



**R.O.C.K.
RESILIENT,
OPTIMISTIC,
CREATIVE, AND
KEEN:
EQUIPPING GEN Z
FOR
WORK SUCCESS
AND
EMPLOYABILITY**

A HANDBOOK

For practitioners, working with youth

Project “Resilient, Optimistic, Creative, and Keen: Equipping Gen Z for Work Success and Employability” is being implemented by five partner institutions from Lithuania (coordinator institution), The Netherlands, United Kingdom (leading on the training framework and intellectual output), Italy, and Bulgaria. The multitude of skills and experiences that we have accumulated in our team enabled to design a meaningful, fun, creative, and applicable training programme for generation z. Hope you find this resource useful in your work with young people.

Lithuania

Non-formal learning club "WE"

<https://mokymosiklubas.wixsite.com/mysite>

<https://www.facebook.com/NeformalausMokymosiKlubasMes>

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-IQ_CvoUIG5eB0Zteko2wA



The Netherlands

Youth Initiative Center

Facebook: @YouthInitiativeCenter

<https://initiativesforyouth.eu/>



UK

MS Research and Training Academy

<https://themsacademy.com/>

Facebook: @msresearchandtrainingacademy

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/ms-research-and-training-academy/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIArdsLctZAm9EUzDMmV0XQ>



Italy

Strauss APS

<https://www.arcistrauss.it/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/StraussAPS/>

https://www.instagram.com/strauss_aps/



Bulgaria

SelfInvest

<http://www.selfinvest.eu/>

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BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Covid-19 crisis is expected to lead to a global economic depression (Bremmer, 2020) with a pronounced negative effect of the pandemic on the lives of young people (i.e., the so called ‘generation Z’, born from late 90's to 2010). This crisis is hypothesized to affect employment, education, mental well-being, rights and social activism as reported by the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2020). Even before the pandemic generation Z were already facing a challenging transition into the labour market and were two to three times more likely to be un- or underemployed. Now, with the tremendously challenging socio-economic situation created by Covid-19 and the changing world of work World Bank fears that 49 million people could be pushed into extreme poverty (United Nations, 2020). Considering all these concerning trends, our aim was to design an output that would help preventing the worst-case scenarios from happening.

Research shows that there are several factors that can beneficially contribute towards young people’s employability. Brewer (2013) proposed that addressing youth unemployment and under-employment requires not only job creation, but skills development too. Our focus has been determined by previous research findings, suggesting that creativity and readiness to innovate (Rampersad & Patel, 2014), resilience (Health and Wellbeing Alliance, 2019) are the soft skills with a fundamental importance for youth employability. In this workbook a youth worker will find a list of activities tapping into the four core skills of resilience, optimism, creativity, and keenness. The variety of tools and activities identified in this workbook allows a youth leader, teacher or a trainer to pick and choose those that best fit needs of the target group.

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WELCOME TO THE TRAINING COURSE

“I R.O.C.K.!”

In this 4-session course we focus on the 4 main topics: (1) Resilience, (2) Optimism, (3) Creativity, and (4) Keeness. The four topics represent soft skills that are extremely important for employability and career progression in generation Z (young people born between late 90’s and early 2010’s).

In Figure 1, demonstrates key components of the proposed training model. The four letters (i.e., R.O.C.K.) capture the 4 core soft skills that must be developed in generation z for career success and employability. The model demonstrates that the four soft skills of resilience, optimism, creativity and keeness are in close connection with behavioural attributes of an individual in the work setting, i.e., communication, cultural awareness, entrepreneurship and leadership. Finally, to ensure the best engagement and keep generation z active and motivated, the model suggests that the content should be delivered live as well as via pre-recorded short lectures and on-line content that generation z can engage at their own pace, time, and on their own.

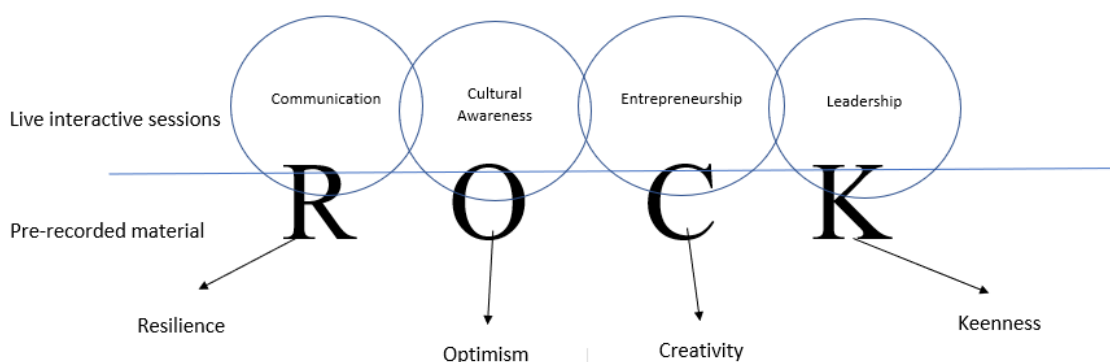


Figure 1. R.O.C.K. Training model



(Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>)

1. R for RESILIENCE

Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness; the ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity (Oxford dictionary). Cambridge dictionary defines it as the ability to be happy, successful, even after something difficult or bad has happened.

In the first part of the course, we focus on stress and resilience. You will learn what stress and resilience is and master three ways of coping with stress. The more specific learning outcomes that you will achieve in this session are listed below:

Resilience

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

Communication skills

1. Learn to recognize and regulate own as well as recognize others' emotions
2. Practice active listening
3. Understand how to communicate effectively

Stress is a response of the body to any demand for change

Five core elements of stress:

1. An important value is threatened
2. There is a need for action to protect the value
3. Uncertainty about being able to take the right action
4. Element of conflict
5. Emotions (anxiety, fear, etc.) (Locke, 2003)

Almost any stressful situation includes the five key elements. First, an important value is at risk. The value may be own self-esteem, survival, well-being, or a valued other person or object might be taken from us. Second, people feel they must take action to protect that value. Third, they experience uncertainty, they are not sure what the best action is to protect that value. If a person is totally certain that they can take the action needed to deal with the threat at hand, there is no stress. There is an element of conflict in the situation. This may be of the form “I must deal with this [for example, public speaking], but I don’t know how”. Finally, in stress we experience disturbing emotions, such as anxiety, fear, anger, sadness, etc.

Activity: “Stressful event”. This exercise allows to see that stress is triggered every time something important (values) is happening in our lives. Please, recall the most recent stressful event in your life and describe it in detail (~5 sentences). Please, now identify the 5 core elements of stress in the case you described. Please, give examples.

My most recent stressful event: _____

Self-assessment: “Stress buttons”. This activity allows identifying and becoming aware of stress triggers that affect your life. Please, list various “stress buttons” that you observe in your life. “Stress buttons” are situations, events, thoughts, emotions, sensations that cause stress. For example, it may be that you experience stress when you are forced to spend time in big groups of people or that certain types of people cause stress to you. Please, list as many triggers as you can remember.

My stress buttons: _____

Resilience is the ability to cope with a crisis and return to pre-crisis status. Resilience exists when the person uses various coping strategies protecting self from the potential negative effects of stressors. Resilience exists in people who are able to remain calm during chaos and to move on.

Tools that help coping with stress and build resilience are no different from exercising at the gym: it needs regular practice to build the “resilience muscle”.



(Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>)

Activity: “Mission Impossible” (~50 minutes): This activity allows you to see how resourceful and resilient in stressful and demanding scenarios you are as a group. You will be divided into two groups; each group will have 5 tasks to complete in 20 minutes. If you have any questions, you can delegate one person who will seek for more detail from the facilitator(s). Once the groups are created, we will share with you the tasks to be completed. Once the time is up you will have to come back to the main room and present your solutions. You will have 10 minutes per group to present. Each of you will have to contribute.

Tasks:

1. Create a presentation, even if spoken only, on what stress is and why we experience it.
2. Identify possible solutions on how stress could be managed.
3. Find 5 influencers who talk about stress and resilience on social media.
4. Provide with 5 convincing arguments on why people should learn how to cope with stress.
5. Find one story about celebrity/ famous person who experienced some sort of stress and talk about it.

Notes: _____

Self-reflection: “Stress appraisal”. Please, reflect on the described situation that Luca is facing. What emotions would Luca experience in each situation and what behaviors would they engage in? What do you think the outcomes of the interview going to be? Most importantly! – Please, identify which of the 3 appraisals you would choose.

Luca is about to go on a job interview, but their mind wonders...

Option 1. I will probably be rejected. This is a very damaging outcome because I have no other job opportunities. If I had the ability to deal effectively with the interview, I could be hired, but I don't have the ability. The situation is hopeless.

Emotion they experience: _____

What do they do?: _____

Option 2. I will probably be rejected. This is a very damaging outcome because I have no other job opportunities. If I had the ability to deal effectively with the interview, I could be hired. I believe I do have such ability and I must think out what would make me an attractive candidate, rehearse, and control my nervousness.

Emotion they experience: _____

What do they do?: _____

Option 3. I will probably be rejected. This would be too bad because I need a job and this one looks very attractive. However, there are other possibilities, so if I am not hired I can try those.

Emotion they experience: _____

What do they do?: _____

Facilitator’s comment: The first response involves negative appraisal and results in the high level of stress. If a person sees the situation in this light, they will feel helpless and probably fail in the interview. The second response involves challenge appraisal. A person sees the risk, but also sees potential and possible positive outcomes, so they will be activated and do as much as they can to win. The third response involves

positive appraisal. This event will not cause too much stress to a person as they believe they have other options to go for if this does not work out.

Case analysis: “Emotion and problem-focused coping”. In the examples below, please, identify stress coping strategies that are either problem-focused or emotion-focused:

a) Laura experiences anxiety as she steps to the podium to give a presentation. She does some deep breathing and gives herself comforting messages. As she manages anxiety, she glances over her notes just before the presentation that helps her to deliver the speech.

Laura’s coping strategy: _____

b) Lee was recently diagnosed with a terminal illness. He perseveres in gathering more information about his condition. The internet is full of threatening and concerning information, but he continuously looks it up instead of discussing this with medical staff.

Lee’s coping strategy: _____

Facilitator’s comment: In the first case Laura applies both: problem-focused and emotion-focused stress management. Deep breathing and self-talk are emotion-focused coping strategies, screening her notes is a problem-focused coping. Lee applies emotion-focused coping. He seeks for information wanting some reassurance, but instead encounters lots of concerning information that makes him even more stressed.

Tool: “Monodrama”. 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!

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

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

Tool: “Humour therapy”. Over the next couple of days find 3 funny videos that make you laugh and save it somewhere so you can re-watch it whenever you feel you need some laughter. If you feel confident, write a joke or a funny story yourself, perhaps even record a funny video? Or, alternatively, learn a joke and tell it to someone. See how it feels!

A funny story that I found/ wrote: _____



(Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>)

Tool: “Laugh Diary”. This activity will help you to recognize humorous events around you. Life is full of ironies and funny things, but sometimes our mind dismisses this information as irrelevant. Try to notice things that make you laugh. Each day (for at least a week) in the table below write one or two things that made you laugh. What were the funniest moments over the last month? Journaling this will help finding the bright side of life and bring more positive emotions.

Month of						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Tool: “Investigator”. Rejection by other can cause a lot of stress, hence, you should practice handling rejection. When someone tells you off, shows dislike or disapproval, don’t immediately think there’s something wrong with you. Rather, assume the role of an inspector and examine what happened from an impartial position. This will help you to find clarity and turn the situation into a learning experience.

Three ways of self-stressing:

- ✓ Breathing
- ✓ Body
- ✓ Emotions

Relaxing through breathing

When we experience stress, we tend to tighten stomach and chest, often like boxers in a fight, this force us to either breathe deeply, or to hold the breath. In this way, breathing becomes stressed and inefficient.

Self-assessment: “Mapping your breathing”. Take a deep breath and think about where you can feel the air inside your body. If you feel your chest moving, chances are your breathing is not correct. You should practice diaphragmic breathing.

Tool: “Diaphragmatic breathing”. Begin by getting comfortable and sitting upright so your back is straight. First exhale fully through the mouth or nose. Now inhale deeply through your nose so you first fill the belly with air. Make sure your belly rises as you inhale. Continue the inhalation to then fill the chest. Make sure your chest rises as you continue inhaling. Now, exhale fully through your mouth or nose allowing the chest to fall, followed by pulling the belly inward to help push out all the air.

Tool: “Panting like a dog”. You can’t help but inhale and exhale properly when you’re panting. Pant slowly so you can dissect your breathing technique. When you breathe in, your stomach should expand. When you breathe out, or exhale, your stomach should return to its normal state.



(Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>)

Relaxing your body

People are too much connected to their thoughts and not enough to their body. We perceive thoughts and memories as us, but we somehow think that our body is separate from us. Coping with stress involving body is based on the idea that relaxing body relaxes our mind.

Self-assessment: Where in the body do you feel tension when you experience stress? Place your right hand on a part of the body that is affected the most.

Tool: “Progressive muscle relaxation”. This exercise consists of tensing and relaxing different muscle groups. It proved being effective in reducing anxiety and stress. The focus is on four-muscle group sets: (1) Shoulders, chest, back, abdomen; (2)

face and neck; (3) arms and hands; (4) legs and feet. The tension should be kept for approximately 5 to 7 seconds. A cue word is “now” or “relax” and suggests you should relax immediately. To train your body to relax automatically, this requires practicing twice a day for about a month.

Legs Muscle Group: Build up the tension in your legs by lifting your legs slightly off the floor and, if you feel comfortable, pointing your feet inward. Feel the tension as it moves up your feet into your ankles, shins, calves, and thighs. Feel the pulling sensations from the hip down. Hold the tension.

Now, release the tension, lowering your legs and relaxing the feet. Feel the warmth and heaviness of relaxation through your feet, lower legs, and upper legs. As you breathe smoothly and slowly, think the word “relax” each time you exhale.

Shoulders and Upper Back Muscle Group: Pull your shoulder blades back and together. Feel the tension around your shoulders and radiating down into your back. Concentrate on the sensation of tension in this part of your body.

Now relax your shoulder blades and let them return to a normal position. Focus on the sense of relaxation around your shoulders and across your upper back. Feel the difference in these muscles from the tension.

Hands and Arms: We will focus on arms and hands now. I’ll ask you to tense the muscles in your hands and arms by straightening your arms and making a tight fist. Now you should be able to feel tension in the hand, over the knuckles, and up into the arm. Can you feel that tension? Hold it. Relax when I say NOW.

Mouth, Jaw, and Throat Muscle Group: Build up the tension around your mouth, jaw, and throat by clenching your teeth and forcing the corners of your mouth back into a forced smile. Feel the tightness, and concentrate on the sensations of tension.

Release the tension, letting your mouth drop open and the muscles around your throat and jaw relax. Concentrate on the difference in the sensations in that part of your body. As you breathe smoothly and slowly, think the word “relax” each time you exhale.

Questions to discuss: What did you like? What didn't you like? What aspects were hard/easy for you? Any questions/comments?

Tool: "Check-in". To start paying more attention to your body, every morning check-in with yourself. Observe and monitor any tensions in your body, how relaxed it is, how energetic and recharged your muscles are. It is advisable to note this down, i.e., start writing a body diary so you can track your own progress. On a scale from 1 to 10 (i.e., 1 = very tensed, hardly rested, 10 = very well rested), how relaxed do you feel this morning?

Monday: _____

Tuesday: _____

Wednesday: _____

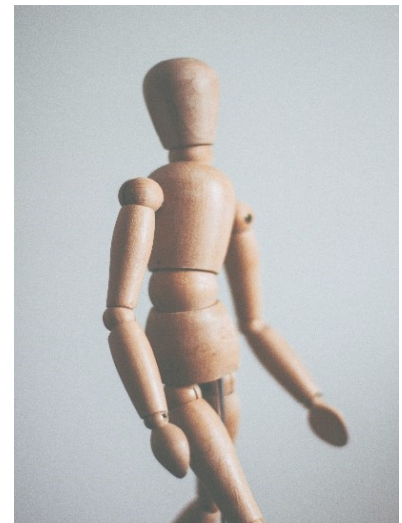
Thursday: _____

Friday: _____

Saturday: _____

Sunday: _____

Tool: "Active movement". When you are overflowed by negative emotions you can use your body to deal with them by actively moving. It does not matter so much what you do as long as it involves rigorous movement. Some suggestions: stamping feet, kicking a ball, jogging, boxing, rigorous arm movement, climbing the stairs up and down, dancing.



(Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>)

Triggering positive emotions

When we experience stress, we simultaneously feel various emotions, such as anxiety, irritation, anger, frustration, and so on. When we are stressed, we become more sensitive, easily irritable and impatient. All these emotions trigger limbic system, buffer creativity and narrow down decision making.

Background: How can imagery relieve stress and build resilience? A cognitive explanation was introduced by Dossey (1988) who suggested that imagery brings about a change in the individual's perceptions. Many researchers consider that the mechanism lies in the distraction created by the pleasant imagery which can divert the mind from intrusive thoughts. There are also physiological explanations, suggesting that pleasant images could trigger the release of endorphins and create an analgesic effect. Guided imagery is a therapeutic technique which uses imagination to decrease pain perception and reduce anxiety. Some guided imageries may include positive self-statements/ positive affirmations that help the visualizer to see themselves as being capable. Examples may include:

- ✓ I believe in myself.
- ✓ I am in control of my life.
- ✓ I can achieve my aim.

It is important that the visualizer feels safe, comfortable, and potential distractions (phone, people, other noises) are kept to minimum. Other significant points in preparation for the guided imagery:

- ✓ Assume a comfortable position.
- ✓ Encourage concentration, which is a skill and can be developed.
- ✓ Breathe slowly and deeply
- ✓ Imagine you're speaking from deep and low in your chest.
- ✓ Soften, and consider deepening or lowering your voice below its normal range.
- ✓ Read slower than you think you need to. Take your time.

Tool: “Guided Imagery - Mirror”. I want you to imagine that you are in a room. It is a room with nicely coloured walls. The atmosphere is very pleasant in the room and you feel welcomed. You begin to feel really relaxed in this space. Rays of sunlight pour through the open window to greet you. As you walk towards the window the rays of multi-coloured sunlight catch you. (Pause)

The light contains so much goodness. As the light brushes your skin the goodness from the light starts to travel all over your body enveloping it like a soft blanket. This makes you feel more and more relaxed and very good about yourself. (Pause)

As you walk around the room you notice that the room isn’t empty. There is a mirror on the wall. You approach the mirror and you can see that just like all mirrors it seems to show you your reflection. Have a good look at your image. As you look more closely you notice that your image is smiling at you much more than you were doing. This is no ordinary mirror, this is a magic mirror. The smile is big and cheerful and warm. It almost makes you want to laugh with joy. This is a very happy face. (Pause)

As you look into the mirror you notice that you cannot help but smile too. The more you gaze at the image the more you begin to look like this image. Your smile begins to grow until you look exactly like that cheerful, joyful face that is staring at you. This image gives you a very good feeling. You feel great warmth travelling throughout your entire body, making your body feel as light as air. (Pause)

I will count from one to ten. At the end of the count, you can slowly open your eyes. Once your eyes are open, I want you to gently adjust to what is going on around you. Try to look at the world with freshness and discovery as though you are seeing it for the first time. I also want you appreciate any differences in how your body is now feeling from the way it felt before.

Questions to discuss: How did this make you feel? Was it easy? Which part was difficult? Could you use this relaxation method by yourself?

Tool: “Design you own guided imagery”. The 5 senses of hearing, smelling, touching, tasting, and seeing help us to connect to the world. Depending on what we experience through the 5 senses we may feel either relaxed or stressed. This tool aims to help you



Tool: “Acts of kindness”. 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.

My 1st act of kindness:

My 2nd act of kindness:

My 3rd act of kindness:

Suggestion: “Power nap”. A short sleep can reset your mood. Sometimes, if you are totally tangled in thoughts, it may be good to “reboot”. Set a timer for 20 minutes with the intention of a short sleep or nap. As you lie in bed, feel yourself in your imagination holding yourself, wrapping your arms around you as you would someone you love. Feel the bed embracing you as you relax into it and get comfortable. Make sure you do not sleep for longer than 20 minutes as this may leave you disorientated and drowsy.

Interesting: Make it a priority to spend at least an hour a day reading. Reading builds the brain in a healthy way and helps develop our mirror neurons and people skills. In other words, reading stimulates those parts of the brain that are responsible for compassion, understanding, and empathy, making us better friends, family members, students, employees, leaders.

Useful link: Want to know more about mindfulness and meditation, here is a good option: Mindfulness Blog by Alfred James (pocketmindfulness.com)

Useful link: Your body language may shape who you are:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ks-_Mh1QhMc

COMMUNICATION

Communication is a process of using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to express or exchange information. It may also involve expression of ideas, thoughts, feelings to someone else.

Activity: “Emotions and communication”. Please, watch movie “Equilibrium” and discuss the following questions:

1. What’s good and what’s bad about experiencing emotions? Do emotions help or hinder?
2. Why would some people want to suppress their feelings?
3. How can one regulate emotions effectively and in a helpful way?

Notes: _____

Activity: “Function of Emotions”. Please, spend some time in small groups thinking about how each of these emotions can be valuable and harming in communication at work:

- Happiness
- Sadness
- Anger
- Fear

-
- Surprise
 - Disgust

Tool: “The 3 Whys” (~30 min). This is an active listening skill building game. Participants are split into pairs. Each pair is given a thought-provoking conversation starter. One participant will ask their activity partner a conversation starter question and then respond to their answer using ‘The 3 Whys’ (participant should ask a question that starts with ‘why’ and modify it in response to what the other person just told). The other participant will take the role of genuinely responding to those ‘Why’ questions.

After 4 minutes, the participants will switch roles. Once both Participants 1 and 2 have practiced using 'The 3 Whys', the group will reassemble to discuss the experience using the follow-up questions provided.

Examples of provoking questions:

1. What activity causes you to feel like you are living life to the fullest?
2. How would you define genius?
3. How much does language affect our thinking?
4. If you could be the CEO of any company, what company would you choose?
5. What is the most recent success you’ve had?
6. Who is the most successful person that you know personally?

Facilitator’s questions:

1. With respect to the ‘Asking’ role, what was it like to ask someone “Why” three times? What happened?
2. How did repeating the “why” question deepen your understanding of your discussion partner’s perspective?

-
3. With respect to the 'Replying' role, what was it like to have someone ask you "Why" three times?
 4. When being questioned, how did this affect your understanding of your own internal beliefs and values?
 5. Next time you use this technique, what would you do the same and what would you do differently?
 6. What other thoughts and insights do you have about this technique? Would it be useful in real-life situations?

Tool: "Building effective communication skills". Objective of a game – focus on what someone is saying rather than on just 'winning' an argument.

Step 1: Split the team into pairs and decide who is "A" and who is "B". Person A needs to take an opinion on the topic and person B another opinion on the topic.

Step 2: Pick a topic that is controversial in nature. For example: 'Everyone should be able to work from home as many days as they like' or 'Companies should offer unlimited holidays to everyone'.

Step 3: Each pair has 5 minutes to win the argument.

Step 4: After the time is up there should be a discussion on the following: 'How did everyone find it?', 'Any lessons?', 'How did they feel?'

Step 5: Using the same topic both parties will have 5 minutes again but this time neither of them is allowed to use the word 'But'. Also, each pair needs to keep a tally of how many 'buts' they used. See who said the most buts.

Step 6: Once again both parties will have 5 minutes. Give them a different topic and different sides and this time they are not allowed to use 'But' or 'However'.

Step 7: Overall debrief on following questions:

-
- Did you find that you listened harder?
 - Did you find that you had to respond to what the other person was saying?
 - Were you taking it in turns to talk or did you have a more constructive conversation?
 - What learning can you take forward?

Activity: “Pitch”. Ask each participant to prepare a 20-30 second (video) presentation about him/herself and his/her qualities. Each person should present him/herself and try to convince a hypothetical employer to hire him/her in his/her company. In the online meeting, play all the participants' videos and ask for an overall assessment pointing out their strengths and areas for improvement. Focus on how communication can be improved while staying within the imposed time frame (the 20-30 seconds), also emphasizing time management skills and highlighting it as a quality that employers expect from an employee. Do the same with all work-related qualities that may come up but focus the discussion on communication and communication skills.

Don't forget to stress the importance of:

- Non-verbal Communication
- Paraverbal Communication
- Assertive Communication
- Persuasive Language

Ideally, at the end of the meeting, show a 30-second video of the same kind but which meets all the best standards of effective and efficient communication. Ask the participants now to make a new video trying to put into practice what they learned during the session.



(Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>)

2. O for OPTIMISM

Optimism is a belief that the outcome of a specific endeavour will be positive. It is about seeing good things in life (no matter how small they are and despite all the challenges). People can develop optimism if they want to and this session focuses on promoting optimism. The learning outcomes for the session are identified below:

Cultural awareness

1. Raise awareness of cultural dimensions and stereotypes
2. Discuss diversity and inclusion matters
3. Elaborate on the importance of authenticity

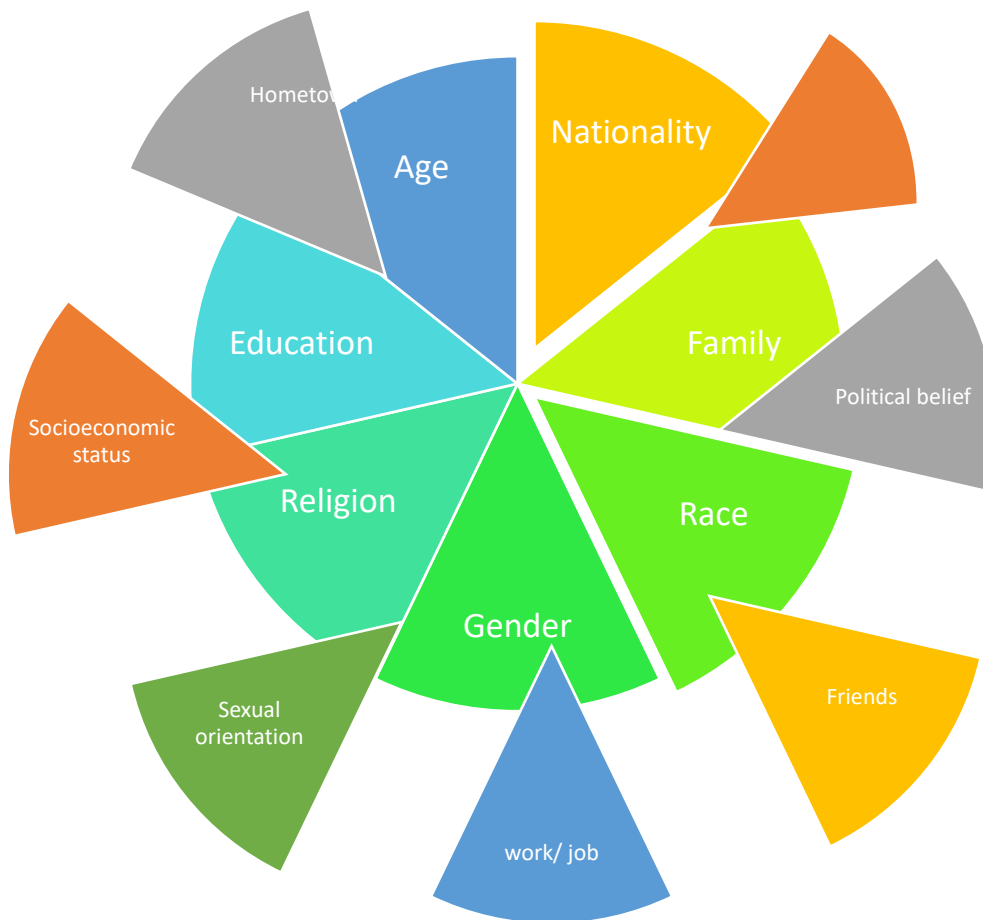
Optimism

1. Identify the factors that foster optimism
2. Practice appreciative inquiry
3. Discover own strengths and learn how to build upon them



Cultural Awareness

Tool: “Identity wheel”. Please, identify the most important identities to you by ticking on the option in the “Identity wheel” and elaborating it if needed. Identify less important features too. Rate the identities from 1 to 10, depending on how important this feature is to you (1 = non-important, 10 = extremely important).



Now that you have identified your identities, think about your goals in study and work and answer the following questions:

- Do your identities match the values that your studies/ work stands for? How?

- What actions in work and study would match your identities?

- How can your identities be helpful in your study and career progression?

- How do your identities may help you understand people who might have different identities to you? (e.g., different cultural background).

Activity: “Can you think of a leader?” Ask participants to think of a leader and write the name on the sheet of paper or in the chat window (if the session is on-line). The more names they can identify the better.

Leaders: _____

After all the names are identified (in approx. 1-2 minutes), please, calculate the number of men and women that were identified as leaders. It is crucial to explore diversity in responses and see whether participants were mainly focused on one gender (either men or female leaders mainly). This could also lead to a discussion on non-binary classification of gender and LGBTQIA+ community members in leadership.

Exercise: “Oppose your stereotyped thinking”. One of the best techniques seems odd but has been shown to have a lasting effect: think of a stereotype and say the word “no” and then think of a counterstereotype and say “yes.” People who do this have greater long-term success in interrupting their unconscious bias with respect to that stereotype.

Activity: “Unconscious bias and awareness”. Please, think and reflect on the following questions. What’s surprising about your answers to the questions below?

• Who are my favorites at school/ university/ work? _____

• With whom am I more inclined to spend time, go to lunch? _____

• Do I hold back on assigning work to people from underrepresented groups? _____

• Who makes me feel uncomfortable and why? _____

• Who do I avoid interacting with or giving feedback to because I just don't know how to relate to them or because I'm afraid I'll make mistakes? _____

• To whom do I give second chances and who do I fail to give second chances? _____

What makes you/ people happy? _____

Two ways to Happiness are **Hedonia** and **Eudaimonia**. Hedonia involves pleasure/ enjoyment/ satisfaction. Peculiarities include a focus on the self, the present moment, taking and consuming what one needs and wants. - Reducing pain and maximizing pleasure. Eudaimonia focuses on the meaning and value, personal growth and maturity, excellence, ethics and quality, authenticity, and autonomy.

My hedonic actions: _____

My eudaimonic actions: _____

Quiz: Please, give an example of an activity that combine both Hedonic and Eudaimonic wellbeing, i.e., an activity that would incorporate both: _____

Possible answers: Exercise (it can boost your mood immediately, but if practiced continuously it increases your overall health), food (a nice meal makes you feel good, but discovering new cuisines and learning how to cook may develop your overall understanding of other cultures).

Tool: “Creating an Optimistic Mindset”. The answers to this activity’s questions provide a direction as to whether the person tends to think optimistically or not. It is excellent for self-motivated individuals who wish to become more positive in their outlook and take life one day at a time.

Please, think about a good and unfortunate incident that recently happened to you. Now go ahead and answer the questions below.

Was the incident the result of:

1. Your inability (Pessimist)
2. External factors (Optimist)

How did the incident make you feel?

1. More negative things will happen to me (Pessimist)
2. This is a one-time occurrence (Optimist)

What does this negative incident mean?

1. More bad things are coming to me in other areas of life (Pessimist)
2. This is a temporary setback (Optimist)

Think of a positive experience that recently happened to you and answer the following questions.

Why did the event happen?

1. Because of my abilities (Optimist)
2. Due to external factors (Pessimist)

What does it imply?

1. More positive things can happen in life (Optimist)
2. This is a one-time fluke (Pessimist)

This incident proves that:

1. More success awaits in the future (Optimist)
2. This happened by chance and would never happen again (Pessimist)

Gratitude

Tool: “Good things in my life”. There are many things in our life to be grateful about. Think back over the past week and write down two things that you are thankful for:

Tool: “The Gratitude Visit”. Think of a person you are grateful for something (it might be your friend, family, or yourself!). Write a letter / thank you note indicating what you are grateful for and why. A very important detail in this activity is – to deliver the letter in person!

Tool: “Naikan (Looking inside) Meditation”. This tool helps to bring awareness towards yourself and others and see where you might wish to increase your gratitude and appreciation.

The act of listing all that you have received promotes gratitude. The questions presented below help to shift focus from being self-centered to attending to others’ needs. Think and reflect on the 3 following questions:

What have I received?

What have I given?

What troubles and difficulties have I caused?

- Begin by making a list of what you have received during the past 24 hours
- Make a list of what you have given to others/ a specific person during the past 24 hours
- Make a list of the troubles and difficulties you have caused to others in the past 24 hours

Finally...Think about what you could improve (if anything) in the way you relate to others

Self-assessment: “Assessing gratitude”. Please, read the scenario presented below and imagine yourself in this situation.

“You have just arrived to a new city during a quiet early evening hour. You are tired, and looking for the hotel. The city is large and the street names confusing – you’re having a difficult time navigating and are getting increasingly frustrated trying to find your hotel. As you keep wandering, trying to make sense of addresses and your fuzzy memory of the directions provided to you, you start worrying about how you’ll find your way, and longing for the warmth and comfort of the room waiting for you. Your wandering leads you to a quiet street downtown. You spot a stranger walking by you, who by the look on her face seems to know the area, and finally build up courage to ask her for directions to the hotel. She stops in response to your inquiry, thinks for a moment, and then outlines a set of directions to get you to your hotel.” (Weinstein et al., 2010, p. 422).

Please, no choose one of the responses, whichever you feel is more accurate to this question – Why do you think the woman helped you?

- a. She had no other choice, she felt uncomfortable avoiding you, because there were no other people on the street.
- b. She genuinely wanted to help

If you selected option b as your answer, chances are that you are generally a grateful person. At least this is what some researchers say, claiming that when we attribute causes of behavior to kindness of a person, this demonstrates our trait gratitude too.



(Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>)

Savoring

Savoring is the capacity to notice and appreciate positive experience. It is distinct from a pleasure itself because it involves a mindful action and focused attendance to a certain events or experience. Savoring may focus on: (1) memories of joyful events, (2) present positive experiences, (3) future positive experiences [anticipation].

Tool: “Thinking about positive events”. Choose one event/experience that you recall and consider joyful. Tell about it to your friend, write about it, think about it, audio-record it. _____

Tool: “Savoring present moment”. Go for a 20-minute walk and notice as many positive things around you as possible (sounds/ music, scents in the air/ birds, flowers blooming/ leaves falling). Note down (mentally or write it down) what it was about these things that made them pleasurable.

Tool: “Increasing awareness of a personal achievement”. Identify some achievement that you are proud of and spend around 10 minutes writing about obstacles you overcame to achieve that. What did you do well? What strengths have you used to get there? How do you feel about yourself and about your life after performing this exercise? _____

Tool: “Memory lane”. Find an old photograph of yourself or some event in your life. Look at the photograph and write at least 3 positive things associated with this event. What happened then? How did it make you feel? How do you feel after this exercise?

Tool (Savouring past): “Life events line”. This tool will help you to holistically reflect on the main positive events in your life. There are different events in our lives, some are positive, others are negative, but they all help us learn from the experience and develop. In the table below, reflect on the positive events and achievements that happened to you over the course of your life. Identify the things you feel confident about, proud and, overall, happy

The year you were born ↓	Year ↓ ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	This year ↓
Positive event ↓	Positive event ↓	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Positive event ↓

After filling the table out, please, reflect on the following questions:

➤ When you look at the happiest times in your life, what were the key elements which made you happy? _____

➤ When were you most successful and why? _____

Tool (Savouring present): “Savouring simple joys”. Go on a 20-minute walk and notice as many positive things around you as possible (sounds/ music, scent in the air, birds, flowers blooming/ leaves falling). Note down (mentally or write it down) what it was about these things that made them pleasurable.

Tool (Savouring present): “Mindful photograph”. Spend 15 minutes taking photographs of objects around you. Try to make your pictures creative, beautiful and meaningful to you. Do not rush, instead try to take everything in. How do you feel?

Tool (Savouring future): “Excitement about what’s coming”. Please, list and describe in as many details as you can three things that you are looking forward to happening in the next few days. These events can be as simple as “having a chat with a friend” or “cooking pasta this evening”.

Self-Confidence

Self -reflection: “Confidence and assertiveness”. For a few moments, reflect on the two following questions:

1. What would be positive consequences of appreciating yourself more? _____

2. How might you appreciate yourself even in situations when you are imperfect, mistreated, or compare less favorably to others? _____

Tool: “Carry it with you”. This exercise helps to counter the distortions that keep the focus on the negative, replacing them with appreciative thoughts and feelings towards self. Please, write down all the things going on inside your head that affects your self-esteem. If you like being creative, you might even draw a picture of a big head with all the thoughts and feelings.

Carry this sheet of paper in a pocket for a day as a symbolic reminder that you can bear the events and memories and they are separate from you and does not make who you are!

Tool: “Healing affirmations”. A psychologist Louise Hay suggests that unhelpful mental patterns can be changed by using healing affirmations. She suggests that the old patterns of thinking can be changed to more effective ones. Healing affirmations must be repeated several times for several days. Here are some affirmations that help dealing with anxiety, addictions, and other common challenges:

Healing affirmation for addictions: “I now discover how wonderful I am. I choose to love and enjoy myself.”

Anxiety: “I love and approve of myself and I trust a process of life. I am safe.”

Loss of balance: “I center myself in safety and accept the perfection of life. All is well.”

Fatigue: “I am enthusiastic about life and I am filled with energy and enthusiasm.”

Tool: “Smile Meditation”. This meditation encourages positive emotions and self-appreciation. You can read the text below or listen to the audio recording. This meditation reminds us that happiness already exists within us as part of our true, happy nature. It is good to practice this at the beginning of the day. Allow about ten to fifteen minutes for this meditation.

Assume the appropriate posture, sitting comfortably erect, with feet flat on the floor and hands resting comfortably in the lap. The spine is straight. The upper body is relaxed but erect. Allow your eyes to close. Let your breathing help you to settle. Think of the playful, good-humored aspects of your true happy nature. Imagine for a moment what it would be like to smile. Perhaps you notice that just the idea of a smile tends to evoke feelings of being content, happy, relaxed, and softhearted. Just the thought of smiling relaxes and softens your face.

Now allow a genuine half smile to form on your face. The smile spreads across your face, soothing, and comforting your face.

Imagine that the smile spreads to the neck and throat, bringing happiness with it. Sense happiness in that region, letting your mind rest there.

Now let happiness spread to the lungs; sense the comfort it brings to that area.

Perhaps happiness feels like a warm light there. Whatever it is, just accept that and allow it to be.

Now let that feeling of happiness fill the heart, warming and soothing it. Breathe and let the mind rest there. Just allow happiness to settle in your heart.

Let the happy feeling of that smile spread to the stomach and any other areas of the body that you wish to focus on. Just sense the happiness in each region of the body.

Hold any thoughts that arise in kind friendliness.

Conclude by sensing your whole body being comforted by the soothing, happy feeling of a smile.

Tool: “Body Appreciation Activity”. Stand in front of a mirror or look directly at your body. Instead of noticing what’s wrong (such as a blemish, bags under your eyes, or wrinkles), notice what is right, what is great and attractive. Pay attention to your hair, your skin, your ability to stand and move, or the color of your eyes. Tell this to yourself.

Tips: “3 tips how to say no”. Below are some tips on how to say “no” and not leave people angry or wondering what you are up to.

1. Be clear about your “no”, don’t leave people wondering. Being as transparent as possible is a great idea as most people respect honesty.
2. Show gratitude for being asked or considered, afterall you want to keep a good relationship and you want to show that you are thankful for being remembered.
3. If you can think of an alternative solution or someone else who could help, let them know!

Tips: “Be Assertive NOT Aggressive”. If you want to be more assertive, but still likeable to others, consider the three tips identified below.

1. Establish a good initial connection with a person. Make sure you find something that unites you, that makes you feel related (similar experiences, events, background...).

The fact that you build that initial connection will become a primary thing between you two and the difficult conversation or negotiation will be a secondary thing that will less likely affect the relationship.

2. Don't run away. When conversation is challenging, most people tend to move from the heated situation consciously or unconsciously. Hold your horses and stay in it.

3. If you disagree with what they are saying, do not validate that unconsciously. We tend to nod head or use vocals to show agreement when listening to the conversation partner even if we don't agree with them. Be aware of this tendency and pause before doing this, especially if you have a different opinion. This will send a clear message that their approach might not be the only one or the accurate one.



(Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>)

Self-reflection: “Characters”. This exercise will help training your mind and see people in a positive light. Ultimately, you will be able to find ways to relate even with those, whom you normally dislike and tend to dismiss. We appreciate people with similar values and beliefs, who do not challenge our own view. “Difference” can be unsettling. Try this challenge, presented to you below and see if you can be more open and relate to diverse groups of people.

STEP no. 1:

Write names of...

- Two people that you know, like and admire
-

- Two people that you think are just not like you at all and that you do not like much
-

- Two people that you dislike or despise
-

STEP no. 2

Now, imagine you are in the television challenge. You are aloft in the air balloon with these people. You will receive a prize of your choice (e.g., 5 million pounds/ euros) if you can bring everyone back to earth. You are only allowed to transport back any person if you can convince the audience that each person is worth saving. You will need to show what you know about the person and can say things about them that bring out their best features. For each person, write down responses to the following questions:

1. What I like, value, admire, find interesting about this person _____
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

2. What this person contributes to the world that is different or valuable _____

2. In general, what kinds of people are you more likely to dismiss as “not your type of person”? _____

3. What kinds of things might you be missing out on because of that way of thinking?

Activity: “Relate through positive feedback”. Studies show that positive feedback given to a person, helps them to experience competence and satisfy one of the core psychological needs. In the next week, share positive feedback with your friends, family, colleagues, about great job that they do and help them to experience sense of competence and relatedness! Here are some tips for effective feedback:

1. Most of the time people don’t see their own strengths, so highlighting what they do well is very helpful!
2. Be specific.
3. Talk about how you appreciate their effort.
4. Give examples, referring to what they did.

Activity: “Learning something new”. In the next week learn something new. No need to aim for something very ambitious (like enrolling for a three-year course). It can be anything from cooking a new meal to learning a sentence in Mandarin language. See how this feel. If this feels empowering, repeat the same task the week after and learn another small thing until you are finally ready to engage with something more ambitious, requiring a greater commitment.

Tool: “Active and positive response”. This exercise helps to establish better relationships with others and achieve belongingness. Helping others to savour their achievements allows you to better relate. This tool encourages you to engage in “active and positive response”. Whenever someone shares some positive information with you or talk about their achievements, try to apply this tool. To do that follow the tips presented below:

1. Provide authentic (not fake) and enthusiastic support.
2. Ask thoughtful questions that encourage a person to share more details about their experience.
3. Match and build up on that excitement. Some examples of responses might be:

“Wow! That’s great! What did you say when you found out? What are you most looking forward to?”

Tool: “Identifying strengths”. It can be difficult to recognize your own strengths but seeing strengths in others and recognizing them can help you to be aware of your own strengths. Please list 3 strengths for each of the people identified below and think about the ways they can apply their strengths more often.

- A close friend

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- Someone you highly respect

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- Someone you have recently met

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Activity: “Tapping into your inner optimist”. This activity primarily concentrates on the difference between positive thinking and negative thinking.

Two groups must come up with the most optimistic and the most pessimistic thinking in each scenario. Assign one group to engage in optimistic thinking and the other to pessimistic thinking and switch after the first round (after the first scenario). The third round should invite both groups to come up with both: most optimistic and most pessimistic views. You should introduce the groups to three scenarios. Some possible scenarios are identified below:

1. Adebola notices an acquaintance crossing the street, waves at her, but she doesn't wave back
2. While giving a presentation, Jimi sees some people yawn
3. Leo fails an exam
4. You submitted job application, but the company never replied
5. Someone you know passed by you today without saying “hi”
6. You are trying to engage a group of people in a game, but instead of paying attention they talk among themselves

Allow groups to share their most pessimistic and optimistic interpretations and lead discussion around the following questions:

-
1. Which view pessimistic or optimistic is more realistic?
 2. Which view is more useful and healthier for a person to employ?
 3. What feelings each interpretation would lead to?
 4. How would we act in the case of pessimistic/ optimistic thought?

Tool: Positive narrative: This activity will allow you to see how quickly you can modify your mood, by engaging in some acting and positive versus negative narrative. Please, work in pairs. Partner number one will start by telling how they spent their Saturday. The story should be told sadly, i.e., as if this was the most dreadful thing that have happened to them in a while. As a facilitator, please, ask them to rate their mood or energy levels from 1 to 10 before this experiment and after (1 – no energy, low mood, 10 – high energy, happy mood). It is likely that after the first round of telling a story in a sad way people will report a drop in their mood. The second step, therefore, is to request to tell the same or another story, but in the most joyful mode possible (as if this was the best day of your life!). Please, ask the participants to rate their mood and/or energy levels again and compare it with the previous indicators. Your discussion may focus on the following questions:

- What was surprising in this activity?
- Did your mood and energy change after telling the story in a sad and joyful way?
- What is the take-away of this activity?

Tool: “Receiving Loving-kindness meditation”. This meditation allows you to feel connected with people who love you and care about you. At the same time, it relaxes and triggers positive feelings.

Close your eyes and think of a person close to you who loves you very much. It could be someone from the past or the present; someone still in life or who has passed; it could be your teacher, family member or a friend. Imagine that person standing on your right side, sending you their love. That person is sending you wishes for your safety, for your well-being and happiness. Feel the warm wishes and love coming from that person towards you.

Now bring to mind another person who cherishes you deeply. Imagine that person standing on your left side, sending you wishes for your wellness, for your health and happiness. Feel the kindness and warmth coming to you from that person.

Now imagine that you are surrounded on all sides by all the people who love you and have loved you. Picture all of your friends and loved ones surrounding you. They are standing sending you wishes for your happiness, well-being, and health. Bask in the warm wishes and love coming from all sides. You are filled and overflowing with warmth and love.

Strengths



Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>

Signs that you are applying your strength...

- You are intuitively drawn to this activity
- You derive a great satisfaction and energy from it
- You learn fast in that area
- You are able to achieve more, and the outcomes are of greater quality

Tool: “My strengths’ list”. Every person has talents and strengths that can be further developed. The list below introduces to 24 strengths/ talents. Please, rate each strength from 1 to 24, depending on how much each applies to you (1 is my main strength, 24 is my least developed strength) (This list of strengths was identified by Martin Seligman, 2004).

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 discovering).
4. Love of Learning (Mastering new skills, related to the strength of curiosity).

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

Tool: “Applying your strengths in action”. When people use their strengths, they do not realise they do it because things go smoothly, they are successful, they learn faster, so they have no concerns and they never stop and think about it! Your aim is to make young people more aware of their strengths.

There are several ways you can coach youth and help them develop existing strengths. You can start by focusing on the 5-6 signature strengths and discuss ways they applied them in the past. You can then encourage to think about a novel/ creative/ fun/ crazy way they can apply their signature strength in the future:

1. When was the last time you applied this strength? Please describe that situation.
 2. What is one novel way that you can apply your signature strength in the future?
- Please, think of the way to use one of your top five/six strengths in a new way every day for 1 week.

The key strength that I choose to focus on: _____

Past applications: _____

Future action: _____

You might decide to focus on two assignments for the week. Young people may be encouraged: (1) to apply the strengths to the job search at least two times during the

coming week and (2) to report two job search-related activities successfully performed that week and to identify the strengths contributing to those successes.

You can also focus on the 14 supporting strengths (situational strengths), that take place when a certain situation requires it. You can ask them to identify situation where they last had to use this strength and describe how it was helpful. You can then ask them to think of any upcoming event or situation where they will have to use it again and ask them to reflect how they are going to do it.

My situational strength: _____

Event/ situation that requires applying my situational strength: _____

Finally, you can focus on the 5 underdeveloped strengths. If a young person wants to develop these strengths, you can ask them what situations, events will require applying this strength or how their life would be better if they would develop that strength. You can then plan an action that would require applying one (or several) of the least developed 5 strengths.

My least developed strength: _____

Ways this strength might be useful: _____

Action where I can apply this strength: _____

Tool: “Best possible future self”. Take a moment to imagine your life in the future. What is the best possible life you can imagine? Consider all the relevant areas of your life, such as your career, study, relationships, hobbies, and health. What would happen in these areas of your life in your best possible future? It may be easy for this exercise to lead you to examine how your current life may not match this best possible future. You may be tempted to think about ways in which accomplishing goals has been difficult for you in the past. For the purpose of this exercise, however, imagine a brighter future in which you are your best self.

This exercise is most useful when it is very specific—if you think about a new job, imagine exactly what you would do, who you would work with, and where it would be. The more specific you are, the more engaged you will be in the exercise and the more you’ll get out of it.

Think about your life in the future. Imagine that everything has gone as well as it possibly could. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing all of your life goals. Think of this as the realization of all your life dreams. Now, write about what you imagined. Write it as a 300-word narrative, which should have a beginning, middle, and end

After engaging in the exercise above, please, reflect on the following questions:

- a. What strengths does this story illustrate?
- b. Do you use these strengths often?
- c. Do the strengths in your narrative show up in other areas of your life? What are these areas?
- d. How can you make these strengths more prominent in your everyday life?

Tool: “In the eyes of a beholder”. This tool helps to see your strengths through others’ perspective. 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?

References:

[Positive Psychology: A new approach to mental health](#)

- [Consumer Health News | HealthDay](#) – paper on positive psychology and it’s approach to mental health

More on positive psychology here:

<https://positivepsychology.com/>

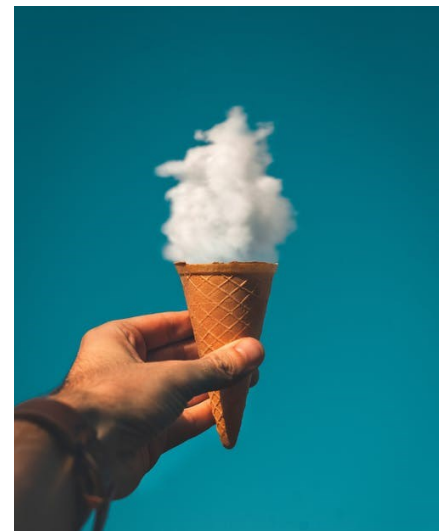


Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>

3. C for CREATIVITY

Over the third session we focus on creativity, which is inevitable feature in the post-pandemic world. In terms of creativity, we come with a thinking that creativity can be developed in anybody, who wants to be more creative. In this section you will find numerous tools that stimulate creativity. The learning outcomes for session are listed below:

Creativity

1. Explain the process of thinking out of the box
2. Explore various ideation techniques
3. Identify factors that can stimulate creativity
4. Understand the process of being creative

Entrepreneurship

1. Identify attributes of successful entrepreneurs
2. Apply motivational interviewing to encourage entrepreneurial intents
3. Discuss practicalities around setting up own start-ups
4. Understand the impact of social media and plan own use of it

Creativity is generation of ideas, insights, or solutions that are novel and potentially useful. Creativity is useful in the post-pandemic world where many things must be done differently. Facilitating creativity is helpful with the residents who have entrepreneurial goals for their future. You might wish to remember that creativity flourishes when (1) exploration, (2) independent work, (3) originality are supported.

Icebreaker: Ask participants to (silently) choose the figure they most identify with. In small groups (of same or different “shapes”) ask participants to talk about why they identified themselves with that figure.



Advise 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.

Group discussion: What is creativity and why is it important now and for you?

Creativity is.... _____

Why is creativity important?: _____

Tool: "Title for an artwork". There are many ways you can access creative ideas. One easy tool is exhausting common responses and accessing remote associations, which ultimately lead to creativity and innovation. In the next minute come up with as many titles for the picture presented below:



Source: <https://www.pexels.com/>

For another minute...come up with as many titles for the same picture (above), but do not mention any of the titles you have already mentioned. How many common responses and remote associations did you identify in each case? Chances are that over time and different attempts your responses become more creative. It is because you exhaust the common responses.

Tool: “The CAMP model”. CAMP is a model that facilitates creativity and innovation and is a wonderful tool for ideation. CAMP is an acronym, which stands for: Combine, Adapt, Modify, and Put to another use. This model is particularly useful in work with youth who aim to start their own business and are working on the ideas for it.

Combine: Think about combining two or more parts of the product or process to make something new. What might I blend? What ideas, purposes, units might I combine?

Adapt: Think about which parts of the product or process could be adapted/ borrowed from somewhere else or what groups you might adapt your idea to. What might I copy? Who might I emulate?

Modify: Think about changing part or all the product or process, or distorting it in an unusual way. What other meaning, color, motion, sound, smell, form, or shape might I adopt? What might I add?

Put to other use: Think of how you might put the product or process to another use. What new ways are there to use this?

Now think of your idea for business, what can you combine, adapt, modify, and put to other use to make it more unique and competitive? _____

Tool: “Mergers”. This tool will help you see how linking two (possibly unrelated) things/ ideas/ services can result in creative solutions and new products.

Please, identify two well-known organisations. Any type or size organisations will do.

Now, imagine that the organisations decide to merge. What new products and services these mergers would offer? Please, write down as many products/ services as possible:

Self-reflection: Please, list 3 things in your environment that contribute to your creativity and identify 1 that you are missing in your life right now, but would like to get more exposure to: _____

Presentation: “A 2-minute challenge”. Please, work in small groups. As a team of entrepreneurs, you have 25 minutes to come up with an innovative business idea. Please, apply models and other learning material you gained in this session. Your idea must be a 2-minute pitch where you present the problem, solution, and unique selling points of your new business. When preparing the presentation, consider these questions: What are your services/ products? What are your unique selling points? What problems are you helping to solve? The panel will rate your idea based on the 3 following criteria: (1) creativity, (2) unique selling points, (3) how useful it is to the target group.

Your business idea: _____

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Activity: “Entrepreneurial attributes”. Please, work in small groups. Each group focuses on a part of the alphabet (A-E, F-M, etc.). Depending on which letters you focus on, please identify words starting with the specific letters that are related to an Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship.

My notes: _____

Activity: “Entrepreneurial skills”. Activity thought to improve your skills on teamwork and foster creative ideas, to encourage creative thinking and business innovation. Please, follow the steps identified below.

1. Please reflect on your skills. In the next 10-15 minute, please, list your skills and rank them from the strongest to the weakest. Ensure you cover a broad range of skills, such as planning skills, personal skills, and health and safety skills, in addition to your technical skills: _____

- 2. Please, share these skills with the whole group (15 min)
- 3. Now, please, reflect what needs you observe in your community that would

require the skills you identified. Please, work in small groups and put the list of needs and skills on a flip chart. Now match your strongest skills with the needs in the community by drawing lines between their skills and the needs (10 mins).

4. Working in small groups of around 3 people (based on similar thoughts/interests and community needs identified), please, create a plan to initiate a business idea (30 mins).

5. When you are back, you will have 5 minutes to introduce your business idea (~20 min).

Tool: “Three questions for motivational interview”. An essential point that encourages entrepreneurial intents is your confidence level. Motivational interviewing can help build that confidence. Please, reflect on the following questions:

First, identify your confidence level, which can be anywhere from 1 to 10 (1 would be the lowest score), then reflect how you managed to get to that point, instead of scoring 1 or 0: _____

What would it take for you to be one score higher? What/who could provide support?

What would you tell a friend in your spot?

Tool: “Recognizing success”. Another important point in entrepreneurship is being successful and experiencing success! Most people do not feel successful or have hard-time recognizing their success. The truth is, you did have certain successes and winnings already, but might not gave enough recognition and attention. Motivational interviewing can direct your focus onto these achievements. Please, consider and reflect on the questions below:

Please, write about a time when you worked out a conflict:

What positive things would your friends or neighbors say about you?

Tell about an achievement or event that you are most proud of:

Tool: Change talk “D.A.R.N. -> C.”. Becoming an entrepreneur is not always easy. D.A.R.N. -> C. is a change talk that leads towards the direction of change. The acronym DARN-C stands for:

- **D**esire – I want, I wish...
- **A**bility – I can...
- **R**eason – If I can... Then I can...
- **N**eed – I have to...
- **C**ommitment – I will...

Now, please, think what you want to achieve as an entrepreneur and finish the statements above with as many relevant ideas as you can think of.

Tool: “Bouquet of affirmations.” During motivational interviewing affirmations can help strengthen self-efficacy that is so important while hunting for a job. Self-efficacy (believing in oneself) is one of the things that can help to be successful in what you attempt to do. Everyone has strengths and genuine affirmations help people feel

proud and more confident. Please, work in small groups and identify one thing that each of your team-members do well:

Now, please, share those affirmations with each of them.

Tool: “Directed Brainstorming exercise”. For the next 5 minutes, please come up with as many ideas as for a new business as possible. Quality does not matter in this case! What you need is as many ideas as possible, even though they are completely crazy.

Activity: “3 ways of marketing your business”. Depending on the business idea that you have, please, identify 3 most effective ways of marketing your business. You can use Google and other search engines to generate ideas. You have 15 minutes to identify 3 of that you think the most useful tools for marketing.

My marketing solutions: _____

4. K for KEENNESS

The final session focuses on the importance of developing keenness. Being keen means having or showing eagerness and enthusiasm. It is interrelated with what psychologists call “intrinsic or autonomous motivation”. In autonomous motivation, the activity itself is rewarding and a person does not need any external recognition or reward. Studies show that intrinsic motivation is facilitated when our actions align with our key values. Keenness seems to be particularly important in the post-pandemic world, where multiple factors that deter motivation and impact mental health exist. In this section you will find several activities and tools that tap into keenness and leadership skills. The learning outcomes for session are listed below:

Leadership skills

1. Develop project management skills, e.g., allocation of resources, time management
2. Learn what makes a leader successful
3. Understand how power can be used and abused

Keenness

1. Understand the concept of mental health and its relationship with keenness
2. Explain why we lack or lose motivation in different situations
3. Develop skills to deal with anxiety and negative thoughts
4. Explore ways to increase and maintain own confidence and motivation

Leadership

Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. Thus, leadership does not necessarily mean management as a

formal position in organization. A leader is any person who influences people and encourages action.

There are many speculations about what a good leader is. A situational leadership theory argues that a good leader is able to adjust their action and leadership style based on the needs of the followers and their developmental level. Transformational leadership theory highlights importance of leader's charisma, their concern with follower's emotions, values, ethics, and motives. There is no one right or wrong answer, at the very end successful leader style is the one that fits you and allows you to be authentic.

Self-reflection: "Role models". People say that the best way to discover your path in career is by analyzing and emulating what your role models did to achieve their success. Thus, we invite you to think about role models and leadership attributes that you appreciate. Please, reflect on the questions below:

Who do you admire the most among your family and friends?

In your opinion, who is the greatest person who has ever lived?

Who are your role models?

Someday you might become someone else's role model. What changes do you want to make to become the kind of person that others will love and follow?

Activity: “Born or Made?”. Think about the best leadership model that you evidenced in your life and identify three core characteristics of an effective leader. Now discuss in dyads assigning characteristics to one of the two clusters: BORN vs MADE. Which part received more attention? – Born or made characteristics? What does it tell us? Are there any contradictions in the list– What does that suggest?

Self-reflection: “I am Leader”. Please, reflect and respond to the following questions:

What are my values/ vision/ mission? How could these impact others?

How do others perceive me?

How do others evaluate me?

Why would anyone want me to lead her/him?

How well did I demonstrate my leadership today?

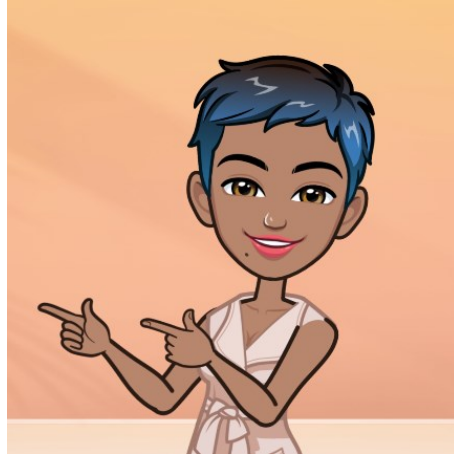
How can I lead better tomorrow?

What changes are essential in leading others?

What are my strengths and what needs development?

Tool: “Creating leadership vision”. Vision is a key differentiating factor between leaders and managers. Please, create your vision for the 4 domains of self, work, community, and home.

Activity: “Effective leader communication”. Please, consider a case below and help Charlie to come up with ideas for effective communication.



Charlie and her 4 people team are working on a strategy to promote their fashion brand internationally. She assigned team members with tasks and is holding weekly meetings to discuss progress. The deadline for the strategy is next month, but things are going much slower than she anticipated. Two out of four members are not delivering expected results, i.e., the ideas are either completely irrelevant or the job is only partially done.

- *Last week Blake had to identify target groups in the United States. He did identify groups, but the data is superficial and does not provide enough information about these customers.*

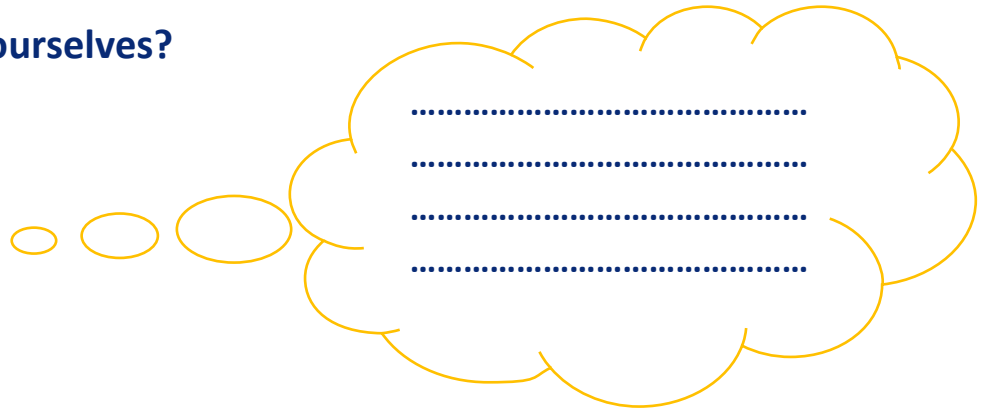
Charlie is feeling exhausted, frustrated and angry. She wants to be liked by the team, thus, refrains from criticizing them, but pleasing others does not seem to help the business.

- *How can I communicate in a more effective, confident and convincing way?*

Please, make some suggestions on **what and how** Charlie should tell her team to improve their performance: _____

How do we sabotage ourselves?

Possible Charlie's fears



Tool: “I like.... I wish... I wonder...What’s next?”. This tool is a helpful guide to what you should consider when communicating bad news, negative feedback, or undesirable information. First, consider a checklist for effective communication:

1. What is the aim of your conversation?
2. What is it exactly that you’re looking for from them?
3. Show you are coming from a place of care – *“This is important to me because I care about ...”*
4. Start with something positive and specific to what they did or do
5. Discuss the root of the problem. Give examples (but avoid being accusatory)
6. Focus on behavior and not their personality
7. Consider you may be missing something – *“Is that how you saw things, or do you see things differently?”*

8. Ask what support they need, what suggestions they have

9. Be open to their feedback

10. Use inclusive nonverbals, match and mirror

Second, remember that your conversation should focus on the four key areas, i.e.,
I like (what did you like about what they did so far?)

I wish (what do you see as the ultimate goal and outcome?)

I wonder (Let them talk about options to achieve that ultimate goal)

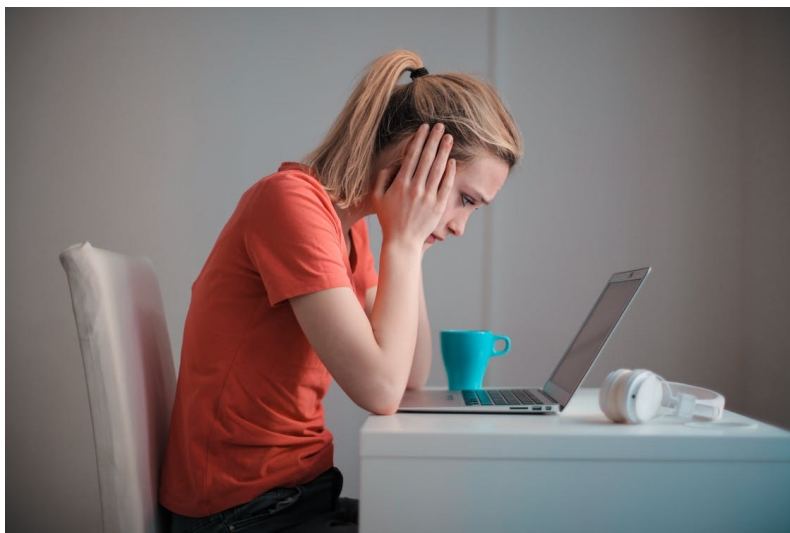
What's next (Project specific next actions)

Tool: "Voice work". This tool is borrowed from stage actors who must deliver a good performance to hundreds and thousands of people in the audience. Effective use of your voice allows one to communicate more effectively and become an inspirational and influential leader. Please, bear in mind that your voice defines you, so how you use your voice impacts your audience. Here are some tips:

1. Engage in vocal warm-ups such as a soft, low hum spanning only a few notes at a time
2. Try a facial massage while humming, which helps loosening up your facial muscles.
3. Yawning is a great way to loosen your jaw. It creates more space for you to breathe, which strengthens you voice!
4. Try tongue twisters, which release tension in your tongue. The tongue is the most powerful muscle in the human body, and it needs to be relaxed in order for you to articulate smoothly.

Raising awareness: “Abusive leadership actions”. Below you will find 13 leadership behaviors that researcher Bennett J. Tepper (2000) attributed to abusive leadership. Have you ever experienced any of these in your work or studies? Have you observed some else experiencing it? Please, bear in mind these behaviors should not be promoted in the workplace as it leads to various negative outcomes for individuals experiencing and observing it.

1. Ridiculing people
2. Reminding of past mistakes and failures
3. Preventing from interaction with colleagues
4. Telling one’s thoughts and feelings are stupid
5. Invading privacy
6. Being rude
7. Breaking promises
8. Giving silent treatment
9. Not giving credit for a job well done
10. Making negative comments about others
11. Expressing anger at a person
12. Putting one down in front of others
13. Blaming a person to save him/herself embarrassment



Mental Health

One important topic that is related to keenness and motivation is - mental health. When we experience good (mental) health, we are in good spirits, and we have great motivation and enthusiasm to engage in things and take actions. Sometimes we go through difficult periods in life, and this is when our keenness and motivation drop. Mental health is hard to define because a person's mental health, types of problems and the impact these have upon their life are individual and specific to them. In other words, no two mental health problems will be experienced or managed in the same way.

Good mental health includes four components: (1) feeling in control of own life, (2) being able to cope with challenges, (3) being able to focus and solve problems, (4) being generally optimistic.

MENTAL ILL HEALTH CHECKLIST (Signs of mental ill health)

Psychological	Physical	Behavioural
Experiencing worry, anxiety, and stress	Inability to relax, feeling constantly tense	Increased/ excessive drinking and smoking
Struggling with overwhelming intrusive and negative thoughts, emotions, memories	Inexplicable tiredness	Taking drugs
Being overly sad and tearful	Difficulty falling asleep or sleeping more than usual	Being aggressive, getting into conflicts
Mood changes	Weight loss or gain	Being cynical and anti-social
Being apathetic towards others and self	Indigestion, changes in appetite	Frequent lateness and withdrawal

Loss of motivation and passion	Back pain	Procrastination
Struggling with making decisions	Headache	Over-excitement
Being more sensitive than usual	Muscle aches	Repetitive speech or repeated activities
Loss of sense of humour	Pain in chest	Making more errors than usually
Difficulty learning and remembering things	Sweating, shaking, or feeling constantly cold	Over-reacting to situations
Feeling hopeless	Reduced immune system	Risk-taking behaviour that is not usual to the person

Bringing awareness: “Causes of poor mental health”

Our relationships play a crucial role in mental well-being. A mutually supportive and loving relationship can help cope with challenges. But unhappy, dysfunctional, or abusive relationships undermine well-being. Rejection by others can cause distinct psychological outcomes. To be more specific, rejections affect our thinking, emotions, and self-esteem.

Rejections are powerful because they undermine our fundamental need to belong. Humans are social animals; being rejected from our tribe would have meant losing access to food, protection, and mating partners, making it extremely difficult to survive. In research, brain scans show that the same brain regions get activated when we experience rejection and physical pain.

Rejection may be so devastating that reason, logic, and common sense are ineffective. It may trigger anger and aggression, which causes us to lash out at those who rejected or at innocent bystanders. Finally, experiencing profound or repeated rejection is extremely harmful to our self-esteem.

Childhood experiences can influence mental health throughout our lives. Being nurtured and cared for sets us up with a strong foundation for mental health and resilience. However, neglect, abuse, or trauma without support and healing, can affect us as adults.

Physical health is intertwined with mental well-being. There are obvious physical causes of mental and emotional issues, such as head injury. Those who suffer from chronic pain are more vulnerable to depression. Other factors such as the nutrients we take in daily support or hamper our mental and physical health.

Financial stress affects mental health. Whether it's not having enough money to meet basic needs, loss of a job, or financial instability, all these reasons can cause emotional and mental distress.

Life stages impact our mental health too. Every significant life stage or event, e.g., moving out of our home, committing to a relationship, buying a home, separation, job loss, childbirth, present significant emotional challenges.

Ideas: “Activities to improve mental health”. Below is a list of various activities that can help you to feel better, improve your mental health and become keener and more motivated. Which 5 activities do you find particularly relevant to you?

1. Reading novels or magazines
2. Watching TV
3. Learning a new craft or hobby
4. Spending time in nature
5. Having lunch with friends
6. Taking a shower
7. Being with animals
8. Singing
9. Listening to music
10. Playing a musical instrument
11. Rearranging your furniture
12. Reading something spiritual
13. Going to an event
14. Playing sports
15. Going to the movies
16. Cooking meals

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17. Having a good cry
 18. Admiring beautiful flowers or plants
 19. Painting or drawing
 20. Visiting people who are sick/ helping others
 21. Gardening
 22. Sitting in the sun
 23. Playing board games
 24. Swimming
 25. Running, jogging or walking
 26. While walking, noticing new things
 27. Being intimate with someone
 28. Repairing things
 29. Giving gifts
 30. Writing letters, cards, notes
 31. Being with close people/ partner
 32. Expressing my love to someone
 33. Doing volunteer work

Keeness

Case analysis: “Gail and Lee”. Please, read the two cases related to keeness and motivation below. Can you think of a similar case among your family / friends? Do you know a person who despite struggles, relied on their enthusiasm and keeness, which led to success?

Gail was born into poverty. She grew up wearing potato sacks because her family couldn't afford clothing. She was constantly shuffled between family members living in boarding houses and on rural farms. She was molested as a child and became pregnant at the age of 14. Now she is known as Oprah Gail Winfrey, a famous American talk show host, whose net worth is evaluated at 2.7 billion dollars.

Lee was born in Lewisham, grew up in Stratford. He was born into a taxi driver's and teacher's family. Lee left school at the age of 16. Since early age he was very interested in clothes. Despite all the financial struggles, he managed to pursue his passion in fashion and the world knows him as famous designer Alexander McQueen, a creative director for Givenchy, whose life inspired Kanye West.

Tool: “Are you ready for change? – The ADKAR model”. This tool that allows you to help others and yourself by assessing where the person is in the process of change. The acronym ADKAR stands for Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reward/ Reinforcement. Please, read the instructions below and fill out the table for further self-reflection.

Please, identify a person who needs a certain change. You can focus on a friend, family member or yourself. Second, thinking of that person, please, answer the questions below. Finally, score each item/question on a scale from 1 to 5, depending where the person is on awareness, desire, knowledge, application, and rewards (1 is not aware/not motivated/does not know how to change/ can't apply in practice/ no rewards are in place and 5 is very aware, very motivated, knows what to do/ how to apply in practice/ there are many rewards in place).

Please, include a brief description of what a person wants to change below:	
How much is he/she/they AWARE of the need to change?	Score (from 1 to 5):
Notes:	
How much does he/she/they DESIRE to change?	Score:
Notes:	
Does he/she/they KNOW what needs to be done to change?	Score:

Notes:	
Can he/she/they APPLY their knowledge in practice?	Score:
Notes:	
Are there REWARDS that motivate them to continue in this endeavour?	Score:
Notes:	

Once the notetaking and scoring is done focus on the areas that scored 3 or below. If awareness is lacking, discuss objective reasons and benefits for this change. If desire is lacking, focus on negative and positive consequences to encourage them to want to change. If knowledge is needed, advice on where they can find useful information. If ability is lacking help them to think of ways, they can practice certain actions or advise consulting with someone who knows how to do it. If reward is needed, find out what they like and reward them for every small step.

Tool: “A value list”. Values define what’s REALLY important to you. Values are not about what you want to achieve; they are about HOW you want to act, treat yourself and others. Please, go through the value list below and identify 9 values that are relevant to YOU.

1. Acceptance: to be open to and accepting of myself, others, life, etc.
2. Adventure: to be adventurous; to actively seek, create, or explore novel or stimulating experiences
3. Assertiveness: to respectfully stand up for my rights and request what I want
4. Authenticity: to be authentic, genuine, real; to be true to myself
5. Beauty: to appreciate, create, nurture or cultivate beauty in myself, others, the environment etc.
6. Caring: to be caring towards myself, others, the environment etc.

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7. Challenge: to keep challenging myself to grow, learn, improve
 8. Compassion: to act with kindness towards those who are suffering
 9. Connection: to engage fully in whatever I am doing, and be fully present with others
 10. Contribution: to contribute, help, assist, or make a positive difference to myself or others
 11. Conformity: to be respectful and obedient of rules and obligations
 12. Cooperation: to be cooperative and collaborative with others
 13. Courage: to be courageous or brave; to persist in the face of fear, threat, or difficulty
 14. Creativity: to be creative or innovative
 15. Curiosity: to be curious, open-minded and interested; to explore and discover
 16. Encouragement: to encourage and reward behaviour that I value in myself or others
 17. Equality: to treat others as equal to myself, and vice-versa
 18. Excitement: to seek, create and engage in activities that are exciting, stimulating or thrilling
 19. Fairness: to be fair to myself or others
 20. Fitness: to maintain or improve my fitness; to look after my physical and mental health and wellbeing
 21. Flexibility: to adjust and adapt readily to changing circumstances
 22. Freedom: to live freely; to choose how I live and behave, or help others do likewise
 23. Friendliness: to be friendly, companionable, or agreeable towards others
 24. Forgiveness: to be forgiving towards myself or others
 25. Fun: to be fun-loving; to seek, create, and engage in fun-filled activities
 26. Generosity: to be generous, sharing and giving, to myself or others
 27. Gratitude: to be grateful for and appreciative of the positive aspects of myself, others and life
 28. Honesty: to be honest, truthful, and sincere with myself and others
 29. Humour: to see and appreciate the humorous side of life
 30. Humility: to be humble or modest; to let my achievements speak for themselves
 31. Industry: to be industrious, hard-working, dedicated

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32. Independence: to be self-supportive, and choose my own way of doing things
 33. Intimacy: to open up, reveal, and share myself -- emotionally or physically – in my close personal relationships
 34. Justice: to uphold justice and fairness
 35. Kindness: to be kind, compassionate, considerate, nurturing or caring towards myself or others
 36. Love: to act lovingly or affectionately towards myself or others
 37. Mindfulness: to be conscious of, open to, and curious about my here-and-now experience
 38. Order: to be orderly and organized
 39. Open-mindedness: to think things through, see things from other’s points of view, and weigh evidence fairly.
 40. Patience: to wait calmly for what I want
 41. Persistence: to continue resolutely, despite problems or difficulties.
 42. Pleasure: to create and give pleasure to myself or others
 43. Power: to strongly influence or wield authority over others, e.g. taking charge, leading, organizing
 44. Reciprocity: to build relationships in which there is a fair balance of giving and taking
 45. Respect: to be respectful towards myself or others; to be polite, considerate and show positive regard
 46. Responsibility: to be responsible and accountable for my actions
 47. Romance: to be romantic; to display and express love or strong affection
 48. Safety: to secure, protect, or ensure safety of myself or others
 49. Self-awareness: to be aware of my own thoughts, feelings and actions
 50. Self-care: to look after my health and wellbeing, and get my needs met
 51. Self-development: to keep growing, advancing or improving in knowledge, skills, character, or life experience.
 52. Self-control: to act in accordance with my own ideals
 53. Sensuality: to create, explore and enjoy experiences that stimulate the five senses
 54. Spirituality: to connect with things bigger than myself

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- 55. Skillfulness: to continually practice and improve my skills, and apply myself fully when using them
 - 56. Supportiveness: to be supportive, helpful, encouraging, and available to myself or others
 - 57. Trust: to be trustworthy; to be loyal, faithful, sincere, and reliable
 - 58. Other (please, list your value here):

Based on Russ Harris at www.actmindfully.com.au

Tool: “Mapping your values”. Please, map your 9 core values, depending on their importance to you



Tool: “Values in action”. There are several ways you can coach young people to be more motivated through engaging with their values.

You can start by focusing on 1 key value and discuss ways they applied it in the past. You can then encourage to think about a novel/ creative/ fun/ crazy way they can apply their value in the future:

1. When was the last time you acted upon your value? Please describe that situation in detail.
2. What is one novel way that you can apply your value in the future?

The key value that I choose to focus on: _____

Past applications: _____

Future action (in the next 24-hours): _____

In addition, you might decide to focus on young people’s employability. For example, you can ask them (1) to apply the key value to the job search at least two times during the coming week and (2) to report two job search-related activities successfully performed that week and identify what values contributed to the success.

Tool: “Goal setting”. One of the most popular ways to boost motivation and keenness is by setting your short-term and long-term goals. In the table below, please, identify your long-term and short-term goals as it relates to the five main areas of life. Please, make sure you review your goals every six months and observe your progress.

Area of Life	Long-term Goals (In the next year)	Short-term Goals (In the next month)
Love/ Family		
Friendship/ Community		
Work/ Career		
Spirituality		
Self		

ENERGY LEVEL	Morning												Afternoon					Evening					Night			
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4		
Very High																										
High																										
Medium																										
Low																										
Sleep																										

Tool: “Energy graph”. In the graph below, please, mark your most productive and least productive times. Use this graph to raise own awareness on your energy levels.

Whenever you want to do something important, try to plan it around the times you are most productive

Reading: “STEEM List”. Please, review a list of thoughts, feelings, memories, and sensations presented below to familiarise with some of the negative thoughts and emotions that people experience.

STEEM List

Acronym STEEM stands for: Sensations, Thoughts, Emotions, Events, and Memories. Below are examples of thoughts, feelings, memories, and sensations that are normal, because EVERYONE experiences them. However, due to heavy nature they tend to be unhelpful. Read through the statements and see if any seem familiar

Sensations

-
- Pain (Headache, chest pain, back pain)

 - Tense muscles, upset stomach, dry mouth, shaking, cold or sweaty hands and feet

 - Tiredness/ feeling sleepy

Thoughts

-
- I have to make everything perfect. If it is not perfect, they won't respect me.

 - If someone criticizes me, they don't like me.

 - I just can't speak in front of people – I sound / talk / look ridiculous.

 - Showing that I am stressed means that I am weak.

 - If I share my opinion, they will laugh at me.

 - If I disagree with others, they will expel me from their circle.

 - If I am different from others, they will not accept me.

 - Everyone around me is more successful than I am.

Emotions

- Annoyance, irritation
 - Disappointment
 - Anxiety
 - Sadness
 - Loneliness
 - Guilt
 - Boredom
-

Events and Memories of them

- Making mistakes
 - Conflicts with others (family, friends, etc.)
 - Being rejected
 - Being humiliated
-

Case analysis: “Natasha”. Please, read Natasha’s case below and respond to the questions. Next, please have a 10-minute discussion in a large group to compare the answers and see whether these thoughts, feelings that you identified are helpful to Natasha. If these are not helpful, please, identify ways how they might be changed to facilitate motivation and keenness.

STEEM SCENARIO



Photo source: <https://www.pexels.com/>

Natasha is 22 years old and has never worked in her life. Ever since she dropped out of high school, everyone has been telling her that she needs to find a job and take care of her life. How would Natasha feel when hearing such ‘advice’?

Having given it a lot of thought, Natasha decides to start applying for jobs but is unsure of what exactly she could do. Someone has told her of an exciting apprenticeship scheme within animal care, which does not require any formal education or work experience. Natasha loves animals (in fact, her long-forgotten childhood dream was to become a vet), so she decides to go for it. She knows the first thing to do is to create a CV. What thoughts would cross her mind when she looks at the blank sheet of paper?

Natasha applies for the apprenticeship scheme and one day, after having waited for what felt like ages, she receives an invitation to a job interview. She has never been to one and is wondering what it would be like. She remembers a time from her teenage years when she auditioned for a role in a high school play and failed, receiving some harsh feedback too. How could this event and the memory of the negative feedback affect Natasha’s expectations of the upcoming job interview?

The day of the job interview has come. Natasha has heard from a friend that job interviews are seldom in the form of 121 meetings and are most often held by a panel of interviewers. The very thought of this is making her feel anxious. What sensations would Natasha experience as a result?

Activity: “A Poem Analysis”. Please, read Rumi’s poem called *The Guest House* below and discuss the following questions:

- ✓ Who's been visiting you lately?
- ✓ Do you know why?
- ✓ Do you tend to reject your own feelings and emotions?
- ✓ Do you ever feel trapped in the prison of your own mind?
- ✓ Can you envision a time when you're grateful for all the visitors who come to your guest house?
- ✓ What do you need to "clear out?"

The Guest House (Rumi)

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness
Some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
Who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
For some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
Meet them at the door laughing,
And invite them in.
Be grateful for whoever comes,
Because each has been sent
As a guide from beyond.

Fun activity: „Who did it?“. Please, watch a YouTube video by clicking on the link below. This video helps to see that human mind is flawed. When we focus on something specific, we miss a lot of important information. For example, when we overly focus on an intrusive thought, we fail recognising positive things in life and lose motivation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubNF9QNEQLA>

Tool: “Here and now”. Anxiety is future-oriented. By training ourselves to focus on the “here and now” we can manage anxiety better and promoting keenness. Practise being in the present moment by attending to:

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

You can use this exercise every time your mind wanders away or gets trapped in anxious and negative thoughts.

Tool: “STOP” aka Sound Focus technique. Wherever you are, begin to listen for a consistent sound in the background. This may be the sound of a fan, the engine, traffic, etc. If you are out walking in the town you can listen for a consistent urban sound, or if you are walking in the countryside, you might listen out for a consistent sound in nature. If you notice your mind wandering away from the sound, just bring your attention back to it.

Tool: “Pause” aka Shower technique. Sit under a warm shower and feel the soothing water. Move your attention to the sound of the water and close your eyes and turn your attention inwards. Listen to the sound of the falling water and feel it on your body. Move your attention to relaxing and letting go.

Tool: “Small actions to develop patience”. Let someone in front of you for a completely arbitrary and unselfish reason. This could be waiting to order a meal, at the grocery store, even just holding a door open.

Watching and counting your pulse. Next time you encounter obstacles, become angry at somebody or situation, watch your pulse for a minute.

Using free time ‘freely’. During technology times many people developed a habit to be busy on their phones, social media every time they have some ‘extra’ minute or are

waiting for something. Instead of that, try just to focus on the present moment and environment.

Activity: “Looking forward”. 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”.

Podcast: “How to stop procrastination?” (3 podcasts)

Podcast 1: https://youtu.be/fmQx0_JttU4

Podcast 2: <https://youtu.be/fKNegmqMoSs>

Podcast 3: <https://youtu.be/Th4luWcFRNg>

Activity: “Positive RE-framing”. 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. How do you feel after engaging in this activity?

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.

Tool: “Exceptions”. We will end this unit with a tool, focusing on the positive things. This tool allows identifying positive practices from the past and bring more of those practices into your present. Instructions: 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?

Concluding remarks

First, we want to say:

THANK YOU FOR USING THESE CAREFULLY CRAFTED HANDBOOK!

We hope this helps you and the young people you work with. Please, feel free to pick and choose tools and activities that best suit your target group. Younger audience might prefer active, fun games that include teamwork, whereas more mature young people may feel comfortable reflecting on their own thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Please, do bear in mind that these activities are of most beneficial when you highlight the key conclusions and learnings from it and when you allow time for participants to reflect on their own learning.

While going through the material you might have wondered – what is the difference between the tool and activity? The answer is that a tool is something that a young person can repeatedly use to help them deal with challenges in work and life. While, an activity leads to insight, but it is generally a one-off exercise that is usually done in a group setting.

We want to take this opportunity to thank all the partner countries (Non-formal learning club "WE", Youth Initiative Center, MS Research and Training Academy, SelfInvest and StraussAPS), our R.O.C.K training participants, youth workers and teachers who took part in our multiplier events, and the national agency in Lithuania, which supported this projected

Thank you! You made sure we implemented a really meaningful project.

If you'd like to share your feedback, thoughts, and suggestions, you can e-mail us at:

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P.S. → YOU R.O.C.K!