I want to feel financially stable.” • “I want a job where I can travel.”



Setting a Career Vision

**Step 2: Break them into
small objectives
Use a SMART template:**

- **S – What exactly do I want to achieve?**
- **M – How will I measure progress?**
- **A – Is this realistic for me now?**
- **R – Why is this important (values)?**
- **T – By when?**

Example:

“Learn basic coding by completing one online course by September.”

Psychological goal:

Transform dreams into manageable actions; reduce overwhelm; foster mastery.



Setting a Career Vision

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6. Identifying Mentors & Role Models	5 minutes
Ask youth to list:	• 2 real-life mentors (teacher, coach, sibling, youth worker) • 2 inspirational figures (from culture, sport, science, etc.) • 1 future mentor they want to find
Reflection:	“What strengths does each mentor mirror in me?”
Therapeutic intention:	Supports attachment needs, belonging, modeling self-efficacy.



Skill Development & Lifelong Learning

Duration:	90 minutes
Focus:	self-efficacy, growth mindset, skill awareness, lifelong learning orientation
1. Opening Grounding: “The Competent Self”	5 minutes
Purpose:	Activate internal confidence and curiosity before exploring skills.
Leader Script:	“Place your feet on the ground. Take a slow breath. Think of a moment where you learned something new and felt proud. That moment shows you that you can grow and change. Today we explore the skills that can shape your future.”



Skill Development & Lifelong Learning

2. Skill Self-Inventory	10 minutes
Tool: YouthPass Competences categories (adapted)	• Communication • Creativity • Problem solving • Teamwork • Digital competences • Learning to learn • Social & civic involvement • Initiative & entrepreneurship • Cultural awareness
Instructions:	Give participants a checklist and ask them to rate each skill on a scale of 1–5: • 1 = “I don’t use this skill yet” • 5 = “This is one of my strengths”
Psychological intention:	Awareness → empowerment; moves youth from “I don’t know” to “I can.”



Skill Development & Lifelong Learning

3. Identifying Skill Gaps	10 minutes
In pairs, participants discuss:	1. Which skills are your strongest? 2. Which skills do you want to improve? 3. Which skills matter most for the career vision you created in Session 3?
Reflection Prompts:	• “Which skills make me feel confident?” • “Which skills cause anxiety or avoidance?” • “What support do I need?”
Therapeutic goal:	Normalize imperfection, reduce shame around “weakness,” and encourage a growth mindset.



Skill Development & Lifelong Learning

4. Soft Skill Training Micro-Workshop

20 minutes

Divide the group into 4 stations.
Each station has a 5-minute micro activity.

Station A: Communication Activity: “One-minute message”

- One youth explains a topic in 60 seconds
- Partner summarizes in 20 seconds

Focus: clarity, listening, empathy.

Station B: Teamwork

- Activity: “Silent task”
- Group must arrange objects (cards, rope, shapes) without speaking
- Focus: non-verbal communication, leadership roles.

Station C: Problem-Solving Activity: “The Marshmallow Challenge (mini version)”

- Small groups try to build a tall structure using paper only

Focus: experimentation, failure tolerance, creativity.

Station D: Creativity Activity: “Alternative uses”

- List as many uses as possible for a random object (paperclip, bottle) in 1 minute

Focus: divergent thinking, flexibility.



Skill Development & Lifelong Learning

5. Digital & Green Skills Exploration	10 minutes
Facilitator Input:	Ask youth to brainstorm skills that matter for the future:
Digital Skills (examples):	• Online collaboration • Basic coding • Digital safety • Social media literacy • Using productivity tools (Canva, Notion, Google Workspace)
Green Skills (examples):	• Recycling practices • Energy awareness • Sustainable decision-making • Environmental responsibility
Quick activity:	“What is one digital skill and one green skill I would like to learn in the next month?”



Skill Development & Lifelong Learning

6. Lifelong Learning Pathways	10 minutes
Short presentation:	“Learning does not stop after school. There are many pathways...”
Options include:	• workshops • online courses (MOOC) • local NGOs • Erasmus+ youth exchanges • volunteering • apprenticeships • mentoring • job shadowing
Task:	Each youth writes a Personal Learning Plan with three steps they will take in the next 3 months.



Skill Development & Lifelong Learning

7. Suggested Activity: Skills Auction	20 minutes
Purpose:	Prioritization, reflection, career awareness
Materials:	• Fake money (each youth gets the same amount) • List of skills for auction • A bell or signal
Example skills to auction:	• Confidence • Time management • Teamwork • Public speaking • Coding • English language • Stress regulation • Leadership • Creativity • Problem-solving • Digital literacy • Emotional intelligence • Environmental awareness Each skill is “sold” to the highest bidder.



Skill Development & Lifelong Learning

Reflection:

- “Which skills did you bid the most for?”
- “Which skills were surprisingly valuable?”
- “What does your choice say about your future path?”

Psychological intention:

Externalizes values, reveals unconscious priorities, supports autonomy and identity development.



Skill Development & Lifelong Learning

8. Homework: Personal Portfolio Starter Page

Youth begin keeping a learning portfolio containing:

- certificates
- workshop reflections
- skill lists
- achievements
- project photos
- volunteering experiences
- short reflections (“what I learned and how I grew”)

– Portfolios boost confidence and help when applying for jobs and Erasmus+ opportunities.



Career Planning & Decision Making

Duration:	90 minutes
Focus:	turning vision into actionable plans, comparing options, dealing with uncertainty, and strengthening decision-making confidence.
1. Grounding – “Standing at the Crossroads”	5 minutes
Purpose:	Reduce anxiety about decisions and activate calm clarity.
Leader Script: “Close your eyes. Imagine you are standing at a crossroads. Each path leads to a possible future. You are not choosing yet—you are simply noticing. Feel your feet on the ground. You are allowed to explore, and you have time. Breathe into the space of possibility.” Psychological intention: Normalize uncertainty, activate agency, reduce decision pressure.	



Career Planning & Decision Making

2. Mapping Career Options	10 minutes
Ask youth to list 3–5 possible career options they are considering. For each option, they write:	• Why is this appealing? • Which skills does it use? • What worries or confuses me?
Therapeutic focus:	Externalize thoughts → reduce overwhelm. Helps youth see choices as information, not threats.
3. Decision-Making Matrix	15 minutes
Participants receive a worksheet with a simple comparison table.	



Career Planning & Decision Making

Example criteria:

- Alignment with values
- Job stability
- Income potential
- Training required
- Personal interest
- Work–life balance
- Growth opportunities

Youth rate each career option from 1–5 for every criterion.

Discussion prompt:

“What surprised you as you compared the options? Did any option become clearer or less appealing?”

Psychological intention:

Improve cognitive clarity and reduce emotional bias.



Career Planning & Decision Making

4. Training & Education Requirements	10 minutes
Participants choose 1–2 potential careers and research or brainstorm:	• required degrees or certificates • available apprenticeships or internships • free online courses (MOOCs) • vocational or non-formal learning pathways • Erasmus+ opportunities
Reflection prompt:	“What steps feel doable now? What support do I need?”
Therapeutic goal:	Shift from helplessness → concrete action.



Career Planning & Decision Making

5. Practical Planning: Finances, Timeline & Milestones	10 minutes
Youth fill in three boxes:	• What will it cost (money, energy, time)? • Who can support me (mentors, teachers, family, youth workers)? • What are the first 3 milestones I want to achieve?
Milestone examples:	• “Register for a course.” • “Update my CV.” • “Talk to someone who works in this field.”



Career Planning & Decision Making

6. Creating a 1–3 Year Action Plan	15 minutes
Participants use a structured template:	Year 1 – Exploration & Foundations • Try courses, volunteering, meetings, job shadowing. Year 2 – Skill Building & Experience • Take training, internships, small jobs, certifications. Year 3 – Transition to Career Path • Applications, interviews, deeper specialization, portfolio.
Add motivational questions:	• “Who will I become during this process?” • “What is one promise I can make to myself today?”



Career Planning & Decision Making

7. Suggested Activity: Three Pathways Exercise

20 minutes

A powerful psychological tool to
reduce fear of “choosing wrong.”

Participants plan three
parallel life routes:

1. SAFE PATH

Stable, predictable, low risk.

Example: “Study a field I’m
comfortable with; get a secure
job locally.”

2. DREAM PATH

If nothing limited you.

Example: “Move abroad, study
my dream subject, work for an
inspiring organization.”

3. CHALLENGE PATH

The path that pushes growth and
courage.

Example: “Take a gap year,
volunteer internationally, build
unique skills.”



Career Planning & Decision Making

Prompts for each path:

- What is exciting here?
- What is scary?
- What skills or support would I need?
- What does success look like on this path?

Sharing in pairs:

“What did you learn about yourself from comparing these three paths?”

Psychotherapeutic purpose:

Reduce binary thinking, open creativity, increase resilience and flexibility.



Career Planning & Decision Making

8. Homework: Mentorship Meeting

Each youth schedules one conversation with a mentor (teacher, youth worker, relative, or professional).

They bring three questions, for example:

- “What skills do you think I should develop?”
- “What would you do in my place?”
- “What opportunities am I not noticing?”

This builds relational support and confidence.



Gaining Experience

Duration:	90 minutes
Focus:	Helping youth understand the importance of hands-on learning and identify paths for gaining meaningful experience.
1. Opening Grounding Exercise	5 minutes
Purpose:	Center participants, reduce social anxiety, and prepare them for sharing personal experiences.



Gaining Experience

Instructions:	1. Ask participants to sit comfortably and close their eyes. 2. Guide them through a brief body scan. 3. Invite them to recall one situation where they felt useful, capable, or helpful. 4. End with a deep breath and eyes open.
2. Warm-Up: “My First Experience”	10 minutes
Method:	Pair sharing
Purpose:	Activate memory of past successes and establish rapport.



Gaining Experience

Prompt:	“Tell your partner about the first time you helped someone, contributed to a group, or learned a skill outside school.”
Psychological framing:	This activates self-efficacy, reminding young people of their ability to grow through action.
3. Mini-Input: What Counts as Experience?	10 minutes
Use a flipchart or slides.	



Gaining Experience

Examples include:	• Voluntary work • Erasmus+ Youth Exchanges & Training Courses • European Solidarity Corps (ESC) • Local youth center activities • Community initiatives (environmental clean-ups, peer support groups) • Informal responsibilities (helping siblings, family tasks) • Job shadowing • Student projects • Online courses with practical work
Therapeutic angle:	Normalize “small experiences” to reduce shame, comparison, or feelings of inadequacy.



Gaining Experience

4. Activity: The Experience Web	15 minutes
Materials:	Markers + A4 sheets
Steps:	1. Each participant draws a large circle (self). 2. Around it, they draw lines connecting to any experience they already have. 3. For each experience, they add: • What I did • What skill I used • How I felt
Sharing:	In groups of 3, youth explain their webs.
Insight:	Makes invisible experiences visible and strengthens internal validation.



Gaining Experience

5. Main Activity: Experience Marketplace	25 minutes
Purpose:	Reflection, peer learning, confidence building
Steps:	1. Set up the room like a small marketplace (stations or circles). 2. Each participant chooses one experience (volunteering, school project, internship, helping at home). 3. On a card, they write: • What I did • What skill I gained • Why it mattered to me 4. Participants “visit” each other’s stands and ask: • What did you learn about yourself? • What was challenging? • What surprised you?



Gaining Experience

Reflection Questions (psychology-focused):	• Which experience made you feel most alive? • Which one grew your confidence? • Where did you face fear—and overcome it? • What skill were you using that you didn’t realise at the time?
Activity: My Experience Roadmap	15 minutes
Purpose:	Turn ideas into action.



Gaining Experience

Steps:

Participants choose one new experience they want to gain in the next 3 months.

They fill in:

- I want to try...
 - Because I want to grow in...
 - The first small step I can take is...
 - Who can support me...
 - When I will start...
- Encourage realistic, small, doable steps.

7. Closing Circle

5 minutes

Ask each participant:

“One experience I want to gain next is...”
This reinforces commitment.



Job-Readiness Skills

Duration:	90 minutes
Goal:	Equip youth with practical tools and confidence to enter the labour market.
1. Opening Exercise: Power Posture & Confidence Breath	5 minutes
Purpose:	Reduce anxiety and activate inner confidence before job-readiness work.
Instructions:	1. Stand feet shoulder-width apart, hands on hips (power posture). 2. Three slow breaths: inhale confidence, exhale fear. 3. Brief reflection: “What strengths do I bring into the workplace?”



Job-Readiness Skills

2. Mini-Input: What Employers Really Look For	10 minutes
Flipchart or slide list:	• Reliability • Communication • Teamwork • Professional etiquette • Initiative • Digital literacy • Adaptability • Emotional intelligence • Motivation
Therapeutic angle:	Normalize that many strengths are learned, not innate—reduces shame and comparison.



Job-Readiness Skills

3. Activity: CV Strength Mining	15 minutes
Pairs or small groups	Participants read each other's CV drafts or brainstorm from zero.
Guiding Questions:	• What strengths do you hear in the other person's story? • What experiences show professionalism? • What qualities aren't mentioned but should be?
This reinforces self-esteem and helps youth articulate their value.	



Job-Readiness Skills

4. Workshop: Writing a Motivation Letter	15 minutes
Structure to teach:	1. Introduction – Who am I + why here 2. Why this role/organisation 3. Why I am the right candidate 4. Conclusion + thanks
Therapeutic tip:	Tell them to speak from authentic self, not performance self.
Participants write 1 paragraph and receive peer feedback.	



Job-Readiness Skills

5. Digital Presence Building	10 minutes
Participants choose:	• LinkedIn profile • Portfolio • Online CV • Simple personal website
Prompt:	“What do I want the internet to say about me as a professional?”
Small group sharing.	



Job-Readiness Skills

6. Main Activity: Speed Interviews	20 minutes
Setup:	Chairs in two facing rows. 3-minute interviews, then rotate.
Possible questions:	• “Tell me about yourself.” • “What motivates you?” • “Describe a challenge and how you solved it.” • “Why should we hire you?”
Reflection:	• What felt strong? • What made you nervous? • What surprised you?
Encourages desensitisation to interview anxiety.	



Job-Readiness Skills

7. Closing Circle: One Skill I Want to Strengthen	5 minutes
Setup:	Each participant shares 1 concrete job-readiness skill to develop next.



Monitoring Progress & Staying Motivated

Duration:	90 minutes
Goal:	Help youth maintain momentum in their career development through structure, reflection, and psychological resilience.
1. Opening Mindfulness: Tracking My Inner Weather	5 minutes
Purpose:	Strengthen emotional awareness.
Participants close eyes and notice:	• Energy level (0–10) • Motivation (0–10) • Stress level (0–10)
They record the scores this creates a baseline for self-monitoring.	



Monitoring Progress & Staying Motivated

2. Mini-Input: Career Growth = Cycles, Not Straight Lines	10 minutes
Flipchart visual:	Growth Cycle: Exploration → Learning → Action → Evaluation → Adjustment Normalize setbacks, uncertainty, and pauses.
3. Activity: Monthly Check-In Mapping	15 minutes
Participants fill a 1-page monthly reflection map:	• What did I learn this month? • What small wins happened? • What challenges showed up? • What will I adjust next month? • Who can support me?
Psychological approach:	reduces shame and increases agency
Pair sharing to reinforce accountability.	



Monitoring Progress & Staying Motivated

4. The Achievement Jar Activity	20 minutes
Each participant receives:	• A paper cup or jar • Small coloured slips of paper
Instructions:	1. Write achievements (tiny or big) on slips: • “I sent an email I was scared to write.” • “I asked for help.” • “I completed a course.” 2. Fill their jar. 3. Once a month, review the slips.
Therapeutic angle:	Builds self-worth, counters negativity bias, strengthens long-term motivation.



Monitoring Progress & Staying Motivated

5. Peer Support Circles

20 minutes

Triads sit together.
Each person shares:

- One current challenge
- One goal for the next 30 days
- One thing they are proud of

Peers respond with:

- Validation
- A helpful question (not advice)
- A reflection of strengths they observe

Trains empathy, resilience, and interpersonal support.



Monitoring Progress & Staying Motivated

**6. Closing Ritual:
Commitment to Growth**

5 minutes

**Participants stand in a
circle. Each says:**

**“One step I commit to taking in
the next 7 days is...”**

Reinforces psychological ownership.



The illustration features four landmarks, one from each of the partner countries in the UFO project: Portugal, North Macedonia, Slovenia and Germany. Can you name the landmarks?





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