



# the Key to Connection

Digital methodological materials  
for dance teachers and youth workers  
on kinesthetic learning for youth empowerment



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# 1. What is it and who are we?

We are an international collective of dance practitioners and youth workers/experts in non-formal education from **Bulgaria, Greece, Latvia** and **Poland** who cooperate to research the power of kinesthetic learning as a key to connection with young people.

*The Key to Connection* (started in 2019 within the EU programme *Erasmus+: Youth in Action*) is our first project together where we develop new kinesthetic learning tools and methods, testing them both on each other and young people. Through the process we trigger such themes as the **Skill of Listening and Observation, Openness as an Attitude, Diversity as a Value, Critical Understanding of Self.**

Movement can become a great helper in the self-growth, development and empowerment of young people. Awareness towards one's own body and choices of movement should be developed in order to be able to learn through movement. We explore how combining our knowledge and experience in the fields of dance and youth

work can promote the engagement of young people in the kinesthetic learning process. While kinesthetic learning and youth work online also provide new opportunities, in the context of embodied learning, we see it as a serious challenge. Many youngsters are not so passionate about leaving their phones and sofas these days, which causes the disconnection from their bodies and challenges with physical and mental health and well-being. Nevertheless, as they experience the power of kinesthetic learning, a very meaningful process for both sides (facilitators and youngsters) starts.

*From Partner meeting 1 in Pernik, Bulgaria.  
Photo by Kamila Neuman*



out to our youngsters at another level as we wish to support them in their process of transition from childhood and adolescence to adulthood, becoming self-aware and confident individuals and responsible members of our communities.

This material includes theory about the subject, as well as proposals for practical activities for kinesthetic learning to promote self development. You will also find interviews with us - participants of the project, which also opens a little the journey through the project - challenges, favourite moments, our thoughts about the kinesthetic learning in the education system etc.

We want this to be a meaningful helper for anyone who believes in the power of kinesthetic learning and wants to start practising it.

## **2. About kinesthetic learning**

**Kinesthetic learning is an important part of our personal development, promoting a holistic approach towards oneself and allowing us to get to know and understand ourselves better.**

For some reasons, it is not appreciated enough in society and is seldom used properly, not opening its full potential.

Different methods have been developed relatively recently to

promote a holistic approach to human essence, pointing out the importance of body and mind indivisibility. Being aware of the fact that the idea of a holistic approach to the human body is not new at all, we want to explore and discover the potential of kinesthetic learning more.

Let's start with the fact that the concept of kinesthetic learning arose in ancient Greece. In Greek the term Kinesthetic consists of two words: kinesis - motion, aesthetic - senses. Sensing movement.

### **What is it? Learning by doing.**

Scientists have acknowledged that kinesthetic learning is one of five ways of learning (Fleming VARK model), where the learner engages the whole body in movement to process new and difficult information. The learning styles are categorized as following:

- Tactile learning
- Visual learning
- Auditory learning
- Read/write learning
- Kinesthetic learning

Sometimes we couple tactile and kinesthetic learning. They are similar, but tactile learners process information mostly through their hands while kinesthetic learners engage the whole body in movement to learn.

We need to be aware that emotional and sensory systems actively take part in our learning process. In every way of learning, we use several of our senses to process new information. For example, riding a bike, I use kinesthetic sense to balance, visual sense to see the obstacles along the way, and audial to be aware of objects

around. Or - will I ever be able to swim without being afraid?  
There are parts of the brain that can be developed only by kinesthetic learning. For example, **skill memory** can only be developed by repeating the action again and again. Sometimes the learner just copies the demonstration and learns the action without awareness, which appears later on after a longer time of practising.



*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia.  
Photo by Justīne Buliņa*

There are also **perceptual-motor skills**, when learners use sensory inputs to approach the movement patterns. There are **closed skills** and **open skills**. **Closed skills** are learnt for example in ballet, when a dancer learns one specific element that is performed exactly the way it is always learnt - there is just one way to perform it. **Open skills** require more flexibility in learning: facilitators create conditions (offering tools, such as techniques or strategies) for learners to use in a different environment. For example, games - even though the tools are the same, the situation is always changing (different places, different people's reactions, different intensities etc.).

**Cognitive skills** (for example, memory, perception, comprehension, and motivation etc.) are a part of kinesthetic learning. Some people learn better in an environment which is more practical and also better develops their cognitive skills. So, it is very important to let the learner be aware not only about the practical part of an activity but also the cognitive skills that have been developed. Talking - question and answer sessions or just conversations on the subject - helps to digest and set the information in mind and body.

Practical activities, such as sports, craftwork, and gardening etc., can be mastered to promote different skills. And there are disciplines, such as theatre and dance improvisation, which are mostly related to the creative process and that develops **kinesthetic intelligence**.

In our project, we mostly use **dance improvisation** to explore the potential of kinesthetic learning. We believe that improvisation is a complete set of values that supports humans in their self development.

## **Why is kinesthetic learning the key to connection?**

Here we give you some reasons why we use kinesthetic learning to reach out to young people:

### **We use kinesthetic learning to sharpen kinesthetic sense.**

Kinesthetic sense is a powerful tool to connect with one's self and the world we live in. Self-awareness - getting to know and understand ourselves is closely related to proprioception (sense of body when it is motionless) and kinesthetics (sense of body in movement) as the body **knows a lot**. It knows the location, size, volume of body parts, distance, balance, weight, and gravity. It has its own sense of timing. It adapts rhythm, timing to our reflexes and organises movements in a sequence to perform our activity fluently and as naturally as possible. For example, I do not think how fast I need to run or when I need to push away from the ground to leap against the wall, then to rebound slightly and land safely. Besides this, at the same time the body considers the next movements needed for the situation. We could not do what the body is doing if we stopped and thought after each movement. Probably most of us have heard someone saying: "I have no idea how I did that!" And dance students work hard to practise complex elements, but the body can do many things without learning. Just - **do we listen, respect and understand our body?** Kinesthetic learning invites us to trust our body that knows and our mind that brings awareness. **Kinesthetic learning is natural, it is our first drive to connect with bodies and movement.** We learn much sooner than when we start speaking or reading. Mothers play a *finger dance* with their children and they repeat this and it is part of their communication. Scientists have discovered that children are able to use sign language at the age of 6-8 months.

**Movement is a part of communication.** 70% of our communication is non-verbal. Through kinesthetic learning we can communicate only with the body, without words - without speaking the same language, not speaking at all. It is like a superpower that we have forgotten.

**Kinesthetic learning is based on co-production.** Both the teacher and learner are connected, engaged and interacting to achieve the goal. The teacher is not an authority that is obeyed without questions. He/she is rather a facilitator who creates an environment for learners to experience, learn from the experience and then exchange thoughts to understand and digest the learning outcome.

**Kinesthetic learning helps to push physical and psychological boundaries.** When we can do something after practising we can get to a new level, ready to do something more. Being in a group, kinesthetic learning promotes such qualities as trust and relaxation, empathy, listening, self expression, and openness etc.

**Kinesthetic learning promotes citizenship and activism.** Knowing and understanding ourselves gives us confidence which helps to reach freedom. At some point in history, body awareness started to become a taboo. The division of body, mind and soul in society has gone so far **that we hardly know and appreciate kinesthetic learning as equal to others.** Many of us think that kinesthetic learning is something that scientists have recently discovered. Sign language is considered to be inferior to verbal. Dance is viewed just as a form of entertainment but actually it brings so much more *to the table*. We develop one narrow quality of our physical abilities to be faster or higher or more flexible or more glamorous to be in competition, to gain prizes and be successful in life. And we just follow the next competition - where we are guided. But do

we know ourselves? Are we more happy with ourselves?

Do we know what we want?

We want to stress how important kinesthetic learning is, how much we have demonised it, to get it back on the throne.

## 3. Target groups for our methods

The characteristics of the target group of each national team was very diverse. Younger, more mature, refugees, dancers, youngsters from socially difficult circumstances... Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, we did not manage to stay with the same group all through the journey. So, we were not able to follow the progress in a longer period of time. But we all noticed how movement opens up the shy ones and softens aggressive ones and excites the sceptical ones.

### **Youngsters in Bulgaria**

The Bulgarian national team has worked with two target groups:

1) 18 young people, aged 12-16

2) 14 children, aged 8-12

For the implementation of workshops, we worked with young

people with different experiences - some of them connected with movement and dance and some of them without experience in movement. In this work, we collaborated with a centre for support and self-development. We selected those participants with the main goal to see how the kinesthetic material will be assimilated by different ages and different experiences (with or without movement experience). This made some of the participants feel more comfortable, but some of them went outside their comfort zone. They faced difficulties of playing with their own body and experiencing the body - not being guided by thinking. It was interesting for us that the youngest group of participants (aged 8-12), was much more open and felt free to try and enjoy their understanding and learning of the body. Of course, all the material was presented by games. We would like to share our observation that, in this group, there were no visible differences between dancers and non-dancers. They enjoyed the process and are looking forward to the next meeting.

*From local activity with young people in Pernik, Bulgaria.  
Photo by Andrzej Sojka.*



The Greek national team has worked with two target groups:

- 1) a group of high school students
- 2) a group of university students

The younger group consisted of 20 people, aged 13-16. For the implementation of the workshops we collaborated with the Experimental Intercultural Athens High School. We selected these particular participants for a number of reasons. First of all, most of them come from foreign countries and moved to Greece because of warfare. This traumatic experience makes them especially vulnerable. In addition, they face the difficulties of adjustment in a country with a different language, religion, customs and culture and also one that was not ready to take in so many refugees and to provide for them. These young adults juggle a significant number of challenges every day and do their best for their families and for themselves. Having all this in mind, we decided to give them the opportunity to get away from this scary reality, even for a while. Through the area of understanding of self, we created chances for our participants to feel safe and strong, explore, get to know and express themselves. Non-verbal interaction and kinesthetic methods helped us communicate with our participants as human beings, foster trust and guide them into exploring their feelings about the situation they live in, here and now, and finally, have fun! We felt that this violent turbulence of their life was unfair and that if our intervention could help them figure out what's happening and put their life back on course, it was worth the shot! The second group included 10 university students, coming from the departments of economics, physics, education, psychology and arts. The ages ranged from 18-25. Most of the participants had no professional or amateur involvement with dance. This was a very

interesting situation, because all of them went outside their comfort zone.

Another target group for the Greek team could be students of humanistic sciences. We believe that, through the variety of the exercises, participants would have the chance to better understand their own qualities, strengths and weaknesses and address very personal issues that need to be sorted out before professional work in this field. What is more, the whole procedure will help them build empathy, which is a very important quality for people working with other people.

### **Youngsters in Poland**

The Polish team worked with 15 young people aged 14-24. Most of the group included Polish youngsters from local schools that wanted to get closer to dance improvisation and movement. There were also ESC volunteers from Turkey, Spain, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Chechnya currently hosted by the Adults for Children Association. The group was not so gender balanced. There were 4 men and 11 women.

### **Youngsters in Latvia**

Rauna is a small village and people there do not trust new things easily. To reach out to young people, the Basement Youth Centre in Rauna collaborated with the Rauna Municipality school.

One of our team members Justine works at the school and knows the background and personalities of the kids attending the school. Based on her selection, we invited 18 youngsters aged 8-15 to

attend the activities in the framework of the Key to Connection. We balanced the group in terms of gender - half girls and half boys. Mostly these are young people with difficulties in behaviour and integrating themselves in the community. Some of them really enjoy dancing and movement. Some are from really poor families. Some of the youngsters in the group changed - did not come more than once, some joined later but the core - around 10 people stayed with us all three times before the pandemic. Unfortunately, we lost most of them during the period of lockdown. We also tried to organise a group of teachers from the same school. The idea was to have the same class with two different target groups - pupils and their teachers. Two teachers started the process but did not last.

It was too complicated to schedule the activities when facilitators, youngsters and both teachers were available.

We organised the activities during the school time and took the youngsters out of their regular classes. I have to admit that this is one of the reasons why we were able to keep the group together. They preferred kinesthetic learning with the non-formal education approach rather than formal education. The journey we had within the first three meetings allowed them to open up to each other: from a place where we hardly got any attention from the youngsters we reached a place where they took care of the attention in the group by themselves, they started to ask questions about the project, they noticed that this, what we are doing, is also learning, just in a different way. Each meeting brought us as facilitators new ideas about the next meetings - both practical parts as well as ways of debriefing.

The Covid-19 virus influenced the group dynamic a lot. After the first pandemic wave, in summer 2020 we tried 2 more activities where the youngsters were invited voluntarily to come but only a few from the core group came.

# 4. **How we see the themes we work on**

## **CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SELF**

In an attempt to group and organise the competences that can be highlighted or developed through the use of kinesthetic education tools, in working with young people who carry some form of vulnerability, we will first refer to the intentions and the purpose of the non-formal education workshops, as carried out by the Greek partner group in the Erasmus+ project the Key to Connection and in the context of the theme Critical Understanding of the Self.

The workshops were designed and implemented by a group of dance trainers and youth workers, with the aim of providing the group of young people who participated in them with a series of kinesthetic stimuli through which the participants could explore/

develop skills that would help them to better understand their relationship with themselves and, therefore, with others.

It is important to mention that, in this project and due to the health constraints brought about by the pandemic, we faced the challenge of online workshops. So we implemented two live workshops and three online workshops. We acknowledge the valuable contribution of this challenge in the way we approached our topic to make it feasible and effective in the online workshop implementation.

In addition, we had the chance to walk the path of our partners' ideas via Footprints and observe the outcomes of their exercises used in the framework of our theme.

## **ABOUT INTENTIONS**

### **INTENTION 1.**

#### **LIVE WORKSHOPS**

For the live workshops, the structure was based on the interaction between the members of the group. All workshops had a specific structure consisting of three main levels:

##### **A) Getting to know the group/breaking the ice.**

The exercises/games at this stage are intended to provide participants with the time and space to become familiar with the process and other group members, to introduce themselves, to connect through shared choices with the group and to acknowledge the fact that there are differences and similarities with others that enrich, rather than hinder, the creative process and communication.

The contract with rules of good cooperation created at the beginning of the workshop by all group members provides the safe space needed for exploration and expression.

From the very beginning of each workshop, the foundations for the development/exploration of competences in the area of knowledge, skills, values and attitude are established.

## **B) Main body of the workshop.**

Throughout the main part of the workshops, the pillars established in the previous part are offered in deeper exploration and aim to produce specific outcomes.

The intention is to encourage members to explore and unfold the possibilities of self by being part of a group.

Some of the aims were:

- To build trust, to unfold creativity and self-awareness.
- To develop self-confidence
- To increase concentration
- To empower initiative
- To engage in non-verbal communication
- To develop empathy
- To re-establish hope & joy.

## **C) Reflection**

By using either words or painting, the members of the group along with the facilitators are asked to proceed to a guided reflection of the experience they had throughout the workshop.

Following a simple questionnaire, they are encouraged to share their feelings on the experience and the topic.

The reflections' questionnaire derives from the aims and intentions

of the workshop and invites the participants to express in more detail the experience and first impression of their encounter with kinesthetic learning.

Since this was an unfamiliar process for most of the group members, it acted as a trigger to redefine what, until then, they had known about themselves.

It is important to emphasise that these internal shifts in what we perceive and believe about ourselves are often invisible though very real, as well as often not easy to express in words directly. It is a slow-moving process that evolves over time and after the experience is over.

## **INTENTION 2.**

### **ONLINE WORKSHOPS.**

The online workshops were built, keeping the same subject and structure as the live ones (A, B, C).

Conducting online kinesthetic training workshops was a new experience for the facilitators as well.

While for live workshops the stimuli/exercises focused on the interaction with others, the online version, due to obvious limitations, was driven towards paying attention to the relationship between the individual and his/her body.

Since we were already coming from a long period of restriction and confinement due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we thought that this “pause” might be helpful.

It prompted us to redefine our goals and intentions and to envision how kinesthetic education in the framework of “Critical Understanding of Self” can have a positive effect when applied to

a group of people who were isolated in their own space. Never before have people been forced to spend so much time alone with themselves.

So we focused the intentions and goals of the online workshops on the “inner journey” and the strengthening of the skills of each participant that either remained dormant or even unknown.

The aims of the workshops were the same as in the live sessions, but focused on the self-exploration aspect.

We were surprised to discover that when you invite people and address them with attention, interest and love, to discover, recognise and care for themselves through living and active communication with their bodies, the results are positive for both participants and facilitators, despite the paradox of coexistence through the internet.

## **ABOUT EXPECTATIONS**

Expectation is the powerful, shadowy companion of every creative process and contact. This is the case no matter how much one analyses one’s intentions, no matter how much one tries to silence the expectation both for oneself and for others that emerges from every moment of interaction.

The best that can be achieved is to consciously accept that expectation is always lurking in relationships and in this way prevent it from taking the reins of creative interaction.

Acceptance balances expectation:

- Acceptance that everyone is special, different.
- Acceptance that each of us has our own response time to the

stimulus.

- Acceptance that what you have imagined and expected as an outcome when you teach can be produced in a completely different and new way by those being taught.

Empathy is the factor that allows us to reach out and connect.

That helps us to become more receptive to the unknown and different and develop a better understanding of others and ourselves.

The workshop facilitators had their expectations of the outcome of what they had planned and we felt that the participants had their own expectations of themselves, to be perfect and flawlessly execute the exercises and of the facilitators to provide motivating and unique workshops.

Very soon, we all realised that with such high expectations we would achieve nothing. The hardest part was letting go of the expectations and the disappointment they were breeding.

Once this was settled, the participants trusted the process and the facilitators discovered that an exercise, despite its design and targeting, can produce many and varied results.

As a result of all the above comes the realisation that each category of Knowledge, Skills, Values/Attitude is a journey and not an instantaneous achievement.

As facilitators we learnt that our job is to suggest paths of self-exploration and to share our faith in our tools of kinesthetic learning.

To be able to listen to our participants and cherish every discovery they achieved through our cooperation and to be thankful for their trust and effort.

## SKILL OF LISTENING AND OBSERVATION

***We have two ears and one mouth so we can listen twice as much as we speak.***

Growing up, you might have heard this quote a lot from your parents, mostly when they wanted you to be quiet and pay attention. Listening is an observation skill that we are taught early on and is very important in the workplace. However, most of us also have two eyes to see, two hands to feel, a nose to smell, and a mouth to taste. We use all five senses to observe the world around us. Even deeper when it includes our body. Listening and observing through our body using movements and our senses is just another level of kinesthetic learning.

But what exactly is observation? According to the Oxford online dictionary, ***observation is the action or process of observing something or someone in order to gain information.*** Our observation skills inform us about objects, events, attitudes and phenomena using one or more senses. Additionally, being able to observe and gather information about the world is important because it's the basis of communicating well.

Improving your observation skills allows you to ***listen with more than just your ears and make better decisions.*** It also enhances your ability to interact with others and to respond in an appropriate manner. Both are keys to success at work and at home.

In the workplace, a good employee not only listens well, but is also aware of what is happening around them.

As you invite your topic, situation, or circumstance to talk to you, the messages or answers may not always come right away or in the forms that you expect. Often messages come as metaphors or

symbols, and they may show up in unrelated conversations or events hours or even days later. Someone may make a passing comment that appears to come out of nowhere, yet it has a clear meaning for you. Or you may walk past a newsagent's and a headline catches your attention. Or the lyrics of a song that you haven't thought about for a long time suddenly keep playing over and over again in your head.

There are messages everywhere. Our job is to be open and receptive. Being open and receptive may also require letting go of our personal agendas. We all have our own wants and needs in life. We're human. Yet attachment to particular outcomes can keep us from noticing the important messages that are trying to come through.

## **OPENNESS AS AN ATTITUDE**

What is **openness**? What does it mean? To what extent does it work with a body? Does openness mean to **enter into yourself or approach others**? If I'm more open to myself does it make me more open to others? Does the openness (trust, self-confidence, acceptance) of others towards me make me more open for myself and others? Where are the boundaries of openness?

**And why should we do it anyway?**

## **DOES OPENNESS MEAN FREEDOM?**

What competences can we get through kinesthetic learning?

**The experience after the workshops shows:**

- Openness to ourselves - When I'm open I am ready to accept whatever comes

- We trust our feelings and emotions and we accept them easier
- We accept the diversity of others, their feelings and emotions
- We extend our scope of movement and the movement awareness
- We broaden our awareness, point of view, our perspective and different aspects
- We are not blind any more - the courage of not following the others' opinions/way of living increases, on the contrary, we can live in agreement with ourselves
- We can liberate ourselves
- We can get rid of stiffness of thinking
- Increasing the level of responsibility for actions - ours and our partner's
- We gain the knowledge how to do THIS
- We understand that less very often means more
- Entering yourself with acceptance makes you less scared (grounding)
- The ability to look at yourself from different perspectives
- Crossing the boundaries of one's own shyness, getting out of the comfort zone
- The inner agreement to make mistakes

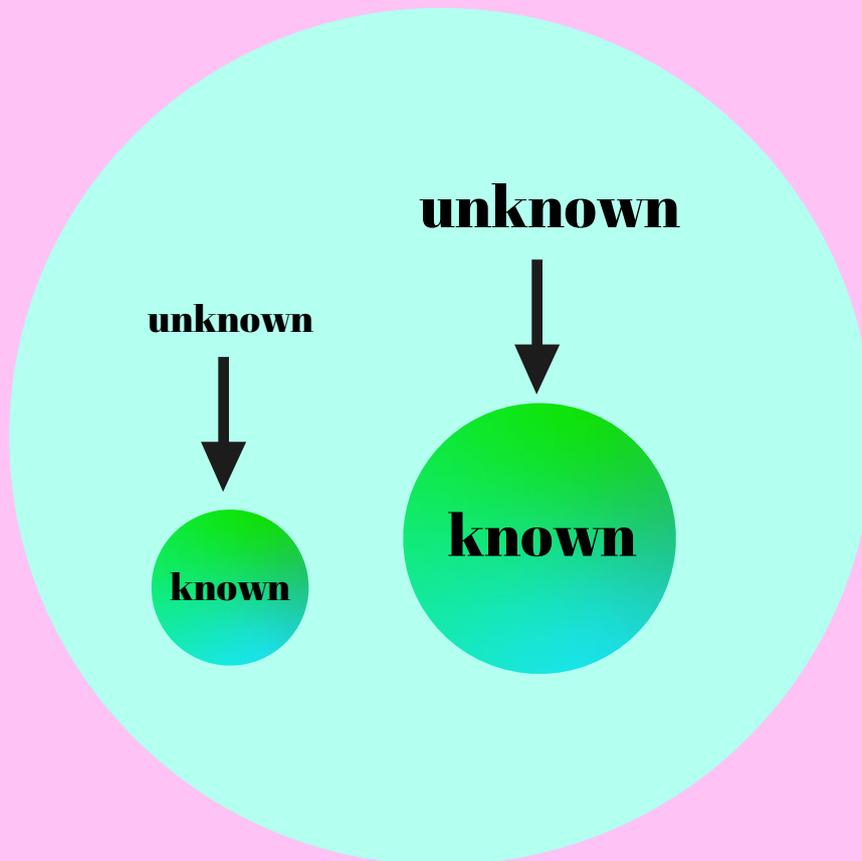
## DIVERSITY AS A VALUE

“Life is suffering” - this is a simplified version of the first noble truth of Buddhism. It is followed by the truth about the cause of suffering, truth about the end of suffering and the path to take to become free from suffering. This can be seen as a very ancient theory about developing competences because it combines practical and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skills as well as behaviour and values.

Where did it start for Buddha and where does the learning path start for anybody? It starts from being exposed to something new, previously unknown that suddenly causes a crack in our existing reality. In Buddha's case it was encountering poverty, illness and death - something new for him as a young person living in a rich castle and being protected from any outside threats. Protected from threats or protected from exposure to diversity? Protected from seeing life in its fullness?

Buddha's discovery of diversity started from a harsh challenge zone - seeing suffering in its extremes, which were intensified by his lack of experience of the world outside the castle. It was not the moment when Buddha said - DIVERSITY IS A VALUE. It is when he said - LIFE IS SUFFERING. This is when he started seeing life. However, no matter how disturbing it was, the first step towards appreciating diversity had been made - **KNOWLEDGE that diversity exists.**

And knowledge has this paradox feature discovered by Socrates - the more you know, the more you don't know. This circle shows a knowing and not-knowing process.



the size of the circle + amount of the knowledge  
the length of the circumference + amount of the unknown

Certain aspects of knowledge to have in order to move towards believing that DIVERSITY IS A VALUE are:

**Knowing myself** as well as I can in order not to arrive in a situation where I am conflicted with myself - when I unreasonably expect from myself something other than what I can give, indignation and judgementality take place. I become blind to the opportunities to

open my potential and use it for being happy. I become blind to open awareness about **the wide range options of choices inside myself**. This is also a place to remember that a human being is more than a thinking mind, a human being is also a body and interaction place of body and mind. This interaction is impossible to understand without kinesthetic learning - learning through movement of the living body in the world.

**Knowing and accepting that diversity exists** - knowledge about differences among sexes, cultures, races, political regimes, and nationalities etc. Once interacting with the outside world, a human sees that there is a wide variety in the world.

**Realisation that diversity is everywhere:** in thoughts, opinions, beliefs, perception, understanding, perspectives, experience, actions, opportunities, in our strengths and weaknesses, fears, energy, health, body, movement, dance, and learning. The diversity is not only in easy to notice things which are different from who we are but also in the processes.

**Understanding of equality.** This is not an easy one. But it once again starts from knowing myself - if I accept myself as a reality and something with rights to exist, there is no reason to doubt that this is the same for anybody else. At this stage in theory mostly but this is a step to move forward.

**Being aware of the journey** that we all experience to find our individual values and learning outcomes. Where are we united in diversity and where are we unique in diversity?

"Sure! That is absolutely clear!" says one of my friends when she has absolutely no clue what I am talking about. It took a while for me to learn that. And even if she would at that moment understand the thought part of what I say it would not mean that she

knows how to do something. **SKILLS** are crucial in order to turn knowledge into action, turn invisible into the visible. We would need to test things we know in practice to understand them, to internalise them, to make them our own, to develop skills in carrying the knowledge over in some other way than just theory. **KNOWLEDGE** items start making sense only when turned into **SKILLS**, experienced through practice. Buddha left his castle and everything he had physically to experience the world he had discovered theoretically.

**Ability to recognise your own feelings (emotions) and to respect them.** Knowing myself or self-awareness is not taken for granted. Knowledge turns into a skill when a person realises that self-awareness is an ongoing and dynamic process that needs to be practised regularly. You most likely know how it feels when somebody says - I am who I am and nothing can be done, I am born under the sign of Virgo, that makes me critical, so nothing can be done. Once I start moving around my knowledge it turns out that there are many more options. Once I develop skills at looking at my inner world, building bridges with the variety of options in the outside world, I start seeing and understanding from where I act.

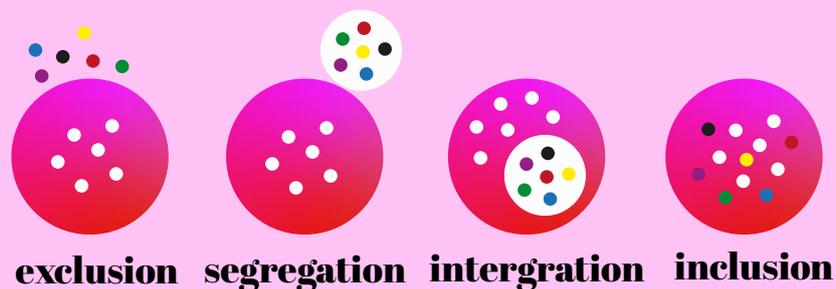
**Empathy.** It is a set of skills required to understand and relate to other people's thoughts, beliefs and feelings, and to see the world from other people's perspective, to explore the similarities and differences with oneself. I know there are different people, but without skills of empathy I don't care about that, I can't accept that it is just a fact having not much to do with myself. Get into somebody's shoes, get under somebody's skin, become somebody else - just a few idioms demonstrating how crucial in this process kinesthetic

learning is. Many dance professionals say that training and practising empathy is the main task of dance arts. We react with our bodies even if we just observe other bodies moving and even more when we move together and interact without words.

**Ability to collaborate.** Here comes another skill to learn to overcome one's attachment to ego. The fight with an illusion of ego as being the centre of the world and as the top of hierarchy is another thing Buddha talked a lot about. There are many things that are impossible to do with only two hands or one head. And what an amazing feeling it is when collaboration teaches us that we have power to have a hundred hands and thousands of voices - have it all and feel part of that, be one with others. A unison of personalities - that would be a dance terminology to talk about the collaboration. Having created something together as a group without individual ownership of different elements - this is another good example of the pleasure of collaboration. I know I did it but it would be impossible without the others, it would not be possible without giving ideas and without killing individual ideas for the sake of the common good.

**Skill to learn from each other,** to develop and to use our human potential. We can become fully human only through the experience of the whole of humanity, it is impossible, but being on that path during our lifetime is exactly the trajectory that provides ongoing growth. Karl Gustav Jung talked about the collective unconsciousness, we know we almost physically feel the experience of our ancestors, we would be different people with different histories, if we had different memories of our mothers and fathers. Just stay open - always have a space in yourself to let the experience of others enter. Despite difficulties that sometimes arise from diversity and

different people working together, it is crucial to BE together and develop the skills to gain from the dialogue and interaction. Once again - sharing physical and kinesthetic space is a perfect tool to notice how the group of people collaborate. Choose your favourite from the options below!

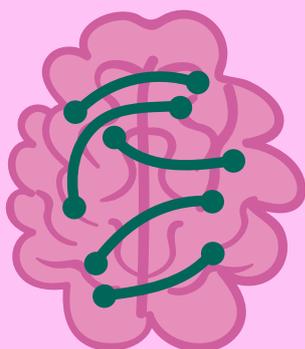


**Skill to overcome anxieties, worries and insecurities about meeting and interacting with other people** who are perceived to be “others”, different from me, someone new. Easy to say, hard to do? Sure! Some of the first steps would be looking at the things upside down - what if that person is worried about interacting with me, what if I feel scared? Is there a reason for that? Am I threatened by somebody having something different? If somebody has a tail - does it mean that in case we become friends I will also get a tail?

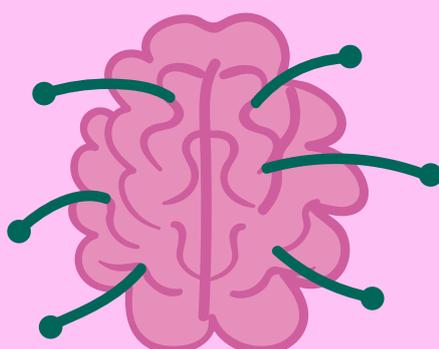
**Flexibility and adaptability** - abilities and positive attitude towards adjusting one’s thoughts, feelings or behaviour depending on context and situation. What is more comfortable - breaking

a hole in a wall in the place where there once was a door or going on a tour around to find a new door?

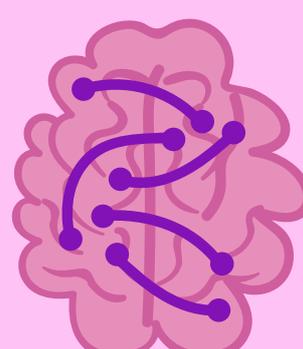
**Ability not only to learn but also to unlearn and relearn.** You learnt where the door is and now it is not there any more. What can you do? Stand and cry that there is no door? Or unlearn the door location and relearn the new door location. OK, there are no doors at all. What then? Unlearn the thing about needing doors to enter new space, windows, cracks, rooftops, underground tunnels also are great ways to get in. Move in space with your body and the solution will come.



**learn**



**unlearn**



**relearn**

**Cognitive skills** are important in any learning process and also an essential part of kinesthetic learning. Through various ways of processing information which in the kinesthetic learning process activates broader areas of the brain, not only comprehension of one's own learning process but it also helps to appreciate and value diversity.

**Improvisation skills** - dance improvisation develops kinesthetic intelligence. Intelligence helps one to be interested in another person, understand another person, feel empathy towards another person. Also towards someone VERY diverse.

Once Buddha, a dancing person, a kinesthetic learner or anybody else has passed through steps of KNOWLEDGE and learning SKILLS of experiencing and appreciating diversity through active practice, it is very likely that DIVERSITY AS A VALUE will now be not a phrase only but a true VALUE having impact also on the BEHAVIOUR in the future.

**Acceptance.** Knowing and experiencing diversity leads to the acceptance of diversity. Acceptance becomes not only an inner value, a compass for life but it is also something easy to notice in behaviour.

*From local activity with young people in Athens, Greece.  
Photo by Niki Louladaki.*



**Respect towards yourself and others.** This value is also expressed through behaviour. It means giving space and time to yourself and others, allowing things to unfold, not trying to push some pre-existing ideas through, in a way it means following the river of life, respecting it, changing nature and appreciating it. Diversity should be positively regarded, appreciated and cherished because it develops us as individuals and enriches us as societies.

Once diversity is seen as a value it brings with it curiosity and appreciation of “something new” / **looking forward to engaging in new experiences.**

Despite diversity, it is crucial to remember that all people share common humanity, have equal dignity and are entitled to equal respect.

As any idea, especially all good ideas, DIVERSITY AS A VALUE can also be turned into something exactly opposite to the initial good intentions. This could happen when the overall compass of human rights and values is broken. This means that there is a chance that, while hiding behind a value of being different and free, even crimes can be committed. Freedom and diversity (of opinions, views, beliefs, life-styles, choices, speech, and actions) are crucial, nevertheless, they should not harm and undermine the rights, opportunities and freedoms of other people and society. Just one example:

# **Hate speech is not free speech**

**Every time hate speech is permitted  
it costs someone part of his or her self,  
part of their self-respect, or part  
of their sanity. It rips people to shreds  
and destroys society.**

Looking once again at Buddhism as an example of a competence making process, it is important to remember that initially it was not a religion but an ethical system, a value compass to carry through life through individual practice and everyday actions mostly oriented towards self-growth. It was about finding one's own way. As they say - knowing the route and taking it is not the same thing. However, it is not easy, so over time certain shortcuts were born, turning the ethical system into a religion, that at times contradict the initial intentions. The form started being different from the contents.

This is just a gentle reminder that any strict propaganda, especially the one of diversity, contradicts its essence. Even if once again the intention is good, there is no way the values can be planted directly and boldly without an individual journey through the acquisition of knowledge, developing of skills and then arriving at values that are internalised and start forming behaviour from within. Not because mother, father or God told us it is good to act like that, but because it is your own choice coming from knowledge and experience. And once again remember that learning processes can be different in form, speed, duration etc. The only thing which is certain is that in order to start learning one needs to exit through the gates into the world and start interacting with people, start moving together in a space to learn from the life flow through our individual and shared bodies, through humans, animals, plants and stones. So different in shapes, colours, sizes, ways of dancing, so equal in rights to dignity and respect.

# 5.

## Descriptions of exercises

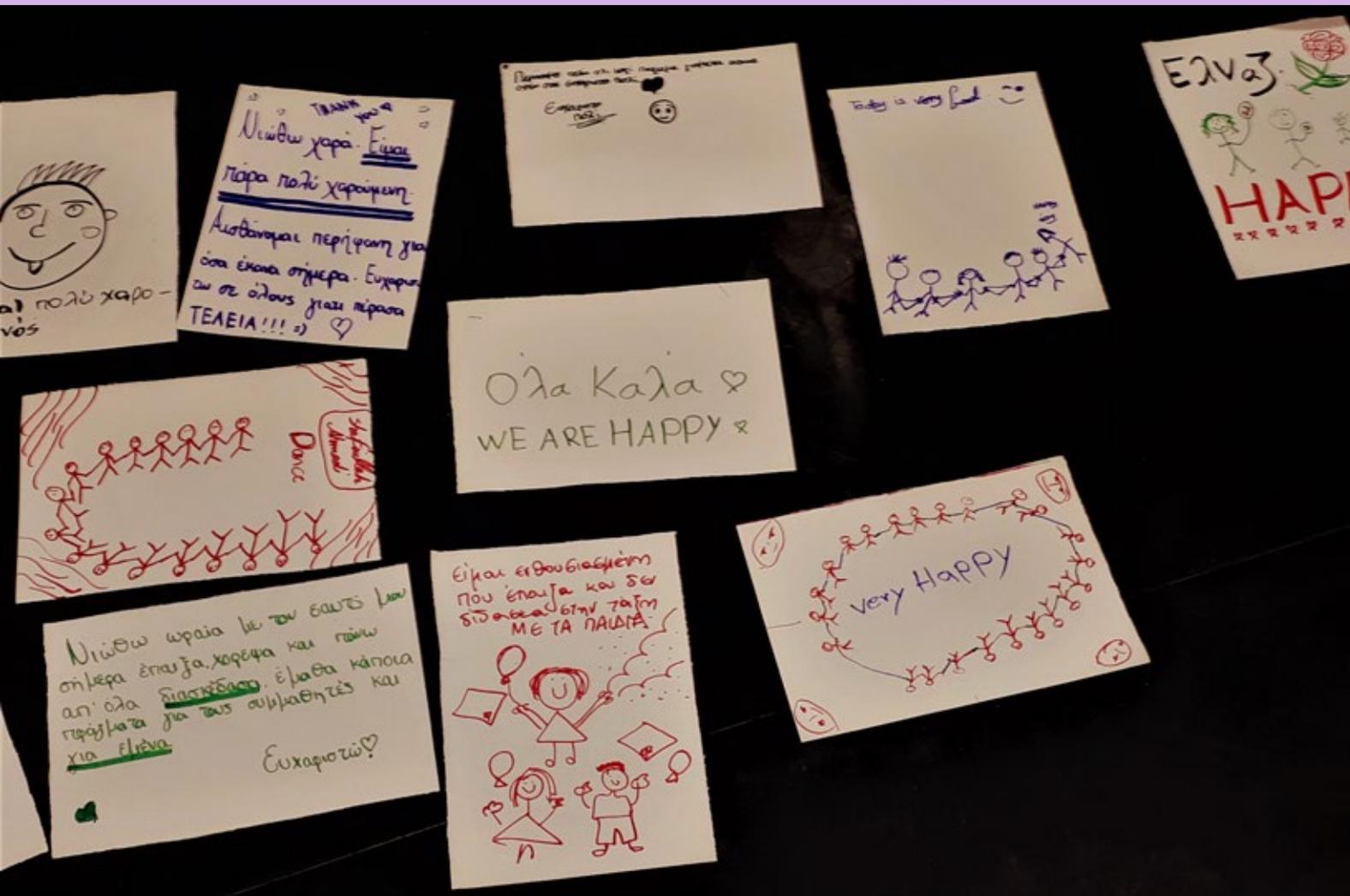
During the project, each national team carried out five workshops with local young people. The workshops were designed and carried out collaboratively among the members within the national

team. The main task was to create new kinesthetic learning tools and methods that can be used in youth work. Here you have descriptions of all the workshops containing the intention, development of the exercises, notes from the facilitators, and examples of questions for the reflection part to get the learning outcome. Please, notice that every national team presents their class activities slightly differently! Find your favourite and most easy to read version!

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia.  
Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



## CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SELF / by the GREEK TEAM



From local activity with young people in Athens, Greece.  
Photo by Niki Louladaki.

### I. UNFOLDING

**CREATED BY** NikiLouladaki, Kiriaki-Maria Papalitsa, Sofia Paspapropoulou, Thaleia Giannakopoulou, Ilektra Tzilali (intern at Pepsae), Maria Roumkou, Anastasia Lampaki (RHODES VOLUNTEERS COMMUNITY) with the participation of stu-

dents from the “Experimental Intercultural High School of Athens”, in Athens, Greece. 21.02.2020.

**ANNOTATION:** unfolding-critical understanding of self: unfolding possibilities; unfolding creativity; unfolding hope & joy; unfolding self-awareness.

**Intention:** to explore the possibilities of self by being part of a group. To build trust, to unfold creativity and self-awareness. To re-establish hope & joy.

**DURATION:** 3 hours

**Target group:** 19 young people (age of 13-16) and 2 teachers (age around 35-45). **Approach:** non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement, rhythm and dance.

**Description of exercises.**

### **INTRO - THE TEAM'S CONTRACT.**

At the beginning of the meeting, before we start playing, we need to set the rules of our collaboration. A big piece of paper is on the wall and every member of the group can say and/or write the rules she/he believes are essential for her/him for the feelings of being safe, respected and welcomed in this workshop to be established.

Note: Recommended for groups that haven't had any previous cooperation. The team's contract ensures that all members have equal rights and responsibilities within the group. They define the framework of its operation and establish the “safe” way to conduct it.

Observation Notes: different language was a barrier. Some

of the kids don't speak, understand or write in Greek. Most of the group members speak English. Two of the members had to translate in Arabic and Turkish language for those who don't speak English. We had to give time to explain what a contract means. When they understood the importance of the contract and felt accepted despite the language barrier, they responded positively and participated. The members wrote these 5 rules :1. Not to make fuss 2. No fights 3. Not to laugh at others 4. No cheating 5. No mocking. Although they created a beautiful multilanguage contract, we had to remind them the first rule (1. Not to make fuss) many times, but this is normal when we work with kids or teenagers.

### **ICE BREAKING:**

we introduce ourselves or re-introduce ourselves to the group.

**Intention:** to start unfolding by being introduced and accepted.

#### **1. I come with...**

A small ball passes from hand to hand. Every person who holds the ball says their name and shares the feeling/way they come here today. "I come with... joy/fear/expectations/with my phone/on foot" etc.

Observation Notes: positive attitude, participation and joy that made participants feel more relaxed and active!

#### **2. I like....**

The one holding the ball repeats his/her name and what he/she likes, such as I am Niki and I like music. Those from the group that have the same taste in music, take a step towards the centre of the

circle. They return to their position and the person holding the ball throws it to anyone in the circle to repeat the procedure.

### **3. In my rhythm...**

- In a circle. The first rhythm is simple (4/4) and works as a base for exploration and playfulness. We clap our hands and move our body in the basic rhythm and tempo. Gradually adding such qualities as loud, soft, fast, slow. Once the group feels secure in the rhythm, the coordinators start to encourage the members to improvise using the basic rhythm as a safety net and to create their own rhythmical line connected to the group and to express themselves freely at the same time.

Observation Notes: maybe it was too soon! They felt embarrassed. The coordinators took the first step but only few followed. Icebreaking exercises accomplished their purpose and appear to have created connections and intimacy among the members.

The group keeps the basic rhythm in a circle. We choose one person (by looking at him/her) and we meet in the centre of the circle to have a rhythm . We go back to our places and the next couple comes into the centre of the circle.

Observation Notes: members are active and participative. Some of them even try to change the rhythm and lead the activity. A good sign is that they start to feel the process as their own. We had a lot of fun!

At the end of this game we gave colourful paper bags to the members. These bags are going to be their secret place where they will keep all the things they are about to discover next.

## **BODY WORK 1 - WALKING THROUGH...**

**Intention:** to explore interaction with space and pace. Reconnect with body parts (isolating body parts and letting them dance).

Alertness and explosiveness in motion.

**Preparation:** free walking in the space following the beat of the music. We walk in different ways and conditions (tiny steps, large steps, on slippery ground, on hot sand etc.)

Observation Notes: Due to the language barrier members couldn't exactly understand the directions but they were so fascinated by the fabrics and the colors that they ended up suggesting their own version of the exercise. It was a positive twist on the process and was adopted instantly by the coordinators.

**Observation Notes:** too many orders too fast seemed to confuse some of the participants due to the language barrier. They followed the movement of others.

### **1. Signs, choices & alertness.**

In the three versions/stages of this game, the coordinators informed the group that there will be a particular sound signal indicating the pause of movement and/or the end of the task. During this pause the coordinators give the next task. Free walking in the space following the beat of the music. With the signal we stop moving (pause) and we are asked to choose one part of our body

which we let dance to the music (while the rest of the body is still in pause). With the next signal we start walking again. We repeat by choosing another part of our body every time, until the whole body is awake and engaged to dance.

Observation Notes: It could last longer. They had fun!

Walking in a circle following the beat of the music. With the first sound signal we start walking backwards. By the next signal forward. The changes get faster and faster and the group must be alert and energetic to follow the instructions.

Observation Notes: They enjoyed every second of this exercise!

## **2. My colour...**

**Intention:** initiative. To unveil hidden qualities. Reconnect with the best qualities of ourselves without being too exposed (that is why we use the fabric and the colour as intermediate objects of expression). The space is decorated with many fabrics in different colours. The coordinators ask the members to look around and pick a colour, the colour they like the most, and move on to it.

The colour we picked has the power to give us an extraordinary ability that we would like to have. What extraordinary ability are we being given by the colour? Now the members of the group can write down this ability on a piece of paper and throw the paper in the small bag given to them at the beginning of the meeting.

*Armed* with this extraordinary ability, the members of the group are asked to move freely and begin to explore the space in all its levels (ground, mid-level, upright) and towards all directions.

Observation Notes: the members had difficulty in moving in all levels and walking freely in the space. They seemed to find hard to break the habit of walking in a circle.

We choose a spot in the space from where we start. Then we choose a direction in which we want to go. This route will need to be made in extreme weather conditions (strong winds, overheating, freezing cold, the road is uphill, slippery, etc.), but we are armed with that extraordinary ability of our colour. Whatever we choose to do in this test is acceptable. There is no right or wrong, we can stop, go back, wait for the weather to improve. When the game ends, we write something we felt during the game or something we found out about ourselves on a card. It will be placed in our bag and no one will see it.

Observation Notes: again the language barrier made it a bit difficult for some of the members to participate. Although they had peers to translate for them, they ended up following the moves other members made instead of expressing themselves.

*From local activity with young people in Athens, Greece.  
Photo by Niki Louladaki.*



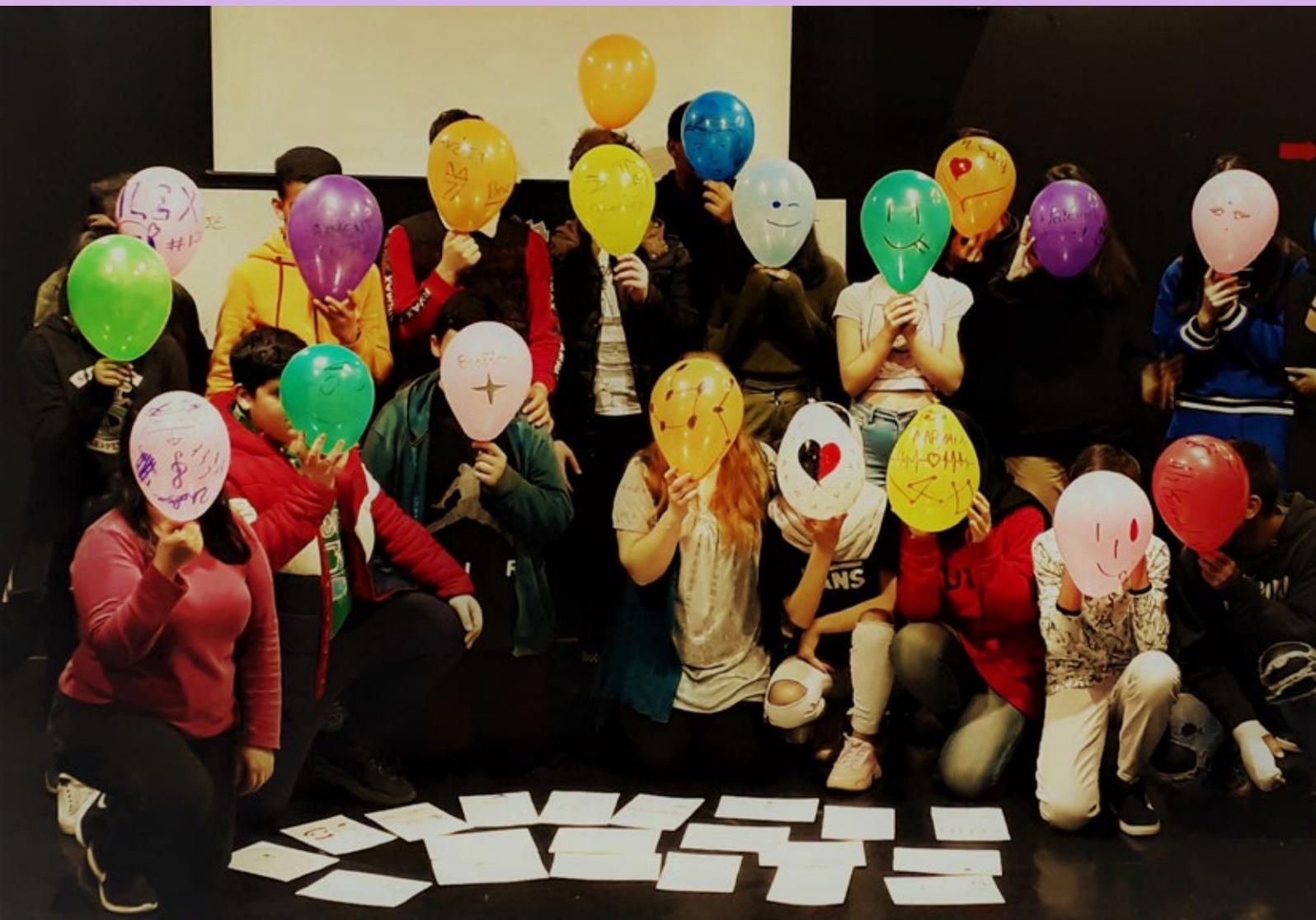
### 3. *This balloon is mine...*

**Intention:** uniqueness in the spotlight. Connection with a variety of feelings and behaviours. (A delicate matter that has to be approached with care. The balloon, as an intermediate object, provides to the group a safe way to express without being exposed and/or hurt).

Balloons in many colours are available. Each member chooses a balloon and draws/writes a symbol or word that will be their signature and in this way marks the balloon as their own.

#### Observation Notes: Amazing drawings!

*From local activity with young people in Athens, Greece.  
Photo by Niki Louladaki.*



## TIME FOR A BREAK WITH SNACKS AND RELAXATION IN THE GARDEN!

We dance / play with our balloons with different parts of our body and in any way we want. We get to know it well. It becomes part of our body.

**Observation Notes:** the members found it hard to work with themselves and their balloon. They seemed to prefer the interaction with others.

***Short balloon stories:*** the directive is that our balloon guides us through its short stories and transmits what it feels like.

Our balloon leads us to different situations and feelings:

- We are in a place where it is raining and our balloon is scared... What do we do?
- Our balloon is very happy and it draws us to share its joy.
- Our balloon is in danger... What is our reaction?
- Our balloon is very angry... It drives us into its anger... What is our reaction?
- Our balloon is bored...
- Our balloon is sad... It drives us into its sadness... What is our reaction?
- Our balloon is shy... What do we do to help it overcome its shyness?
- Our balloon is undecided... What to choose? Go up or down? Right or left?
- Our balloon is tired... What do we do?
- Our balloon is beautiful and happy!

Observation Notes: Despite the language barrier (again!), somehow the members managed to respond to the instructions and create beautiful improvisations. The great success is that no one left the activity!

## **BODY WORK II - TOGETHER**

**Intention:** Connection and collaboration.

### **1. Lead the way....**

We are divided into 4 groups and we make 4 lines where everyone has their hands on the shoulders of the person standing in front of them. We all have our eyes closed except for the person who is first in line and will be our driver. Each line is led by its leader, who is the only one with open eyes. Leaders make sure their team is moving in space with safety and among other teams. All members of each line will become leaders and have the opportunity to lead the team. At the end all the lines become one big line.

Observation Notes: the alternative instruction for those who don't feel safe to keep their eyes closed is to have them open and look down. This was used by some members as a chance to play around and tease each other. Two of the lines took the instructions seriously and tried their best. This exercise revealed the difficulty of the members to trust and have a responsibility. That all changed, when all the lines became one. Suddenly they stopped laughing and tease each other and started to enjoy the process.

## **2. Mirror...**

In pairs, we stand opposite each other and one member suggests moves while the other mirrors them. We change roles so that both members of the couple can propose their own moves.

Observation Notes: they tried their best. We felt they were a bit afraid to suggest moves and kept it on the safe ground of imitating each other. They transformed the instruction into a "Group Mirroring" exercise. The positive aspect is that members feel safe enough to adjust the exercises into something they are willing to follow.

## **3. Cooperation...**

In pairs:

we try to walk with a balloon between our shoulders. We can't let it fall down; we try the same thing with the balloon between our backs; and between our heads.

**OBSERVATION NOTE:** Fun! Fun! Fun!

## **4. Dance the traditional Greek way...**

Hug dance: observe and do what others do!

**Intention:** a group dance. All together! Each and everyone is special and important for what is happening! Extensions to how society works. We cannot survive alone. Observation, Collaboration, Coexistence. In a semicircle using handkerchiefs, we hold hands and we follow the leader of the dance. We dance in a circle and when the leader gives the sign, the first pair of the line forms a "bridge" with their arms. The rest of the group passes under the

“bridge” without leaving hands. When the last person passes the “bridge”, the first “hug” is made with the hand of the second person of the pair lying on the shoulder of their partner. The dance ends when all the members are in the position of the “hug”.

**Dance in three:** in a semicircle using handkerchiefs, we hold hands and we follow the leader of the dance. Every person in the circle is important, everyone will become a leader.

Observation Notes: it was a surprise! Most of the members are from different cultures and at first they felt a bit awkward. But, curiosity prevailed and they started to dance. Surprisingly the moment the dance started everyone was focused on the process. No fuss, no laughs, just dance! They felt safe, special and calm in this group activity!

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

We discussed how we felt throughout the workshop. What was difficult to understand, what we enjoyed, what was boring etc.

The coordinators ask the members of the group to capture on a card their experience from the workshop in any way they like (it can be a drawing or just words) and finally to write a word or phrase that describes the overall feeling of the workshop.

Observation Notes: not much of a discussion due to the language barrier. The members told us that their class was the only one which had to come to the workshop while the rest of the school was going for a walk to the park. We felt it was

extremely frustrating for them. We think it is amazing how they engaged the process, despite their frustration, how they made the most out of it and how much trust they offered us in such a short time.

They created feedback card. Most of the feelings are positive! They asked us to prepare feedback cards for them and they put them on the wall of their classroom right next to the blackboard!

## II. SELF REFLECTIONS

**CREATED BY Greek national team: Niki Louladaki, Kiriaki Maria Papalitsa, Sophie Papaspyropoulou. Stelalena Nalmpanti, Anastasia Lampaki, Maria Roumkou. (P.E.P.S.A.E.E , Rhodes Volunteer Community). Date: 17/05/2020**

**ANNOTATION: prior to introducing the exercises which will take place in our seminar, we would like to state that our goal, which we have set up when we were trying to interpret in a practical way what exactly understanding of self is our participants to understand themselves through their answers a variety of questions relate their preferences. Certainly, our participants after be involved in exercises which test the cooperation, trust, leadership skills, following or guidance skills, will answer questions such as: under which circumstances did you feel more comfortable or embarrassed, confident or disbelief? In accordance with the feelings stimulated during the exercises mentioned, we strongly believe that the participants will create a more concrete image for themselves, especially in the field of their confidence with**

people that they don't know very well, as well as in the field of leadership skills, of taking initiatives and of cooperating. In this way they will achieve better self-aware.

**Intention:** understanding of self, self-awareness-trust building-connection-cooperation- initiative.

**DURATION:** 3 hours

**TARGET GROUP:** 20 young people age 15-22

**APPROACH:** non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement, rhythm and dance.

*From local activity with young people in Athens, Greece.  
Photo by Niki Louladaki.*



about the following questions, try to give fast answers to themselves, but not to announce these answers to the team:

*Do I trust or not someone that I don't know very well?*

*Do I like cooperating with others or not?*

*Do I prefer being the leader rather than following someone?*

*How do I react when I take initiatives?*

After the time of consideration has passed, we explain to our participants that they will be involved in exercises which will make them come into better conclusions about themselves in the field of their confidence with people that they don't know very well, as well as in the field of leadership skills, of taking initiatives and of cooperating.

### **Description of exercises.**

#### **BREAKING ICE.**

Duration of the exercises belonging in this unit in total: approximately 30 minutes

#### **1. Here we are...let the rhythm start (5-7 min)**

**Intention:** team building. Self presentation. Contact.

In a circle we start building a basic rhythm (clap your hands or use your feet etc.);

We keep the beat and one person says his/her name (e.g. Maria) the group responds (hello Maria) the second person follows / the group responds etc., until all members have said their name and received the welcome from the group;

We repeat the same, only this time every person who says his/her name makes a move. The group responds by saying the name and doing the move.

## **2. Chain of energy (10 min)**

**Intention:** Group dynamic. Focus. Speed. Contact.

People standing in a circle and passing a tennis ball in the circle;  
Gradually more and more tennis balls start to be involved in the circle.

At the end, it can be as many as there are people in the group;

Change the direction of the ball's travelling in the circle;

Balls can be passed to anyone in the circle BUT first eye contact should happen and then attention to the ball. Start from one and then add more balls to the game;

Walking in space balls can be passed to anyone in the group BUT first eye contact should happen and then attention to the ball.

Start from one and then add more balls to the game. Increase the speed.

**Challenge:** Do not let the balls hit the ground! Increase the speed!

Keep the energy chain (ball journey) even (do not drop it!) Pay attention to not lose eye contact, when it is needed.

## **3. Dancing Game (7 min)**

**Intention:** Observation skills. Contact. Group dynamic. The use of traditional Greek dance to empower the contact between the members.

The coordinator chooses one person to stand next to him/her. The selection is based on a common external feature (colour of clothes or shoes, height, hair colour, etc.).

Now this person chooses the next one based on the same terms (external feature) and asks him/her to stand next to him/her.

This process continues until everyone is next to each other and holding hands creating a semicircle.

The music starts and the leader of the circle (the coordinator) asks the members to follow his/her steps.

Note: if there are members who come from different cultures they can be held using handkerchiefs instead of bare hands.

### **STEP ANALYSIS:**

1. everyone turns their bodies 3/4 to their right side;
2. starting with the right foot we do 3 steps forward (right, left, right);
3. the left foot hits the ground twice;
4. change of direction to the left side and repeat;
5. three steps to the left (left, right, left);
6. the right foot hits the ground twice.

After every four changes of direction, the leader moves from the head of the semicircle to the end (with free style dance) while the rest of the group continues the dance. All the members become leaders.

## **COOPERATION - TRUST ACTIVITIES (45 min)**

### **1. Walking & Connecting**

**Intention:** Contact. Self-presentation. Initiative.

Walking in the space and:

- With every person we meet we stop and have eye contact with him/her. We separate and move on to the next meeting;
- With every person we meet we start a dialogue with our arms;
- With every person we meet we start a dialogue with our feet & legs;
- With every person we meet we share a hug.

## **2. Leave it to me!**

**Intention:** handle being the leader. Handle being the follower.

Connection. Responsibility. Trust in each other.

### **First Part:**

- The coordinator asks the members to choose their couple;
- One person from each couple will be the Guide and the other will be the Follower. The Follower has his/her eyes closed;
- The Guide has his/her eyes open and holds the hand of his/her partner;
- The Guide travels around the space leading his/her partner with safety;
- When the coordinator asks for it, the couples change roles.

### **Second Part:**

- The team remains in couples;
- Now the couples have to decide with which part of their bodies they will be connected until the exercise finishes;
- Again the couple is divided to Guide and Follower;
- The Follower closes his/her eyes, and lets the Guide lead him/her;
- When the coordinator asks for it, the couples change roles.

## **2. Many bodies, one soul**

**Intention:** Connection. Cooperation.

The team gathers in one circle;

Everybody sits on the floor with the members to the right or to the left facing the back of the person who sits in front of them;

The members put their ear on the back of the person who sits in front of them and try to start breathing in the way of that person;

The challenge for the whole team is to cooperate and connect with each other on such a great level, so if someone out of the circle looks at them, they have to seem like one body breathing.

### **3. In pendulum we fall...**

**Intention:** Build of trust. Responsibility.

The group is divided in sub groups of five:

- One member of each sub-group stands with a straight body, his/her eyes closed, feet in parallel position and arms crossed at the chest level, touching the shoulders. He/she is the Person who falls;
- Four people surround the Person who falls in the shape of a cross (one person supports the front part of the Person who falls' body, one is at the back part and two supporting the right and left side). They are the Board of Trust;
- The Board of Trust touches with their hands the body of the Person who falls to show him/her that they are there ready to catch him/her when he/she decides to fall;
- The Person who falls decides the first move. He/she either falls front or back or on one of the two sides. The Board of Trust catches him/her and starts throwing him/her at each other. The movement of the body resembles that of a pendulum. The Person who falls must keep his/her feet on the ground and his/her body - straight.

### **4. The Broom Dance (based on the traditional Greek dance)**

**Intention:** Connection. Initiative. Self-confidence. Attention. Concentration. Fun.

- All the members are divided into couples. And one more person holds the broom;
- The music starts and the couples dance (like doing a waltz) while the person with the broom whips the dance floor;
- The person with the broom gives the signal (by saying "change")

- and then the couples must split and find another partner;
- The person with the broom puts it down and tries to find a partner as fast as he/she can;
  - Once the couples are formed the member who doesn't have a couple takes the broom;
  - The game ends when all the members of the group have danced with the broom.

## **EXERCISES FOR BUILDING STRONG INITIATIVE (30 min)**

### **1. *Dance Captains* (5-7 min)**

**Intention:** handle being the leader, initiative, cooperation.

- We find a spot in the room and stand there facing the same direction others do;
- One of the coordinators becomes the *Captain*;
- The *Captain* shows dance moves to the group;
- The group copies the moves;
- The *Captain* changes his orientation/direction and that is the sign that another person who is now standing in the front line (due to the change of direction) becomes the *Captain*. But who from the front line will be the *Captain* ?
- The members of each front line can take a quick look at the people next to them and take responsibility to become the *Captain* if no one else does;
- Then the *Captain* changes orientation/direction and another line becomes the front line...another person chooses to become the *Captain*. This goes on and on! For sure, there'll be mistakes but the laughter will be great!

## **2. Let's Dance (15 min)**

**Intention:** taking initiative, developing the capacity of being the follower, connection, cooperation.

- We walk in the room in pairs;
- We show our partner the part of our body we are dancing with now;
- We can change the part of our body we dance with or decide we want to dance with more parts.
- The roles between pairs change with a clap of hands by the coordinator.

## **EXPLORING & SHARING... EMOTIONS**

### **1. The Dance of Emotions! (30 min)**

**Intention:** self-expression, non-verbal communication, empathy, Cooperation, insight - self-awareness => Emotional intelligence Development.

#### **Step 1:**

- The coordinators have written emotions/emotional states down on colourful cards. 3 pairs of opposite emotions/emotional states: (Such as: Joy-Sadness, Satisfaction-Disappointment, Interest-Boredom) (Alternatives: Anger-Love, Fear-Safety, Anxiety/Stress-Calmness/Relaxation);
- Participants are separated into sub-groups. (Sub-groups can be created randomly or according to a common characteristic/attribute of the participants, a favourite fruit, colour, artist etc.);
- We put the cards in different bowls and we hand them to the sub-groups. All emotional pairs are given to all sub-groups;
- Each participant picks a card, reads it and takes some time to

think about the last time they felt this way. They DON'T reveal the emotion/emotional state to the other members of their sub-group;

- A few minutes are given to each participant to prepare a short sequence of moves by using their upper body (torso, hands, head) to express that emotion/emotional state;
- After that, participants demonstrate to the members of their sub-groups their short choreographies and the rest of the members try to guess which emotion/emotional state is being demonstrated.

**Note:** They are free to share with the sub-group if they have also experienced the same emotion/emotional state themselves in the past (optional).

### **Step 2:**

- The emotion cards have numbers on them. The numbers are also pinned on different places in the room;
- Each participant finds their card's number in the room and goes there. In this way, new sub-groups are created based on the emotion/emotional states that were chosen by the participants in Step 1;
- Their mission is to share their sequences of moves and create a new choreography that includes all dancing aspects of the same emotion;
- The target here is to set an environment in which cooperation and exchange of views and moves will flourish!;
- When the new choreographies are ready, the sub-groups sit down and through discussion we all together try to find the

opposite emotional pairs, the antidote for each emotion/emotional state;

- Each pair (sub-group) takes the stage and has an emotional dance dialogue.

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

**Body Relaxation:** We relax our bodies with some yoga exercises. Through that, we are ready for a productive conversation for the evaluation of all this act;

**Consideration Time:** we give ourselves some time to evaluate everything that happened today. The coordinators suggest that everyone should lie down on the floor, close their eyes and with the accompaniment of chill music, think of all the positive or perhaps the negative impressions;

### **My shield (closing exercise)**

**Intention:** reflection, insight - self-awareness, resilience, inspiration/motivation, strengths discovery => Self-confidence building.

We give the participants time to reminisce about all our meetings, to remember the activities, their feelings, the sense on their bodies, the way they experienced the tasks, their relationships with the other members and the coordinators;

1. How would they describe the overall experience?
2. Did they gain anything?
3. What things would they want to remember?
4. What did they learn about themselves?

We provide them with sheets with printed shields and we ask them to write/draw/paint all the strengths they discovered thanks to the Key to Connection's Workshops. They may keep and, of course, use their shield from now on!

**Conversation and Evaluation:** we talk with the other participants about today's act. We let them openly express their feelings (positive or negative). We ask them to answer again the questions which they had thought about at the beginning of the workshop, and tell us if they give different answers. We wish to hear from you about moments that maybe made you feel uncomfortable. The reason for this act is to express our feelings during this day and to come to know ourselves a little bit more. At the end, we ask our participants to write down in a few sentences what they will keep from today's class!

## **RESOURCES**

Links we have used for the Greek dance (music and steps) in the exercise of Dancing Game:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBEIWGXdoH4&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EI2sAqYG49M&feature=youtu.be>

The link which was used for the Broom Dance Exercise:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBCSMx7piFE>

### III. STRONG ALONE, UNSTOPPABLE TOGETHER

**CREATED BY:** Stelalena Nalmpanti, Anastasia Lampaki, Maria Roumkou (Rhodes Volunteer Community), Niki Louladaki, Sofia Papaspyropoulou, Kiriaki - Maria Papalitsa (P.E.P.S.A.E.E.), 10.05.2020 online via the Zoom platform.

**ANNOTATION:** The following exercise sheet structures our attempt to conduct a first online workshop. Based on the thematic Critical Understanding of Self, we have tried to include exercises through which we hope that participants will reach a deeper co-existence of themselves, this time not only through their intermingling and contact with others, but more through the discovery of their body, and the way they can express themselves through it. So there are exercises that model remote cooperation, and subject individuals to processes of initiative or follow-through, in order for participants to discover how they function in these situations and to draw conclusions about specific aspects of their personality. However, particular attention was also given to exercises aimed at relaxing and clearing the body, while aiming, perhaps in the long term, at the achievement of goals more related to the attainment of self-awareness, exercises that still rely on techniques that participants can use afterwards to relax and eliminate stress, particularly useful for those days when there is a pervasive uncertainty and anxiety about the future. Our project of conducting an online workshop is certainly an attempt at initiation and adaptation, both on our part, as infiltrators, and on the part of the participants, to new ways of communication, imposed by

the particular circumstances that prevail.

**Intention:** To explore the possibilities of raising self-awareness through body work and relaxation practices.

**DURATION:** 2 hours.

**TARGET GROUP:** twelve participants, most of them students, aged 19-25 years old, facing geographical obstacles and a lack of access to kinesthetic education activities. (Two of them were also NEET - NOT in education, employment or training).

**APPROACH:** non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance

## Description of exercises

### 1. *Let's meet* (15 minutes)

**Intention:** Getting to know the participants, establishing a friendly and safe environment.

One by one as the facilitators see them on the screen, each participant addresses a greeting to the group and simply announces his/her name.

One of the facilitators announces that everyone should give some information about themselves, any information they wish (student status, hobbies, activities, etc.) and once they have finished giving information, they should say the name of another participant so that they can speak.

**Notes:** The purpose of the second part is to test everyone's ability to memorize, to see how many names they can remember, and how many names they can remember better (and if a name is heard that doesn't exist at all in the group, we can laugh a little, to break the ice).

tion seemed more uncomfortable. In the audience we had two left-handed people who said that the anticlockwise way was more comfortable, which at first we thought was reasonable, but then it struck us that some right-handed people claimed the same for the reason mentioned above.

*From digital activity with young people in Greece.  
Snapshot from session .*



## 2. **Walking Meditation** (Duration 8-10 minutes)

**Intention:** Relaxing the mind

- Find a place inside or outside where you can walk in a circle;
- Walk on the same path, each time you circle, during the exercise;
- Start walking anticlockwise, walking comfortably. Breathe effort-

lessly. This is the direction of many race tracks. Walk for about five minutes, focusing your eyes on the trail, but allowing yourself to become aware of your surroundings;

- Rest for a moment outside the circle you were walking in;
- Now, walk the same path clockwise for about five minutes. What did you notice about the different directions? Do you feel or think differently? Which way was more comfortable? Which way seemed more annoying to you?

Observation Notes: We addressed the above questions to the participants immediately after completing the exercise. Some argued that their clockwise rotation was more comfortable, because they were more used to moving in this way. Some stated that, because they first walked anticlockwise for a certain period of time, they got used to it, and then, the clockwise rotation seemed more uncomfortable. In the audience we had two left-handed people who said that the anticlockwise way was more comfortable, which at first we thought was reasonable, but then it struck us that some right-handed people claimed the same for the reason mentioned above.

### 3. **Choreographers** (Duration 10 minutes)

**Intention:** Cooperation, taking the initiative, activating participants.

- The participants are divided into groups, preferably equal in number;
- In the individual groups, one member starts by making a move of his own, the next member repeats the previous member's move and adds one of his own and the exercise continues until each member has added his own move;

- All groups do the same exercise at the same time, so each participant must keep their attention focused on the icons of their group members and not get confused by looking at the movements of others;
- When all groups have created their own choreography, they start performing their choreographies at the same time;
- The facilitators, after a short period of time, can start to give the following instructions:
- “With the clapping of our hands you do the choreography faster (the rhythm can be given by clapping hands, each clap signalling the end of the movement performed and the start of the next one).”
- “With the clapping of our hands, you do the choreography backwards, from the end to the beginning.”

**Observation Notes:** This exercise did not succeed. Firstly because of connection barriers (not all participants could connect to Zoom via a computer and that brought difficulties to the way they were able to view other participants using their mobile phone). On top of that, the sound of the claps arrived with delays and some people told us they couldn't hear them at all. The online version might not be fully successful, but this activity could be a powerful asset for live workshops!

#### 4. **The Mirror** (Duration 10 minutes)

**Intention:** Cooperation, taking the initiative, sequence

- The facilitators divide the participants into pairs;
- Each person has to watch the icon of his/her pair and perform the movement shown as if it were his/her mirror;
- With a clap of the facilitator's hands, the roles are alternated.

**Observation Notes:** This particular exercise didn't go badly. A slight problem arose, because the image was arriving a bit out of sync, so it was not possible to achieve the continuous flow that this exercise requires.

## 5. **Stress management** (Progressive Neuromuscular Relaxation Technique) (Duration 20 minutes)

**Intention:** Self-awareness, focus on how our body works.

- Lie with your back on the ground, always making sure that you are insulated from it with a cover. Make sure that your head is aligned with your spine, your hands on the sides of the body, with your palms open upwards and your feet slightly apart;
- Close your eyes;
- Dominant hand and arm: make a fist, vigorously clenching the fingers, but allowing the brachial plexus to remain relaxed. Hold the tension for 5-7 seconds. Relax and notice the difference between tension and relaxation. Repeat 3 times;
- Brachial plexus of the dominant arm: press the elbow down towards the mattress without pressing the arm. Hold the tension for 5-7 seconds. Relax and note the difference between tension and relaxation. Repeat 3 times;
- Other hand and arm: follow the same instructions as for the dominant hand and arm. [Repeat 3 times];
- Brachial plexus of the other arm: follow the same instructions as for the brachial plexus of the dominant arm. Repeat 3 times;
- Forehead: raise the eyebrows and crinkle your forehead as much as possible. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;
- Cheeks and nose: squeeze the eyes tightly and wrinkle the nose strongly. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;

- Lower part of the face: clench your teeth and pull back the edges of your mouth. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;
- Neck: squeeze your neck muscles as if you were trying to open and close at the same time your jaw. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;
- Chest, shoulders and back: take a deep breath and hold it. Pull your shoulder blades up. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;
- Abdomen: squeeze the muscles of your abdomen as if you are trying to simultaneously pull outwards and at the same time inwards with your stomach. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;
- Thigh of the dominant leg: tighten all the muscles of your thigh as much as possible. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;
- Calf of the dominant leg: pull your toes upwards with your fingers. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;
- Sole of the dominant foot: turn the toes and the sole of the foot downwards and gently massage your toes together. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;
- Thigh of the other leg: tighten all the muscles of your thigh as much as possible. Keep the tension. Relax. Repeat 3 times;
- Calf of the other leg: follow the instruction as for the calf of the dominant leg. Repeat 3 times;
- Sole of the other foot: follow the same instructions as for the sole of the dominant foot. Repeat 3 times.

**Notes: Do not proceed to the next step, until you have fully relaxed the previous muscle group!**

Observation Notes: participants commented that the repetitions were too many. Maybe try to repeat just twice?

## **6. General therapeutic meditation with colour**

(Duration 10 minutes)

**Intention:** Relaxation, body awareness

- Sit comfortably with your eyes closed;
- Start by breathing slowly and rhythmically;
- Visualise a golden beam of light in front of you or above your head;
- As you inhale, imagine the colour going inside you or visualise your body moving inside the light;
- Feel the light moving through your entire body. Feel its energy sanctifying, penetrating and unblocking every limb, every organ. Feel it dissolve obstacles as it moves through you;
- Exercise until you become familiar with it;
- Repeat the exercise, this time using the colours of the rainbow. It generally helps to visualise the colours in the order of the rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet;
- When you have finished, visualise a radiant source of white light pouring over and into you in golden streams or surrounding you from your head to under your feet.

Observation Notes: the exercise flowed flawlessly!

## **7. Diaphragmatic breathing, lateral breathing**

(Duration 5-7 minutes)

**Intention:** to understand ourselves through breathing

- Place your right hand on your belly;

- Inhale and feel your belly swelling;
- Hold your breath for a moment and exhale by pulling the belly inwards;
- Continue with the same short hold;
- Repeat five times;
- Then, place the palms on the ribs with the thumbs towards the stomach;
- Inhale by pushing the ribs outwards, holding the breath for a moment, and exhale by pushing inwards as much as you can;
- Continue with the same short hold with empty lungs;
- Repeat 5 times.

Notes: you can use relaxing music as a background.

Observation Notes: this exercise went really well! Participants rated this exercise as one of the best in the workshop!

We reminded our participants that this kind of exercise needs to be repeated regularly in order to bring results. Nevertheless, participants mentioned that they felt very relaxed even after this first time!

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

We asked the participants to tell us how they felt after completing the workshop;

Then, we asked which colour came to their minds at that moment;

After that, we asked the participants to raise their hands to the following suggestions, if they agreed with them:

“I felt more comfortable working with people I already knew”.

“It didn’t affect me at all that I didn’t know the people I worked with”.

“I felt better when I had the role of mentor”.

“I felt more comfortable when I just had to follow along”.

“I realise I didn’t know my body that well”.

“I feel better about myself”.

By counting how many hands were raised we collected some quantitative data.

Observation Notes: everyone had a light colour in mind and, in general, we got some very nice comments!

Throughout the first online workshop we didn’t really know what to expect and that’s exactly why we had planned a more extended than usual reflection, so that we could obtain both quantitative and qualitative data. With no exception at all (and quite to our surprise!) the participants responded quite enthusiastically; they said they really liked what happened and that it felt like a very useful procedure for them after being in lockdown for almost 2 months! They emphasised the importance of the Progressive Neuromuscular Relaxation Technique and how it made them feel lighter, free (although under lockdown!) and stress free. These statements were absolutely consistent with what we observed, while they were instructed to do the relaxation technique and the breathing exercises! Their bodies were loose on each individual’s floor or bed and they seemed so connected to their self and bodies! The majority of them were smiling while doing the exercises, and looked very calm and happy. In general, their participation was full and active; they seemed to enjoy it, even though they didn’t understand everything about it. Later on, they had many comments

and questions about the exercises and we took the time to address them all! In addition, we asked them some questions and told them to raise their hands (for yes or no), so that we could gather some quantitative data. So, all of them felt more comfortable working during the workshop with people they already knew, rather than the ones they didn't know. They (80% of them) felt more comfortable when they followed instructions instead of when they were leading. They felt better about themselves and their bodies at the end of the online workshop. They hadn't realised they weren't familiar with their bodies and the exercises gave them food for thought... They expressed their will to have more workshops like this and they would also like to try the on-site version to see the difference between the face-to-face and online versions!

#### **IV PUZZLE DANCE CHALLENGE**

**Created by: the Greek national team. Niki Louladaki, Kiria-ki Maria Papalitsa, Sophie Papaspyropoulou. Stellalena Nalmpanti, Anastasia Lampaki, Maria Roumkou. (P.E.P.S.A.E.E, Rhodes Volunteer Community), Date: 14.05.2021 online via the Zoom platform.**

**Annotation: this workshop is a combination of exercises inspired by the Bulgarian and Polish national teams. The Greek national team adjusted them in order to implement them in an online environment, since the situation shaped due to the pandemic does not permit face to face activities.**

**Intention: The aim of this workshop was to approach the com-**

petence area of Critical Understanding of Self through exercises made to work on other domains of the project and test their effect. Also, it aimed to provide a holistic approach of the tools that could be used in youth empowerment and to give the participants the opportunity to work, in a non-verbal way, on different aspects of their relation with themselves and others.

**Duration: 2 hours**

**Target group:** the Greek national team changed the target group, because the previous one came from the Experimental Intercultural Athens High School that was closed because of Covid-19 cases detected there. This workshop was addressed to 9 young people aged 15-29 from Greek and Cypriot cities facing a lack of access to kinesthetic education activities.

**Approach:** non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance. The first attempt to implement this type of educational material and tools online.

### **Theory About the Theme**

See the Bulgarian workshop: *Attempt to Fly* (a) and the footprints workshop: *Human & Five Elements* (b), Polish footprints workshop: *An Attitude towards Openness* and Latvian footprints workshop: *Diversity as a Value*. More info about the Ether element:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aether\\_\(classical\\_element\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aether_(classical_element))

Representative material about the Feldenkrais Method: References from the Moshes Feldenkrais book *Awareness through movement: Health exercises for personal growth*

<https://feldenkrais.com/>

<https://feldenkrais-method.org/>

<https://www.feldenkrais-institute.com/the-team/>

**Carl Jung** Theory of Archetypes: <https://harappa.education/harappa-diaries/carl-jung-theory-of-archetypes/>

**Plotkin B. (2013).** Wild Mind: A Field Guide to the Human Psyche. Novato, California; New World Library. More about Plotkin's Nature-Based Map of the Psyche: <https://www.bodyartsoul.org/wild-mind>

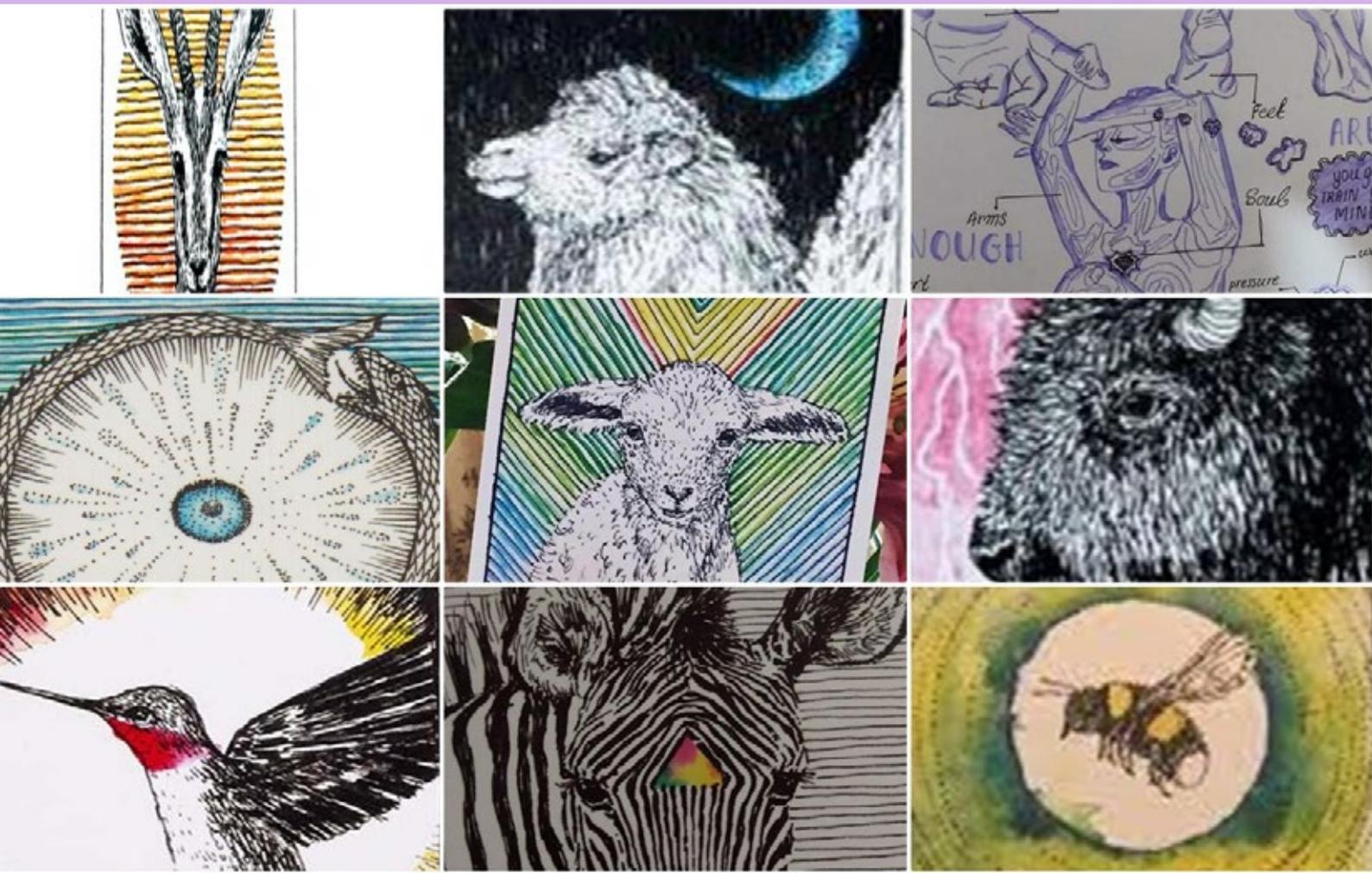
**Spirit Animals: The Spirit Animal Oracle - Guidebook** (2018). Baron - Reid C., Hay House.

### Description of the Exercises

**Go with the music** (Bulgaria) & **How can I call myself?** (Poland)  
(5-7 min.)

**Intention:** Warm up / Ice breaking

From digital activity with young people in Greece. *Spirit Animal cards.*



- The music starts, people from the team are walking around all the space, building some mood, tempo and rhythm by moving the air;
- Then, the music stops briefly and each participant touches a body part and starts dancing with it when the music starts again;
- Repeat a few times (until you dance with all your body).

**Notes:** It is essential to ask the participants to use as many body parts as they can.

**Observation Notes:** participants seem a bit shy, but they smile at the camera before the workshop begins. They react well during the first exercise. They all dance and follow the instructions uneventfully. They seem to enjoy themselves and to have fun.

## **2. Introduction to the elements** (Bulgaria, b) (5-7 min.)

**Intention:** To explore the body's instant interpretation of the 5 elements (learning from the body's reaction), vigilance, to explore levels and directions in space with our bodies.

Now that we have warmed up all our body, we introduce the participants to the 5 elements, one after the other (ether, air, fire, water, and earth) and we ask them to find a representative pose for each element;

Gradually, we say the elements faster, changing the sequence every time. The participants must adjust to the rhythm and change poses faster;

From the representative poses:

- we melt as slowly as we can to the ground and rise back up again,

- we expand in the room, taking as much space as we can and become small, a miniature of ourselves,
- we lie on the ground and we stand on our feet (slowly and quickly),
- We end up on the ground.

**Observation Notes:** participants had a lot of fun, as did the facilitators! Big smiles from everyone. In their majority, the members moved faster during the air command and a lot slower during the ether command, but they kept the same pattern of movement. In Greek, there is a slight confusion between the two and in this exercise we wanted to see if it would be expressed through the body, as well, and if participants were following the instructions after they put them through a cognitive process or just reacted to them spontaneously. No one asked about the difference between air and ether after the exercise.

### **3. How does my body work? (Poland) (5-8 min.)**

**Intention:** To revisit our body by focusing on each part of it without a judgemental attitude, to increase awareness of its structure and release tension, to reconnect with the body.

- Everybody lies on the floor with eyes closed finding a comfortable position, releasing the tension and feeling every single part of their body;
- With very small movements they try to move joint by joint;
- Lying on the floor, the participants are invited to imagine a tiny bicycle controlled by their mind. They will travel all over their bodies with this bicycle;
- Starting from the top of their head, they are asked to ride

slowly down the back of their head and observe the parts of it that are leaning on the floor. Using deep breathing and avoiding any kind of judgement they are invited to locate tensions (if there are any) and use their breath to release them;

- Following the same slow procedure, they visit their neck, shoulder blades, arms, hands, chest, belly, pelvis, legs, and feet etc. each time paying attention to every small part of the body and using their breathing to release tension;
- When the journey is completed, the participants are invited to start moving joint by joint and gradually achieve full moving potential.

**Notes:** Inspired by the Feldenkrais method of body movement, this exercise is a meditative journey to the body. The aim is to make the whole body move and travel through the space changing position, with eyes closed all the time. The participants can change position little by little from lying up to standing.

**Observation Notes:** Participants went off camera, because they lay down. After the exercise, they reappeared refreshed and relaxed and some of them were a bit sleepy. This exercise helped them concentrate and focus their attention on their body and the changes caused by each and every movement, no matter how small it was.

#### 4. ***Dance of the Elements*** (Bulgaria, b) (10 min.)

**Intention:** To explore the creative ability of the body's expressive material, to recognise the connection between nature's elements and the body's movement, to feel free to express.

Water Element. We move as if:

- a) We are in water,
- b) We are made of water.

Earth Element. We move as if:

- a) We are in or on the earth,
- b) We are the earth

Air Element. We move as if:

- a) We are in the air,
- b) We are the air

Ether Element. We move as if:

- a) We are in ether,
- b) We are ether.

Fire Element. We move as if:

- a) We are in a fire,
- b) We are fire
- c) *The Ceiling Orchestra / My Feet are Flames!* (Greek national team's additional exercise):
  - We lie down, we lift our legs and we make sure that they are visible from the camera,
  - When the music starts, we conduct the ceiling orchestra with our legs.

**Notes:** For this last element of the exercise, we use many different genres of music. Also, colourful socks are very much ap

**Observation Notes:** Participants seemed to move according to the music and not according to the instructions. What if we tried the same exercise without music? Would that give more space for movement - element exploration? As far as the water element is concerned, there was little difference in the way the

members moved when they were in water and when they were water itself. Some stood still and some were beginning to move at times, but without completing their movement. During the earth element some participants seemed like they got tired or lost interest. Many of them, when instructed to be the earth element, chose to turn around themselves repeatedly. Participants exhibited far wider variations of motions while pretending to be in the air than when they were the air element. Was the first situation more familiar? There was increased mobility during both states of the fire element. Can't tell if it was because of the song or the nature of the element. The Ceiling Orchestra was really fun to watch! Participants wore colourful socks, as asked by the facilitators, and our computer screens were filled with literally happy feet! All members participated in it. Overall, it felt like the participants didn't really understand the instructions or found it difficult to differentiate their motions between the different states of being inside an element and being the element itself. At some moments they seemed like they didn't know what to do, so they waited for the next instruction/exercise. Maybe it was too soon to ask for such improvisations? Had we worked with the same youngsters before, would we get a different result? Would they be better prepared for it? Many participants went off camera due to the lack of space in front of their computer or because they felt safer away from the exposure to us and to the other members (whom mostly they met for the first time today). Nonetheless, a few participants went all the way through and didn't give up on us. It was a real pleasure watching them processing the instructions with their bodies!

5. **You are ENOUGH** (inspired by the Bulgarian exercise:  
Words, (a) (15 min.)

**Intention:** to express the emotions of the words through the body, without illustration, just with movement, to find the exact movement provoked by the emotion of the words.

Working with the lyrics of the song You Are Enough by Boe Huntress and expressing the emotion through the body;

All participants dance together. First in silence, then with music;

At the end of the exercise, the facilitators may ask the participants to write down and share with the group the words that they used as a guide / worked as triggers for their moves.

***You are enough / Lyrics:***

***You are enough when you wake up***

***You are enough when you're unproductive***

***You are enough when you're too scared***

***You are enough when you bring what you have***

***You are enough when you feel small***

***You are enough when you know it all***

***You are enough brave enough to try***

***You are enough when you want to hide***

***I would go to the top of the mountains***

***to bring you back into my arms where you belong,***

***little one***

***I would follow you up those cold mountains***

***right to the top***

***of your mind winds to bring you down, home again***

***I know it doesn't feel enough***

***but this time you'll just have to trust me  
Cos I've been around now long enough to see  
That some things you don't have to believe***

Notes: We used Boe Huntress's song *You are enough* in order to create an environment where the participants could get easier in touch with their inner self and especially that part of self that is called the inner child or the wounded child. Using Carl Young's theory about Archetypes in combination with Bill Plotkin's Nature - Based Map of the Psyche, we intended to invite participants to get in touch with two parts of their Inner Psyche - the Nurturing Generative Adult (our inner mother) with the Wild Indigenous (inner child). In order for them to dance together hand by hand and by feeling, recognising and accepting each other's existence to finally integrate and become one and by raising awareness to enhance the critical understanding of self.

Observation Notes: At first, without music, only two people moved. Later, with music, only three. We hypothesise that the participants focused on the lyrics of the song and that affected them deeply. Also, we knew that they hadn't previous experience of kinesthetic activities, so it is absolutely understandable not to be able to express oneself through motion. During the workshop we weren't able to tell if the exercise had any effect on the members. However, we were utterly surprised when, a couple of hours later, we started receiving inbox messages in social media by the majority of the participants stating that the workshop was really intense and it really made them

realise so many things about themselves, things they hadn't ever thought of, until then! They said it was a huge challenge to dive in the activities, so they felt hesitant at first, but, when they did, it was an epiphany for most of them! Someone said that it was a great surprise for them that doing such simple moves with the body could lead to such realisations about their inner self and even more about the connection with the expressed behaviours in daily life! Maybe the participants didn't explore their emotions and thoughts through their bodies, but they definitely took some time to think about the lyrics and themselves.

#### **6. I - *the different*** (Latvia) (10 min.)

**Intention:** To recognise and get familiar with the idea that we all differ, but each one of us is important, to reflect ourselves through the spirit animal we choose.

- We introduce the participants to spirit animals;
- We give them a few moments to pick which one they identify with;
- After that, participants are instructed to move like their spirit animal;
- In the end, everyone says which spirit animal they chose.

**Notes:** It's not necessary to move like they are the spirit animal. We want to see how they demonstrate the essence and the qualities of their spirit animal! By choosing a spirit animal, participants make a personal statement. In this way, we have the chance to observe our different choices in a safe framework.

Observation Notes: participants seem to be still affected by the previous exercise or maybe they are just tired. The workshop is about to end. Only one participant is dancing. All the rest are just listening to the music. Maybe, if we were all together in the same space, they would get carried away by the facilitators or each other. Now they seem lost in their thoughts or numb and shy. After all, this is an exercise that potentially could reveal a lot of information about themselves and maybe they are not ready for it.

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

- Choose a pose to show us how you are feeling right now;
- Draw/Paint on a piece of paper the body part that cooperated best with you today. Participants show their drawings one by one and talk about it, if they want. After that, we simultaneously show gratitude to this body part;
- Draw/Paint on a piece of paper today's most resistant body part. Participants show their drawings one by one and talk about them, if they want. After that, we simultaneously show gratitude to this body part;
- Listen to the sentences and react with your body:
- "I felt comfortable following the facilitators' instructions."
- "It was difficult for me to lead and/or improvise."
- "I discovered or remembered a movement/pose with which I felt safe and I will try to include it in my daily life."
- "I realised that a movement/pose from my daily life expresses an emotion that is not clear to me or others."
- "It's easy to depict an emotion."

- “It’s hard to find the exact movement that is triggered by emotions.”
- “It’s easy to listen to my gut and senses during the exercises.”
- “I liked the fact that I was in my own space and my focus wasn’t affected by the presence of other people.”
- Sharing of thoughts/comments;
- Which was your best moment in today’s workshop?
- Say goodbye in your own unique way;
- Would you like to participate in the next workshop?

Observation Notes: participants were not exactly talkative.

Three possible explanations: a) they are tired b) they don’t feel comfortable sharing with strangers information about themselves and their feelings c) the last two exercises worked on a deeply personal and existential level. Maybe they need time to process. Nevertheless, there were a few comments from participants:

- I feel calm now, I let off steam;
- I feel well-rested, but after The dance of the elements and You are ENOUGH I felt upset;
- I feel like I am exactly where I’m supposed to be, like I found myself again;
- When asked about the body parts that cooperated best and resisted: “I’d say my whole body, in both questions. Some parts worked with me during some exercises and during other exercises they didn’t. Same thing with all body parts. The great saboteur is our brain.”
- Music made everything easier

## V. WHEN ART MEETS YOU - MUSIC ELEMENT

**CREATED BY:** the Greek national team. Niki Louladaki, Kiriaki Maria Papalitsa, Sophie Papaspyropoulou. Stelalena Nalmpanti, Anastasia Lampaki, Maria Roumkou. (P.E.P.S.A.E.E, Rhodes Volunteer Community) Date: 04.06.2021 online via the Zoom platform

**ANNOTATION:** this is an online workshop targeting the relationship with a favourite musical artwork. Usually, when a piece of art, in this case a song, captures us to the point of being our favourite one, it happens unconsciously, without much thinking and without paying attention to how or why we were led to this connection. But, if we take some time to think about it, about the reasons and the characteristics of the artwork we call our favourite, then it is possible to find out and come across parts of ourselves we weren't aware of. That is because whatever we choose to be our favourite reflects pieces of our substance that at this period of time are trying to find ways to emerge and be expressed. This is what art has been about, after all, since the beginning of our existence. It is the expressive channel of human complexity and simultaneously a way of communication through creativity. Important note: this workshop with this specific topic could not happen face to face, under any circumstances. That is because each participant was working with their own favourite song. As a consequence, listening to all these songs simultaneously is impossible. We took advantage of the Covid-19 situation and the need for social distancing to work on a small part of the critical understanding of self.

**Intention:** this workshop aims to explore the role of music as an art form in each person's journey to self-knowledge. It is an invitation to look into the relationship with our favourite song and see how many things it can reveal about us. The chain of exercises prepares the participants for this journey, which is private. The workshop was designed in a way that would permit work with oneself in a safe framework, turning the state of isolation into a facilitating factor.

**DURATION:** 2 hours

**Target group:** same target group as the previous online workshop. This time we worked with 8 young people aged 14-30 from Greek and Cypriot cities facing a lack of access to kinesthetic education activities.

**Approach:** non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance.

*From digital activity with young people in Greece. Snapshot from session.*



## Theory About the Theme

Inspired by Art Therapy, this workshop uses musical stimulus and how it can help participants to explore impressions, emotions and intentions. With a structure that extends from analysis to synthesis, it suggests a way of consciousness in terms of choice, self expression and creativity.

## Description of the Exercises

### 1. *Breaths & Focus* (5 min.)

**Intention:** Warm up, release of muscular tension

- Sit on a chair with your back straight and away from the back of the chair, your feet parallel on the ground. Inhale through the nose, exhale through the mouth;
- Take a slow deep breath for 4 counts filling the chest area with air. Hold the air for 4 counts and exhale through the mouth for 6 counts. Repeat 4 times;
- Take a slow deep breath for 4 counts filling the stomach and the pelvic area with air. Hold the air for 4 counts and exhale through the mouth for 6 counts. Repeat 4 times.

**Observation Notes:** participants are relaxed and focused. Some close their eyes, some others touch their chest and follow its movement while breathing.

### 2. *Spine Release* / Activation (8-10 min.)

**Intention:** Focus on spine mobility, release muscular tension.

- Sit on a chair with your back straight and away from the back of the chair, your feet parallel on the ground;
- Inhale through the nose, exhale through the mouth;

- Take a slow deep breath for 4 counts, filling the torso with air. Exhale for 4 counts while letting your head fall to the front. The rest of the torso remains in the axis;
- In this position take a slow deep breath for 4 counts, filling the torso with air and exhale for 4 counts. The rest of the torso remains in the axis;
- Take a slow deep breath for 4 counts and exhale for 4 counts while letting your shoulders fall to the front, guided by the weight of your head. The rest of the torso remains in the axis;
- In this position take a slow deep breath for 4 counts, filling the torso with air and exhale for 4 counts. The rest of the torso remains in the axis. Continue the procedure by letting one part of the spine each time (chest, lower back etc.) fall to the front;
- Return to the axis position, starting from the lower part of the spine (coccyx).

**Notes:** this exercise can be performed sitting or standing. The facilitators decide judging by the familiarisation of the participants with this type of exercise. The same exercise can be used for side bends of the torso / spine.

**Observation Notes:** The participants seemed to find the exercise relieving for their bodies and followed it without interruption.

### **3. *Body Energiser with Music* (5 min.)**

**Intention:** to activate all body parts

- Begin to shower yourself slowly and with care, starting from your head/neck/shoulders/chest/arms etc. and make sure you cover all your body with a shower gel;

- Now the pace is changing and you need to shower off all the gel you are covered with as fast as you can, using cold water and making sure you clean all the body parts.

**Observation Notes:** some members of the group rushed the first, slow part and had to do the shower gel twice or more times. During the second part of the exercise, the quick one, all participants burst into laughter and seemed to have the time of their lives! Team spirit is born!

#### **4. IT'S TIME FOR ART - Let's Meet with our Favourite Musical Piece (20 min.)**

**Intention:** This exercise aims to provide the time and space needed for a participant to have a closer look at his/her connection with his/her favourite music piece. Reflecting how music affects us, as an external stimulus.

- Introduce to the group your current favourite musical piece, only by sharing information about the artist, the era etc. Please don't share anything about your connection/affection to it;
- Find one gesture, move, sound, facial expression to describe the first impact this art piece had on you. How did it catch your attention?
- Now use that first gesture, move, sound, facial expression to start describing (through movement) your first encounter with your favourite artwork. Share with us how your connection began, through movement.

Notes: Try to save any impressions and feelings towards the favourite piece of art from being consumed by words and rationalism. It is more important to dive into the ritual of expressing the connection in a non-verbal creative way. It's important to remember and remind the participants that this is not a competition. They don't have to come up with fancy or impressive movements. There is no right or wrong way to move. Every movement is right as long as it comes from within their soul and their relationship with the preferred artwork. A few helpful questions:

- Was it love at first sight?
- Was it a... slow seduction?
- At first, did you hate yourself for liking it so much?
- Was it a surprise to you that you got so into an artwork you never expected yourself to be involved with?

Observation Notes: From this point of the workshop we could collect only visual information, as all participants switched their microphones off to work with their favourite song. It was not possible to work and listen to all tracks at the same time. This made the procedure of drawing conclusions more difficult, since we didn't have access to the music evoking the motions we were watching. Two participants couldn't resist sharing how their favourite songs make them feel, even though we specifically told them to focus on descriptive information. Two members went off camera and most of them sat on their chairs. They seemed numb and shy, like they didn't know what to do, how to follow the instructions, or how to explore this relationship using their body. These reactions were anticipated, since

many of the participants had no previous experience from kinesthetic workshops and were familiar only with one of the four facilitators. We stated multiple times that what was important to us was for them to feel free and figure out what they felt about the chosen piece of art. We knew that this was a personal/private journey and we preferred them going on that journey without us witnessing it to witnessing a biased procedure.

### 5. **Analyse it** (10 min.)

**Intention:** the goal here is to perceive how an external stimulus (music - lyrics - vocals) may trigger emotions and thoughts, create images, bring out desires and dreams and, at the same time, provide some kind of support, a way of expression, a motivation for creation etc. This exercise belongs to the field of self-knowledge and self-fulfilment.

- Can you identify which element(s) of this musical piece interests you the most?
- If yes, focus on that element and let your body move like it was that element. Concentrate on your feeling/emotion revealed while improvising as this element. If not, listen to the music now and work with the first element you feel attracted to;
- What emotion(s) does this artwork emit to you? (Please write the emotion(s) on a piece of paper and share it with the group);
- Is it familiar to you?
- If yes, please move in a way that expresses this emotion. If not, please move like you explore the sense you have of this emotion.

**Observation Notes:** participants listened to the instructions carefully. Four of them switched off their cameras. Most of

them struggle trying to avoid using words to express themselves. They are reluctant to search for the provoked emotions and the ones who are not are trying to find which (the name) of the emotions more than to improvise using these emotions. It's a whole new approach to their favourite song · until now, they just listened to it, sang it or danced to its rhythm. Now we are asking them to bring it down and find out why it's their favourite, to analyse it. In addition, we are asking them to do so in a non-verbal way, which is not familiar to them. As a result, they block, but they don't give up.

#### **6. Creative Dialogue - Body is Music (6 min.)**

Intention: this exercise aims to complete the circle of exploration with a sense of equality. Participants are no longer passive receptors of the musical piece, they are not searching for the way it affects them any more, but they stand right next to it as equals and they respond to it. It's an invitation to start a kinesthetic dialogue with the favourite artwork.

- Let your body move to the music and create its own artwork as a response to the stimulus;
- After that, please write or draw on a piece of paper:  
*How important is this piece of art to you right now?*  
*What does it provide to you?*

Notes: if the facilitators feel this exercise is challenging as it is, they can give an alternative instruction · participants may have this... "conversation" with the artwork sitting, moving only the hands and the upper body.

**Observation Notes:** Three participants (same as the previous exercise) switched off their cameras. The rest at first were somewhat static, though they began moving a bit after a short while. Definitely, the fact that they could use only their hands, if they preferred so, liberated them! We implemented the alternative ourselves, because we felt we were asking too much from the participants. Until now, they seemed shy, but we didn't sense we were pushing them too hard. We decided we wanted to create a safe framework for them to work in, so we adjusted the instructions. If we strictly followed the designation of the workshop, we could possibly end up putting too much pressure on them, which would give us totally different results. The important thing for us was to keep them engaged. And we succeeded by reducing the stressors (smaller expectations - ability to work off camera). This last exercise was the greatest challenge of the workshop. It takes strength and courage to stand right next to an internalised "legend" and begin a dialogue as equals. It demands that the participants believe in themselves and instantly grow into their best and confident version.

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

- Please, take a minute to identify the feeling that currently prevails over your body;
- Transform this feeling into a sculpture. Take that pose that expresses the most how you feel;
- Share the musical piece that accompanied you through the workshop with the group.

**Observation notes:** They all found a characteristic pose and demonstrated it with joy! A few participants were a bit shy,

but that didn't stop them. Sharing their favourite song, as well as information about it, brought the participants closer. They were happy to share the reasons they picked that specific song, exactly which part of it they liked the most and why. Most of them were singing while their song was playing. Others were also singing the lyrics. The majority of the participants avoided looking at the camera, while their song was playing. Maybe they were feeling exposed at that time. Three of them seemed like they were trying to focus on the song and get lost in its rhythm, immersing themselves into a relaxing and liberating state where they could let themselves express their feelings freely. One participant suggested we make a playlist with all these songs and everyone agreed with smiles on their faces!

**7. *Picture Yourself*** (exercise from Daniel Wargin of the Polish national team) - A Game of a Free Body Response to Stimuli (10-15 min.)

**Intention:** this exercise constitutes an invitation/challenge to try and let go into a form of free movement. It comes after a long procedure of personal work with the self and creates a space for the members of the group to connect (since now they are all exposed to the same stimulus). Also, it provides a chance to experience/realise if there were any changes in the way the body moves. Daniel Wargin's sketch video is introduced to the participants via the "Share Screen" operation of Zoom. The instructions are plain and simple; look at the screen and react to what you see using your body. You can follow the moves and the lines the creator is making or move inversely, express yourself, your thoughts and feelings deriving from the visual stimuli etc.

Observation Notes: No participants stood up for this exercise, as happened for almost all the workshop. It was really hard to inspire the whole body from a distance! Only one member followed precisely the instructions and seemed to be responding to the sketches (in very nice, creative ways!). This exercise didn't result in much movement. One participant moved just her head according to the creator's hands' movements. A few others swung their torso a bit. Only one participant used her hands in this exercise, making big moves and using the available space. The participants seemed to move more according to the music accompanying the video. What would happen if the sketch video didn't have any music? Would that help the members of the workshop focus on the visual stimulus better and easier or would the lack of music end up in even less participation? Would it be too silent or awkward? Not sure if this same stimulus for all participants managed to bring them closer as a group. Maybe it was too hard an exercise for people that are not used to using their body to express and communicate. Of course, the fact of the distance between all of us (in between participants and also, between participants and facilitators) was not an asset in this case. There's a chance, if we were all in the same space, that we, the facilitators, could take some of the pressure off by leading the moving part first.

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

- If you wrote down or drew anything during the workshop and you are willing to share with the group, now is the time to do so;
- Any questions? Any words you would like to share with us?

**Observation Notes:** the mini reflection (mentioned above) really helped in team building! At the end of the workshop, the participants behaved like old friends! They were relaxed (some of them relieved the workshop was over maybe?), intimate and in a good mood! A lot of them showed us drawings they made, while listening to the songs, and explained them. One participant, in particular, made drawings for each song and presented them to the group! Another participant talked about the lyrics she feels are more special: "You've got a heart as loud as lions / So why let your voice be tamed?" (from the song "Read all About it" by Emeli Sandé) and commented: We all have a voice, which we sometimes repress. However, it's nice to let it out, even if no one else is listening. YOU are listening and in this way, you obtain the control of your life. This is something we should all remember. Another one showed us a drawing of her feelings she had made in the past. She connected it with her favourite song. Even though the drawing had dark colours and gave the observer a sense of sadness, she described it as a part of her and, even if it was a part hard to regulate, she liked it as much as she liked other aspects of herself. She was very calm, while talking about it, and she even smiled at times! This is an excellent example of the depth of kinesthetic education works. Beginning from this workshop, from a favourite song, this participant immersed herself into a long emotional journey, travelled back to past feelings and managed to observe and describe them from a distance, resulting in accepting them as a tricky but still valued part of her core self. Participants and facilitators came to the conclusion that the chosen songs displayed great genre variety, but had similar

topics. This realisation demonstrated the wealth of different ways the same thing, the same message, can be expressed and, like the songs, we may differ on the outside (ethnicity, hair - eyes - skin colour, age, interests etc.), but on the inside we are much more alike than it seems, than it sometimes feels, than we think. The workshop ended with an exchange of gratitude for the participation in the workshop and wishes for the future. Happy thoughts, satisfaction and optimism were the gifts this whole procedure gave us!

## **SKILL OF LISTENING AND OBSERVATION** by the **BULGARIAN TEAM**

**CREATED BY: Yoana Yordanova-Sojka, Radoslav Yordanov, Elena Kostadinova and Andrzej Sojka. 25.01.2020**

**ANOTATION: Listening and observing**

**INTENTION: Observing, listening and connection**

**DURATION: 2 hours**

**TARGET GROUP: 18 young people age 8-12**

**APPROACH: non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement.**

*From local activity with young people in Pernik, Bulgaria. Photo by Vladislav Stefanov*



## Description of exercises

### 1. *Ice Breaking*

Welcome the group with an ice-breaking game in a circle, saying the name and showing the mood today with some movement in the moment.

*From local activity with young people in Pernik, Bulgaria. Photo by Vladislav Stefanov*



### 2. *Observation*

- Observing everything that is around you with eyes open. Everybody around you;

- Then slowly go to your own body, from outside to inside, with your mind and observing with closed eyes;
- Start to walk, move slowly, continuing your observation of your own body. Listening to your own breathing, steps and movement;
- Maybe meet someone with part of your body. Observe the reaction of your body. If a meeting with some other body starts a slow dialogue with the movement. Listen, accept and give back some information through the body.

### 3. **Contact**

- Making couples. Standing back to back, start to breathe together and feel each other's breath;
- Sitting on the floor back to back, trying to stand up together;
- Then move together - walk, move, run, jump, together. All the time listening to your body and the body of your partner. Expressing energy, giving and receiving, making contact and moving through the space till the moment when couples feel free to try flying in the space.

### 4. **Words** / working with words through the body.

- 4 lines from a Bulgarian poem (by Yordan Radichkov). Have to express them through the body without illustration, just with movement provoked by the emotion of the words.

### 5. **Attempt to Fly**

- Every participant creates her/his own solo from the movements through emotions provoked by the words;
- Then start to observe the space and other people, meeting



*From local activity with young people in Pernik, Bulgaria.  
Photo by Vladislav Stefanov*

someone in the space, start contact back to back with her/him and continue movement in couples;

- The aim is to start flying together.

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

- Open talk with the group. What do they feel, how do they feel? Did they find something and what, in their own bodies and in the body of the partner? Was it hard to work with the partner? Was it hard to work with text? How do they feel working in this way with text through the body?
- Some comments:  
'It was hard to follow the partner"; 'I discovered a new way of understanding the text"; 'I prefer to work with eyes closed,

because I can concentrate better”; ,’Work with a partner is responsible, you have to be careful towards your partner and towards yourself”; ,’It is not easy to fly with someone but it is fun”; ,’It was hard to express words through movement without illustrating them.”

Note: the most important for us as leaders of this meeting was work with words: to express them through the body. The way word work in you, on you. What emotion arises from specific word and how can this emotion be expressed through the body. The same text, expressed in 18 different ways. To observe work of young people is amazing. How are they searching, how are they trying, how do they express themselves How do they change during these 2 hours a real performance happened.

## II. BE PRESENT HERE AND NOW

**CREATED BY: Yoana Yordanova-Sojka, Radoslav Yordanov, Elena Kostadinova and Andrzej Sojka. 22.02.2020**

### **ANOTATION:**

what it has to be,  
you limit it.  
If you let it show you  
what it wants to be,  
it will open doors  
you never knew existed.  
–Rutter-Rhymer

**INTENTION: Observing, listening and connection**

**DURATION: 2 hours**

**TARGET GROUP: 14 young people age 8-12**

**APPROACH: non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement.**

### **Some theory**

This topic provokes many feelings and thoughts. As you invite your topic, situation, or circumstance to talk to you, the messages or answers may not always come right away or in the forms that you expect. Often messages come as metaphors or symbols, and they may show up in unrelated conversations or events hours or even days later. Someone may make a passing comment that appears to come out of nowhere, yet it has a clear meaning for you. Or you may pass by a newsagent's and a headline catches your attention. Or the lyrics of a song that you haven't thought about for a long time suddenly keep playing over and over again in your head. But using movement as a method to realise all or part of this, especially with children working even deeper and on different levels.

These are some thoughts which our participants shared with us: "Listening opens up my not knowing much more and asks me to trust what is being revealed through the listening. It's powerful and exciting and scary at the same time"; "It can change from moment to moment. One moment I'm talking to, and the next moment I'm listening to. It's a full circle. This is incredible"; "I have to combine movement with listening. Now I see that they can be partners. I'm learning that we can receive and act at the same time. This is the new way to lead when you are in the position of leader."



*From local activity with young people in Pernik, Bulgaria.  
Photo by Yoana Yordanova Sojka.*

## **Description of exercises**

### **1. Welcome yourself to the space**

- Everyone finds his own comfortable position and space in the moment. Start to wake up the body with movements, sounds;
- In a circle every participant expresses through movement her/his mood at the moment adding his/her name.

### **2. Break the ice and distance**

- From a big circle everyone tries to come to the centre and stay there as long as possible.
- creating one group laughing and moving together changing level, direction, position.

### 3. Observing

- In couples: observe your partner - his look, behaviour, movement;
- Observe yourself after reaction from your partner (touching, speaking, provoking you);
- Now it is the combination from both - observing yourself and your partner moving, speaking, singing, laughing in the space;
- Stay alone with eyes closed and observe only your breath, heart beat, organs, muscles, bones, and skin. Then open your eyes and observe everything around you. Try to remember the exact place of each person, subject and furniture (Feeling the space between and how it influences you)
- Feedback from participants:
- comfortable; unpleasant; tight; claustrophobic; stuck; flying in space, light.

*From local activity with young people in Pernik, Bulgaria.  
Photo by Yoana Yordanova Sojka.*



#### 4. **Moving doll**

- Making groups with 6 people in each group. One is the doll - it stands in front of the group. The group of 5 people is assigned tasks - one to lead the head of the doll, another leading the right hand, one more - the left hand, one more - the right leg and the other - the left leg. Then they change the roles;
- Every participant finds his place in the space, with closed eyes, starts to listen to all the surrounding sounds and noises and uses his/her body drawing the picture of the sound.

#### 5. **Connection**

Participants choose from the wall some words, colours, questions or forms that they associate with themselves. In a circle, with words or movement they try to explain why they made this choice and what the connection is with them;

In a circle, holding hands sending and receiving the energy from today closing the meeting.

### **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

**Question:** How do you feel? Was this meeting strange for you?

Would you like to have exercises like that?

**Answer:** YES, WE WANT! It was different. It was new. It was fun.

### **III. HUMAN AND FIVE ELEMENTS**

**CREATED BY: Yoana Yordanova-Sojka, Andrzej Sojka.**

**30.07.2021.**

**Link to video: <https://www.facebook.com/xavery.vashka/videos/53992832048806>**

**ANNOTATION:** This workshop is compilation and development of already accomplished two workshops which was realized in January and March 2020 Let's start from this. Ancient Rishis / sages/ whom realized that consciousness is an energy that is realized through five basic principles or elements - Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth, are also connected to our senses as the humans - Hearing, Touching, Seeing, Taste and Smell. Our bodies are part of nature in that sense we are under influence of the five elements. Listening is a vital component of effective communication. Communication with our self and with others. Not being listened to can be infuriating and damaging; conversely, being heard can have a positive or negative impact. Effective listening involves the eyes as well as the ears, as body language must be observed. Listening cannot be a passive activity, it takes effort and genuine engagement. Words need to be heard, considered and digested.

**INTENTION:** Listening and observing through body, mind, movement, senses. We as a Human nature and Communication with our self

**DURATION:** 3 hours

**Target group:** 14 young people on age 13-18 years old

### **Some theory**

1. Back to your senses you can become a creator;
2. Every sense is connected with an element from our nature;
3. To learn how to listen to your body and your senses, you can understand yourself better;
4. Information needs to be heard, considered and digested by our body and mind;

5. Five elements - Five senses.

**All Five elements joined together make one unit - Our Nature, an undivided combination of mind, will, emotions used as a source of expression - our body.**

**Earth** - Stability and rhythm. It's a symbol of life and the basis of all human creation.

**Water** - Adaptation. Mirror reflecting our inner peace and the surrounding reality.

**Fire** - Energy of Transformation. It gives us strength to express ourselves, a clear mind and ability to see more through our eyes.

**Air** - Connection between five elements. Lightness, inspiration and freedom.

**Ether** - Space, universe. A place where all our inspirations, self-awareness, memories are kept. Our unique nature, who decides who we really are.

Finding these elements in you and getting to know them will help you to stay in balance and harmony with yourself, because the body is an instrument of expression and channel of communication with our inner emotional world.

Element	Sense	Organ of sense	Action	Organ of action
Ether	Hearing	Ear	Speech	Speech / tongue, mouth, vocal cords - connection
Air	Touch	Skin	Catch	Skin
Fire	Seeing	Eyes	Walk	Legs
Water	Taste	Tongue	Reproduction	Genitals
Earth	Smell	Nose	Separation, secretion, release	Anus

**Any idea arises in the mind, every thought ends with movement.**

Movement is connected with dance. Dance is what can not be owned in our life and, because of this, it is so valuable.

Dance art helps to free expression of the human spirit - feelings, emotions, fears and joys.



*From local activity with young people in Pernik, Bulgaria.  
Photo by Daniela Marinova.*

Energy, impulse, intention, act, mood and inspiration are combined in the definition of creativity

Some more reading about:

<https://www.alternateremedies.com/five-elements-and-relevance-with-human-body/>

<https://www.nursingtimes.net/clinical-archive/assessment-skills/communication-5-effective-listening-and-observation-skills-12-03-2018/>

## **Description of exercises**

### **1. Move with the music (5-7 min.)**

**Intention:** Ice breaking, to know and feel each other

- the music starts, people from the team are walking around all the space, around all the participants and building some mood, tempo and rhythm by moving the air;
- then the music stops and the person in front of the other from the team touches the nose (or the shoulder) of the other and says;
- Hi I'm ...name... and my mood today is like (I feel like)... earth, water, fire, air... Or... something else;
- with some movement trying to express the mood

### **2. Observation - Water element (20 min.)**

**Intention:** start a small conversation about senses - to narrow the topic.

- First step, observing everything around you with eyes open - everybody around you, every subject, sound in or out of this space, without walking, with less movement;
- Then close your eyes and slowly go to your own body, from outside to inside, with your mind and observation. Start to walk slowly, move slowly, continuing your observation of your own body. Listen to your own breathing, steps and movement;

**Notes:** Participant comment after this exercise w that they feel really big and the same time so light. They can feel their own energy and see the color of it especially with eyes.

- Imagination - start to imagine how everything looks inside you (colour, form, weight...) Maybe meet someone with part of your body. Observe the reaction of your body. If a meeting with some other body starts a slow dialogue in movement. Listen, accept and give back some information through your body.

**Notes:** Finding the way to know the general mood in the group and in the space with this exercise, showing us how open the participants. Every first step is hard, but when you have examples, it helps and encourages you.

### **3. Stability - Earth element (20 min.)**

**Intention:** rhythm is a symbol of life and the basis of all human creation.

- Creating a big circle with all participants, where everyone - one by one in his/her own rhythm and tempo makes a few steps to the centre and goes back to his place in the circle. It is her/his choice to reach the centre or not;
- With the second try to the centre, we can add claps with hands to the steps, or claps to some other part of the body, making a braver and louder sound than the first time. Again one by one;
- Third try, everyone is free to move to the centre when he feels like, using steps, hands, voice and building his own symphony created with his body;
- Fourth level of the exercise is for all groups to listen to each other, feel other participants and together move to the centre and back making sounds with their own bodies and try to build a stable common rhythm as a common musical flow.

#### 4. **Moving Doll - Fire element** (30 min)

**Intention:** responsibility, energetic transformation, listening and focus.

- Making groups with 6 people in each group. One is the doll - it stands in front of the group, the other 5 people are divided with the tasks - one to lead the head of the doll, one leading the right hand, one the left hand, one leading the right leg and one the left leg - staying as one group close to each other, but on different levels. It is important for the doll to see all 5 participants in front;
- Every participant has to go through the doll.

#### 5. **Psychological gesture - Air element** (60 min.)

**Intention:** connection, imagination, freedom of the body to express the emotion of words.

- Working with text and giving the expression of the emotion through the body. 3 lines from a poem, Haiku or other text is absolutely enough. Every participant worked alone for 45 min. The task is to express emotion of the words through the body, without illustration, just with movement, find the exact movement to provoke the emotion of the words;
- Every participant makes his own solo created by movement - expressing the 3 lines from the poem;
- In the next 15 min. every participant shows his solo. First, just text - the 3 lines. Then without words, just with movement playing his solo.

**Notes:** Is really hard to express emotion of the words without illustrating them.

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION / Ether element (30 min.)**

In a circle, everybody's free to share. Space and self-awareness.

A place to share experience, feelings, and understanding of what has just happened. A place for questions and finding answers.

Final notes from facilitators: As facilitators everyone is free to create many and different exercises inspired by each element. This connection with a nature is the big observation and listening lesson, which can open your senses and make the biggest and true connection with ourselves. Choosing the best exercise from both past workshop meeting and give them new shape and meaning, inspired by five elements on the Mother Earth and having opportunity to realize activities in the Nature.

### **Resources :**

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/science/continuum/Pages/sensesworking.aspx>

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-five-senses-their-functions.html>

<https://ccmit.mit.edu/observation/>

## **IV. MOTION - EMOTION**

**CREATED BY: Tzvetina Matova, Yoana Yordanova-Sojka, Andrzej Sojka, 17.08.2021.**

**ANNOTATION: The main idea of the workshop is to give space and opportunity for the participants to connect with their own feelings and emotion through the body. Also to be able to notice the emotions of the others and to establish communication**

with them through the body.

The workshop include dance techniques, theatre and a lot of questions about the inner world of the participants.

Intention: Make participants aware of their inner world and how to interact with others through the body in the most honest way.

**DURATION:** 3 hours

**TARGET GROUP:** 12-20 years old

**Approach:** Non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance.

*From local activity with young people in Pernik, Bulgaria. Photo by Tzvetina Matova.*



## **Description of exercises**

### **1. *One, Two, Three, Clap rule* (20 min.)**

Intention: ice breaking, to know and feel each other and establish a physical connection.

Make a circle and learn the *1, 2, 3 Clap rule*;

Start to walk through the space, while beautiful calming music is playing. A random person says *1, 2, 3 Clap*, then says his/her name and all the people in the group repeat it. He/she shows a body part, and all the participants start to slowly warm up that particular part.

Continue walking through the space and when you hear

*1, 2, 3 Clap* you have to touch:

1. one person on the shoulder
2. two people on the shoulders
3. one person on the shoulder and another on the knee
4. everybody should touch everybody
5. everybody should touch everybody, but nobody should touch you.

**Notes: playful atmosphere, joy and trust.**

### **2. *Sculpture* (30 min.)**

**Intention:** to connect feelings with the body

- The participants are asked how they feel and are given 2 minutes to find one word that could describe their state of mind;
- After this, they have to find a position like a sculpture that could most accurately illustrate it. The people are separated into two groups. The first one creating their sculptures, the others walking around them and observing every detail, trying to figure out

what the core emotion is. Then the groups switch. After a short discussion, they are all asked to recreate their sculptures but this time in different places and in relation to the others.

### 3. **Solo** (20 min)

**Intention:** to expand the sensation

- Beautiful music is playing. The participants are given time to improvise and develop a dance solo that starts and finishes with the sculpture.

### 4. **Yes - No Game** (20 min.)

**Intention:** honesty

- We place “Yes” and “No” signs at both ends of the space;
- We start asking them questions connected to their feelings, fears, thoughts and world perceptions.

1. Can you be honest?
2. Do you like sharing your thoughts and emotions?
3. Is there someone to share them with?
4. Do you have friends?
5. Are there many of them?
6. Have you ever been alone?
7. Are you scared?
8. Are you scared to be alone?
9. Have you ever been disappointed?
10. Have you ever been disappointed by your friends?
11. Have you ever been disappointed by yourself?
12. Have you ever been disappointed by your parents?
13. Is there a part of yourself that you dislike?
14. Is there a part of you that you would like to change?

15. Are you able to be kind with others?
16. Are you able to be kind to yourself?
17. Were you honest in this game?

- They answer physically by walking to either Yes and No;
- We give them time and space to find a body position that expresses the new feelings and realisations;
- Everybody starts to walk again through the space and at a certain point they have to find a partner and look at each other's eyes;
- Then they should verbalise with one word the feeling that they have found in each other's eyes;

All start to walk again and somebody randomly says one of the words that he/she has heard for himself/herself. Everybody physically supports that person to create a sculpture that expresses this word.

#### 5. **Choreography** (30 min.)

- The participants were given a short piece of choreography to learn and adapt in their own way so they can express themselves through dance. Afterwards they had to include the sculpture task in their solos;
- One by one they performed their new phrases.

#### **TIME FOR REFLECTION** (30 min.)

In a circle, everybody's free to share. Space and self-awareness.

A place to share experience, feelings, and understanding of what has just happened. A place for questions and finding answers.

### **Questions:**

1. How do you feel?
2. What phases did you go through?
3. Are you honest?
4. Were you surprised by your own answers?
5. What did you like in other solos?
6. Which moment was the best and which was the worst from all the workshops?
7. What did you observe during this workshop about yourself?
8. Did you discover something new in the way you move?

### **OPENNESS AS AN ATTITUDE / by POLISH TEAM**

**Created by Marta Zawadzka and Małgorzata Skusa.**

**22.02.2020.**

*From local activity with young people in Sepolno Krajenskije, Poland. Photo by Mikail Bayir.*



**Intention: building trust, openness, awareness of my own body coexisting with others**

**Duration: 3 hours**

**Target group: 14 young adults in age of 16-29**

**Approach: Non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance.**

**Video extract created by Mikail Bayir: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdhEphA4qWs&feature=youtu.be>**

## **I. BE READY TO OPEN!**

### **Description of exercises**

#### **1. How does my body work?**

Everybody lies on the floor with their eyes closed finding a comfortable position, releasing the tension and feeling every single

*From local activity with young people in Sepolno Krajenkije, Poland.  
Photo by Mikail Bayir.*



part of their body. With very small movements they try to move joint by joint. The aim is to make the whole body move and travel through the space changing position with their eyes closed all the time.

Observations: It was surprising that participants seemed to be willing to move, their moves were small, insecure, very delicate. It looked as if they were afraid to move, didn't want to take too much space or bump into each other. Their bodies seemed to be tense and not comfortable in this exercise.

### **Feedback from participants:**

- I can do very simple things to feel my body and listen to my mind;
- I opened myself when we were lying on the floor with our eyes closed, I felt relaxed;
- Closing eyes is a great idea to lose the fear.

### **2. What do I call myself?**

The participants prepare their name cards. They put down their real names and a word which describes and reflects the state of their mind and/or body after the first exercise. They stick it to their chests.

*From local activity with young people in Sepolno Krajenskijs, Poland. Photo by Mikail Bayir.*



**Observations:** many of them put down the word which described more a feature of a character than the state of mind or body...

Participants' name cards:

- Anita Freedom
- Ecem Lazy
- Melih Poor
- Iza Friendly
- Vaid Sleepy

*From local activity with young people in Sepolno Krajskije, Poland.  
Photo by Mikail Bayir.*



### **3. *Where am I?***

Everybody walks around the room and focuses on the way of walking: pace, feeling the floor under their feet, directions of moving, walking among other people without any contact and feeling the space around.

**Observations:** it was difficult to get to know an unknown person - very often they chose their friends with whom it wasn't easy to deepen the interaction.

### **4. *How does your body work?***

The aim is to choose a partner who they haven't worked with yet. One person initiates the other person to move by touching one joint at a time. The animated person works with eyes closed - till the end of the activity, moving only the part of the body that is touched. The first step is to get the impulse and come back to the initial position, the second - keep moving and reacting to new impulses. The last step is to continue the motion, transfer it; the partner stays aside and observes. Then change roles.

**Observations:** it was a challenge to concentrate only on work with a chosen partner - for many people what was going around was very distracting.

### **5. *"Who shot the sheriff?"***

A game that involves everybody - the aim is to have fun, integrate with others, relax and check rapid response while playing. All participants stand in a circle, one person is in the middle. His/her task is to shoot at a chosen person shouting pif. The shot person has to

squat down while their neighbours have to react as well, targeting each other and shouting paf. The neighbour who comes second is out, the shot person if he/she doesn't squat down is out too. The game continues till there are only three people left.

Observations: It was a great fun for everybody. However, it demanded a high level of concentration and quick responses which wasn't easy because the necessity of fast action and unexpected shot caused spontaneous reactions in mixing roles.

### **6. What is my body picture?**

Cards with surreal images (*DIXIT* cards) were used to summarise the first part of the workshop. Each participant was to choose a card that was the best image of their body awareness, feelings, attitude towards what had happened. Everybody was supposed to show the card and tell the others why he/she had chosen it.

Observations: It was striking because the chosen card didn't expectation after observing the participants during activities. The other interesting thing was the participants' associations connected with the cards - some of them were very critical towards themselves, some went quite deep describing their feelings in public, some found new opportunities.

### **7. Can I see me in you?**

Work in pairs, standing face to face. One person is the leader, the other - the follower. The leader's task is to move slowly so the other person can follow the movement. No talking, keeping eye contact. After a while - the roles are changed.

Observations: The most difficult part of this exercise for some people was to maintain eye contact and make up the movement when they were leaders. Some partners weren't able to work symmetrically like in a mirror image.

### **8. *Can you follow me?***

The whole group works together like a shoal of fish with all faces in one direction. The person at the front-line moves and the others should follow the leader. When the direction of faces changes - the leader is changed as well. The aim for the group is to move like one body.

Observations: It was demanding exercise: some participants didn't want to be a leader, on the other hand some didn't want to give up the role of leader, the group moved too fast and not very precisely. Besides they concentrated more on the movement as such forgetting about the space.

### **9. *How close can I come?***

People take positions in space motionless like trees in a forest. One person with closed eyes tries to walk through the forest without touching but feeling the energy of the trees. After walking through the forest another participant can do the same.

Observations: It was interesting that some of the blinds behaved like harvester - they walked straight line not paying attention to the energy of other people, bumping into the trees. Others, however, walked very slowly feeling energy of others but still they lost the direction, e.g. walking around one tree. They were surprised by the place they reached.

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

### **Where am I now?**

- What does openness mean to you?
- What allowed you to open? Are you ready to open?
- Did you break anything?
- What would you like to work on next time? What do you feel you need to work on?

### **Feedback from participants:**

- I have to work with the limits of my openness. (...) To understand myself and understand when people are comfortable with me;
- To feel more secure with my own body, to get to know myself;
- (...) To express myself and cross shyness;
- Not to be afraid of doing something else than the others, not to try to fit in a group but be myself - Openness is to feel comfortable around people. To express feelings (...) and not to be shy to name something or not to be afraid to name something wrongly;
- Try to set the hidden feelings free.

### **How can I call myself now?**

Name cards from the beginning of the workshop can stay the same or maybe the participants want to change them.

"I've never been in a workshop like that. After that I felt my body was so relaxed. It was a really good experience for me."



*From local activity with young people in Sepolno Krajskiej, Poland.  
Photo by Mikail Bayir.*

## **II. AN ATTITUDE TOWARDS OPENNESS**

**Created by Marta Zawadzka and Małgorzata Skusa.**

**04.07.2020.**

**Intention: building trust, openness, awareness of my own body coexisting with others and in the space - especially outdoors.**

**Duration: 3 hours**

**Target group: 12 young adults in age of 16-29**

**Approach: Non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance.**

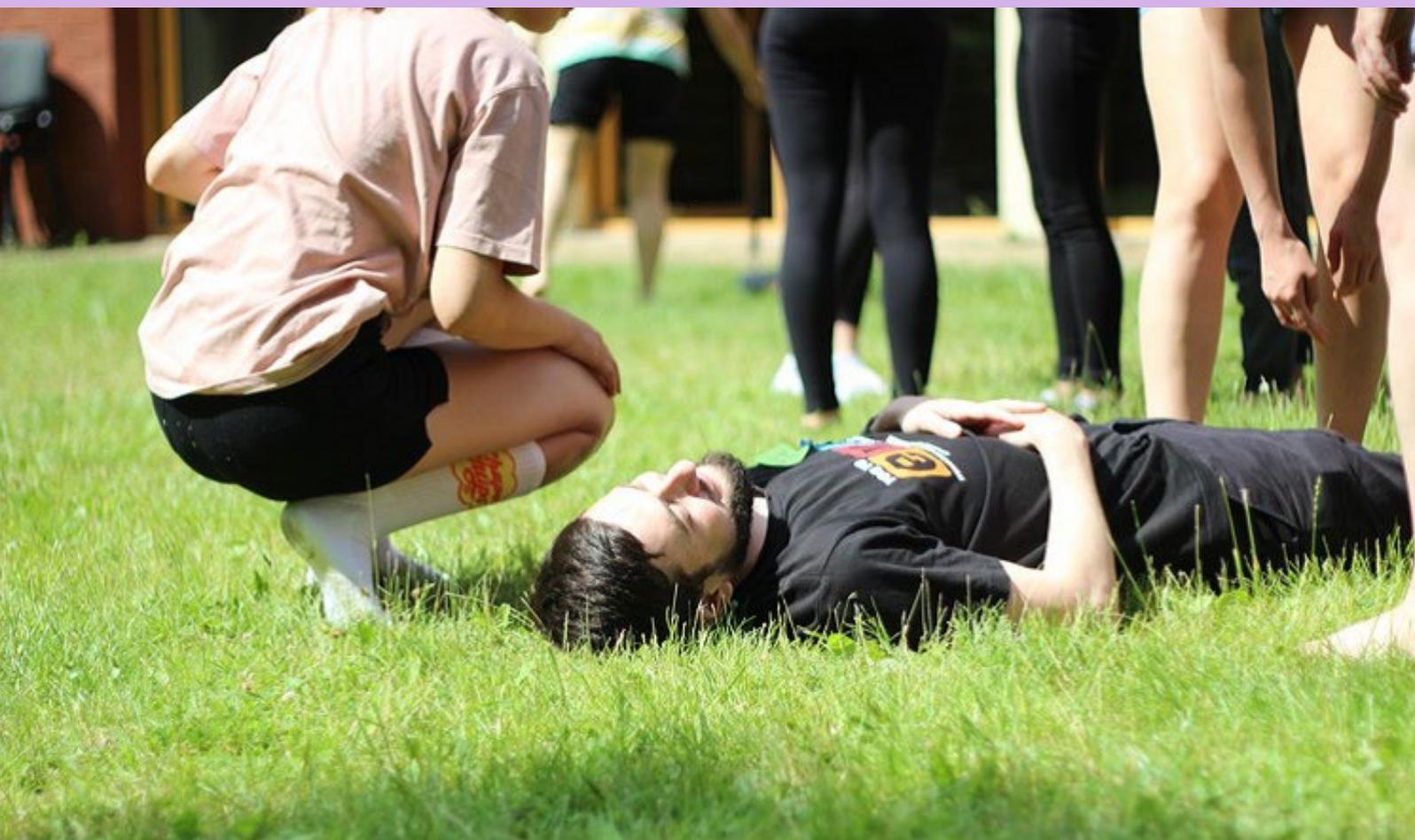
## Description of exercises

### 1. How does my body work?

This exercise was performed last time: everybody lies on the floor with their eyes closed finding a comfortable position, releasing the tension and feeling every single part of their body. With very small movements they try to move joint by joint. The aim is to make the whole body move and travel through space, changing position with their eyes closed all the time. The participants can change position little by little from lying up to standing.

Observations: Like previously participants seemed to be willing to move, their moves were very small, insecure and delicate. Some of them couldn't stop laughing and focus their attention on themselves, their body movement.

*From local activity with young people in Sepolno Krajenskijs, Poland.  
Photo by Mikail Bayir.*



### **Participants reflection:**

- It wasn't easy to move my body;
- I wasn't able to move because my body was stiff. When I finally did it;
- My movement was disharmonious, every part lived its own life;
- It was nice for me, I went deep into my body and I felt my movement clearly;
- When I moved one hand I forgot about the other, I could concentrate only on one part of my body.

### **2. *What do I call myself?***

Like last time, the participants prepare their name cards. They put down their real names and a word which describes the state of their body after the first exercise (surname). They stick it to their chests.

Observations: It was difficult to find connection between body and mind, to describe feelings from the corporal side and not from intellectual one. And many of participants put down the word which described their body like stiff, heavy, tense...

### **Participants' name cards:**

- Marta Tense
- Ola Heavy
- Wiktoria Sluggish
- Wiktoria Stiff
- Natalia Calm
- Daniel Open
- Vaid Tired

### **3. *Where am I?***

The space is changed - everybody walks outdoors barefoot around the space and focuses on the feelings: grass under their feet, sun and wind on their skin, listening to the sounds of nature without any contact when meeting other people.

Observations: It wasn't easy to focus on their feelings, to stay with awareness of "being here and now" and not to react to the others.

### **4. *Who am I? Who are you?***

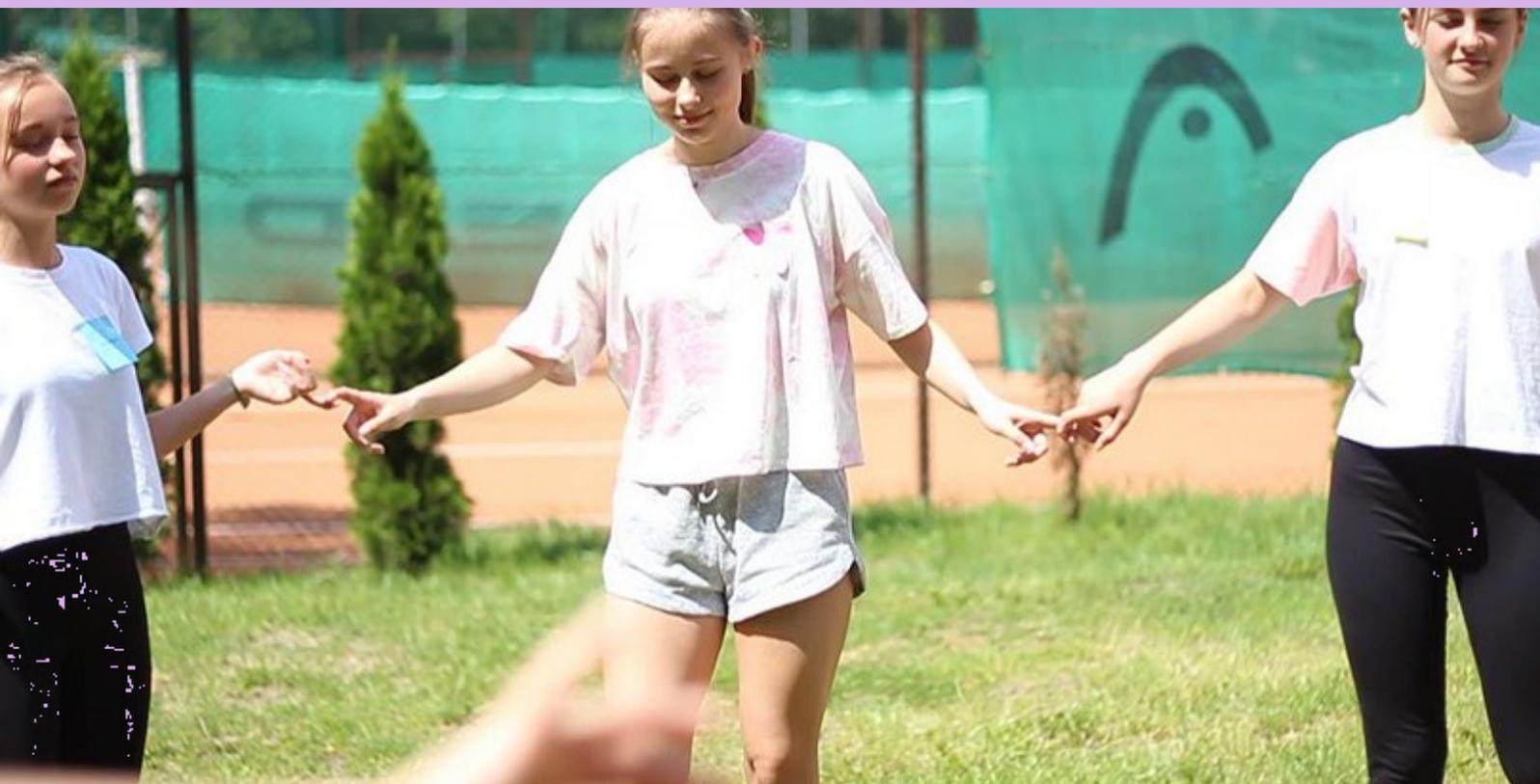
Still walking, the participants meet other people and they introduce themselves through body movement, an individual, characteristic combination of gestures. It can be connected with the second name on their name cards or the opposite. The aim is to create a movement dialogue, body conversation.

Observations: "It was difficult to create a precise, conscious combination of movement, gestures and to find individual movement mark". Despite this issue, it is a lot of fun and laugh.

### **5. *How do our bodies cooperate in pairs?***

Working in pairs, with the eyes closed, partners are connected with the tips of forefingers. The aim is to move together, not to lose finger touch and listen to the others - who prefers leadership (the leader), who wants to be led (the follower). Maybe the role is changed or there is perfect communication...

From local activity with young people in Sepolno Krajskije, Poland. Photo by Mikail Bayir.



**Observations:** Like in previous exercise participants first had to feel one another. At the beginning all of them seemed to be waiting for one person who would like to lead. As the time went by they felt more secure which was reflected in broader movement, willingness to be a leader and a lot of fun. On the other hand the movement was limited usually only to the hands. Still it was difficult to engage the whole body.

### **6. How do our bodies cooperate in a group?**

Work in a circle, like before - keeping the connection with the tips of the neighbours' forefingers. Trying to move together in a big group, listening to the others and not to lose contact.

### **7. What do you choose: swish, bang or point?**

An integration game which involves everybody and requires quick reaction and rapid response. All participants stand in a circle and one of them makes: - *swish* - a movement like a *horizontal loop* with their arms towards a person standing on the right or on the left saying swish, or - *bang* - a gesture like a shot to a chosen person in the circle saying bang, the chosen person (from swish or bang) can answer - swish to the next person or change the direction - so the movement goes back to the first person, or - bang - to choose a different person, and she or he can answer - point making the stop gesture (direct their palms) towards a bang person, and the movement comes back to her or him. Those who make a mistake or think too long are out of the game. The game continues till there are only three people left.

**Observations:** It was great fun for everybody. It demanded a high level of concentration and quick responses. Additionally, it appeared that for some people it was not easy to make a movement like horizontal loop and clearly direct it to the chosen person. Also, the difficulty was that they needed to choose one of the various answers. The necessity of fast action caused spontaneous, chaotic responses.

### **8. What is my body picture?**

Cards with surreal images (DIXIT cards) were used to summarise the first part of the workshop. Each participant was to choose a card that was the best image of their body awareness, feelings, and attitude towards what had happened. Everybody was supposed to show the card and tell the others why she or he had chosen it.

Observations: It appeared not to easy to choose the right card with a picture reflecting feelings of the body. And next - to share with the others the reason for this choice and describe how they felt their body after the first part of the workshop. In many cases, the choice was probably from mind. In some cases, the feelings of the body were changed compared to the beginning.

### **9. How can we listen to each other?**

Everybody takes a comfortable position. The task is to count from 1 to 15 one by one only by listening and deciding who will say the next number. When more than one person says the next number at the same time - the counting starts from the beginning. Everybody should be very concentrated to do this task properly.

Observations: The most difficult part of this exercise was to listen to each other and predict if someone would say the number. It generally was easy to count only to 3... One girl found a way to count alone very quickly without listening to the others. It was a challenge for her to say only one number in one set of counting...

### **10. Do you trust me?**

Work in groups of three or four people, one person with the eyes closed is like a puppet and the others animate her or him. This exercise aims to build the trust between the puppet and the rest of the group, respond to signals from the bodies and respect them - as well as give permission or resistance. It is important to listen to each other, to be conscious of the partner's will and follow it, not

force my will. This is a different situation when animating a real puppet...

Observations: There was not only one conclusion about this exercise - it depended on the participant: some people were easy to led, some had a problem giv up control and couldn't keep the eyes closed, some were surprised how easy it was to be animated by the others. And there were different ways to be an animator - some participants were attentive to their puppet, some wanted to force their idea of the puppet's movement, and some were interested in what was happening around, or in other groups...

**Participants reflection:**

- Before I became a puppet I said I would not allow others to lay me down, I had to keep control so I was surprised;
- the moment I closed my eyes I was on the ground!
- I felt that I could do everything with Natalia, she was like a dough, she trusted us and found pleasure in being animated;
- I didn't feel comfortable in this exercise either as an animator or as a person being animated. As an animator, I didn't know what to do, how I could operate somebody else's body and not hurt anybody. Being animated I couldn't find any peace, the need to control was too strong;
- In relation to teacher-student, it was hard to animate a person because I felt like crossing the line, I couldn't take part in this exercise as much as I wanted to.

## TIME FOR REFLECTION

### Where am I and what can I call myself now?

Time for reflection about what happened during this workshop:

- What does openness mean to you?
- What allowed you to open? Are you ready to open?
- How do you feel about your body now?
- Did anything change?
- Would you like to change your surname from your name card?

### Participants reflection:

- Now I am more relaxed and I know how important body working is;
- Firstly I was so tense, It was so hard to switch off and feel only the body;
- We were so overstimulated that the mind couldn't stop working and the body was separated. Little by little, it changed, I became more open, more allowed to be close to me. I want more, I'm interested in this process;
- I'm not into dance and movement that much so, at the very beginning, I felt a bit weird and insecure - like an acrobat balancing on the rope above some canyon... even if I had the feeling that I'd like to jump down I wasn't brave enough to go for that... but with time and the new exercises that came, I started to think that I am actually ready for even more... I guess now I am ready to jump... and explore... and enjoy...;
- I spoke about the important mission of the project - to achieve contact between the participants. This time we had to do it with people who were involved in the process to varying degrees. Someone was frankly bored and from the actions of the

coaches I made an important conclusion for myself that even a frank demonstration of unwillingness to participate in exercises is a kind of self-expression.

## PHOTO & VIDEO EXTRACT

created by Mikail Bayir:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3ERpv3pXQY>

## III. THE ESSENCE OF OPENNESS

**Created by Marta Zawadzka, Małgorzata Skusa, 18.09.2021,  
Sępólno Krajeńskie**

*From local activity with young people in Sepolno Krajenkije,  
Poland. Photo by Mikail Bayir.*



**Intention: building trust, openness, awareness of my own body coexisting with others and in the space - especially outdoors.**

**Target group: 14 young adults (12-29 y.o.)**

**Duration: 3 h**

**Approach: non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance.**

### **Description of exercises.**

#### **1. *How does my body work?***

We start with our warming up exercise: everybody lies on the floor with their eyes closed finding a comfortable position, releasing the tension and feeling every single part of their body. With very small movement they tried to move joint by joint. The aim was to make the whole body move and travel through the space changing position with their eyes closed all the time. The participants could change position little by little from lying up to standing.

Note: This time the participants willingly followed the instructions. Most of them went deeply into the exercise exploring possibilities of their bodies but some of them, especially the younger ones, found it impossible to turn off controlling the outside - they couldn't keep their eyes closed. The temperature wasn't comfortable (chilly) which might cause the feeling of being insecure. We proposed this exercise to every new group and each time we could observe people who faced challenges overcoming various difficulties.

#### **2. *What do I call myself?***

The participants prepared their name cards. They put down their

real names and nicknames (an adjective) which described and reflected the state of their body after the first exercise. They stuck it to their chests.

Notes: It was hard to describe oneself through the body. Most people tended to describe themselves intellectually, more using their brain than basing on their senses. It could be caused by the lack of connection with a physical body.

### **3. *Let us introduce ourselves***

The participants walked around the room. When they met, they introduced each other making a gesture which reflected the nickname. Next, we created groups of 3-4. In a circle, each person at a time showed their gesture. Another person in a group made this gesture bigger and the next one even bigger. The same gesture was developed within two cycles, which meant that each person in the group worked on the same gesture twice.

We came back to walking around the room. Then, when the participants met, they introduced each other with the final, biggest gesture.

Notes: This exercise made the participants feel relaxed, cheerful, and liberated. Introducing by gesture was fun, increasing it provoked more amusement.

### **4. *The image(-ination) of the body***

The participants drew a picture of their physical body. Next, they were to point out (mark) the place where their nickname derived from and they exchanged the drawings. One by one, everybody described what they saw.

Notes: It turned out that understanding of the task was the first obstacle because most of the participants drew not exactly a PHYSICAL body but a created, imaginary picture of their body. There were pictures which didn't resemble a human body

*From local activity with young people in Sepolno Krajskijske, Poland. Photo by Mikail Bayir.*



(a "handysaur", a fairy)... The second difficulty was connected with a description of what they saw. This description didn't refer to the actual picture but was an interpretation of psychological features assumed by the speaker. It is proof that for many people their physical body doesn't exist, their brain with an image of body and physical body are separated.

## IV. THE ESSENCE OF OPENNESS (continuation)

Created by Marta Zawadzka, Małgorzata Skusa. 19.09.2021,  
Sępólno Krajeńskie

**Intention: building trust, openness, awareness of my own body coexisting with others and in the space - especially outdoors.**

**Target group: 14 young adults (12-29 y.o.)**

**Duration: 3 h**

**Approach: non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance**

### **1. *How does my body work?***

- At the beginning, we asked our participants how they felt and what they brought with them from the previous day.
- The first exercise was to move to energetic music. In diagonal lines the participants spontaneously danced, moving particular parts of the body in exaggerated ways: first round the legs, then hips, then chest, arms, head and then the whole body.

**Notes: It was easier to move the arms and legs and even the head than to move the chest and spine, not to mention the pelvis. Again, it appears that this part is mentally cut off.**

### **2. *How does your body work?***

- Pair work: one person moved to the music, the other person gave impulses by touching various points on the dancer's body. The dancer had to move this touched part wider, with special intention and intensiveness. Then the role changed.

- The next step was to freeze the touched part instead of an exaggerated, intensive move.

Notes: the Freeze exercise seemed to be more difficult. Even if turning off one part of the body wasn't that difficult, to move the rest of the body, to organise it in a new way, was problematic.

### **3. Are we One...?**

Work in pairs, standing face to face. Two people had to listen to each other in a way that they could move simultaneously. There was supposed to be no leader or follower. No talking, keeping eye contact..

### **4. Can you feel me?**

Work in pairs, with the eyes closed, partners were connected with the tips of their forefingers. The aim was to move together, not to lose finger touch and listen to the others - who prefer leadership (the leader), who want to be led (the follower). Maybe the role is changed or there is perfect communication.

Notes: It was not an easy task. Some pairs found it difficult to concentrate on listening to the leader, sometimes it resembled a kind of delicate wrestling. For some participants the hardest part was to work with eyes closed.

### **5. Where can you take me?**

The main purpose of this exercise was to build trust and openness to the partner and new experiences. On the other hand, the

leading person had to be sensitive, careful, and tuned to their co-worker. The participants were working with the same partner. One person with covered eyes was led across the space, in different directions and was exposed to various stimuli.

Notes: Many people didn't feel comfortable in this exercise. Maybe it was the partner they worked with, maybe basically they didn't/don't like to be blind. Very few felt perfectly taken care of.

### **6. *Am I open for touch?***

Half of the group stood still with their eyes closed. The rest approached them and touched their bodies in different ways but with intention and delicacy. Then the role changed.

Notes: Touching and being touched was much more uncomfortable for younger children. The older participants found this exercise surprisingly pleasant in both ways despite their previous belief that they wouldn't like it.

### **7. *Where are we going?***

Drama exercise. Four people pretended to go by car. One person was a driver. The task was to react to an unrealistic situation given by one of the travellers. Everybody in the car had to adjust to the situation and react spontaneously.

Notes: There was a lot of fun. It was the most enjoyable exercise for the youngest who wanted to do it all over again.

## 8. *Where am I?*

Cards with surreal images (DIXIT cards) were used to summarise the workshop. Each participant was to choose a card that was the best image of their feelings, attitude towards what had happened. Everybody was supposed to show the card and tell the others where I am.

Notes: Chosen cards referred to participants' state of mind after the workshop.

## PHOTO & VIDEO EXTRACT

created by Mikail Bayir:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vH3ekNTPdUw>

## I. ME, YES, TOGETHER

**Created by Ilze Zīriņa, Ieva Grundšteine, Agnese Bordjukova, Justīne Buliņa, in Rauna, Latvia. 21.01.2020**

**Annotation: Me - to be aware of myself: feeling myself with eyes closed, trusting, roles of leader/follower, me in cooperation with another.**

**Yes - do not judge! Not myself, not the people around me.**

**Checking myself during the process - how many times I catch myself judging. Being brave enough to acknowledge some episodes.**

**Together - cooperation to create by copying, support or contrast. Learning to listen when another speaks.**

**Intention: trust building; awareness towards own body and**

senses; cooperation to create; observation of judge in self.

**Duration:** 2 hours x 2 classes: the same class for two separate target groups from the same school. One for young people (age of 9-16) and another for teachers (age around 40-50 y.o.).

**Target groups:** 17 young people (age of 9-16) and another for 2 teachers (age around 40-50 y.o.).

**Approach:** non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance.

## Description of exercises

### 1. *Ice breaking*

Everybody takes a piece of paper tape, writes their own name on it and sticks it to their own body on their clothes. Everybody chooses where to attach the name individually. Then the group starts walking around the space, in different directions. While walking, people are asked to read out the names of others. The next step is to connect the spots of people's bodies where the name is attached.

### 2. *Check your senses!*

**Intention:** to remind participants of all the senses that can be used in kinesthetic learning. The fastest way to get the idea is through direct experience.

Short questions to activate thoughts could be:

- For **vision**: "How do you know this t-shirt is black?" Answer: "I see it";
- For **listening**: whisper in the ear something and then ask: "What did I say to you just now?" After getting the answer, ask again: "How do you know that?" Answer: "I heard";
- For **smelling**: eyes closed. Let people smell something (for ex-

ample cinnamon or lemon). Ask: "How can you recognize what it is?" answer: "I can smell it."

- For **taste**: eyes closed. Put something on the tongue of receivers (sugar for example). "How can you say what it was?" "I tasted it"
- For **touch**: eyes closed. Make palm to palm contact with the receivers. "How do you know what it was?" „I could touch palms."
- For **kinesthetic sense**: one person from the group closes their eyes. Give some instructions to her/him, for example: "Raise your left arm vertically up, step backwards with your right leg, turn your head 90 degrees right, place your right hand on your waist." Then ask the group: "How could he/she know where 90 degrees is or backwards or waist or...?" Answer: "Mmmm..."

**Note:** this can be used to explain what kinesthetic sense is. And what kinesthetic learning.

### **3. Activation of group energy:**

**Intention:** to develop skills of awareness and reaction.

Each one wants to touch the other person's knees with palms.

Equally each one doesn't want his/ her own knees to be touched.

Immediately participants are involved in an activity, which is fun & dynamic.

### **4. Me - Inside and Outside:**

**Intention:** to develop self-awareness.

**Inside:** Participants are asked to choose an individual spot in the space. For a moment, let them pay attention to the space around (outside view), then to bring this sight to their inner space by closing their eyes (inner view).

Give them time to observe what is happening. How do they perceive their own body with eyes closed? We suggested focusing on sensations of touching points between the body and a surface. In the positions of standing, on all fours, sitting and lying on the floor. The suggestion was to notice how the body weight transforms in between those positions; when the body is still, can they feel the breathing? To pay attention to how they perceive things without seeing them.

Note: It was a bit challenging for some teenagers to endure slow tempo, but in our view it was absolutely necessary to bring their attention towards themselves to get the sensation of “Me”. Who am I? How do I perceive things? Gradually we would like to build up the confidence of every participant to be true to own wishes and needs as well as to have different view and opinion. This was the first step towards that.

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia. Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



**Outside.** Then from a still position participants were asked to start moving in the space. Eyes still closed. They start to bring their attention towards the space around without seeing it. Sensing, meeting people around. Starting to meet each other through touch. In a simple manner, passing by. Choosing how long they feel comfortable staying with somebody. At some point they choose one person to stay with. When feeling ready they open their eyes. Now people meet somebody else with their eyes. The transition from “me” to “other”.

### **5. *Together - cooperation***

**Intention:** challenge of eye contact. Empathise with the movement another provides.

Standing facing each other and having eye contact for around 3 min. No sound.

Continue with the mirroring exercise where one of the couple is the leader, the other - follower. After a while, the roles need to be switched. An important point is not to rush, so the other person can follow.

**Note:** For still eye contact: it is interesting to observe what people do when the eye contact is too much. Some were closing eyes, starting to laugh or talk, leaving the space but for some it was ok to stay. In mirroring it's nice to see which details people notice and choose to follow. This exercise always can bring out different discoveries about different possibilities what following can mean. This is suitable task for different levels of experiences.

## 6. **Check 1 on trust level.**

**Intention:** to shake the energy and challenge the ability of trust.

The whole group is divided into groups of 6-7 people. One person stands in one side of the room, the other part of his/her group - the opposite side of the room. The one from one side of the room runs with closed eyes towards the rest of the group as fast as he/she can. Try to keep the speed even all the way through. The group receives each member softly and safely.

The next step is that the group lifts the runner off the floor.

**Note:** This exercise shows how to take responsibility for others as well as to trust them.

## REFLECTION TIME

Everyone has 3 sheets of paper. Individually every person writes down where he/she experienced key words of this class Me, Yes, Together. When it's written down, everyone is asked to share.

### **Some answers from participants:**

- I experienced cooperation in the mirroring task;
- When I had to run with my eyes closed;
- Me when I had to lie down and stand on all fours with eyes closed;
- Yes during the exercise of mirroring;
- Together when looking in the eyes of another;
- I felt more myself while trying to sit down with my eyes closed;
- I felt Yes while running with my eyes closed.

## 7. **CO-CO-CO (copy, contribute, contrast)**

**Intention:** to be aware of freedom of personal choice. To develop



*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia.  
Photo by Justīne Buliņa*

consciousness of individual choice and diverse options concerning how it is possible to participate in group work being comfortable with yourself.

Complex task in groups of 4-6 people. The facilitator guides the timing of the whole structure. There are 4 stages in this exercise. Every stage has an equal time frame, for example 4 min. The facilitator says when the task needs to be changed.

**First stage:** one person is the leader. The leader starts to do a movement of his own choice, the other people in the group copy it. When the leader wants to switch the role, he/she delegates it to some other person in the group by giving a simple sign with a hand. It is up to the leaders if all the participants of the group could try to be leaders within the time frame of 4 min.

**Second stage:** the routine of the leader who is suggesting the movement pattern is kept. During this stage, other group members support the leader's motion. It's nice to give some options, what support could mean, but it's equally fine to give space for

exploration as to what support can be for them. Participants use the same sign to switch the position of the leader.

**Third stage:** the structure stays the same. This time other participants of the group contrast the movement offered by the leader. The same sign to switch roles. Give time for explorations.

**Fourth stage:** the same structure but followers make individual choices of how to react to the leaders' movement: to copy, to contribute or to contrast.

**The focus of the participants at the end of the class was weak, so we did not manage to try out the fourth stage. Also the performance of first three stages was not very clear. We plan to involve this structure next time and see how does it develop.**

#### **8. Check 2 on trust level.**

**Intention:** to end the class with a relaxing and fun exercise which challenges the ability to trust.

The group is divided in half. One person standing higher than the rest of the group eyes closed and falling backwards vertically in the hands of the group.

**Note:** Not everyone did it. But some - wanted more than once.

#### **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

Short reflection on the whole class. Every participant needs to finish one sentence of four options: Today I enjoyed..., I didn't understand ..., Next time I would like to..., I did not quite like...

Some examples:

- I liked the sense of togetherness;
- next time I will wear pants;

- today I enjoyed the support from the group during CO-CO-CO;
- next time I would like to do more exercises like this;
- I did not understand the purpose of all this;
- today I enjoyed being with my eyes closed;
- today I enjoyed the fun game about catching the knees;

## II. DIVERSITY IS UNIQUE

**CREATED BY Justīne Buliņa, Agnese Bordjukova, Ilze Zīriņa, in Rauna, Latvia. 26.02.2020**

**ANOTATION: "Diversity is unique", is a quote of one youngster after experiencing this class and we decided to leave it as a title. Thinking of diversity as a value, we decided to explore following ideas in our community of young people:**

- **We become aware of how unique we are when we realize how diverse we are;**
- **And on the same time when I open my weirdness and I see that I am not alone like that, it surprises, releases, and connects me with people surround me.**
- **Am I ready to accept those who are different? Am I ready to be different myself?**
- **When do we all become the same, and when do we split in million diverse pieces?**

**Intention: awareness of diverse perception towards one and the same information. Self-awareness in a connection with another. Trust building through sharing personal experience.**

**Visual and audial perception and diverse interpretation.**

**Duration: 2 hours x 2 classes: the same class for two separate target groups from the same school. one - for young people (age of 9-16) and another for teachers (age around 40-50 y.o.).**

**Target groups: 17 young people (age of 9-16) and another for 2 teachers (age around 40-50 y.o.).**

**Approach: non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance.**

### **Description of exercises**

1. Remembering names and bringing energy together.

Everybody who is present standing in the circle and throwing a ball by saying:

1.) my own name;

2.) later - the person's name to whom I direct the ball.

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia.  
Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



Note. Smooth transition from people still gathering to starting the workshop.

## 2. **Hug game.**

**Intention:** activation of group energy.

Everybody is walking in the room.

- Whenever the leader is clapping hands one time, participants hug the first person they have eye contact with. The person staying without a partner should sing a song that has never been composed, in a language that has never been invented to the whole universe (meaning - loudly). Two times clapping means - release and keep walking.
- Next step of the game: Everybody should hug AND put the partner on the floor but at the same time - not to allow it to happen with themselves.

Note. It is always fun, breaks the ice and also good energizer.

## 3. **Contact points.**

**Intention:** to promote awareness of the here and now. To observe the diverse choices people around me make.

- The leader calls out a number and participants make contact points to the floor with different body parts according to the number that is called out;
- In couples: a couple should make together as many contact points to the floors as the leader calls out;
- In couples: a couple creates as many body contact points between them as the leader calls out;
- The couple should create contact points in the space.

Note: participants connected and started to cooperate in an easy way. Gradually they started to become competitive - who will be the wisest and who - the most advanced physically. It them to dive into the process.

## **OPENING CIRCLE**

When the participants were brought together energetically and warmed up physically, we invited them to remember the last time we met and to help each other to remember details of it.

- Why have we gathered here? What did we do last time? What was your favourite part?
- We also brought participants' attention towards the theme of this day
- Notice the Diversity.
- Thinking of the previous exercise, what do you think might be the theme of today?
- What is diversity for you?

## **4. I - THE DIFFERENT**

**Intention:** trust building through sharing personal experience. Observing and appreciating the diversity of experiences, tastes and opinions.

Everybody takes a spot in a room. Somebody says some statement about him/herself. Those people who can relate to this statement walk towards him/her. Others stay where they are.

Then another person says another statement and again - people who agree approach the initiator while others stay where they are.

Note: we were surprised how ready the kids were to participate and willing to share their personal thoughts and experience. And we realized - when I open my weirdness and I see that I am not alone like that, it surprises, releases, and connects me with the people surrounding me.

Among youngsters, such statements as I am stupid, I do not like my style, I like horror films, I like to dance and eat, when I have nothing to do, I draw on arms, I grew up with my grandmother, we are weird etc.

Among adults, such statements as I am doing all the works quite slowly, It is very difficult for me to wake up in the mornings, I like to take responsibility, I like to work with kids with learning difficulties, My father is my hero, I like to be in problematic situations, It makes me find effective solutions, I like to sit in a bath for a long time, I hate aggressiveness etc.

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia.  
Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



## **5. Centre of gravity/ qualities.**

**Intention:** Self-awareness in connection with others.

**Sensitivity and listening skills.** In a couple

The follower's eyes closed. The leader places a palm on the lower back of the follower and starts to guide the partner through the room. Changing directions and speed, sometimes staying quiet.

Guidance just with the open palm;

The same but now the leader takes the follower off the vertical using all the levels - floor level, sitting, standing.

**Mobility and speed.** In a couple:

Both - eyes open. Now, the person who has a palm on the partner's lower back is a follower. She/he should never release the palm off the partner's back. The leader challenges with the speed, sudden changes of directions and levels in space.

**Power and strength.** In a couple:

- One tries to lift another one vertically up. First, the person being lifted says YES and another time - NO;
- One lies down, facing the floor. The other tries to turn the lying person around but this person resists as much as she/he can;
- One lies across the other one. The person on the bottom should turn around but the person above does not allow it;
- One pushes the other one sideways. The other tries to stay on a spot. First by using muscles. Then - using energy (releasing muscles and breathing out through the feet into the ground.)

**Balance.** In couples:

- One in a table position. The other one tries to balance placing her/his centre of gravity across the partner's.

## 6. *See me, hear me, interpret me.*

**Intention:** awareness towards diverse perception towards one and the same information. Visual and aural perception and diverse interpretation.

In couples:

- One writes down 4 simple actions (walk, sit, raise hand) + everybody has one thing in common - hug the sun;
- Then he/she reads these actions to the partner who interprets them. When the partner learns this movement sequence by heart, he/she performs it to the partner who films the performance on the cell phone;
- Then the cell phones get switched with another couple;
- The person who was just performing has the unfamiliar phone with the filmed movement sequence. So, she/he explains verbally to the partner what the person is doing in the filmed material, but the other one interprets movement as she/he understands.
- Both couples come together and appreciate the similarities and differences of interpretation.

### **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

**Question:** what did you do?

**Answers:** we trusted our cell phones to others; we were listening.

**Question:** what did you notice in the videos?

**Answers:** each of us understands things differently; somebody moves more gracefully, somebody - clumsier.

**Question:** name 2 differences that you noticed comparing videos!

**Answers:** the personality of the performer makes a difference; our

videos are quite similar because we paid attention to the explanations; it is different people performing, different people filming in a different space.

**Question:** how easy/difficult is it to understand what the partner means?

**Answers:** it is easier if the explanation is more detailed.

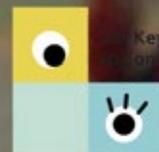
**Question:** who enjoyed more freedom in interpretation and less explanation?

**Answer:** around 80%.

**Question:** who thinks it is easier to be like others?

**Answer:** 0%

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia.  
Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



Note: We take this as another starting point of exercise we want to develop. This time participants just understood the instructions and started with really basic actions. It was not a wide range of interpretation. Next time we would like to ask them to write down actions where each can be more creative with the interpretation.

## **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

Short reflection on the whole class. Every participant needs to finish one sentence of four options: *Today I enjoyed..., I didn't understand..., Next time I would like to..., I did not quite like...*

### **Some examples from participants:**

- next time I would like to have this session longer;
- I enjoyed walking with my eyes closed;
- I enjoyed improvisation and cooperation with people;
- next time I would like the group to be more quiet during the process;
- I enjoyed guiding a person with the palm;
- next time I will be braver;
- I did not quite like dancing;
- I did not understand why when filming with an unfamiliar phone,
- I had a feeling it is stolen; I enjoyed being here.

Video extract by Justine Buliņa

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=poPOCoBI3cU&fbclid=IwAROX-Qthxm3IXN-avA0V1nNZrb0mBLIVmj1JJTJ2m-wLN5KusFq5qvlt6B-ZA>

### III. POSSIBILITY TO MAKE A CHOICE

**CREATED BY** Agnese Bordjukova, Ilze Zīriņa, in Rauna, Latvia.

**11.03.2020**

**ANNOTATION:** Diversity can appear when we become aware of freedom of choice. Find your own way to move! How many ways you can find? Say, **NO**, when it is enough! Say, what you **WANT** to say. By words. By movement.

**Intention:** Kinesthetic experience is quite a specific and individual way of learning & getting an experience. Focus of this class was to introduce youngsters with exercises what can be useful expanding their own vocabulary of movement. Additional aim of the activity is to become aware of the freedom of choice, however it's possible to stay in a contact and cooperate having different views. It's very important to build the process of learning gradually, including activities what help to get to know better own comfort zone, limits as well as individual responsibilities of making choices.

**DURATION:** 2 hours

**TARGET GROUPS:** 11 young people (age of 9-16). Teachers - just 1 came and we canceled. We do not know if we will keep working with the teachers.

**Approach:** non- formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance

#### **Description of exercises**

##### **1. Warm up**

All of the participants form a circle. One person in the circle is the leader, who makes different movements by choice. Others in the

circle reflect his/ her actions. Everyone has a chance to be specific and to copy all of the motions they notice. Not just those that are meant to be the right movements, but also those which are in between - motions of doubts, confusion, thinking and similar. When the leader wants, he passes the role further to the next person using some key action or motion.

Notes: This simple task suggests notice that range of movements can be different and that our body moves when we talk, when we think, when we don't know etc. However usually people with no experience find it confusing what to show, as they think that it needs to be something particular, for example, they need to show cool or right warm-up moves. One more thing that can be experienced through this exercise is the possibility to sense own wishes and needs as every leader can choose what to show. Few youngsters of this particular group found it uncomfortable to be leaders having all the attention towards themselves.

### ***Different interpretations for one offer***

- **Intention:** to widen the vocabulary of movement.  
The source is the individual body as well as possibilities of interpretations.
- Versions of **actions** are given by the facilitator, like: to slide, to roll, to fall, to walk, to jump, to flow, to open & to close, to explode;
- And additions later on: quiet - loud, sharp - soft, minimal - maximal, on a spot - moving in the space, one body part - whole body;

- The task is to find as many possibilities as one can for the given action. Additions are suggestions for learners of what can be added to make a difference or to add a different colour to their movement.

**Note:** Finding the best way of communicating this task with learners still might be in progress. Structured and clear instructions help them to see what the possibilities to verify an action.

### **3. Individual choice in cooperation with others**

**Intention:** to get to know personal needs and borders better. To suggest the idea that everybody can take responsibility for their own choices. The following task is the first step towards that:

- personal space: Participants form pairs. They stand a long distance away facing each other. Preferably they keep eye

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Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



contact. One person is A, the other B. A remains standing, B slowly moves closer. A uses his/her palm as a sign to stop and moves it towards B when it's the edge of the comfortable

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Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



distance for A. They keep eye contact and stand still. If after a while A feels like letting B come closer, he takes his palm down. If not, B moves backwards. It's possible to let them play by coming closer and moving backwards. After a while they switch roles.

- **a touch:** Participants work in the same pairs. One person looks at the other person and names different body parts of their own choice. If the other person finds the particular body part comfortable to be touched, he/she places his own palm on that spot. If she/he wouldn't like to be touched there - no placement of the palm. After a while they change roles.
- The next phase is that A touches B on different spots of the body. Whenever the touch is uncomfortable for B, she/he takes the other person's palm off. Both couples experience it by switching roles.
- **managing the information about yourself coming from others:** Couples stay the same. Working together for a longer time is a possibility to build a certain level of trust between them. Both make quite a long distance between each other again. A says some facts about B. They can be different kinds - obvious or personal (for example: you are blond, you are too shy to show your gentle side, you are creative, I saw you were rude to the teacher). The task for B is to evaluate the fact and own attitude towards that with making a step forward or backwards. A step forward means that the person agrees with that and approves it, a step backwards is the opposite. After a while they switch roles.

Note: As touch and personal space rather sensitive topics for young people, good decision could be to let them experience that gradually.

#### 4. **Finishing the sentence**

**Intention:** to offer a kinesthetic way to express myself. Introduction of the possibility to be different because it is hard to be identical in movement. To suggest that every version counts and is acceptable.

- **Proposed sentences by facilitator:** *My name is... I'm aged...I've got brothers or sisters... My wish is... I don't get along with...I often feel...I can...I can't...*
- **The task** is to give an individual response to the statement in a motion.
- **The first phase** is when all groups work together and step by step try out different versions of movement for every sentence.
- **Then** 5 minutes are given to formulate and to choose one answer in movement for each sentence.
- At the end of the class **a simple structure was tried out:** All the participants stood in one line. The free space they face is a performing spot. The facilitator calls out the statements. Those who want to show their responses go to the stage and show their response in movement.

#### **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

We asked participants to write a letter to us and talk about moments when they did not feel comfortable during the class, moments where they felt supported. We also asked them to ask a question to us.

Some examples from letters:

- I felt very uncomfortable when I had to repeat the movement of another. I feel very comfortable sitting on the floor or a chair.

I would love to come to such classes again. Will we have more classes like this?

- I do not feel comfortable at all. But I agree with everything that we do here. When will we have another class like this? I loved it and hope that it will happen again.
- I felt uncomfortable when I was late after the intermission. I also felt uncomfortable during eye contact. I liked doing all the actions (like sliding, falling, jumping etc.). Why are we the ones who participate in this project? Why is a project like this happening?
- I felt uncomfortable when I had to initiate a movement and everybody repeated it. I do not like tasks where one person is the centre of attention.
- I felt uncomfortable when I was touched. I enjoyed finishing the sentence with the movement. Will we use more elements of sport or ball at some class?
- I felt uncomfortable when I had to touch different body parts of another person. I enjoyed expressing by movement my answers to questions. Other people might divide us into couples.

#### **IV. BALANCE**

**CREATED BY Ilze Zīriņa, Ieva Grundšteine, Agnese Bordjukova, Justīne Buliņa, in Rauna, Latvia. 10.06.2020**

**ANNOTATION: hiking and balancing on ropes invites to experience well known pathways with another eyes. About 2 km long nature trail, filled with a variety of tasks that sharpen senses such as vision, hearing and touch. At the end of the pathway,**

there are ropes for balancing. There is a teamwork task to make possible for a person to cross the distance on the rope. Intention: to meet again after the experience of pandemia, 2,5 months long. To reconnect and build the trust enjoying outdoor

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia.  
Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



adventure together. To bring attention to self-awareness, self in a group as well as well as physical development.

**DURATION:** 2 hours.

**Target groups:** a group of 9 young people 9-15 y.o.

**Approach:** non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance.

## Description of exercises

### PREPARATION BEFORE HIKING

Arriving at the starting point of the journey, every person gets a note with the name of one person from the group. And the facilitator invites everybody - during the walk to pick one thing from nature that could be a gift for that person.

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia.  
Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



### **Station 1: by the sandy rock of the river**

**Task:** to touch 5 surfaces as different as you can find. Then find a couple. Choose 3 favourite surfaces to “show” to your partner who has eyes closed. Change roles.

Keep walking....

### **Station 2: on the road with a stony surface**

**Task:** take your shoes off and walk the distance, around 400 m with bare feet. Exaggerate the natural, spontaneous reaction from the hard surface of what comes into the body in voice or movement.

Keep walking...

### **Station 3: on the bridge**

**Task:** find a spot on the bridge where you can feel alone. When you hear clapping with your hands, move as fast as you can. When you hear the clapping again - stop, keep the silence and listen. There are several sets like this. Later you also close your eyes during the silent moment. At the end of the task, lie on the bridge and listen.

### **Station 4: on the way to the cave (around 500 m distance)**

**Task:** on your way, while running, find at least 7 physical obstacles and let your body find a natural way of overcoming them.

### **Station 5: in the cave**

**Task:** before entering the cave, everybody gets a blindfold. Enter the cave, find your favourite spot where you can feel alone and put your blindfold on. Stay still for a while. Then - start exploring



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Photo by Justīne Buliņa*

the cave using your touch and hearing. Meanwhile, the facilitators provide little surprises: whispering, pouring sand on feet, making soft sounds with objects from nature (dry leaves, stones, sand etc.). After 5-10 min, the facilitator asks everybody to gradually find the exit out of the cave. When you are out, take the blindfold off.

### **Station 6: on the way to the post office**

**Task:** NO TALKING during this station. Observe the lines in nature - lines, circles, triangles, dots etc. Take a picture of some favourite lines.

### **Station 7: by the post office**

**Task:** do you have your little gift for your secret friend? Approach that person and tell him/her why you present this gift to her/him!

### **TRANSITION TO THE LOCATION OF ROPES (AROUND 1 KM)**

**Task:** walk in groups of 2 or 3. Talk through the following questions:

- How many times have you walked along this path?
- What was different this time?
- Which task was your favourite? Why?
- Which task was the most challenging? Why?
- In which moment did you overcome your fear or laziness?
- What did you notice?

Choose 2 comments which you will share with the rest of the group!

### **TIME FOR REFLECTION**

As a summary - most of the young people have walked this path many, many times and they appreciated details that were noticed this time. The favourite moments were being in the cave, eyes closed, overcoming obstacles. Some overcame fear by climbing a tree during the obstacle task, some found it interesting to observe shapes in nature, some loved showing their favourite surfaces to their partner.

## ON THE ROPES

### 1. Preparation

Everybody participates in setting up the ropes (there is one like a ribbon and another - a rope). Then the facilitators remind us about security.

### 2. Spider Pig

2 people on each side of the rope. They will walk to the other side of the rope, trying to pass in the middle. Each of them holds a security rope in their hands. On both sides of this security rope there is a person, pulling the rope and letting it become a support for the Spider Pig.

The Spider Pig has to organise the support around her/him letting supporters know whether to pull stronger or release a bit... Change roles when the Spider Pig has made her/his journey to the other side of the rope.

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia. Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



### 3. Balancing on the ribbon

One person at a time on the ribbon with supporters by each hand. Just practise getting to the other side of the ribbon, receiving as little support from partners as possible.

Note: this practical activity seemed exciting to everybody - preparation made the group team up. Everybody wanted to help. the sceptical ones. Not everybody took the challenge to be on the rope but everybody took supporter's role. couple of painful falls from the rope (legs on different sides of the rope).

### TIME FOR REFLECTION

As values, participants noticed more active participation than usual, cooperation, supporting each other and overcoming fear (on the ropes). Nevertheless, there were young people (aged 12-13) who chose to be there but not participate. They could not say why.

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia. Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



## V. DIVERSITY AS A VALUE

CREATED BY Ilze Zīriņa, Ieva Grundšteine, Agnese Bordjukova, Justīne Buliņa, Inta Balode in Rauna, Latvia. 06.07.2021

### INTENTION OF THE CLASS:

- 1) building trust to open up
- 2) awareness of own body and senses as well as other people in the group
- 3) getting familiar with a concept of choice
- 4) awareness about making a choice
- 5) reflection about the experiences

**DURATION:** 6 hours with a break.

**TARGET GROUPS:** 20 young people (age 8-15)

**APPROACH:** non-formal kinesthetic learning through movement and dance.

### Description of exercises

#### 1. *A guide of various options for movement possibilities*

**Intention:** To introduce young people with different possibilities to how movement can be created, initiated, or taught. In the long term, it's a way to get familiar with choices that they can have.

A development of a movement vocabulary.

**First step:** Follow the guide!

There's one person in the group that takes the lead in creating different movements. Other participants just simply follow the example. Some of the facilitators can start that, but the guidance can be passed on to other members of the group if people feel open enough to take the lead.

Note: exercise is made to experience how is to be a follower. Not being responsible for leading, just following suggestions of another person.

**Second step:** Learn the score of movement!

It's very straightforward - participants are introduced with a dance combination to learn. It's a very traditional way of learning dance - to copy the facilitator or teacher.

Note: like the first step. Just here it's even more important to be able to copy the movement and to be precise in one's body. It's good to encourage them to pay attention to details and to make it in their own way.

**Third step:** Get inspired by music!

Facilitators create a mix of different music samples. The more contrasting the better. Participants are asked to close their eyes and to connect with the music, letting the sound resonate through their bodies. Different music examples make people move differently.

**Fourth step:** Initiate the movement from different body parts!

Divide the task into phases: introduce participants to the idea that movement can be initiated from the elbow, palm, foot, head, tail, shoulder, knee and so on. An impulse from a certain body part can make them work with gravity and inertia more; longer lines created by the body part can show the flow which takes the movement in different levels of the space. (That can look like drawing.) It is possible to play with these two qualities.

**Fifth step:** Move together with a group!

1. Find a common speed within a group - all the participants

move through the space in different directions but keep a similar speed of motion for all groups together without talking. If somebody in the group speeds up, everybody follows, if somebody suggests slowing down - all the group joins.

2. Stop and start moving at the same time. People continue with a similar speed of movement within a group and add stopping and starting the movement. Nobody leads or guides. It's again non-verbal communication among all the participants of the group based on listening and observation.
3. Every participant is invited to silently choose two random participants of the group. The task is to keep both in one's view at the same time. As everybody is moving in a space simultaneously movement is initiated and changed by the other people's motion.

**Note:** These are simple task in a structure, but they work well to develop skills of listening, observation, attentiveness, reaction, connection with other people physically without being personal.

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia. Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



# 6.

# Notes from pandemic

*From local activity with young people in Rauna, Latvia. Photo by Justīne Buliņa*



# From Latvia...

## March, 2020

The Latvian national team was excited to welcome international partners for the Kick Off Seminar. It was supposed to happen in Rauna, Latvia on March 31 - April 4, 2020. The facilitators were more than ready: the Avio tickets - bought, accommodation - organised, young people - ready to participate and meet international guests. On March 11, 2020 concerns about the Covid-19 attack were so high that we seriously considered the cancellation of the meeting in Latvia. And on March 12, the seminar in Latvia was cancelled.

## What's next?!

Everybody was confused and full of concerns.

We came together on the Zoom platform on April 3 to agree on the next moves.

We resisted the digital platform. Some more than others. We all agreed that the essence of the project was about being together - physically in one room and time. Besides this, we were sceptical about kinesthetic learning on a digital platform.

Greece was more ready to start looking for new ways to connect through digital platforms than the rest of us. But... it took a long and painful time till the pandemic broke us and we started to look for digital tools.

We made an extension for the project 2 times. The final changes - we extended as far as we could - until December 31, 2021.

## Summer /Autumn 2020

During the summer, Poland, Greece, and Latvia managed to run the second workshop, meeting their target group physically. Still, as the Latvian team observed - the trust was gone. Participants were quiet and in denial compared to the last time we met them before the pandemic. The first wave of Covid-19 was easier on Latvia, so also in October we could organise activities physically in one space. We decided to *Step in Footprints of Greece* (*Creating and Stepping in Footprints* is a 3-hour-long workshop created and described on paper by each partner for others to check how easy or difficult it is to interpret a written description, created by another). Well, 4 people came. We ran the workshop live on Facebook for our partners to watch if they wished. But that was the last time we met our young people in person.

**Partner Meeting 2 in Poland was supposed to happen in August.** At some point, it felt that it could actually happen, I mean - a physical international meeting. But pretty soon many reasons showed that it was impossible. We met on the Zoom platform in July to think about what to do with the international partner meeting and project in general. The meeting in the big group was heavy and stiff. Nevertheless, we reached common ground and agreed to extend the project and see if we could postpone the Partner Meeting 2 in Poland to October/November. We also agreed to have regular digital meetings in smaller thematic groups starting from September. The project's FB group should be the platform where all the material of the project is collected but information should also be exchanged through emails as quite a few

participants are not active FB followers.

## **Autumn 2020**

As we know, the *Partner Meeting* in Poland also did not happen in Autumn 2020. We extended the project as much as we could - till the end of 2021. Still in October the Latvian team did what they could to meet youngsters. As mentioned before, we stepped in the Greek team's footprints - implemented a workshop, created by the Greek team, in Rauna. Only four youngsters came. Of course, we enjoyed implementing something that our foreign friends had created and also youngsters enjoyed when they forgot that they were so few.. but the energy was not the same as before the pandemic. In November, we started online workshops within the target group. The Latvian team started with *Dance Never Lies* facilitated by Inta Balode. It was a Zoom talk/workshop about how dance is a good testing field of your real stance about issues in understanding, accepting and valuing diversity.

Besides digital meetings, we also started to collect materials for the final result of the project - the digital reading material. All the process was slow and hard as people struggled with their everyday duties. And the lack of energy exchange made moving the project each day more and more difficult.

## **Winter 2020/21**

In January, the Greek team came up with a nice gift - an online workshop *When Art Meets You!* The theme of the workshop was kinesthetic dialogue with our favourite piece of art. The workshop was great because, first of all, it was a possibility just to enjoy the

facilitation of the Greek team and participate being a receiver and it also brought up some questions about the issues that could appear working digitally with youngsters and movement.

February was dark and quiet - no international nor local activity was heard within the framework of the project.

## **Spring 2021**

In March, the Latvian national team started digital laboratories of kinesthetic learning among themselves but also opened that space for partners, and later - even their friends, to join. In total, the Latvian team ran 4 digital laboratories of kinesthetic learning and they found these meeting times meaningful both for professional and for personal interests.

In April, we understood that actual international meetings might not happen in the framework of our project. So, we stopped waiting and set the date for digital *Partner Meeting 2* - April 17, 18. Of course, emotionally nobody was enthusiastic about it but we did not see another way. We met for two days, 3 hours per day. When we actually met, we felt that it was the right choice: first of all, we were more familiar with the digital platform for both verbal and kinesthetic communication and felt more relaxed about it. Secondly, we moved on in terms of objectives of the project (thanks to JAMBOARD, which Ieva brought to the process). Thirdly, we shared ideas and moved together. This gave a little bit of sense about being a team again. We did not manage to implement everything we wanted in those two days, so we agreed to continue *Partner Meeting 2* a month later. Which we did on May 15, 16.

The Greek team invited partners to join an event they were organising for PEPSAEE youngsters - *Bollywood Dancing Party* to shake

away the negativity and tiredness from the pandemic.

In May, the restrictions loosened a bit and the Latvian team came together for 2 days' residency to move forward with some materials for digital reading material.

## **Summer 2021**

June started with an organised online workshop *When Art Meets You* by the Greek team about the music element. They used the video with Daniel Wargin's sketches from one of our international weekend meetings at the workshop. Which means that even in the darkest times good ideas fly around... if we are able to observe, listen and appreciate...

In summer, we also organised international working groups working on such themes as Kinesthetic Learning, Competency Framework, Digital Reading Material, Visuals of Project, and Interviews with the Participants. We met online and worked on materials for the digital reading material - about content, structure and shape.

Online dance events seemed to really work in Greece, so, they organised one more - *Bollywood / Hip Hop* dance event at the end of June and they were open for us to witness the event as well. Talking about digital job shadowing as well as about many other good ideas - it stayed good only theoretically. Practically they were not implemented even if proposals (like this one) appeared in the group. This is one of the learning outcomes of this pandemic period - there are many good ideas on paper or in mind, which does not mean they should be implemented in reality knowing how busy we are with all our duties. **We need to find the right balance when we adapt some project to reality.**

Doing something just to fulfil something that is written on paper is not the purpose of this project. It has to be beneficial both for youngsters as well as participants of the project.

At one point there was a hope to have the final meeting in Greece as we planned. But soon, in July it started to be clear that the cases of Covid-19 in Greece increased drastically and the islands started to be locked down again.

Summer was good for the Bulgarian team. Meaning that they could implement two activities for their youngsters *Human and Five Elements* in July and *Motion - Emotion* in August.

August was good for all of us as a few of us (one participant from each country and all the Latvian team) managed to meet in Latvia for a job shadowing activity on August 19-23, 2021. It was an exciting, motivating and meaningful meeting. It feels that with this meeting we broke the pandemic inside of us. I mean all the nightmare of the pandemic still goes on, but it feels like we somehow got back on track.

**What are learning outcomes?** First of all:

**Do not give up!** Nobody promised the journey would be easy. Even the simplest project can become complicated because of many different reasons. Going through this complicated process opens up the themes of the project (understanding of self, skill of listening and observation, openness as an attitude, value of diversity) in a much wider range than if it was sharply organised, running smoothly etc.

Second - kinesthetic learning on digital platforms does not work as exploration and self-awareness for people who have not practised movement before. It can be a tool for relaxation and having fun and communication though. There are people who feel more

comfortable in the digital world but there are people who do not feel comfortable there at all and there should be a possibility to choose. **The pandemic did not give this choice.** And that was the worst part for me in all this story.

Third - **there are many good ideas which theoretically would be possible to implement. But only a few of them find ground and get implemented.** Maybe for others it is not time yet.

**Covid-19 still controls us and we still go on...**

## **From Poland...**

The pandemic time was a tough time for everybody who was trying to work on the project. The Polish situation was no different. We had to and still have to deal with various obstacles - both physical and psychological. We started the project with great hopes and expectations. When all the partners met in Bulgaria, got to know each other - we knew that it was something that could bring a lot of benefits to the people we were going to work with, but also to us, the leaders of the project - to develop more skills, to gain a lot of knowledge about others and about ourselves. And then the pandemic came...and what was supposed to be done with real people in real surroundings was transferred to the online world. That was one of the most difficult things to deal with.

At the beginning, it was not so bad. We all had a lot of motivation, maybe because no one could predict that we would stay in front of our computers for almost a year. But still.... we truly wanted to work, to be connected, to bring something important to the project even if we could only see each other via Zoom. Unfortunately, after some time, we felt that the motivation was fading away, we

felt more and more tired of spending time online. Additionally, the problems with internet connections could spoil the best prepared meeting. The frustration that this kind of project should have looked totally different was growing quite fast. Of course, everyone was aware that the coordinators were trying to do their best to make the project live. They were also trying to encourage and motivate us by sending new tasks to do, which was - at the peak of the pandemic and at the peak of tiredness, very hard. Besides this, we communicated in English which sometimes caused problems with understanding each other, with understanding what we were supposed to do...and no one could say how long it was going to look this way. What we all missed the most were direct meetings with partners, sharing the ideas, thoughts, impressions, talking, working together, even hugging. We had a dose of it in Bulgaria and then it was over... There was again a tiny ray of hope. It was August 2020 when the chance to meet in Toruń and/or Sępólno Krajeńskie in Poland appeared. Unfortunately, we couldn't manage to do so due to some perturbation on one of our partners' side

From local activity with young people in Sępólno Krajeńskie, Poland.  
Photo by Mikail Bayir.



The second huge issue caused by the pandemic was connected with the target group. We managed to do one workshop before the first lockdown, the second meeting was prepared, everything was arranged and the Polish government set the lockdown a day before the second workshop (March 2020). The next time we met with the target group was after a few months (July 2020). That meant that the target group was different, the participants were different, the goals to achieve had to be different. The next workshop took place after more than a year, in September 2021 with again a different group. So each time we were working with new people. What is more - each time the participants were of different ages. Teenagers and young adults expect different things. It is obvious that working with them requires various, diverse methods and activities. To combine them can be really interesting and valuable, but if we wanted to achieve our goals - it became harder. There were two basic reasons. Firstly, to organise a new group, to encourage and motivate young people from a small town requires a lot of managing skills. Secondly, and it seems to be the most important - regular meetings would be much more beneficial for youngsters. They could work on some issues and at the same time our goals, they could go deeper into themselves and for sure that would be the most efficient for their development and openness. The last problem that we had to deal with was a change in the position of project coordinator and the director of the Centre of Contemporary Art in Torun as well. The cooperation with both coordinators was smooth and easy, but for a few months there was nobody delegated to take care of the project. Thankfully, the situation has changed for the better and our coordinator takes care of us as much as she can. We have been assured that there will be no

change in her position till the end of the project.

Now we are looking forward to meeting all of Rhodes. We cannot wait to meet together in real life, so we could again - like in Bulgaria - share the ideas, thoughts, impressions, talk, work together and hug a lot.

It seems that our story will come full circle.

## From Greece...

Photo by Justine Buliņa



The first workshop of kinesthetic learning (*Unfolding*) in the framework of the project took place on February 21, 2020 with students of the Experimental Intercultural Athens High School. Although the *Kick Off Seminar* in Latvia was cancelled, the threat of the *Covid-19* disease was still a distant and not very real threat to us. But... one month later, the first lockdown happened in Greece and everything froze. We lost our contact with the school and our

target group and we stayed at home feeling numb and useless. Soon, thanks to P.E.P.S.A.E.E., which is a mental health organisation that had to quickly find ways to keep providing its services to the public, we were back and trying to figure out the best way to keep the project alive· figuratively, inside us, and literally, meaning to find ways to approach our target group or find a new one and keep working on the kinesthetic activities. We knew that we couldn't give up on our young people the time they needed us the most! We believed that now was exactly the time to show them how to find and use their strengths to overcome adversities and to give them the tools to observe what's happening inside them, how they react and why and, finally, to understand and control their feelings and be the version of themselves they want to be. Otherwise, we felt that we would fail them and that we wouldn't be worthy of their trust. Our organisation decided to give online activities a chance, but at that point we couldn't imagine how to implement kinesthetic activities without being in the same space as the participants.

Then, RHODES VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY facilitated a pilot online workshop with university students and hope warmed our hearts again. It was a very different experience and gave us a lot of information about the implementation of kinesthetic activities online. As a national group, we still preferred face-to-face meetings with our target groups, though. Meanwhile, we devoted our official-activities-for-the-project time to studying theoretical material on our topic: critical understanding of self, and on creating the Footprints workshop. To do that, we had a few long Zoom meetings, which helped us bond as a team and understand our topic better. We realised how wide it was and how careful and gentle

we should be with our participants in order not to be invasive or pushy.

In June 2020, restrictions were being slowly lifted in Greece, so we rushed to meet the principal of the Experimental Intercultural Athens High School to make arrangements for our next workshop. She was thrilled to have us and very cooperative! She informed us about the safety measures that applied to school units and together we figured out the ways to make this second workshop a reality, as participants were very excited after the first one! Of course, we had to make a few adjustments to our activities, give out gloves and make sure participants would have no physical contact with each other. That was the ultimate paradox: in a project that was about connection we had to keep a *distance* from each other. Nevertheless, we did our best to create exercises that respected the health regulations, but also provided self-awareness stimuli. And the most important for that time: we didn't forget to have fun with our participants, to help them remember what it's like to be care-free and playful! We met half of them on June 2 and the other half the next day in their school yard. Some of them were more open towards the exercises and us than before; they felt more comfortable around us. Once again the language and cultural barrier took its toll, but everyone participated in their own way and everybody's boundaries were respected.

After summer 2020, we contacted the Experimental Intercultural Athens High School again to plan the next workshop, but *Covid-19* got there first! There was a case in the class we were working with, so the principal told us that she didn't know when and if we would be able to work with them again. Suddenly, we were left without a target group! Immediately we started organising back-up plans,

but before we had the chance to make calls, a new lockdown was enforced in the country. Once more, we had to work from home and that made the national group communication and cooperation a lot harder. Also, each one of us was trying to meet all our jobs' and the project's requirements and that proved a real struggle! We were amazed by the difficulty we had finding mutual free time to meet online, although we were under a strict quarantine, accompanied by extreme limitations! Suddenly, we found ourselves spending most of our time inside the house, but at the same time filling our days with mental or physical activities, leaving absolutely no time and exhausting our tolerance for Zoom meetings and screen time! During the winter of 2021, we strived to be present as far as the project is concerned. The pandemic started to tire and alienate us from each other. For a while, most of the members of our team were preoccupied by job or family matters and we, also, found it extremely hard to reflect upon our experience, which would give us a better perspective of our position in the project. Nonetheless, we participated in the digital laboratories of kinesthetic learning facilitated by the Latvian team and offered our partners an online workshop (*When Art Meets YOU*) involving a favourite piece of art and working on our relationship with it. Although time consuming, being part of these online activities with our partners helped us keep a sense that the project was moving forward, reminding us of the responsibility that we had to develop new tools for unprivileged and vulnerable young people that were in need, improving our understanding of our topics and, of course, deepening our relationship with the people forming the other national groups. That last one was very important, especially to the people that hadn't participated

in the First Partners' meeting in Bulgaria and had established those relationships via Zoom!

And from the absolute struggle to remain active, we jumped into kinesthetic inspiration and workshop planning! Springtime was a busy period for our team! It was like we were reborn, like nature! We started meeting online more frequently to move the project forward and to prepare for the first Digital Partners' Meeting in April. Thanks to this meeting, the partners' relationships were repaired and we were all reminded of our mutual goal and, of course, our deadlines! In addition, it gave us the opportunity to talk to each other, learn about each country's situation and difficulties and reunite as an international team. After that, we felt it was time to follow young people's habits and to figure out what we can do for their kinesthetic education by using their beloved internet. Thus, we decided to test our skills by facilitating an online workshop (*Puzzle Dance Challenge*)! That would be our Footprints workshop. For the first time, the two Greek organisations planned and facilitated a workshop together! We were equally involved and supported each other along all the way, because we knew how difficult our attempt would be. We built the sequence of the exercises based on many of our partners' workshops, not just one, because of the nature of the workshop (online). What is more, we took under consideration many important factors, such as the distance between us and the participants, the probable lack of space and physical presence, the non-physical contact, all significant and substantial factors in kinesthetic learning. Being thankful and with respect towards the participants, we made sure to use only exercises with few and easy instructions, that would be easy to execute by one person alone and at home and we used audio stimuli, such as our voices and music, in the best way we could.

We had 9 participants that totally moved us with the trust they showed to us! All of them had previous experience of online classes, but none of them had ever participated in a similar activity - face-to-face or online. It could be said that we all - facilitators and participants - shared a sense of stress, but also of curiosity about the workshop and the procedure. We - the coordinators of the activities - had planned the exercises very carefully, but no one is capable of predicting the future and we couldn't know how the participants would react. For that reason, we spent quite a time introducing ourselves and meeting our young people. After that, we gave them information about the project and the procedure we would guide them through. We thought it was of great importance to create a safe environment from the very beginning, be open and available to answer questions and make them feel comfortable. One of the ways we achieved that was the permission to leave their cameras open, but move them or even to switch them off. We also clarified that the workshop didn't include any form of competition, that they didn't have to impress anybody and that there were no correct or wrong answers/reactions. The framework set must have been helpful enough for the participants, because they felt free to move off camera and actually work on the things we intended them to. Maybe our expectations weren't met 100% and our participants were not extravagant during the reflection, but we know we did a good job from their feedback, which came a few days later, and by good job we mean that we gave them food for thought and we introduced them to a new way of experiencing their self, the world and their place in it.

We shared our observations with the partners at the second Digital Partners' Meeting in May. We felt satisfied, relieved and ready

to plan our next and last workshop, When Art Meets YOU - The Music Element. That one was planned for June with some of the previous workshop's participants and a few new ones. Again in this workshop we spent time in the introduction of ourselves, the participants, the project and its goals. It was nice to see familiar faces becoming more loose and relaxed. It meant that those two hours we spent together last month really did the trick! That, also, helped the new ones feel more comfortable and open.

This workshop was more targeted to the self and was planned for people to work absolutely isolated with their favourite piece of music. That meant switching off microphones and no interaction between the participants or with the facilitators. That was a risk we decided to take, but handled it very carefully and watched the process closely so as not to miss any discomfort coming from the exercises. That was one of the most challenging moments throughout the project, since we didn't know much about our participants and, as a result, we couldn't know if they were capable of enduring such a lonely journey. The results rewarded us, because, during the reflection, the participants commented positively on the process of the workshop and declared they would happily participate in another one!

Online workshops were such rich and growing experiences! Priceless! They sharpened our observation skills and raised our flexibility and adaptability. We had a plan in our minds, but it was our participants' reactions that, in fact, guided us. If we learnt one thing, it is that during online workshops facilitators have to be 100% present and that they can't afford to miss out on non-verbal information, because the whole experience could end up traumatic for the participants. Of course, that is a very difficult thing to achieve

and that is the point where a group of people becomes handy. We had derived our tasks beforehand and everyone knew what they had to do to complete the workshop successfully. After the workshops, we had online meetings to talk about our observations, the things we felt/thought went well and wrong, adjustments or improvements we could make and, last but not least, our feelings, our sense after the workshops. These meetings gave us valuable material to reflect on and to use during our next planning.

Of course, there are many things that still concern us about the online workshops. First of all, the space from which the participants connected to the workshop. Most of the time, it was really hard for them to find a room where they could be alone, without distraction, and that would be spacious enough for them to move freely. Second, movement off camera or with a camera switched off. We could understand the reasons behind this decision and we preferred that to a non-participating person or non-authentic participation, but this choice deprived us of useful information in a situation where we had access to an already decreased amount of data. Especially during our workshop in April, it was with great distress that we watched every move and every facial expression, right because we weren't at the same location with our participants! Did we miss anything? And, if yes, how much did we miss? And how helpful could we be from a distance should anything happen?

Another issue arisen from the online workshops had to do with the limited movement exhibited by the participants. Didn't they have enough space to move? Were they shy? Were they not used to or open to expressing through movement/body? If we were face-to-face, would that make any difference? Would they be inspired by us or each other to at least try it out? So many questions that re-

main unanswered! But these questions will keep us going and working until we figure them out! As long as the pandemic is defining our lives, we are obliged to explore ways to reach out to the vulnerable and marginalised young people in order to achieve their empowerment and pass the message of resilience and continuance of growth even under difficult situations!

# 7.

## **Creative team**

We are an international team of people who care about connecting with young people and keep looking for effective ways to reach out. We are a very wide range of professionals: youth workers, non formal educators, teachers, dancers, dance pedagogues, managers, psychologists, also young people - volunteers at one of our partner organisations. And we are very diverse personalities with diverse life experiences. All through this long period of carrying out the

project, we explored the themes not only in exercises but also in relationships with each other... ***understanding and accepting self, listening and observing, being open, appreciating diversity as a value.***



## **Yoana Yordanova-Sojka** **from Bulgaria**

### **What do I do?**

At this moment I am a proud mother with two beautiful daughters, but normally in my daily life I work as a ballet dance teacher and choreographer.

### **In which organisation am I working?**

Also as Director of the NGO Artarea where from 2012 till this moment we have created European projects and worked with young people from Bulgaria and Europe.

### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

In my free time, I love to be with my family, travel somewhere and discover new places.

### **If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?**

If I can, after 10 years I would like to say to myself - "Hello Yoana, you made it, be proud and enjoy the rest of your life."

### **Which is my favourite movement?**

And always keep moving because movement is my life, the key to be alive.



## **Andrzej Sojka**

### **Polish man, living in Bulgaria**

#### **What do I do?**

I am a teacher and director of a circus theatre company.

#### **In which organisation am I working?**

Working in the **CPLR - ODK Pernik** organisation and partnering with Association **ARTAREA**.

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

I love to travel, be in nature, tasting food and wine from all over the world.

If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?

#### **If I can say something to myself 10 years from now, it will be...**

"Andrzejku, your 'campervan project' succeeded. Now is the time to hit the road and enjoy the rest of your life."

#### **Which is my favourite movement?**

My favourite movement is... to fly! (In my free time I am Superman but... shshsh...)



## **Tzvetina Matova**

### **from Bulgaria**

#### **What do I do?**

Dancer, dance teacher, youth worker, actress for Playback Theatre.

#### **In which organisation am I working?**

I am working in Association **ARTAREA**

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

In my free time, I try to be with my son and family with a nice lunch or a walk in nature. I also like to do different kinds of massages and to give my body the love and rest that it deserves. Cooking, reading a book or chatting with friends are also part of what I do in my free time.

#### **If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?**

If I could say something to myself 10 years from now it would be "Be brave, to love and to dance even more."

#### **Which is my favourite movement?**

My favourite movement could be every movement that comes from the soul not to show something, but to express and to connect. Even breathing is a marvellous movement.



## **Sofia Papaspyropoulou** **from Greece**

### **What do I do?**

I work as a psychologist and the Centre's Program Coordinator. P.E.P.S.A.E.E. stands for PanHellenic Association for the Psychosocial Rehabilitation & Work Re-Integration and is a non-governmental and non-profit scientific union established in 1996 (<http://www.pepsaee.gr/>). In my job, I have many times been given the opportunity to work with various artists and combine science with art. I deeply believe in the effectiveness of early intervention, thus I am always happy to work with young people and walk with them the rough path of mental illness, making good use of all kinds of tools and I try to impart this approach also to my interns.

### **In which organisation am I working?**

P.E.P.S.A.E.E. takes part in the national program for psychiatric reform in Greece and specialises in supporting, coordinating and empowering rehabilitation and work integration initiatives for adults with mental health problems. The specialised Day Centre - Social Dialogue Centre, in particular, is an alternative mental health structure that focuses on the establishment of new job positions and on the realisation of innovative activities, related to all sorts of art, for the rehabilitation of people with severe mental health

problems. In it, mental health professionals, artists, employees and volunteers combine art and the principles of the methodology of Recovery in order to help mental health services' users on their way to social integration.

### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

In my free time, I like to listen to music, exercise and spend time with my friends. I belong to the generation of people who leave their countries to study or work abroad, so I have a lot of friends who live far away and it's very important for me to stay in touch with them and still feel part of their lives.

Off quarantine times, I usually meet my friends outside for coffee and a chat or in someone's house where we usually end up watching movies. On cold winter days, I appreciate reading a good book, ideally next to the fireplace in my parents' house back home. Alternatively, I like to grab a warm blanket and read my book on my comfortable couch with a cup of coffee or hot chocolate by my side. When the weather is good, I like to go outside for long walks in nature or to ride my bike as I used to do with my father on Sunday afternoons, when I was a little girl. Spending time with my beloved dog, Rambo (yes, he is named after the action hero of the homonymous movies!), is also one of my favourite activities! He is always so full of energy, happiness and love! It feels like he charges my batteries and he is the best companion anyone could possibly ask for! When there is not a pandemic in the world, I LOVE to travel! I've been in more than 10 different countries, I've met new people and their cultures and I've filled my soul with beautiful and unique images, smells, tastes, sounds and feelings! Now that travelling is off limits, I enjoy reminiscing about my journeys around the world, planning and dreaming of new trips, playing board games and tidying up my house.

If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?

I am a hard-working and passionate person. I devote myself and time to anything I take on. So, if I could talk to my future self, I would remind them that I have worked hard and achieved many things and that sometimes it's good to take a break and look back. I feel that I always try for the best outcome and forget to cherish my successes and little victories. Life is happening, Sofia! Look around and... live! Give little everyday moments the importance

they deserve, focus on the here and now and savour it! Not being on a mission all the time doesn't make you lazy! Just... Relax!

### **Which is my favourite movement?**

I don't have a favourite movement... at least yet! But if I had to answer that, I'd probably choose something from the domain of contemporary dance. Maybe something that implies energy and feelings coming outwards, to all directions. This movement stimulates my soul, as lately I find myself looking for ways to express myself, my feelings and thoughts, positive or negative, and work on them. Growing up with two professors as parents, there was often no room for expression and genuine communication. Thus, I learnt to bury most of the things I was feeling, thinking that was the way I was supposed to behave, that's how people cope. But through dance I get the opportunity to explore what's been dwelling inside me, be aware of it, pay attention to it and control it instead of letting it control me. I am grateful for being part of this program, which makes me work with myself in new, exciting ways and grow! I hope the methodology and tools being developed will make a difference for people in need!



## **Niki Louladaki**

### **from Greece**

#### **What do I do?**

From the age of five, I was involved in dance and music and it did not take long for me to decide what my professional direction would be. In the artistic field, my studies led to a Dance Teaching Diploma (ballet and contemporary dance) granted from the Greek Ministry of Culture and a Certificate of Competency in Ballet Teaching issued by Academie International De Dance Varna (Vaganova system), as well as a Degree in Music (piano and advanced music theory). Since then, I have been teaching dance to people of all ages and participated in various projects, as a dancer and choreographer.

In my capacity as a musician, I have worked as a music instructor and as a music accompanist for contemporary dance classes. I have also composed music for both dance and theatre performances.

I met physical theatre at the age of 23 and felt that it is the field in which I can develop and express myself with all my artistic aspects. Thus, I became co-founder of the experimental physical theatre group Metehmio in 1994. I was mainly trained in the Grotowski method and fell in love with ritual theatre. With Metehmio I explored the relationship between dance, music and theatre and did some research on how the rituals of ancient civilization are applied in theatrical practice. I enjoyed my training in Street Theatre tech-

niques (Stilts, Ribbons and Flags) and gained valuable experience related to the theatrical act by participating in Street Theatre performances.

My participation in a number of theatrical projects in Greece and abroad as a director, performer and choreographer offered me valuable experience and the chance to observe how art affects people.

During my five-year collaboration with the Cultural Association of Elatia, a small town located in Central Greece, I had the opportunity to create the theatrical education department of the municipality and to teach theatre and create memorable performances with children, teenagers and adults.

During the same period, I was responsible for the music-kinetic program in the Children's Educational Centre Eneka Paideias and member of the creative team of SciCo's (Science Communication) project Health Education in primary school. As a member of this project, I had the chance to teach workshops at the European University of Cyprus, training instructors on how to implement the results of this project in their field of expertise.

Although I never stopped being creative as an artist, it was not until my 30s that I felt the urge to seek alternative ways to serve art. One of my strongest beliefs is that art is not a luxury and is not addressed to the few, but on the contrary, it is a place where one can redefine oneself, reconnect with the joy of creativity, express oneself and strengthen hope. This belief led me to seek education on how art can be part of the treatment and social reintegration for people with mental illness.

I was trained at the Research Centre for Art and Mental Health Education, under the guidance of Mrs Katerina Voutsina and then I collaborated with the NGO EDRA, as a presenter of music-kinetic education workshops for children with learning difficulties.

### **In which organisation am I working?**

It was my Bollywood education that led me to a fruitful cooperation with the Specialized Day Centre Social Dialogue Centre of P.E.P.S.A.E.E. as a dance instructor in 2014. P.E.P.S.A.E.E. stands for PanHellenic Association for the Psychosocial Rehabilitation & Work Re-Integration and is a non-governmental and non-profit scientific union established in 1996 (<http://www.pepsaee.gr/>). It takes part in the national program for psychiatric reform in Greece

and specialises in supporting, coordinating and empowering rehabilitation and work integration initiatives for adults with mental health problems. The Specialized Day Centre - Social Dialogue Centre, in particular, is an alternative mental health structure that focuses on the establishment of new job positions and on the realisation of innovative activities, related to all sorts of art, for the rehabilitation of people with severe mental health problems. Within the P.E.P.S.A.E.E scope, mental health professionals, artists, employees and volunteers join forces to combine art with the principles of the Recovery methodology, in order to help users/ beneficiaries of mental health services to achieve social integration.

At the beginning, I was teaching Bollywood to the members of P.E.P.S.A.E.E.'s theatre group and implementing dance groups for people with mental health issues. But it was the vivid vision of the organisation and the fact that art is a strong pillar of the Specialized Day Centre - Social Dialogue Centre's program, which led me to open-heartedly accept the offer to work there as Coordinator of the Office for Alternative Reintegration Actions. In addition to my administrative and organisational responsibilities, I continue to coordinate theatre and dance groups in P.E.P.S.A.E.E.'s Specialized Day Centre - Social Dialogue Centre and capitalise on the relationship that the persons I work with develop with art.

### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

When circumstances permit, I love taking long walks in nature with my loved ones, travelling, being in a state of silence, listening to music, attending theatre or dance performances and literature. Being Greek, it is part of my cultural identity and mentality to cook for friends and family and enjoy long conversations around the dinner table. This is a tradition, a ritual, I cherish and always try to keep despite the rhythms and demands of the modern way of living. Of course, my cats are always the perfect companions for a lazy day at home by offering a lot of cuddles and unconditional love.

If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?

"May you haven't betrayed your beliefs and values. May you have learnt more about how to love, accept and help others. May your heart be still young and creative, your soul wise and affectionate and your mind open to

new challenges. May you realise from your days insofar that your body is the only one you have and you should treat it with love and acceptance.”

Which is my favourite movement?

It is the genuine, primal movement that derives uniquely from each person. It is the personal kinetic vocabulary that thrills me and encourages me to use improvisation in my dance classes. It is a promise of freedom to my students.



## **Kyriaki-Maria Papalitsa** **from Greece**

I was born in Canada and have been living in Greece since I was two years old.

### **What do I do?**

I have been engaged in research and preservation of Greek tradition since 1995. I participate as a dancer in the traditional Greek dances group Perperouna with which I have performed in Greece and abroad, spreading the wealth of traditional dance.

### **In which organisation am I working?**

At P.E.P.S.A.E.E. I voluntarily coordinate dance groups consisting of people with mental health issues. I hold a degree in pre-school education for children with special needs and a nursery degree and I work at the 1st Special Primary School of Ilion. During my educational career, I have worked with youth groups in all levels of education.

### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

I prefer to spend my free time working as a volunteer, combining my interests, dance and ecology.

If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?

My dream after 10 years is to live in a village in Greece, to grow my own food, to participate in dance groups and to teach traditional Greek dances.

**Which is my favourite movement?**

My experience has taught me to listen and observe people and situations before I act and make decisions about them. Everything is possible as long as you want it.



## **Stelalena Nalmpanti**

### **from Greece**

#### **What do I do?**

I am a psychologist and a trainer in Erasmus+ projects and very passionate about Non Formal Learning and Youth Work. I am very familiar with the theory of kinesthetic learning. I am an occasional wheelchair user and am passionate about movement, wishing to MOVE more, WALK more and why not DANCE?. I want to promote movement as a tool of self development in my country and this is a reason why the Key to Connection can happen in Greece.

#### **In which organisation am I working?**

I am from Rhodes Volunteer Community which I founded in January, 2016 in Rhodes in order to be part of procedures connected with the involvement of volunteers in projects of various kinds. Its intention is to be a bridge between the volunteers and the local and also national and international reality in order to enhance the volunteers and help them express and develop in a personal and social way. Also to empower the volunteers to be more aware of their values, both cultural and intercultural.

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

I love reading books. Writing. Meeting people. Observing.

If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?

I'm so grateful I'm still alive and almost kicking!



## **Inta Balode**

### **from Latvia**

#### **What do I do?**

I like to call myself a dance politician, lately it has turned more into a contemporary arts politician, to be even more precise - I stand for the values contemporary arts represent and see them as a great potential every society member could benefit from, no matter whether they like or dislike contemporary art as an aesthetic experience. I am a dance writer, curator, dramaturge, and since 2011 I have been the editor of [www.dance.lv](http://www.dance.lv). Since 2004 I have been curating dance projects, including seminars for artists, journalists and managers and a mini-festival called New Dance in a New Place. The main issue I as an arts politician stand for is trying not to stand for anything too stubbornly.

#### **In which organisation am I working?**

As an outcome of caring about geographical, mental, and emotional peripheries, in 2017 together with co-thinkers from Latvia, France and Finland we established the international non-profit organisation LAUKKU. LAUKKU has been actively creating different projects where contemporary artists meet people from a vast variety of ages, social situations, and backgrounds.

What do I like to do in my free time?

Free time is a bit of luxury for me but, whenever I get some, I love spending time in nature or diving into some physical work - chopping wood, repainting walls, building a small dance stage in the old barn.

If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be? I will live in the countryside and run a LAUKKU place, which is somehow like an artist's residency place but will also definitely include some wood chopping and stage building and whatever people feel LAUKKU would want to do. There will be a lot of dancing, of course.

**Which is my favourite movement?**

My favourite movement is any movement and definitely also motionless and silent moments where all politics is gone, and forest enters every cell of my body.



## **Agnese Bordjukova**

### **from Latvia**

#### **What do I do?**

I am a dance artist, based in Riga, Latvia. I received my education in dance at the Latvian Culture Academy (contemporary dance choreography, BA, 2007 & contemporary dance art, MA, 2017). I was a performer in the contemporary dance collective ‚Z.I. temp dance‘ (2004-2010), and a member of the contemporary dance project “Anatomy of dance” (2007-2015). Currently I’m a member of the international artist collective “LAUKKU” [www.laukku.lv](http://www.laukku.lv), since 2017. In my artistic experience, I have collaborated with various different choreographers, theatre directors, live musicians, philosophers and visual artists. I have created experimental, staged, social performances and events. My solo performance “Childhood’s dream” won a Latvian theatre award in the category of contemporary dance, in the season 2016/2017. I have provided movement classes and led workshops to people of various groups of age and backgrounds, for example, students in music school (2008-2011), youngsters of the theatre studio “Savējie” (2008-2019), a children’s dance group in Babīte Municipality (2010-2014), librarians, social workers and their clients etc. I use movement practice for raising self-awareness as well as a tool for developing creativity and the vocabulary of body expression.

**In which organisation am I working?**

For this project I'm a representative of the international artists collective LAUKKU. But generally, I am a freelance artist and work for different organisations and projects.

**What do you do in your free time?**

I go for walks.

If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?

Everything that really makes a difference takes time.

**Which is my favourite movement?**

It is a lift of the chest and inhaling.



## **Justine Bulina**

### **from Latvia**

#### **What do I do?**

I'm a youth specialist. I am the head of the Rauna Youth Centre and I work at school as a deputy director for parenting and non-formal education. I develop methodological materials that support formal education educators with methods of non-formal education. I am a youth mentor, a coach in youth motivation programmes and work on developing new educational content.

In which organisation am I working?

Rauna Children and Youth Centre Basement.

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

In my free time, I like to change work with my head to work with my hands. I restore deteriorated wood and furniture, furnish and maintain my property.

If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?

I would ask the question - learning to finally balance between work and myself?

#### **Which is my favourite movement?**

I like walking around the room. Thinking seems to be encouraging and it is still concentrated, because the room is also limited.



## **Ieva Grundšteine**

### **from Latvia**

#### **What do I do?**

I am a youth worker, trainer and project developer in the international youth work field. I enjoy working with groups of young people, teachers and youth workers in order to build their competences.

My favourite themes for training: learning through body/movement, outdoor experiential learning, learning through games, promoting inclusion, active participation, Human Rights education and gender equality.

In which organisation am I working?

I am a freelancer cooperating with different organisations in Latvia and other European countries.

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

Hikes in nature. Watching movies. Travel and exploring other cultures.

**If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?**

I would like to look back and see to what extent I have managed to keep

a positive and curious outlook on life, be courageous in trying out new things and be sensitive and compassionate towards people and the environment around me.

Which is my favourite movement?

Haaa, probably something while lying on the floor, stretchy and with no sweating involved .



## **Ilze Zirina**

### **from Latvia**

#### **What do I do?**

I am a lecturer at the Latvian Culture Academy, working in the contemporary dance field. I am also a youth worker at Rauna Municipality (a village 100 km from Riga). Together with Ieva Grundsteine I have facilitated 6 programs of kinesthetic learning in youth work in the framework of the Erasmus+ program.

#### **In which organisation am I working?**

In the project the Key to Connection I represent LAUKKU -- an international group with members from Latvia, Finland, France, Germany and England. Periphery and mobility are the two fundamental elements of this collective.

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

I like to do practical things (especially when Covid-19 took over the world). For example, craft: creating a cat tree or renovating old wooden doors in my house. I also like cross-country skiing, and swimming.

#### **If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?**

In 10 years I will sit on a terrace at my house after the final partner meeting

of the Key to Connection 3 and will say to myself: "Yeah, this is the key to connection!"

**Which is my favourite movement?**

I love the movement which awakens my kinesthetic sense. The favourite movement in myself is the one born in my intuition.



## **Marta Zawadzka**

### **from Poland**

#### **What do I do?**

I am a dancer, teacher of contemporary dance and choreographer. I am also a musician (Dalcroze's Eurhythmics).

#### **In which organisation am I working?**

Currently, I work in a music school as a teacher, I cooperate with the Centre for Contemporary Art in Toruń (Poland)

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

Hmmm.... Reading books, meeting with friends, listening and playing music...

#### **If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?**

Keep it up! You look nice! ;-)

#### **Which is my favourite movement?**

Contemporary, physical dance, of course!



## **Małgorzata Skusa**

### **from Poland**

#### **What do I do?**

I'm a primary school teacher. I'm a dancer. I'm a dance theoretician.

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

I love to spend my free time on my passion. I love books, films, and meeting people. I also like to get to know new things from different fields, like psychology, art, dance, and culture. I would love to still develop myself through mind and body and explore different possibilities of these phenomena.



## **Kamila Neuman**

### **from Poland**

#### **What do I do?**

I help cultural institutions, artists and creatives transform their ideas into projects and apply for grants.

#### **In which organisation am I working?**

The Centre of Contemporary Art in Torun

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

Take photos of my everyday family life.

#### **If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?**

Chill out and dance more.

#### **Which is my favourite movement?**

My favourite movement is when my body tells me how to move.



## **Daniel Wargin**

### **from Poland**

#### **What do I do?**

I'm a teacher. I teach English. Besides that, I am a member of an NGO. I am responsible for international projects there: Voluntary Service, training, youth exchanges.

#### **In which organisation am I working?**

The Adults for Children (Dorośli Dzieciom) Association, Sępólno Krajeńskie, Poland

#### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

My recent passion is gardening, but it's only during spring and summer. I enjoy seeding plants and observing them grow. It gives me a lot of satisfaction. I also like developing new techniques/tools for teaching English as I believe that the lessons should be as interactive as possible. A bit of a weird hobby, I know ;). What's more, I enjoy spending time with my family, playing games, talking, and sometimes doing nothing...

#### **If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?**

Follow your dreams, keep trying and don't regret anything...

#### **Which is my favourite movement?**

All new, inspiring or funny moments are my favourite ones, so every time someone asks me it might be different.



## **Anastasia Lampaki** **from Greece**

### **What do I do?**

I'm a student at the Faculty of Psychology at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

### **In which organisation am I working?**

I am a member of the Rhodes Volunteer Community organisation.

### **What do I like to do in my free time?**

However, my interests vary in many fields. First of all, in my free time, I'm taking dance lessons, and I really enjoy expressing myself through movement. Since I finished school, I have started thinking how full someone feels when he provides services to people that have been deprived of rights that other people consider fundamental. So I took up volunteering which makes me feel fulfilled and blessed.

### **If I could say something to myself in 10 years from now, what would it be?**

I hope, in ten years from now, when I look back in the past, I will be capable of saying to myself that I'm proud of what I have done and what I have been.



## **Maria Roumkou**

### **from Greece**

#### **What do I do?**

I am a graduate student of special education in the department of educational and social policy at the University of Macedonia. I'm working as a teacher at a special-vocational education and training laboratory.

#### **In which organisation am I working?**

I'm a member of the Rhodes Volunteer Community.

#### **Something more?**

My personality is characterised by determination to always achieve my goals. I'm an open-minded person and always keen on acquiring new skills and abilities. One of my biggest dreams is to succeed in combining my passion for the art of dance with my future employment in the field of special education.

# 8.

## Organisations we come from



**LAUKKU** is a collective of members from different countries, who are dance professionals and enthusiasts from different fields. The word "laukku" refers to the countryside in Latvian. "We believe there are unforeseen artistic potentials outside, which do not meet institutional expectations and needs of centres..."



Association ARTAREA is a non-profit organisation established at the end of 2012, popularising non-formal education in the field of culture, art and ecology through art methods. ARTAREA - the place where everyone is free to create! Association ARTAREA

implements projects for the youngsters from Pernik with young people from other countries, giving them the opportunity to have new experiences and meet with other nationalities, cultures and traditions.



The Centre of Contemporary Art Znaki Czasu in Torun (CoCA) during the last 10 years has succeeded in becoming one of the leading public institutions dedicated to contemporary art in Poland. The international and multidisciplinary artistic program is naturally very sensitive towards local issues, as it fosters a lifelong learning attitude based on the conviction that an art institution first of all has a socially active and educational role. CoCA believes that dance is one of the forms of expressions of contemporary art, therefore it regularly presents and organises events dedicated to dance.

Adults for Kids is an association that implements different programs that contribute to the inclusion of children and young people with disabilities and the risk of social exclusion. We 97 organise therapeutic, rehabilitation, educational and leisure time activities in our municipality Sępólno Krajeńskie. We have established and run: Occupational Therapy Workshop for disabled people, Commune Information Centre, Young Creators' Club' for

young, gifted people, and “Teachers’ Improvement Institution”. Since 2005 we have also been actively involved in EVS and different international youth projects.



**P.E.P.S.A.E.E** aims at facilitating the social inclusion and work integration of people with psychological problems. It takes part in a national programme for psychiatric reform in Greece and specialises in supporting, coordinating and empowering rehabilitation and work integration initiatives for people with mental health problems. It has more than 50 employees and numerous volunteers and operates three rehabilitation structures.

Youth Centre “Pagrabiņš” (Basement) of Rauna Municipality, founded 2011 with the aim of organising free time for children and providing youth with opportunities for non-formal education. It is located in a small municipality in the western part of rural Latvia - Rauna (~3.5 thousand people).

## RHODES VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY

Rhodes Volunteer Community was created in 2016 in Rhodes. Its intention is to be a bridge between the volunteers and the local and also national and international reality in order to enhance the volunteers and help them express and develop in a personal and social way. It also tries to empower the volunteers to be more aware of their values, both cultural and intercultural.

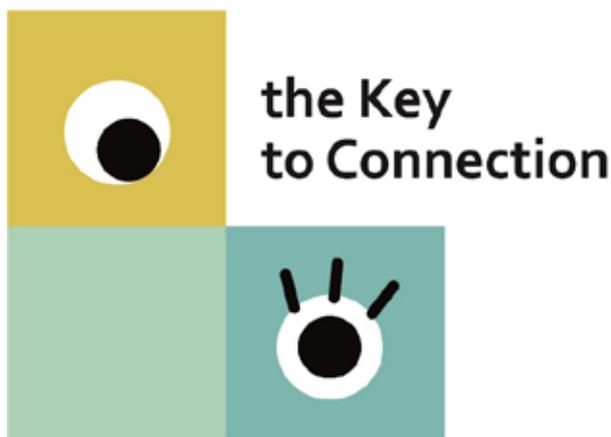


**Sdruzenie Uch. N-vo CPLR - ODK Pernik** is a non-government organisation working to provide free time for local young people and children in the field of studies, technology, sports and tourism. The organisation has a rich cultural, recreational, scientific, mass, information, sports-tourist and applied technical activity, with over 150 children's performances annually in the country and abroad.

# 9.

## Links to video documentation

the Key to Connection Youtube channel:



<https://www.youtube.com/.../UCEMZxHlI3FOZMM-XKKly3Hg/videos>

The European Union's "Erasmus+" programme

This project was implemented within the European Union's "Erasmus+" programme, Key action 2, Strategic partnership - Cooperation for Innovation and Exchange of Good Practices. Generally, the "Erasmus+" Programme is a funding scheme to support activities in the fields of Education, Training, Youth and Sport. In the framework of this project, it was mainly focused on youth work and non-formal education context, but also included professionals from the dance and movement field.

In the field of youth, the "Erasmus+" Programme enables youth

work professionals, young leaders, youth activists (anyone working with young people as a target group) and young people (aged 13 to 30) to develop different projects - youth exchanges, youth participation projects, learning activities for youth work providers, capacity-building and strategic projects to develop innovations and enhance international cooperation.

Examples of objectives for the "Erasmus+" Programme in the field of youth:

- improve the level of key competences and skills of young people
- support and promote youth participation in democratic life, active citizenship
- improve intercultural dialogue, social inclusion and solidarity
- promote European values
- promote quality improvement in youth work, in particular through enhanced cooperation between youth organisations or other stakeholders
- improve the international dimension of youth activities and the role of youth workers and youth organisations as support structures for young people
- develop the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and cross-sectoral cooperation
- strengthen the capacity of youth workers and the youth field in general.

If the projects are well focused and provide considerable added value to the youth field, from our experience, it is highly likely that the funding is granted. In our case we applied for the funding in the Latvian national agency administering this programme - the Agency for International Programs for Youth (in February 2019), but all EU countries and some other ally countries (so-called Pro-

gramme countries) have similar national agencies that support organisations, so we highly recommend checking out the opportunities!

All necessary information can be found on the official website of the “Erasmus+” Programme: <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/>.

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