



GUIDEBOOK

for people working with youth

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Acknowledgements

This guidebook is developed in the context of the strategic partnership **“Don't Worry, Be You”**.

Our partnership unites six non-profit organisations from Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Italy and the Netherlands. We have gathered to discover how to bring mindfulness into education.

Our aim is to promote health, personal and collective growth.

Our partnership is funded by the European Commission through the programme Erasmus+.

In the context of our partnership, we have created:

- this guidebook for youth workers, facilitators and educators
- A 21-day mindfulness challenge with a podcast of 21 series
- 10 Video Tutorials to promote movement and embodied learning
- The Good Deed Game, to play with our communities
- Plenty of local events, where young people could experience mindfulness practices
- A Training for youth workers
- A Youth Mobility, where young people could meet and explore together the topic of mindfulness and community wellbeing

The materials for this book are collected by our core team: Niels Koldewijn and Lana Jelenjev (Netherlands), Jochen Schell, Saskia Weissenbach and Iva Bubalo (Germany), Joanna Nikolova and Zsofia Gaudi (Bulgaria), Danaï Tessa (Greece), Mirela Marovic Omerzu (Croatia) and Alessio Sgarlato (Italy).

The book is written by Joanna Nikolova & Lana Jelenjev.

The book is edited by Joanna Nikolova, Iva Bubalo and Zsofia Gaudi.

The design of the book is created by Danaï Tessa.



**YOU CAN ACCESS THE TOOLS AND READ MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT
ON OUR WEBSITE [HERE](#).**

DON'T WORRY BE YOU

Who is this guidebook for?

This book is developed to be a guide for people who work with youth - community, social and youth workers, educators, parents and the soccer coach from the school nearby. It is also a self-coaching tool for all of you who want to learn something new about yourselves. ...

This is for you if you:

- Want to learn about yourself and expand your abilities
- Are looking for tools and resources to support yourself in your mental well-being
- Work directly with youth in exploring their mental health and cultivating resilience
- Organize, facilitate and design spaces for youth to meet up and connect with each other
- Are looking for a guide on how to “walk alongside” young people in navigating their mental health challenges



THIS BOOK IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE
FOR PROFESSIONAL ADVICE
OR HELP.



Why do we talk about wellbeing?

Taking care of our mental health is a daily action. Just as exercising in the gym, it makes us stronger, more resilient, and more connected with our own self, with our needs and desires. Most of all, we can **live our life fully, enjoying the journey ahead.**

It is so important, especially in times when we face so many environmental, economical and social challenges.

In this book, we practice being strong and connected in times of peace and in times of crisis. We practice facing what is coming and **walking our steps with integrity.**





How do we think about Mental Health?

Do you have a list of habits, behaviours and ways of living that make you healthy? Maybe running in the morning, yoga, laughing, spending time with loved ones and pets, going for nature walks, good food or vitamins?

Mental health is no different. Actually, we say that it looks like a house we need to take daily care of. Sometimes it is about cleaning the dust or refreshing the air. Other times, something gets broken and we need to repair, let go, or substitute. **It is the house we live in and this house is changing all the time.**

There are moments when we are so busy that suddenly we find ourselves in front of piles of dirty clothes and dishes. Other times we invite somebody for a while and after that, it feels empty. It also happens that a storm passes and just like that we are left under the leaking roof. In some of our houses, there are monsters hiding under the bed.



No matter if you feel like you have a lot of renovation to do or if you just want to learn more effective ways of taking good care of your house, we invite you to ask yourself the question:

“Which is the next small step I can take, in order to take care of the house I live in?”

“Which is the next small step I can take, in order to take care of my mental health?”

We think of mental health as “the ability to learn how to learn about myself”.

- How do I operate?
- What constructs my identity?
- Why do I feel what I feel?
- How to regulate my emotions?
- How to bring clarity to my thoughts?
- How to find a direction when I feel lost?
- How to connect with my body?
- Or with nature?
- Or with others?



What you can find in this book:

In this book, you will find various techniques and theories that you can use yourself or when working with other people.

In our experience, learning how to learn about myself is a process that combines:

- Exploring myself - my needs, feelings, behaviours, patterns, and strategies
- Connecting with my environment - where I am, the people around me, and the circumstances
- Growing a mindset that supports me to constantly grow and develop, to reach my goals and dreams, to face challenges and stay resilient in times of storm.

Each chapter is designed to serve those three fields of growth.



- we offer you exercises and questions that will guide you through deep self-exploration
- we offer exercises that will support you connect with your environment
- we also offer a system of exercises and theoretical input that will lead you towards developing a **Growth Mindset**.

What is a Growth Mindset?

A growth mindset is a system of beliefs, behaviours, habits, ways of thinking and perspectives that allow you to constantly develop yourself and “outgrow your own life script”, as Els Van Steijn writes in "The Fountain". The psychologist Carol Dweck has developed the theory of the two mindsets (fixed and growth). She researched human behaviour and motivation and after years of work she wrote in her book “Mindset”:

“The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it’s not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset. This is the mindset that allows people to thrive during some of the most challenging times in their lives.”

Developing a growth mindset opens the door to:

- New perspectives and the ability to notice your strengths and aspirations
- Ability to persevere and pivot in the face of difficulties
- Ability to see learning opportunities where others see failure
- Inspiration, gratitude, and the ability to enjoy each step on the way

Developing a growth mindset is a process that looks a lot like doing yoga every day. It is about the small actions you take, the pieces of learning that you incorporate into your daily life. Most of all, it is about showing up for yourself, every day.

Learning how to grow is the most beautiful expression of self-love. It requires time, contemplation, adaptation and trust... Trust in yourself! Trust in life. Trust in the process.



Our invitation

We are very much aware that cultivating a growth mindset is a process that takes time and quite a lot of work on oneself. There is not a magic video, pill or book that transforms how we see the world. And very often the journey could be challenging. Yet we decide to walk it step by step, every day. Why? Simply because it allows us to enjoy life! To be more healthy, happy, and connected. More willing to follow our dreams and express ourselves in the world in our own unique ways.

We invite you to join us so that we can grow together!





**Before we
embark on
this
journey**



BENEFITS OF A GROWTH MINDSET (HOW DO WE ACTUALLY LEARN)

Have you ever heard somebody say:
“Challenge yourself!”

Sometimes little challenges stretch us and along the way, we learn. Actually, there is quite some research on the topic that proves to us that by challenging ourselves, doing new things and exploring new environments, we expand our ability to learn about who we are and how we operate.

**Tom Senniger
(2000),**

a German Educator coined “The Learning Zone Model”. This is based on the work of Lev Vygotsky on the Zone of Proximal Development. This model invites us to look at positive experiences as learning experiences that can help us understand, expand and work on our boundaries and “comfort zones.”

The Learning Zone Model shows in what ways learning can happen within 3 different zones:

1. Comfort Zone

The comfort zone is like your favourite sweater. It is all the environments, places, people and behaviours that you feel comfortable and safe with. It is your “safe bubble”.

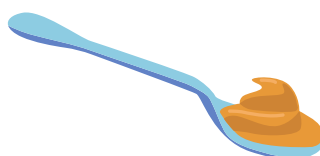
The comfort zone is very important for your development because it is where you meet your basic needs for safety, trust, connection, love, etc.

What is important to know about the comfort zone is that here your brain works less, because most of the behaviours you have are automatic. Imagine going in the night in your kitchen. You don't need to think about where the peanut butter jar is. You know it, you know where the knives are, the plates etc. So you don't actually think about those.

The Comfort zone is where we use skills and abilities we already have acquired. While the comfort zone is, of course, comfortable, we can't make progress or learn new things by staying there, because it is where we already know how to do things.

So now imagine that you wake up in the middle of the night, you go to have a spoon of peanut butter and suddenly you find yourself in a completely new kitchen. You have never seen this place before and you don't even know if there is a peanut butter jar there.

What you might experience, is what we call **Panic Zone**.



2. Panic Zone

The Panic Zone is the opposite of the Comfort zone. You feel unsafe, unprotected and in danger. Sometimes you might also feel exposed or incompetent.

If you've ever become scared and anxious at the thought of doing something, it is because you've run into **the panic zone**. Activities that fall in this zone are so difficult, that we don't know where to start to approach them. This can be very discouraging. In this zone, you can't make big progress as you probably don't have the skills needed for the task (yet).

But you don't have to choose between comfort and panic. Between the panic zone and the comfort zone you find the Learning Zone.

3. The Learning Zone

A learning zone is a place where you can make progress by learning new skills and slowly going further in your development. It is not as comfortable as the comfort zone, but not as scary as the panic zone. By staying in the learning zone, you will slowly master even activities that previously were in the panic zone!

The learning zone is exactly the place where you can "Challenge yourself!". To try something new. Meet new people, visit new places, and do something that you have never tried before.



Wayfinding

In the circles, write down events in your life where you found yourself in your Comfort Zone, Learning Zone and Panic Zone.

Looking at what you wrote in your comfort zone, what are the common activities in your comfort zone?

What commonalities do you notice with these activities?

What were the body reactions that you noticed and experienced when you were in the panic zone?

How did you move from your panic zone to your learning zone?

Together with this book we have prepared a series of 21 daily challenges, each of them accompanied by a podcast. If you want to explore the Learning zone & Challenge yourself, you can access them [here](#).

The challenges can also be done in groups, so you can organise them with your friends or people you want to connect to.

The 6 Pathways to Wellbeing

“We are the mapmakers
and the travellers”.
- Brene Brown



As mapmakers, our team designed this book to serve you on your own unique path.

And as it seems, we are also the travellers, stumbling next to you. We have good days and bad days, and, probably, so do you.

Sometimes we fall, and sometimes we thrive! Sometimes we are lost. And then we repeat to ourselves that the only thing we can do is to show up, again and again, for ourselves. To find strength and motivation to do the next step, step by step, day after day - on a journey where the destination is home. The home I am for myself.

The **6 Pathways** is the map that we have created for this self-exploration adventure. Each Pathway contains theoretical pieces, exercises, challenges, games and learnings.

You can read it page by page or just go to the pathway that is important for you at the moment.



If you are working with people and need some inspiration, we include in each pathway practical assignments, tools and exercises that you can use when working in groups or with individuals.

How this guidebook is formulated:

Into different Pathways, like chapters

A map to guide you on the different concepts and theories presented

- Pathway 1: The Road to Body Awareness
- Pathway 2: Emotional Awareness
- Pathway 3: Communication as the Act of Moving Together
- Pathway 4: I am the Captain of My Ship
- Pathway 5: Finding What Moves Me Forward
- Pathway 6: Resilience: What Keeps Me Standing (Even Against the Wind)



Each chapter follows a learning cycle:

- **Notice:** a self-assessment for each pathway
- **Learning Bites:** some background on theories, tools and models
- **Experiment:** practices and exercises
- **Wayfinding:** questions and exercises for reflection
- **Share**
- **One-Minute Review:** a quick summary on what was shared in the pathway

Transformation Cycle of Learning: NEWS

If the 6 Pathways are our Map, the Cycle of Learning is the Compass. If you ever find yourself lost in your learning or you don't know what is the next step, check the Compass.

In this guidebook, we will refer to the transformation cycle of learning when going through the different exercises.

1

NOTICE

Stop. Breathe. Raise your awareness. Notice. What do you recognize? What behaviours, language, results, and signs do you see?

2

EXPERIMENT

Create a small movement in what is at the moment. A short practice or an exercise? A new perspective? A challenge? An action? What will you do? What is the next step?

3

Wayfind

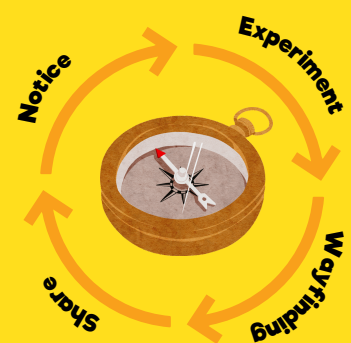
Reflect. What happened? What worked for you? What didn't work? What do you want to keep? What is your learning?

4

SHARE

Share your learning with your local community. Who can join you in your action? Who would enjoy doing it together? Who would benefit?

If you work with young people or communities, here you will find many exercises and explanations that might support you in what you do. We invite you to make the journey exciting for yourself and encourage others to take the steps with you. Explore how those games, exercises and challenges can bring connection, growth and health to your community or group!



Enjoy the ride!



Pathway 1: The Road to Body Awareness



What is Body Awareness and why do we start with it?



Concept Map:

- The Language of our bodies | Sensations
- Presence | Coming to the body
- Movement | Elements of working with the body

NOTICE

1. Close your eyes, take a deep breath and bring your awareness to your body in the present moment.
2. What sensations do you have at the moment?
3. What feelings do you experience?
4. Is there extra energy in one area of your body? Is there less energy somewhere?
5. Do you feel pain, holding, or tension in any body parts? Do you feel ease and pleasure?

SELF-CHECK:

Using a scale of 1-5, 1 being very like me and 5 very unlike me, write down what resonates with you after reading these statements:

- I am most of the time connected to my body.
- I am, most of the time, aware of the sensations in my body.
- I am, most of the time, present with what I am doing.
- I am, most of the time, present with those I am interacting with.

INTRODUCTION

In our Western world, we do most things with our heads. The way we communicate, make decisions, work on electronic devices, and reflect... is all there in our heads. Over the years, we have developed our analytical thinking and now it is our main tool when it comes to life. We think.

But, hello! We also have our bodies. And, to the surprise of many, their function is not to be brain taxis.

Your body is a huge source of information. It is intelligent. It can heal itself, learn, sense, and create emotions.

By being in connection with your body and taking good care of it, you raise the quality of your daily life and your health, both physical and mental.



Speaking about good care, we ask you:

- How do you take care of your body?
- How do you connect with your body?
- Do you have daily rituals, such as yoga, running, meditation etc.?
- How do you take care of the flexibility and the healthy development of your body?
- How confident do you feel in your body?

Chapter 1: The Language of our bodies | Sensations

LEARNING BITES

Our bodies, as well as our analytical brains, receive a lot of information from the environment.

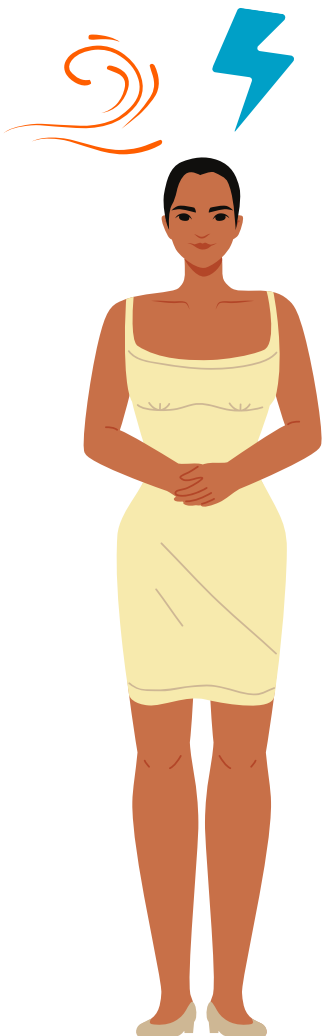
While the language of our analytical brain is thoughts, facts, comparisons etc., the language of the body is the sensations that we have. And sensations are different from emotions or feelings. Are you curious to know more about that?

Well, sensations are physical reactions and they don't have a meaning attached to them.

Have you ever experienced a situation in which you meet a new person and immediately feel the cold breeze on your skin? There is no logical explanation. You don't know why this is happening, your analytical brain also doesn't know. Your body, on the other hand, receives way more information and it knows something.

In time you might start noticing that every time you have this sensation of a cold breeze on your skin, you are attracted to the person, or that this means that you better take your time with the person. Each body speaks a different language. And how you can learn the language of your body by listening to it and discovering the sensations and in which situations they appear.

Because we rarely speak about sensations, sometimes it is difficult for us to name them or distinguish them. This is why we offer you a simple list of body sensations and we invite you to add to this list your own words and expressions.

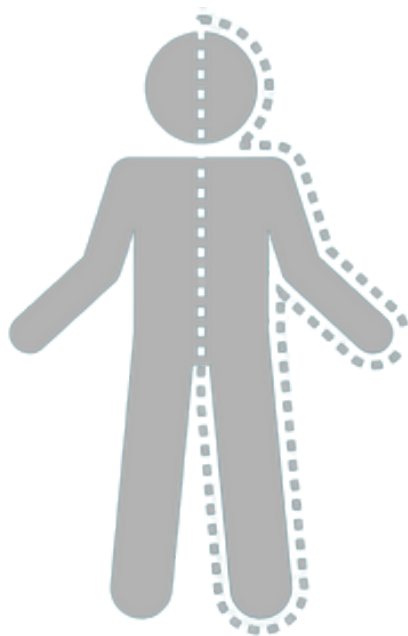


To discover sensations in your body, ask yourself the questions:

What is it that my body is experiencing right now?

What are the sensations that run through my body at the moment?

Here's a list of sensations:



Common Words

- Tight
- Tense
- Knotted
- Sore
- Pressure

Energy Quality

- Shaky
- Trembly
- Fluttery
- Shivery
- Short of breath

electric Quality

- Prickly
- Tingly
- Burning
- Buzzy
- Itchy

Blah... Meh...

- Empty
- Dull
- Disconnected
- Heavy
- Drained

Closed Off

- Constricted
- Choking
- Rigid
- Suffocated
- Imploding

Open/Wellbeing

- Relaxed
- Released
- Energetic
- Grounded
- Expansive

You can say, for example:

- I experience some ache in my arm.
- I have a bubbly sensation in my belly.
- When I heard this, I immediately experienced tightness in my back.
- When I saw him, I immediately got shortness of breath.
- Write your own example: _____

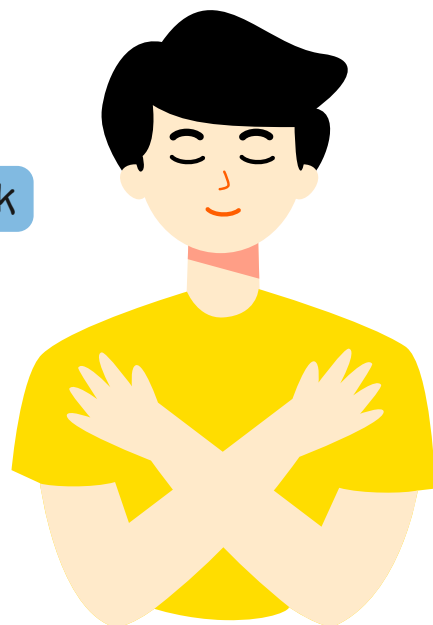


When we start exploring our sensations, we immediately notice two things:

1. Our sensations are connected to a specific body part. As much as we know how to bring awareness to our body parts, the bigger is our capacity to hear, distinguish and learn from sensations.
2. Sensations do not happen in general. They are in the present moment. They come to give information about something that is happening right now. Working with the body and with sensations, means working with presence. (We will speak about this in our next chapter).

Experiment: Try this Body Check

This chapter is about learning how to bring awareness to different body parts. (video material on BODY CHECKING)



If you work with people, then we invite you to observe how their bodies react to what is happening. If you notice something that catches your attention, ask them.

Examples:

- “What is happening with your neck right now?”
- “When you said that your voice went up, what is the sensation in your throat?”

Chapter 2: Presence | Coming to the body

LEARNING BITES

Nowadays there are many authors, influencers and mental health professionals introducing and working with the concept of presence. If you search for what presence means in Google, you will be surprised by the variety of definitions.



“Unease, anxiety, tension, stress, worry - all forms of fear - are caused by too much future and not enough presence. Guilt, regret, resentment, grievances, sadness, bitterness, and all forms of non-forgiveness are caused by too much past, and not enough presence.”

Eckhart Tolle, “The Power of Now”

According to some resources, the presence is connected with being focused on the present moment of “Now”. Other resources link presence to awareness or availability. Presence is connected with mindfulness, well-being, and relaxation. It is a key element of many well-being practices, such as meditations and visualizations.

After all, being in the present moment sounds very natural, right? Our bodies are always in the present moment, living the “now”. So how come there are situations, in which we are suddenly not present?

Have you ever experienced a situation where your body is in the present moment, but your mind is somewhere else? Maybe daydreaming about the future, or remembering the past? We all do that and it is connected to our ability to plan our future or celebrate and mourn what has happened in the past.

Yet there are some situations, where it seems like we are not traveling in time by choice. Sometimes we might experience getting stuck in moments that are not the “Now”.

Examples of this are when we:

- worry about the future
- have irrational fears related to the future
- feel anxious
- can't overcome something that has happened in the past
- want to bring back the past

All those symptoms that we mentioned above are here to indicate that we are not in the moment of Now. And reasons for this can be many. Sometimes traumatic experiences are blocking our ability to be in the present moment or connected with our bodies. It seems like we almost escape to some place of comfort in our minds (what we call the "attic").

There are many ways we can escape to the attic of our thoughts: thinking about the past or future, being busy with activities that "take us away", such as continuously scrolling our social media, playing games or losing ourselves in movies.

Many times not being in the present moment is a coping mechanism so that reality becomes more bearable. In these cases, we create illusions (virtual worlds, memories, images of a bright future, dreams, imaginary spaces) and we prefer to live in those illusions, instead of reality.

And it doesn't mean that there is something wrong with daydreaming, watching a movie or playing a video game. Yet it is great to ask ourselves:

Do I do it out of choice, or is this my way to handle reality?

If you catch yourself being too much "in the attic", being stressed or mellow, spacing out or not being able to focus, maybe it is a great idea to call yourself back home. Back home in your body and in the moment of Now.

Inspired by the book "Leading with Presence" by Antonie Knoppers, Milly Obdeijn, and Steffen R. Giessner, we are offering you a 4-steps programme that will support you to **raise the quality** of your presence and support others to do so.

NOTICE

Before you start with this programme, ask yourself the question:

- To what percent (%) am I present at this moment?

LEARNING BITES

There are many ways you can raise the quality of your presence. Here we offer you some practices that you can use alone or in a group. They will support you to come to the present moment with awareness.

Step 1: Grounding.



“Place your feet at hip-width distance, relax your toes, and spread your weight evenly over your feet. Sense the weight of your body, allow knees to relax so they are neither bent nor locked, but feel “fluid”. Give your weight to the earth, but keep your structure (avoid stiffening up or collapsing). Feel the weight of your leg-bones descending down into the ground, as if your feet could grow roots into the earth. Grounding is a dynamic relationship to the earth; you can practice it standing, sitting, lying down, or in motion.”

Antonie Knoppers
Trainer, Coach, Speaker, Author



Grounding, also called Earthing, is a practice related to your natural ability to connect to the earth (physical world) and discharge the energy that is in excess in your body. It is essential for your sense of safety in the world.

There are various different exercises that support individuals and groups to ground their energy. The benefits of those exercises are:

- Increase sense of safety
- Decrease stress response
- Reduce fatigue
- Increase energy
- Reduce blood pressure and hypertension
- Better focus

Different grounding practices have different paces. You can do a slow meditation with your body laying on the ground or a very intense shaking exercise. A simple mindful walk or a cup of warm tea can also serve as a grounding practice.

Facilitating Grounding

When you work with a group, our recommendation is that you choose the type of practice according to the energy of the group at the moment. If the energy of the group is intense and bubbly, do a grounding practice that is more energetic (could be movement, dance, shake etc.). If the group is low on energy, you can follow them with guided breathing, slow movement or meditation.

When facilitating a grounding practice, we invite you to bring extra attention to the connection between the body and the ground. Here are some examples:

- If people are standing, invite them to sense how their 10 toes are touching the ground
- If people are lying, invite them to feel the weight of their body surrendering to the ground.
- If people are walking, invite them to bring awareness to each and every step.
- If people are sitting on a chair, invite them to sense how the chair is holding their bodies.

Many grounding practices include manual work, such as cooking, gardening, crafts and DIY. Those are especially important if you spend a lot of time in front of a computer or your work is more related to thinking than doing practical things.

Barefoot walking, sunbathing, hiking, yoga, dancing and other physical activities are also very beneficial when it comes to grounding.

If you want to learn more about the topic, we recommend you to watch the documentary [The Earthing Movie: The Remarkable Science of Grounding](#). You can find the full movie on Youtube.

Step 2: Alignment and Centering.



““Centring” is the overall term used for the self-regulation skills that work with the body. At core, being stressed is a bodily response, so we need bodily tools to work with this.”

Mark Walsh, “Centering”



While grounding is about the flow of energy in the body, alignment and centering are about the mechanics of the body.

The body is a system and as with any other system, it has a certain order. If you imagine a car, you know that it is created by many different elements that serve different purposes. Each element has its exact place. And the elements are connected with specific links. If an element is out of its place, it can easily bring disbalance to the whole system.

Alignment and centering practices are about the posture and the way we hold our spine. When working on alignment, we create space in the body, so that the person can also take their space in life.

Often when we are stressed, overwhelmed or uncomfortable, we make ourselves small by collapsing our spine, closing our shoulders and heart area or displacing the core. Sometimes when people experience fear, you can see that they bring their chin forward and in this way they create tension in the neck.

Centering and alignment practices are supporting us to bring awareness to our postures, way of standing, way of walking, way of balancing our weight, dealing with gravity, and dealing with other mechanical forces.

Alignment practices support us to arrange our bodies and put the different parts in order so that the energy can flow freely. Benefits from it are:

- Increased confidence
- Sense of relaxation
- Improved focus
- Improved body awareness
- Better balance and stability
- Improved mental and emotional well-being

When you facilitate Alignment or Centering practices, bring awareness to the following elements:

- Imagine a line (thread, pipe) that goes through your body and centre your body around it. Align your head over your heart and your heart over your pelvis.
- Lengthen the spine by imagining that you create a space between each vertebra.
- Tuck your chin to your chest and create length in your neck.
- Relax your shoulders and roll them away from your ears. Imagine that with each inhale you open the space in the area of your heart and the shoulder blades are coming closer together down your back.
- Relax your jaw.
- Engage your core muscles by contracting your trunk muscles to provide support for your spine and pelvis.
- Imagine that with each inhale you create an upward current of energy in your front body (the energy goes from your toes up to your belly, chest and head) and with each exhale you ground your energy by creating a downward current of energy in your back body (the energy goes from your head, through your spine, back of the legs to the ground).

If you are interested in the topic and want to learn more, we recommend you to read:

- **“Alignment matters” by Katy Bowman**
- **“Centering” by Mark Walsh**

“Watch your habits, for they become your posture. Watch your posture, for it creates your boundaries. Watch your boundaries, for they restrict your growth. Watch your restrictions, for they create immobility. Watch your immobility, for it becomes your illness.”

“Alignment matters”, Katy Bowman

If you want to increase your well-being and build resilience, we recommend that you take at least 20 minutes a day for exercises. Our favourite way to do so is by doing Yoga with Adriene which is available for free on Youtube.

ADD VIDEO HERE: WAVES Here you can watch a video that will support you to align your body

Step 3: Breathing.

Breathing is a physiological process that has a huge impact on our well-being. How we breathe is how much oxygen we provide for the body. Our breath is connected with our heart rate and nervous system.

When we are scared or stressed, we sometimes restrict our breath. In uncomfortable situations, we might have shortness of breath. When experiencing anxiety, sometimes we find it difficult to take a breath. All of those are reactions of the body to the environment. The body makes itself small in order to escape from danger.

We can also reverse this process by bringing awareness to the breath and in this way changing the response of our body to the environment.

By increasing the quality of our breathing, we experience benefits such as:

- Increased quality of presence
- Decreased levels of stress
- Stimulated lymphatic system
- Lower blood pressure
- Reduced “flight or fight” response
- Enhanced cognitive performance



Breath exercises and staying connected with the breath can support people to remain calm and focused in stressful situations and calm down when they experience anxiety, panic attacks, feeling unsafe, stress.

When you work with groups or individuals, facilitating breath awareness exercises is essential for **increasing the quality of presence in the group**. There are simple techniques that take only a couple of minutes to be performed.

Here are two effective breathing techniques that you can use yourself or with others:

- **Box Breathing** also known as square breathing, is a technique that supports you to reduce the level of stress. You breathe for 1, 2, 3, 4 moments, and hold it again for 4. Then exhale for 4, 3, 2, 1 moments and hold it for 4. The breathing is slow and deep.
- **4 - 7 - 8 Breathing**. Inhale through your nose for a count of 4. Hold your breath for a count of 7. Exhale through your mouth making a sound for a count of 8.

Facilitating Breathing

When facilitating breathing exercises for a group, you can bring awareness to the following:

- The breath moves us. With each inhale we expand, with each exhale we ground our energy.
- You can invite the group to imagine the breath as a colour or light. For example: “With each inhale, imagine a white light entering your body. With your next inhale, bring the white light to the area of your chest...”
- You can invite the group to imagine that with each inhale they fill their bellies with air.
- The breath has different qualities you can pay attention to:
 - Depth - do you facilitate a series of short and fast breaths or deep breaths into your belly.
 - Rhythm - how long is the inhale and how long is the exhale? Are there pauses in between? There are many techniques that we can recommend and you can find them below.
 - Style - is it energetic breathing or calm, legato or staccato, smooth or wavy?
 - Direction - do you want to invite the person to direct their breath to a specific body part?
 - Sound - you can invite the person to exhale with a sound or silently.



- With each inhale we receive energy. With each exhale, we can let go of what is not serving us anymore.
- You can invite the person to focus their attention on the sound of their breath. If there are other thoughts or images coming, the person can let them come and go like the clouds in the sky. If the person experiences many thoughts and images coming, this is very normal, especially at the beginning of practice. We recommend that you don't tell them to shut those thoughts off, because in this case, they might experience strong resistance. Invite them to lower the volume of their thoughts.
- Working on Body Awareness, you can invite the person to experience what are the sensations that each breath creates in their body.
- If you work with a group, you can invite them to take a couple of deep breaths together. In this way, they will match their individual rhythms and perform better as a group.
- When guiding meditations, use long and deep breaths in the beginning, to calm the person. You can use a quick exhale with a sound at the end to support the person coming back from the meditation with energy.

If you want to deepen your knowledge and practice in this area, you can check:

BREATHING exercise.
In the video tutorials, you can find inspiration for grounding exercises that you can do alone or with a group.

- **Pranayama** exercises. Pranayama is a yogic practice focusing on the breath. There are various ways of breathing and you can find many video materials on Youtube.
- **Breathwork**. Those are breathing exercises and techniques that are often used for therapeutic purposes. You can visit free breathwork sessions on <https://alchemyofbreath.com/free-breathwork-sessions/>

Step 4: Connect.



“When you are grounded, aligned, and breathing with ease; connecting with the world, beyond one’s own kinesphere, becomes possible.”

Antonie Knoppers



The kinesphere is a very important concept when it comes to Body Awareness. It is the space around us that we can reach without changing our place. We can use a large area around us when we use big movements, especially with our hands and legs. It correlates with our sense of personal space and boundaries.

When working with the body, it is important to introduce the concepts of personal space and consent. Different people have different boundaries. What is normal for some people is violent and abusive for others.

When working with people, invite them to sense their personal space. To imagine it as a bubble around them and to expand their awareness from their bodies to that bubble.

In groups, you can invite people to walk around the space and expand their awareness of the area around them. How much space do they take? How close or how far can they allow another person? Invite the people you work with to always to check with one another how close is comfortable for both sides to be. Touch or getting closer requires verbal or nonverbal consent. You can ask the group to agree on how they ask for consent and how they stand by their personal boundaries.

Once you are grounded, aligned, connected to your breath and aware of your personal space and boundaries, you can take the next step and connect with what is beyond your personal space - the surroundings, the people around you, and the environment.

1. Connect with your surroundings

Take some moments to look around you. Notice what is happening? Who is there? What is there? What are the sounds, smells, and colours around you? What is the space you are in? What is the temperature of the air? Are there any doors, windows, chairs etc.? Where are you standing? How are people positioned around you?

If you work with a group, you can challenge them to find with their eyes 5 red/blue/yellow objects in the space around them.

2. Connect to others

It is important to mention that as social beings we have developed a lot of social behaviours that signify connection. For example, smiling or a handshake.

When working with groups and individuals, invite people to be aware of their automatic behaviours and to explore what is beyond them. You can facilitate processes where the participants experience the sensation of connection beyond their automatic behaviours.



Here are some examples:

- Invite the participants to walk slowly around the room. First, they bring their awareness to their own body and personal space, going through their checklist for grounding, aligning and breathing. After that, they expand their awareness in the room. They can start noticing other people and the space. When they are ready, they can expand their awareness to others and start making eye contact when walking.

- You can divide the group into couples, where one person is A and another is B. A and B are invited to maintain eye contact for 10 minutes. When the connection is too much and one of them needs to reconnect with themselves, the person closes their eyes. When the person is ready to connect again, they open their eyes. If one of the two people closes their eyes, the other can choose to close their eyes or to remain with their eyes open. It is an individual process performed in duets. It aims to support the participants to explore connection and their personal boundaries.
- In duets - person A and B. They look at each other, keeping eye contact. Each person put their hands together in front of the heart area, palms touching. The hands are a metaphor for a door. Each person "opens" or "closes" the door of their heart, depending on how they feel at that exact moment. There is no right or wrong. Could be that person A is with their hands wide open, while person B is with their hands closed. Could be that person A opens their hands and in a second this is not comfortable and they want to close them. It is an individual process, performed in duets.
- In duets. Person A creates a "nest" with papers, markers, natural materials or others. The nest reflects their personal space. Person A takes a place in their "nest" with eyes closed. Person B approaches the nest. Person B takes different positions around the nest - on the left, on the right, front, back, close by, and far away. Person B can even ask if they can take a step in the nest. Person A experiences what kind of sensations arise in their body during the exercise. After they switch.
- Mirroring. Person A is making a movement, person B is mirroring the movement.
- Matching. Person A is making a move, and person B is making a movement that matches the style of movement of A, but is not the same.

All of those exercises aim to support people to explore nonverbal connections with others and what resonance connection creates in their bodies. There is no right or wrong reaction. By exercising nonverbal connection, we explore how our bodies react to others, how we take our personal space and how we approach other people.

Those exercises support us to remain present when connecting with others and keep the connection with the self meanwhile.

Keep in mind that for many people connection is not easy. It might take time or require more distance. Our invitation is to dedicate time to this last fourth step.



After each exercise, dedicate some time for reflection. Invite the participants to reflect on their sensations during the processes. Invite them to challenge themselves with each exercise. Maybe they can maintain eye contact for a second more. Or use breathing exercises to calm themselves when close to others. You can invite the participants to answer these questions:

- What does connection mean to you?
- How do you experience connection?
- What do you want to connect with?

Chapter 3: Movement | Elements of working with the body



“How you move matters”

Adriene, from “Yoga with Adriene”



LEARNING BITES

In the previous chapters we have explored how to work with the body, listen to our sensations and raise the quality of our presence. We have been practising how to connect with our bodies, breath and with others. How to be aware of our own personal space and how to align the body, so it is in a more receptive state, where the energy can flow freely and organically.

Once we have made all those steps, we are ready to further explore our body through the movement. The aim of this work is to bring awareness to the way our bodies are moving in space, and how they interact with each other in movement.

There are different qualities of movement that we are going to explore.

1. Dimensions of movement

You can explore those exercises alone or invite the people you are working with.

- The first dimension that we start working with is the kinesphere. Find a comfortable position in the space and go through your grounding, alignment, breathing and connection checklist. By doing this you are raising the quality of your presence. Once you are ready, imagine your kinesphere as a bubble around you. Play calm music and explore the movements of your body. It is not necessary that you dance. Listen to how your body wants to move. How much and how less? How intense. How much space does your body want to take with movement?
- If you feel comfortable with moving in your kinesphere, we invite you to expand that dimension. Imagine a bubble that is two times bigger than your kinesphere. Once you are there, you can expand your movement. While in the kinesphere you are at one place, in the bigger bubble you can go back and forth, making steps and turns. We invite you to explore this second dimension. You might want to play more energetic or playful music or do this exercise in silence. Again, it is not about dancing. It is about you exploring how your body wants to move. Maybe your body wants to do movements that you wouldn't do in another environment. Let yourself explore.
- If you feel comfortable with this bubble, expand it. Imagine that now you are in a bubble that includes the people close to you. Now you see them. You can get closer, and check if they want to interact with you. Check if you interact because your body wants to connect or out of social expectations. How much and how less do you want to involve others in your movement? How much space do you want to take? How is your movement transforming?

- Once you feel confident enough in this bubble, you can expand it and imagine that you are in a bubble that includes all the room. Now you can change location and interact with everyone. Listen to your body. Let your body lead the way. Where is your body bringing you?
- If you experience discomfort, you can always go back to the previous bubble. Very often a small event, like somebody's movement, can trigger negative thoughts, shame or other unpleasant sensations. It is normal to experience that and you can always go back to your safety bubble. We invite you to stay with that sensation and explore it. Move from that sensation. What is it? What kind of emotions are triggered?
- There is no right or wrong way to explore the dimensions. Some people prefer to stay at their kinesphere all the time. If you see that, don't try to take them out or pursue them to move with you. This practice is an individual experience in a group context. Each person knows the boundaries of their body.
- After this exercise, reflect in small groups or duos for at least 10 - 15 minutes. You can answer these questions:
 - Which bubble is the most comfortable for me?
 - Were there automatic behaviours or thoughts that I observed?
 - In which bubble I was most willing and open to connect?
 - How did my body react if somebody wanted to approach me?

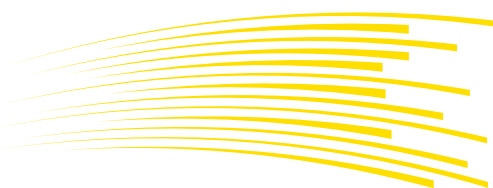
2. Levels

- Invite the group to do the first exercise again and this time, in each bubble we will explore the 4 different levels of the body.
- The first level we explore is when we are standing. It is the same level that we have been exploring for the first time
- The second level is high. This means that the direction of our bodies is up towards the sky. We reach the ceiling. This might include moving on the tips of our toes, jumping, reaching our hands high or waving our legs up. Imagine that the body wants to go up. What is its natural way of doing that? Again, there is no right or wrong. For some people, this level might look like ballet turns with hands up, for others, gently putting their chin up.

- The third level is the medium level. It is between the ground and standing. You can bend your knees, and explore the air below your head. Explore what are the qualities of your movements there. What images come to you when you are moving to this level?
- The fourth level is the ground. You can lay on the ground or crawl on your knees. You can glide on the floor. At this level, explore your connection with the ground.
- You can transition from one level to another. Explore at which level you feel the most comfortable. What is different in your movements at the different levels? How do you connect with others on different levels?

3. Speed

- Here the invitation is to play with your speed. If your normal speed is 5, how is it if you lower it to 2 or 0. How does it feel if you turn it to 10?
- You can use walks to explore the speed. Walk with speed 5. Then lower to 3. Then to 1. Then pause. 0. Then turn to 5 again. And increase to 7. And 9. What is happening when you walk at speed 10?
- Explore the speed in the different bubbles. At which speed do you feel more comfortable to connect with others? How does your movement change at different speeds?



You can exercise those three elements of movement separately or together. We invite you to play with them.

If you face an issue in your life, a difficult situation where you feel the energy is not flowing freely, you can explore how your perspective towards this situation is changing at different speeds, dimensions or levels.

When working with groups you can also explore those three elements with different metaphors from the daily life of the people or by using storytelling. Here is one example:

EXPERIMENT

The City and its Citizens

Invite the participants to lay on the ground. You can facilitate a short meditation or visualization.

Then you can invite them for the following:

“Imagine that you feel rays of sun on your skin. You are in your bed and just woke up. You open your eyes after a long sleep. (pause) You stretch your body in the bed. How does your body want to stretch?”

Slowly you prepare yourself to stand up from your bed. (The participants are changing the level and standing from the ground). What do you do when you wake up? Maybe you want to go to the window and watch outside? Maybe you go to brush your teeth or prepare a coffee. (Give them time to explore this state, to do what their bodies feel like doing).

Oh, you look at the clock and you realize you are slightly late for your work. Now you need to prepare yourself and go out. How do you prepare yourself?

You are leaving your home and walking on the street. There are other people around you. Maybe you create eye contact with some of them. (Pause) Now you realize that you are late for the bus. You are in a hurry. You are almost running. The people on the street are obstacles for you that you want to avoid. (Pause)

Here you are, on the bus stop. Ah, you missed the bus. Now you need to wait for a couple of minutes. How do you wait? do you interact with the other people at the bus stop?

The bus is here. You enter, but it is full. You need to take as little space as possible. How does your body deal with this?

You arrive. After getting off the bus, you want to take a big space and shake your body from the trip. You are walking towards your job and you start noticing familiar faces. How do you greet people?

You live in a small town where all the people gather to drink coffee together on the main square before going to work. Now you need to cross the park, where you enter a deep forest, full of bushes. You are very careful with the thorns of the bushes, when you are walking.

(From here you can continue the story in your own way, creating obstacles, different situations, different interactions. With this exercise you invite the participants to be creative and explore different ways of movement in the space).

LEARNING BITES

Parts of the body that are leading the movement

Very often we are used to moving or dancing in a certain way. Invite the people you work with or yourself to explore movement led by different body parts. You can do that in different dimensions, speeds and layers.



- Play music by your choice. We recommend choosing music that is not too fast. Invite the participants to move in a way that their right hand is leading the movement and the rest of the body is following. Then change “the leader” to the left hand, right ankle, left knee, the tips of the toes, the head, the tongues, the right shoulder, the belly etc. Give the participants enough time to explore the movement when different body parts are leading.
- You can also use storytelling to do that exercise. Invite the participants to imagine that their right hand transforms into a brush with a golden colour and it wants to paint the room, the floor, their own body, or the body of the others. Then change the brush to another body part.
- Remember to facilitate a reflection after this exercise. Ask the participants to reflect in couples or small groups on
 - How is the movement transforming when they change the leading part?
 - Which body part was the most difficult to follow?
 - Which body part was leading most firmly?
 - Which body part was connecting with others the easiest?

5. Contact points

When standing on our two legs, we have two contact points with the ground - right and left feet. You can invite the participants to explore movement with more or less contact points to the ground. How are they going to move if they need to keep three contact points? Or four? Every body part that touches the ground, the wall, the chair etc. is a contact point.

When the participants are comfortable with exploring the contact points in this way, you can invite them to explore further, when connecting and moving together. Every connection between body parts is considered a contact point. If two people are moving back to back, they have four contact points with the ground (4 feet) and 1 contact point between each other.

Style of movement

The style of movement is related to the way the movement is performed. If the movement is sharp or smooth, legato or staccato, fast or slow, gentle or aggressive, with direction or flowing.



One simple way to explore different styles of movement is by playing different styles of songs as a background.

You can also invite the participants to use specific movements - a touch of the skin, shake, grabbing, kicking, turning, waves etc.

Our favourite exercise is “The four elements”, where you use elements of nature as metaphors for different styles of movement.

- The first element is **Earth**. Invite the participants to walk slowly with speed 3. To step slowly, step by step. To walk in straight lines with awareness of their own bodies. Their spine is straight, their posture is aligned, and their breath is deep. Their movement is calm. You can also play calm and strict music and let them improvise their movements.
- The second element is **Water**. Here they soften their gaze and walk like cats, in the third layer. Their movements are soft and oriented towards connection. They are moving closer to each other, smoothly. The speed is 4 or 5.
- The third element is **Fire**. They are connected with their core muscles. Moving with a direction. They pick a point in the room and walk towards it. Others are only obstacles on their way. The movement is staccato, clear and with purpose. The speed is 7/8.
- The fourth element is **Air**. The element of creativity and freedom. The moves are oriented towards the second layer - up in the sky. The moves are light, without a direction, without a purpose. Here the participants can explore with crazy movements that they wouldn't do otherwise. The atmosphere is playful.

After they have played with the different elements, invite them to improvise and follow the body in its own style of movement. What is specific about the movement of their bodies?

Facilitate a reflection where the participants are sharing in small groups or in couples their experiences. You can ask the following questions:

- Which element is familiar to me?
- Which element is the least familiar to me?
- From which element do I want to add more in my movements?
- What is the style of my movement in life?



Wayfinding

It is a moment for reflection. After trying out the exercises, we invite you to write down or share with others:

Which exercise worked the best for you? What are your take aways?

Which is your preferred speed? What slowing down brings you? What speeding up brings you?

Which are the two elements of nature (Earth, Water, Fire, Air) that you connect the most with? Which ones you would like to have more of?
Is there an element in excess?

How would you describe your relationship with your body?

What inside you wants to move?



One Minute Review:

In this chapter, we have shared with you our way to approach the body and raise body awareness. We invite you to explore and play, and add your own exercises in your own way. Working with the body is magic and the results are amazing! In this field, a little goes a long way. A simple daily practice can improve the quality of your daily life and the way you connect with others.

It all starts with making our bed in the morning, isn't it?

Our team is wishing you good luck and a lot of fun and connection!



Pathway 2: Emotional Awareness



What are emotions? Why is emotional awareness important?

Concept Map:

- The language of our emotions | emotions and feelings
- Wheels of emotions



NOTICE

SELF-CHECK:

Using a scale of 1-5, 1 being very like me and 5 very unlike me, write down what resonates with you after reading these statements:

- Most of the time I understand my emotions
- I am, most of the time, able to regulate bodily sensations related to my emotions (ex: shaking hands, sweating etc.).
- I am, most of the time, present with my emotions.
- I am, most of the time, able to express my emotions.
- I am, most of the time, able to regulate thoughts related to my emotions.

Chapter 1: The language of our emotions | emotions and feelings

“

“Emotion is energy in motion. When you move energy, you create an effect. If you move enough energy, you create matter. Matter is energy conglomerated. Moved around. Shoved together. If you manipulate energy long enough in a certain way, you get matter. Every Master understands this law. It is the alchemy of the universe. It is the secret of all life.”

Neale Donald Walsch, *Conversations with God, An Uncommon Dialogue: Living in the World with Honesty, Courage, and Love - Volume I*

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NOTICE



- Name three emotions that you have experienced today
- Name three emotions that you experience often
- Name two recent situations where you had the chance to share your emotions
- Name three ways in which you express your emotions (ex: drawing, journaling, dancing, talking to friends etc.)

What is the word for emotion that you use in your own language? What are the meanings attached to it?

Introduction

LEARNING BITES

We, humans, are emotional beings. We experience joy and grief, we are sometimes afraid and other times angry.

Emotions are not completely known territory. Many scientists are working on discovering how emotions are forming in our brains and bodies. How old are our emotions, looking at our evolution? We don't know if people centuries ago could experience love the same way we do. Or sadness.

What we know is that emotions are in our bodies. They affect our mood, our decisions, our opportunities, availability, way of connecting, postures and the way we walk.

The first step to take as facilitators is to understand the difference between feelings and emotions.

In this book we use the following definition: Emotions are the bio-chemical experiences of our bodies when an event occur. Feelings are the interpretations that we give to those experiences.

Here is an example. Emma is walking on the street. She notices Paul approaching her.

- **Sensations:** heart beat, soft knees, occurring smile on the face, a cold breeze on the skin
- **Emotions:** joy
- **Feelings:** in love, happy



Let's take another example. Ivan is walking in the forest. He suddenly notices a bear approaching.

- **Sensations:** cold hands, shortness of breath, goosebumps, shivers
- **Emotions:** fear
- **Feelings:** scared, in danger

Do you recognise the difference?

**Sensations: reactions of the body in the present moment.
No attached meaning.**

Emotions: the energy in the body that creates a certain state. The reaction of the environment or the inner thought processes.

Feelings: our subjective interpretations of what we experience. Coming of past knowledge, cultural images, expectations and belief system.

Feelings are about how I interpret reality, while emotions are about how my body experiences reality.

Maybe you wonder why is this important for a facilitator. Or how is it connected with the topic of mental health?

Well, here is how.

- Sensations: in the previous chapter we already spoke that if we listen to our sensations, we have access to a whole world of information. Information that comes to our bodies. Noticing our sensations support us to be connected with our bodies and the present moment.
- Emotions: noticing our emotions supports us to express them and/or regulate them. We know more about the flow of our energy and what state it creates. We can also notice the flow of energy in others. We can ask them to reflect on their emotions. We can suggest exercises that support people to regulate their emotions. One example is if the group suddenly experience fear. Being aware of the emotion and how it works, supports you to address the issue, instead of ignoring it.
- Feelings: feelings are interpretations. Knowing how to work with them, we can explore what is behind those interpretations. What stories do we tell ourselves? What are the emotions behind the feeling? To which images and cultural ideas are those feelings connected?

Emotions

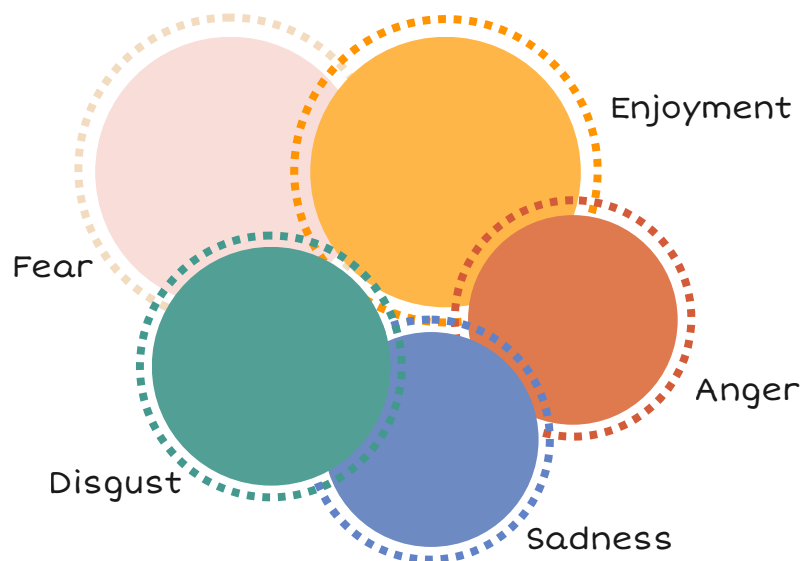
There are various different theories on the topic of emotional intelligence. We will introduce one approach and mention a few others. Our aim is not to state what is true or not, but to give a simple frame that you can later use in your work or self-care practices.

Different theories give us different information on how many emotions there are, how they appear etc. What we find a very practical tool is the Atlas of Emotions that you can [find here](#).

The Atlas is a digital tool that gives you a lot of information about how emotions are formed and expressed. It is developed by the American psychologist Paul Ekman, professor emeritus at the University of California, San Francisco and Dalai Lama.

In the atlas you will find 5 primary emotions:

- Enjoyment
- Fear
- Anger
- Sadness
- Disgust



Each emotion can be experienced as intense or less intense. There are different physical reactions that can accompany the emotion.

Let's explore!

Enjoyment

It can be experienced as slight sensory pleasure, compassion, amusement, relief, peace, pride, wonder, excitement, ecstasy and others. All of those are faces of the same biochemical process. Each emotion comes with certain responses. So for enjoyment we have:

- Engaging
- Connecting
- Seeking for more
- Enjoy other envy
- Giving time to experience pleasure

We ask you, what kind of environment you can design, so your body can experience enjoyment? What kind of environment you can design so that others experience enjoyment?

- What is important for you to experience enjoyment?
- Sense of safety
 - Reward
 - Achievement of something difficult
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____



Sadness

Sadness might appear as disappointment, discouragement, resignation, helplessness, hopelessness, misery, despair, grief, sorrow, anguish and others.



The responses it creates can be:

- Feeling shame
- Mourning
- Protest
- Obsessive thoughts about the emotional experience
- Seeking comfort
- Withdraw

Sometimes when sadness is too much and we cannot cope with it, we develop a secondary emotion. The secondary emotion covers the primary one and makes it more bearable. Sometimes if sadness is too much, we start experiencing anger, for example.

EXPERIMENT

If you want to explore more emotions, we invite you to take a look at the atlas. It is very interactive and you can also use it in your workshops or online courses.

Feelings

When speaking about feelings, we refer to the [CNVC list of feelings](#). It is a very useful tool that we highly recommend.

Here are some examples:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curious• In love• Glad• Happy• Touched	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relieved• Eager• Relaxed• Amazed• Fulfilled	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confused• Scared• Sleepy• Distracted• Depressed
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EXPERIMENT



How to work with those?

- the First step, you can ask yourself or another person: How do you feel? You can invite them to take a look at the list of feelings and check which words create resonance in them.

Example: "I feel sleepy, relaxed, connected etc."

- the Second step, invite the person or yourself to check what kind of body sensations they experience?

Example: "I sense warmth in my chest, the breeze on my skin, heaviness in my eyes etc."

- Third step, invite the person or yourself to check what are the emotions behind the feelings? You can guess and see if it resonates.

Example: "Do you experience sadness?" "No, I wouldn't say. It is more of a pleasure". You already know that pleasure is a way to experience enjoyment. You know what behaviours and reactions can be there.

EXPERIMENT

This frame is there only to support our exploration. In real life we often mix emotions, feelings and sensations. And there is nothing wrong with that.

If you want to work on raising emotional awareness (both for yourself and the people you work with), we can give four tips:

- Choose a frame, as the one we have proposed, that will allow you to create distinguishments and explore deeper. Go for a frame that is open enough, so you can create your own way of working with it. Frames with a lot of explanations and theories are usually heavy on the people and not inviting for active exploration.
- Work on your emotions/feelings/sensations vocabulary. Sometimes we don't recognise what exactly is that we feel or experience because we lack words for it. Use lists of feelings and emotions to invite in your dictionary more words.
- There are beautiful videos and books on how our hormones affect our emotions and feelings. Get yourself some knowledge in this area. It will support you to understand your body better and what habits can lead to positive emotions and a healthy lifestyle.
- Emotions and feelings occur in contact with our environment. Instead of being stuck in a feeling or emotion, check how can you create an environment that invites movement in you. Here are some examples:
 - Changing the place you are at: going outside for a walk, changing the room etc.
 - Changing your posture. Create movement in the way you sit on your chair, walk, and stand. Take more space. Go through your Body Awareness checklist.
 - Take 10 - 15 minutes to exercise, run or do yoga.
 - Ask the people around for a hug or a conversation.

Wayfinding

We invite you to write down in your notebook the five emotions from the Atlas: enjoyment, fear, sadness, anger, disgust. Next to each one of those, write down:

When was the last time you experienced this emotion in your body?

What was it about?

What was the intensity?

What physical reactions were created?

Use the Atlas if you need inspiration.

EXPERIMENT

Emotional Awareness exercise to do alone or in a group:
Think of an activity or an event that recently happened.
Reflect on the following:

1. The **situation** you were in (whatever is happening to you at that moment);
2. The details you paid attention to regarding the situation;
3. The **value** that you gave it, what the situation meant for you personally; and
4. Your **response**, including the physical changes (like blushing or shaking), and your behaviors (like tapping your feet or scratching your head).

LEARNING BITES

According to Professor James Gross, in the Modal Model of Emotion, the process of feeling an emotion happens through these four components:

The situation. For an emotion to happen, there is something happening around you (the situation you are in). This might be in a classroom, at work, in a crowded train station or a bustling coffee shop.



Your attention.

We only pay attention to the parts of the situation that are relevant for us. Given that there would likely be a lot of things happening around us - for example in a crowded bus there might be people on their phones, children crying, people talking to each other, the sound of the bell, rustling of the leaves outside the bus. It is not possible to notice every detail, yet we notice the things that matter to us. It might be the smell of what someone was eating, or the topic of what the person in front of you was talking about, or how a person was staring at you. You would pay attention to these things because they have personal meaning to you.

The value.

Once a relevant-to-you situation attracts your attention, you interpret what that thing means for you. This thought process could be automatic (below your conscious awareness) or it could be intentional (conscious thoughts you could say aloud about what this means for you). The thought process of the situation will determine the feelings you have. It generates the type of emotion you experience.

Your response.

Based on the thought processes you have (the appraisals), you will then have a response. This emotional response involves several components.

1. feelings (subjective feelings, like "I feel scared")
2. appraisals (thought patterns, like "I am under threat")
3. expressions (facial and bodily expressions of emotions, like being wide-eyed with fright)
4. action tendencies (the tendency to perform certain actions, like freezing, hiding, fighting/attacking); and
5. physical changes (physical symptoms of emotion, such as butterflies in the stomach).

This model is proposed by Professor Klaus Scherer on his [component-process model of emotion](#).

Wayfinding

What was the situation you were in?

What details did you pay attention to? Why were they relevant for you?

What were your appraisals of the situation? What were your automatic thoughts about this situation?
What were your intentional thoughts?

What were your responses to the situation?

Feelings:

Value that you gave:

Expressions:

Action tendencies:

Physical changes:

Chapter 2: Wheels of Emotions

In the first chapter, we have introduced one frame that you can use for yourself or your work. There are other frames that we will experience in this chapter.

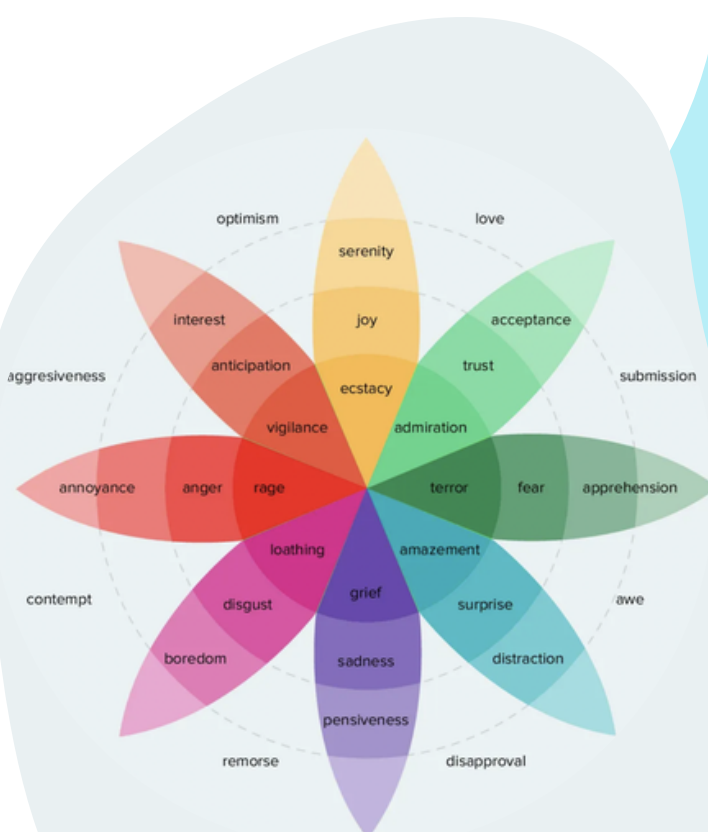
You can use different frames with different groups. None of them is created to reflect “the truth”. They are here to guide us to explore, expand our vocabulary and connect with our bodies and experiences.

LEARNING BITES

Psychologist [Robert Plutchik](#) developed one of the most popular emotion wheels, known as the Plutchik wheel. He suggested that people experience eight core emotions, which he arranged in opposite pairs on the wheel:

- sadness and joy
- anger and fear
- expectation and surprise
- acceptance and disgust

You can use this wheel as a starting point to dissect why you feel the way you feel, what your feelings are trying to tell you, and what to do about it.



As you can see on the wheel, emotions are arranged on color-coordinated spokes in three layers:

Outer edges. Along the outer edges, you'll find low-intensity emotions: acceptance, distraction, boredom, and so on.

Toward the centre. As you move toward the centre, the colour deepens and milder emotions become your basic emotions: trust, surprise, disgust, and more.

Center circle. The centre circle holds the most intense manifestations: admiration, amazement, and loathing, among others

Between each coloured spoke. Here, you'll find what are called mixed emotions – contempt, for example, rises out of a combo of anger and disgust.

EXPERIMENT

Try this Wheel of Emotions Exercise

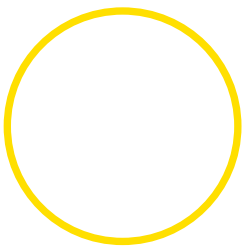
The purpose of this exercise:

- to become familiar with different emotions and feeling that one can experience;
- to become aware of one's emotional state and embrace it without any judgment;
- to become aware of how emotions and feelings change and are never permanent

STEP 1 (5 min)

Find a comfortable posture, sit or lie down, and take a few deep breaths. Start paying attention to how you are feeling today. Take some minutes to reflect on your feelings and emotions. If you are finding it difficult to name your emotions you can explore the variety of potential feelings and emotions in the “Wheel of emotions”.

STEP 2 (10 min)



Now, after you have reflected on your feelings and emotions, you have an opportunity to create your own unique Wheel of Emotions by using different colours and words that represent how you are feeling. You can use a circle template or draw your own circle.

STEP 3 (15 min)

For a group: participants come sitting into a circle and they are invited to present and share about their circle, only if they want to. Other participants are invited to actively listen the person talking. You may want to limit the time for the presentation so that there is enough time for everybody to share. In that case announce it before the sharing circle starts and give a signal some seconds before the time is up for each person.

Wayfinding

Can you think of a time when you 'flipped your lid'? What happened? How did it feel?

What did you do?

Think of a very close relationship. When are the times that you 'flipped the lid' with this person?

What could you do to open the door and ask the upstairs people for help?

What can you actively do to support yourself when you flip your lid? Make a list.

One Minute Review:

Our emotions are energy in motion. The awareness we have around our emotions allows us to respond and collaborate with others in more connecting ways. Understanding the granularity of our emotions enables better self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. These are all crucial components of our emotional intelligence.

Our emotions are complex reaction patterns that can easily keep us from smoother interpersonal relationships when we are not aware of these patterns and understand what happens when we flip our lids. When our emotions rule and we flip our lids, we run the risk of disconnection and ineffective communication which can cause the breakdown of significant relationships. The more that we understand that our primitive brain is taking over, the more that we can do practices that allow us to regulate ourselves and respond with reasoning.



“Emotions are human beings’ warning systems as to what is really going on around them. Emotions are our most reliable indicators of how things are going in our lives. They are also like an internal gyroscope; emotions help keep us on the right track by making sure that we are led by more than cognition.”

- Maurice Elias, Ph.D., Coauthor of Emotionally Intelligent Parenting



**Pathway 3:
Communication
as the act of
Moving
Together**



What is communication awareness? Why is it important? How can we connect in conflict?



Concept Map:

- NLP Communication model
- Chapter 2: Four layers of communication
- Chapter 3: Communication styles

NOTICE

Think of a time in your life when you felt the freedom to express yourself. How did that feel? What made it possible for you to express yourself fully?

SELF-CHECK:

Using a scale of 1-5, 1 being very like me and 5 very unlike me, write down what resonates with you after reading these statements:

- Most of the time I express my thoughts freely
- I am, most of the time, able to express my emotions and feelings freely
- I have people in my life with whom I find it easy to share my authenticity
- I feel understood, seen and heard by the people around me
- It is easy for me to put my thoughts and emotions into words

INTRODUCTION

LEARNING BITES

What comes to mind when you hear/read the word communication? What words, images, gestures, or sensations do you associate it with?

Did you know that...

The word communication comes from the root *-mei**, which means "to move" and the preposition *-com**, which means "together with"!

Imagine that the whole process of communication is our way to move together with the people around us, grow together, to understand each other!

According to communication theory, we can explore two aspects of communication. The first aspect is related to the creation of a connection. The second is the exchange of information.

EXPERIMENT

You can do this by yourself or in a group.

Invite the participants in your activity to create small groups of 4 or 5 people. Invite each group to write on a piece of paper their recipe of connection. Invite them to shape the recipe as one from a cooking book.

For example 1 kg. of humour, 10 tbsp vulnerability, 3g eye contact etc.

After that, invite the participants to write their recipe for disconnection.

When all the groups are ready, invite each group to share their recipes. We invite you to facilitate a reflection. Some questions you can use:

- What does connection mean to you?
- How do you know if the connection is there?
- What supports you to establish the connection?
- What is the opposite of connection?

CONNECTION

Already in the chapter dedicated to Body Awareness, we have been discussing the topic of connection. We invite you to explore the exercises there. We challenge you to create your own recipe for connection and also to stay curious about other recipes. Different people connect in different ways. For some people it is important to share, and for others to have physical touch or quality time.

If you want to learn more about connection, we invite you to ask your friends, colleagues and family about their recipe of connection. Is there any tradition, ritual or activity that they do in order to connect? Maybe there is a specific story they tell? What are the signs of connection they are searching for? What does it mean “connection” to them?

Connection is happening naturally and it is more for you to let it happen than to create it. From this perspective, you can ask yourself:

- What is holding me back from connection?
- If I connect, then what could happen?
- What will not happen if the connection is there?
- What is the connection taking away from me?



EXCHANGE

Once the connection is there, we can start exchanging information. This can happen through various different channels.

According to different research, between 70 and 93 % of communication is nonverbal. This means we send and receive most of the information without using words. We exchange information through touch, the pitch of our voices, colours, the clothes that we wear, our gestures, and the environment around us.

EXPERIMENT

We invite you to go for a walk. Pick a random person on the street and explore what you know about them without knowing them. What kind of information do you receive from the way they walk, talk, dress, and behave?

Do this at least 5 times with 5 different people.

In a group, you can invite people to share their observations.

This exercise is very good when it comes to exploring prejudices. Many times we “receive” information from our past experiences or out of stereotypes. This might lead to misjudgment or discrimination.



Chapter 1: The NLP Communication model

NOTICE

How do we receive information from the world outside?

LEARNING BITES

Something is happening. A situation. I receive a huge amount of signals through my senses. This information looks like a random collection of lights, colours, tones, touch on the skin, temperature etc. Once received, this information need to be arranged. Some of the information I don't need, so I delete it. Other information I place in categories. I attach it to something that I already know from before.

To do this, my brain has created filters that the information go through. In NLP we call them **Filters of reality**.

The filters of reality are the glasses through which we see the world. They are shaped by our culture, past experience, values, beliefs, and memories. What in one culture is perceived as dangerous, in another will be seen as a sign of connection, for example. The same action, in different cultures, will produce different body reactions, hormones and responses.

The three general filters that we use are:

Generalization, Distortion, Deletion.



Generalisation.

Out of our past experiences, beliefs, religions, and culture, we generalize, so that our picture of the world is more clear. When we receive information, our brain divides it into categories. We create general knowledge about some categories.

Generalization sounds like: "Planes are comfortable.", "All women are good drivers.", "Everywhere the pizza in Italy is tasty.", "I always drink coffee in the morning", "He never lies."

When working with people, if you want to challenge their critical thinking, invite them to reflect on this filter. If they say "always", "never", "all", or "every time", invite them to clarify. Is it really always?

Distortion.

This filter is about how we change the way we experience something, because of our memories, past experience, culture or beliefs. We can distort an experience by making it smaller than it is, bigger, and more or less important, giving it a meaning, connecting it with another experience etc.

Very often distortion is about making connections between events when those connections are not existing in reality.

For example, you make a low score on one test and conclude that you're unintelligent in general. There is no real connection between being unintelligent and a low result, but your brain creates a connection.

Another example is if you are late for a meeting. You enter, two of the managers are laughing and you conclude that they are laughing at you. There is no connection between you being late and them laughing, but you create it.

And another example. Your friend forgets about your birthday and you conclude that you mean nothing to them.

We challenge you to explore situations in which you create connections between events and to check if those connections are real.

Deletion.

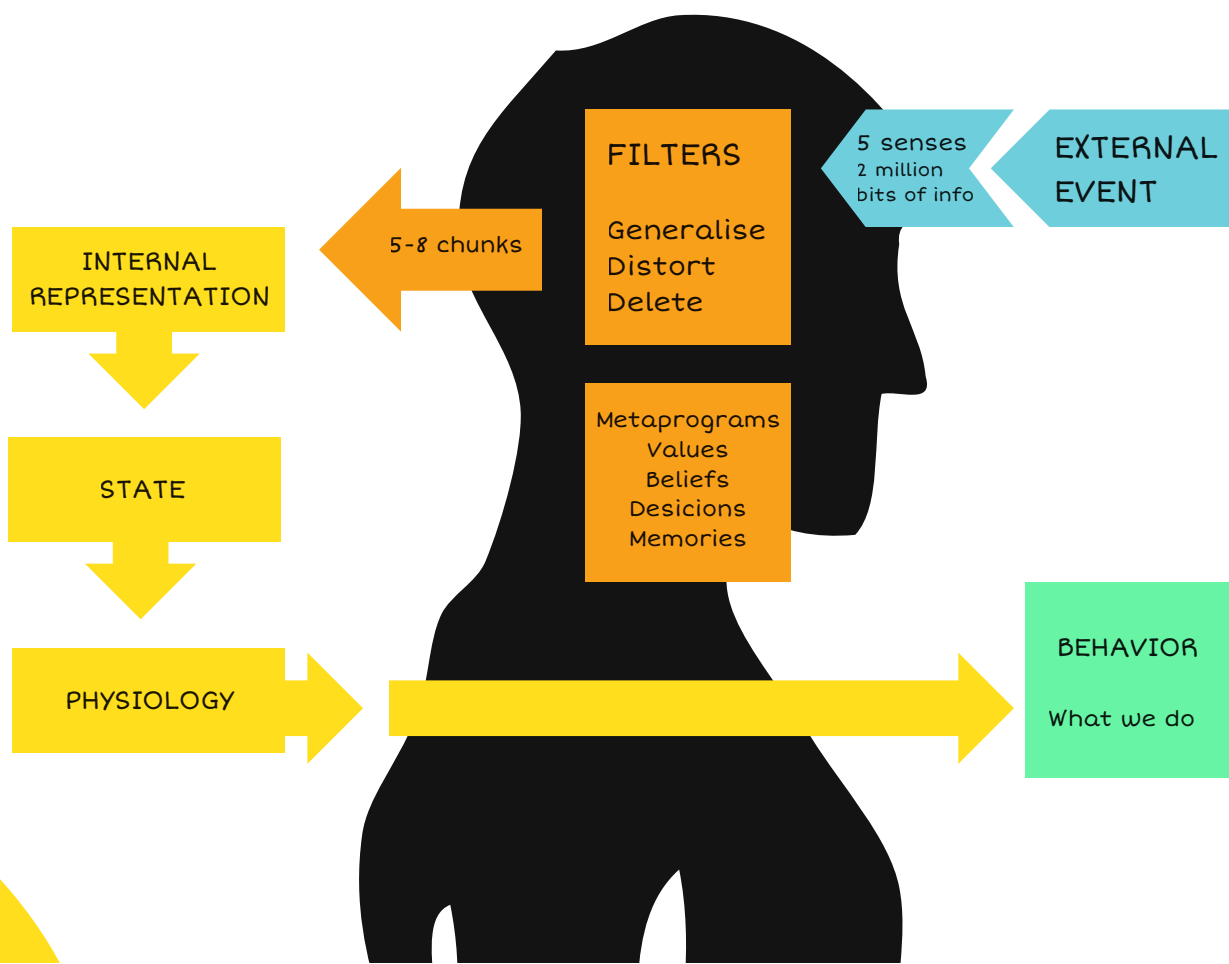
Deletion happens when consciously or subconsciously we delete part of the information. In our speech, it might look like skipping a noun or a verb.

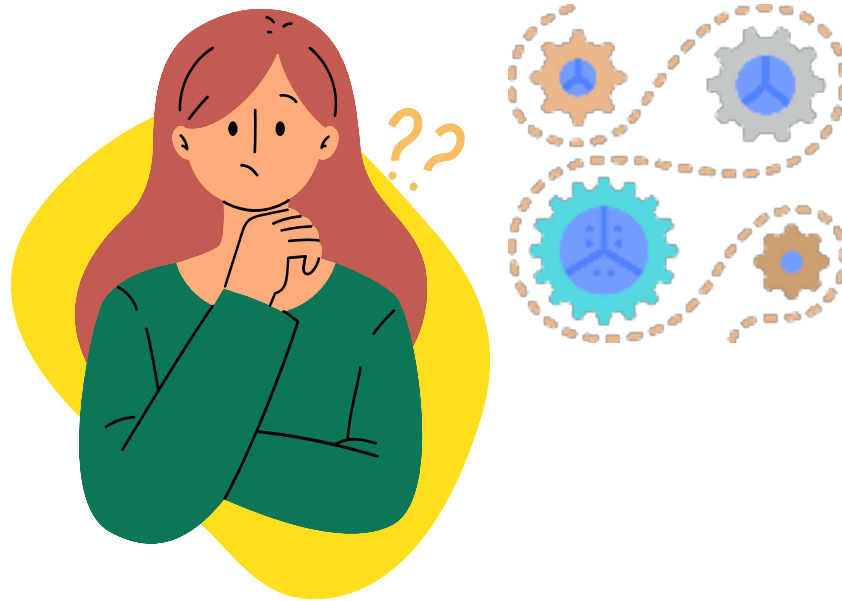
Examples for deletion:

- I am uncomfortable. (About what? All the time or in a specific moment?)
- They don't listen to me. (Who? When? All the time?)

To notice deletion, we invite you to listen to:

- What is not said?
- What is not acknowledged?
- What is not seen?





What happens after the filters?

When we receive information from the world outside, we filter it and it creates something in us. It evokes certain thoughts, emotions, and feelings. We are in a certain state.

The state I am in produces a specific behaviour. I use certain language, gestures, and grimaces, and act in a certain way. My behaviour creates the same process in the other person.

You can imagine this process as waves that are flowing from one person to another. Everything we do or say and everything we are creates **resonance**. And this is the essence of communication.

Everything counts!

The communication process is not linear. It includes us and everything around us. All the time.

Communication is not only about what do I say. It is also how am I saying that. To whom? When? Where? Are there other people around us? How am I dressed? What is my posture? What is the atmosphere? What are my feelings? What are the feelings of the other person? How are they dressed? Are we sitting or standing? How fast are we speaking? Etc. etc. etc.

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

As mentioned before, more than 70% of communication is happening without words.

What are the components of nonverbal communication?

1. Facial expressions. We read the emotion of the person if they are friendly or not. If they are open to connecting or not?
2. Gestures. What do we know from the gestures? Can you understand what the person means from the gestures? Is the person friendly? What is their mood?
3. Pitch of the voice, tone of the voice, pauses and melody of the voice. Body Language.
4. How much personal space is taken (Note: Check the chapter on Body Awareness.)
5. Eye gaze.
6. Touch.
7. Appearance.
8. Context. Where is the communication taking place?

Do you want to improve the way you communicate? The way you speak in front of people?

EXPERIMENT

We share with you this [book with exercises](#) that you can do alone or in a group. They are developed by actors and trainers who speak in front of huge groups of people.

Improving the way you communicate nonverbally will support you to better connect with people and boost your confidence.

Wayfinding

What do I communicate right now with my appearance?

What do I communicate at the moment with my body posture?

What do I communicate with the way I express myself?

How do I communicate trust? How do I know if I trust someone? Do I communicate trust?

Chapter 2: The four layers of communication

LEARNING BITES

The four-sides model is a communication model postulated in 1981 by German psychologist Friedemann Schulz von Thun. According to this model, every message has four layers. The four layers of the message are fact, self-disclosure, social relationship between sender and receiver, and wish or want (appeal).



Let's grab an example. A teacher is saying to a student: "I want to speak to your parents."

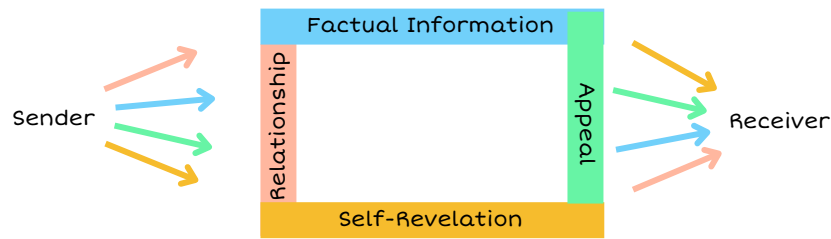
The **first** layer of this message is about the facts that are communicated. The fact is that the teacher wants to speak to the parents.

The **second** layer is about self-revelation. With each and every message we reveal ourselves. Here the teacher reveals their concern, intention and care. There are certain emotions communicated.

The **third** layer is about the relationship between the sender and the receiver. There are certain dynamics between the two. Here we also have a power dynamic between a teacher and a student. There are certain social roles that they act out of. The teacher will maybe not say the same sentence to the parents. We can understand how close the two people are, and what their connection is.

The **fourth** layer is about the appeal. What is the message that the teacher sends with those words? Maybe: "I am not satisfied with your performance" or "You need to work more".

Each layer reveals different pieces of information and it is useful to check what we, as youth workers and people, learn from each layer.



Here is some information about each layer:

- Factual information: facts, news, data, dates, and people mentioned in the message.
- Self-revelation: What does this message say about the sender, about their emotions and feelings, values and beliefs, thoughts and intentions? What do they reveal?
- Relationship: What is the connection between sender and receiver? What is allowed in this communication? From which social roles do the two people act? Which bigger systems do they represent? What is not allowed in this conversation? How close or formal is the conversation? How much or how little do those people know each other? What are the power dynamics?
- Appeal: What is that the sender really wants from the receiver? What are the intentions, advice, and requests in this message? What is actually said without being said? Does the sender manipulate the receiver?

EXPERIMENT

Listen to a conversation. Take one sentence and discover what kind of information is given in each of the layers. How much of this information is verbal and how much is nonverbal?

Advanced version: listen to a conversation. Are there sentences said only to reveal something about the sender? Are there sentences said to establish a connection? Is there a hidden request from the sender to the receiver?



A great example to discover the layers is when people gossip. Many times the function of gossip is to send information on the third level of the relationship. When you start a new job, you don't gossip with your colleagues, because you are not close enough. You don't know if to trust them or not. Later, you find yourself gossiping not because you exchange some important information, but to establish a connection. The real message is: "I trust you and you can trust me. We are friends."

EXPERIMENT



All the information and the exercises so far are there to support you to bring awareness to the process of communication. Being a good communicator can bring you a lot of benefits, especially when working with people.

We cannot help but to share this very [funny video](#) with you. It is a great example of communication and miscommunication. We recommend you to watch the video and reflect on how clear the way you communicate with others is.

EXPERIMENT

To be a good listener requires first of all being able to listen to yourself. To recognize your own beliefs, opinions, needs or fears.

Active listening is a skill like any other that can be practiced and trained. To build and strengthen the capacity for active listening, you can try out the following exercise:

In duets. Person A and person B. Person A has 5 minutes to express themselves. You can suggest a question that person A will answer in those 5 minutes. (such as: What is alive in you at the moment?).

Person B listens. They do not ask questions, nod, smile. Just listen, connect with themselves and with the other person.

At the end, person B summarise in one or two sentences what they have heard and what resonance was created by this information.

You can create your own variations of this exercise.



Wayfinding

Discuss the following questions with the whole group.

What did it feel like to share and to be listened to? Did you feel heard?

How did it feel to have what you shared reflected back at you?

What did it feel like to listen?
What was your emotional response while listening to your partner? Were you able to stay present with what the other person was sharing and also with your own internal reactions?

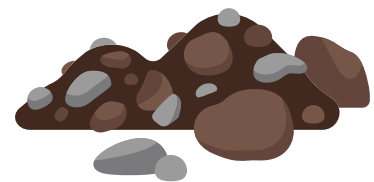
Chapter 3: Communication Styles

LEARNING BITES

Do you remember that in the Body Awareness chapter we had an exercise on the Four elements of nature? Better check it out, because we will use the metaphor of the elements to explain the four main communication styles.

Communication styles can give you a lot of information about the way somebody gives and receives information. They will support you in better connecting with the people and speaking “their language”. You will understand what kind of information is important for the person and which words will grab their attention.

We invite you to explore also your dominant communication styles and check how you can integrate into your speech and behaviour all the styles.



Style 1: Analyzer. Element: Earth.

For people with a dominant Analyzer style, what is important are the facts. When they speak, you will hear them use a lot of statistics, numbers, and descriptive language. Usually, their tone of voice is calm and they create an impression of being grounded and relaxed.

People with a dominant Analyzer style tend to analyze the situation and make rational decisions. They take one step at a time and calculate the risks of their actions.

If a person with a dominant Analyzer style would share a story about their vacation, they will speak a lot about what happened in facts and numbers.

Example: We went to Bari. We were there for 5 days. The weather was warm, around 30 degrees. We were four people, sharing an apartment....

Style 2: Supporter. Element: Water.



For the Supporters in the room, what is important is connection and emotions. They enjoy working in groups, connecting with people and ensuring peace in the group. When they speak, you will hear metaphors, emotions, feelings, and words that describe relationships and connections.

The way they speak is usually calm, soft, and gentle. Could be that they use more physical touch when speaking. They are very good at adapting to the style of the other person.

If a person with a dominant Supporter style would share a story about their vacation, they will speak a lot about what happened in terms of connections, teamwork, feelings and relationships.

Example: We went to Bari with friends. It was a very relaxing experience, we could spend a lot of time together. We enjoyed playing games on the beach. It was great meeting my friends again. We shared some old memories. It was like opening an old album...

Style 3: Controller. Element: Fire.



The word for this style is purpose. The people with a dominant controller style are task-oriented. You better let them know from the very beginning why they are doing what is requested from them. What is the purpose and what are the results that they will achieve?

Those people know how to pursue their goals. They listen to clear instructions. Tell them what are their benefits and skip the details.

They are straightforward communicators and their speech is usually energetic and strict.

If a person with a dominant Controller style would share a story about their vacation, they will speak a lot about what were the benefits, what are the results, what was achieved and which were the goals.

Example: We went to Bari because we wanted to swim. We wanted to have a good rest. Our goal was to visit at least 5 different beaches. We did this and even more...

Style 4: Promoter. Element: Air.



Promoters are all about creativity, expression and experience. They think out of the box and come up with crazy ideas and solutions. They are usually the loud ones, people who talk and share. When they speak, you will hear a lot about their own experience and point of view. They often jump from one topic to another.

They pay a lot of attention to the details, sensations, the subjective experience.

If a person with a dominant Promoter style would share a story about their vacation, they will speak a lot about the different moments of the experience. Maybe they will present them in a random way, sharing how they felt.

Example: We went to Bari and it was amazing! Such a unique place! I felt like in an amusement park, surrounded by all the palm trees, the music, the people... It was a great experience! I could connect with my inner child and write a lot in my diary...

EXPERIMENT

Exercise: In a group, ask one person to share about their dream job or dream vacation. Then ask the others to guess the two dominant styles of the person. Ask them to explain their guess.



WHY ARE THE COMMUNICATION STYLES IMPORTANT?

If you know your dominant communication style, you could be aware of what kind of information you communicate with others and how.

If you know the communication style of the others, you can **adapt your messages to their needs**, so that they can receive the information.

We change our styles depending on the context we communicate in. You can observe which is your dominant style in a specific environment. We challenge you to play with it.

If you notice that you are speaking from your promoter styles with the people you work with, for example, invite the element of Earth. Explore how this is transforming the energy in the room.

If you work with a group, guess which is the dominant style of the group. What does that say about the group? Can you bring balance using the exercises of the Body Awareness chapter? What element is missing in the group? Can you invite it into your behaviour?

Nonetheless, communication styles are important when you give instructions. Here is our advice on how to formulate your message to the group:

Here is an example:

This manual for educators will improve your work with people so that you can achieve better results in your work and reach more people in less time. What is unique about it is the various exercises that you can use in your own style. The suggested games will be great for building connected teams and enjoying time with your students. You can download the book online from our website.

- First, start with the controllers. Their attention span is short. Start with why you do what you do, what are the results that you are looking for and what are the concrete tasks.
- Then approach the promoters. Explain why is this unique and what kind of personal experience will bring to the people.
- For the Supporters, share how this experience relates to connection. Is it a group experience? Are they going to work with others?
- Close your message with the facts, the data: when, where and how.

Wayfinding

What is my own unique way of movement?

What is something that I
“know” from before, and can
stop me from learning
a new step?

How do I set my
boundaries?

How do I want others to see me? Do I communicate
it this way?

Wayfinding

How do I create a connection? What works for me?
What works for the other?

What information do I want to exchange?



One Minute Review:

If you are not a hermit, living alone in a cave, communication is an important part of your life. We communicate ourselves in the world: our ideas and dreams, our personalities, our needs, and our feelings. We communicate with our clothes, postures, voices, and words. Sometimes, we even communicate without being aware that communication is happening.

Raising awareness of the way we communicate supports us to maintain more authentic connections with others while taking care of our own needs and feelings.

Being aware of our filters of reality and presumptions supports us to discover new horizons and questioning what we think we know.



RESOURCES WE RECOMMEND FOR YOU TO CHECK OUT

If you are on your way to becoming a great communicator, we have some recommendations that will support you to bring awareness to the messages that you send and receive.



NLP or Neuro-Linguistic Programming

Neuro-linguistic programming is an approach to communication, created by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in California in the 1970s. This approach explores the connections between neurological processes, language and behaviours.



NVC or Nonviolent Communication

Nonviolent Communication is an approach to communication developed by the clinical psychologist Marshall Rosenberg in the 1970s.

It supports you to own your experience in language, connect with your feelings and needs and distinguish between needs and strategies. It is widely used in conflict resolution and therapy. It brings a lot of awareness of language.



Check out the book

[Language and the Pursuit of Happiness: A New Foundation for Designing Your Life, Your Relationships & Your Results](#) by Chalmers Brothers.

There is also a [TED Talk](#) you can watch on the topic of language as a creative force.



Pathway 4:

I am the

captain of

my ship



What is self-agency? How do we engage, influence and cooperate with each other?



Concept Map:

- Chapter I: Zones of influence, control and concern
- From Victim to Accountable: the path not taken
- Cooperation

NOTICE

What has been one of the best experiences of your life – a time when you felt most engaged, alive and enthused in what you are doing?

SELF-CHECK:

Using a scale of 1-5, 1 being very like me and 5 very unlike me, write down what resonates with you after reading these statements:

- I am navigating my own life, finding my way through difficult periods
- I am reaching my goals and making my dreams come true.
- I am living my life fully and with joy
- I enjoy my life, even if sometimes there are difficult moments

LEARNING BITES



“Life isn't happening to you, or for you. It's being created BY you.”

Tony Robbins, coach and influencer



Learning how to learn about myself.

We are writing this book as we acknowledge that we live in a time when many people experience mental health difficulties. Often we even normalise symptoms, such as low energy levels, headaches, lack of focus, feeling lonely etc. We give labels such as “anxiety and “depression” to our symptoms, and treat them with various pills that numb our ability to experience life.



Many times we treat our mental well-being as something outside of us that has issues or gets broken. We have pills for everything. But pills can only numb the symptoms.

What if the anxiety that you experience is a symptom of something else?

What if this anxiety tells you: “I am overstimulated. Give me a break.” or “I experience trauma. Give those emotions some space.”, or “Please, hear what I am saying.”

What if we speak less about diagnosis and more about health? Healthy lifestyles, healthy mindsets, healthy communities, healthy communication, healthy jobs.

This is a book for people who want to actively take care of their health and well-being.

By exercising, reading, reflecting, and working on yourself and with others, you also take ownership of your own health, mental and physical.

In this chapter, we will speak about acknowledging and ownership as the steps towards growth.

Chapter 1: Zones of influence, control and concern

LEARNING BITES


Let's first have a look at our place in the world outside!

Each person on Earth has an impact on the physical universe. We learn this between the ages of 3 and 5. We learn that if we put two pieces of lego together, we create a new entity that was not there before. We learn that if we drop a plate, it transforms into pieces of ceramics on the floor. We learn that our words and actions create the environment. We learn that if we cry, we receive attention or punishment. If we ask, we receive an answer.

It could happen that if we were told that we are not good or if we have received punishments for our actions, we start to perceive ourselves as small and powerless. This self-image can continue living with us in our adult lives.

As educators, one of the great things we can do is to empower young people to see and experience their impact. To remind them that they are not invisible or powerless. Because each person has the power to transform reality, create and also, to destroy.

A great example comes from the Latvian organisation "Adventure Spirit". What they did was to collect tools for renovating bikes and some old bikes. They invited young people to step by step learn how to renovate their bikes. In time, those young people started to gather and renovate bikes together. They even started donating bikes to the ones who didn't have their own. Step by step, many young people felt empowered to own a bike and move in this green way.



We have thousands of examples in the field of youth! Learning how to cook a meal, how to plant a herb, how to build a birdhouse or a bench... All those activities support us to be in the present moment and reconnect with our inner power.

The sense of inner power is directly connected to the physical universe we live in. As much as I do actions with a physical impact, the more I connect with my inner power.


Yet sometimes, we get stuck in the “attic” that we have discussed in the previous chapters. Instead of doing with our bodies, we get trapped in our thoughts. We get trapped in concepts or ideas that we cannot do much about. We feel powerless because we cannot impact climate change in general, the system of banks, or poverty in the world... in general.

But our impact is not “in general”. It is concrete and born in action. Maybe we cannot feed the population of the Earth, yet we can cook lunch for our communities. Maybe we cannot change the way the world produces food, yet we can plant our own garden. Maybe we cannot change how the economy works, but we can choose a more mindful way of living.

A little goes a long way...

If you work with people or if you want to empower yourself, we offer you a tool for reflection that can support you to discover what is your place of action. This tool comes from the book “The Logical Thinking Process” by William H. Dettmer.

Dettmer distinguishes between the things that we can control, the zone of our influence and the zone of our concerns. It is not that those zones really do exist, but they help our analytical brain distinguish between the different elements of the systems we operate in.



So, let's take an example!

Let's say I am really concerned with the topic of climate change. I watch all the documentaries and read the articles. I experience fears. Fear that awful natural disasters can happen and that where I live now may not be safe in a couple of years. Fear that the prices of food will skyrocket in the next few years. Fear of poverty... etc.

All of those thoughts belong to my **Zone of Concern**. In the Zone of Concern, I experience fears, worry about the future, question the systems that exist in the moment and practice coping skills. This is an important Zone because it gives space to my abstract thinking, I can create my own concepts and zoom out, exploring the issue from different perspectives. Yet, if I remain there for too long, I might get stuck in my thoughts. I might experience myself as powerless.

If you stay longer in your zone of concerns, you might experience thoughts like this:

"I cannot change the events... What can I do... The big corporations are the ones to blame... Let's hope for the best..."

Watch out! What behaviours do you observe here?



If I am stuck in my Zone of concern, I might develop behaviours such as:

- blaming (others, the circumstances, the system etc.)
- waiting and hoping (that something might magically change)
- excuses
- playing small

There is also another zone: the **Zone of Control**. This Zone is where everything I have a direct impact on is. It is my personal zone, similar to the kinesphere. It is about my own decisions, what I focus on and my time and energy. What is under my control at the moment? From “how do I create my schedule” to the way I breathe and my posture. How many times a day do I drink water, what food do I eat, with whom do I interact with, etc.



If I decide to focus my attention on my own Zone of Control, I can take ownership of how much of that big topic is up to me. In our example with the climate change, I can check if my way of living is sustainable and if I engage with people who share my values for sustainability and how I can change my routine to have a better impact on the world. I can reduce my plastic, eat more organic food or... plant a garden.

In the Zone of Control, I already connect with my power. Life is not happening to me, it is being created by me. I have the power to make decisions and transform my reality.

In our work with young people, we can often experience situations where it is difficult for the person to take ownership and realize their own power. We will come to that in the next chapter.

So far we have mentioned the Zone of Concern and the Zone of Control. There is a Zone that is between those two. It is smaller than the Concern and bigger than the Control. This is the Zone of Influence.

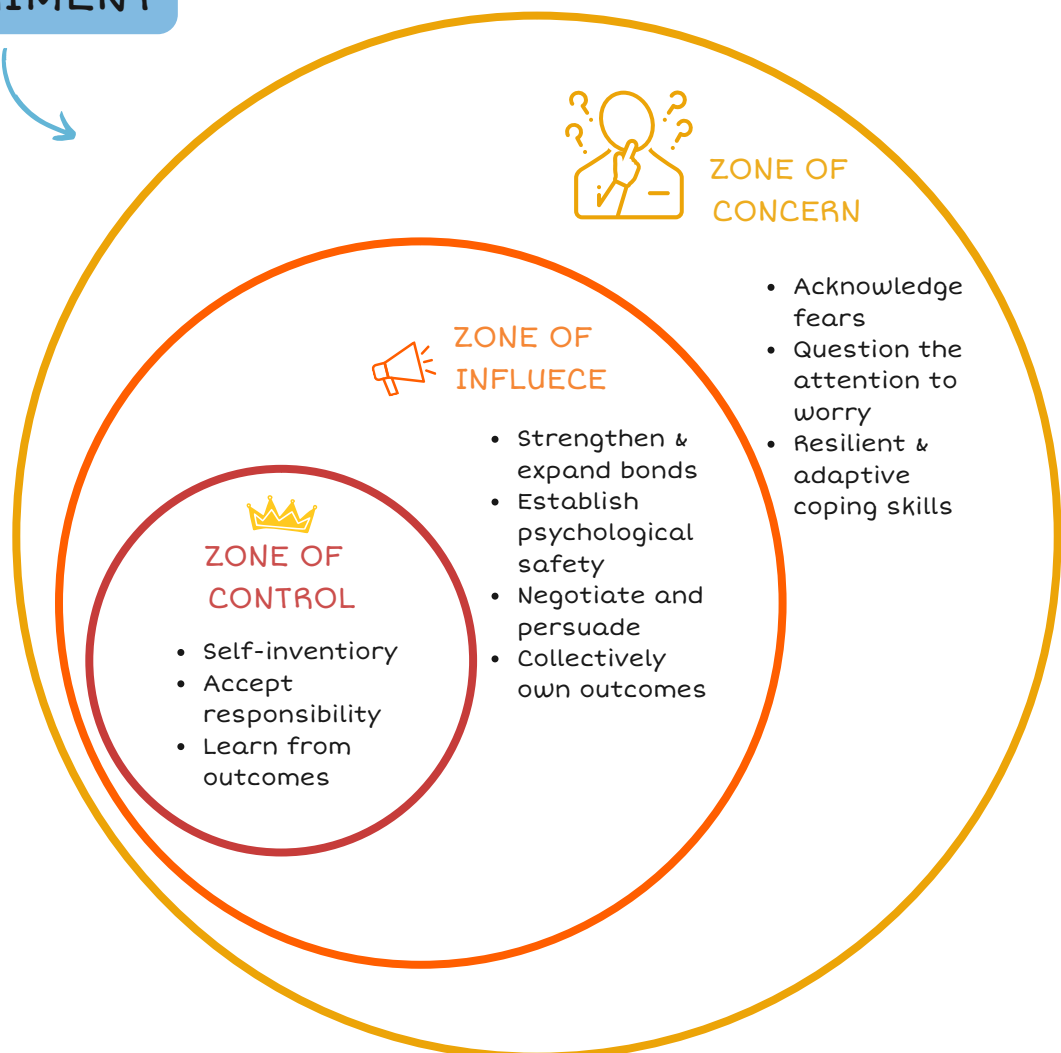
The **Zone of Influence** is about the impact that you can create on the world around you. Following the example of climate change, maybe I can speak with my friends or share materials on social media. Or maybe I can volunteer in an organisation that is working on the topic of climate change. I can create an impact in my neighbourhood, school or city. I cannot control the results, but I can set an example and motivate others to follow it.

As educators, we empower young people to expand their Zone of Influence. Instead of speaking about an issue or complaining, we empower them to focus on what their impact can be and how to make a bigger impact.

A great example is Greta Thunberg. She has expanded her Zone of Influence by building a strong presence on social media with many people following her. At the moment she has followers not only from her neighborhood or city but from all over the world.

There are hundreds of great examples of people, brands and campaigns that create a big impact by expanding their zone of influence and reaching more people. Material resources could also expand the influence one has. Finding funding for a campaign or starting a business are examples of actions that lead to expansion.

EXPERIMENT



Wayfinding

What are your concerns?

How do you address them in your Zone of Control?

How big is your Zone of Influence? How many people can you reach today?

What actions with physical impact can you do to come closer to your goals?

As an educator, how can you support young people to switch from Zone of Concern to Zone of Control?

As an educator, how can you empower young people to expand their own zones of influence?

Chapter 2: From Victim to Accountable: the path not taken

LEARNING BITES

As educators, youth workers and coaches, it is sometimes very difficult for us to support people to switch from blaming and excuses to empowerment. And the reasons for that are deep in the way our brain works, our sensitivity, the way we see the world, our belief systems etc.

In this chapter, we invite you on a journey to discover the complex ways in which we think, see the world and position ourselves inside of it.



The German philosopher Martin Heidegger came up with a great metaphor that we will use here. Imagine you are using a hammer to drive a nail into a wall.

When I drive a nail in the wall, in the very process of doing it, I am so focused on the nail that the hammer goes out of my scope. I don't think about it and even more, I don't even look at it anymore. It becomes a part of the background.

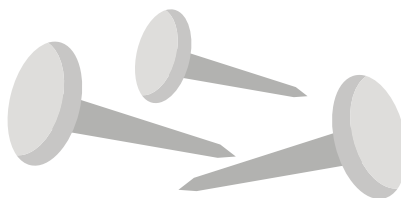


In our daily lives, often we focus on “nails” – situations, people, events, actions, and thoughts. We zoom in on them and by doing so, the tools that we approach them with are moving to the back of our awareness.

Those tools, or “the hammer” are our beliefs, presumptions and the sum of our past knowledge and experience, through which we see the world.

Very often the nail is in the wall and our operation is successful. Great! We don’t need to think about the hammer, because the result is present and we have achieved our goal!

What we will explore in this chapter are all the situations when the result is not there.



Let's take an example!



Ana is 22 years old. She went to volunteer abroad for a year. After two months in the new place, she felt lonely. She couldn't make friends. In the beginning, she was finding excuses. Maybe the weather today is not good to go outside, maybe it takes more time, maybe I just need more time for myself those days

After two more months, she started getting angry. She went into the "blaming" mode. "It is all because of the culture of this country... people are so cold! And this city has no social life whatsoever!", Ana was telling herself. Once she got tired of blaming, complaining and finding excuses, she decided to wait and hope that things will change: "When the universe decides so, I will have friends", Ana concluded.

In the case of Ana, the nail is not on the wall (desired result is not there), yet Ana is so focused on the nail itself, she is not seeing the hammer in her hand. The hammer is all the automatic thoughts and behaviours that she uses to achieve her goal.

Automatic thoughts and behaviours are those that we have accepted as reality, as "truth" or what is "normal". They have become a natural part of our life and the way we see reality. In many cases, they work perfectly... until they don't. But because we have been living with them for so long, it is difficult to actually see them.

Using the metaphor, we have been holding the hammer for so long that even if it is now broken, we don't even think to take a look at it. It has become an extension of our hand.

In the same way, Ana is coming to this new context with all her automatic behaviours that might have been working in her country, but are not working here. She is doing the same things that brought her many friends to her country, but they are not working in the new place.

Often when people face a situation like this, they go through the phases of excuses, blaming, waiting and hoping. This we call the "victim state". When I am in the victim state, I am not connected with my inner power. I blame the world outside for how I experience it. Or I am making excuses. Or I am waiting and hoping that the world outside will bring me change, while I do more of the same. I am living as a victim of the circumstances.

To go from "Victim state" to "Accountable state", we use our favourite tool - The Victim/Accountable chart.



Let's say Ana is volunteering in your organisation and you work with her. What can you do to support her to reconnect with her power?

If you are running out of ideas, you can use the V/A Chart that will give structure to your work, no matter if it is a mentoring session, coaching or a friendly conversation.

1. The first step towards an accountable state is to **acknowledge reality** or as we also call it, a reality check. Often when people get stuck in the victim state, they start living in the stories that they are telling themselves. Support them to connect with the physical universe.



Here are some ways to do that:

- Ask them questions to clarify the facts:
How long do you live abroad, Ana? How many friends do you have at the moment? How often do you go out?
- Ask them to position themselves on a scale from 1 to 10:
From 1 to 10, how much do you enjoy your social life at the moment, Ana?
- Ask them to clarify their needs that are met and their needs that are not met. (Met: relaxation, connection to myself. Not met: connection to others, support, physical touch)

At the bottom of this chapter, we give you a couple of powerful exercises that you can do for the reality check.

2. The second step, after acknowledging reality, is to invite the person to **accept ownership**. Invite them to take a look at their Zone of Control. What is up to them?

Here it is important to understand that taking ownership of a situation is also applicable in situations where something bad has happened to us or we have experienced pain. In this step, we accept that no matter what is happening and if we like it or not, it is part of our path and we cannot delete it or avoid it. Even if it is "not fair", it is reality and taking ownership is seeing the situation as it is and accepting that it is my situation.

In the case of Ana, this phase might sound as: "I am facing difficulties to find new friends and I don't know how to approach it." This statement is different from blaming others, waiting and hoping.

3. Step 3 is to **find solutions**. At least 7, we say. Why is that?

Usually, our brains play safe. They come with the most familiar solution. Yes, and if I do what I was doing before, the chances are that I will get what I was getting before. To avoid automatic thoughts and behaviours, we invite the person to come up with more solutions. In this way, they have a choice.

If you only have one solution, how much choice do you have? If you slip to the one solution that is closest to your past, how much innovation do you bring?

If you work with groups, invite them to brainstorm solutions together. As many as possible. What is the craziest solution you can come up with? What is the one that you would never do?



4. Step 4 - **implementing the solutions**. Not necessarily all. Invite the people you are working with to choose solutions from the list and implement them. This doesn't mean planning - it means real action!

Invite them to take time for reflection afterwards. What gave good results? What was bringing more of the same as before? What was challenging? What else can I do?

The V/A Chart is not a one-way street. Sometimes people are going backwards or fall again and again in automatic behaviours. This is part of the human process. Sometimes, moving on the chart we work on feelings such as grief, and sadness, and we touch traumas. We invite you to be patient and trust the method behind the chart.

Remember the metaphor with the hammer? Our role as educators is to support the people we work with to discover the beliefs and behaviours that limit their growth.

It is not about finding a new friend for Ana. It is about supporting Ana to discover the behaviours that are standing on her way.

Sometimes people find it very difficult to switch to accountability, because this means accepting that their favourite strategies toward the goals are not working anymore. In these situations, we simply ask: "Do you want to be right, or do you want to be successful?"

Working with the chart many times mean to claim myself a beginner and accept that what I was doing so far is not working. I need a new strategy. This could be quite painful in situations where the person has invested a lot in the previous behaviour.

Let's have an example:

Ivo has been studying for 5 years to become a lawyer.

He invested many hours of his life in this, and a lot of money. It is time for him to find a job and he is just finding reasons to not accept the offers.

Deep down, he knows that he doesn't want to work as a lawyer and that law makes him deeply unhappy.

He wants to travel and volunteer abroad. Yet, it is a painful process for him to face this desire, because of the investments he had made. He might find himself stuck in this situation for years.

We ask him:

"Do you want to be right, or do you want to be happy?"

If he wants to go for what makes him happy, it also means to admit that he was investing in something that doesn't make him happy. Maybe he faces all kinds of inner judgements.

Then we would ask:

"What would you call yourself if you quit this job?"

This question gives him space to acknowledge the judgments that he has. A process like this might also include mourning. Mourning the years that he was doing what he didn't want to do, for example.

EXPERIMENT

We offer you three exercises that will support you to position yourself in a situation, exploring your place and which elements play a role in the situation.

Aim of the exercise: Acknowledge reality

You can do this exercise alone or in a group of people.

Materials that you need: paper (A4 or bigger), materials to write and draw

Time: 20 - 40 minutes

1. Pick a situation in your life, where you feel lack of movement.

Take a piece of paper, where you will re-create the situation.

The first step is to position yourself on the paper. You can draw, create a symbol or simply write your name. Let your intuition guide you in choosing a place on the paper. There is no right or wrong choice.

One by one, start positioning on the paper the elements of the situation (people, places, events)?

2. Now you have your visual map or reality. It is time to connect the dots. We invite you to use different colours and shapes to connect the different elements in the situation. Use your intuition, rather than logical brain.

You can connect dots that doesn't seem to have connections. For example, I feel that I want to connect my mother with my coaching course. I don't know why, but I do that. Later I will reflect.

You can use different or similar lines and colours to create connection. You can add symbols and images.

3. Moment for reflection. Look at your map. What do you notice? To which areas of the situation do you give the most time? To which you give the most energy? Which are your priorities on the map? What looks different than you have imagined?

We invite you to acknowledge the place that you are REALLY taking in a system and what are the rights and the responsibilities that are coming with your position.

Choose a system to work with. Could be the system of your family, friends, job or business.

Take a piece of paper and position yourself on it (draw, symbol or a name). After that position on the paper all other elements of the system.

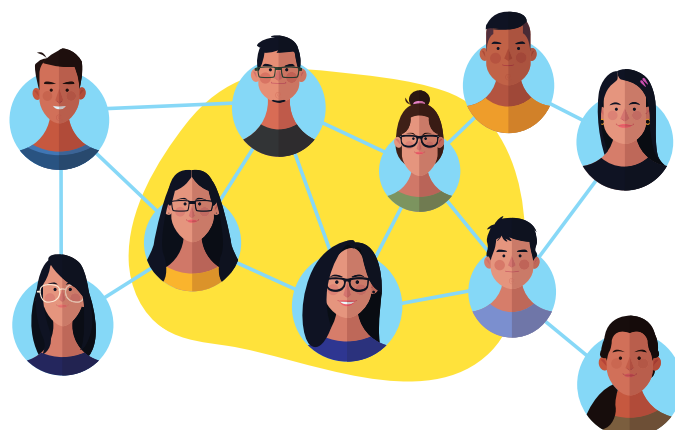
For example: If I decide to take the system of my job, then I position myself, the members of the team that work with me, my manager, the manager of my manager, the coordinator, the founder of the company, the CEO, etc.

Position higher than you are your managers and lower the people that you manage. Reflect on who are the people who came first in this system? Who stayed longest?

Check with yourself if the position that you take on the map reflects the way you behave in the system.

Many times we assume places are different than the ones we take. An employee feels smarter than their manager, so they act like they are the manager in the team. A child takes care of their family, because it feels more mature than its parents.

It is important to acknowledge the real place that you take. If you see that the place that you take and what you are doing are not matching, it is time to reflect on where this difference comes from.



In the previous exercise we are exploring the concept of place. We can also do a reality check from the perspective of time.

Choose one topic that is important for you and you want to work on. It can be your career, dream, project, house, education etc.

On a piece of paper draw a line. The left end of the line is 0 and the right is 10.

Under 10 write how this project, dream or an idea will look like when it is completed.

For example: My goal is to complete my BA's degree in chemistry. 10 = I have a diploma.

Under 0 write your starting point, when this dream, goal or idea was not even born.

For example: I was still in 7th grade and I had a dream to specialise in chemistry.

Now make a dot on the line that represents the place that you take now. Where are you now on the line?

Example: I am at 4. I was accepted to study chemistry and now I will study and take all my exams.

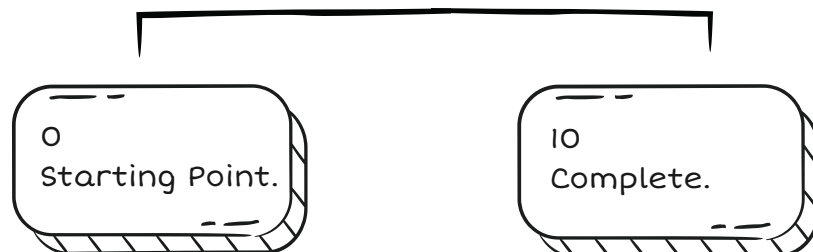
Take a moment to reflect.

Where do you stand at the moment?

What learnings and transformations have you been through on your way here?

What are the most important moments of this journey?

Is there something that you would like to correct?



Simple reality-check exercises will support you to orient yourself in time and space, check the facts and take action in the direction that you choose.

Wayfinding

What will support me to connect with their inner power?

What will support me to connect with the physical universe?

What do I need to let go of, in order to take the next step?

What beliefs and behaviours are standing on my way?

Chapter 3: Cooperation

LEARNING BITES

So far we have been exploring how to connect with the inner power ourselves. In this chapter, let's have a look at how to do it with others!

Have you experienced situations when you collaborate with other people and everything is running so smoothly? You are just enjoying amazing flow, having fun and being productive!

If you have experienced this, you know how amazing it is! It brings trust, connection and joy to the team! The quality of the performance is better! People have more fun, they are willing to exchange more information and be more present.

The question is: How to get there?

If so far we have discovered aspects of a growth mindset as individuals, can you imagine developing a growth mindset as a group?

This process requires teamwork and the ability to hold the space for each other's growth process. Here are some points you can work with:



- **Listening.**

In the team you work with, how do you listen to each other? How much time is dedicated to sharing needs, feelings, expectations etc?

- **Safety.**

To which extent do people in the team feel safe to experiment, share their thoughts, express their worldview, and stand their position?

- **Order.**

What is the arrangement of your team? Is there a hierarchy? Is it clear who is the boss? Is it clear who is responsible? Are the working principles clear (such as working hours, roles, means of communication etc?)

- **Goals.**

Do you have a common goal as a team? And common means that it is shared by all the people in the team. (A great example of teams with a common goal is value-driven start-ups.)

- **Completion.**

Who or what is easily forgotten in the team? Who or what is excluded? What needs to be there for the team to be complete?

- **Origin.**

What reason connected us on the first place? To what did we say YES as a team?



For many teams and individuals, the challenge is to switch from competition to cooperation. To set common goals and arrange a plan that works for all.

One tool that we find just great when it comes to working in teams, is the **Scale of Cooperation**. The scale is developed by a team of trainers and educators who have been studying groups for many years. They have found that some behaviours create more cooperation than others.

Here we provide a brief overview of the Scale. If you want to find out more, there is a whole book about it and a lot of materials on the website: <https://scaleofcooperation.com/>.

The scale is divided into three zones, as you can see from the picture below.



The first zone is the zone of **Struggling**. Here the team is not experiencing flow and cooperation. The people in the team experience themselves as individuals and there is no sense of belonging to the group. Symptoms of this stage could be fights, conflicts of needs, opinions between people, criticism, and judgement.

If you find your team at this stage, we recommend that you facilitate a conversation. Check with the people involved what are their goals. Why are they part of the team? What is their motivation? Set common goals and plan how to achieve them together.

Create space for everything that is there to be expressed. Do not try to keep away conflict. Let conflict situations be expressed and ask questions to understand what is beyond the visible. **What is this conflict really about?**



The second zone is zone of **Transition**. Here you can find behaviours such as:

- Talking about...

People are talking about the issues, but not engaging to solve them. They are in the Zone of Concern and do not take ownership yet.

- On your own...

People behave as if they are on their own. They do not ask for support from the other members and do not offer their help. They do not create time for discussion and working together.

- Talking to...

People start to talk with each other and figure out ways to communicate their needs, boundaries, ideas and actions.

The third zone of the scale is the zone of **Cooperation**. Here people learn how to give each other feedback, discuss issues, distribute tasks, work together, and ideally achieve a flow in the team.

Cooperation is the art to move together, while each person is connected to their inner power. And sometimes it requires a lot of inner work and sharing. Yet, it is worth it! Because when we grow together, we grow way more resilient and strong!



EXPERIMENT

Take a look at the scale.
Where would you position the groups you are working with?
And the teams you are working in?

Wayfinding

How much are you accountable for your actions?

How much do you allow yourself to experiment?

How do you deal with failure?

Can you claim yourself
as a beginner in
something?

Do you want to
cooperate or to
be right?

How do you communicate your needs?

Do you go to people pleasing when you face a conflict situation?

Do you tend to make yourself small?

Do you tend to hide behind others?

How much are you available to listen to what other people want to say?

How much are you willing to share your feelings and needs?

How do you use this scale in your daily work?

One Minute Review:

In this Pathway we have been exploring how to connect with our inner power and be the captains of our own ships.

We have explored the three Zones - concern, control and influence.

We have explored the Victim/Accountable chart and how to take ownership of a situation.

We have explored cooperation.





**Pathway 5:
Finding
What
Moves Me
Forward**



What are my sources of motivation? How can I motivate myself and others? How can I use dreaming to motivate me?



Concept Map:

- Chapter 1: Sources of motivation
- Connecting with the need
- Hiraya Manawari - "May All Your Dreams Come True"

NOTICE

Think of a moment when you felt very motivated. What factors helped you feel motivated?

What or who made you stay motivated?

Think of a moment when you felt less motivated. What factors contributed to this?

How did you shift your motivation at that moment?

USING A SCALE OF 1-5, 1 BEING, VERY LIKE ME AND 5 VERY UNLIKE ME, WRITE DOWN WHAT RESONATES WITH YOU AFTER READING EACH STATEMENT.

- I have dreams.
- I have goals.
- I am very driven towards my dreams and goals.
- I know how to motivate myself.
- I know how to motivate others.

Chapter 1: Sources of Motivation

LEARNING BITES

What comes to mind when you read the word motivation?

In the previous chapter we have been connecting to the spark of our inner power. In this chapter we are going to practice how to turn this spark into a fire. Fire that can shoot us to the stars...

Our motivation is what brings us forward. What inspires us to move, even when we find ourselves in a difficult situation.

Think of a plane. The motivation is the engine. It has the power to lift tones of weight in the air. It has the power to push it through winds, storms and thunders.

The same goes for our motivation.

What keeps you motivated?



here are two types of motivation.

- Motivation that comes from the outside. Somebody else is motivating us to do something.
- Motivation that comes from the inside. We are motivated because it is important for us. Because it is part of our life path.

Very often in schools, educators are trying to motivate the students (first type of motivation - from the outside). They promise rewards, good grades, school trips and approval, in exchange of something.

This motivation can work, for a while. Yet, how sustainable is to do something, because somebody else want me to?

As youth workers and trainers, we know that **people learn, when learning is important for them.**

If you want to be a pilot, and if this is what you truly want, you will find your ways to learn as much as you can about it, right? You don't need a reward. Or good grades. Because your dream is the most important reason for you to learn.

Our goal as educators is to support people connect with their inner sources of motivation!

- Why is this important to you?
- How is this part of your own process?
- Is this connected to your own values?
- How will this knowledge bring you closer to your dreams?

The best motivational speakers are not the ones who explain and pursue. **They are the ones who connect! Connect people with their own sources.**

Sometimes people lack motivation. This is not because they lack dreams or goals. Very often it is because they have lost faith in themselves. They have lost faith that their dreams can come true.

In this case, our role as educators is to empower them.



EXPERIMENT

We invite you to mentally position yourself behind the student. You are there to support them discover their own path, not show the direction.

Write down how you feel about this position. What actions you can take? In which ways you can empower the learner without interfering with their process?

Wayfinding

How does this perspective resonate in you?

What are your own sources of motivation?

What are the dreams and ideas that drive you forward?

How can you facilitate a context, where people can connect with their own sources?

Chapter 2:

Connecting with the need

EXPERIMENT

Write down on a piece of paper one of your goals or dreams.



LEARNING BITES

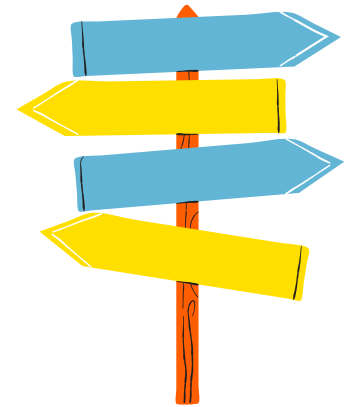
In the previous chapter, we were speaking about the inner sources of motivation. What are those sources, you might ask?

Since motivation often drives us to walk to a point in the future, we might be tempted to think that the sources are also in the future. That the sources are our dreams or the images of what we can achieve and accomplish

The sources are inside of us. A dream, no matter how beautiful it is, is always a strategy to fulfil a need. A need that is important to us.



Let's take an example. Lora is born in Sofia, Bulgaria. Her dream is to travel all over the world and discover different countries. What do you think are the sources of her motivation?



The first step is to ask Lora what does that dream mean to her? What will be accomplished if the dream come true? How did this dream form in time?

"I am dreaming about that since I was a little girl. I was reading the Wolli magazines and imagined all these different places, all around the world. The spices, the food, the streets, the clothes of the people... I knew I want to be a traveller.", is Lora sharing.

In this case, could be that Lora's dream is meeting her needs for expansion and growth. Those needs are inside of her already. Somehow, in time, they became important. And she invented dreams that can lead to fulfilling those needs.

Once we recognise the need that drives our dreams and behaviours, we can explore how this need lives in us. What other strategies are there to meet the need?

Maybe we will discover that Lora loves to study and expand her knowledge. She often explores new brands and loves to read stories about how small businesses develop.

In this example, you can see that the driving needs for expansion and growth are appearing in all kinds of ways in Lora's life. They are who she is. Who she becomes.

For other people, the driving needs might be different, such as health, love, attention, connection, expression and others. Once a need becomes important for us, it starts living its own life. We create a variety of different strategies to meet our baby needs. Most of the time, without even being aware.

If you would like to check a list with human needs, we recommend the [CNVC list here](#).

EXPERIMENT

Come back to the dream that you wrote in the beginning of the chapter.

- What does that dream mean to you?
- How did it form in time?
- When did you start dreaming about that?
- What basic human needs will be met if this dream come true?
- How are those needs important to you?

LEARNING BITES

You might ask, how does a need become important? How does a need become a source of our motivation?

We have no answer to that question. Sometimes it has to do with who we are, where we come from, our family systems, our pains and the way we are in life.

Maybe Lora was living in a family where everything, every day was the same. Maybe she was bored of being in the same place every day, so her need for growth and expansion became important.

Maybe if Lora would be living in a family that travels all the time, her need for stability would be stronger. Maybe then Lora would have different life and dreams.

We, people, have different lives and experiences. We have different important needs. And sometimes those needs are changing. Imagine a group of 20 young people. They all have different needs and different reasons to study and develop.

The question is how can you, as an educator, support them connect with their own needs and move with integrity? How could you facilitate learning, where people are aware that they are doing it for themselves? How can you encourage them to believe in themselves and keep walking?

Wayfinding

We invite you to reflect on your own motivation.

What are the needs that are so strong and important, that they drive you forward?

Why are those needs so important? When did they become important?

Are those needs important for other members of your family and local community?

In which ways do you meet those needs?

Chapter 3: Hiraya Manawari

“May All Your Dreams Come True”

“Hiraya Manawari” is an ancient Tagalog saying that means “May all your dreams and wishes come true.”

The Ancient Nahuatl people believed that events in our awake states come directly from our dream state, and therefore, we can learn how to recreate and change the direction our life takes through our dreams.

When you go to sleep, according to Nahualism, you form a new, unique energy body. With the right techniques, you can reach a state called temixoch, or “blossom dream” – a lucid dream state that you can completely control.

Dreaming is central to indigenous practices and also in our modern times. Dreaming allows for creativity, innovation and flow. As Albert Einstein said:

“Imagination is more important than knowledge,”

When there is nothing to spark aspirations and dreams, then negativity peaks. Goals without a dream are like arrows without a target. Dreams centre and guide us. They support us in making decisions that are relevant for the future.



EXPERIMENT

Vishen Lakhiani, the founder and CEO of Mindvalley, invites us to address 3 simple questions about our life:

1. What experiences do I want to have and create in my life?

1. What ways do I want to grow, learn, and express myself?

1. How do I want to contribute to the world?

By exploring your dreams and mapping out your big vision, you set an anchor for your energy. It propels you in the direction of where you want to be.

So how do we start dreaming and envisioning?

EXPERIMENT

We invite you to take some time for daydreaming today. What works best for you?

- Visualization
- Creating a vision board
- Writing and journaling
- Sharing with a friend
- _____
- _____

WOOP

We invite you to fill in the model. More guiding questions you can find below.

The WOOP technique is science-backed way of making your ideas and aspirations a reality. When you WOOP, you think about your ultimate goal, the best possible outcome, the obstacle(s) that may stand in the way and to plan for getting around those roadblocks.

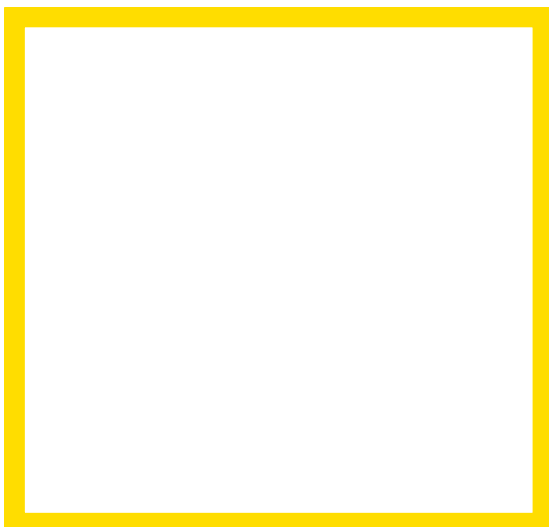
W: What is it that you wish to achieve?



O: What is the best possible outcome?



O: What personal obstacles stand in your way?

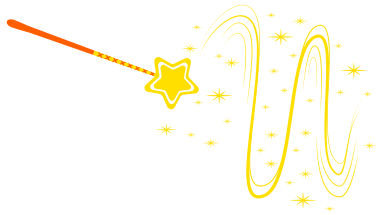


P: What is your plan for the possible obstacles?



1. WISH

- What is it that you wish to achieve?
- What is it that you aspire to?
- What do you want to create in your life?
- What do you want to create today/this week/this month/in the next 90 days? (set your own timeframe)



“Wishes are thoughts vibrant with life and eager for action.”

- Mary Martin

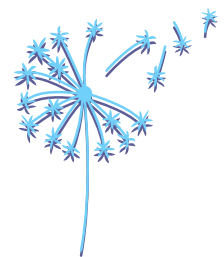


Spend the time to dive deep into your wish. Look at your various life areas. Be specific. Think of something that feels exciting, challenging and feasible. Try to name this wish in 3-6 words.

2. OUTCOME

Now that you have written down your wish in 3-6 words (ex: to read 40 books by December), the next process is to identify and imagine the best possible outcome.

- What will be the result of accomplishing your wish?
- What is the best possible outcome?
- How do you “see” success in this wish?
- How do you “hear” success on this wish?
- How will you “feel” when you succeed in this wish?
- How will you reward yourself with this success?



“Imagine the relevant events and experiences as vividly as possible. Let your mind go. Don’t hesitate to give your thoughts and images free rein. Take your time.”

—Gabriele Oettingen



3. OBSTACLES

Write down or think about several obstacles in the way of you completing your goal.

- What personal obstacles stand in your way?
- What's standing in the way between you and your goals?

You can also identify the main obstacles within yourself (emotions, habits, patterns, mindsets) that can stand in the way of you fulfilling your wish.

Identify no more than two obstacles that you know from experience you are most likely to come up against.

Visualize yourself experiencing these obstacles, including the emotions that will arise. Envision them as fully as you did with your outcomes. Get very specific, the more details, the better.



4. PLANNING

Planning for obstacles involves creating an “If ... then...” strategy to face whatever event may come your way.

Planning for the obstacles means thinking of what you can do to help you get through your challenges. Psychologist, [Peter Gollwitzer](#), who introduced implementation intentions, identified this preloading as anticipating how to react to certain situations. His research shows that when advanced mental commitments are made -“ if X happens then I will do Y” people are more likely to act in support of their goals than those who did not do any mental planning.

In planning for obstacles, think of your answers to the following question:

- What effective action or thought can you use to surmount the possible obstacles that might come your way?

LEARNING BITES

The first three parts of the process are all about mental contrasting. Mental contrasting is an approach to positive thinking that combines both fantasy and reality.

Mental contrasting is the coupling of wishful thinking with an elaboration of the current reality. Why this works because positive fantasies lower your blood pressure and make you feel less energized and motivated. You need the jolting of the obstacles to get you energized and propelled into action.



“Positive thinking fools our minds into perceiving that we’ve already attained our goal, slackening our readiness to pursue it.”
— Gabriele Oettingen

WOOP is an excellent method that you can apply in work, study, attending to challenges, and changing habits. Try this technique out in setting your goals, creating habits, or in decision-making and see how it can give you transformative results.

The **WOOP** technique is designed by Gabriele Oettingen, author of the book [Rethinking Positive Thinking](#).

Wayfinding

How can I apply the WOOP technique in my work with people?

How can I apply daydreaming activities in my work with people?

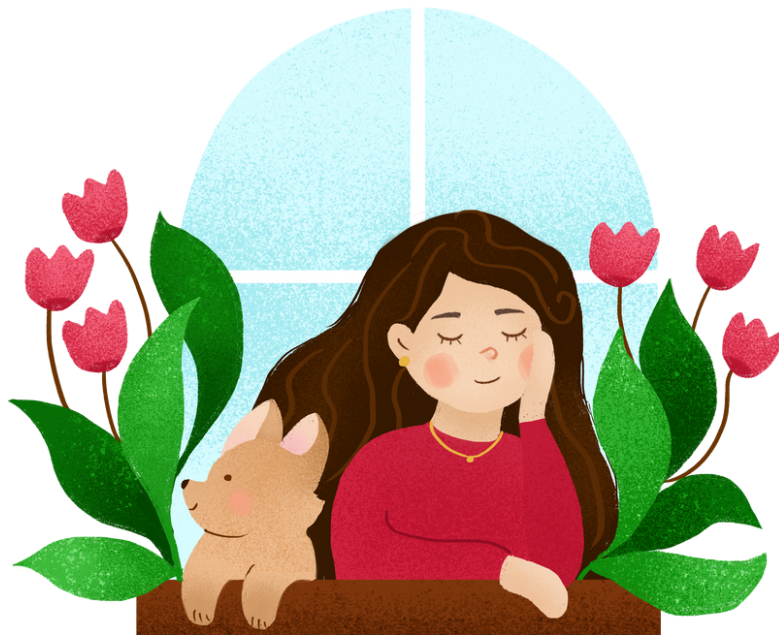
How to support young people to connect with their dreams?

What does daydreaming mean to me?

One Minute Review:

In this Pathway we have explored motivation and how is it important when creating a learning environment. We were discovering the needs in stories and guessing how needs are living their own life.

In the end, we enjoyed daydreaming and WOOP-ing.





**Pathway 6:
Resilience:
What Keeps
Me Standing
(Even Against
the Wind)**



What is resilience for you? What supports you to navigate through difficult situations?

Concept Map:

- Chapter 1: Self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem
- Post-traumatic growth
- Personal and Collective resilience

NOTICE

- How do you face difficult situations?
- What are the elements of your support system?
- Which practices and habits support you to be healthy in difficult situations?



USING A SCALE OF 1-5, 1 BEING, VERY LIKE ME AND 5 VERY UNLIKE ME<, WRITE DOWN WHAT RESONATES WITH YOU AFTER READING EACH STATEMENT.

I am having a system of habits and a mindset that is flexible and strong in times of crisis.

I am having a support system to hold me in times of crisis.

I have a set of habits that keeps me healthy in times of crisis.

I am open for the transformation that comes after a crisis.

I am willing to let go of what no longer serves me.

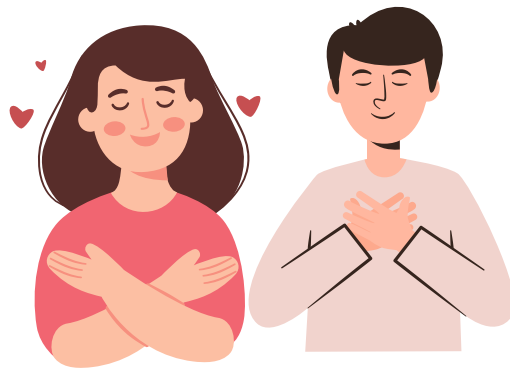
Chapter 1: Self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem

“

“Once we believe in ourselves, we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight, or any experience that reveals the human spirit.”

E.E. Cummings

”



In the previous pathways, we talked about body, emotional and communication awareness. We were exploring the path towards taking ownership and expanding one's zone of influence. After that, we were igniting the spark of motivation, while connecting with our individual and group needs and dreaming.

We went through practices and exercises that leads us towards self-exploration and discovery.

In nature, even the strongest trees and plants eventually face storms. Storms are beautiful opportunities for transformation. Opportunities to let go of what is no longer serving our lives. Opportunities to reinvent ourselves.

The question is: how to let the storm passes without breaking us? How to be both strong and flexible? How to adjust to new environments without losing connection with our core?

As youth workers, we are honoured to witness some of the most stormy periods in human life. We work with people who are taking the first steps towards their destinations.

Transitioning from childhood to adulthood is a beautiful and long process. We all know. We have all been there, asking thousands of questions:

- Who am I?
- What do I want?
- What to do?
- Where do I want to be?
- What is allowed?
- Is the world a safe place?



The world is not designed to be a safe place. There is no person in the entire world who can guarantee our safety. And this is sometimes a shocking realisation.

It would be so great if we could live our life healthy, happy and loving all the time. But it is not the case. We get sick sometimes. We fall in love and then out of love. We have our hearts broken. Multiple times. And we see that some people have more than others. Some people are happier than others. Some people die and others come to life. Sometimes we lose our jobs or fail our dreams. Sometimes we are losing friends and loved ones.

One of the main topics in the transition towards adulthood is self-care. If lucky, for years our parents were providing home and food for us. They were managing the finances, and the administration and they were there to give advice.

Suddenly we find ourselves on our own. Not knowing even who we are in the picture of the big world.

In this chapter, we are going to explore how to support ourselves and young people on the way to building resilience.

LEARNING BITES

How resilient we are is how adaptable we are. How capable we are to move through life while growing and enjoying.

In terms of mental well-being, resilience is our capacity to keep learning how to learn about ourselves, even if we face obstacles. It is how well prepared are we to keep growing, even when we face anxiety, sadness, grief, despair, hopelessness, helplessness, and anger.

It is about how we talk to ourselves.

- Are we nurturing the voice that is encouraging and trusting or do we nurture the critical, demanding and judgmental voice in our heads?
- Do we take care of our bodies, thoughts and communities on a daily basis?
- Do we stay connected to our communities or do we isolate ourselves?
- Do we develop new skills and gain new experiences, or do we sink into the same old routine of our comfort zones?
- Do we practice reaching out and asking for support or do we try to do everything ourselves?
- Do we live in reality or do we live in fantasies?
- Do we stay healthy, surrounded by a healthy environment? Or do we sink into bad habits and a destructive environment?
- Do we take ownership of our actions or do we prefer to complain and look from the side?
- Do we take care of our basic needs?
- Do we communicate our feelings or do we swallow them?

EXPERIMENT

In this chapter, we focus on the way we see ourselves in life. First, we will offer you a simple test, to orient yourself to the topic.

Try this [Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale](#).

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

Score

2. At times I think I am no good at all.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

6. I certainly feel useless at times.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

Scoring:

Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored.

"Strongly Disagree" = 1 point // "Disagree" = 2 points

"Agree" = 3 points // "Strongly Agree" = 4 points.

Sum scores for all ten items. Keep scores on a continuous scale.

Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem.

Total

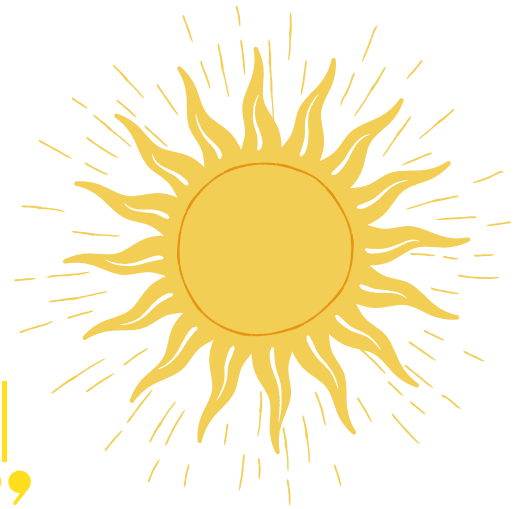
LEARNING BITES

We will take a look at three concepts that have to do with our resilience and how we see ourselves. Self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem. First, we invite you to take a moment and check what those words mean to you. How do you translate them into your own language?

“

"Your beliefs become your thoughts. Your thoughts become your words. Your words become your actions. Your actions become your habits. Your habits become your values. Your values become your destiny."

Mahatma Gandhi



- **Self-efficiency:** if a person has lower levels of self-efficacy they are more likely to focus on feelings of failure rather than success. People with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to cope better in adverse situations (Park and Folkman, 1997).
- **Self-esteem** is a realistic respect for your ability to achieve and thrive in life. You may have healthy self-esteem (I could do it if I wanted to) but low self-efficacy (I probably don't want it enough to complete it).
- **Self-confidence** provides the courage to make things happen.

EXPERIMENT

Your Voice

In this exercise, participants produce different sounds with the intention to open their voices which may support them to express themselves more easily through the power of their voice. This exercise works on opening the diaphragm and expanding the breath capacity.

Come sitting or standing. Make your spine straight and shoulders relaxed. If it feels comfortable, allow your eyes to close or soften your gaze. Bring your awareness to your breath.

Take a full, smooth inhale through your nose without stiffening your nostrils. On the exhale start sounding the syllable "Ayyy" (as in "hi") and make it as long as it feels right for your body. When you finish, take a normal breath in and out and then inhale again and repeat the sound of the same syllable one more time.

Inhale deeply, and on the exhale sound the syllable "Wu". When you finish, take a normal breath in and out, inhale and repeat the sound of the same syllable one more time. It's important that you don't strain so that you feel short of breath. Your measure for success is a smooth, open, and easy feeling to your breathing. If you are feeling insecure to open your voice, tell yourself that your voice is pleasing to you and those around you.

Feel ready to be heard.

Continue with a syllable "ah". Inhale, and on the exhale sound the syllable "ah". When you finish, take a normal breath in and out, inhale and repeat the sound of the same syllable one more time. Gradually keep increasing the length of the sounding.

Now continue with sounding the syllable "oh". Inhale, and on the exhale sound the syllable "oh". When you finish, take a normal breath in and out, inhale and repeat the same sound one more time.

Now, you will sound the syllable "ee". Inhale, and on the exhale sound the syllable "ee". When you finish, take a normal breath in and out, inhale and repeat the sound of the same syllable one more time.

Finally, you will repeat the sound "ssssss" (as steaming). Inhale, and on the exhale sound "sssssss". When you finish, take a normal breath in and out, inhale and repeat the same sound one more time.

Now relax your breath. Notice your breath and how you feel. When you feel ready you can gently open your eyes and start moving your body.

Wayfinding

How much space did you take with your voice?

Do you restrict your voice and make yourself smaller in this way?

Do you feel connected with your voice and breathing?

What were the sensations that you experienced during this exercise?

LEARNING BITES

No matter how much we try, we can never see ourselves through the eyes of others. First of all, because they have their own filters of reality.

Driven by our need to belong, often we seek recognition and approval from others. And when this approval is not there, our confidence is shrinking.

With adulthood, often there is nobody who can give us approval or applaud us.

Let's take the example of Maja. Maja is 26. She was a great student in high school and even better in university. She was constantly receiving recognition from her teachers and professors. Meanwhile, she was winning competitions in sports and receiving raises from her employers. Maja was happy and successful.

One day, Maja decided to quit her job and start her own business. She moved to a new country so that she can be closer to her potential clients. Working long hours every day, she barely had time to meet friends or call her parents. In some months the business was growing and in others, Maja was losing money and clients.

Maja started feeling bad. She was thinking: "I am not good enough. What do I know about business? I am such a loser to quit my well-paid job. And in this new city, everyone is so cool and I am alone all the time. Because I am so boring, working all the time. Who would like to be my friend?"

Maja lost her confidence and self-esteem. She was feeling more and more lonely and disconnected.

EXPERIMENT

What would you do in this moment, if you would be Maja? Write a list of 5 actions that you would take.



What Maja is experiencing is something that many people go through. Once Maja is walking on her own path, with no boss, parents or teachers to hold her hand and applaud, she is losing her sources of recognition.

We ask you, how could Maja ground her confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy in herself?

Wayfinding

What are your strategies?

What actions do you actively take to boost your confidence?

What actions do you actively take to estimate where are you standing on the moment?

EXPERIMENT

Try the S-O-A-R

SOAR

**What are my
greatest strengths?**

**What are my best
opportunities?**

What are my aspirations?

**What are the measurable
results that signify success?**

SOAR is a process tool rooted in Appreciative Inquiry, designed to assess strengths, and initiate change. Use this exercise for individuals or groups who would like to explore their strengths, aspirations and what they deeply care about. The clarity that this tool provides can help boost one's self-esteem, self-confidence and self-efficacy.

When conducting a SOAR, we ask the following questions:

- What are our greatest **S**trengths?
- What are our best **O**pportunities?
- What are our **A**spirations?
- What are the measurable **R**esults that can tell us we've achieved our future aspirations?



STRENGTHS:

Help identify the strengths using the following prompts:

- What makes you unique?
- How do you use your strengths to get the results you want?
- How do your strengths fit in with your environment?
- What are your greatest achievements and which strengths did you use in achieving these results?

OPPORTUNITIES:

- What are the top 3 opportunities you want to focus on?
- How do you make sense of the opportunities in your environment?
- Who do you want to connect to?

ASPIRATIONS

- Who are you? Who would you like to be?
- Where would you like to go?
- What are your dreams and wishes?
- What would support these aspirations?

RESULTS

- How will you know if you are succeeding?
- What can be your anchors to ground you in your aspirations?
- What are meaningful benchmarks for success?

Chapter 2: Growth after Difficult Moments

“Out of these hottest fires
come the strongest steel.”
- Chinese Proverb



NOTICE

Write down one difficult moment in your life when it was very challenging for you to continue forward.

LEARNING BITES

Some difficult moments in life are darker than others.

Sometimes those moments are related to our path and transformation, such as identity crisis for example.

Other times, those moments are connected to our worlds being shaken, such as losing someone we love or going through divorce and separation.

And unfortunately, there are times, when it seems like something is happening to us. Something heavier than we can bear. Such as illnesses, accidents, violence, wars, disasters and others.

It could happen that a difficult moment leads to forming trauma in our body and mind. This book is not focusing on that and if you experience symptoms of trauma, we recommend you speak with a professional.

However very often we are able to shake off the difficult experience and grow from it.

To learn how we grow from difficult situations we take a look at the Post-traumatic growth theory.

Post-traumatic growth is defined as the “experience of individuals whose development, at least in some areas, has surpassed what was present before the struggle with crises occurred. The individual has not only survived, but has experienced changes that are viewed as important, and that goes beyond the status quo” (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004).

EXPERIMENT

You can do it individually or in a group.

Write down situations in your life when you experienced growth after a difficult situation or crisis. Ask other people to share moments of their lives when they experienced such moments.

LEARNING BITES

Researchers Tedeschi and Calhoun discovered that people often report ways in which their psychological functioning increases after experiencing challenging situations. In 2006, Tedeschi reported that 60% of people who experience difficult events report growth afterwards.

When adversity strikes, people often feel that at least some part of them – be it their views of the world, their sense of themselves, or their relationships – has been smashed. Those who try to put their lives back together exactly as it was before, usually remain fractured. But those who accept the breakage and renew themselves become more resilient and open to new ways of living.

This growth amidst adversity reminds us of the Japanese Practice of Kintsugi.

This is the centuries-old Japanese art of fixing broken pottery with a special lacquer dusted with powdered gold. A beautiful gold glint in the cracks of the ceramic ware. The gold gives a unique appearance to the piece and it reminds us where was it once broken.

Wayfinding

How did you recover from your own difficult situations?

What actions supported you?

What is your recipe to renew yourself?

How did the difficult moment affect your strength?

And your spiritual believes?

LEARNING BITES

“Turn your obstacles into opportunities and your problems into possibilities.”

- Roy T. Bennett

Difficult events are a watershed with a sense of life 'before' and 'after' the event. As your life changes so do your priorities. You may want to abandon your old life and feel motivated to do something that's meaningful now.

We suggest you play with a model, designed by Virginia Satir. This model shows us the movement that we do through difficult situations. The old status quo, once faced with a foreign element can cause initially resistance and later on chaos. As we go through life, we are finding meaning and take action to get us out of chaos. Suddenly we find transformative ideas that we begin to practice and integrate into life. These new possibilities get us into our new status quo.

It can be that through adversity we change careers, change the place of residence, divorce or break off from toxic relationships or even switch previously held goals.

EXPERIMENT

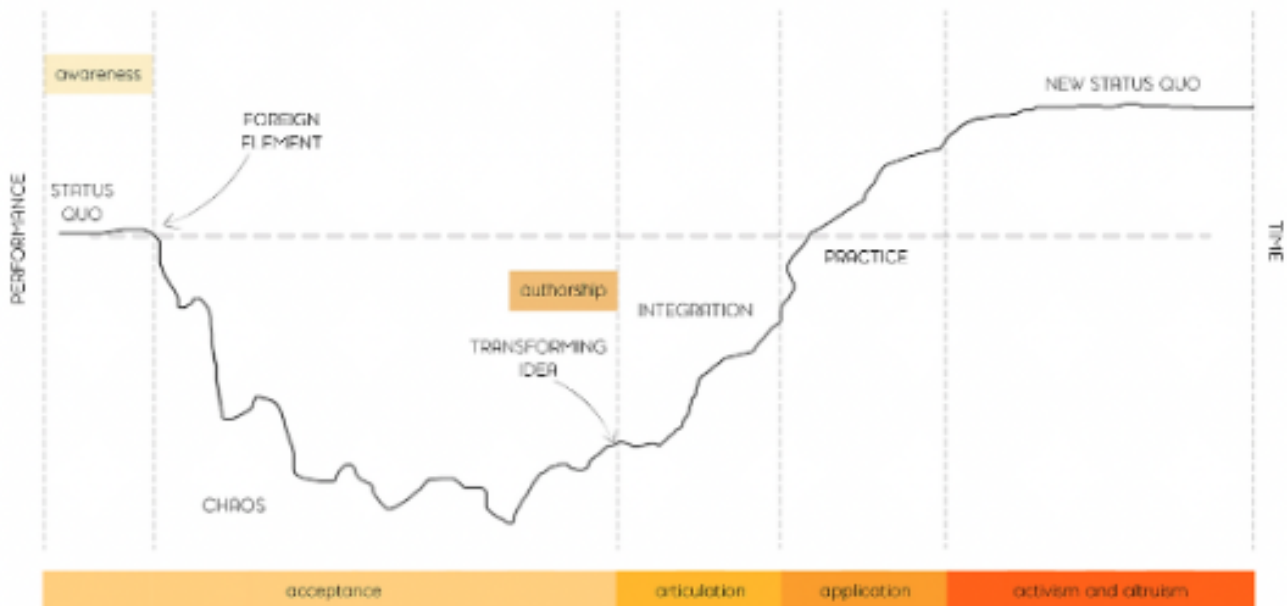
Using the model in the next page, how would you describe your movement through the Covid-19 pandemic?

Ask other people to share with you their stories.

SATIR CHANGE MODEL

Think of a period of transition or change that you went through. Plot your own Satir Change model.

(by Virginia Satir)



Old Status Quo: What was your previous status quo/your comfort zone?

Foreign Element: What was the foreign element that stirred you into chaos? What were the inciting event/s that challenged your comfort zone?

Chaos: How did you experience chaos? What was your resistance to change? How did you embrace chaos?

Transforming Idea: What made you think that change is necessary? What transforming idea/s supported you in moving out of chaos?

Integration and Practice: What shifted for you, in your knowledge, skills and mindsets, that you have integrated and practiced?

New Status Quo: What did you experience in this new status quo? What has changed?

Wayfinding

What are the behaviours that usually keep you stuck in chaos?

What are the behaviours that support you to move forward?

What are the actions and habits that support you to stay resilient in times of crisis?

Who or what are you most appreciative of after crisis?

Wayfinding

We invite you to reflect on the following questions:

How can I support young people who face difficult situations, using the models proposed above?

What are the elements of resilience that young people can practice?

What are the difficult situations that the young people I work with could face?

Chapter 3: Personal and Collective Resilience

In the previous chapters we have been exploring how to go healthy through difficult times as individuals. Now, let's reflect together on how to build resilience as a group.

NOTICE

- Give examples for a resilient group.
- What do you think are the benefits of belonging to a resilient group?
- Which groups that I belong to, do I wish are resilient? (ex: family, colleagues, my country etc.)

For years we have been busy researching which are the elements of growing a resilient group. It is so compelling to imagine what could be available for such a group. How much growth can happen in such an environment? How supportive is to belong to such a group!

As youth workers, we wanted to know how to facilitate the development of such a group. What needs to be there, so the group is resilient?

EXPERIMENT

We invite you to bring the topic for discussion to the individuals or the groups you are working with.

Ask them to draw a painting of a resilient, healthy group they want to belong to.

Notice the details in their paintings and stories. The colours, the locations, the age of the people included in the imaginary groups, the activities...

Notice what is different in the fantasy from the reality people live in at the moment.

LEARNING BITES

Learning how to facilitate the development of resilient groups, we are connecting to the **SCARF model of engagement**.

It is developed by David Rock and grounded in years of research on how our brains work when we interact with others.

The three underlying premises of the SCARF model are

- Our brain reacts to social needs in the same way it reacts to our own personal needs. So we are very much social beings.
- People behave in ways that aim to minimize perceived threats and maximize rewards.
- We feel threatened more frequently and more intensely than we feel rewarded. This implies that we need to put a much greater weight on efforts intended to generate a reward response.


From those three points, we learn that:

- a group of learners does not equal the number of individuals in that group. The group has its own needs. It has its own soul.
- The group and its individuals will move in a direction of rewards.
- It is great if rewards and positive experiences are more than threats.

The SCARF model reveals 5 group needs that we take into consideration when facilitating a learning space:

- Status
- Certainty
- Autonomy
- Relatedness
- Fairness.

Let's take a look at each one of them!



1. Status is about the place that the individual takes in the group. Is this person important in the group? Do they matter to the rest of the members? Are they seen in the group?


So what happens if someone is excluded?

One of the studies showed that a reduction in status resulting from being left out of an activity lit up the same regions of the brain as physical pain.

When facilitating the development of a group, it is great to keep in mind that every person in the group belongs to the group. The same goes for families.

Every person belongs. Even if they are behaving in a way that creates conflicts or degradation in the group. They have their place.

When facilitating the development of a group, we invite you to use this checklist related to Status:

- Do I notice and give attention to all members of the group? Is there somebody I exclude?
 - Do I use inclusive and inviting language that everyone can understand?
 - Do I really need to give feedback? How about giving compliments instead? Compliments encourage people to develop and support them in learning from their successes and connecting with their strengths. On the other side, just saying "I have feedback for you" already activates a threat response. Giving regular positive feedback and compliments make people more comfortable with feedback. This is one way to make our brain more comfortable with this.
 - Do you emphasize the strengths and talents of the people? Where we bring our attention, grows.
 - Do you facilitate reflection moments when people can assess their place in the group?
- 

2. Certainty relates to being able to predict the future and brings us a sense of safety.

Predicting the future, of course, is not possible. Yet there are ways to calm our brains. In a state of certainty, the group has more potential for growth.

To create a sense of certainty in the group, you can use this checklist:



- Create rituals. Even a small one. They give structure and rhythm to the group. Have rituals for the moments of transition. It will bring a sense of predictability.
 - How do you start the day with the group?
 - How do you greet each other?
 - How do you celebrate successes?
 - How do you accept a new member?
- How can there be transparency in the group? How can the activity of the group be viable to all the members?
- Clear instructions create a sense of safety. Clear examples as well.
- Clear agreements and agendas, and breakdown of projects and tasks bring clarity. This doesn't mean that you, as a facilitator, need to create the schedules and have all the info. Invite people to create their own programme, to-do lists and planning.
- Clarity on the next steps also gives a sense of certainty.
- MIT Human Dynamics Lab's research shows that the best teams communicate frequently.
 - Do you provide means for open communication?
 - Do you facilitate spaces where open dialogue, connection and sharing can happen?
 - Do you have routines when it comes to communication?

3. Autonomy is related to our sense of freedom and choice. It has to do with our perception of control over events. If people have no autonomy, they become passive and disengage.

- How do you empower people to have a sense of autonomy?
- Do you engage people by delegating tasks?
- Do you invite people to create their own learning plans? Or to work on their personal projects?
- Are clear boundaries communicated? What are the basic rules of this learning space? Once people have clarity on the basics, they will have the freedom to experiment with the rest.

4. Relatedness is how we connect with the other people in the group. It gives us a sense of belonging and connection. It is important for our learning in a group. Relating to others allows me to look at them as mirrors of myself. It deepens human connections and creates strong bonds.

Checklist:

- Is there a space for connection on a personal level?
- Is there a space for sharing stories?
- How do we communicate our feelings and emotions in the group?
- How much can the members of the group be vulnerable?
- How much do you allow yourself to be vulnerable in the group?
- Do you have moments for collective grief?
- Or collective celebration?
- If one member of the group is going through a difficult period, how can the group hold this person?

5. Fairness is a perception of fair exchanges between people. Exchange is how we connect to people. It can be an exchange of time, resources, services and others. For the connection to be in balance, the exchange is also balanced.

If one person only gives and the other only receives, the connection will break. (This doesn't go for our parents and teachers. In those cases, parents/teachers give and we receive.)

When a member of the group thinks something is unfair, the brain automatically reacts with the avoid response and goes into a defensive mode.

This can lead to conflicts in the group and separation. It can create differences between the members and lead to exclusion and tension.

Here is your checklist:

- How do you promote equal exchange in the group?
- Does your group has its own currency?
- Do you have a list of values or a manifesto that is visible to all of the members?
- Who gives the most in the group? Who gives the least?
- What are your working principles as a group? (working hours, working areas, reflection moments, principles and rules etc)
- Is it clear for the group who is the leader/manager/boss? Does this person carry the responsibility for that?

Imagine that you belong to a group where:

- You are shown how great you are and your status is increasing. You feel that you matter to the group and that you are important to the other members.
- You have clear expectations and know what are your tasks.
- You take your own decisions and have space to express your creativity and personal style.
- You experience a human connection with the other members. You trust each other and share vulnerable moments together. You know that in a difficult moment, the group will be there to hold you.
- You receive what you give in the group. There is fairness and clear boundaries.

How would you feel in such a group?

Our dream as youth workers is to facilitate learning spaces like the one described above.

Wayfinding

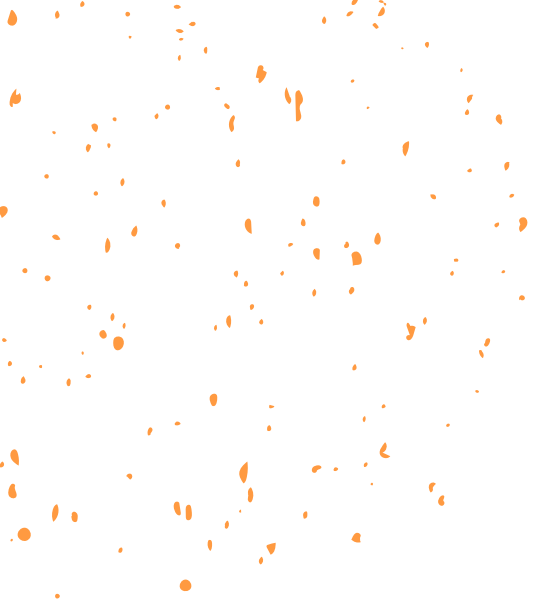
What is your own checklist to facilitate a growth environment for learning?

How do you include everyone?

Do you include also yourself?

How do you ask the group to give to you?
What do you want to receive for your work?

Which points from the checklists above are important to you?



We start with a group, but we know that it is much more than that. As we see it, it is about the development of healthy communities. Communities where people are connected and take part in each other's healing, growth, mourning and celebration moments. Communities with a fair exchange, where people can express themselves within the clarity and safety of a basic structure. Communities where the different generations remain connected. Communities where individuals can grow and develop together. Where individuals can fulfill their potential and reach their destination.

Call us dreamers... Yes, we are.





One Minute Review:

In this pathway, we have been diving into the topic of resilience. How to navigate through difficult situations, while keep growing and developing ourselves. We have been checking out if there is life after the crisis and how does that life look like. In the end, we were exploring collective resilience and the power of healthy communities.

Last words

Mental Health is like a house.

It requires every day care, investment, boundaries, and... to know how to change the light bulb sometimes.

Who are the people you invite in?

What is the atmosphere you create?

Do you refresh the air from time to time?

One action a day can bring a lot of movement and transformation.

The hardest thing is to show up for yourself, again and again... And you already did it!



GUIDEBOOK

The materials for this book are collected by our core team: Niels and Lana (Netherlands), Jochan, Saskia and Iva Bubalo (Germany), Joanna Nikolova and Zsafia Gaudi (Bulgaria), Danaï T. (Greece), Mirela (Croatia), Alessio S. (Italy)

The book is written by Joanna Nikolova & Lana ...
The book is edited by Joanna Nikolova, Iva Bubalo and Zsafia Gaudi
The design of the book is created by Danaï ...
Illustrations by

Organisations collaborating on this project:
Institute for Creative Education | Internationale Akademie Berlin | Roes Cooperativa
| YEPP Italia | SH!FT Foundation | Alter Network

Co-funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ program

Supported by the Dutch National Agency

