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Learning journal

A personal journal to record learning



Aims

- To keep track of what you learn
- To give words to what you have learnt
- To reflect on your learning by writing



Group

- Any



Needs

- Notebook or diary for each participant



Time

- Varies



Step by step

A learning journal can have different formats and can be used in a variety of ways. The main idea is to give learners a tool to describe their learning and how they have learnt. The greatest value in writing a journal is the fact that you sit down, think about what you have experienced and give words to it. It helps you become aware of what you have learnt.

Another benefit of keeping track of your learning is that you can refer back to previous experiences and thoughts. It is a good way of remembering your learning. A learning journal can be daily, weekly or related to different events. But it definitely helps to have a rhythm.

The learning journal can be a nice-looking notebook that you give to participants at the beginning of the project. People can carry their journals with them during the activities, make notes and use those notes when talking to their peers.

It is also possible to invite learners to write their journal online, as a personal blog. A blog can be kept strictly personal, or the participants can invite a selected group of readers, or they can share their learning with the whole world (public blog).

Give participants time and space in the project to write in their learning journal. You could, for example, set aside half an hour at the end of each training day to write down learning thoughts. It is important to emphasise the importance of this individual reflection.

Identifying & documenting

Describing outcomes

Introducing Youthpass

Role of facilitator

**Adaption**

- People with limited linguistic skills or educational difficulties can express themselves by means of other media such as drawings, collages, pictures, etc.
- Young people with visual impairments can use electronic tools to write down and read back their learning reflections.
- The activity can be adapted or used in almost any context. It can also be translated into different languages or turned into an online application or blog.

**Tips**

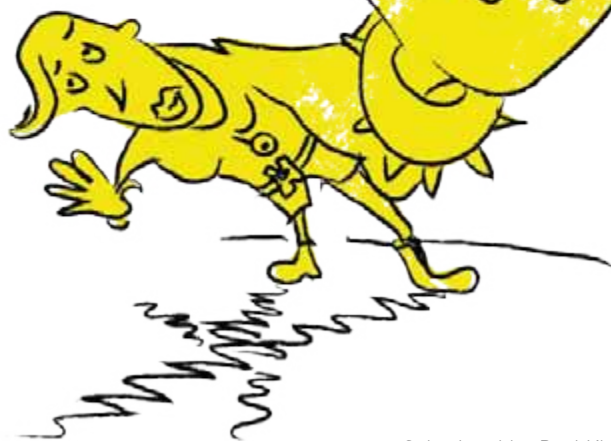
- Give participants the time and material to personalise their journals (e.g. different colours, types, decorations). That way, it becomes their own tool and you avoid mix-ups.
- Give tips and questions to start off the reflection and paste them into the first page of each journal.
- Encourage participants to use the journal when discussing their learning with peers.
- You can also use peer-reflection, where two or more participants reflect on their learning in pairs or in small groups. The journal can be an excellent tool for exchanging ideas and supporting each other's learning reflections.



Handouts

Your personal learning journal

(can be glued into the first page
of the learning journal)



Submitted by Paul Kloosterman and Darko Markovic

Hi,

I am your personal learning journal and I am at your service. My purpose is to help you support and document your own learning during this training course/EVS project/ youth exchange/youth initiative.

However, it is up to you to find your own way to use me. You may take notes, doodle and draw, stick interesting pictures in, write your reflections, share thoughts and insights etc.

Experience shows that people might struggle with how to start these reflections and what to write in a learning diary. So, a suggestion would be to finish some of the unfinished sentences below:

- Today I have discovered...
- Now I understand...
- I feel more confident about...
- The "AHA!" moment was...
- The new question that appeared was...
- I need to research more about...

Or perhaps you may wish to reflect on your own learning process and yourself as a learner, using some of the suggestions below:

- The way I prefer to learn is...
- I am passionate about learning when...
- The way I sabotage myself in the learning process is...
- In my learning process, other people can help me with...
- I support others in their learning processes by...
- What I have learnt about learning is...

Good luck and have fun!