

# "DESIGN YOURSELF" TEST PHASE REPORT



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The project is hosted by ARTE EGO Foundation in Poland, and Grenz Kultur in Germany.  
Co-financed by Erasmus+ Youth in Action.



# DESIGN YOURSELF

## EDUACTIONAL MODEL

### REPORT FORM THE TEST PHASE IN POLAND AND IN GERMANY



Creating something with our own hands makes us mindful. We believe that handcraft and self-expression in cloth design stimulate more independent work and creativity in society. Nowadays, people are already restricted in handmade activities shaped by the market: it's easier to take than to make. That's why we would like to invite you to join a community that does exactly the opposite: make first, take later.

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## CONTEXT AND AIM OF RESEARCH

This research was an activity aiming at documentation and evaluation of the test phase of Design Yourself Educational Model (DYEM), so that the results of this research could be used in our final publication - Design Yourself Kit for youth workers and educators. We have invited several creative handcrafters in Berlin (Germany) and in Łódź (Poland) through an open call to participate in the Design Yourself Project and contribute with a workshop offer to the virtual platform [designyourself.space](https://designyourself.space). Based on that various range of offers we collected:

In Berlin: jewelry making, upcycling clothes, making a hoodie, creating own handmade lingerie, a workshop on creativity and self expression, an open sewing jam, an offer to do beards from wool and a self development workshop.

In Łódź: making jewelry, dream catchers, designing and sewing own bags, printing cloth, make-up workshops, dread/ dreadlocks making, henna tattoos, knitting, crocheting and felting.

The research activity consisted not only on interviewing participants of the project in all phases of DYEM but also at the same time supporting them in their learning process through guiding questions and coaching support to evaluate what works well and what could be improved. In this way, this action research on self-development of participants both in Łódź and Berlin constituted the integral part of all test phase activities.

During the practical implementation of our project it turned out that our creative handcrafters - called in our project "masters" - are to the large extent also young people, who through participation in Design Yourself project developed especially in area of facilitating learning of youth. Thus, both Polish and German action researchers decided to interview also masters to investigate how this way of working with young people was beneficial for them.

It is important to add that the basis for this research constituted another Design Yourself project activity- Design Yourself Craft Consumption Study / Design Yourself Research focusing on how young people in Poland and Germany express themselves through their clothing style and how this is related to their pro-activity in various aspects of their life. The results of both qualitative and quantitative part gave a lot of directions for the test phase and this action research.

### **Methodology of the test phase research in Poland:**

Participants met with the project coordinator in Łódź before the test phase started to be introduced with all phases and the learning process of the Design Yourself project. They were also interviewed by the researcher about their motivation and how they have been already expressing themselves through their clothes/accessories. The next step was the first individual coaching session in which participants could recognize more their creative potential and what part of themselves (passions, personality, dreams, strong sides, values, etc) they would like to express manually. Participants were also invited to explore the DY platform [designyourself.space](https://designyourself.space) by themselves and make their final choice which workshops they would like to join. After this part all participants met on skype with the learning facilitator/researcher about the process and the outcomes of the coaching session as well as making the choice of workshops

using the platform. They received also Design Yourself Learning Support Manual introducing them into the area of key competences and self-directed learning process. They were encouraged to use the guiding questions to reflect on and evaluate their learning process and outcomes. Next steps of the test phase were craft workshops with the masters, focusing on gaining practical skills and actually producing the clothes, accessories and make-up with own hands. This part was also supported by the coach and researcher who made an interview with each participant. The craftsmen also participated in research before and after the workshops they conducted in order to evaluate their learning process. At the end of the project there was a meeting for participants and craftsmen to further integrate, to give the certificates and to share the results of workshops.

### **Methodology of the test phase research in Germany:**

Participants were invited to take part in a preparation session with the coach which at the same time gave them the overview about the flow of the methodology. It also supported their reflection towards the field of interest they wanted to develop by taking part in the workshop. Participants were encouraged to explore the DY platform [designyourself.space](http://designyourself.space) by themselves and make their final choice which workshops they would like to join.

During the pilot phase participants took part in the workshop and tried to document their work to show later on the learning blog on the project webpage [designyourself.info](http://designyourself.info)

After the week of workshops the participants were asked to respond to a questionnaire and also invite to a meeting to reflect their experience with a coach.

Also the handcrafter were invited to respond to a evaluation questionnaire and had a visit to speak with the coach about the experiences and their reflection.

### **General conclusions**

Both in Germany and Poland there was a big appreciation of the experience which have been made on both sides: learners and masters. The opportunity to have workshops taking place in the creative studios of the handcrafter offered an intimate feeling of connection and trust. The workshops were addressed very individually according to the needs and wishes of the learner and this was highly appreciated by the learners. The masters also highlighted the fact they could build their workshops on the motivation and interest of the young people choosing what they liked to explore and create together.

The platform was evaluated as very inspiring tool but still with some elements need to be developed further to make it more user's friendly also for people with less IT skills.

The wish to continue with the project on a wider scale was expressed by all actors involved.

## PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

There were 16 participants of the test phase of DYEM: 8 in Berlin and 8 in Łódź. The criteria to make the final selection was based on the expressed motivation and the ability to participate during the pilot phase in 8 hours of creative workshops, a preparation meeting and a final evaluation with the support of a coach. Every participant was also encouraged to register on the DY platform.

### POLAND:

There were young people between 17 and 27 years old. They joined the project through various ways - mostly by applying through our facebook /internet page or were recruited by cooperating institutions, such as Daily Therapeutic Centre for Youth "Imbryk" in Łódź (3 participants). Moreover, one participant was currently unemployed, one was a migrant from Georgia, one was a university student and the rest were high school students (17 -18 years old). There were all female participants, with one male translation assistant for the Georgian participant.

### GERMANY:

The recruitment of the participants was made based on an open call, which was addressed to the young people active within the Cabuwazi Circus environment and also around. We tried to have a balance within the gender and the nationalities of the participants, to give also people a chance to participate who come to live in Berlin from another country. So we made invitation for participants with the refugee community and among foreigners in Berlin. So finally we had 4 young people from Berlin and 4 with a migration background. Only to ensure the gender background was a challenge, finally only one male participant was motivated to join. What is more, most of the participants were experiencing difficulties on the labour market, and two girls were coming from disadvantage family backgrounds .

## PHASE ONE: MOTIVATION TO JOIN THE PROJECT AND SELF-AWARENESS

The first phase of the project be the assessment of the needs of the young people, following the question what do they need to express towards their surrounding/ society/mates, how they have been already expressing themselves through clothes and accessories and why they decided to join the project. This reflection process was facilitated by the learning expert together with the coach.

### POLAND:

The motivation articulated by participants of the test phase of DYEM shows that there are several reasons and impulses for young people to take part in these activities, some related closely to self-awareness and self-expression:

*I was told about this project by a friend already some time ago but I actually I have decided recently to participate in it. **Maybe the reason is that now I'm in such a time in my life in which I really need it. Now I'm in the moment of my self-development and waiting for a change in my life.** I'm working on myself now, I finally have time to get deeper into myself, to participate in some workshops, to get to know myself better, to change some of my "wrong" behaviours...and it makes me feel really well.*

***I wanted to try something new, to get some new skill. I was thinking to find my own style. I think that is natural that if we put something on ourselves we want to tell the world something about us. I care about the details and I try not to distinguish at any price...what really matters for me are the details such as jewellery, accessories, so that it is subtle. I feel well in my clothes. I feel that I'm dressed not disguised. That it is mine. My style refers to the "icons" like Audrey Hepburn or Coco Chanel who appeal to me in a way that I want to take something from them to myself. I usually buy this accessories and then I try to combine them or use them in a unique way - for example with my hair.***

***My friend is coordinator of this project in Łódź and motivated me. At the same time I wanted to do something for myself. I work a lot and I do a lot for the other people so I wanted to focus on myself for a moment. I didn't have time for it until now. I dress usually to feel comfortable rather than to express something. So far I was not really expressing myself manually and I believe that I'm not good at it. That's why I chose workshops that seem not too difficult. In my free time I'm volunteering in the hospice. Recently I have initiated workshops of making felt bags but I did not managed to create my own bad. I was just too busy with helping the kids. So that's why I participate in this workshop. To make something for myself. Although I have the materials needed to make a felt bag at home it would take a long time to actually make it happen. Thanks to the workshops I will be "forced" to find time and space for it.***

***I learnt about this project from my friend who invited me to join it. I thought " I can learn something new, get new skills, meet new people." Besides the topic seemed extremely interesting to me: linking manual activities like designing, sewing, doing make-up with self-expression. I was always looking for unusual clothes not to show off but to express myself by what I wear. Although I have never tried to transform clothes by myself I always wanted to learn and I would like to start now. I miss some courage and manual skills but I have a lot of ideas already:-) I would like to cut some dresses in an interesting way or I also have some ideas for the jeans jackets - how to transform them. But I have never done it. I was also a bit afraid of trying for the first time, of damaging something.***

***I wanted to meet with people who are artists and I wanted to make something with my own hands. My boyfriend told me about this project and I was very happy to take part in it. But my boyfriend is not interested at all in this kind of project, he is far away from "design yourself" idea. As for me, many years ago I tried to make some jewellery, but I'm a bit lazy maybe to make it more... One of the best thing if you make clothes or accessories by yourself is when somebody ask you: "where did you buy this?" and I can say "I did it myself". It feels great:-) For me colours are the most important. My favourite one is blue. I also like red and actually also all other colours except from black. I have not a single black thing -even no black shoes!***

***I was looking for something new, how to express myself, my style, my emotions, my feelings. I like to wear black clothes - but no in an ordinary way. I always try to combine them like nobody else in the street is dressed. I like to be different, no to be part of the crowd. I feel more self-confident and happy when I wearing those things. That's why I wanted to take part in this project.***

***I was attracted by the fashion design. I'm interested in it a lot. I express myself by dressing differently from the others. Some unique clothes with unusual prints like dress with the pattern***

*representing ravens or something like this. I find them in shops - I hate boredom. When I wear my clothes I feel good and somehow stronger. I like to draw, to paint in my free time and I find this project very interesting.*

***A friend told me about this possibility and when I started to think about it I found this interesting. I have never expressed myself manually through my clothes. I usually choose my clothes in grey, white and black colours. It is important for me. If I had a chance I would like to make a dress by myself. Although during this project I would like to make a bag. I like bags, I always did.***

## **GERMANY:**

The motivation of the young people was mainly concentrated around the topics of:

- Learning something new, challenge myself
- experience some practical workshop to create a concrete outcome
- get to know inspiring handcrafters and a new technique to create
- find out more about myself and what I would like to do in my life
- have an inspiring workshop experience
- develop a skill, interest further, have an opportunity for breaking the routine of the everyday life
- just being open for something new

some quotes:

*I was always interested in fashion, but had till now never the chance to create it with my own hand, this project gives me a chance to try out some concrete skills and create something which i can use in the future.*

*I was curious how it is possible to make some fashion with my own hands and to get to know people who made their living based on a creative expression.*

*The opportunity to do something creative and to learn in this practical way made me motivated to join that project.*

*I had already some experiences in doing this or that with my own clothes, but here i got a great opportunity to learn from some real professionals and get inspiration for new directions of creation.*

## **PHASE TWO: PRACTICE**

The second part of the test phase was based on the development of practical competences to design and create own cloth items. This was mainly achieved during practical experience of participants in creative working spaces, where the participants in could learn how to use different techniques to create own fashion. This phase also revealed the ways participants prefer to learn (so that it is safe, enjoyable and effective for them) and beside practical skills developed learning to learn competence. The outcomes of this phase are presented below:

## **POLAND:**

*After the meeting with the Design Yourself coach and psychotherapist - I decided I would like to participate in the jewellery workshop to make some kind of amulet.*

*I got mostly interested by make-up and workshops focusing on hair, like dreadlocks. I think I could use it in the future, to make somebody dreadlocks. I like to learn most by experience, by practicing things and not reading about them. That's why I think such projects create a good chance to learn this way. What is important is the teacher or master who already has some skills and is ready to share with the others. From my side I'm open for the new experience and try to follow the teacher's instructions.*

*I chose printing on bags and make-up. We usually learn the make-up by experimenting by ourselves in front of the mirror and I thought it would be interesting and useful to learn from somebody else. Bags seem quite easy to do...When we sign up for something it is easier to finally try because you need to get to the workshop and try. By yourself you need to be really motivated to start. With the workshops it is just easier to start actually doing something, especially when you make the appointments with the masters. If someone more experienced is able to show us how to do the things, to support us it makes it much easier to learn new things. I like to learn these things by imitating the master, repeating some activities.*

*I have chosen fashion design and make-up. I hope that after the fashion design workshops I will move from the desire to do something to the concrete action and final product. As for make-up workshop I was just pragmatic :-) I'm curious to learn something new, I think that make-up an important form of a self-expression, especially for a young girl. I like to learn when I'm invited to express myself freely and when I have a possibility to get involved. On the other hand I like to know that somebody support me, that I can ask questions. I don't like the situation when the teacher is speaking and learners are listening or taking notes. I very much enjoy learning by doing as I believe that we learn best by practicing. And I like to learn in interaction with other people.*

*I chose fashion design and henna tattoos. I wanted to try it in the past but I had never a chance so far. So I got interested by this.*

*It seems to me that the "masters" are in the beginning a bit stressed to run workshops. But just in the first moments. Because when they understood that I came here to learn something new, to make the things I would like to have but at the same time I was not expecting professionally prepared workshop. Although I'm already quite experienced in manual self-expression for me the greatest joy was to be in her atelier, to see how she is making bags, what kind of "tricks" she have - of course up to the point she feel free with this:-) So to realize my intention, my ideas using her potential- both personal and "material".*

*Although I took something for myself from both - making the dream-catcher gave me a lot of unexpected joy and relaxation. I was so focused on myself and the work I was doing that could not realize what was happening around me. And it was something that I actually expected from this project - to have the time only for myself: a couple of minutes, half an hour, an hour or three, just as*

*much as I need. And I got it. Of course I've also learnt how to make such a dream-catcher and now I'm able to do it, but this concentration on myself was the most important experience for me.*

*What is more I discovered that I can be patient. Because usually I'm not. While making dream catcher I was patient. I discovered that I need to find more time for myself in my life. When I heard that I would be not able to make the things I expected during this workshop (because there was no material) I wanted to do another thing but to finish as soon as possible. In fact I was sitting there focused on the work and on myself for three hours and I even wanted more!*

*The process of learning was very nice. One girl was interested by Georgia, we were communicating in English and listening to the Georgian music.*

*What I liked the most from this process was contact with people and the way they were sharing their knowledge and skills - so different to that in school! The masters don't have this formal authority, they talked with me a lot and I could learn in an efficient and enjoyable way.*

## **GERMANY:**

**How do You enjoy the workshops? What have You learned? What would make your learning better?**

**Some general conclusions from reflections of the participants:**

- the learning of some new skill around the fashion design went hand in hand with reflection about the personal development. The participants made very clear a link that through the creative process they got some inspiration for their wider life context.
- The workshop were evaluated as inspiring and useful, because they had a concrete aim and outcome, build on the personal interest and followed the ideas of the participants and had a very supportive guidance from the master
- The personal learning process of the young people was stimulated though a supportive attitude the masters which was making a connection between the creation of the items and the question what and how this should reflect the feelings and ideas of the learners.
- Another aspect which stimulated the personal growth though the workshop was connected to the creation as such, it seems that the creative expression stimulates an opening towards the inner self and make the learner open to reflect about themselves

**Some quotes:**

*the learning was very practical and concrete, I wanted to make my product what motivates me to find out how to do it, this learning by doing it is the best way to learn*

*the way how the master was guiding me through the process opened a lot of new insights form and, not just about how to be creative but also about what I want in my life. This was exactly what I needed now*

*learning in this personal and creative dialogue helped me a lot to trust and open for this process, great way to learn without the feeling to be pushed but more to be invited for a journey to explore new inspiration*

## **How do You evaluate the platform design yourself.space ? What is working well, what would You change and how?**

*It would be great to make it more clear who is able to participate in the courses. Can anyone participate or do you need to fill specific requirements? Like age/student/income/background .. ?*

*Unfortunately I found out about the project quite late in January and didn't have the necessary time to engage so much with the platform. I believe it can be a functional tool to bring together artists that are offering workshops with the youth who are looking for workshops.*

*It was very complicated, to find the way how to upload a new workshop. It was not possible to connect our space which we have described on the platform with the space for the workshop, it doesn't appear as an option during the description process.*

*The social competences are interesting, but the language sounds more like a specific language for non-formal learning not so much a youth friendly language.*

*We like very much the potential of the portal, it can support the direct connection between the workshop offering handcrafters and the ones who want to be creative. This makes it much more easy to coordinate and promote the workshops, of course it needs a bigger recognition and visibility, so more promotion would be needed and also connection to people which could use it.*

## **PHASE THREE: PRODUCTION**

The third phase invited participants to produce manually their own style elements with the inspiration gained through the reflection process. This process was facilitated by the craft entrepreneurs visited in their work places. Below we present the outcomes of the research in reference to the workshops space, individual form of the practice, following the needs of participants and making the human "connection" with them.

### **POLAND**

**WORKSHOP SPACE is very important.**

**Participants were inspired and motivated by the workshops spaces in "professional ateliers", especially during the workshops with special machines/equipment. Although the master's private flat it was also very nice and supportive learning space if the workshop did not involved any professional or special equipment/ technology.**

*What I liked the most? I think the spaces, their studios that are both in "Art Incubator "which is a great place! In Olka's studio there were a lot of tissues with different textures on the wall, I was inspired while touching them. And I loved the pillows. I was amazing.*

*I'm sewing my bags at home with a simple sewing machine while during the workshop I could use professional industrial machines, special knives to cut the material, etc. And at home I'm dealing with thinner tissue. Here I was given a thick nice felt and thought me how to use the industrial machine. And I could use this professional atelier. So it was exactly what I wanted. It was quite difficult to use the industrial sewing machine but I liked it a lot and I would like to continue to practice to be able to sew like this in my future.*

*Although I really enjoyed being in professional workshop space to make bags, I also liked the private workshop space at home to make dream-catcher. For the latter we did not need any special equipment so the fact that it was in the master's flat did not influence negatively my learning experience.*

*I was surprised that both craftsmen I chose didn't have their own working spaces like ateliers. Then I was told that I chose those without:-) It would be strange for me to meet in a cafe or another public space - I would not feel comfortable I suppose. So we decided to meet in Patrycja's flat to make the dream catcher and in my flat for make-up. In Patrycja's place was very nice, she baked cookies and I liked working in her flat a lot. We were talking, I was asking questions about her passions, and I also have a possibility to focus on myself*

*I would prefer to have workshop in the master's ateliers or flat, not in my flat. Because Natalia did not take all the accessories as it was too difficult for her to carry everything with her.*

#### **LEARNING PROCESS- PRODUCTION**

**It is crucial that participants learn and produce the results BY OWN HANDS. It is really effective and enjoyable. It supports the idea of the project that everyone is a creator and it is recognized by both sides.**

*They were explaining me what to do step by step. They were watching me and asking whether I needed some help.*

*I liked the way I was learning the dream catcher: we were doing our works simultaneously and if I didn't know how or I was lost Patrycja was explaining me or showing it on hers. And she was not touching mine: I had to do all only by myself.*

*From the workshops I learnt how to die and make some abstraction on material. It was very nice when I showed two scarves to my friend she asked: "Can you make the same for me?" And I answered "Yes, we can make it together". Because now I know the techniques and I can make it by my own. With Bagabaga I made a great bag and I know how to make another one. And my sister asked me: "Can you make the same for me?" And I said "Yes, we can make it together". I'm really happy. I'm now able to make such great things with my own hands! I'm really happy that I have participated in this project.*

*I have learnt how to do it because I was doing it by my own. It was not that she was putting make-up on me. Natalia was doing one on her face showing me how to do it, and I was following her making my own make-up. And we made it twice so I could really learn it step by step. It worked a lot for me and I started already to make it on the daily basis for myself. I learnt really a lot of things: starting from which cosmetics and accessories I need and how to buy them - what to check, to pure practical*

*skills and tricks. Big and small things I didn't know before. Very interesting and useful. When Natalia was telling me all those things in the beginning she was trying to incorporate the issues that was interesting for other participants she had met before me. And she was open for my questions*

*Dream catchers: I have learnt how to make them as well as about their history - what it is and why. I also learnt some more about making jewelry in general, because the girl leading the workshop had some equipment for making it and explained me how to use various elements, how to connect etc. I very satisfied with the result, I created the dream catcher which I exactly wanted to have and now it has already became the part of my life. I liked a lot the way Partycja worked with me.*

*Bags: Although I make bags myself I learnt a lot of new things. For the first time in my life I was working with this kind of tissue and the equipment(...)*

*So because of this quite long theoretical part the practical part was shorter and I would prefer to make the theory short and the practice long. Maybe I expected too much that I will learn a lot in a short time? And at the beginning I didn't say that I want it this way- I was open for the proposal of the workshop leader. I tried to make it shorter by communicating if I already knew about something. So if I could I would take more hours of make-up. Because now I could do it only if somebody would sit next to me and tell me exactly what to do. I would not be able to make it again all by myself. On the other hand the dream-catcher I could do now by myself. Even I plan to do it again with the children I work:-)*

*What worked very well for me was that we were creating the things at the same time so I could learn and also compare my progress and results with those of a craftsmen.*

*I participated in two workshops. During the make-up workshop I have learned a lot of practical and useful things concerning application of make-up, use of various "tools" and ways of expression. I also chose henna tattoo workshop although I had not known anything about it before. I turned to be a great fun. I thought that it would be time consuming and difficult but actually for me it was fun and I learned how to do it. To be honest I doubted before that I would be able to learn it but my motivation to learn it was quite strong and I decided to try. And I succeeded:-) Now I am able to make such make-up and henna tattoo by myself - I really took a lot from these workshops for my expression. I took my own initiative and tried to create own patterns while making henna tattoos.*

*With Bagabaga I knew that I would make a bag. We were exchanging e-mails before the workshop so she knew about it when we met. But I had an idea to make a certain bag that I found in the internet and I thought it was hers. But it was not so we did another one. When Marta showed me what kind of bags she was doing I liked them a lot and we together decided how this bag would be like. I'm really satisfied with the result.*

## GERMANY

### What do You see as important aspects creating a supportive learning environment for creating?

#### Some general conclusions from reflections of the participants:

- Especially this intimate relation to the master and the supportive learning environment of the studio have been identified as a source of an effective learning experience.
- Also the connection of learning and creating, this learning by doing and creating this process of the personal interest and making it a path to create something what is reflecting a personal reflection created a positive attitude in the learners to the process
- The learners had highlighted the personalized approach of the masters, who made an effort to get to know the interest of the young people, to explore their ideas and to make the workshop in a dialogue
- The openness to learn something new, the curiosity and trust to the master were important attitudes which helped the learners to get in the learning process

#### Some quotes:

*the environment of the studio was very inspiring, I got the chance to explore a real creative environment and connect to the master in her personal space of creation*

*I really appreciated the passion and the patience of the master, she was putting a lot of heart in the workshop and helped me to get the learning through own experience, great learning moment.*

*The moment of creating something with the own hands was supported by very inspiring question what I want to express and manifest through this style, it helped me a lot to get some inspiration for my life.*

*wow, I wish to continue this way of learning, I feel that I have grown a lot and new perspectives opened for me.*

## LEARNING PROCESS SUPPORT

During the test phase each participant got individualized coaching sessions to develop their own potential with an experienced expert on supporting creative processes. This supported young people to plan their ideas how to transfer inner needs through creative expression via fashion and design.

### INDIVIDUALISED COACHING SESSIONS

Participants in Łódź were invited to take part in two coaching sessions: one before the workshops, one during the test phase or after. All participants used this offered support. Some of them were very enthusiastic and benefited a lot from these meetings. For the others it was an interesting and useful experience. For half of participants it was a first meeting with such form of support and a person (professional psychotherapist). Thus it was an important finding for them that you may see a coach not only when you have problems, but also to learn something about yourself, to get impulses to develop and to grow. Only one person was not satisfied with nor motivated to take part in such meeting - she did, but she evaluated as something she did not need.

Below some reflections of participants about this element of DYEM are presented:

*She helped me on various levels. Firstly, to understand better what I really need right now for myself. And I already started to act to make the change, so this meeting pushed me to start actually doing things about which I was only thinking before.*

*Secondly, thanks to this conversation I understood that one of the things in me that I was recently struggling with is actually not my weak side but a strength. Especially in this moment in my life I need it. So it was a perfect time to meet with a person like her.*

*And thirdly, this meeting was like a bridge to understand what I would like to make during the workshops. I need something to remind me about what I have realised. To be open for everyone as I've been so far and at the same time to filter it thought my own needs. Thus I was thinking about the amulet that I will carry with me as a part of jewellery. As I've becoming more open to the colours again I would like it to be colourful.*

*This meeting was surprising and really very nice. I could look at myself from another perspective. In a sub-conscious way ( we were using some cards) I learnt a lot about myself. I have never had a possibility before to meet with a psychologist and I believe I would not have such a chance for a long time. I have had no problems so I did not think of meeting such a person. If I'm healthy I'm not going to see a doctor so if I have no problems I'm not going to see a psychologist. I was thinking in this way but unexpectedly I found this meeting very useful and interesting. I could look into myself, I became more aware on what I would like to work on with myself and ensured me that it was a good choice to take part in this project:-)*

*I had one meeting with a coach. We were looking for some inspiration how to express myself during the workshops. Usually I'm taking inspiration from poems and art. This time it was different. I did not expect to go out of my "shell" but I did. And I discovered my need for the change.*

*I had two meetings. The first one I did not like as it was only me speaking. But the second one I liked a lot. I found something to express myself and maybe I will use it during workshops. But I don't know yet*

*We met on skype because I was ill and this was the only way possible. I could think on what is important for me in life, what I have learnt in key moments. It was very interesting and important experience for me because I do not reflect on these kind of things usually but I discovered that I need it and like it. The next step was to find a visual symbol for one of the important aspects of my life that I had defined following coach's questions. I chose kaleidoscope. Then we tried to refer it to the workshops I have chosen. It was my first meeting with a psychologist/personal trainer and I find it interesting and useful.*

*I'm quite self-conscious person and I think that such meeting was not necessary for this kind of project. What I realised even better during this conversation with Ania was that I the balance between work and time for myself is important for me. And since recently I was working a lot this projects with workshops giving me the chance to focus on myself appear in a good moment. I needed this time for myself now.*

*I already had chosen my visual symbol to be "applied" during the workshops. What we did with Ania was that we were analysing what this symbol could mean, its interpretation.*

*We were talking a lot about myself. I don't know yet what it gave to me.*

*I found out that during the workshops I would like to make a bag. A black one and quite big so that I could carry my books. With silver zips and silver pendant. The vision of this bag came into my mind thanks to this meeting. With every question of the coach the image of my bag was becoming clearer to me.*

## **DESIGN YOURSELF LEARNING SUPPORT MANUAL**

Before the first workshops participants both from Poland and Germany were given a learning support manual with the guiding questions introducing them into the topic of self-reflection based on self-directed learning and key competences. The content of this manual was based on the Youthpass and the concept of key competences that were adopted to the specific perspective of Design Yourself project. For the purpose of our test phase we focused mainly on 3 competences: cultural awareness and expression, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and learning to learn competence. Below we include the English version of the manual (it was also available in Polish).

### **Dear Design Yourself participants!**

You are warmly invited to reflect on your learning while participating in our project. Each of you had her/his own motivation, needs and expectations connected with this project. You took part in meetings, discussions and workshops. Now the time has come to sum up the path that you went through. Below you will find the questions guiding you in three main areas of this reflection.

These are:

1. How I know that I have learnt something?

2. Which competences I could develop during the project?

3. How can I document this learning process?

### How do I know that I learned something?

Well...what is learning anyway? We use the word learning in many ways: 'I learned a lot about myself'. 'I had to learn all the words by heart'. 'I learnt to ride a bike when I was 8 years old'. All about learning but maybe a different process you go through. With some things it's easier than with others to really know you learnt it. When you study for a while how to use the power point programme you can probably at a certain moment say: "Yes, I can do it! I learnt it, I know all possibilities and know how to use them". But what about for example team work?

#### You might identify it when:

- X you know now how to do it
- X you understand something (better)
- X you feel more secure in doing
- X you understand yourself better why you act in a certain way
- X you found for yourself a role that suits you
- X you have now a (theoretical) framework for the topic
- X you know what to learn next
- X ...

### 2. Which competences I could learn during the project?

Below you will find questions to stimulate reflection. They aim at directing your attention to the various areas of development, not to categorize. It is natural that in the same project different people may develop different competences - particularly in the "Design Yourself" project in which you could choose diverse workshops. What is more, a lot depends on the motivation of the participant, his/her previous experience, age, etc. Think of how you have developed through participation in our project? Document the most important results. We'll talk more about this during the skype talk.

### Cultural awareness and expression

- To what extent I wanted to involve myself in the new forms of self-expression? What helped me, what made it difficult?
- Why I decided to choose these particular workshops? What does it say about my preferred way of expression?
- In which forms of expression I felt best: working with clothes, accessories, body, jewelry? what I have learned about my interests / strengths connected with the self-expression?

### Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship

- What new challenges I have undertaken during the project?
- What new ideas I was able to put in practice?
- In which way I was taking initiative?
- How I was open for the ideas of masters leading workshops?
- How will I use the gained skills in the future?

### Learning to learn

- What I wanted to learn by this project? Have I achieved it? If yes, why? If now, why?
- How I was learning when it comes to the different senses and styles: by observing, listening, movement, touch, talk, active experimentation, self-reflection?
- What I needed to feel that I'm learning?  
challenges or safety?
  - guidance, support from others or independence ?
  - structure or chaos?
- What I took for myself from the meeting with the mentor (Mrs Ania)? What I learned about myself? How this form of support is useful for my development?
- How other people supported my learning during this project? What was their role: different perspectives, points of view; inspiration; feedback; security / challenge; ...?
- Which activities in the project motivated me the most in my learning?
- In which learning environment I felt that I was learning the best?
- What materials / tools were useful to me?

### Other competences

- What new technologies I have discovered: printing, sewing, etc.?
- Which new ways of communication (online and interpersonal) I was using? Have I find out something new for myself in this area?
- What other things have I discovered about myself / ways of expression / ....?

## 3. How can I document my learning?

- **Written word:** You may write down the most important reflections wherever you feel like: notebook, diary, calendar, blog; loose notes, poem, a story ....
- **Sound:** register your thoughts using dictaphone, add some music...
- **Pictures:** maybe instead of words you may draw, use symbols, photos, make a short movie...
- **In space:** sculpture, installation representing what you experienced, discovered and learnt during the project
- ....

## LEARNING PATHS - DIRECTIONS

Based on results of our Design Yourself Research demonstrating that for the young people the fact that actually they come up to the idea of what and how to express oneself is crucial in this process. Once they have an idea, they will be much more motivated and able to find ways to express themselves. Linking this outcome our DYEM test phase it became important for us to find some efficient and low cost way to support young people in discovering and developing their own ideas for self-expression. In our project we planned and we did it through personal support of a coach. But as we wanted DYEM to be available to various young people and youth workers, it is probable that it will not always be possible for them to find or to afford a personal support of a psychologist or a coach. Therefore both Polish project coordinator Dagna Gmitrowicz and researcher Marta Brzezińska-Hubert decided to create an online support using guidelines given to us by the coach, the results of the study and action research and our personal experience as trainers (both of us) and art therapist (Dagna) and that is how the tool called "learning paths" was created. It was incorporated on our project page : <http://designyourself.info/learning-paths/> in two language versions: Polish and English (the German one is also planned). Moreover, an alternative musician from Berlin HENYAZ illustrated paths with an amazing tunes.

These learning paths may be used as a tool stimulating self-awareness already in the context of manual self-expression. Below we present the content of this tool. There are four paths: East, South, West and North. Young person is invited to choose one direction and to follow the paths by making choices concerning the form of activity he or she prefers. In each direction a person may read a story, write a story on his/her own or listening. After completing this activity and writing down the results he or she may choose the next step: manual work; work in space or a motion. When this task is done, the culmination comes with some concrete outcome to be used during practical workshops.



## If you go: EAST

- it's a new life.

The direction supports new ideas and solutions that like the rising sun invite you to experience a new day.

### 1. Questions:

What do you want to start?

What kind of a new activity, event do you need?

What have just started?

---

### 2. Choose the option (one or more):

#### I'M READING A STORY/ I'M WRITING ON MY OWN/ I'M LISTENING

##### I'M READING A STORY:

Read the following text slowly. Take a pause after each sentence. At the same time take notes describing your thoughts, words, shapes which will be appearing subsequently.

Take care of the calmness around you and of the body comfort.

*ME opened the eyes. Still the glimmering colours and the sounds from a good dream are around.*

*What could the dream be about if it has left such a pleasant feeling?*

*ME is trying to recall the memories that accompanied this dreamy journey, in which everything is possible ... Relaxed body is stretching slowly.*

*Sounds are coming from the surroundings, the details are becoming sharper.*

*"Hello new day" - ME whispered to myself.*

*The first thought is coming when the foot touches the floor.*

*"What about starting something from scratch?"*

*"What if I change something so that it would give me more joy and a sense of accomplishment?"*

*ME is slowly going to the bathroom to wash the face with the refreshing water.*

*Water washes away the doubts, uncertainty, sadness. It makes the face smooth and brings the fresh viewpoint to the reality.*

*ME looks incidentally in the mirror. Strong light from behind distorts the image. This random phenomenon gives a sense of inner strength. ME smiled.*

*"Why not? I can manage a lot...at least the first step ... "*

*During the breakfast prepared with the favourite ingredients the surprising thought came to ME.*

*An idea...*

*A sense of the new energy in the body.*

*In such a moment ME knows that the time has come for the new action.*

- *What is this action?*
- *Where does it lead?*
- *What could be a first step towards this change?*

*ME began to note down the things that have just started to appear as a draft of the new reality. Let the dream turn into a reality ...*

### Result:

Save the three most important associations words, thoughts, which were used for further work .

When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

### **I'M WRITING ON MY OWN**

Imagine that you're a hero in the novel - what are you doing, where are you going? Write, record the story (who you are). It may be also a video with the invented hero.

#### **Result:**

Save the three most important associations words, thoughts, which were used for further work .

When you are ready, take the next step: **MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION**

### **I'M LISTENING:**

Listen to the music and imagine your own journey. You are just about going for a journey, where are you heading to? What are you packing? What do you want to experience? Who are you going with? What do you want to achieve ?

#### **Result:**

Keep the notes from this exercise for the next task. When you are ready, take the next step:

**MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION**

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### **3. Next steps on the learning paths invite you to :**

**MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION**

#### **MANUAL WORK**

Equip yourself with a paper and a pencil. Close your eyes and while thinking about the chosen elements from the previous exercise draw shapes in a free, relaxed way. Select a part that you like the most.

#### **WORK IN SPACE**

Using any objects that accompany you every morning (maybe a cup of coffee, maybe a toothbrush) create an installation representing the associations from the previous exercises.

#### **MOTION**

Grab your camera (e.g. in your phone . With the camera turned on and carried in your hand take the usual morning route. It can be for example making your morning exercises or a short walk. Add to the well-known activity something new: a new movement: a new place, something that can refer to the prior reflection. Play a movie that has been recorded in an uncontrolled way by your camera. Choose the moment you like in particular.

---

### **4. CULMINATION**

Create a synthesis of previous works on a loose sheet of paper. Add image to the words. Create a symbol which may later be replicated indefinitely. Add colors(s) and a certain "character" if you wish.

## **If you go: SOUTH**

The sun at its zenith; and around us full of all kinds of activities and people.

#### **1. Questions:**

What do you like to do the most? What are you good at?

What are you passionate for?

Who do you spend most of your time?

---

## 2. Choose the option (one or more):

### I'M READING A STORY/ I'M WRITING ON MY OWN/ I'M LISTENING

#### I'M READING A STORY:

Read the following text slowly. Take a pause after each sentence. At the same time take notes describing your thoughts, words, shapes which will be appearing subsequently.  
Take care of the calmness around you and of the body comfort.

*ME felt the summer sun on the skin, the smell of the summer and the energy to act.*

*ME took a deep breath while making some exercises to awaken the body. Then ME took a backpack and got on the bike. ME was going through the favorite places: maybe it was a park, local basketball pitch, a bench and grocery store; or maybe something completely different: perhaps it was the forest or a beach...*

*Suddenly, ME gazed at a group of people in ME's age practicing dance steps.*

*ME thought: "I also have to get to work."*

*"Which things should I do immediately?"*

*"What is especially important to me but somehow I have been postponing it for ages because I have never had time to actually care about these things?"*

*"What consumes unnecessarily too much of my time?"*

*ME stopped the bike and stood on the ground to stare intensely at the sun.*

*It's time for a resolution: from now on I will do the things that matter to me the most even though so far I have not had time for them.*

*The sun was at its zenith - it's a good time to organize your life.*

#### Result:

Note words, draw shapes and take from this experience as much as possible. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

#### I'M WRITING ON MY OWN

Recall in mind your favourite activities: at home, at work / school / at your leisure.

Where are you? What exactly are you doing? What objects are you using? Who are you cooperating with? What are you wearing?

Write, record the story.

**Result:** Choose three words of your story that according to you represent the energy and well-being. You'll be invited to use them in the further work. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

#### I'M LISTENING:

Listen to the music and imagine yourself during your favourite activity / activities - eg. related to your passion, with your free time.

What are you doing exactly? Which parts of your body are involved the most? Where are you? Who is with you? What smells are surrounding you? What objects are you using?

#### Result:

Write down three words / associations representing what appeared to you in this imagination with the greatest intensity. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

### 3. Next steps on the learning paths invite you to : MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

#### MANUAL WORK

Take a few magazines or newspapers you don't need any more, preferably with many illustrations or pictures. Cut those images and words that you may associate with your favorite activities. Then create a collage out of them. If you want you may also draw something to it by your own. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

#### WORK IN SPACE

Put in front of yourself two or three items you use during your favorite activities. Look at them carefully paying attention to the details. What is their shape, texture, colors, perhaps a pattern? Which of those elements do you like the most? Keep it in your memory or draw it.

#### MOTION

Find a separate gesture for each of the words written by you in the previous exercise.

Now try these gestures out one after the other. Experiment by changing the order, making larger and smaller movements. Choose the movement you feel the best with.

Imagine how the cloth(es) giving your movement more power, energy and clarity would look like? Keep it in your mind, describe it on a paper or draw it/them.

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#### 4. CULMINATION

Create a synthesis of previous works on a loose sheet of paper. Add image to the words. Create a symbol which may later be replicated indefinitely. Add colours(s) and a certain "character" if you wish.

## If you go: WEST

- slow motion, closing our activities and time for reflection. Vibrant or pastel colors of autumn and the sunset.

West makes us free from these actions and ideas that are no longer valid so that we gain space for what is really meaningful and important for us.

#### 1. Questions:

What recently have you finalized? What are you going to finish?

What have you learned, what have you developed? In which way?

## 2. Choose the option (one or more):

### I'M READING A STORY/ I'M WRITING ON MY OWN/ I'M LISTENING

#### I'M READING A STORY:

Read the following text slowly. Take a pause after each sentence. At the same time take notes describing your thoughts, words, shapes which will be appearing subsequently. Take care of the calmness around you and of the body comfort.

*ME looked at oneself as if he/she was looking over oneself in the water of a smooth lake in which the sunset was reflected.*

*ME focused for the moment and started wondering: how do I feel physically? How is my mood? Do I like to spend time in this place?*

*ME was thinking for a moment about those questions which were suddenly followed by the new ones: what makes me feel at ease: which people and places? What I wear to feel confident and comfortable?*

*ME was thinking for a while again. Then strongly focused on remembering the answers and put them down on the paper.*

#### Result:

Note words, draw shapes and take from this experience as much as possible. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

#### I'M WRITING ON MY OWN

It is evening, the colours of the sunset in the sky. Are you sitting comfortably, nothing around disturbs you the peace of the ending day. You are holding something to write in your hand as you are going to write a letter to your friend. Describe what plans and activities you have recently managed to implement and accomplish? What have you learned about myself, about others, about your neighbourhood?

**Result:** Write down three most important words / associations / thoughts which you will use for further work. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

#### I'M LISTENING:

Listen to the music and imagine that you are walking in the surroundings of your home while the sun slowly leans towards the West. What you see, what you hear? Think about the things that you have recently finished, about your completed plans. What have you learnt about yourself and the world around you? How do you feel?

#### Result:

Write down three words / associations representing what appeared to you in this imagination with the greatest intensity. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

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## 3. Next steps on the learning paths invite you to : MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

### MANUAL WORK

Take crayons, paints and a paper. Think about the colors of the sunset - sometimes colorful and strong, sometimes pastel and delicate. Which of these colors reflect your feelings, emotions associated with the previous exercise in the best way? Put them on the paper.

### WORK IN SPACE

Take three items you got from friends or/and family members. Put each of them in various positions: horizontally, vertically, upside down, etc. Look at each of them carefully from a certain distance or very closely as using magnifying glass. Maybe you can also make the light reflect on them from the different angles. What can you see? Which setting of the items you like the most? Leave them in this position for the further work.

### MOTION

Find the evening a moment just for yourself. Choose a place in your home or neighborhood where you feel relaxed / a, in which no one and nothing you do not mind. Find the most convenient position in which you feel relaxed and well. Look from this position at your body, its shapes. Focus both on a wider parts as well as on the details. what do you see? Keep this image for the further work.

---

### 4. CULMINATION

Create a synthesis of previous works on a loose sheet of paper. Add image to the words. Create a symbol which may later be replicated indefinitely. Add colours(s) and a certain "character" if you wish.

## If you go: NORTH

North is the direction of the winter time, the direction of the universe.

This is the time when you may slow down a bit, cover yourself with something warm and look at your whole life from a distance. To look at the time that has already passed as well as to think about what may still come .

#### 1. Questions:

- What are my resources, what are my dreams?
- What makes me happy?
- Where I am now in my life?
- In which direction am I going to?
- What/who accompanies me?
- If someone who is friendly and at the same important to me looked at my life from aside., what would he or she say/comment/advise?

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#### 2. Choose the option (one or more):

#### I'M READING A STORY/ I'M WRITING ON MY OWN/ I'M LISTENING

##### I'M READING A STORY:

Read the following text slowly. Take a pause after each sentence. At the same time take notes describing your thoughts, words, shapes which will be appearing subsequently.

Take care of the calmness around you and of the body comfort.

*ME looked up at the sky.*

*ME saw a white cloud slowly moving across the sky. Its shape reminds what is closest to the ME's heart.*

*The shape of the cloud is slowly transforming into other forms and shapes. ME is watching carefully.*

*ME draws with the cloud own memories. People, places and feelings.*

*What do they show? Who they describe? What emotions they carry?*

*ME admires both what is familiar and what is new.*

*THEN THE CLOUD IS SLOWLY APPROACHING TO ME.*

*The shapes of the cloud become so familiar that ME can't resist not to touch it.*

*ME is reaching out one hand and is dipping it in the cloud. Palm, fingers, the whole hand become connected with the cloud.*

*ME, immersed in the wonderful feeling of lightness and fullness of being, is floating with the cloud*

*ME becomes the cloud and is now is able to form any of own dreams. ME is feeling the dream from the inside out.*

*ME is trying to remember what ME has just created.*

**Result:**

Note words, draw shapes and take from this experience as much as possible. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

**I'M WRITING ON MY OWN**

By magic you moved to another planet which has a different conception of time. Using a telescope you can observe your life on Earth. You may keep track of the past, observe the present and create the next steps in the future. Describe what you see through the telescope . Do not hesitate, do not think too much. Just write freely until you exhaust the subject.

**Result:**

Note words, draw shapes and take from this experience as much as possible. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

**I'M LISTENING:**

Sit in a quiet place; you may put the headphones on, you may also take this music for a walk. Follow the track by inviting all that is close to your heart: what has already taken place and what is going to happen. Give yourself freedom of sensations and thoughts. Then take notes on what has appeared to you: it can be a feeling , a word, perhaps a color or a shape. Everything has a meaning.

**Result:**

Keep the notes from this exercise for the next task. When you are ready, take the next step: MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION

---

**3. Next steps on the learning paths invite you to :  
MANUAL WORK/ WORK IN SPACE/MOTION**

**MANUAL WORK**

What is needed is a loose paper from a notebook or a block. And something to write.

Put your hand on the paper and draw its shape (a whole hand or just a part of it). You may also draw the other hand or its part if you wish, superpose one on the other. Maybe you would even like to add a shape of your foot or feet.

This work with a number of superposed drawings is a starting point for the next step.

Once you have it ready, crush the paper with drawings in the same way as you would form a snow ball. Try to create such a paper snow ball.

Once you have the ball, throw it in the space in front of you.

Look at the ball from the distance. Remind yourself the notes from the previous exercise and take a look at the ball again. What it reminds you? Which brings it to your mind?

Put down some notes or/and sketch everything that comes to your mind - try to come to around 10 associations.

Once the list is ready select words/ drawings that reflect your present self in the best way. Make sure that the chosen words and drawings are giving you strength and support.

### **WORK IN SPACE**

Choose from your surrounding such an object that you can relate with your strengths, a good part of yourself. This might be a glass or lamp; or perhaps something completely different.

Once you have chosen the object, look at its surroundings. Is it located in the shadows or in the light? What other objects are placed nearby?

Think about what you can change in the surroundings of this object so that this environment would suit this object the most, would be the best for it.

Maybe you can make a difference. Move the object to another place, put something else nearby, change the light ... Give yourself time and try to do your best so that in this given moment the object has the best possible connection with the environment.

When your installation is ready take a picture or make a description of it.

### **MOTION**

Lie down comfortably or sit on a chair. Breathe regularly: inhale - exhale. Follow your breathing, feel the temperature of the air. Relax your entire body starting from the head, neck and later through arms, stomach, hips, legs up to your feet. Let this time be only for you. Let your thoughts flow like clouds. Do not stop anything, let the thoughts flow freely. Perhaps from time to time you will see the clear sky. The more thoughts the wind blows away the better. Give yourself time, without any task, without a purpose. Allow yourself to have 5 minutes of a free being. And let your thoughts flow... this is their nature.

While your relax finishes, pay attention to what will appear as first thought. Write it down. Record. Memorize .

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## **4. CULMINATION**

Create a synthesis of previous works on a loose sheet of paper. Add image to the words. Create a symbol which may later be replicated indefinitely. Add colors(s) and a certain "character" if you wish.

## SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF CRAFTSMEN/MASTERS

### POLAND

#### **Motivation to join the project:**

*I decided to take part in this project because on the other hand I was a volunteer in previous project run by the Are Ego Foundation and on the other hand I liked the overall concept of this project. I had a meeting with one participant. First of all I was positively surprised that such a project really exists and that someone has invited me to join it. I felt appreciated and empowered - for me it means that I am somehow recognized as an expert and I'm happy about it.*

*Make-up is my passion and I wanted to share my competences with others. So I found this project very interesting. For many years I have been developing my make-up skills and knowledge using books, tutorials of British and Polish youtubers and my own experience and "artistic soul".*

*I'm a freelancer active in two areas: I run educational workshops and I'm interior designer. This project enabled me to connect this two areas. I also wanted to take part in it because I like such initiatives that connect people through a certain platform; that people have a better access to creators, craftsmen , to people who run unusual activities. I wanted to take part in this test phase hoping that this project will evolve further and I would contribute to the development of this initiative and the network of contacts.*

#### **My own learning process/personal development: what I got for myself from the project?**

*For the first time I was running a workshop for young people. In the beginning I was hesitating whether to take part in this project or not, because I was a little bit afraid of conducting the workshops. It was something new for me and finally I decided to try. I'm happy to do it because it gave me several things. I learned that there is nothing to be stressed about. I gained new experience, time spent in a really nice way with new interesting people, and also some concrete practice that I will put in my CV as it may be useful for my future studies connected with arts. It was inspiring and simply a good feeling to share my skills with other people. I will think of making more workshops like this in the future.*

*It was my first time when I had the whole activity with an individual person. I could focus on this person, her personality, character and to adjust all means of communication and means of expression to this particular person. It was very inspiring to have the entire three hours with each of the two participant, to get to know them, to share not only on a creative level. It is not an ordinary talk as this person is expressing some part of her soul and thus naturally opens up to me. In turn I'm introducing her in some aspects of self-expression. It was very interesting for me to feel this "delicate matter" of an individual person not a group. It seems to me now that you need to be much more attentive and mindful in this kind of workshop. And I liked it a lot. I gave to both girls time and physical space to experiment by their own, to follow their ideas. I gave also space for my expectations not to fulfil entirely and to change the scenario of the workshop according to the need of participants. It was also the first time for to run the workshop in English and I'm happy about it.*

*For sure I improved my communications skills: to be able to talk with somebody for a few hours, give clear instructions, explain what I'm showing...Before it was a challenge for me so I think that thanks to this project I improved in this area a lot. I also became more patient. What is more I was even calming people down when they were impatient with the result of their work. To support them by for example telling that with time and practice they will be more successful. From one workshop to another I was becoming less stressed, I knew on what I should focus more as I was talking more with participants about their needs. Also I got more contacts with people.*

*I didn't know what to expect from this workshops. When the participants who chose me contacted me to say, that they would like to make bags, it was a challenge for me. Because I have already been running workshops about more traditional crafts, not bags. So I was concerned about this new experience, whether I manage to support someone to make own bag, to show the things in a proper way and if the girls would like to process and result of their learning. And it turned out that the workshops went very well. Both participants have enjoyed it a lot and left with self-made bag- each with a different kind:-) So I felt an expert in running bag-making workshops as well.*

*Taking part in this project gave me the possibility of cooperation with new people. I could also see how much time and effort it takes for a "beginner" to make dreadlocks and how to communicate with this person so that she or he understands how to do it and not gets bored. Because it takes much more time for someone who had never done it than for me. And I was "teaching" someone to make dreads for the first time in my life.*

### **The process of workshops**

*I had some draft conception of workshops as I needed to prepare the physical space with material, equipment, etc. I had some potential ideas that could have been realised or not, depending on the situation. I wanted to give both girls a chance to try out a few things but this plan was open for changes. Each participant was different and they were interested in or enjoyed different things. I also contacted them before the workshop to ask which activities and in which form they would prefer. Although it was rather general because the techniques I use are not common and it is difficult to know them unless you actually see them in reality. First each participant got to know the basis of the technique and they could choose what they want to do as well as the patterns, colours. I was assisting and supporting them so that they could achieved the result they wanted. In a tea break we were sharing our experience and thoughts connected with artistic expression beyond the topic our workshop. It was also the natural time of personal and intercultural exchange and connection. They were both very satisfied with the result of their work and it also made me happy. Both participants have now the whole knowledge and necessary skills to make similar things by their own but it would be a challenge to replace some equipment at home ( although it is possible:-)*

*I prepared myself before for the introductory and technical part - how the hygiene and safety of work look like, etc. When it comes to technique I was explaining it "on the spot". I was showing the learner step by step how I was doing it and sometimes adding the information which techniques other master may use. Because the most important is practice here. So we were practicing and while doing it I was taking with Natalia, asking her questions to identify better her needs and interests, why she decided to take part in this workshop. When we did our dreads I showed her how to decorate dreads with*

*embroidery floss so that it would look esthetic. We met in my flat: cosy atmosphere, I could prepare a tea and something to eat. Natalia wanted to have dreads before but her mother was against. So what we did during the workshops were dreadlocks that are not made of your own hair but some artificial hair. You first need to make them and later attach to the hair. You may detach it whenever you like. Natalia was very satisfied and told me that in some time she would make dreads on the whole head.*

*I conducted three workshops. We met in my home which is my creation space. I proposed them to choose where they prefer to meet: in a coffee place or at my home. They all chose my place. The ambiance of each meeting was very nice, while creating the dream catchers we were talking about various things, not only about self-expression. I had some initial plan, but I was rather following the needs of a particular participant. As they were to make something expressing themselves I proposed to make dream catchers in a form of necklaces. In the beginning of the workshop I explained how to make it but the major part was to actually make it together. Then I was sitting with each person and making my dream catcher while she was doing hers, adjusting my pace to hers. In case of some questions I was showing how to do it, but this person had to do it on her own object. This form proved to be very nice and effective. It was also easier to make a connection between us and to learn in a relaxed way. All the girls felt well and learned how to make it. And they left with their finished necklaces. The fact that it was a meeting with individual person could help in a way that I was adjusting my pace to her and had a possibility to focus on her, to get to know this person better. And the atmosphere was really unique.*

*1+1 was great! Usually I run group workshop. Individual workshops create completely different way of working and learning. You can communicate much more with this one person. While conducting group workshop it is rather me to give participants the directions, to tell them what to do and later they follow in their own way - I do not have "control" of it unless somebody comes up and asks for support etc or I notice something really wrong. Thanks to the individual workshop I had much more space to refer to the needs of the participant, to show various options and models...From the very beginning to the end we were talking, discussing the way the bag will look like etc. So it was very comfortable and joyful work for me and I think that for both participants too. Each of them left the workshop with one bag but at the same time with the consciousness of how this might be done in another way or with the use of other materials. This one bag represents the result of long talks, showing various examples, materials as well as the choices that were made by the learners.*

*The first workshop was prepared more by me, with more fixed plan as I did not know what to expect and I had no experience in conducting this kind of activities. While during the first workshop I offered one hour of theory and two hours of practice, during the following ones together with participants we decided to make the theory quite fast and even to connect the practice with theory - not to separate it. And it was better suited to the participants' needs and we had more time to make make-up.*

## GERMANY

### **What was Your motivation to participate in the Project Design Yourself?**

*I am passionate about reforming the fast fashion industry, and one important step is to teach people (especially young people) how to make, remake and repair their own clothes. Design Yourself Project is a great opportunity for me to share my knowledge and experience. I want to make people aware of the possibilities and challenges in creating garments and the time behind each garment which will add another value in their future purchases.*

*The opportunity to have an open conversation with the young people motivated me to participate. I just started my business and work hard every day to earn my living, so that it is paid made it possible to take my time and participate.*

*I heard about the project Design yourself through NEMONA, and was interested because I have been giving upcycling and sewing workshops as a way to pass on my technical experience as a seamstress, as well as create a social discussion about the current consumption habits in the fashion industry. I believe young adults are a good range of people to open up this discussion with, as they will shape future habits.*

*Our concept of the Naehcafe is connecting the workshop offers and the creation process, so the invitation to join the project is very much in hand with it. We like to offer the space to inspire people to discover their potential to create with own hands. The creative dialogue can open a deeper understanding of the own awareness and a reflection about what is fashion, what is so special about a piece which is unique und original, because it was produced in a personal creation process.*

### **How do You enjoy the workshops? What have You learned? What would make your learning better?**

*I enjoyed to host the workshop. The girls were excited to learn and asked questions.*

*I planned the workshop in step-by-step which helped me a lot to keep a good learning flow during the hours.*

*The workshops I led were very enjoyable as the students were eager to learn sewing. I feel I always learn so much when I give a workshop, in a sense of how to best pass on information and technique, as well as having discussions about fashion with the students, and showing them that instead of buying new clothes they can alter the ones they already have, it is interesting to see this world opening up for them, especially when their reaction is positive. Having more time would potentially increase this process.*

*The workshop was very nice, we made a hoddie to wear and based on this process could explore the different aspects of a creation process: like design the idea, making the plan, choosing the cloth and the different sewing techniques.*

### **What do You see as important aspects creating a supportive learning environment for creating?**

*To explain, leave space for questions, then make them try with own hands. To make the participants aware that it is ok to do mistakes, as it is from them you learn and grow.*

*An open space for creation – having the tools and technique to encourage ideas coming from the young students*

*An open space for discussion - enquiring about current consumption habits in fashion and how does that impact our lives/environments.*

*An open space for projects –encouraging the younger generation to take matters into their own hands*

*The important element it is the dialogue with the learner, to create a trustful ground to be able to welcome his/her needs and ideas, to make the common process of creation a journey where he/she can discover new aspects of own personality, can open himself and get in a creative state of mind. There is a need to connect the teaching of the technique with a personal approach related to what i want to express through the creation, and for this is a trustful dialogue the ground.*

*Another aspect is patient and empowerment, the learner needs to feel that it is him/her is responsible for the learning being guided by a supportive master who can give him the technical support he needs to come to own learning success, without pressure supported by feedback and guidance.*

**How would You suggest to develop the idea of Design Yourself further, what would support to make it a successful path for Young people to learn creative handcraft?**

*6 hours is not enough to learn a handcraft. It is enough to get a rough idea, but to develop further it would be needed to follow up and do more workshops. If a student is interested it would be nice to make it possible to attend a small course in a studio, alternatively to do a funded internship in a chosen studio.*

*I am very happy to be further involved in offering workshops for youth. I believe that time is an important factor to create a strong bond with the students, and that the continuation of a project over time can really impact the decisions of these young minds.*

*Cooperation with institutions where young people could get a supportive structure to attend the workshop can be a good direction: many young people would not make this step by themselves but if they once experience how it works they could continue this path. So schools could be a good partner to develop some partnerships.*

*The idea to stimulate that handcrafters will develop their competences and motivation to offer workshops can also be a good direction: There could be more learning from each other happen, this could happen through participating in workshop from each other. Also mobility of handcrafters on the international level could stimulate their potential to create.*



# DESIGN YOURSELF

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