METHODOLOGY FOR EDUCATING YOUTH WORKERS TO PREVENT STRESS AND BURNOUT IN YOUNG LEADERS USING VIRTUAL REALITY SIMULATION ACTIVITIES

METHODOLOGY FOR EDUCATING YOUTH WORKERS TO PREVENT STRESS AND BURNOUT IN YOUNG LEADERS USING VIRTUAL REALITY SIMULATION ACTIVITIES

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Organisations:

Year of creation

2023 - 2024

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

You have just opened VR RESILIENT - A training methodology for youth workers to prevent stress and burnout in young leaders using virtual reality simulation activities.

We aim to offer youth workers and youth leaders support in creating a burnout prevention environment for young leaders who work with peers or children in their personal development sustainably and systematically. This activity requires much effort and energy, which can cause frustration and burnout in their work.

We hope to offer inspiration, ideas, and encouragement on how to guide young people to prevent burnout at work and manage stressful situations and depressive experiences. The offered methodological publication contains several educational blocks guided by non-formal education methods using virtual reality. It is aimed at promoting the mental health of young people.
Experts in non-formal education and psychological services and virtual reality creators from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Croatia have contributed to the development of this methodology.

About the educational blocks

On the following pages, you will find the final learning blocks you can use in your work with active young people to prevent burnout.
The different learning blocks of the methodology also use simulation activities that can be found in the virtual reality application called VR Resilient. The app can be downloaded to virtual reality goggles, Oculus Quest 2, and can be found here: https://lnk.sk/nogi

The VR application consists of five simulation activities labelled as VR experiences: Activity Choosing, Painting, Week Harmonogram, Lead Practice focusing on Diaphragmatic Breathing and Muscle Relaxation, and Video Interview.

For a detailed description of each simulation activity, its benefits, instructions for use and other information, please refer to the publication "Manual for Youth Workers on how to implement the learning blocks, methodology with virtual reality simulation activities in work with Young Leaders".

The individual learning blocks of the methodology use the following VR experiences:

Burnout Syndrome
• VR experience: Video Interview
• VR experience: Painting
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Stress management
• VR experience: Lead Practice (Muscle Relaxation)
• VR experience: Week Harmonogram
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Ability to navigate in challenging situations
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Resilient Waves
• VR experience: Painting
• VR experience: Lead Practice (Diaphragmatic Breathing)
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Ability to establish relationships
• VR experience: Week Harmonogram
• VR experience: Painting
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Ability to reflect your level of self-esteem
• VR experience: Week Harmonogram
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

The ability to value yourself and others
• VR experience: Week Harmonogram
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

The art of relaxation
• VR experience: Lead Practice (Diaphragmatic Breathing)
• VR experience: Painting
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Strategic time management
• VR experience: Week Harmonogram
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Ability to identify your priorities
• VR experience: Week Harmonogram
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Ability to delegate and develop this competence
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Ability to manage your perfectionism
• VR experience: Week Harmonogram
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

Ability to effectively communicate and share
• VR experience: Week Harmonogram
• VR experience: Activity Choosing

We give thanks to all the experts who contributed to developing the methodology and creating the virtual reality application.

BURNOUT SYNDROME

Goals of the block

- understand what is burnout and what are sources of burnout
- be able to recognize symptoms and triggers of burnout
- acknowledge their values and goals and how to live by them
- recognize bad patterns in everyday life
- develop attitudes to set goals and reflect on personal and professional growth

Group

5 – 20 participants

Material

- pens
- Questions about values *(Attachment 1)*
- Values in my life *(Attachment 2)*
- Monthly goals *(Attachment 3)*

Length in minutes

100 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Introduction and ice-braker
Activity 2: Values
Activity 3: Burnout
Activity 4: Future me

Instructions

Activity 1: Introduction and ice-braker (25 min.)

Trainer welcomes everybody and opens the topic of the session: "Topic of today's session is burnout. Probably you already know what this term means but today we will find out what it is, why it happens and how to prevent it."

Trainer divides participants into pairs and prepares questions about values *(Attachment 1)*. Every question should be cut out of the *Attachment* and mixed on the floor facing down so that every participant can pick one paper. If the group is bigger than 10 participants, *Attachment* should be printed out 2 or more times so that there are enough questions for everyone. Trainer gives a few minutes to participants for this task.

The trainer introduces the activity: "In this ice-breaker we will introduce ourselves to each other and we will answer some personal questions to our pair. We will also start discussing what is important to us in our lives. Pick one question from the floor and if you don't like it or feel like you don't want to talk about it with the person from your pair, choose another one."

When both participants from each pair finish with answering question, trainer asks questions and starts a short discussion:
- How many of you picked another question?
- Is it hard to talk about things that matter?

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Activity 2: Values (30 min.)

Trainer explains what are values, why are they important and how they guide us through life: "Values are type of goals that can never be fully achieved. Imagine "being a good friend" as a general value. You will never fulfil that value but on the way towards being a good friend you can do things or behave in a way leading to this value. For example, you can "help a friend in a difficult situation", "visit a friend in hospital" or "wish a happy birthday to a friend". This example shows us that values are the general direction in which we want to move, while goals are points on that journey. Goals are concrete things that we can "make", "reach" or "complete" while values guide us through life. Values reflect our sense of right and wrong or how things should be. Values are important because they direct our behaviour during long time periods and being aware of our values makes clear to us what kind of behaviour is useful and desirable for our lives. When we live by our values, our life becomes harmonious and we feel inner satisfaction. Some of the common values are: to be kind, to be patient, to be grateful, to be loyal, to be respectful, to be persistent, to be forgiving, … These are just examples of values and there are much more."

Once the group has gained context about the values, the trainer will offer them the values worksheet *(Attachment 2)*. The tasks on the worksheet are to be answered by each participant.
When participants finish with task, trainer asks them questions to start a discussion:
- Was it difficult for you to write the values in these 5 spheres?
- In which sphere do you have the lowest alignment with values? What do you think, why is that so?

Activity 3: Burnout (30 min.)

Trainer presents the meaning of the term "burnout", triggers and symptoms of burnout:

Burnout syndrome has probably been around for as long as there has been work. It is a state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and long-term stress. Burnout syndrome is mostly related to the work environment but it often occurs when several factors overlap, i.e., when other spheres of life are also out of balance with our values. This happens when a person feels overwhelmed, emotionally exhausted and unable to meet constant demands. As the stress continues, the person begins to lose interest and motivation in performing certain activities at school/college/work that they had no difficulty in performing before the burnout occurred.

Common symptoms of burnout:
- feeling tired or drained most of the time
- feeling helpless, trapped and/or defeated
- feeling detached/alone in the world
- having a cynical/negative outlook
- self-doubt
- procrastinating and taking longer to get things done
- feeling overwhelmed

If a person ignores the signs of burnout, it could cause further harm to their physical and mental health in the future and it could spill from study/work sphere to other spheres of life such as relationships with family and friends. So, if you are experiencing burnout and are having difficulty finding your way out, or you suspect that you may also have a mental health condition such as depression, seek help and bring new activities into life.

At this point, burnout probably sounds stressful enough to wonder if you can ever recover from it. The good news is there are ways to bounce back and learn to enjoy your daily life again.

For starters, you need to be honest with yourself and recognize the burnout – just check the list of symptoms and estimate how much they occur in your life – a little or a lot. Different people handle stress and burnout differently. Some need more sleep, some need more physical activity, some need more social contact, some need more time in nature while some need individual or group work in the form of psychotherapy. But there is one thing in common for all the different people – they need to change something in their life and they have to make and commit to these changes. One way of doing so is to set an action plan with realistic goals. Don't overestimate your possibilities, rather set yourself some small goal that you are almost sure will come true.

After discussing burnout, the trainer asks participants to look at their completed Activity 2 worksheet *(Attachment 2)* and write down what they could do in the next month (in the form of small, achievable goals) to be more aligned with their values. The trainer will give each participant a new sheet: Monthly Goals *(Attachment 3)*.

Activity 4: Future me (15 min.)

Trainer asks participants to close their eyes if they feel comfortable enough, and if not to direct their gaze lower, towards the floor. Then, trainer leads participants through short visualization based on following questions:

- What kind of behaviour can bring me closer to my values at work/study?
- How do I imagine my life when it is fully aligned with my values?
- What will my life look like in 5 years if I don't decide to behave in a way that leads me to my values?
- What will my life look like in 5 years if I decide to behave in a way that leads me to my values?
- What will you do TODAY?

After visualization the trainer asks participants to slowly open their eyes when ready and to take three deep breaths.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Questions about values

1. What is your purpose in life?

2. What were you dreaming of when you were a kid?

3. What do you hope for?

4. Who is the wisest person that you know?

5. What does it mean to love for you?

6. How do your values differ from the ones of your family?

7. What is friendship for you?

8. What makes a good life?

9. What would you do if you were rich?

10. What have you learned from difficult experiences?

Attachment 2: Values in my life

This exercise is divided into 5 spheres of your life and they determine 5 areas of values. In each category write what is important for you and what kind of person you would like to be if there were no obstacles. Also, try to write your personal values, not necessarily what is considered desirable. If you have hard time with some questions, you can skip them and come back to them later.

1. Values in my family relationships

2. Values in my social life

3. Values of my psycho-physical health

4. Values in my work/study

5. Values in my free time

When you finish writing your values, rate from 1-10 how your life currently aligns with your values (1 – not aligned, 10 – very aligned).

1. Values in my family relationships

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

2. Values in my social life

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

3. Values of my psycho-physical health

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

4. Values in my work/study

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

5. Values in my free time

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Attachment 3: Monthly goals

1. To be more aligned with values in my family relationships, this month I:

2. To be more aligned with values in my social life, this month I:

3. To be more aligned with values of my psycho-physical health, this month I:

4. To be more aligned with values in my work/study, this month I:

5. To be more aligned with values in my free time, this month I:

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Goals of the block

- understand what is and what causes stress
- understand how stress affects their well-being
- recognize symptoms of stress
- be able to ground themselves as a proactive response to stressful situations
- increase awareness and focus on the present moment
- develop attitudes to resist physical and psychological stresses

Group

5 – 20 participants

Material

- 2 markers/highlighters, string, tape, scissors, A4 papers, pens, flipchart
- Human silhouette *(Attachment 1)*
- Grounding through the 5 senses *(Attachment 2)*

Length in minutes

110 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Introduction and energizer
Activity 2: What is stress?
Activity 3: Raising awareness of stress and stressful situations
Activity 4: Grounding

Instructions

Activity 1: Introduction and energizer (20 min.)

Trainer welcomes everybody and opens the topic of the session: "Today we will talk about stress – the feeling of nervousness or anxiety, which we all encounter in certain situations. Everyone will learn to recognize situations that put them in a state of stress. In addition, we will learn several ways that can help us fight against it. In the beginning we will bring energy into our body with the activity called Connect yourself."

Trainer divides the participants into two groups in such a way that each of the participants in the circle says the number 1 or 2 until they reach the end of the circle. When the participants are divided into groups, trainer explains the rules of the activity.

The activity consists of two phases - preparation of materials and agreement on tactics, and the performance itself.

Task 1 for each group: The first step is to wrap some tape around the lid of a marker so that it will not open during the activity and tie a long string around the marker lid.

Task 2: Once the group has completed Task 1, they can stand in a straight line and pass the marker with the string through each participant's clothing so that the marker with the string enters through one sleeve and exits through the other sleeve, and then is passed to the next person until the end of the line.

The activity ends when the highlighter and string are passed from the first person to the last person in the group, i.e. when the marker and string connect the whole group. The first group to do so wins. However, time should be given to the other group to complete the activity and to help them if necessary *(Attachment 1)*.

Before groups begin Task 2, they can agree on a strategy for administering the highlighter with string.

Note for the trainer: Let the groups come up with their own strategy for threading the highlighter with the string - maybe each person will thread through their own sleeves, maybe a fast person will thread through the whole group (in this case, note that it's okay if one of the participants is bothered by another person's touch, so let them do it themselves).

Activity 2: What is stress? (30 min.)

When participants feel energized they are split into 5 groups (if there are 20 participants). Trainer asks each group to brainstorm and write their answers for the following questions on paper in the form of 1 – 3 words:
- What causes us stress?
- What are the sources of stress?
- Do you know what frustration is?
- What causes frustration?

After each group is done trainer asks one person from each group to read all the answers they have brainstormed.

After each group presented their answers, trainer asks each group to make a definition of stress from words from previous step. When groups are finished, every group reads their definition, and trainer initiates a discussion of definitions in a large group. When the discussion is over, trainer writes the definition of stress on the board: "Stress: Nervousness, tension, insecurity or fear, which we all feel from time to time."

Activity 3: Raising awareness of stress and stressful situations (40 min.)

The trainer will give each participant a sheet - Human Silhouette *(Attachment 2)* and ask them to write and label on the drawing:
- Which situations are a source of stress for you?
- Which situations are stressful for you?
- Where do you feel stress in your body?

When participants finish writing, trainer asks some questions to initiate discussion.
- Was this task easy of hard for you? Why?
- What was the hardest part of this task?

Trainer emphasizes that the event itself is only a potential source of stress or a stressor, and the occurrence and intensity of stress depend on how we perceive the situation.

Trainer gives short lecture about stress, sources of stress and stressors *(Attachment 3)*.

Activity 4: Grounding (20 min.)

Trainer shows and explains strategy to participants that could be done anytime and anywhere that will help them manage stress: "Stress and bad thoughts occur when we lose focus on the things we are doing. It is easy for our minds to wander and become distracted by other things in our bodies or what is happening in the world around us. When there are a lot of changes happening, it is easy to feel overwhelmed. Therefore, the most important thing is to regain focus on what we are doing, and the easiest way to ground yourself is through our 5 senses. It is important to know that this strategy is only to keep you safe until the storm passes."

Trainer gives participants leaflet with 5 senses *(Attachment 4)* and guides them to fill them out:

"This activity will help you to pay more attention on things around you and less on your thoughts about past or future. For start, take a deep breath. Get comfortable wherever you are, sitting, standing or laying down. Pay attention to the environment around you based on your 5 senses.

Identify:
- 5 things you can see,
- 4 things you can hear,
- 3 things you can feel,
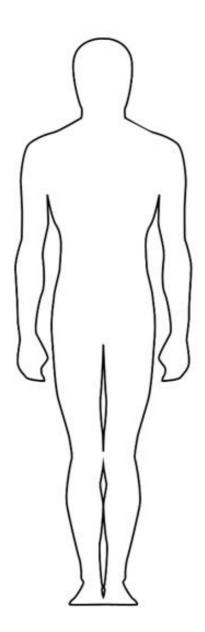- 2 things you can smell,
- and lastly 1 thing you can taste.

Hopefully, this was an easy exercise. I suggest you to practice this every time you get distracted, in different setting and surroundings especially before difficult tasks or tasks that cause you stress."

Attachments

Attachment 1: How to thread a marker with a string

Attachment 2: What is stress?

Attachment 3: Theory on stress, sources of stress and stressors

Stress is a set of **emotional reactions, body reactions, behavioural change** and **beliefs change.** It occurs when we assess an event as **dangerous or disturbing.**

Stressor is the event itself, i.e.an external influence.

Stressor (event) → Stress (estimation) → Reactions (TSR – Traumatic Stress Response – immediate or can occur after, such as running away, fighting or "freezing" → Outcome (PTSR – Post Traumatic Stress Response – emotional, physical, behavioural).

The occurrence and outcomes of stressful situations are normal and frequent in our lives! At this moment there are many people in this room, in this building, in your neighbourhood and all around the world that are experiencing stress. Reactions to stress are expected and sometimes can be unpleasant. Some of us feel tired, some cannot focus, some feel sad or cry, some feel angry, some have problems with sleeping or have changes in appetite. High intensity stress often affects the body. It could be a headache, pain in neck and shoulders, back pain, heavy chest, upset stomach, tight muscles or lump in the throat. It does not imply that reactions will go away on their own, sometimes we have to help ourselves with some easy focus and engagement practices. If our response lasts longer than usual, and when it begins to disrupt the quality of life of the individual, it is necessary to seek professional help.

In everyday life, we most often encounter stressful situations in our homes and at work. It's actually quite logical, because we spend most of our time there during the day. Therefore, we divide sources of stress into internal and external. The sources of stress that come from within ourselves are our personality, our previous experience, our work style, our values and our self-image. External sources of stress come from the environment that surrounds us, and include other people, actions or events that we encounter. The most common source of stress is workplace because of various internal and external reasons.

Internal sources of stress at workplace happen because we:
1. have unrealistic expectations from work and from ourselves
2. excessively identify with our users and their problems
3. have the need for constant and complete control of the situation
4. get overly attached to work and feel complete responsibility
5. identify with work, which becomes our only meaning of life and confirmation
6. do not leave part of the work to others
7. are excessively persistent, rigid in achieving the goal at any cost
8. use our time ineffectively
9. have no priority, everything is important
10. feel professionally incompetent

External sources of stress at workplace include:
1. sources related to working conditions such as:
   a. too small, inappropriate, unequipped workspace
   b. heating, humidity, noise, lighting
   c. lack of privacy and constant exposure to beneficiaries
   d. lack of space to conduct confidential conversations with beneficiaries

2. sources related to work organization such as:
   a. daily exposure to beneficiaries for too long
   b. time pressure of deadlines
   c. too much responsibility in relation to the possibilities of solutions
   d. lack of co-workers
   e. absence of daily rest
   f. unclear organizational structure
   g. vaguely defined roles, tasks, expectations
   h. unclear division of work, responsibilities, overlapping responsibilities
   i. unclear rule of promotion, reward, rest, privileges
   j. the absence of professional training in accordance with the needs
   k. unclear rules for replacing the absent person

3. sources related to relationships with others within the organization such as:
   a. the psychosocial climate of the organization and the type of mutual relations that are encouraged or prevented (cooperation vs. competition, rivalry vs. support, trust vs. suspicion, encouraging vs. inhibiting independence, encouraging a sense of stability vs. uncertainty., ...)
   b. management and decision-making is rigid, authoritarian or centralized where the individual has no influence or can express an opinion
   c. there is no clear philosophy of the organization, vision of its goals and meaning
   d. lack of feedback on achievements and plans
   e. closedness of the organization to external information and experiences
   f. absence of formal/informal professional and personal support
   g. lack of encouragement of the spirit of community and belonging to the team

4. sources related to the type of work and characteristics of the people being helped such as:
   a. a large number of people for constant and intensive help
   b. a lot of problems with no prospect of good solutions
   c. emotional exhaustion due to constant awareness of great needs of beneficiaries
   d. the uniformity of the problem of the population being worked with
   e. danger of an attack on a professional the similarity of the helper's personal experience with the beneficiaries' experience

Attachment 4: 5 senses

- 5 things you can see:..
- 4 things you can hear:..
- 3 things you can feel:..
- 2 things you can smell:..
- 1 thing you can taste:..

Space for notes.

ABILITY TO NAVIGATE IN CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

Goals of the block

- know how a stressful situation can occur
- know what reactions can be triggered and the consequences of not dealing with situations or, conversely, escalating them
- learn the correct techniques and attitudes needed to deal effectively with difficult situations and to improve teamwork

Group

15 – 20 participants

Material

- papers
- pencils
- markers
- flipchart

Length in minutes

120 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Introduction
Activity 2: Dealing with stressful situations
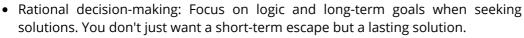Activity 3: Allegory

Instructions

Activity 1: Introduction

The trainer will invite participants to share their ways of coping with challenging, stressful situations in youth work.

After a joint discussion, the trainer will tell the participants some tips and tricks that can help them manage stressful situations without getting into a negative cycle of avoiding problems or escalating conflicts (the main points may be written on a flipchart beforehand):

- Understanding your emotions and controlling yourself: We all have emotions, and that's okay! But it's important to know how to handle them. Learning to control your emotions will help you respond in a reasonable and non-impulsive way.
- Active listening: When you feel overwhelmed or stressed, talk to someone about what you are experiencing. And remember to listen to others! Empathetic listening can build solid relationships and improve communication.
- Rational assessment of the problem: Ask yourself the following questions if your whole world is crashing down. What exactly is stressing you out? What are the worst and best-case scenarios? That may make the problem seem more bearable.
- Instead of focusing on what's going wrong, find alternative perspectives and options. Friends, colleagues and previous successful experiences can be your guide.

- Rational decision-making: Focus on logic and long-term goals when seeking solutions. You don't just want a short-term escape but a lasting solution.
- Step by step to change: Choose the steps to help you solve the problem. Be realistic and use the SMART method ("specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound").
- Learning and observation: Consider what works and what doesn't, and be open to further adjustments if necessary.
- Support and share: Open communication is key to a positive environment.

The trainer then reminds the participants: "Remember that stress management is a process everyone must find for themselves. It is a path to personal growth and development and is always worthwhile. Be open to change and learning and find your way of coping with life's challenges."

Activity 2: Dealing with stressful situations

The trainer will introduce the participants to the issues of understanding their emotions, self-control and avoiding crises *(Attachment 1)*.

Participants will be divided into groups of 3. They will write on paper what stressful situations they experienced in the group, their emotions, and how they managed to resolve the situation.

In the second phase, the participants choose one of the situations they want to solve in the model situation.

The trainer will instruct the participants: "Decide who in the group will be the person who will escalate the situation and the person who will de-escalate the situation. A third team member will monitor the situation and record feedback."

At the end of the model situation, the team will explain what went well and what did not. To encourage the team to reflect and actively engage in the whole process, the trainer can use the question from *Attachment 2*.

Activity 3: Allegory

The trainer asks the participants to imagine the following crisis:

"Imagine that bees and roosters share a common area near a farm. This farming area is full of flowers, the main food source for both bees and roosters. The only problem is that due to climate change, the flower garden is becoming smaller and smaller, reducing the availability of food for both groups of animals."

"Bees are very organised in this situation and have a clear hierarchy. They immediately start communicating and gathering to find new flowers and ensure enough food for the hive. Their communication and teamwork are amazingly efficient, allowing them to find solutions for new food sources quickly. The emotions they experience are stressful to some extent, but the teamwork and trust in the team keeps them motivated and optimistic."

"Roosters, on the other hand, have a more individual approach in their flock and are less organised than bees. When they find that the flower garden is smaller and the food is less, they compete over who has the right to the food. The emotions they experience include frustration, fear and mutual aggression. Their uncoordinated and competitive behaviour creates tension in the team, which reduces trust and motivation throughout the group."

The trainer then notes that in this symbolic situation, one can see how different attitudes and natures affect those in a crisis: "The bees show that strong teamwork, communication, and trust can help overcome a stressful situation and keep the team motivated. Conversely, roosters illustrate that lack of cooperation and too much competitiveness can lead to conflict, reduced motivation and a negative team atmosphere. This allegory reminds us of the importance of creating an environment where everyone's voice is heard, and team members feel supported and motivated to solve problems together."

The trainer will open the discussion, inviting the participants to share one thing they realized during the activity. In doing so, he may use the following questions:
- What did you realize during the exercise?
- Which technique do you want to use in your setting to resolve conflicts?
- Which technique do you find difficult and feel you cannot master?
- What else would help you in the training?

Attachments

Attachment 1: Theoretical basis for Activity 2

Understanding emotions
- Managing emotions and reactions: Emotions are part of our everyday life, and that's okay! It is important to be in tune with our emotions and not forget their influence on our behaviour. Learning to understand our emotions and how they affect our reactions and the reactions of others can be the key to improving our interpersonal relationships.
- Constructive communication: When dealing with conflicts and problems within a team, it is important to eliminate argumentative errors that can worsen the situation. Instead, we can focus on the specific situation (instead of personal attacks, focus on the specific behaviour or situation that caused the problem) or listen to the other side (give space for others to express their feelings and opinions and actively listen to them, as this helps build trust and respect among team members).
- Specify the problem: Identify what is causing the stress or conflict and ask questions such as: "What exactly was the problem?" and "How can we solve this problem?".
- Finding mutual solutions: Instead of focusing on the negative aspects of the situation, try to work together to find alternative perspectives and solutions.
- Respect and empathy: Always remember to respect others and try to put yourself in their shoes. That will help create a positive environment for constructive communication.

Self-Control
- Impulse control: Self-control is the ability to control one's reactions in situations that evoke strong emotions. We can use mindfulness and relaxation to calm the mind and reduce emotional reactivity. Mindfulness and relaxation techniques can help calm the mind and manage stressful situations.
- Take a short break before reacting: Before you respond impulsively, take a moment to think about what the best response is.
- Focus on the specific behaviour or situation: Instead of general attacks, focus your criticism on the particular behaviour or situation. That will help you avoid creating a hostile environment.

Avoiding crises
- Proactive communication: Preventing crises is the key to maintaining a harmonious working environment. Open communication in which we communicate our needs and concerns can prevent misunderstandings.
- Constructive feedback: When problems arise, we should work with them constructively. Giving constructive feedback and respecting the views of others is the key to solving problems and maintaining positive outcomes.

Attachment 2: Supporting questions

If the trainer or someone on the team recognizes increased tension or conflict between team members:
Question: "Have you noticed any tension or conflict amongst yourselves?"

The trainer then chooses a quiet place where team members can discuss their feelings and perspectives. Each team member must be able to share their feelings and perspectives without interruption.
Question: "What do you think about the current situation? What do you think is the problem?"

The trainer tries to reduce emotional tension and nervousness by using calming techniques.
Question: "How are you feeling right now? Is there anything that will help you calm down?"

The trainer prompts the participants to identify the main problem or issue they agree on.
Question: "What do you think we should address as the main problem?"

The trainer encourages team members to suggest different ways to address the problem.
Question: "What are your ideas for how we might solve this situation?"

The trainer selects the best solution mentioned in the discussion that everyone supports.
Question: "Which solution seems most appropriate, and what is your opinion?"

The trainer then draws up a concrete plan with the participants on implementing the solution and invites them to think about how they could prevent similar problems.
Question: "What specific steps do we take, and how can we prevent similar situations in the future?"

This structured approach aims to lead the team to a shared understanding, constructive discussion and the search for effective solutions.

Space for notes.

RESILIENT WAVES

Goals of the block
- understand the concept of psychological flexibility
- know adaptive strategies
- know how to manage moods and affects
- know expressive relaxation techniques

Group
5 – 20 participants

Material
- office supplies
- flipchart
- paper
- markers
- magazines
- scissors
- glue
- printed *attachments*

Length on minutes
160 min.

Summary
Activity 1: Introduction and energizer
Activity 2: What is Resilient and how to become psychologically flexibly
Activity 3: My past sources of resilience – assessment
Activity 4: My strengths' list
Activity 5: In the eyes of a beholder
Activity 6: "Looking forward"
Activity 7: "Acts of kindness"
Activity 8: "Monodrama"
Activity 9: "Positive RE-framing"
Activity 10: "Exceptions"
Activity 11: Coping Skills Toolbox

Instructions

Activity 1: Introduction and energizer (10 min.)

The trainer asks participants to (silently) choose the figure *(Attachment 1)* they most identify with. In small groups (of same or different "shapes") ask participants to talk about why they identified themselves with that figure.

The trainer advises participants of the "personality interpretation" of each shape:
- Triangle: These people have a solid foundation but can get a bit sharp and pointy at times.
- Square: These people are balanced, stable, and like structure.
- Z: These people like to cut across issues and move from one task to another.
- Circle: These people are spiritual and somewhat introvert.

Activity 2: What is Resilient and how to become psychologically flexibly (15 min.)

The trainer will open a brainstorming session on what psychological resilience is and a discussion:
- What does the term psychological resilience mean to them?
- What psychological flexibility? How to achieve it?
- How do they recognize in themselves and others that they are resistant or not resistant?

After the brainstorming session, the trainer will summarize the resilience information given. The trainer can also compile the information into a PPT presentation according to *Attachment 2*. It will focus on the target group and their knowledge, accordingly going into depth on the topic.

Activity 3: My past sources of resilience – assessment (20 min.)

The trainer will instruct the participants: "In front of you is a SWOT analysis of strengths that you have. Your task is to reflect and try to find out what your strengths are by filling in the table *(Attachment 3)*."

Activity 4: My strengths' list (20 min.)

The trainer will instruct: "Everyone has talents and strengths that can be further developed. The following list *(Attachment 4)* represents 24 strengths/talents. Your task is to rate each strength from 1 to 24 according to how much each strength applies to you (1 is my main strength, 24 is my least developed strength). Use the material provided *(Attachment 4)*.

After completing the task, the trainer divides the participants into small groups and leads them to discuss the task process. They have to answer the following questions:
- Was it difficult for you to fulfil it?
- What was easy/hard?
- How did you choose your main talents and strengths?

Activity 5: In the eyes of a beholder (10 min.)

The trainer will provide instruction to the participants:

This tool helps to see your strengths from the perspective of others. Ask your friend or family member the following questions about you and answer them yourself:
- What are my 3 key talents and strengths?
- What activities should I engage in to apply these talents and strengths more often?
- What areas do you think I would be most successful in?

Compare your understanding of self to their understanding of you:
- Is there something surprising?
- Have you learnt something new about the way others see you?
- What are your main strengths that you should use constantly?

A group discussion follows where participants share their findings of seeing themselves through their own eyes and the eyes of others.

Activity 6: "Looking forward" (10 min.)

The trainer assigns a task:
"Please, identify one small thing that you can look forward to enjoying in the near future? Write it down. It can be as small as "having a cup of coffee" or "listening to a favourite song".

Activity 7: "Acts of kindness" (10 min.)

The trainer instructs: " Positive psychology practitioners suggest that performing acts of kindness help us become more resilient, better deal with stress and experience more happiness. Thus, your task is to perform 3 simple acts of kindness over the next week. Some examples are: paying a compliment, cooking a meal, sending a postcard to someone you haven't seen for a long time. When you finish, please write it on the kindness sheet *(Attachment 5)*. At the end of the training, we can share our feelings about what we have done."

Activity 8: "Monodrama" (10 min.)

The trainer explains: "We often stress due to contradictory wants and needs. For example, we love smoking, but at the same time we feel bad whenever we smoke because it affects health, our appearance, even emotions. Gestalt therapy uses a technique called "Monodrama" where a person (you) discusses this conflict between the two conflicting parties within themselves. Imagine that the conflict in you is between two people discussing the issue. It may be a bit awkward at first, but this discussion may help you to get to the solution and reduce levels of stress!"

The trainer then divides the participants into pairs. Each pair chooses one problem that one of the members of the pair is solving and they both look for arguments why and how to work with the problem. They write down their answers on the argument sheet *(Attachment 6)*.

Activity 9: "Positive RE-framing" (20 min.)

The trainer distributes the sheet from *Attachment 7* to the participants and assigns the following task: "Please, reflect on the questions bellow. Positive psychologists suggest that positive re-framing increases wellbeing, because a person starts focusing on positive thoughts and emotions."

After participants share their feelings about the activity in the group.

Activity 10: "Exceptions" (15 min.)

Trainer instructs: "We'll end this block with a tool where we focus on the positive. This tool allows you to identify positive practices from the past and bring more of those practices into your present. Think about times when you felt great and describe those moments *(Attachment 8).*"

After the activity, the trainer will create a space for participants to share the recorded insights from their positive experiences.

Activity 11: Coping Skills Toolbox (20 min.)
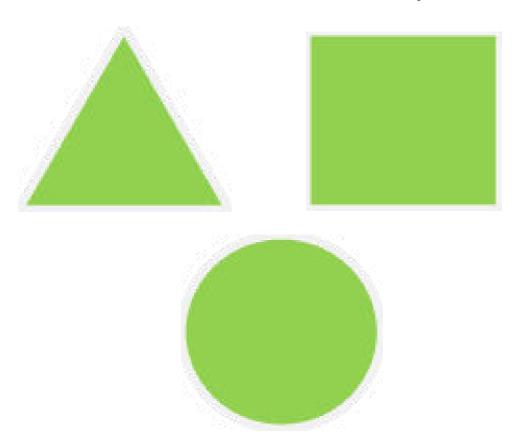
As part of this activity, the trainer will have the participants create a personal "Coping Toolkit". The trainer will provide materials such as art supplies, journals, and scissors and ask participants to create a visual representation of coping strategies, resources, and support systems that they can turn to during difficult times.

The trainer encourages their creativity and imaginativeness.

At the end of the session, participants can share and inspire each other with the outcomes they have created.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Introduction and icebreaker activity

Attachment 2: We can build psychological resilience

Each of us has found ourselves at least once in a situation that was emotionally challenging for us or our loved ones. In such situations, expected reactions to stress occur on an emotional, physical, cognitive, and behavioral level (fear, anxiety, knot in the stomach, worry, irritability, restlessness...). We say that these reactions are normal responses to abnormal events and they occur in everyone, including psychologically resilient individuals. So, what does it mean to be psychologically resilient?

What is resilience?
Emotional resilience—also called emotional agility—is the ability to bounce back emotionally from stressful situations. It means you can cope or deal with distress and move forward. It is a phenomena that enables children and young people to survive and function despite disadvantage and
risk beyond that of the normal challenges of growing up.

Resilience implies:
1. Understand what stress is and why we experience it
2. Understand the concept of resilience
3. Learn about different coping strategies

Evidence has shown that it is possible to identify the factors that have an impact on children's emotional health. Risks can be specific to the child, their family, their environment (including school) and life events:
- Loss or separation – resulting from death, parental separation, divorce, hospitalisation, loss of friendships especially in adolescence, family breakdown which results in the child having to live elsewhere;
- Life changes, e.g. birth of a sibling, moving house, changing schools; and
- Traumatic events – abuse, violence, accidents, injuries, war or natural disaster.

Some children and youth, against all the odds, develop into confident, competent and caring adults. A key therefore to the promotion and recovery of children's mental health is an understanding of the protective factors that make children and yoth resilient.

Psychological flexibility
Psychological flexibility, or rather its lack, was perfectly described by the famous psychologist Abraham Maslow when he said: "When we only have a hammer, we tend to treat all things as if they were nails." In other words, when we rigidly stick to old patterns, it will be difficult for us to open up to new possibilities and we will try to solve everything in the same way. And in life, this is often impossible and inevitably leads to suffering.

Therefore, we can say that psychological flexibility is our ability to recognize and adapt to different situations that life brings us. To change the way we look at things and, consequently, adjust our behavior in a way that allows us to have a life balance in the areas of life that are important to us.

If we do not develop psychological flexibility, we behave (according to Maslow) like an automatic car wash that can wash a car very well, but it will behave the same as if it were a car towards any other thing put in the wash. Thus, the results of washing anything else, except the car, will be weak.

Resilience factors
'Resilience does not constitute an individual trait or characteristic…… Resilience involves a range of processes that bring together quite diverse mechanisms' (Rutter, 1995).

There is a complex interplay between risk factors in children's lives and promoting their resilience. As disadvantage and stressful events accumulate for a child, then more protective or resilient factors are needed as a counterbalance.

Resilience factors in the child and youth:
- Secure early relationships
- Being female
- Higher intelligence
- Easy temperament when an infant
- Positive attitude, problem-solving approach
- Good communication skills
- Planner, belief in control
- Humour
- Religious faith
- Capacity to reflect

Resilience factors in the family:
- At least one good parent-child relationship
- Affection
- Clear, firm and consistent discipline
- Support for education
- Supportive long term relationship/absence of severe discord

Resilience factors in the community:
- Wider supportive networks
- Good housing
- High standard of living
- High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and antibullying
- Schools with strong academic and non-academic opportunities
- Range of positive sport/leisure activities

Resilient processes might seek to:
- Reduce the likelihood of negative chain reactions arising from the risk
- Promoting self-esteem and self-efficacy through the availability of secure and supportive personal relationships, or success in achieving tasks; and
- Opening up new and positive opportunities and offering turning points, where a risk path may be rerouted.

Are we born resilient?

We know that a young person or an adults chance of becoming very stressed, and it leading to anxiety or depression is a combination of nature and nurture. That means that how we react to situations is effected by what is passed on in our genes, how our parents, carers, family, friends deal with stresses and the circumstances that we experience in our life.

The good news is that skills to improve your resilience can be learnt. Resilience is not just learnt in one lesson so you need to be patient and be kind to yourself. Resilience is better thought of in the same way as any other skill and developed over time.

How Do You Spot Resilience?

Emotionally resilient young people are not identifiable at a glance, as few conclusions can be drawn from physical appearances alone. A small child can in fact have greater emotional resilience than a physically strong adolescent.

It is behaviour and expressed thoughts and feelings that give us the greatest insights. A resilient youth will have, or have had experience of a consistent, positive parent or care giver. They will present with a reasonable level of self-esteem, confidence and a sense of humour. They will usually have a circle of friends and be regularly attending school. Schools have a vital role in promoting resilience. A young person needs to be having their emotional needs met before they can effectively access learning.

A resilient young person, when worried or under pressure, will tend towards problem solving behaviour and be less likely to show extremes of violence or patterns of avoidant behaviour.

Why is Emotional Resilience Important?

Emotional resilience means you can manage anxiety and stress in a way that doesn't impair you on a day-to-day basis. For young person it's "fighting back the worry bully."

In contrast, people who struggle with emotional resilience experience anxiety or stress so intense that it:
- Becomes the only thing they can focus on
- Doesn't allow them to do what they need or want to do
- Impacts relationships

Building emotional resilience includes:
- Building self-acceptance
- Improving stress management strategies
- Building self-esteem
- Being mindful and focused on the present
- Expressing emotions wisely
- Choosing to react to stress in a way that won't harm the self or those around

Ways to become emotionally resilient:

Find acceptance

The first thing we need to practise in order to build our emotional resilience is acceptance. When we resist a situation, we expend unnecessary energy and cause ourselves unnecessary suffering. Think back to Person A in the delayed train example above. All that huffing, puffing, swearing and shouting will have used up lots of energy and probably made them feel more angry. For what purpose? Did it help the situation? No. And the only person who suffered in that scenario was them.

Person B, however, was able to accept the situation and think rationally about what to do next. They stayed calm and probably didn't experience any suffering, apart from some mild irritation.

To practise finding more acceptance, keep these ideas in mind and reflect on them when the need arises:

Change is inevitable: the only thing we can rely on in this world is impermanence!
We're not superhuman: we don't need all of the answers all of the time.
It's ok not to know: although it can be uncomfortable, sitting with uncertainty can be a powerful practice.
Stay open to what arises: if we can stay open and receptive to whatever may arise, we'll be ready and more easily able to adapt to adversity.

Be optimistic

Is your glass half empty or half full? Adopting an optimistic attitude can help us build emotional resilience, as it means we're always looking on the bright side. No matter how dire or tragic a situation may seem at first, there's always a silver lining to be found.

Even in a situation as painful as the death of a loved one, it's still possible to find the blessing. I women who lost her mother some years ago was able to experience this. Once she'd moved through some of her grief she was able to look back and reflect, and the silver lining of losing her mum was that it brought her closer to her dad.

You might think that being optimistic all the time is setting yourself up for disappointment. But, it depends how you look at it. Again, if something doesn't turn out the way you wanted, is there a silver lining to be found? What's the lesson that can be learned from this? No matter what the situation, there's always an opportunity for growth.

Have presence

Being mindful definitely contributes to our emotional resilience muscle. If we can practise being fully in the present moment with non-judgmental conscious awareness, we can truly embody our thoughts and emotions. We can be completely in the now. We can be ready for whatever arises.

Living more in the present means we're not constantly worrying about the past, ruminating over those 'what ifs' and dwelling on our regrets. It also means we're not catastrophising about the future, imagining scenarios that haven't even happened yet and may never do so.

Bringing mindfulness into our lives helps to give us a stronger sense of control – over our thoughts, our emotions and our life in general. Through mindfulness we also learn not to blame others when things or situations go wrong. We learn to accept what is and deal with it accordingly – just like Person B in our delayed train example.

Practise self-care
Self-care is not self-indulgent. In fact, it's essential for our physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. We only have one body and one life (unless you believe in reincarnation), so we need to take good care of it.

What do you do to look after your physical wellbeing? Are you active? Do you exercise? Do you eat and sleep well?

How about your mental wellbeing? What do you do to relax or re-energise your mind? Are you an overthinker? What do you do to switch off? Do you meditate? Are you creative?

And what about your emotional wellbeing? How do you express yourself? Do you have people you can share things with? Do you feel heard? Have you tried journalling?

Looking after ourselves and getting to know ourselves better will give us a deeper insight into our needs and desires, and help us understand how we react to certain situations. And self-care is a practice, so it needs to be done on a regular basis, preferably every day. How can you start to bring some self-care practices into your daily life, however small?

Attachment 3: My current sources of resilience

SUPPORT - that keeps you on on your feet	STRATEGIES - that keep you engaged
COMPASSION - which gives you comfort and hope	SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS - behaviour you demonstrated

Attachment 4: List of strengths

1. Creativity (Thinking of novel and productive ways to do things).
2. Appreciation of Beauty (Noticing and appreciating beauty or skilled performance in various domains, from nature to art to science).
3. Curiosity (Taking an interest in experience for its own sake; exploring and
4. discovering).
5. Love of Learning (Mastering new skills, related to the strength of curiosity).
6. Bravery (Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain).
7. Perspective (Being able to provide wise counsel to others).
8. Honesty (Speaking the truth, presenting oneself in a genuine way and acting in a sincere way; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions).
9. Fairness (Treating all people the same according to notions of fairness and justice).
10. Perseverance (Finishing what one starts; taking pleasure in completing tasks).
11. Hope (Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it).
12. Social Intelligence (Being aware of the motives/feelings of others and oneself).
13. Leadership (Encouraging a group to get things done and at the same time maintain good relations within the group).
14. Zest (Approaching life with excitement and energy; living life as an adventure; feeling alive and activated).
15. Kindness (Doing favors and good deeds for others; taking care of them).
16. Gratitude (Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks).
17. Teamwork (Working well as a member of a team; being loyal to the group).
18. Humor (Liking to laugh; bringing smiles to other people; seeing the light side).
19. Spirituality (Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe).
20. Forgiveness (Forgiving those who have done wrong; accepting others'
21. shortcomings; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful).
22. Humility (Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; not regarding oneself as more special than one is).
23. Love (Valuing close relations with others, being close to people).
24. Self-Regulation (Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined).
25. Judgment (Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; not jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence).
26. Prudence (Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted).

(This list of strengths was identified by Martin Seligman, 2004)

Attachment 5: Sheet of kindness

My 1st act of kindness:

_____
_____
_____

My 2nd act of kindness:

_____
_____
_____

My 3rd act of kindness:

_____
_____
_____

Attachment 6: Arguments sheet

Person 1 arguments for doing something (e.g., smoking):

_____
_____
_____

Person 2 arguments against doing something (e.g., smoking):

_____
_____
_____

Attachment 7: Positive reframing

Step 1: Describe a recent event or situation that triggered a negative reaction. Describe the thoughts that you had and the feelings you experienced. Try to remember what specific thoughts triggered those emotions.

_____
_____
_____

Step 2: Try reimagining the situation by finding positive alternative interpretations on what happened. Imagine that your alternative interpretations are actually true. How does this change your feelings? If you find it hard to imagine your feelings under the new circumstances, describe feelings that you think are likely to occur.

_____
_____
_____

Attachment 8: Exceptions

Please, think about the times you felt great and describe those times:
_____
_____
_____

Please, talk about the times when you did not experience overwhelming challenges.
_____
_____
_____

How was it possible that you were able to do that?
_____
_____
_____

How can you repeat that again?
_____
_____
_____

ABILITY TO ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS

Goals of the block

- learn the basic elements of communication, empathy and respect in a digital context
- understand how to improve these skills
- know how to avoid negative interactions online

Group

15 – 20 participants

Material

- flipchart
- markers

Length in minutes

130 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Introduction
Activity 2: Building relationships in a digital world
Activity 3: Active listening
Activity 4: Closing discussion

Instructions

Activity 1: Introduction

The trainer will welcome the participants and explain what to expect:
"Welcome to a learning activity aimed at developing key social skills in a digital world. Today's topic is relationship skills and the challenges the current digital era poses. The foundation of successful offline and online relationships is effective communication, empathy and mutual respect. At the same time, we recognize that the growing problem of hate speech and aggressive language can undermine these skills and disrupt healthy relationships. In the next session, we will explore the essential elements of communication, empathy and respect in a digital context. Together, we will try to understand how to improve these skills while avoiding negative online interactions."
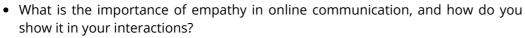
Activity 2: Building relationships in a digital world

The trainer will explain to the participants the issue of establishing relationships in the digital world *(Attachment 1)*. The trainer may use a flipchart to explain.

That is followed by a discussion on networking in which the trainer asks the following questions:
- Akým spôsobom ste sa stretli s problémami pri nadväzovaní vzťahov v digitálnom svete a ako ste ich prekonali?
- Aké stratégie používate na lepšie pochopenie emocionálneho kontextu za slovami iných v online komunikácii? Máte nejaké osvedčené postupy?

- What is the importance of empathy in online communication, and how do you show it in your interactions?
- Can you share an example of when you participated in an online community or work team and had to quickly adapt to different norms and ways of communicating? How did you manage this?
- How can you develop the ability to have constructive online discussions? Can you give an example of a time when you were able to do this?

This is followed by a discussion of the pitfalls and good practices in working with toxic people, with the trainer asking the following questions of the participants:
- Do you have experience working with people who exhibit toxic behaviour such as narcissism or gaslighting? How have you dealt with it?
- What strategies do you recommend for maintaining your own integrity and psychological well-being when interacting with people who try to undermine your confidence or manipulate you?
- What are your recommendations for recognizing potentially toxic relationships in digital environments and avoiding conflict with such individuals?
- If you have an experience with someone prone to aggressive behaviour or hate speech, how would you handle such a situation without disrupting team dynamics?

These questions should foster an interactive and in-depth discussion on networking, best practices and pitfalls that can arise in the digital space.

Activity 3: Active listening

The trainer chooses five people to send out the door.

The trainer will explain the activity (silent mail), in which he reads a story to the first participant, and he has to retell it to the next person behind the door. The activity focuses on listening, responding actively, and respecting others (expressing emotions, engaging, etc.).

The trainer will tell the story from *Attachment 2* to the participants left in the room. He then invites one participant back into the room from outside the door (1 of 5, four remain outside). The trainer selects one participant from the room who heard the story, whose task is to retell the story to the participant who came in. His task will then be to tell the story to the next new participant from outside the door (the second of the five, leaving three participants outside). This process continues until the last fifth participant behind the door has heard the story.

The trainer will invite those who were outside the door to share their feelings and open a discussion about the activity and active listening:
1. Was it easy to retell a story you only heard once?
2. What would you do differently if the activity was to be repeated?
3. What does active listening mean to you, and what situations lead you to engage in this activity?
4. When was the last time you felt that someone was actively listening to you, and what did that do to the situation and your sense of involvement?

What skills or practices can you think of that could help you become a better active listener in your daily interactions?

Activity 4: Closing discussion

The trainer leads the final discussion and invites participants to reflect on the following questions:
1. What do I want to improve about networking?
2. What do I want to look out for?
3. What is important to me, and what do I want to take home from today's training?

Attachments

Attachment 1: Theory on the issue of relationship building

Building relationships in a digital world combines aspects of psychology, sociology and leadership that can help an individual become an effective team player and develop.

- The psychology of communication and interaction: In the digital world, we are often limited by the space of non-verbal communication offered by offline communication. That means we have to get a lot of information from text messages, emoticons and tone of voice. Understanding the basic principles of communication psychology can help interpret the words and the emotional context behind them. The ability to 'read between the lines' becomes crucial.

- The sociology of online communities and teams: The digital world is full of diverse online communities and work teams. Each of these groups has its norms, values and ways of communicating. Understanding social dynamics and group psychology can help individuals integrate and adapt more quickly in the digital space, which is essential for effective collaboration.

- Leadership and personal development: Cultivating one's leadership and personal development is key offline and online. The ability to communicate, motivate and lead teams, even when physically separated, is challenging. The digital space places a premium on the ability to inspire and maintain team spirit remotely.

- Emotional intelligence and empathy: Emotional intelligence plays an important role in establishing relationships and communicating effectively both online and offline. The ability to recognise, understand and respond appropriately to the emotions of others is key to building trust. Empathy, the ability to put yourself in others' shoes, helps create deeper and more authentic relationships in a digital world where non-verbal cues can be lacking.

- Conflict prevention and constructive discussions: The ability to not only identify conflict situations but also to resolve them effectively is key to maintaining a positive environment. Leadership skills such as having constructive discussions and the ability to prevent conflict are invaluable for team members, whether they are in the same room or on different sides of the world.

Attachment 2: Napkin story

Imagine you have just sat in your favourite café and the famous artist Pablo Picasso is next to you. Amid his creative musings, he takes a napkin and starts doodling. You are witnessing this moment when a work of art is created. Picasso leaves paintings, curves and shapes on the napkin that seem random but at the same time bear his unique handwriting.

With this simple act, Picasso became a creator and an innovator. His ability to see art in the mundane and be inspired by the moment is one of the keys to his work. Picasso knew that art was about the finished work, process, and personal approach.

Now imagine a tourist sitting next to you, watching Picasso's efforts. When the napkin is covered with unique shapes and colours, he turns to the artist and smiles: "May I keep this napkin?" "Yes," he replies. Picasso smiles at her and says: "Of course, but for a price." The tourist nods in confusion and asks why the price is so high when it only takes a few minutes. Picasso replies with a cold smile: "Yes, but it took me a lifetime to learn."

Through this moment, the tourist learns not only about the value of the artwork but also about Picasso's life commitment that resulted in these brief but extraordinary moments of creation. Implicit in this story is the lesson that a true artist (and, in this case, a good team player) not only sees the potential in everyday situations but invests time, effort, and life energy into honing their skills and abilities.

With this idea of art, creativity, and personal engagement in the process, let our "Napkin Story" activity begin. I am curious to see how this story will change as it is passed from one participant to the next, just as the napkin changed under Picasso's paintbrush. Let's begin and discover the power of active listening and sharing.

Space for notes.

ABILITY TO REFLECT YOUR LEVEL OF SELF-ESTEEM

Goals of the block

- discover the image of: "How I see myself and how others see me" and "How others perceive my behaviour"
- to be aware of the differences in what one person perceives as an asset that I strive for, the other person may perceive as a drawback
- clarify how we can achieve our goals with increased self-confidence and self-esteem

Group

15 – 20 účastníkov

Material

- A3 paper
- flipchart
- papers, pencils and other stationery
- printed characteristic cards *(Attachment 1)*

Length of minutes

120 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Introduction
Activity 2: Personal activity
Activity 3: Healthy self-esteem
Activity 4: Dialogue with the inner voice
Activity 5: Japanese Cube - test

Instructions

Activity 1: Introduction

The trainer writes the following motto on flipchart paper: We create our world according to our feelings.

The trainer explains: "To perceive reality more fully, we depend on the information we receive from other people. It is good to be aware of the differences in how one person perceives as an asset that I strive for, another person may perceive as a deficiency."

Activity 2: Personal activity

Instructions:

1. The trainer will distribute an evaluation sheet *(Attachment 1)* to each participant.
2. Each participant draws nine cards at random *(Attachment 2)*. The remaining cards are in a pile on the table.
3. Each participant still gets three special cards with the statements "MORE", "KEEP", and "LESS". They place these face up (uncovered) in front of the table.
4. Participant 1 takes the top card from the deck on the table, looks at all ten of his cards and thinks about the following questions:

- Which 9 cards best describe me?
- In which characteristics do I recognize myself?
- Which tenth card is a good fit for another team member?

5. He hands this tenth card to that person, i.e. places the card face up on the table in front of them. In doing so, the participant who hands over the card says whether this co-participant should exhibit the trait more, less, or keep the current level.

6. The card is handed over with a comment:
- "I see you as …… I wish you to continue to show this quality".
- "I wish you were a little more/less …"

7. No one may refuse a card, and no one may have more than nine cards. The addressed participant then continues.

8. The activity ends when one of the following conditions is met:
- 12 rounds were played
- participants have at least 8 cards face up in front of them
- the deck of cards on the table is used

9. At the end of the activity, each participant has 9 cards in their hand that they have kept, which form an image of how they see themselves. On the table in front of each participant are the cards that have been donated, and they are placed according to whether to keep the trait, show it less or show it more. These cards form an image of how the other participants see the participant.

10. The traits are recorded in the appropriate boxes on the evaluation sheet.

DISCLOSURE: If someone is uncertain about the meaning of a card, the initiator takes it without explanation and the participant takes another card.

Independent work follows, in which participants are asked to write answers to the following questions on paper. It has two parts:

1. "How do I perceive myself"
- Do I like this image of myself?
- What pleases me about it?
- What makes me angry?
- Which card best describes me?
- Which card describes me the least?
- Which qualities would I like to keep, and which would I like to lessen or strengthen?
- What has led me to keep some cards and pass others on?
- Which card would I have passed on two years ago - do these qualities belong to my current self-image?

2. "How do others perceive me"
- Which card am I most excited about?
- Which card do I think about the most?
- Which card outrages me the most?
- What is my attitude towards expressed wishes?
- Which characteristic do I want to keep? Which do I want to express more or less?
- What are the differences, matches, or ambiguities between the two perspectives?
- What questions arise from them?

The trainer will then open a group discussion - self-image discovery and invite the participants to answer the following questions:

- What did I take away from this discussion?
- What would I like to work on?

Note to trainer: Ensure that participants speak directly. Use the "I" form.
Recommended literature in the topic: Sabine Hugentoblero, Bernhard Octli, Doris Ruckstuhl.

Activity 3: Healthy self-esteem

The trainer will introduce the participants to the theoretical foundations on the topic of healthy self-esteem:

"What follows is a clarification on the themes of healthy self-esteem and self-worth in the context of a rapidly changing world. Today, we find ourselves amid a paradox. On one hand, there is a growing awareness of the importance of mindfulness, self-love and conscious self-assertion. On the other hand, the challenges posed by the digital age can disrupt our peace, well-being and sense of self-worth. In today's age of complex stimuli, social networks and constant change, adapting and coping with challenges is the key to success. So, how can we achieve our goals with increased confidence and self-esteem? How can we simultaneously avoid the extremes of pride and inflated ego on the one hand and feelings of underestimation and anxiety on the other? We will now explore this issue from several perspectives. We will combine knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to help you build a solid, healthy self-esteem and self-worth foundation. This activity will give you the tools and perspective to face today's challenges better and achieve your goals with greater confidence, self-esteem and inner balance. Let's dive into this together and discover ways to see yourself and your value in alignment with the world around you."

The trainer then asks the participants to write on paper their own definitions of the following terms:

- Pride
- Critical inner voice
- Healthy self-esteem and self-confidence

Discussion and presentation of answers follow (approx. ten min.).

After the discussion, the trainer will present the theoretical knowledge on the mentioned concepts (pride, critical inner voice, healthy self-esteem and self-confidence) according to *Attachment 3*.

After the presentation of the necessary knowledge, the trainer will again open a discussion focusing on the participants' own experience: "What comes to mind from your own experience that you would like to share?"

Activity 4: Dialogue with the inner voice

The trainer will begin by reassuring participants that this activity is a safe space to share and process emotions.

The trainer will select two volunteers. One will play the role of the negative inner voice, and the other will play the role of the person who works with self-esteem. The person playing the role of the negative inner voice will begin to talk to the other person.

They may present negative thoughts, doubts and self-criticism that could undermine their self-esteem. The other person, working with self-esteem, will try to respond calmly and rationally. They will look for arguments to counterbalance the negative thoughts. They may use a rational approach, reminding themselves of their achievements, positive qualities or previous successful situations.

If a person working with self-esteem starts to have trouble finding arguments or starts to feel overwhelmed by negative thoughts, the trainer will switch to calming techniques. They may settle down in a comfortable place or lie down on a mattress if one is available. Afterwards, the participant takes a few minutes to engage in simple meditation or deep breathing. The trainer can guide the participants through this meditation and help them focus on the present moment and release the pressure of their thoughts.

The activity is followed by a discussion about how the participants felt during the activity. Questions may include how participants felt as they played different roles, how they worked with their inner voice, and whether they found the calming techniques effective.

This activity allows participants to practically explore how to work with negative thoughts and achieve calming and distance from the inner voice. It is also important to add that if someone has problems with negative thoughts or healthy self-esteem, they should consider professional help from a psychologist or therapist.

Questions to discuss the activity:
- What new insights or knowledge did you gain during this session regarding the importance of self-esteem and creating a positive self-image?
- How did you feel about working with your inner voice and finding the positive aspects in your life?
- Can you share specific situations in which you have felt a change in your attitude towards yourself?

Activity 5: Japanese Cube - test

The trainer introduces an activity called "Japanese Cube", which takes the form of completing a short test: "A simple test with Japanese cubes will reveal your personality in 5 minutes. This psychological test based on pictures will reveal what you are hiding. You can write down or draw your answers. Just take a sheet of paper and a pen and answer the following questions truthfully."

Instructions:
- Imagine you are standing in the desert, and you see a cube. What will the cube look like in your imagination? Is it big, small, transparent, wooden, stone...? How big is it compared to the desert? Let your imagination run wild.
- Now imagine a ladder next to the cube in the desert. Does it lean towards the cube or not? Will it be long or short? What colour will it be?
- Now add a horse to your imagination. Will it run freely or be a tame, saddled stallion? What is the distance between the cube and the horse?
- Continue your imagination. A storm is coming. What is it in your imagination? A real hurricane or just a light rain? Is it in one place, or is it moving? Is it directly above you, or do you see it only in the distance?
- Finally, imagine a flower. Where is it located? And what colours does it have? Is there only one, or do you imagine more? Where is it among the last things you imagined?

The trainer then discusses their drawings/descriptions with the participants, interpreting the Japanese cube from *Attachment 4*.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Evaluation sheet

Evaluation sheet

My cards from the game, from the day: …………………………………….at …………………………

How do I perceive myself

Do I like this image of myself? What pleases me about it? What makes me angry?
Which card best describes me? Which card represents me the least?
Which qualities would I like to keep, and which would I want to soften or strengthen?
What has led me to keep some cards and pass others on?
Which card would I have passed on two years ago - and do these qualities belong to my self-image today?

How others perceive me

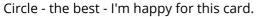| More	Keep	Less

Which card am I most excited about?
Which card do I think about the most? Which card outrages me the most?
What is my attitude towards expressed wishes? Which characteristic do I want to keep? Which do I want to manifest more or less?
What are the differences, congruencies, or ambiguities between the two perspectives? What questions arise from them?

Mark the results on the card according to the following key:

Circle - the best - I'm happy for this card.
Cross - scratch - I disagree - it's a mistake. I certainly don't have this trait.
Asterisk - change from the past - I have changed this trait from the past - how can I tell?
Question mark - I'm thinking about it - I'd like to hear more - first group comments, then individual.
Star - which one will I work with - How? More, preserve, less.

How do I specifically know the trait/characteristic I circled? Describe a specific situation in which it manifests itself and when others might perceive it.

....

....

....

....

....

What function/characteristic do I want to work on?

....

....

....

....

....

Which feature/characteristic do I want to work with? How specifically do I want to work with it?

....

....

....

....

....

Attachment 2:

Hard-working	Responsible	Strict	Brave	Extroverted	Unburdened	Full of energy
Realistic	Productive	Thankful	Prompt	Indifferent	Has a clear objective	Harmoniser
Hardheaded	Flexible	Natural	Shallow	Diplomatic	Can get passionate	Ambitious
Proper	Agile	Intense	Self-critical	Stable	Impulsive	Able to evolve
Caring	Entertaining	Persuasive	Respectful	Logic oriented	Powerful	Specific
Loyal	Effective	Gentle	Sceptic	Willing	Trusts easily	Quick thinking
Assertive	Supportive	Open to agreement	Open	Restrained	Improver	Positive
Problem solver	Engaged	Engaging	Constructive	Discrete	Honest	Exact
Elegant	Principled	Considerate	Spiritually based	Calm	Integrative	Self-restrained
Soft	Foresighted	Versatile	Full of strength	reticent	Hard to please	Caring
Democratic	Independent	Stubborn	Strong	Quite	Aware of quality	Malicious
Dynamic	Emotional	Critical	Strong-willed	Trustworthy	Fun	Cheeky
Punctual	Humble	Well-read	Future-oriented	Disciplined	Friendly	Quick thinker
Serious	Brave	Combative	Sporty	Polite	Competitive	Expressive
Conscientious	Happy	Generous	Methodical	Righteous	Empathetic	Creative
Disturbed	Resilient	Smart	Careful	Submissive	Entrepreneurial	Social
With a sense of duty	Intelligent	Objective	Traditional	Reputable	Thoughtful	Has a good taste
Carefree	Intuitive	Gullible	Accessible	Stimulating	Influential	Imaginative
Practical	Understanding	Gifted for learning	Direct	Initiative	Original	Indulgent
Collegial	Motivated	Fearless	Nimble	Spontaneous	Creative	Snappy
Abrupt	Fast	Full of ideas	Passionate	Rooted	Inventive	Cooperative

Attachment 3: Theory for Activity 3

Pride

Pride is an emotional state defined as excessive and inadequate self-esteem caused by a feeling of superiority, of being better than others and a belief in one's exceptionalism. It manifests itself as a tendency to self-enhancement, a lack of humility and a desire to show superiority to others, whether through excellence, possessions or other means.

In today's digital world, pride can take many forms and manifestations:
- Social media and personal image: Many people in the digital world put their lives and achievements on display on social networks. That can lead to the impression that they are better than others and thus to pride. People can deliberately highlight their achievements and the positive aspects of their lives while hiding annoyances and problems.
- Competition and comparison: In the digital world, it is easier to compare oneself to others, not only in terms of achievements but also appearance, lifestyle and material wealth. This comparison mechanism can fuel feelings of superiority and pride.

- Cyberbullying and negative comments: On the other side of the spectrum, pride can aggressively manifest itself when an individual with overconfidence attacks or humiliates others on social media. That may be due to a desire to gain attention or damage the reputation of others.
- Virtual world as a mask: The digital world can provide a false sense of anonymity and detachment from reality. That can create a false identity that emphasises pride, arrogance and superiority that may not be so apparent in the real world.
- Dependence on feedback: People may seek validation and approval from others on social media, which can boost their ego and create the impression that they are unique and special.

Overall, pride in today's digital world can manifest itself in various ways, reinforced by the easy availability of public speech and how social media allows us to present ourselves and interact with others.

Critical inner voice

The critical inner voice is a term used in psychology and mental health to refer to an internal dialogue or monologue that tends to be negative, critical, and self-critical. This inner voice can include criticism, judgment, self-doubt, and lack of self-esteem. It is an inner critic that echoes in our thoughts and can harm our emotional and mental well-being.

The critical inner voice can play a significant role in a digital world where social media is often filled with seemingly perfect images and constant comparison.

When we excessively monitor social media and compare ourselves to unrealistic images of other people, several things can happen:
- Excessive comparison: The critical inner voice can be activated when we constantly compare ourselves to what we see on social media. Comparing our weaknesses to other people's best moments can lead to feelings of inadequacy and self-worth.
- Unrealistic ideal: Social media often showcases the best aspects of people's lives. A critical inner voice can reinforce the idea that to be successful or happy, we must achieve the same ideal we see in others, which may be unrealistic.
- Self-criticism and lack of self-esteem: When we view social media too much, the critical inner voice can amplify and reinforce our self-criticism. We may begin to doubt ourselves and feel a lack of self-worth due to not achieving what we see in others.
- Feeling lonely: Constantly comparing ourselves to other people can create loneliness and isolation, as we may begin to feel that we are the only one who doesn't have everything 'perfect'.

To avoid the adverse effects of a critical inner voice and excessive comparison on social media, it is important to develop critical thinking, self-advocacy and the ability to distinguish between the fundamental aspects of life and what is presented online. Maintaining a balanced approach to the digital world and remembering one's values, achievements, and journeys is also important.

Healthy self-esteem and self-respect in a digital world

Healthy self-esteem in a digital world is where individuals have a realistic and balanced view of their abilities, values and identity. A person with healthy self-esteem is aware of their strengths and weaknesses and does not feel the need to constantly compare themselves to others or present themselves as someone else. They have a solid inner foundation resistant to external pressures and unrealistic ideals.

Healthy self-esteem in the digital world means one has a positive attitude towards oneself, can accept oneself as one is and likes oneself without getting validation from others. An individual with healthy self-esteem understands that no one is perfect and can deal with their mistakes and imperfections. He has a balance between what he sees on social media and what he perceives as his values and goals.

Work on maintaining a healthy balance:
- Conscious monitoring: Be aware that what you see on social media is usually only part of reality. Follow the content that inspires you and brings you joy while being aware that there may be many unseen challenges behind it all.
- Self-acceptance: Work towards accepting yourself as you are. Remember that no one is perfect, and it's normal to have times when you feel vulnerable or dissatisfied.
- Recognize the critical inner voice: Be aware of critical thoughts that may come to mind and try to challenge them. Ask yourself if your thoughts are realistic and valid.
- Limit comparison: Constantly comparing yourself to others can trigger negative emotions. Focus on your achievements and progress and be inspired, not demotivated, by others.
- Digital detox: Take a break from social media occasionally. This "digital detox" will allow you to focus on the real world and strengthen your inner balance.
- Skills development: Work on your personal and professional development. Create achievements and goals that will motivate you no matter what you see online.
- Support and personal connection. Personal interaction can help you keep perspective and build real relationships.

Working on healthy self-esteem and self-worth in a digital world is ongoing. It's about developing skills that allow you to better manage the pressures and challenges of the online environment without losing your authenticity and inner stability.

Attachment 4: Interpretation of the Japanese Cube Test

Cube: It represents how you perceive the world. If the cube is translucent, people see right through you. The cube's material represents your feelings and whether you are tough or vulnerable. The size of the cube compared to the desert represents your ego. If the cube is large compared to the desert, you have a high opinion of yourself. Does it overlap with the desert sand?

Ladder: It represents your friends. Your friends can call you for support and help if the ladder is on the cube. They can rely on you. The distance between the ladder and the cube shows your proximity to your friends.

Horse: It is a symbol of your lover or ideal lover. The distance between the horse and the cube represents how close you are to your boyfriend/girlfriend. If the horse is tied, it indicates the need for control in the relationship. If it is saddled, you feel secure with it. If the horse is loose and unsaddled, it suggests that your partner is uncontrollable and unpredictable.

Storm: It indicates obstacles that enter your life. If the storm passes, your current problem has a solution in the near future. However, if the storm does not pass, it is a current obstacle in your life with no solution in sight. The storm's size represents how you perceive the problem and the storm's distance. The more distant the storm, the less important the problem is to you. However, if the storm is strong, you are concerned about the problem in your life.

Flower: It represents your children and your desire for children. The closer the flower is to the cube, the closer the relationship you have with children or, the more urgent the need to have them. The more flowers, the more children you want.

THE ABILITY TO VALUE YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Goals of the block

- know the types of appreciation and the value of appreciation
- know how to name and work with personal trauma
- know how to use at least three methods of appreciation

Group

12 – 20 participants

Material

- pens, markers, flipchart, clean pieces of paper
- SWOT questions and SWOT Table *(Attachment 1)*
- Five languages of appreciation *(Attachment 2)*

Length in minutes

110 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Identify strengths
Activity 2: Personal SWOT analysis
Activity 3: The Five Languages of Appreciation

Instructions

Activity 1: Identify strengths (20 min.)

This team-building activity helps team members think about and articulate the strengths that others bring to the team. This activity should be included in training when participants already know each other. The goal of the activity is to improve each team member's ability to recognize the strengths of others and to become aware of the qualities that others appreciate about them. The impact on a person of seeing the strengths that others attribute to them is motivating.

The trainer will inform the participants that there will be a team activity, which will involve each member sharing, in one sentence maximum, what they appreciate about the other members. The trainer will give all participants blank paper and a pen/pencil.

Task: Each participant writes their name in the middle of the sheet. After writing the name, they hand their sheet to the person sitting on their left hand. In this way, each participant has their neighbour's sheet. The person holding the sheet writes around the name a strength or characteristic that they value about that person. They can write a maximum of one sentence, which will be anonymous. After writing the sentence, they pass the sheet to the next person on their left. Thus, each sheet with the names of the participants will go around the circle and contain each participant's opinions. The task ends when the name sheet arrives in the hands of its owner.

When all participants are finished, the trainer will ask them to share one item from their worksheet.

At the end of the activity, the trainer will instruct the participants to take their sheets with them and be aware of how they might continue to look for qualities they value in others.

The participants can use the list of strengths in the next activity.

Activity 2: Personal SWOT analysis (45 min.)

At the beginning of the activity, the trainer summarizes the principles of SWOT analysis and illustrates the basic SWOT diagram on a flipchart. The trainer explains and shows the different parts of the SWOT analysis with an example.

He then distributes the printed SWOT questions and the SWOT table *(Attachment 1)* to the participants.

Task: Participants complete the table - a personal SWOT analysis - according to the supporting questions in the *attachment*. They have 25 minutes to do this.

When all participants have completed the task, they share in the group by selecting one answer from the many answers from the table: one strength, one weakness, one opportunity and one threat and present it to the group.

At the end of the activity, the trainer will point out that everyone has strengths and weaknesses. It is important to know yourself. It is good to use our strengths more and spend less time on our weaknesses.

Activity 3: The Five Languages of Appreciation (45 min.)

The trainer will divide the participants into five groups. Each group will be given a brief description of 1 language of appreciation *(Attachment 2)*.

Task: Each group introduces the appreciation language they have described to the other participants using a short role-play method.

After each role-play, a group reflection will take place, and in the discussion, the other participants will reflect on what kind of appreciation the role-play depicted. The trainer will conclude each discussion by explaining and summarising what the language (type) of appreciation was and may give further examples.

At the end of the activity, the trainer will summarize the languages of appreciation and emphasize that each person perceives appreciation differently. That is, they speak a different language of appreciation.

Attachments

Attachment 1: SWOT questions and table

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

SWOT questions:

Strengths
What advantages do you have that others don't (such as skills, certifications, education, or contacts)?
What do you do better than anyone else?
What personal resources do you have access to?
What do other people consider to be your strengths?
Which of your accomplishments are you most proud of?
What values do you believe other people fail to exhibit?
Are you part of a network that no one else is involved in? If so, what connections do you have with influential people?

Weaknesses
What tasks do you usually avoid because you don't feel confident doing them?
What will people around you perceive as your weaknesses?
Are you completely confident in your education and training skills? If not, where are you the weakest?
What are your negative work habits (e.g., are you often late, disorganized, temperamental, or poor at handling stress)?
Do you have character traits that hold you back in your field (for example, if you have to run meetings regularly, fear of public speaking would be a significant weakness)?

Opportunities
What opportunities are opening up for you?
What trends could you take advantage of?
Do you have a network of contacts that can help you or give you good advice?
Is there a need in your area that no one is filling?
How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?

Threats
What threats could harm you?
What obstacles are you currently facing at work/school?
Is the demand for the things you do changing?
Does changing technology threaten your position?
What threats do your weaknesses expose you to?

Attachment 2: 5 languages of appreciation

Five ways to express appreciation are:
- Words of assurance
- Quality time
- Acts of service
- Giving tangible gifts
- Physical touch

Words of assurance

This language of appreciation means to utter words that let a person know they have done something valuable. However, it is not enough to throw out occasional and generic words like "Good job!" To be effective with words of assurance, be specific. Saying "Great job!" every time someone delivers a good performance will lose its effect over time since it is a vague statement that is so easy to use. Choosing a specific part of someone's performance gives the praise meaning.

Quality time

Quality time means listening to the person rather than talking and letting them express their thoughts. An example might be - having coffee with a person, during which we give them our full attention and show genuine interest.

Acts of service

This language of appreciation especially appeals to those who think, "Talk is cheap - why don't you do something?" Physically taking on a task and perhaps even mitigating that work from someone else shows that you recognize the amount of work they are doing and appreciate it - by actually doing something!

Giving tangible gifts

This language of appreciation especially appeals to those who think, "Talk is cheap - why don't you do something?" Physically taking on a task and mitigating that work from someone else shows that you recognize their work and appreciate it - by actually doing something!

Physical touch

This language of appreciation makes perfect sense in a family context. In work relationships, be careful. A high five, a fist bump or a handshake is generally acceptable in the Western world. In some cultures, people often greet each other with a kiss on each cheek. In the workplace, a simple hand on the shoulder or a pat on the back can resonate with those who respond to physical touch, and that's when they perceive appreciation.

Source: Inspired by the book The 5 Languages Of Appreciation At Work (Päť jazykov ocenenia na pracovisku) od autorov Gary Chapman a Paul White.

Space for notes.

THE ART OF RELAXATION

Goals of the block
- understand the importance of relaxation as a prevention against burnout
- know at least one relaxation technique

Group
8 – 20 participants

Material

- data projector, Wi-Fi, flipchart, markers, papers, pencils, crayons, printed anti-stress colouring pictures *(Attachment 2)*
- printed emoji cards *(Attachment 1)* or other communication cards (e.g. https://www.b-creative.cz/terapeuticke-pomucky-b-creative-zivot-je-zivot-life-is-life-cards)

Length in minutes
100 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Introduction
Activity 2: "How are you today?"
Activity 3: Positional statements on mental health and stress management
Activity 4: The importance of relaxation and rest in our lives
Activity 5: Demonstration of relaxation techniques and how to use them
Activity 6: Your opinion

Instructions

Activity 1: Introduction (5 min.)

The trainer will introduce themselves and open the training topic, "Effective communication and sharing are essential for youth workers to create a safe and inclusive environment where young people feel understood, respected and empowered. By actively practising these skills, youth workers can build strong relationships with the youth they work with, facilitate constructive conversations, resolve conflicts and promote personal development. As role models and facilitators, youth workers shape the young people they work with, especially in the social and emotional domains. Understanding the importance and nuances of communication enables them to guide young people in developing their communication skills, encouraging self-expression, empathy and respect for others."

Activity 2: "How are you today?" (15 min.)

Preparation: the trainer sets up a circle of chairs and prepares communication cards in the middle of the floor (if he/she chooses the Emoji cards from *Attachment 1*, he/she prints and cuts out each picture separately) so that each participant has a chance to see the cards and the other participants in the group. The trainer sits the participants in a circle so that they are as comfortable as possible and invites them to introduce themselves briefly.

The trainer then asks the participants, "How are you today? Sometimes, finding the words for this question is difficult, so cards like this can be useful. Try to look at them and choose 1 card that represents how you are today (if the trainer uses Emoji cards, he/she will ask the participants to choose three cards)."

The trainer waits for everyone to choose, then sits them down in the circle again. He invites the participants to say how they are today and how their chosen card relates to it.

In the end, the trainer praises the participants and acknowledges their confidence and courage.

Activity 3: Positional statements on mental health and stress management (20 min.)

The trainer will create enough space in the room for the activity and introduce it: "The following activity is to find out what rest and relaxation means to you. You will hear several statements that do not have a correct or incorrect answer. Try to imagine a scale, and if you agree with the statement, move to the right side of the room. If you are undecided, stay standing in the middle; if you disagree, go to the left."

Statements:
A. Mental health is just as important as physical health.
B. I have influence to improve my mental health.
C. When I feel exhausted, I know what can help me.
D. I have good time management.
E. I purposefully create space to relax.
F. Social media affects my relaxation.
G. The only proper relaxation is active movement.

In between the statements, the trainer creates space and leads the discussion among the participants.

Activity 4: The importance of relaxation and rest in our lives (25 min.)

The trainer puts flipchart paper and markers on the floor. He divides the participants into groups of 3-4.

Then, he opens the discussion with the following questions:
- What do you think relaxation is?
- How do you relax?
- What do you associate with relaxation?
- Are you more in favour of passive or active relaxation?
- Advantages and disadvantages of active and passive relaxation?

The trainer facilitates the group discussions.

The activity can conclude with insights about relaxation and promoting the inclusion of relaxation in everyday life: "Psychologically, relaxation is more than just a state of rest. It is a process that reduces the effects of stress on the mind and body. Relaxation techniques can help manage symptoms of anxiety, depression and sleep disorders. They can also improve focus, concentration and overall cognitive function, making them particularly beneficial for young people in their formative years. It is therefore important to constantly raise the topic of rest and relaxation, encouraging young people to relax. If we need help, bringing in a professional, such as a psychologist or therapist, is perfectly fine."

Activity 5: Demonstration of relaxation techniques and how to use them (20 min.)

The trainer will create space for participants to try out relaxation techniques. It is important to remember that this is only a demonstration of relaxation techniques. For many of them, professional education or training is required to use the techniques in practice.

I. Guided imagination:
The trainer asks participants to close their eyes and imagine a peaceful place or situation when they last felt calm. In doing so, he will use descriptive language to engage all five senses.

Demonstration: "Find a comfortable position. Close your eyes. Please take a deep breath, hold it, and then slowly exhale. Imagine you are at the edge of a calm, beautiful lake. The water is calm. The sky is brilliant blue. Breathe in. Imagine the peace that fills your body. As you exhale, let go of any tension or stress. Continue to breathe calmly and exhale the tension. Remember that you are in control of your relaxation."

Source: (https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/relaxation-techniques-for-stress-relief.htm)

II. Art Therapy:
The trainer clarifies: "Art is a great way to relax. It is important to remember that this is just an example of what art therapy might look like, as therapeutic training is required to run an art therapy group."

The trainer prepares a quiet place for the participants by turning on calm, soothing music. He gives the participants two tasks in turn:
- Task 1: "Draw a memory of a time when you felt most relaxed."
- Task 2: "Choose one of the anti-stress colouring sheets *(Attachment 2)* and start colouring."

III. Mindfulness walk:
The trainer will organise a short walk and encourage participants to focus on the present moment and their immediate surroundings, noticing colours, sounds and smells.

IV. Short version of Jacobson's relaxation technique:
Demonstration: "Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Start with your toes, tense them for five seconds and then relax. Move to your feet, then your calves, and continue this pattern to your head. In the end, the whole body should feel relaxed."

Source: Adalbert Olschewski- Progresivní svalová relaxace

V. Breathing techniques:
1. Box breathing: Breathe in for a count of four, hold the breath for a count of four, breathe out for a count of four, and then wait for a count of four, and then breathe in again. Repeat this process for a few minutes.
2. 4-7-8 Breathing: Inhale to a count of four, hold the breath for a count of seven, and then exhale for eight. This method is beneficial for reducing anxiety and aiding sleep.

Source: Je ok, že nie si ok: Pomoc pri strese existuje (https://mkmk.facebook.com/ipcko/posts/4060478784006052)

Activity 6: Your opinion (5 min.)

The trainer will invite participants to anonymously answer a question in the slido application: What did they take away from today's workshop?

The trainer will conclude: "The art of relaxation is a skill that can be of great benefit to both youth workers and the young people they serve. Youth workers can build a more relaxed, focused, and resilient community by incorporating these strategies into their work. Thank you for your attention!"
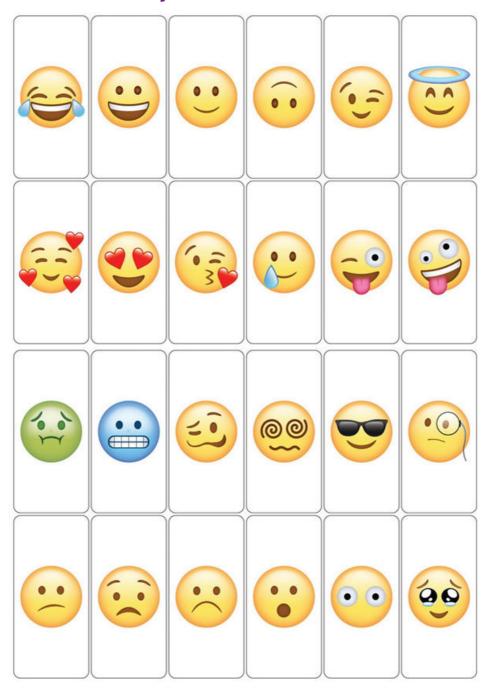
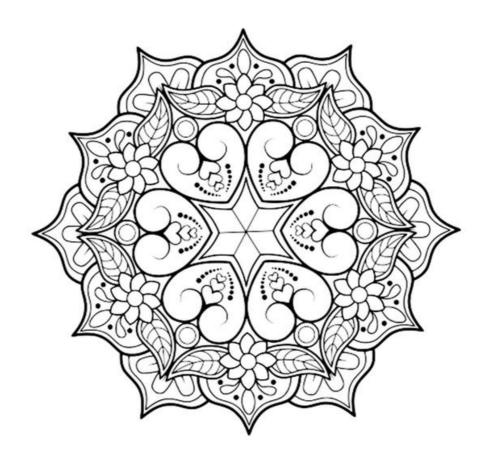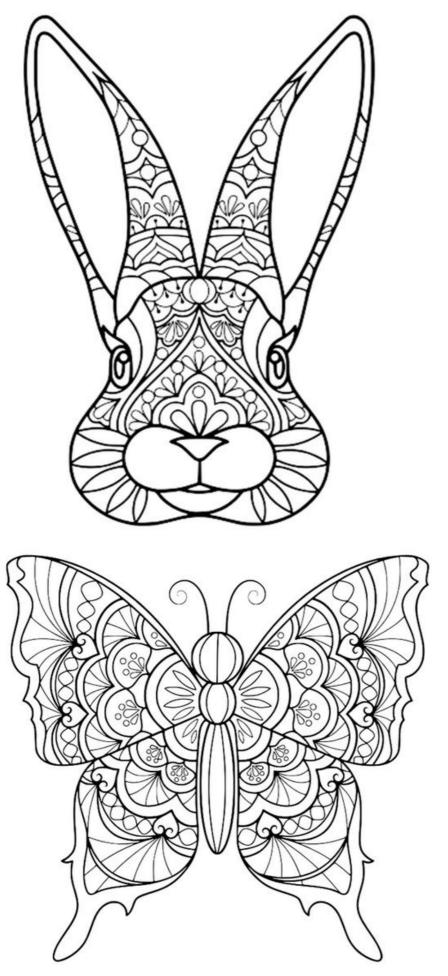# Attachments

Attachment 1: Emoji cards

More colouring pages can be found at: https://www.omalovanky.sk/antistresove-omalovanky/

STRATEGIC TIME MANAGEMENT

Goals of the block

- to be able to define boundaries for work better
- set clear personal management objectives
- be aware of how to improve the management of their time

Group

10 – 15 participants

Material

- data projector, wifi, flipchart, markers, papers, pens, crayons
- printed *Attachment 2*
- printed emoji cards *(Attachment 1)* or other communication cards (e.g. https://www.b-creative.cz/terapeuticke-pomucky-b-creative-zivot-je-zivot-life-is-life-cards)

Length in minutes

95 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Introduction
Activity 2: "How are you today?"
Activity 3: Time mapping activity
Activity 4: Theoretical insight
Activity 5: Prioritisation game
Activity 6: Your opinion

Instructions
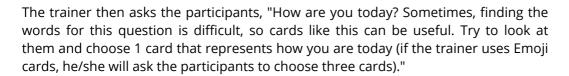
Activity 1: Introduction (5 min.)

The trainer introduces himself and opens the training topic: "The ability to plan your time effectively is a key skill, especially for youth workers. It enables us to balance their responsibilities, including programme design, team leadership and administrative tasks. Effective time management allows us to set aside enough time for each task and reduces the risk of work stress and burnout syndrome. It also sets a positive example for the young people they work with and demonstrates the value of organised time and its benefits in achieving goals."

Activity 2: "How are you today?" (25 min.)

Preparation: the trainer sets up a circle of chairs and prepares communication cards in the middle of the floor (if he/she chooses the Emoji cards from *Attachment 1*, he/she prints and cuts out each picture separately) so that each participant has a chance to see the cards and the other participants in the group. The trainer sits the participants in a circle so that they are as comfortable as possible and invites them to introduce themselves briefly.

The trainer then asks the participants, "How are you today? Sometimes, finding the words for this question is difficult, so cards like this can be useful. Try to look at them and choose 1 card that represents how you are today (if the trainer uses Emoji cards, he/she will ask the participants to choose three cards)."

The trainer waits for everyone to choose, then sits them down in the circle again. He invites the participants to say how they are today and how their chosen card relates to it.

At the end, the trainer praises the participants and acknowledges their confidence and courage.

Activity 3: Time mapping activity (15 min.)

This activity aims to create visual time maps of a typical week for the participants and illustrate how they spend their time.

The trainer will distribute printed *Attachment 2* and crayons to the participants.

Each part on the wheel will represent one of those parts:
1. family (parents, siblings)
2. romantic relationship/marriage
3. relationships (friends, colleagues)
4. work/school
5. body (physical health)
6. mind (mental development)
7. rest/relaxation
8. spiritual development
9. addition of the participant's choice

The trainer then asks participants to fill in their wheel according to how much time they think they spend in what area and how satisfied they are with it. Suppose a whole section of one area is filled, e.g. family. In that case, the participant is actively engaged in their family relationships, building and nurturing them and would not want to change anything about this approach.

The trainer will divide the participants into groups and start a discussion about the activity. He asks: Which part would they like to spend more time on, and which part would they want to spend less on? How did they fill their wheel?

Activity 4: Theoretical insight (20 min.)

The trainer puts flipchart paper and markers on the floor. He divides the participants into groups of 3-4.

The trainer will open the discussion: "In today's fast-paced world, young people are often confronted with multiple challenges, including schoolwork, extracurricular activities, social commitments and family obligations. Without effective time management, they may have difficulty balancing these tasks, leading to stress and decreased performance. By emphasising the importance of time management, youth workers can equip young people with key skills for success and balance in their personal, academic, and eventual professional lives. From a psychological perspective, the ability to plan time effectively contributes to a sense of self-efficacy and control over one's own life. It reduces feelings of overwhelm and increases self-esteem.

The statement "I am more than my performance at work or school" also aligns with this view. It emphasises that self-worth is not only defined by productivity or success in traditional roles but also considers other aspects of personal development and well-being. Time management skills increase productivity and provide space for relaxation, self-care and personal growth, reinforcing this holistic view of self-worth."

Source Je ok, že nie si ok: Pomoc pri strese existuje (https://mkmk.facebook.com/ipcko/posts/4060478784006052), McNeil, M. P. (2017). Time management: Finding balance to do it "all"

The trainer will then open a group discussion on the following questions and invite participants to write their ideas on a flipchart:
- What is time management, in your opinion?
- What do you think are the "rules" of good time management?
- What should not be done in proper time management?
- How do you perceive the view of time management within different generations (boomers, millennials, Gen Z)?

The role of the trainer is to facilitate the discussion in each group.

At the end, the trainer will evaluate tips for improving time management and add ideas for follow-up:
- Set clear goals: Knowing what you need to achieve directs your planning. Divide larger tasks into manageable sub-tasks.
- Prioritize tasks: Not all tasks are created equal. Use tools like the Eisenhower Box to distinguish between what is urgent and important.
- Avoid multitasking: Despite popular belief, multitasking can reduce productivity. Encourage focused, uninterrupted work on one task at a time.
- Take regular breaks: The Pomodoro technique, which involves working for a set amount of time (e.g., 25 minutes) and then taking a short break (e.g., 5 minutes), can increase productivity and focus.
- Exercise - Time Blocking Method: This creates a structure to help manage time more effectively.

Source: (The Pomodoro Technique: The Acclaimed Time-Management System That Has Transformed How We Work)

Activity 5: Prioritisation game (25 min.)

This activity aims to emphasise the importance of prioritisation in improving time management.

The trainer divides the participants into groups of 3-4 and assigns them one of the fictitious scenarios:
- Resolve a severe conflict between two members of your team.
- Organise a recreational outing for youth as a form of social gathering.
- Organise a team meeting to discuss organising a national conference for youth from your organisation.

The trainer then invites participants to create a to-do list of varying urgency and importance. The trainer will ask the group to prioritise these tasks and discuss their reasoning. The trainer may invite the groups to share experiences to make the work more effective.

Activity 6: Your opinion (5 min.)

The trainer will invite participants to anonymously answer a question in the slido application: What did they take away from today's workshop?

Attachments
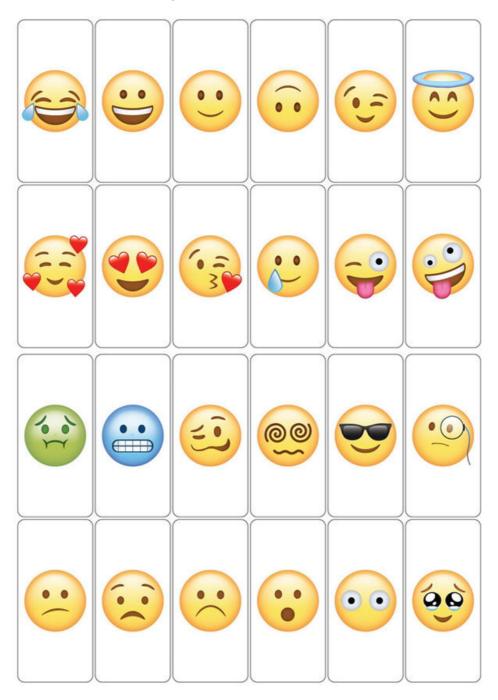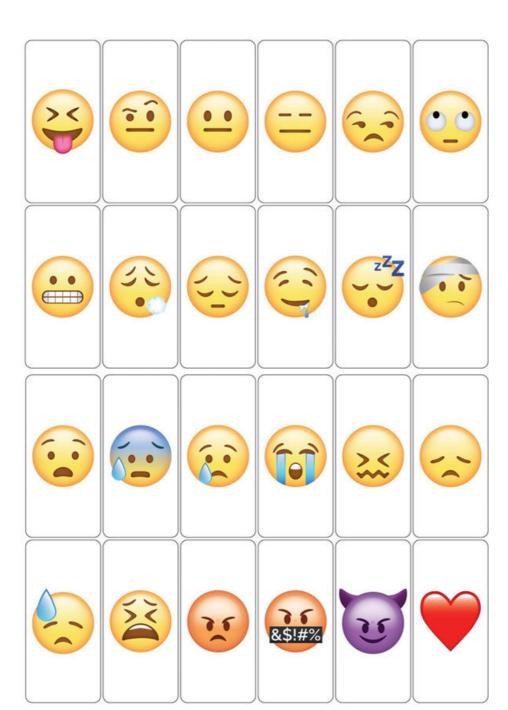
Attachment 1: Emoji cards
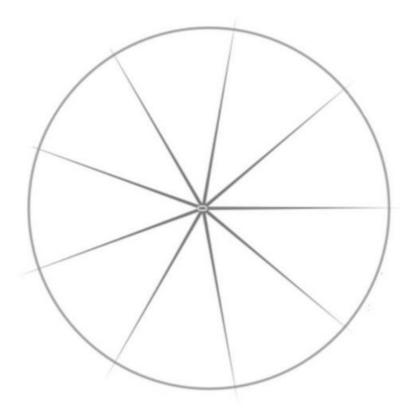
Attachment 2: Wheel

Space for notes.

ABILITY TO IDENTIFY YOUR PRIORITIES

Goals of the block

- to name areas of life that affect the participant's life
- create a network - a mind map of the areas and their connections that affect the participant's life
- create their own vision of life and its content
- name their priorities in order of importance and urgency
- organise the priorities according to their importance
- name the consequences if one does not have priorities in life
- separate work and private life

Group

12 – 16 participants

Material

- cards from *Attachment 1*
- cards from *Attachment 2*
- worksheets from *Attachment 3*
- visual image from *Attachment 4*
- flipchart, post-its, pen, markers, tape, A4, A3 paper

Length in minutes

120 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Areas of life that influence our decision-making
Activity 2: Vision of my life
Activity 3: My personal priorities and their fulfilment

Instructions

Activity 1: Areas of life that influence our decision-making

Note to the trainer: To make good decisions about priorities, the participant needs to know what influences his/her life and in what sequences.

The trainer prepares a list on cards of several areas of life that most people encounter and affects their lives. He/she will write one area per card *(Attachment 1)*: work, family, health, home, relationships, friendships, hobbies, entertainment, self-care, personal growth, sports, spirituality, religion, money, and volunteerism.

The trainer hangs the cards randomly on the flipchart. He or she hands out post-its with a pen to each participant of the activity and invites them to add to the list they see in front of them other areas that affect their life based on personal experience. On one post-it, the participant writes one area that influences his or her life in any way.

The trainer encourages the participants to write down everything that has strongly influenced their quality of life in the last year. The naming of areas and experiences should be as specific as possible. It can be any area of life.

Allow 10 minutes to work on the task. Soft music can be played during the creation.

When the trainer sees that most have already written the areas, he/she will ask them to stick the post-its around the cards on the flipchart while reading aloud to the group what they are sticking. That will create a map of the areas that may affect the participants' lives.

Once all participants have shared their outputs, the trainer and the participants form groups of similar areas that affect the participants' lives on the flipchart.
An area may emerge, e.g. health, finance, community, entertainment, etc. That will summarise the life areas that may influence the participants' lives.
The trainer will work with the participants to create a mind map of the areas and activities of the participants that influence their decision-making when prioritising an area, see example *(Attachment 2)*.

At the end of the session, the trainer will distribute A4 size paper to the participants. He asks each participant to write his name in the top right-hand corner.
The trainer then gives them an assignment: to make their mind map of the areas that affect their lives and to arrange them in order of coherence and priority, according to how they see it through their own eyes. They can use painting, drawing, pictures from magazines, writing, etc. The trainer is available during the activity if the participant needs help.
Once the participants have created a map, they stick their outputs in a common place (e.g. on a wall).
The trainer will explain to the participants why they put up the life map to keep them returning to the areas that influence their lives in subsequent activities.

Activity 2: Vision of my life
Note to the trainer: When making and prioritizing decisions, the participant needs to know his/her vision of what he/she would like to achieve in a certain period of time.

At the beginning of the training session, the trainer will invite the participants to start imagining (to start dreaming) in their minds about what they would like to achieve in their lives and in which areas. The starting point for each participant will be the moment they are currently experiencing in that area. For each area or issue, they can indicate when they would like to achieve the state they name.

After the introduction, the trainer will distribute worksheets with supporting questions to each participant *(Attachment 3)*.

Participants are asked to answer the questions. They have the opportunity to add other areas that they consider important and name them. If a participant is missing an for them important area, they can fill it in with their questions and answers.
After the participants have completed their answers and created their vision of life, each participant shares with the other participants the answer to one question they choose in each area that they consider to be the most important in that area.

By selecting a specific question and answer, they will prioritize it in that area. The participant marks it in colour on the worksheet.

At the end of the learning session, the trainer will invite participants to share how they felt about the activity, what they were excited about, what they were worried about, and how they will continue to work with the findings to prioritize their activities.

Note to trainer: Prepare worksheets with questions to ask the participants before the training. These will be different for adult youth workers than students and young volunteers.

Activity 3: My personal priorities and their fulfilment

The trainer prompts each participant to choose one area from the "Vision of my life" section (previous activity). He/she hands out post-its to each participant. On the post-its, the participant has to write what specific activities and actions he/she plans to implement to move closer to his/her vision in the selected area during the next six months. The participant writes one activity per post-it.

When all participants have written activities and actions, the trainer asks each participant to share with the group the number that represents the number of post-its written down, i.e. how many activities and actions he/she plans to implement, has named.

To ensure that all activities and actions are not implemented simultaneously, the trainer will remind the participants of the importance of organising the activities according to importance and urgency. The trainer will encourage the participants to carefully follow the presentation of the Matrix of Importance and Urgency *(Attachment 4)*.

After presenting the matrix, the trainer will offer each participant a paper (A4 or A3) to make their matrix of importance and urgency based on the presentation of the matrix and place in each box those activities written on the post-its that they think belong in that box according to importance and urgency.

Once the matrix is formed, each participant presents the activities that he/she has in the importance and urgency box to the others.

At the end of the learning session, the trainer will summarize the outcomes that support the person in being able to define his/her priorities to prevent burnout:
1. Name what influences his/her life and how they are related.
2. Know the vision of his life he would like to achieve.
3. Know what he can do and what activities and actions he can take to achieve the vision of his life.
4. Rank what is important, unimportant, urgent, and non-urgent among the named activities.
5. Focus on the important and urgent, plan for the important and non-important, delegate the unimportant and urgent to others, and know how to say goodbye to the unimportant and non-urgent.

In this way, frustration and burnout in activities and actions can be prevented.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Areas affecting the life of the participant

WORK	FAMILY
HEALTH	HOME
RELATIONSHIPS	FRIENDSHIPS
HOBBIES	FUN
VOLUNTEERING	PERSONAL GROWTH
RELIGION	SPIRITUALITY
SPORT	MONEY
SCHOOL	POLITICS
SOCIAL MEDIA	COMPUTER GAMES
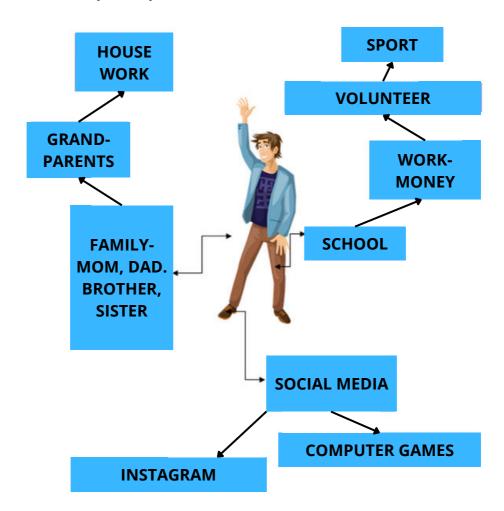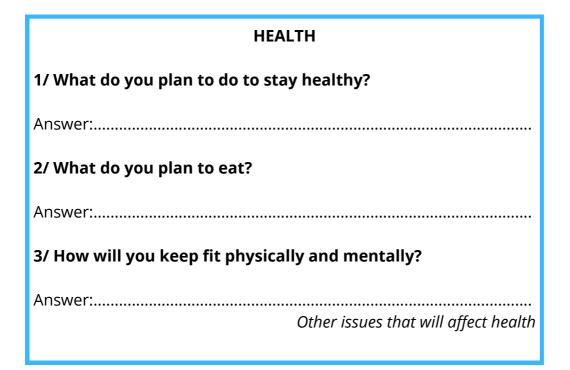
Attachment 2: Mind map of the connections of the areas in which the participant lives

SPORT

HOUSE WORK

VOLUNTEER

GRAND-PARENTS

WORK-MONEY

FAMILY-MOM, DAD. BROTHER, SISTER

SCHOOL

SOCIAL MEDIA

COMPUTER GAMES

INSTAGRAM

Attachment 3: Vision of life

FINANCES

1/ How much do you plan to earn per month?

Answer:...

2/ What will your home look like? What do you want to have in it?

Answer:...

3/ Where will you live? In a city, village, countryside?

Answer:...

4/ What car will you drive?

Answer:...

Other issues that will affect finances

HEALTH

1/ What do you plan to do to stay healthy?

Answer:...

2/ What do you plan to eat?

Answer:...

3/ How will you keep fit physically and mentally?

Answer:...

Other issues that will affect health
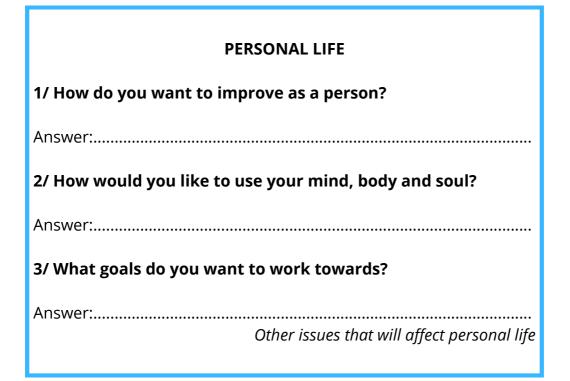
CAREER

1/ Where will you work, in which area, in which town?

Answer:..

2/ What specifically would you like to do?

Answer:..

3/ Who do you want to work with?

Answer:..

4/ What kind of boss do you want to have?

Answer:..

Other issues that will affect your career

RELATIONSHIPS

1/ What kind of relationship do you want to have with your family?

Answer:..

2/ How often do you want to be with your friends?

Answer:..

3/ What kind of life partner do you imagine?

Answer:..

4/ What will your own family look like?

Answer:..

Other issues that will affect relationships

RELAXATION

1/ What would you like to do in your free time?

Answer:..

2/ What hobbies would you like to pursue?

Answer:..

3/ Where would you like to spend your holidays?

Answer:..

Other issues that will affect relaxation

PERSONAL LIFE

1/ How do you want to improve as a person?

Answer:..

2/ How would you like to use your mind, body and soul?

Answer:..

3/ What goals do you want to work towards?

Answer:..

Other issues that will affect personal life

COMMUNITY

1/ In what kind of community of people would you like to live?

Answer:...

2/ What should be your role in the community?

Answer:...

3/ How will you get to know people in the community?

Answer:...

4/ How will you help in the community?

Answer:...

Other issues that will affect the community

Here, you can add areas with questions that have not yet been named.

Attachment 4: Matrix of importance and urgency

	URGENT	NOT-URGENT
IMPORTANT	**DO FIRST.** *JIt is necessary to establish a clear timetable for implementation with deadlines.*	**PLAN WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO DO THEM. YOU CAN DO THEM LATER.** *Schedule activities after the important urgent ones in the schedule.*
UNIMPORTANT	**DELEGATE THEM TO SOMEONE ELSE.** *They need to be completed. They do not require your skills.*	**THERE IS NO NEED TO PAY ATTENTION TO THEM.** *Activities that take up your time. They can be implemented as part of relaxation.*

ABILITY TO DELEGATE AND DEVELOP THIS COMPETENCE

Goals of the block

- learn about types of delegation
- to get familiar with the recognition and understanding of the types of delegation
- understand appropriate delegation principles and how to follow them effectively

Group

15 – 20 participants

Material

- recycled A4 paper (for making paper airplanes)
- flipchart
- markers

Length in minutes

90 min.

Summary

Activity 1: Introduction
Activity 2: "Flying with leadership skills"
Activity 3: Allegories
Activity 4: Creating good practice for great delegation

Instructions

Activity 1: Introduction

The trainer will start a new block of activities: "Delegation is one of the basic activities of the work and competencies of a leader. It is the Delegation of part of the responsibility to friends and colleagues in the group through which the task is accomplished. Part of the Delegation process is the Delegation of the necessary authority, which is proportionately linked to the scope of responsibility and the task's difficulty. The motto is: Not only to shine but also to let others shine. Today, we will examine the subject of Delegation and its importance in different areas of life. This topic is key to developing your leadership skills, and we will try to find out how we can use Delegation not only in our work life but also in our family, leisure and college."

The trainer will open a discussion on the topic of delegation. He asks the participants what they imagine this term to mean, where in their lives they are delegated by someone else, and where they delegate others. At the end of the discussion, the trainer explains what delegation is *(Attachment 1)*.

Activity 2: "Flying with leadership skills"

The trainer will divide the participants into two teams. Each team will be given a stack of paper, and their task will be to build as many functional paper airplanes as possible.

Each team has two minutes to plan at the beginning. During this time, they should determine the procedure for building the planes and divide the tasks.

After planning, teams have two minutes to build the paper airplanes according to their plan.

The trainer will determine the start and finish lines in the room. Teams are tasked with testing their planes by launching them and seeing how far they will fly.
After testing, the results will be tallied, and the number of functional airplanes will determine the winning team.

After the first round, the trainer will discuss with the teams what knowledge they have gained during this part of the activity. He asks them the following questions:
- How was the planning, assembly and testing?
- How did the teams feel during this activity?
- Was it stressful or fun?

The trainer repeats the whole process with the same teams. This time, however, the trainer will give the teams clear tasks and roles to delegate.

The discussion will be opened again after the second round of launching the planes. The trainer asks the participants the following questions:
- What difference did you notice between the first and second rounds in terms of delegation of tasks and clear leadership? What were the main advantages and disadvantages of each approach?
- How did your teams feel during the first round when they had more freedom to make decisions? And how did they feel during the second round when they had clearly defined roles?
- What was the biggest challenge in delegating tasks in your team? How might you overcome this challenge in the future?
- How can you apply the delegation skills you learned today to your daily life, whether in school, work, or family relationships?

Activity 3: Allegories

The trainer will tell the participants two allegories in turn.

Allegory No. 1 - Beehive:
In a hive of bees, one queen determines the direction and goals of the entire hive. Each bee has its specific role and mission, for example, collecting nectar, building honeycombs or looking after the larvae. All beekeepers are motivated and work together to achieve a common goal - to produce honey and keep the hive strong. With clear roles and tasks, the bees thrive, and the hive is a harmonious and effective community.

Allegory No. 2 - A chicken coop full of roosters:
Three roosters living in a chicken coop constantly argue about who should be the leader. None of them has a clearly defined role, so they all run back and forth, feigning activity to look useful but doing nothing. There is chaos in the chicken coop, and no one knows what to do. As a result, the hens are not laying eggs, and everyone is frustrated and demotivated.

The trainer will then open an in-depth discussion on the importance of clear leadership, delegation and motivation in different situations and how they can be applied in real life.

Open questions for discussion:
- In the case of bees, what skills and traits were vital to the success and effectiveness of their community?
- What main differences do you see between the queen bee's style of delegation and the situation in the hen house with the roosters?
- What are the consequences of ambiguous leadership and a systematic approach at work, as illustrated by the roosters in the hen house?
- What are the implications of motivation and clear leadership on the performance and satisfaction of team members, as illustrated in the hive?
- How would you apply these concepts of delegation and effectiveness in your work or personal life to achieve better results and improve team collaboration?

Activity 4: Creating good practice for great delegation

The trainer will divide the participants into smaller groups, each with five members.

Each group has 10 minutes to list five rules of good delegation. In doing so, the trainer will remind them to make these rules concrete and practical to be easily applied in different situations.

After the time is up, each group has 5 minutes to present their rules for proper delegation. They can use a flipchart, slide show or other visual aids.

A discussion follows each presentation. Other participants can ask questions and provide feedback on each set of rules. The aim is to create a space for constructive debate and exchange of ideas.

After all the presentations, the small groups will disband, and the trainer will summarize the key points and rules that have been developed. Discussions on how these rules could be applied in everyday life and work situations are held.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Delegation

Delegation is the ability to delegate/shift tasks, duties and responsibilities to others to achieve a common goal. This skill is essential for any leader and has wide application. In life, it can propel you to high effectiveness and success.

Why is delegation important?
- Team development: Delegation allows others to grow and develop their skills and abilities. That creates a stronger team that can achieve greater success.
- Time efficiency: Delegating can free up your time and energy for more important tasks. That is key if you want to handle multiple things efficiently at once.
- Improved decision-making: Delegation allows more people to contribute their ideas and experience to decision-making. That increases the chances of finding the optimal solution.
- Increased motivation: When you delegate tasks, you give your co-workers a sense of importance and responsibility. That can significantly increase their motivation and engagement.

Now, let's look at the degrees of delegation that you can use in different situations:
- Full delegation: You completely hand over the task and responsibility to someone else. This level is appropriate when you have confidence in that person's skills and abilities.
- Delegation with explanation: You hand over the task but remain available to give advice and answer questions. This level may be appropriate if the person needs guidance.
- Delegation with supervision: You hand over the task, keep checking progress, and give regular feedback. This stage is helpful if you want to maintain control of an important task.
- Delegation with the final decision: You hand over the task but ask for feedback and decide what direction it will take. This stage allows the collaborator to bring new ideas and retain your ultimate control.

All these degrees have their place in different situations, and it is up to each person to decide which is most appropriate for the problem.

Delegation is a critical element of success in many areas of life, whether it is career, education or personal development.

ABILITY TO MANAGE YOUR PERFECTIONISM

Goals of the block

- be able to name the signs of perfectionism
- know how to introduce methods to work with perfectionism
- know how to use at least two methods to help channel perfectionism through virtual reality (breathing, painting)
- know how to weigh decisions of demandingness towards self and others

Group

12 – 16 participants

Material

- printed A4 sheets with the image from *Attachment 1*
- printed A4 sheets with the image from *Attachment 2* (each image on 1 A4)
- flipchart paper, markers, crayons, picture magazines, glue, post-its, pen, stopwatch, glue

Length in minutes

120 min.

Zhrnutie

Activity 1: Your perfectionism
Activity 2: Signs of perfectionism
Activity 3: Come out of perfectionism so you don't burn out

Instructions

Activity 1: Your perfectionism

he trainer places picture sheets on the floor with the drawing facing the floor *(Attachment 1)*. He then instructs the participants sitting in a circle: "Each of you take one of the sheets and look at the picture. Write your name in the top corner and, within 4 minutes, connect all the dots on the picture with a pen so that the picture looks as nice as possible."

After the instruction, the trainer starts the stopwatch and asks the participants to take the picture sheets. Everyone starts working as instructed. After 4 minutes, he says "STOP," and each participant puts his pen down.

The trainer asks the participants to give their sheet with the picture to their neighbour on their right hand. The neighbour's task will be to count how many dots were not connected or dots were connected that did not follow each other (how many lines are missing or incorrectly connected in the picture). They will write their number in the left-hand corner.

When finished, the sheet with the picture is handed over to its owner.

After this activity, reflection follows. Each participant says:
- how many faulty and undrawn lines he had
- what he felt when drawing
- what he doesn't like about the drawing
- what he would do differently to make the drawing perfect

After this part of the session, the trainer will open the topic of perfectionism, which haunts individuals and provokes stress and anxiety.

A person annoyed that his work or the work of others is not perfect or does not conform to his vision may become a perfectionist. Perfectionists have a character trait - Procrastination - a label for the compulsive postponement of important tasks until later. It should be noted, however, that this is a psychological matter, as opposed to laziness, which is physical. The consequence of procrastination is stress, feelings of guilt and self-incompetence, leading to further procrastination. Those affected often calm themselves down and convince themselves with statements such as, "I perform better under pressure."

Activity 2: Signs of perfectionism

The trainer will place pictures around the room *(Attachment 2)*.

The trainer gives the following instructions to the participants: "You see in front of you pictures expressing some emotions, attitudes, symbols. These pictures depict perfectionism, which affects a person, his feelings, mind and behaviour. Your task is to write a word or sentence for each picture to express what you think the picture of the perfectionist person symbolizes. In this way, we can create a map of the characteristics of perfectionism."

The trainer will give each participant post-its to express their thoughts. He/she will allocate 10 minutes for the activity.

After the 10 minutes are up, he/she asks the participants to sit down, approaches each picture and reads the participants' statements. The trainer then summarizes what may be a sign of perfectionism with examples in one sentence and sticks the statement next to the picture *(Attachment 3)*.

Activity 3: Come out of perfectionism so you don't burn out

The trainer divides the participants into three groups. The task of each group is to create a list of recommendations for a person who suffers from perfectionism. They can write the list on flipchart paper and express it with a drawing or pictures from magazines. The trainer will give them 20 minutes for the activity.

After the time is up, he/she will invite the groups' spokesperson to present suggestions on overcoming the signs of perfectionism and what to focus on.

After presenting the outcomes, the trainer will summarize the recommendations on how to get rid of perfectionistic behaviour in 7 steps *(Attachment 4)*.
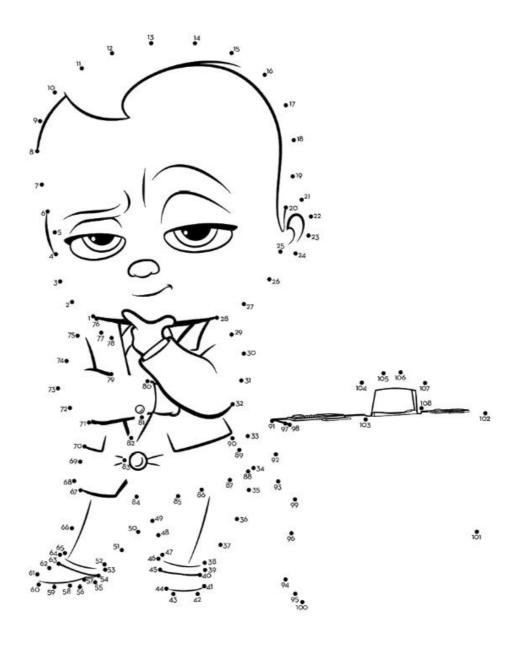
Attachments

Attachment 1: Your perfectionism

Attachment 2: Signs of perfectionism

Attachment 3: Characteristics of perfectionism

| Symbol	Signs of perfectionism, the person who suffers from it
	They feel depressed, frustrated, and anxious.
	They have a black-and-white mindset (e.g., "Anything less than perfection is failure.", "If I need help from others, then I am weak.").
	They put off work and activities until they start to "burn".
	They get irritable, angry, and get upset over little things.
	They refrain from trying new things and activities where they risk making mistakes.
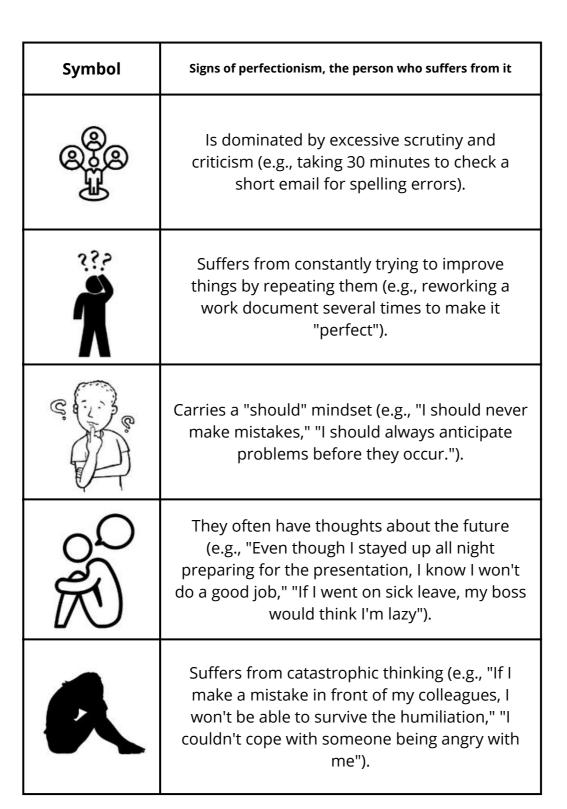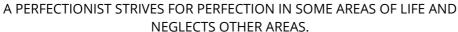
Symbol	Signs of perfectionism, the person who suffers from it
	They tend to constantly evaluate their work because they want it to be perfect.
	Being overly cautious and meticulous (e.g., devoting 3 hours to a job that takes other people 20 minutes).
	They struggle to decide on details or not very important things (e.g., which film to watch, which word to choose in a text).
	They make detailed to-do lists and check them frequently (e.g., when to get up, brush their teeth, shower, etc.).
	Suffers from chronic procrastination and has difficulty completing tasks.

Symbol	Signs of perfectionism, the person who suffers from it
	Is dominated by excessive scrutiny and criticism (e.g., taking 30 minutes to check a short email for spelling errors).
	Suffers from constantly trying to improve things by repeating them (e.g., reworking a work document several times to make it "perfect").
	Carries a "should" mindset (e.g., "I should never make mistakes," "I should always anticipate problems before they occur.").
	They often have thoughts about the future (e.g., "Even though I stayed up all night preparing for the presentation, I know I won't do a good job," "If I went on sick leave, my boss would think I'm lazy").
	Suffers from catastrophic thinking (e.g., "If I make a mistake in front of my colleagues, I won't be able to survive the humiliation," "I couldn't cope with someone being angry with me").

A PERFECTIONIST STRIVES FOR PERFECTION IN SOME AREAS OF LIFE AND NEGLECTS OTHER AREAS.

Attachment 4: 7 steps that can untie the "hands" of a person who is plagued by perfectionism

1/ THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF A PERSON WHO IS PLAGUED BY PERFECTIONISM
For the perfectionist person: Write down on paper to what extent your behaviour benefits you and what it robs you of. Based on this, determine whether it is a good servant who helps one succeed and be in control or a bad master who robs one of strength and self-worth.

2/ MISTAKES BELONG TO LIFE
For the perfectionist person: Allow yourself to be human and make mistakes because success does not come from night to morning. Mistakes belong both to life and achieving results.

3/ IMPERFECTION IS A HUMAN TRAIT
For the perfectionist person: If your inner critic consumes you, focus on what this imperfect performance teaches you or what new experiences and knowledge it gives you. The performance may be unsatisfactory to you, but the authenticity, originality, and human expression appeal more to those around you.

4/ LOW TARGETS DO NOT DISAPPOINT
For the perfectionist person: Strive for success rather than perfection. It is always better to complete a minor activity than to set a high goal but not be able to achieve it. If you set big goals, break them down into smaller, realistic ones. Always work on one task that you also finish. You can work on the next task when you have completed that one. Keep evaluating these sub-achievements so that you can re-evaluate your big goal continuously.

5/ TIME LIMIT HELPS ACHIEVE THE GOAL
For the perfectionist person: Think about what bad things will happen if you don't give 110% performance, but work to the best of your ability. Even if, according to your ideal, it will only be 80% or 90%. Set a time limit for smaller activities and stop them when the time limit passes. Let them go. It may not be perfect, but it will be the best you can do.

6/ THE VALUE OF A PERSON DOES NOT DEPEND ON HIS PERFORMANCE
For the perfectionist person: Remember that your value is not based on performance. If you lack recognition or respect and cannot get it from those around you, then learn to value yourself. Every night, write down what you are proud of yourself for about what you accomplished during the day. It may be small things, but over a year, they will accumulate. Thanks to this, you will not need appreciation and praise for superhuman and perfectionist performances.

7/ LIFE HAS DIFFERENT AREAS THAT NEED TO BE LIVED
For the perfectionist person: Set aside time and energy for other areas of your life. Maintain quality personal and more human relationships. Don't encourage competitive relationships and performance focus.

Space for notes.

ABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE AND SHARE

Goals of the block
- know the characteristics of open, non-violent and assertive communication
- recognise the importance of sharing as part of burnout prevention

Group
15 − 20 participants

Material
- data projector, smartphone (each participant), flipchart, markers, pens, 10 A7 papers, a container for a lucky draw (hat/bowl)
- emoji/communication cards - the trainer can choose which ones are most suitable for the group work (recommendation: Life is Life (https://www.b-creative.cz/terapeuticke-pomucky-b-creative-zivot-je-zivot-life-is-life-cards)/Dixit/other emoji cards, an alternative are the emoji cards in *Attachment 1*

Length in minutes
90 min.

Summary
Activity 1: Introduction
Activity 2: "How are you today?"
Activity 3: Put on other people's shoes
Activity 4: Empathy connects
Activity 5: Nonviolent communication training
Activity 6: Assertiveness simulator
Activity 7: Feedback

Instructions

Activity 1: Introduction (5 min.)

The trainer will introduce themselves and open the training topic, "Effective communication and sharing are essential for youth workers to create a safe and inclusive environment where young people feel understood, respected and empowered. By actively practising these skills, youth workers can build strong relationships with the youth they work with, facilitate constructive conversations, resolve conflicts and promote personal development. As role models and facilitators, youth workers shape the young people they work with, especially in the social and emotional domains. Understanding the importance and nuances of communication enables them to guide young people in developing their communication skills, encouraging self-expression, empathy and respect for others."

Activity 2: "How are you today?" (15 min.)

Preparation: the trainer sets up a circle of chairs and prepares communication cards in the middle of the floor (if he/she chooses the Emoji cards from *Attachment 1*, he/she prints and cuts out each picture separately) so that each participant has a chance to see the cards and the other participants in the group. The trainer sits the participants in a circle so that they are as comfortable as possible and invites them to introduce themselves briefly.

The trainer then asks the participants, "How are you today? Sometimes, finding the words for this question is difficult, so cards like this can be useful. Try to look at them and choose 1 card that represents how you are today (if the trainer uses Emoji cards, he/she will ask the participants to choose three cards)." The trainer waits for everyone to choose, then sits them down in the circle again. He invites the participants to say how they are today and how their chosen card relates to it.

At the end, the trainer praises the participants and acknowledges their confidence and courage.

Activity 3: Put on other people's shoes (15 min.)

This activity aims to develop empathy and promote open communication through understanding different perspectives and experiences.

Preparation: The trainer writes down different life situations or scenarios on paper before the group meets. These scenarios should be varied and open-ended, such as "You just moved to a new town where you don't know anyone." or "You have just been promoted to a challenging position at work". Put the papers in a container.

The trainer asks each participant to take a slip of paper with a scenario out of the container. He/she allows them a few minutes to read and think about the situation they have pulled out. Then, one by one, each participant should share their scenario with the group, describe how they imagine they would feel and react and what they would need in that situation. The trainer encourages them to be as open and detailed as possible and to try to describe the emotions they would feel (joy, fear, anger, surprise, disgust, sadness). The trainer can record the named emotion on a flipchart and write the situation with which the participants associate it.

After each participant has shared, the trainer will begin a brief discussion. Other participants may ask follow-up questions. The trainer may ask questions such as: What was it like for them to put themselves in "their" hypothetical scenario? How did they think about that situation? What was it like to look for and name the feelings they would experience and what they would need?

After the discussion, the trainer asks the participants to swap their scenario with someone else and repeats the process. That gives the participants a chance to perceive different perspectives.

After the activity, the trainer facilitates a discussion about the experience. The trainer then asks the participants what it was like to empathise with different situations, what they learned about their own and others' perspectives and how this might influence their communication in the future. The importance of empathy and understanding in open communication is discussed (open communication should encourage the free exchange of ideas and feelings; its characteristics include active listening, empathy, transparency and non-judgmental feedback).

Activity 4: Empathy connects (15 min.)

The activity aims to bring a sense of closeness through sharing with someone one has known for a short time and still can talk about their feelings and needs.

The trainer will divide the participants into pairs and give them 15 minutes to walk around the grounds together, during which they will share with each other. Each participant will have equal time - 7 minutes.

The trainer instructs the participants to listen to their pair without interrupting. However, at the end of the sharing, they can ask questions and express support in a way close to them.

There are three topics to cover during the conversation:
- two life events that have influenced who I am now
- what I am currently doing
- where I would like to take my life

The trainer will encourage the participants to form pairs mainly of participants who do not know or know each other only briefly. After 15 minutes, everyone will meet back in the meeting room.

After the activity, a short discussion about the shared experience can take place.

Activity 5: Nonviolent communication training (15 min.)

The trainer prepares (before the activity starts) 10 scenarios, each on separate paper, depicting different situations that could lead to conflicts or misunderstandings.
For example, "Your roommate always leaves a mess in the kitchen." Or "Your colleague often interrupts you during work meetings."

This activity aims to promote non-violent communication (NVC) by providing participants with an understanding of the critical components: observation, feelings, needs and request.

At the beginning, the trainer will briefly explain the concept of non-violent communication, highlighting four components:
1. Observation: As accurate a description as possible of what I saw or heard, without any evaluation of the situation.
2. Feelings: The expression of how we feel concerning what we observe.
3. Needs: Identifying and expressing needs that were not met by what I saw and heard.
4. Request: Clearly articulating a feasible and positively worded request that would contribute to meeting my needs.

The trainer will divide the participants into pairs. In each pair, he/she distributes one prepared paper with one specific situation. One participant from the pair will take the role of the person in the scenario creating the conflict. At the same time, the other will use the principles of non-violent communication to handle the situation.
After each scenario, the participants switch roles in pairs and repeat the exercise with new roles.

After the role-play, the trainer leads a group discussion about the experience of the activity. He will ask the participants how they felt using the non-violent communication model, what they found challenging and how they could apply these skills in their daily lives. The discussion is about how non-violent communication can lead to more effective, empathetic and calm communication.

Activity 6: Assertiveness simulator (15 min.)

Before the activity begins, the trainer prepares scenario cards (approximately 10) depicting different situations that require assertive communication. For example, "You have been given an unrealistic deadline at work." Or "A friend keeps cancelling plans at the last minute."

The activity aims to build assertive communication skills, helping participants express their feelings, needs and rights respectfully and confidently.

The trainer briefly explains assertive communication: "Assertiveness involves expressing one's own thoughts, feelings and needs in an open, honest and respectful manner. It is a balance between passive communication (not expressing one's feelings and needs) and aggressive communication (expressing one's feelings and needs in a hurtful, hostile manner), where one stands up for one's rights without violating the rights of others."

The trainer divides the participants into pairs or small groups and gives each a prepared scenario card. In each group, the participants perform a skit based on their scenario and show how to handle the situation assertively.
The trainer encourages them to use statements beginning with the pronoun "I" and to express their feelings and needs clearly but with respect for others.

After the role-play, the trainer leads a discussion with the participants. He/she asks them to share what they have learned and how they could apply assertive communication in their daily lives. The importance of assertive communication in maintaining self-esteem and healthy relationships is discussed.

Activity 7: Feedback (10 min.)

The trainer asks the participants, "What valuable insights can you take away from this training?"
The trainer invites participants to anonymously comment on slido.com on what they found useful and the key takeaways from this training.
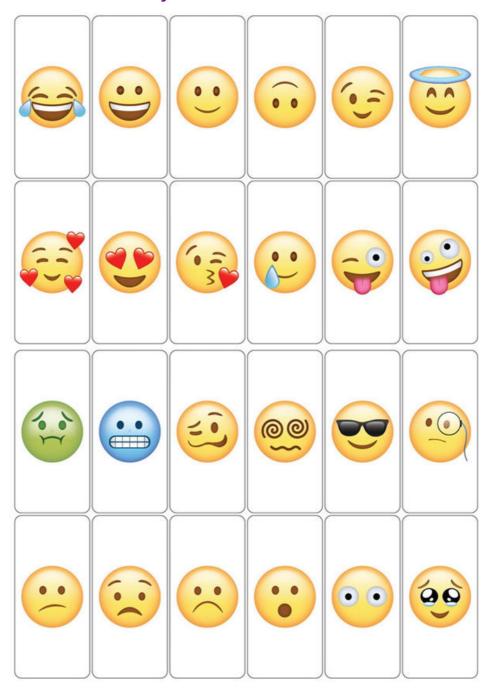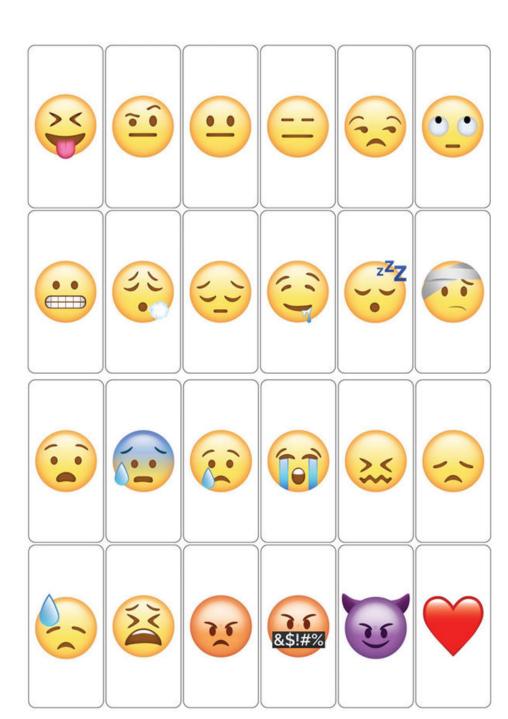
Attachments

Attachment 1: Emoji cards

ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF THE METHODOLOGY AND VR

Darina Čierniková (SK)

The author has many years of experience in formal and non-formal education. In the field of non-formal education, she has been a creator of methodologies and a guarantor of several accredited educational programmes aimed at supporting youth work since 2011. Since 2003 she has been a trainer of young leaders and youth workers. Her specific educational focus is soft skills, youth participation and the promotion of human rights and mental health development.

Since 1995 she has been active in DOMKA - Salesian Youth Association, and since 2002 she has been the President of the Regional Youth Council of Žilina. In 2013 she became the Director and Project Manager of the Project Management Office of the Regional Youth Council of Žilina and Manager of the Association of Regional Youth Councils. In Erasmus+ programmes she works as an application evaluator and project manager. She has extensive experience in youth policy making at local, regional and national level.

Martin Šturek (SK)

He has been working with youth for more than 15 years. Within the activities of the Regional Youth Council of Žilina he has experience in training members and coordinators of school parliaments and youth parliaments, in facilitating discussion meetings between young people and representatives of local governments, in preparing strategic documents in the field of youth work at the local level. He is a trainer and creator of various methodologies and methodology of accredited training programmes: 'Leader of educational activities for youth participation' and 'Leader of school parliament', where he also acts as an accredited trainer.

Ivana Gabrišová (SK)

She is currently studying at the University of Žilina, at the Faculty of Management and Informatics. There she graduated in 2020 with a bachelor's degree in Management. She also studied in Finland at the University of Vaasa, focusing on project management and business English.

Since 2020 she has been coordinating the activities of the Project Management Office for the Regional Youth Council of Žilina. Among other things, she is involved in the coordination of project activities, grammar proofreading and translation work. Her main areas of interest are focused on active youth participation, educational activities in the field of non-formal education and strategic partnerships.

Petr Kantor (CZ)

Since 2003 he has been professionally engaged in lecturing, coaching and consulting activities for the commercial sector, public administration and non-profit organizations. In the field of youth he has been active since 1996 in the Association of Secondary School Clubs of the Czech Republic as an event organizer for unorganized youth. Since 2005 he has been active in Petrklíč help, as a networker supporting the growth of individuals and companies, and since 2013 in the Association of Non-Formal Education as a promoter of non-formal education, which he sees as an opportunity to learn voluntarily, intentionally and from experience.

He is the author of several college textbooks on crisis communication, teamwork, and game theory in educational practice. He was involved in the founding of several non-profit organizations in the Czech Republic, Poland and Belgium.

Eva Klusová (CZ)

She graduated in Political Science and European Studies at Palacký University. Her interests focus on the areas of human rights and social engagement, both in a political context and within the human rights framework. Due to her long experience, she has a wide range of experience in the field of education of youth, seniors and company employees, both through formal and informal methods. She develops her professional skills not only through traditional education, but also through active participation in volunteer projects and studies abroad. As of 2018, she has been working mainly in the field of disinformation, where she is involved in training, monitoring and developing methodologies to combat it. Recently, her interest has been focused on vulnerable groups in the online space and working with them, reflecting the growing issues related to the digital sphere and the protection of these groups.

Marianna Heřmánková (SK)

She is a psychologist who works at the Crisis Helpline telephone counselling service. She is also the head of the crisis intervention centre Káčko Žilina, which is a project of the civic association IPčko. During her university and psychology studies, she volunteered as a counsellor at the chat line IPčko.sk and as an employee of an association focused on helping victims of violence. As part of her work, she provides counselling and support to people in difficult situations free of charge, anonymously and non-stop. Since high school, she has been active in the non-profit sector as a volunteer and later as a youth worker. She is very familiar with topics such as motivation, working with stress and time management.

Dorota Balalová (SK)

She works as a psychologist at the IPčko civic association, where she has worked since her university studies. Back then, she helped as a volunteer in the Online Fieldwork Project with colleagues to educate young people on the topic of mental health in online environments. Currently, she works in the Káčko project in Žilina, where she meets, works with and supports people seeking help and support in challenging situations.

Marina Horvat (HR)

She graduated in political science from the Faculty of Political Sciences in Zagreb in 2019. After graduation, she interned at Sirius, working on project activities and coordinating volunteers. After the internship, she got a job at Sirius as an associate for projects and programs. Some of her tasks are writing and managing projects, coordinating project activities, managing the organization's social networks, and youth working. She received professional training at the Centre for Peace Studies, where she received a diploma in Peace Studies. Her main areas of interest are youth work, active citizenship, climate change and environmental sustainability, and gender equality.

Adrijana Al-Nidawi (HR)

She graduated in social work from the Faculty of Law in Zagreb in 2015. Since graduation, Adrijana has worked with various vulnerable groups of users (children and youth from alternative care, foster parents, homeless people, drug addicts, women victims of violence, people with hearing impairments, etc.) and has gained a wealth of work experience in the field of social work. Today, she works as an associate for projects and programs, and some of the tasks she performs are designing, writing and implementing project activities and psychological counselling with beneficiaries.
She completed the first degree in Solution-focused brief therapy and training for the Manager in preparing and implementing EU projects at the EU PROJECTS School, Zagreb Educational Institution. She is currently undergoing professional training at the IGW Centre for Gestalt psychotherapists. Her main areas of interest are stress and solving crisis situations, trauma and recovery, social work in the field of mental health, poverty and social exclusion, and the protection and well-being of families, children and young people.

Collective of creators from SPACE s.r.o.

VR SPACE is an entrepreneurial entity that creates virtual and augmented reality environments and visualization with the overlap of using real-time programs to develop additional tools and configurators for mobile and virtual devices. Due to the broad scope of the working team, they have worked in construction, healthcare, and engineering, created simulations of various situations, and educated employees and students in schools using virtual and augmented reality. They have developed over 80 different virtual reality applications.

Space for notes.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Project background information:

The project Virtual reality as support for burnout protection through non-formal education is carried out thanks to the support of the ERASMUS+ programme, K2 Cooperative Partnerships under No. 2021-2-SK02-KA220-YOU-000050550 in the timeframe 05/2022 - 07/2024.
The project follows the Erasmus+ Youth priority: increasing digitalisation and enhancing learning with digital tools of virtual reality.

The main issues addressed by the project:

1. Young people lack developed psychological resilience to the stresses, responsibilities and problems that occur.
2. Youth workers lack methodological support in mentoring and training young leaders.
3. Youth workers lack modern technologies that will enable them to support the guidance of young leaders in better quality.

Project objectives:

1. Improve non-formal education by introducing the method of using virtual reality.
2. Increase methodological support for youth workers for the work with young leaders from different groupings.
3. To support the implementation of educational blocks with the application of virtual reality in education in youth work.

Project target groups:

The primary target group is youth workers dedicated to working with and supporting young leaders preparing to take on the role of youth leader and youth worker.

The secondary target group is young leaders of organisations and various youth groups. Young people in different interest groups are also targeted.

Expected project outputs:

1. A set of simulation activities in virtual reality focused on the prevention of stress and burnout when working with young people with case studies.
2. Methodology of non-formal education of youth workers aimed at preventing stress and burnout in young leaders using virtual reality simulation activities.
3. Manual for youth workers how to implement educational blocks, methodology with simulation activities of virtual reality to work with young leaders.

Part of the project activities are also educational activities: a pilot training to validate the developed methodology and a multiplication event to disseminate the project's results - the final conference.

Impact of the project results:

In the long term, the project's results will contribute to changing attitudes towards working with young people so that they can sustain quality value creation over time without frustration, stress and burnout. They will enable an increase in the quality of youth work and their personal and professional growth. They will support young people's mental health.

Partner organisations:

Rada mládeže Žilinského kraja (SK)
SPACE s.r.o. (CZ)
Centar Sirius - Centar za psihološko savjetovanje, edukaciju i istraživanje (HR)
IPčko, o.z. (SK)
Petrklíč help, z.s. (CZ)