

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Natural Compassion- nature-based practices for holistic development of youth workers

Training course for Youth workers and Educators, Erasmus + KA153
SAMOTHRAKI ISLAND - GREECE 30/6/2023 - 9/7/2023



Natural Compassion is a training course targeting personal development practitioners (trainers, youth workers, social workers, mentors, school teachers and councillors). The main intention of the project is to equip the participants with successful tools and methods to support their individual development and that of young people.

Natural:

1. existing in or derived from nature;
2. in accordance with the nature of, or circumstances surrounding, someone or something;
3. having a specified character by nature;
4. closely resembling an original: true to nature;
5. having a form or appearance found in nature.

Compassion:

sympathetic consciousness of others' distresses together with a desire to alleviate it

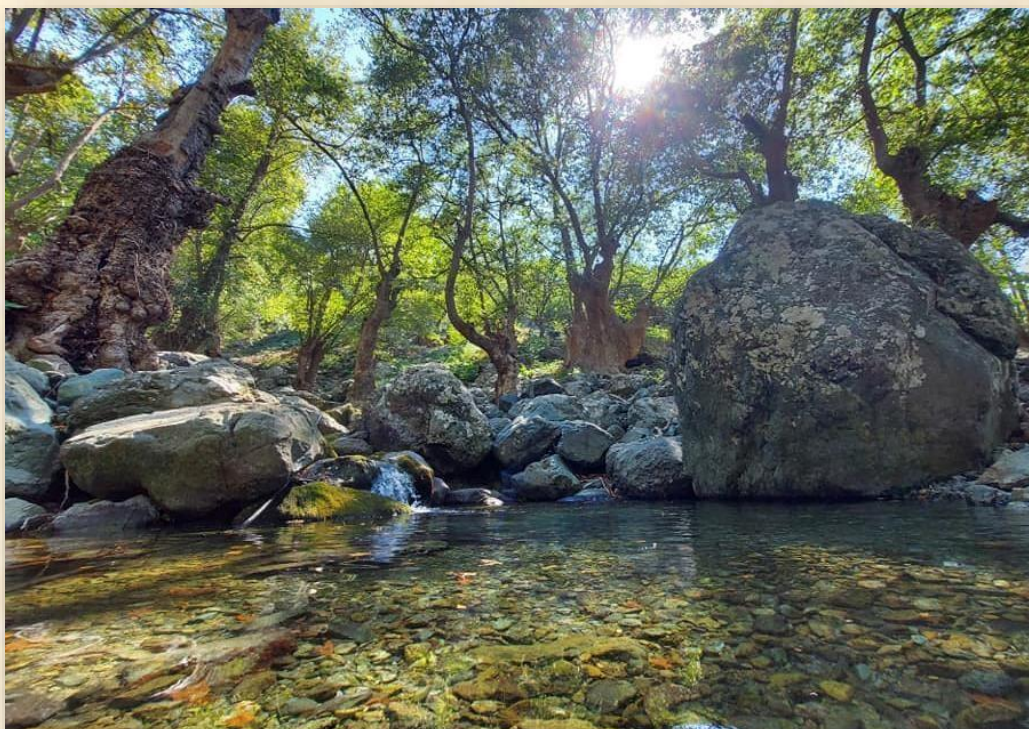
If your compassion does not include yourself is incomplete

NaturalCompassion will be introducing an innovative way to combine evidence-based science and deep inner knowledge from indigenous practices in order to reach a deep understanding of the developmental needs of a person in every stage of their lives. We aim to provide the means for the participants to step close to their wholeness. That way their target groups will be provided with healthy role models of functioning and well-developed adult figures. Wholeness and coherency are something youth is severely lacking in our uncertain times. Thus, youth workers will fill that need as they will gain the competences to develop and facilitate practices that lead in that direction.

NaturalCompassion is an opportunity and a way to create a group of innovators who can not only spread the message but be the message, as well. We plan to develop a community of open-minded and critical- thinking workers who recognize the new challenges and take action to solve them with modern resources based on proven approaches and practices. By integrating the concepts and the practices with the experience during the course, we want to encourage them in activities on all levels. We want to extend the impact of the project and reach out to youth and social workers on a wider scale.

Objectives:

- To practice nature-based methods to stimulate the self-improvement of the participants, thus facilitating personal and professional development;
- To introduce holistic ensoulment and embodiment practices for self-discovery and self-cultivation, integration, and reflection.
- To develop a personal deep nature connection and cultivate environmental stewardship and ecological consciousness;
- To inspire the improvement of personal positive attitudes;
- To empower youth workers to adopt and create their own practices based on personal strengths, talents, and preferences in the field of personal development;
- To create opportunities for international cooperation and partnership building



The training course is designed to present an innovative integrated approach to working with young people, which combines elements from nature-based practices., positive psychology and education, ecopsychology, social work, and personal development.

Methodologies

Self-discovery and resourcefulness - understanding ourselves and supporting others' self-development process;

Somatic and kinesthetic learning - embodiment as a method for deepening connection to oneself and provoking kinesthetic learning experiences;

Physical exercises - practices based on yoga and other traditions that can be implemented in everyday life;

Outdoor creativity and nature - connecting with the self, nature, other people, and the outside world, organise open air learning and creativity activities;

Non- Religious Spirituality - exploring secret-sacred elements, sharing experiences, understanding human spirituality in different cultural backgrounds, exploring rituals and ceremonies;

Meditation and mindfulness - tools for focusing and balancing attention, emotions and consciousness.

Project Elements

- Working with values
- Nature based methods
- Experiential learning
- Methods for self-development
- Workshops development and delivery
- Group and solo time in nature
- The Way of Council
- Holistic Practices and self-healing
- Living as a community (cleaning, cooking etc.)



Who is this Training For?



1. For participants from **Greece, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Jordan, France, Georgia, Spain, Romania, Poland, Croatia, Slovakia**.
2. With **relevant professional experience**: The participants should have one of the following roles: youth and social workers, youth leaders, educational and career counsellors, teachers, general educators, trainers, mentors, coaches, educational nature guides, people who care for people.
3. Who feel a strong **calling** to participate in this course and have strong and relevant **motivation** for joining the process. The motivation should be a blend of personal and professional factors. We are looking for people who feel comfortable with being in nature (as the topic will be addressed through nature-based practices), who can immerse in natural learning environments, be willing to explore body based methods and non-religious spirituality.
4. **OVER 21 YEARS OLD** and have a communicative level of English to enable full participation in the program.
5. Who are available to participate in the whole program. It means coming later or leaving earlier is not allowed. The program will run **long hours** during the day -and also offer some night activities.
6. Who commit to follow our strict **SOBRIETY POLICY** (to refrain from using any consciousness altering substance - alcohol, cannabis, any drug etc. - for the whole duration of the course)
7. Who **are not offended** by the naked or partially naked human bodies – as Samothraki island is nudity friendly and we cannot -and don't want to- control the surrounding environment.
8. Who are comfortable living for 10 days with simple conditions, in a **camping site**, sharing tents, taking care of their common space and time.
9. Who commit to engage in the whole process of the course (if selected) including the **ONLINE PREPARATION** (includes articles and videos to familiarize with the theoretical background, as well as nature-based practices to do at home in the weeks prior to departure) and the **FOLLOW UP COMMITMENTS** (to create at least one dissemination activity in their home community - organising a workshop, writing an article etc. - after the course).



Trainers team

Ognian Gadoularov (Bulgaria) Anastasia Priyamvada Charitidou (Greece), Tina Kovacic (Slovenia)



Ognian Gadoularov (trainer) is an international trainer - member of trainer's network of SALTO EuroMed, member of the national team of trainers of the Bulgarian National Agency "Erasmus +"(HRDC). ([https:// www.salto-youth.net/tools/toy/ogniangadoularov.2625/](https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toy/ogniangadoularov.2625/)) He has prepared and conducted over 20 international training within the Youth in Action and Erasmus + Programs, including TCP/TCA training for Romanian, Latvian, Cyprus and Bulgarian national agencies and SALTO training for SALTO Inclusion. Ognian is a passionate naturalist, rock climber, and expert on wildlife, birds, and forests. For 11 years, he has been working in the field of non-formal education and personal development. Ognian supports people to unfold their full potential in life and to discover themselves. He is a trainer with interests and experience in meditation, yoga, and energy practices. His favorite topics are personal development, self-discovery, responsible consumption, sustainability, and environmental protection. He lives as an activist for cultural evolution, re-sacredising life and reconnecting people with the more-than-human world. Ognian is part of Nature-based Wholing and Self-healing Wild Mind Training Programme (WMTP) at Bill Plotkin's *Animas Valley Institute, Colorado, USA*.



Anastasia Priyamvada Charitidou, MSc, BSc (project manager/ trainer) is an educator, youth worker, and researcher on somatics and positive psychology with a focus on self-compassion and mindfulness. She facilitates "holistic ensoulment and embodiment practices" a technique and a process based on an experiential approach that explores the relationships of the individual with their "wholeness", their interactions with the group, and their relating to "All that Is". Her contribution synthesizes theory and practices from contemporary approaches such as Positive Psychology, Pedagogy, Physical Theater, and Healing and Therapeutic modalities and she incorporates values and elements from wisdom traditions. Anastasia has studied Pedagogy (BSc Major), Theater (Diploma), and Self-development. Her Master's degree was in Physical Education with her MSc thesis on the positive effects of combined holistic exercises on emotional and psychological well-being. She has worked as a professional actress for over 10 years. She has a sincere and deep interest in equine-assisted learning. Anastasia aspires to and believes that she can share her own inspirations, communion, immense appreciation, and gratitude for nature and for all living beings. To that end, she brings her organizational skills and a wide palette of practices, activities, and methods as well as her sincere enthusiastic engagement.



Tina Kovačić (trainer) is an embodied facilitator that has extensive experience with designing, organizing, and facilitating educational programs and workshops on a national and international level for the past 10 years. Coming from a diverse background, authentic leadership is her default way of living, not just working. Finding strengths in every situation, being able to learn from each and every individual on a spiritual, physical, emotional, cognitive, or mental level, and at the same time staying present and aware of her own internal processing is something she strives for on a daily basis. She has participated in over 20 Erasmus+ projects on different levels since 2019. Her passions for nature, sustainability, and movement are a silver lining in her work with emotions, communication, body awareness, and on a more cognitive level also neuro-linguistic programming. Her interest and experiences in Non-violent communication, Conflict transformation, Multi-intelligence, Embodiment, Art and Dance therapy, Process-oriented psychology, Theater, and Contact improvisation together with experiences from youth work are invaluable assets for this project. As a very dynamic trainer, she brings positive energy and enhancement of user experience even to the most mundane lectures.

When and Where?

30/6/2023 - 9/7/2023 in Samothraki, Greece

The course consists of **8 full training days**, 1 day for arrival and 1 day for departure.

Natural Environment: The training course will take place in the Greek Island of Samothraki. It is an unspoiled and majestic island that has beautiful mountainous valleys, cliffs, forests, lush green vegetation, rivers, waterfalls, natural pools and natural thermal pools. Magical, wild and exquisitely beautiful, the northern Aegean Island of Samothraki has a particular mystic and healing energy.

FINANCIAL AND PRACTICAL CONDITIONS

The project is financed by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, thus all the activities, accommodation and food are 100% covered by the EU grant. The travel costs will be reimbursed to the participants after the course, according to travel distance and the use of green travel. The travelling arrangements and the meeting point will be finalized after the boat schedule is published by the Ferry Boat Company; the travel arrangements will be discussed with selected participants.

There is **NO participation fee** for this training course.

TRAVEL

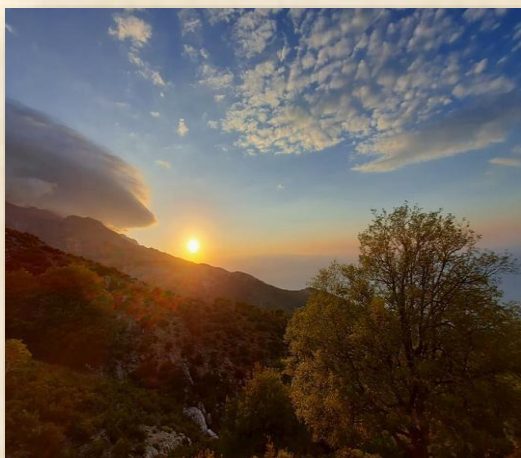
If you plan to **arrive earlier** or **leave later**, your expenses for accommodation out of the training days will not be reimbursed by the organisers. If you stay for more than 2 days before or after, your travel costs will not be covered by the project.

INSURANCE

All participants are required to have valid health insurance for Greece. (EHIC or private standard insurance).

FOOD

Food During the training rich and healthy VEGAN and VEGETARIAN food will be served. The food will be prepared with love by a professional chef. Teodora Czentye is a professional trainer, visual artist, and professional chef specializing in vegan and sustainable cuisine. She will offer culinary experiences that create an impact and a different kind of connection with food. Please, inform us about any special diet and food allergies by stating it in the application form.



How to apply?

If you want to participate in this training course, please fill out this questionnaire until **Saturday 15th of April 2023**

APPLICATION FORM

If you have any questions, you can contact naturalcompassion.eu@gmail.com