



# EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO WORK



*Empowering young people to work*  
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# INTRODUCTION

## How to read this booklet

This booklet is an outcome of the project “Youth work empowers youth to work” which was implemented by Youth for Exchange and Understanding and was funded by European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe. This booklet is about youth work, youth unemployment and youth empowerment. It outlines how youth work can play a key role in empowering youth to get employed.

It is divided in two parts. The first part, the Introduction, provides all information related to the project, the organization and the funders. The second part includes the key educational elements of the project. For this part, only sessions that bring added value to the existing manuals and toolkits of Non-Formal Education are presented. This booklet can be used by youth workers and youth trainers. In the second part, the readers can find ideas for sessions and a step by step guidance on how to put them into practice. We hope this booklet is useful for you and your organization and that young people will be empowered to pursue their elements for their employment.

## Youth for Exchange and Understanding

Youth for Exchange and Understanding (YEU) was founded in Strasbourg in 1986 by a group of 120 young people from 11 different countries. In 1989 we were recognized as a member association of the European Coordination Bureau (E.C.B.). Today we are a member of the European Youth Forum which is the independent platform for INGYOs and NYCs in Europe. We have young people from over 30 countries from across Europe and Africa involved in our activities. As an international network, we are the representative body of our members in contacts with the institutions and partners in the youth field. YEU is run by young people for young people by means of a democratic structure and our members are mainly working on a voluntary base. The limit age to participate in our activities is 30 years but the majority of participants are under the age

of 25. It is young people who decide about activities of the organisation, define the strategies and implement the action plans, run the organization and ultimately evaluate it. It is important to note that most young people in YEU are actively involved in other aspects of civil society, frequently establishing links between the Member Organizations and the local, regional and national institutions, other youth organisations and the community in general, extending the participation in the international organisation to the local dimension.

Youth for Exchange and Understanding works to promote peace, understanding and co-operation between the young people of the world, in a spirit of respect for human rights.

## **Council of Europe and European Youth Foundation**

The Council of Europe (CoE) has its headquarters in Strasbourg, France. With 47 member states and a combined population of over 800 million people, the Council of Europe was set up in 1949 to ensure that the atrocities of WorldWar II never happen again. Its work is unique in that everything it does is based on its core values: human rights, democracy and rule of law.

The Council of Europe is a separate organisation from the 28-member European Union. The European Youth Foundation (EYF) is a fund established in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial and educational support for European youth activities. Only youth NGOs from Council of Europe member states, as well as the Cultural Convention Signatories: Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Holy See, can apply to the Foundation. It is a division in the Youth Department of the Council of Europe's Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Directorate General of Democracy. The mission, roles and responsibilities of the Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation: Rooted in the European Cultural Convention, the mission of Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation is to develop democracy, human rights and the rule of law through education and youth policy and practice. The programmes focus on the emerging generation, enabling children and young people to become engaged and responsible European citizens who advocate human rights and participate fully in democratic life.

## CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

Youth unemployment is one of the most common words today. Crisis still infests Europe causing serious problems, poverty and social exclusion. Youth suffer the most from unemployment scoring double unemployment rate than the rest of the population. Their autonomy, strengths and rights are significantly endangered.

Paradoxically, the trends aiming to address the problem remain problematic. Youth are still pushed to attend higher education and mainly topics that were traditionally recognized, but usually don't fall into their interests or offer almost no chances for employability. Youth are pushed to study topics that correspond to the needs of the society 50 years ago. Yet, market indicates a high demand in different professions.

Some specialists claim that adjusting to the needs of the labour market can be the solution. However, the problem cannot be solved by adjusting to the needs of the present. Just a quick glance 10 years ago will convince that the jobs opened because of the uprise of new media couldn't be predicted. Nobody can predict the needs of the labour market in 30 years, yet a 20 year-old person now will work for the next 45years!

There is therefore a need to endorse a different, a more organic and genuine approach to addressing youth unemployment. Youth can fight unemployment when they adjust to their own interests and competences, when they are in their "element". As described by Sir Ken Robinson the "element" is the point at which natural talent meets personal passion. What we need thus is a world in which youth are empowered to acknowledge their passions and talents and with these fight unemployment in a sustainable way. Once people do what they love and are good at it, they can be creative to financial crisis, innovative to social changes and flexible to technology reforms. When formal education fails to empower youth to find their "element", youth work's responsibility grows.

The study by the European Youth Forum in cooperation with the University of Bath & GHK Consulting has proven that youth participating in NFE have the competences that nowadays employers seek. YEU takes this

finding a step further and is certain that youth work can empower youth to identify their talents, embrace their passions and unlock their potential. Youth work provides the space for youth to explore, create and innovate and can definitely support the youth to get employed by identifying and following their element. This is proven by various cases of youth who switched career after attending non-formal learning activities because the experience inspired them to follow their dreams. This is the context in which the project “Youth work empowers youth to work” was developed.

## THE PROJECT

The project “Youth work empowers youth to work” aimed at enhancing youth workers’ skills in empowering young people to overcome unemployment. It involved a training course which equipped youth workers with tools that allow young people to identify their talents, their skills, their interests and passions in order to get employed (or self-employed).

The three concrete objectives of the training course were:

- To explore current situation regarding unemployment and discuss the need for sustainable solutions to address the problem
- To provide youth workers with tools that empowering young people to overcome unemployment
- To create strategic plans in which youth workers will include empowerment for employability in their activities If the activity is 100% successful, 30 skilful youth workers from different countries who will be motivated and prepared to empower young people to overcome the problem of unemployment.

The training course took place in November 2015, in Banja Luka, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country with estimated youth unemployment over 60%, a tendency to brain drain and emerging soft skills gap according to UN’s Youth Employability and Retention Programme. It involved 30 youth workers from various countries all over Europe. It also involved a professional team of experts, trainers and organizers, among others Eleni Michail, Valentina Antic, Srdjan Petkovic, Milos Blagojevic and Giulia Annibaletti.

## DAILY PROGRAMME

The daily programme of the training course can be found in the end of this booklet. The training team paid special attention to achieve a good flow of the programme. Particularly, it was attempted to have a logical sequence behind the flow of the programme. Another aspect was related to the relation between objectives and daily programme. The programme followed the sequence of the objectives as described previously and in order to make it clear for the participants, the sessions corresponding to each objective were marked with a different colour.





# KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT

## THE ELEMENT

### Short theory related to this session:

Sir Ken Robinson in his book “The element” introduces the theory about the element. Basically he defines the element as the point at which natural talent meets personal passion. As he explains, the element is not what people do, it is who they are. He argues that finding the element can change everything simply because the combination of talent and passion can drive people to happiness and success.

### The two main characteristics of the element are:

1. Complete absorption in the task done. This means that once somebody is in his/her element the only reality is his/her element. All the rest (environment, people around, worries, thoughts, even senses such as being hungry) are not important.
2. Time transformation. Once a person is in his/her element 1 hour feels like 5 minutes. In contrary, when far away from the element, 5 minutes feel like an hour!

### Preparation for this session:

Download the Ken Robinson’s ted talk “Bring on the learning revolution” and prepare the equipment to project it.

## Session step by step

### 1. Introduce the session:

Tell the participants that they will explore the concept of the element. Let the participants watch the ted-talk “Bring on the learning revolution” given by Sir Ken Robinson . Once the video is over, ask participants to share how they found it and facilitate a short discussion.

## **2. Provide a short theoretical input:**

On a flipchart introduce the concept of the element. You can draw 2 overlapping circles. The first circle represents the talents, the second circle represents the passion and overlapping part representing the element. Then, give the participants two of the characteristics of the element.

## **3. Facilitate a discussion:**

Make a short discussion with the participants about the element as a way of overcoming youth unemployment. You can ask them the following questions:

- How sustainable is the concept of the element?
- How long term solution to unemployment does it provide?
- How many possibilities for progress/career evolution does it include?
- How empowering is it?

## **4. Let the participants give examples:**

Divide the participants in groups of 3. In these small groups they need to think of a person (a person they personally know, or a famous person) who found and practices his/her element. Then, ask them to share information about him/her with their peers.

If you want, you can also inspire them by sharing with them the story of a famous person, Paulo Coelho, as written in the book "The element". The story is very inspiring although not widely known. Here is a part of it as retrieved from the book.

"Sometimes, of course, your loved ones genuinely think you would be wasting your time and talents doing something of which they disapprove. This is what happened to Paulo Coelho. Mind you, his parents went further than most to put him off. They had him committed repeatedly to a psychiatric institution and subjected to electroshock therapy because they loved him. The next time you feel guilty about scolding your children, you can probably take some comfort in not resorting to the Coelho parenting system.

The reason Coelho's parents institutionalized him was that he had a passionate interest as a teenager in becoming a writer. Pedro and Lygia

Coelho believed this was a waste of a life. They suggested he could do a bit of writing in his spare time if he felt the need to dabble in such a thing, but his real future lay in becoming a lawyer. When Paulo continued to pursue the arts, his parents felt they had no choice but to commit him to a mental institution to drive these destructive notions from his head. “They wanted to help me,” Coelho has said. “They had their dreams. I wanted to do this and that but my parents had different plans for my life. So there was a moment when they could not control me anymore and they were desperate.”

Coelho’s parents put Paulo in an asylum three times. They knew their son was extremely bright, believed he had a promising career ahead of him, and did what they felt they had to do to put him on the right track. Yet not even such an extreme approach to intervention stopped Paulo Coelho from finding his Element. In spite of the intense family opposition, he continued to pursue writing.

His parents were right in assuming he had a promising future ahead of him, but that future had nothing to do with the legal profession. Coelho’s novel *The Alchemist* was a major international best seller, selling more than forty million copies around the world. His books have been translated into more than sixty languages, and he is the best-selling Portuguese-language writer in history. His creative reach extends to television, newspapers, and even popular music; he has written lyrics for several hit Brazilian rock songs.”

## **5. Facilitate a discussion about the element:**

After the sharing part, ask the participants to share any insights, thoughts, feelings they have. Give them also the opportunity to share any questions, or doubts they have about the element. If you cannot answer these questions on the spot, take notes and address them later on.

## **6. Encourage the participants try to find their element:**

Explain to the participants that now they can now try to identify their element. Drawing two overlapping circles (one for the talents and one for the passion), participants can identify the point at which natural talent meets personal passion. It is important to underline that this is the first

attempt to identify their element. Maybe they will not exactly spot it, but they will know more or less the area they need to focus in the future. Tell them also that the rest of the sessions will help them to better identify their element.

Participants should work on individual level for this activity. You can play some relaxing music, preferably instrumental while they are working. After the participants are done, ask if there is something they would like to share.

## **7. Close the session:**

For the purposes of closing the session, clarify again the connection between the concept of the element and empowerment.



## MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

### Short theory related to this session:

Howard Gardner has presented the theory about Multiple Intelligences in 1983. It suggests that each person encompasses eight different intelligences that take into account a broader range of human potential.

- Verbal-Linguistic intelligence (“word smart”)
- Logical-mathematical intelligence (“number/reasoning smart”)
- Visual-Spatial intelligence (“picture smart”)
- Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence (“body smart”)
- Musical intelligence (“music smart”)
- Interpersonal intelligence (“people smart”)
- Intrapersonal intelligence (“self-smart”)
- Naturalistic intelligence (“nature smart”)

The theory of Multiple Intelligences goes beyond the idea of IQ test which is based only on the Logical-Mathematical intelligence of this model. It suggests that all people are born with all types of intelligences but some types of intelligences are naturally more developed than others. The theory of multiple intelligences refers to the talents each person is born with.

It must be noted that later on, Howard Gardner has suggested that a 9th type of intelligence exists, the existential intelligence.

### Preparation for the session:

For the purposes of this session, you will need to prepare 8 stations, one for each type of intelligence. You can use the same topic for all intelligences (such as environment) or use different topics in each station.

Below, some materials and tasks in each station are suggested.

- Verbal-Linguistic intelligence (“word smart”): In this station provide books, articles, paper, pencils, story cubes. Through the instructions, encourage the participants to read, speak or write.
- Logical-mathematical intelligence (“number/reasoning smart”): In this station include mathematical problems or logical questions. Through the instructions, encourage the participants to count, calculate, solve.

- Visual-Spatial intelligence (“picture smart”): In this station provide papers, scissors, coloured pencils, glue and other materials. Through the instructions, encourage the participants to draw, paint, create or construct.
  - Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence (“body smart”): In this station provide balls, parachute or robe. Through the instructions encourage the participants to move, dance, exercise or play.
  - Musical intelligence (“music smart”): In this station, you can provide musical instruments. Through the instructions encourage the participants to sing, compose songs, play rhythms and identify songs.
  - Interpersonal intelligence (“people smart”): In this station provide cards with questions. Through the instructions, encourage the participants to share and listen.
  - Intrapersonal intelligence (“self-smart”): In this station provide paper and pencils. Through the instructions, encourage the participants to stay alone and reflect on themselves.
  - Naturalistic intelligence (“nature smart”): In this station provide leaves, stones, fruits, nuts or other natural objects. Through the instructions encourage the participants to explore, compare, taste, learn about nature.
- All stations should also include a paper with the name of the station, a short description about the type of intelligence and instructions that the participants can follow.

In the working room, prepare 8 tables/stations, one for each type of intelligence with all materials listed above and invite the participants to stay out of the working room until all preparations are done and the session begins.

## **Session step by step**

### **1. Give instructions:**

Give the instructions outside the working room. Explain to the participants that once they enter they will see 8 stations. Once they enter the room, they will have 40 minutes to explore the space. They can visit 1 station or they can visit as many as they want, even all of them.

### **2. Let the participants explore the space:**

Instead of 40, give the participants 50 minutes to explore the space

### **3. Debrief on the experience:**

Once the 50 minutes are over, invite the participants to gather for a debriefing.

Questions for the debriefing can be the following:

- How was the previous activity for you?
- Do you want to present us some of your achievements/creations?
- How many stations did you visit?
- How much time do you think you were exploring the stations?
- (Reveal that they had 50 minutes instead of 40). Knowing this, what conclusions can you draw?
- Based on what criteria did you select stations to visit?
- Which stations did you feel closer to? Why?
- Which stations did not attract you? Why?

### **4. Present the theory:**

Provide to the participants a short input about the Multiple Intelligence theory of Howard Gardner. Explain all types of intelligences. Share also the following characteristics of multiple intelligences:

- Blend of intelligences (each one of us has a unique blend of all intelligences)
- Time (once you are in your main intelligence, time flies)
- Empowerment (the theory of multiple intelligences should be used to empower, rather than label the people as unable in some areas)

Mention that multiple intelligences represents the natural talents. In the end, present shortly the 9th intelligence (existential intelligence).

### **5. Close the session:**

For closing the session, ask the participants to answer the question “What is the role of the youth workers in empowering young people through multiple intelligences?”

## SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

### Short theory related to this session:

Self-directed learning means that the learner takes the initiative and the responsibility for his/her own learning. It is linked also with the concept of comfort – challenge - panic zones. Comfort zone includes all activities we are used to do and we feel comfortable doing. Challenge zone includes all activities that we are interested to do but we don't feel so comfortable doing, or we hesitate doing. Challenge zone does not threaten or puts in danger. Panic zone includes activities that put us in danger or are harmful. Learning occurs in all 3 zones. But the biggest learning takes place out of the comfort zone, into the challenge zone. The benefits of challenging oneself are not only related with learning, but also with identifying one's strong points, passions and increasing empowerment and self-confidence.

### Preparation for the session:

It would be good to implement this session outdoor in the nature if possible. Before the session starts, ask the participants to bring a scarf with them.

### Session step by step

#### 1. Give instructions:

Explain that this session will offer a set of different activities. Once one activity is over, everybody will gather in circle and have a short group reflection and then the next activity will take place.

#### 2. Get the participants blindfolded:

Ask the participants to be in pairs with a person they have talked the least. One of them will be blindfolded and the other one will guide him/her around the space. The guiding session is divided into 2 parts. The first part allows physical contact (so participants can hold the hand of their partner or stop him/her to protect from some potential obstacle). It lasts 2.5 minutes. In the second part the blindfolded person still needs to be guided but no physical contact is allowed. This part also lasts 2.5



minutes. In both parts verbal communication is now allowed. You can tell participants that once they hear the signal (such as ringing a bell) the second part will begin. Once the second part is also done, allow the participants to change roles and follow the same process.

### **3. Group reflection– measuring the challenge:**

Ask the participants to gather into a standing circle and rate the level of challenge of the previous activity. In order to do it, they can raise their hands. Raising their hands up in the sky means that this activity was extremely challenging (maximum) for them. Keeping their hands down towards the ground means this activity was not at all challenging for them (minimum). It is of course allowed to use any other position between maximum and minimum. It is better to ask participants to raise their hands simultaneously, by counting on 3. Give a couple of seconds so that the participants observe the level of challenge for their colleagues.

### **4. Running in the zipper:**

This is an activity which is rather well known. Ask the participants to stand in 2 lines, the one facing the other. Participants should raise their hands in front of them in a way that a zipper is developed between the two lines. Then, ask for a volunteer who will first run between the zipper. The zipper opens only when the person who is running approaches. (so participants keep their hands in horizontal line until the person approaches. Once the person approaches, they lift their hands, giving him/her the space to run through).

In order to avoid somebody being hurt, it is good to engage some guidelines. The person who will run needs to ask very loud the group “is there anybody who is not ready?”. If the person hears any noise then he/she should not run. Then he/she should repeat the question until there is silence. Then he/she can run.

Once the first volunteer runs through the line, another volunteer can run. This goes on until there is no more people who are interested to run. In case there are some people who seem interested to do it, the group can encourage them, but never push them. It has to be their decision.

## **5. Group reflection– measuring the challenge:**

The same as explained before

## **6. “I love me message”:**

In this activity, the participants need to say a message to themselves. If the name of the participant is George, then the message should be phrased in this way “George, I love you because.....” Participants need to state the reasons why they love themselves. They need to record this message on their smart phones or say it in front of the mirror and watch themselves. You need to underline that this is a strictly individual activity and encourage the participants to be in a place they feel comfortable, far from the others. Give them 5-8 minutes to perform the message, watch it and then come back to the circle.

## **7. Group reflection– measuring the challenge:**

The same as it was explained before

## **8. Debriefing:**

Initiate a debriefing based on the previous activities. Some potential questions can be:

- How are you after all these activities?
- What was the easiest/most difficult activity for you? Why?
- How did you feel after taking a task that was rather challenging for you?

## **9. Provide a short theoretical input:**

Explain the theory of the 3 learning zones (comfort zone, challenge zone, panic zone). Underline the importance of a self-directed learning process. People can choose themselves how and to what extent to challenge them.

## **10. Discussion: Initiate a discussion.**

You can use the following activities:

- Which activities (from the ones we did today) were in your comfort zone? Challenge zone? What did you learn in each zone?
- Which zone provided the biggest learning?
- How does this model reflect reality?

- How is self-directed learning linked with empowerment?
- How is self-directed learning linked with employability?
- What is the role of you (as youth workers) in the self-directed learning of young people?

## **11. Close the session:**

In order to close the session, say few final words and also share a famous quote "Do one thing that scares you every day".



## THEATRE AS A TOOL FOR MOTIVATION

Short theory related to this session: Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) is an exploration of highly visual techniques, which help to bond audience with performer, exploring complex issues around isolation, oppression, motivation and social and political change. Its key aim is to energise the participants so they become more than spectators, exploring and transforming the reality in which they are living.

### Session step by step

#### 1. First short activity: Stop and Go

This exercise works without talking, raises energy and concentration of the group very quickly and shows how easily we communicate as a social system even without talking.

Description

The whole group stands spread all over the room. As soon as the first person starts to walk, everybody walks. As soon as somebody stops, everybody stands still, and so on. Everybody has to play close attention to all the other people in the group.

#### 2. Second short activity: Mirror

(Participants are asked to not speak) everyone gets a partner. Partners stand in two lines, facing each other, about a meter apart. One is the leader, the other, the “mirror.” Moving only from the waist up, the leader begins to make simple gestures or movements. The “mirror” duplicates the leader’s movements exactly—just as a mirror would.

The goal is to mirror the partner perfectly, so the leader must move carefully so that the ‘mirror’ won’t fall behind. If they are doing a good job, we cannot tell who is the leader and who is the “mirror.”

#### 3. Third short activity: Creation of images

Everyone gets a partner. Into couples participants divide themselves into two roles. 1) Model, 2) Sculpture artist. When they make a division, trainer said a word and according to that word sculpture artist have to create image from a model, which will present the word. (Prepare a few words:

love, happiness, hate, anger, sadness, freedom, peace, etc) Pairs change their roles, so that everyone in the group can be the both roles.

#### **4. Group image of empowerment**

Trainer divides participants into 4-5 groups. The task is to create as a group image which will present empowerment. They have 10 minutes to create and present to the group

#### **5. Debriefing:**

Initiate a debriefing following the previous activities. Some questions you can ask are the following:

How were the previous activities for you?

Which part did you enjoy the most? Why?

Were any people who challenged themselves in the previous activities? In which parts? Why? How was it to overcome the challenge?

What were the benefits of using theatre as a tool to work with young people?

#### **6. Theoretical input:**

Short description of the "Theatre of the oppressed" by Augusto Boal ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre\\_of\\_the\\_Oppressed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatre_of_the_Oppressed) and <http://www.theatreoftheoppressed.org/en/index.php?nodeID=3>)

#### **7. Close the session:**

End session with encouraging participants to be creative and inovative when they work with young people. Creativity is one of the keys for innovation. Body language and theatre techniques are design to explore creativity thus developing multi-transversal personal skills and competences.

## LEARNING CYCLE AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Preparations for the session: 3 kg of rice (broken, dog food type); 200 round balloons; Instruction video; Instruction paper; Instruction video you can find on YouTube channel of YEU international: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_h7iFRc0pyl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_h7iFRc0pyl)

### Session step by step

#### 1. Start session:

Participants are told they have the opportunity to learn how to build 3 juggling balls in the next 30min. The participants have 3 options for learning: Video; Instruction paper; Human teacher.

#### 2. Participants receive Learning Cycle Model to apply in their task:

- Do;
- Review (what happened, what went well, what went wrong?);
- Develop and implement ideas for improvement (what will I do?);

#### 3. Start activity:

Participants build the 1st juggling ball and have take notes of their process of learning, according to the model presented.

#### 4. In small groups, each group receives the following questions:

Which of the different options did you choose and why?

Are you satisfied with how far you got?

What were the difficult moments?

How did you try to overcome these moments?

Did you look at the others? Did they have different strategies?

Can you connect this experience to how you normally learn?

How do you think you can further improve?

## 5. Input on Learning Cycle and Experiential Learning:

### Kolb's Model – Learning Cycle

Kolb includes this 'cycle of learning' as a central principle his experiential learning theory, typically expressed as four-stage cycle of learning, in which 'immediate or concrete experiences' provide a basis for 'observations and reflections'. These 'observations and reflections' are assimilated and distilled into 'abstract concepts', producing new implications for action which can be 'actively tested' in turn creating new experiences.

Kolb says that ideally (and by inference not always) this process represents a learning cycle or spiral where the learner 'touches all the bases', i.e., a cycle of experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting. Immediate or concrete experiences lead to observations and reflections. These reflections are then assimilated (absorbed and translated) into abstract concepts with implications for action, which the person can actively test and experiment with, which in turn enable the creation of new experiences.

Experiential learning is a powerful way to address individual growth and potential, which is commonly a much neglected approach to teaching and developing people of all ages.

Experiential learning is adaptable for individual style, preferences, strengths, direction, etc. As such it is more likely than conventional prescribed training or teaching to produce positive emotional effects, notably confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of personal value and purpose.

*This session is an adaptation from a session used in the training course "Innovation & Creation: developing new NFE tools and activities related to social cohesion" developed by Nik Paddison and Rui Afonso.*

**<http://exercisingourrights.yeu-international.org/>**

# OUTDOOR EDUCATION

## **Short theory related to this session:**

Outdoor education is the kind of education that takes place outdoor, but mostly in the nature! It has been proven to maximise the learning achievements and result among other in tranquillity, increased self-esteem, etc.

## **Preparation for the session:**

This session should take place outside. Before having to deliver this session, take a walk around the venue and notice some interesting spots that you would like participants to explore. Also, choose in advance the group game you will use for the session and gather the necessary materials. Last, choose the benefits of outdoor education you find more relevant, write them on paper and stick them under the chairs of the participants.

## **Session step by step**

### **1. Introduce the session:**

Tell the participants that this session will take place outside in the nature

### **2. Walking in nature:**

Ask the participants to make pairs and discuss with their pair while walking in the nature. You can give the topics that they should discuss. Allow enough time for discussion, giving them to enjoy also the nature around. You can ask the participants to follow you and you can guide them to the interesting spots you noticed.

### **3. Playing games in the nature:**

Enable the participants to play some group games in the nature. These games can be simple, such as football, or volleyball, or any other group game that you would like to use. If needed, make some warm-up before the group games start.



#### **4. Debriefing:**

Initiate a debriefing following the previous activities. Some questions you can ask are the following:

- How were the previous activities for you?
- Which part did you enjoy the most? Why?
- Did you notice any connection with your main intelligence?
- Were any people who challenged themselves in the previous activities? In which parts? Why? How was it to overcome the challenge?
- What were the benefits of working outdoor?

#### **5. Theoretical input:**

Ask the participants to look under their chairs for some papers. Ask each participant to read the paper out loud and explain what it means to him/her. You can stick the papers on the flipchart and provide additional information if needed.

#### **6. Close the session:**

You can close the session with questions that aim to connect how outdoor education can help young people feel empowered, feel closer to their element and thus get easier employed.



# HAPPINESS

## **Short theory related to this session:**

A lot of researches in the last decades have revealed the strong correlation between happiness and career success. The research findings indicate that happy people perform much better at work, are more effective and earn more money. Moreover, happiness boosts self-esteem and creativity, two very important elements for getting employed.

## **Preparation for the session:**

For this session you will need an A4 white paper on which you need to draw a black asymmetrical dot in the middle.

## **Session step by step**

### **1. The paper with the black dot:**

Show to the participants the paper with the black dot and ask them to answer the question “What do you see here?”. Encourage their imagination. Usually most of the participants talk about the black dot. Almost nobody talks about the white part of the paper.

After there are no more answers, ask them “What criteria did you use to answer the question?” Remind them the first question you asked them “What do you see here?” underlining that you did not tell them to focus on the black dot. Explain that our brain similarly has learnt to scan and identify the negative points while we have a whole white paper to observe. Instead of focusing on our potential, our capacities and opportunities we focus on the hassles, the problems and the complains. Yet, the external environment/circumstances define only 10% of our happiness. There is therefore a need to reverse this way of thinking.

### **2. List the top 5 elements that make them happy:**

Ask the participants to write down the top elements/things/practices/conditions that make them happy. Give the participants few minutes to do this. Once this is done, ask them to write down what they do every

day. Then, ask them to compare the two lists. Share that all people want happiness, but sometimes not a lot of attention is paid in achieving happiness.

### **3. Little things that make you big time happy:**

Share with the participants the following practices that boost significantly the happiness levels.

- Express gratitude (People can express gratitude by writing a “thank you” letter to somebody they appreciate/love outlining the reasons why they want to thank him/her. Then, they can call the person and read their letter, or email it to him/her. It is important to register the reaction of the receiver)
- Do random acts of kindness (Random acts of kindness are activities in which we are being altruistic to somebody else, even somebody we don’t know (in the street, in the supermarket, etc). There are 3 conditions for this 1. Contain your cost of giving, 2. Make it fun for both parties 3. Register the impact)
- Practice mindfulness for 5 minutes (Mindfulness can be done in the following ways: 1. Meditate: Close your eyes and focus only on your breathing 2. Pray: Close your eyes and repeat a pray of your religion 3. Take a walk without the intention to reach a particular place (preferably in the nature) 4. Watch your watch’s arrows moving)
- Eat right, move more, sleep better
- Plan a trip but don’t necessarily take it (This involves imagining taking a trip and writing down all details about it, without necessarily in the end taking this trip)
- Practice self-compassion (This can be practiced by writing a letter to myself showing compassion for not achieving something that I wanted)

Give the participants the option to choose one practice from the list and practise it during the next 20 minutes. Give the participants the option to move around and find a place they feel comfortable. Underline that this is a personal activity and they should focus on themselves.

#### **4. Debriefing:**

Once the participants are back initiate a debriefing on the following activity. Some potential questions might be:

- How do you feel?
- Is there somebody who wants to share what she/he practiced the last 20 minutes?
- Any shifts in your emotional state before and after the activity?
- How long do you think it takes to rewind our brain?
- What is the connection between happiness, empowerment and employability?
- What will you do as youth workers taking into account all these?

#### **5. Close the session:**

Share with the participants that by practicing the “little things that make you big time happy” we manage to reverse the negativity of our brain and encourage them to incorporate these techniques on a daily basis in their lives. End the session with the quote “happiness is a state of mind, not a result of circumstances”.



# SELF-AWARENESS

## Theory related to this session:

Self-awareness means having a clear idea of your personality, among others your talents, your values, your passions and dreams. Self-awareness allows you to understand how you can expand your talents and improve your weaknesses.

## Session step by step

1. Identifying who I am:

Provides a template which will help the participants to raise self-awareness. The template should be in a form of a flower with 4 petals. Each petal represents the following:

- talents (I am good at...),
- passions (I am passionate about...)
- Values (I believe in...)
- Dreams (I dream of...)

In the centre of the petals, there is the “element”.

Give the participants 30 minutes to prepare this flower for themselves and work on it on individual level. Allow them to find a place in the room they feel comfortable to sit.

## 2. Debriefing:

Once the participants are back, initiate a debriefing. Some potential questions can be:

- How was the process for you?
- What insights did you have?
- Comparing this attempt with the one done during the session “the element” what conclusions can you draw?
- Which elements helped you raise your self-awareness?
- Why is self-awareness for empowerment?
- Why is self-awareness important for youth employment?
- How are you going to use the learning elements from this session in your future work?

## FINAL WORDS:

We hope that this booklet has helped you to learn a bit more about the topics addressed. Young people need youth organizations which believe in their potential and strive to empower them to move forward!

We encourage you to disseminate this booklet and spread its elements among your circles!

