



Joy

# JOY

## Innovative, Recreational, Stress Relief Youth Empowerment Strategies

### Intellectual Output 3

### Youth burnout awareness and therapy workshops

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of the European Union



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## Introduction

Stress in young people is increasing at an alarming rate. All those in contact with teenagers have witnessed the increasing pressures placed on this age group, often without an increase in the support available to them. High and continuous stress is overwhelming for children and adolescents and it often has negative effects on their physical, emotional and mental health. According to World Health Organization, 10-20% of children and adolescents experience a diagnosable mental illness world-wide. 50% of these mental illnesses begin by the age of 14 and 75% by mid 20s. At the European level, in the top 5 causes of illnesses among youth are depression and anxiety. In low- and middle-income countries suicide is the first cause for death among youngsters between 10-19 years old. In high-income countries, suicide is the second cause leading to death.

Causes of this phenomenon are: fears and dilemmas coming up in their trek to adulthood, peer pressure, adults' pressure, stress induced by the educational system, competitive society and the need to succeed pressure. Long term stress not attended turns into burnout which can manifest in a variety of signs and symptoms such as poor energy, negative changes in behaviour, acting irritable or moody, withdrawing from activities that used to give them pleasure, routinely expressing worries, complaining more than usual about school, crying, displaying surprising fearful reactions, clinging to a parent or teacher, sleeping too much or too little, or eating too much or too little, significantly avoiding parents, abandoning long-time friendships for a new set of peers or expressing excessive hostility toward family members.

Burnout effects may lead to serious consequences: health problems, lack of motivation and involvement, school dropout, conflicts, juvenile crime. Youth stress and burnout are not enough taken seriously by youth themselves, by parents, educators or



health professionals even if relief measures can bring important positive consequences on youth well-being, school performances, relationships, family life, future.

``*JOY - Innovative, Recreational, Stress Relief Youth Empowerment Strategies*`` is an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project implemented by Palatul Copiilor Iași, Romania, Asociacija Kurybines Ateities Idejos, Lithuania, Asociatia Demetrius, Romania, Eesti People to People, Estonia, Mitra France and Godalen Videregående Skole, Norway, addressing youth aged 14-20, on one hand and youth educators, parents, teachers, health professionals, on the other hand.

The aim of the project is to raise awareness on youth burnout danger among the target groups and stakeholders as highly important and stringent issue related to children mental health and to provide a widely usable training solutions and burnout prevention and coping skills through partner cooperation and exchange of expertise, methodologies and good practices in order to reduce the effects and consequences in European Union.

The initiative offers improved knowledge, skills and practices in youth burnout prevention and coping, a new and not enough approached topic widely affecting European youth, in a highly accessible and attractive manner using recognized and validated training methodology, burnout recovery best practice collection, therapeutic workshops and guidelines for developing their career and learning effectively.

``*Youth burnout awareness and therapy workshops toolkit*`` - Intellectual Output 3 in the JOY project is an educational tool which purpose is to build strong characters, to strengthen positive behaviours, to underline successful educational practice, to prevent burnout and lack of motivation among youth through enhancing the joy of life and sharing it with peers, to make youth get a sense of equilibrium and purpose of life.

The toolkit will contain guidelines for 6 burnout awareness and therapy workshops addressed to youth workers and teachers to be used in their daily activity in NGOs, youth centres, schools, in summer or winter camps or with other occasions.

It contains six sets of instruments, each for one day workshop with a group of 8 - 20 young people, aged 14 - 20, being based on different training methods: art therapy, hand craft, relaxation techniques, drama, outdoor activities, non-formal methods.



The training methods included are extremely varied, attractive, interactive and they can even be used interconnected. The expectations for this therapy workshops toolkit is to have a highly positive impact on the communication skills and self-confidence of all participants, as well as on their critical thinking and sense of inclusion, equality, diversity, non-discrimination, gender balance, segregation, harassment and violence prevention.

The *‘‘Youth burnout awareness and therapy workshops toolkit’’* is addressed and designed to youth workers, trainers, teachers therefore it contains detailed methodological clues, so that to be easily replicated in NGO`s youth clubs and centres, schools, etc. and to enhance a high degree of transferability, in order to promote positive emotional and social environment in schools and build students` skills to cope with adverse circumstances and adopt healthy lifestyles.



## 1. Art therapy workshops

### 1. Collage “A map of my thoughts “



Collage is a painting and graphic technique in which pieces of paper, fabric or other material are glued to a substrate and drawn or painted.

During the sessions, clippings are cut from the magazines and everything is combined into one common card. The environment in which everything takes place is very important. It must be safe, free to allow creativity to unfold.

Needed resources: a piece of A3 format paper, a scissors, a glue and several magazines.



Workshop is starting with meditation. Quiet music can play in a room. Trainer asking participants close their eyes and imagine. “Imagine yourself in a place, where you feel more comfortable, safe, happy, place you dream about. Now you can open your eyes, take magazines and cut from them pictures, letters, text, whatever you want. Glue these clippings into one picture and make a picture of your favourite place. Spend a generous amount of time going through the magazines. Tear out any images that you like, that seem to appeal to you for ANY REASON. Don't question WHY you might be drawn to the images. Simply rip them out!”.

Each card in a Collage represents and honours one of the following facets of my unique life: a voice that lives inside of me, a person who supports me, an animal that has special energy to give me, or a mythical figure which guides me.

After pictures are ready, teacher ask each participant talk about his collage, and interpreter it.

**Task completion time - up to 2 hours.**

## 2. I am a boat







Resources:

Colored pencils

Felt-tip pens

A4 white sheets of paper

Implementation:

Let's take colored pencils. Relax. Close your eyes. With closed eyes, imagine - you are a small boat in a big storm.

It would be good to say something about waves, wind and fighting in this place. (The wind howls and whistles in an attempt to sink a small boat. The boat resists. A fight between the boat and the storm takes place).

Trainer need to ask the youth to be in the boat, to imagine how he feels about being what is happening now, what will happen soon. And depict it all on paper.

This fantasy always allows you to learn a lot about what place a youth occupies in the world and how he overcomes external forces.

DISCUSSIONS after:

1. How do you feel being in a small boat?
2. What does it mean to be a small boat in a big storm?
3. What is a boat usually afraid of?
4. How do you feel in a storm?

**Task completion time - up to 2 hours.**



### 3. A man picking an apple



**Task:** Draw a man picking an apple from a tree.

The task leaves a lot of freedom. This means that the situation itself, or its solution, is created by the author of the drawing himself. Picking an apple (as a symbol) reflects the action by which a person expresses the ability to achieve his goal. Interpretation reveals the originality of the painter's spiritual world.

**Resources:**

Coloured pencils and felt-tip pens, including black

A4 white sheets of paper

**Implementation:**

Let's find a place you like in a room, sit down. Relax. Take a pencil and draw "The Man Picking an Apple".

**DISCUSSIONS:**

- a) On the other side of the sheet, describe your drawing
- b) Share the feelings and emotions that arose during the process with a friend sitting on the right.
- c) How did you feel after finishing work?
- d) Has the person picked an apple? (if not depicted holding an apple, you may be told that he will necessarily pick it up or too high for him and he will not be able to).

**Task completion time** - up to 2 hours.



## 5. Art therapy method to reduce stress and angry

6.



**Task:** Reduce anxiety, turn negative feelings into positive ones

### **Resources:**

Pencils, glue, A4 white sheets of paper

### **Implementation:**

Let's find a place you like in a room, sit down. Relax. Remember worst moment from your life, remember what you felt then, what feelings have you experienced. Try to feel same feelings again. When you feel all those negative feelings again, anger, annoyance, take a pencil and draw all these feelings on the paper, express them, transfer them from yourself to the paper. Then wrinkle this sheet of paper, tear it off. How do you feel now? Better?

Now you should transfer these bad feelings in to good. Take those pieces of crumpled paper and try feel they softness and tenderness. Take other sheet of paper, and glue something soft and beautiful from these pieces of crumpled paper: bird, butterfly, kitten, flowers.

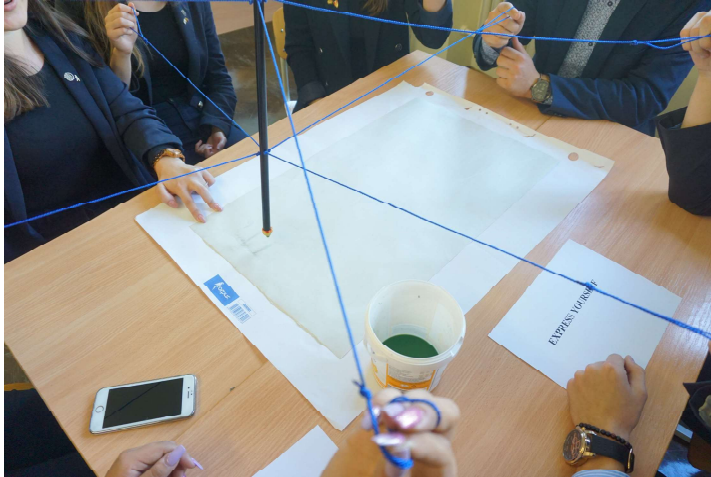
### **DISCUSSIONS after:**

1. How do you feel after this exercise?
2. Does your feelings had changed?

**Task completion time** - up to 1,5 hours.



## 5. Painting with one pencil



**Task:** learn to work in a team

**Measures:** Big pencil, controlled with 8 ropes, A1 format paper sheet, colours (gouache)

### **Implementation:**

Ask students divide in to teams, from 4 to 8 people. Each team gave a pencil, A1 format paper sheet, colours. Gave for them simply task (write their names, name of school, title of project, etc.). Pencil is controlled by each team member. Students should hold on to the tip of the ropes. They have to soak the tip of the pencil in colours and write it on paper sheet.

### **DISCUSSIONS after:**

1. Do you have leader in your group?
2. Did you work as a team from the beginning?

**Task completion time** – 30 minutes.



## 2. Handcraft workshops

Handcraft is one of the efficient antidotes to the stress and burnout as it has focus on repetitive actions and helps to relax and do not think about daily problems. Handcraft activities have mental and even physical benefits as can connect the body and mind.

Creative and attractive activities such as knitting, weaving, ceramics, needlework, woodwork and others help to think in positive way. They allow to develop new skills. People can be proud of what they learned and made when working with own hands. What is important that it is possible to improve creative skills and make pieces of handcraft better and better. The quality increases from one workshop to the next one.

Handcraft allows engagement with peers what is very important in the preventing burnout. Kids can share own experience with each other, to learn from each other, with each other and by each other. Group work support team building and develop common values and understanding. Kids can share patient, concentration on creative work and success of great results.

### **The benefits and competences of the handcraft activities:**

1. Relief from stress.
2. Reduced anxiety.
3. Enhanced confidence.
4. Cognitive abilities (improved memory, concentration and ability to think through problems which can arise during the technical or creative implementation of art work).
5. Relaxation.
6. A sense of accomplishment.
7. Increased happiness.



Handcraft activities increase also self-esteem, personal sense of well-being, ability to live positively and make distance from negative emotional and cognitive states. They are very good solution for preventing burnout because person has to change direction of thinking and doing things and concentrated on completely new creative movements of hands and also of brain.

Handcrafts allows to use different materials and colours. Working with colours was found by scientists to be uplifting, especially in winter. Self-made products can serve and decorate the life of the participant herself/himself, but they can also become gifts for friends and family and have added value as people will be happy of what was done by hands and specially for someone.

Handcrafts play a key role in enhancing the quality of life of those who participate in its practices in all ages and can be used for the prevention of burnout at schools and hobby centers as non-formal activities after official lessons. The trainers can be teachers, mentors, parents and grandparents and kids themselves. Intergenerational education is very welcomed in handcrafts workshops because it supports mutual understanding between representatives of different generations and help to build strong family relationships.

### **1.Bracelet decoration**

We recommend to start with a simple workshop in which children decorate a bracelet or watch with coloured or solid beads.

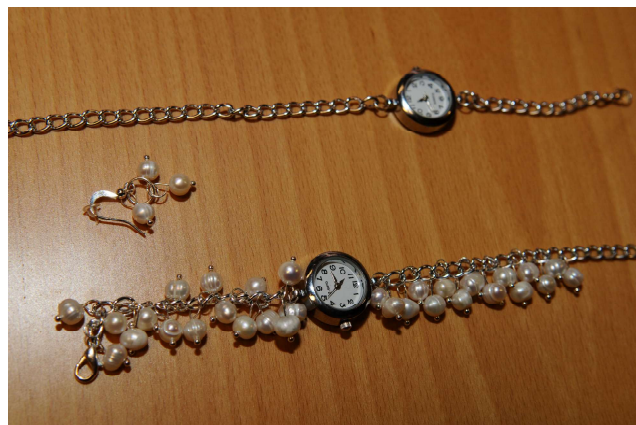
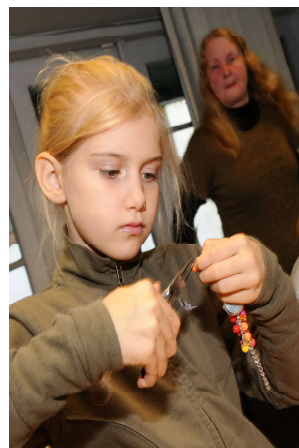




For work, you need to prepare a thin short line or wire with stopper that look like thin nails, as well as tongs. Beads need to be strung on a fishing line and clamped or twisted with tongs, so that the beads hang in bunches from the bracelet. Any compositions and color solutions are welcome.

This workshop will take about 1-2 hours, depending on the age and experience of the participants. The age group can be 10+.

Trainer has to show how to work with tongs and then children using imagination work independently.



Here you can see what girls made during one hour. They also decorated earrings. Trainer was Ruta Pels from Eesti People to People NGO (Estonia).

You can use also brooches and other staff which can be decorated with beads, but for this you need to prepare them in advance.



## 2. Handmade jewellery workshop

We propose to conduct the next workshop about handmade jewellery.

Let start with introduction, getting know the techniques, the materials: artistic clay, plastic mass, various kind of paints, the tools for working, the way of working, presentation a jewellery collection as a possible pattern using ICT/ multimedia projector, computer and digital camera.

We will learn how to roll out clay forming different shapes and cut them which will then be used to make beads, necklaces, brooches, bracelets, earrings and other handmade jewelry. First step is selection of materials with the help and support of trainer, combining different techniques together creatively, individually and in teams. Each piece will be carefully designed and crafted through selection of colours and pattern, to achieve the best result.

It is better to use wet clay and special plastic and buy them in art shops. If you would like to use dry clay, it should be wet before the workshop.

The cut forms must be dried well before painting. Therefore, it is better to schedule two or even three days for this activity.



On the first day, participants draw on paper what they want to do, then they make blanks out of plastic and clay based on their drawings.

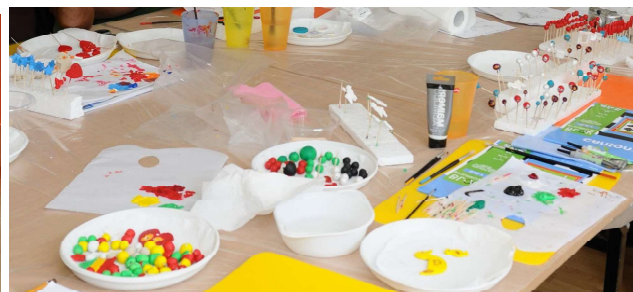




We recommend using wooden toothpicks while dry and also painting the moulds for future jewellery and then sticking them into the Styrofoam to dry the pieces. If this is done on a plane (on a table or plate, the pieces may stick together or lose some of the paint from the sides, so be careful and put all pieces separately).



On the second day, participants paint pieces and put to dry. We recommend using acrylic paints or those that the store advises for painting plastic and ceramics. You will also need brushes, glasses of water, and napkins to wipe down the brushes.





On the third day, when the paint has dried, we will finish work on our handcraft, add clasps, buckles, joining all elements in one piece of jewellery - bracelets, necklaces, beads, etc. process and results.

It is very important to present participants' art work and organize small exhibition of all handmade jewellery and then organize evaluation activity to receive feedback about the process and results.



It is also very important to evaluate workshops and get a feedback from participants about their new knowledge and skills and also their emotions during and after the workshops which are directly connected to the prevention of burnout. If you organize workshops during few days, we suggest to start each day and finish each day with feedback, so in this way you as a trainer can see the development of competences of your learners and compare what they knew and could at the beginning and at the end of workshops.



### 3. Tiffany technique workshop

We invite you to the glass workshops in Bjarte studio and Vitraazikoda – associated partners of Eesti People to People (Estonia) in JOY project. Trainers and learners use Tiffany technology for cutting and connecting pieces of glass to the handcraft work.

Tiffany (full name — Louis Comfort Tiffany, 1848-1933) is the name of the American artist and designer who invented the method of joining small pieces of glass with copper foil. The technique of soldering stained glass was named in honor of the inventor — Tiffany technique, and became the most common technique for creating stained glass in the whole world.



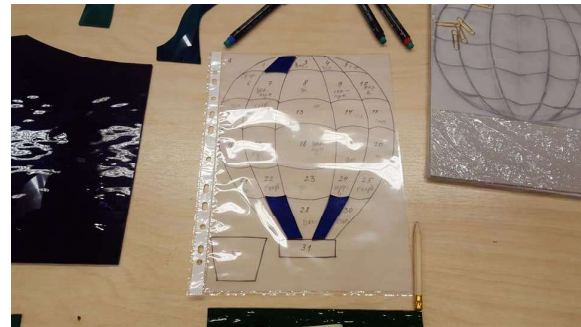
We need for this workshop:

1. Multi-coloured glass. Preferably transparent or translucent.
2. Diamond glass cutter.
3. A shatterer.
4. Cutters.
5. A grinding machine.
6. Copper foil, solder alloy.
7. Soldering acid.

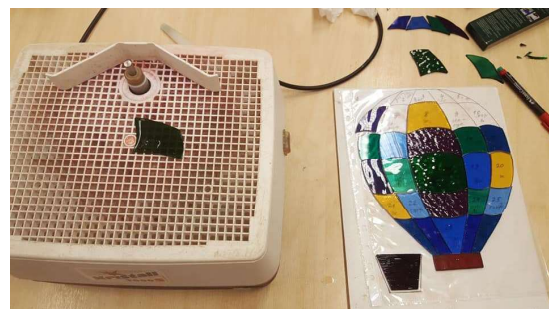
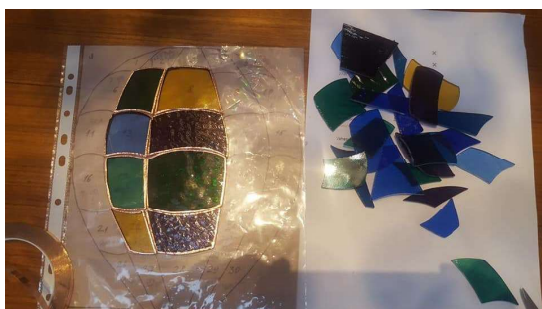


8. Patina.
9. A soldering iron.
10. A marker, 2 brushes, scissors, a chopstick.

Workshop starts with drawing of future piece of art. Learners have to mark pieces with numbers on paper and decide which colour will use for each number. Trainers help to prepare glass based on drawings and also tools to connect them.



Learners mark glass pieces with numbers and put on paper, so numbers are the same on paper and on glass. Then they connect pieces using tools, dry and clean with paper and water at the end of the workshop.





The time for workshop depends on the complexity of the future work (can be 1-2 hours).  
The age can be 7+. Workshop can be organized for 1-2 learners or for groups up to 10-15 people.



## 3. Relaxation techniques workshops

### 1. Mindfulness meditation



Mindfulness has become extremely popular in recent years, garnering headlines and endorsements from celebrities, business leaders, and psychologists alike. So, what is mindfulness? Rather than worrying about the future or dwelling on the past, mindfulness switches your focus to what's happening right now, enabling you to be fully engaged in the present moment.

Meditations that cultivate mindfulness have long been used to reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and other negative emotions. Some of these practices bring you into the present by focusing your attention on a single repetitive action, such as you're breathing or a few repeated words. Other forms of mindfulness meditation encourage you to follow and then release internal thoughts or sensations. Mindfulness can also be applied to activities such as walking, exercising, or eating.

Using mindfulness to stay focused on the present might seem straightforward, but it takes practice to reap all the benefits. When you first start practicing, you'll likely find that your



focus keeps wandering back to your worries or regrets. But don't get disheartened. Each time you draw your focus back to the present, you're strengthening a new mental habit that can help you break free of fretting about the past or stressing about the future.

Teacher can explain the students the benefits of this exercise and recommend them to practice it on the daily basis.

The exercise may take place outside in a peaceful setting or inside in a spacious and appropriate room.

Using an app or audio download can also help focus your attention, especially when you're starting out.

The workshop will consist in two activities - a static and a dynamic one.

### **Methodological clues:**

- Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted or distracted.
- Sit on a comfortable chair with your back straight.
- Close your eyes and find a point of focus, such as your breathing—the sensation of air flowing into your nostrils and out of your mouth or your belly rising and falling—or a meaningful word that you repeat throughout the meditation.
- Don't worry about distracting thoughts that go through your mind or about how well you're doing. If thoughts intrude your relaxation session, don't fight them, just gently turn your attention back to your point of focus, without judgment.
- After 8-10 minutes stop and return to the normal state of mind.

The teacher will start a group discussion:

- How did you feel during this exercise?
- Have you succeeded to find a point of focus?
- How difficult was to keep focus?
- What thoughts were disturbing you?
- How did you feel at the end of the exercise?



For maximum stress relief, add mindfulness to your workout. Rhythmic exercise that gets you into a flow of repetitive movement can produce the relaxation response. Examples of rhythmic movement include: running, walking, swimming, dancing, rowing, climbing. While simply engaging in rhythmic exercise will help you relieve stress, adding a mindfulness component can benefit students even more.

Mindful exercise requires being fully engaged in the present moment, paying attention to how your body feels right now, rather than your daily worries or concerns. At home, instead of zoning out or staring at a TV as you exercise, focus on the sensations in your limbs and how your breathing complements your movement.

**Methodological clues:**

- Walk or run for about 10 minutes.
- Focus on the sensation of your feet touching the ground, the rhythm of your breath, and the feeling of the wind against your face.
- Then focus on coordinating your breathing with your movements and pay attention to how your body feels as you raise and lower the weights.
- Gently return your focus to your breathing and movement when your mind wanders to other thoughts.
- After 10 minutes stop and breathe continuing to focus on your breath.

The teacher will start a group discussion:

- How did you feel during the exercise?
- Have you succeeded to focus on your breath?
- Do you feel more relaxed in the end of the two exercises?

**Task completion time - up to 1 hour.**





## 2. Visualization for school efficiency



This exercise is adapted after Herbert Benson's relaxation meditation. During 20 years of research, he demonstrated that the regular practice of a meditation or a relaxation exercise for 8 weeks leads to a number of beneficial changes in the brain, including the fact that gray matter has become denser in areas of the brain associated with: learning, memory and information processing, emotional regulation, decreasing fear, anxiety and stress.

Teacher can explain the students the benefits of this exercise and recommend them to practice it on the daily basis.

The exercise may take place outside in a peaceful setting or inside in a spacious and appropriate room.

### **Methodological clues:**

- Ask participants to sit in a comfortable position, to close their eyes and deeply relax while they breathe.
- Ask them to focus on their breathing and breathe deeply 2-3 times.
- To imagine a sun or a light above their head, which relaxes the area of the top of the head, ears and face.
- They can still imagine how the sun goes down lightly on the body and the pleasant sensation of relaxation is spreading on the neck, on the shoulders, on the back to the base of the spine. Then on the hands, from shoulders to elbows and from elbows to palms and fingertips.



- The warmth of the sun and the wonderful feeling of comfort embrace their chest, abdomen, pelvis and extend from the hips to the knees and from the knees to the toes.
- Then, ask participants to focus and repeat in their minds for 2-3 minutes a sentence at their own choice. Teacher can suggest students the following sentences:

*“I am in peace. I can learn and memorize better when I am relaxed as I am in this moment and in the following hours.”*

*“My body and mind are in a peaceful state”.*

*“Relaxation and calm embrace my body and mind”.*

*“I am focusing better and better on the school tasks and homework”.*

*“I am better and better at school, because I am calmer and more relaxed every day”,  
Etc.*

- If participants surprise themselves thinking in other things during the repetition, they will say “Oh, well, it’s okay” and come back at repeating the sentence.
- Remain in silence for 2-3 minutes while they repeat one of the sentences at their choice.
- After 2-3 minutes, ask participants to remain with their eyes closed, but coming back at their regular thoughts.
- After one minute, ask students to deeply breathe once and open their eyes and come back fully awake with energy and joy.
- Ask students how they felt during the exercise.

**Task completion time - up to 1 hour.**



### 3. Progressive Relaxation



When you're experiencing anxiety, stress, or worry, one of the ways your body responds is by tightening up. Progressive muscle relaxation is a relaxation technique that helps you release the tension you're holding in your body and feel more relaxed and calmer. This exercise does not only progressive muscle relaxation to help relieve anxiety in the moment, but with regular practice, it can also lower students' overall tension and stress levels.

Teacher can explain the students the benefits of this exercise and recommend them to practice it on the daily basis.

The exercise may take place outside in a peaceful setting or inside in a spacious and appropriate room.

#### **Methodological clues:**

- Focus on your breathing, on everything that's going on there like a camcorder watching everything that's going on without analysing it.
- I will ask you to move your attention to the top of your head, to be aware of this part of your body. And as you speak, you feel more and more comfortable moving your attention inward.
- Release any tension or pressure in your body and feel more and more relaxed.
- Continue to turn your attention to the muscles of the face and allow yourself to release any discomfort and relax them more and more.



- Continue to relax your neck both externally and internally. And be aware that from the top of the head to the base of the neck, this whole part is relaxed, both externally and internally.
- Continue to relax your shoulders and back, continue to relax your chest cavity, chest muscles, intercostal muscles, diaphragm. And allow yourself to relax the diaphragm just like when you sleep.
- Continue to relax the abdomen, both on the outer and inner muscles.
- Continue to relax the pool, both outside and inside
- Continue to relax your left hand, from shoulder to elbow, and from elbow to palm and fingertips.
- Continue to relax your right hand, from shoulder to elbow, and from elbow to palms and fingertips.
- Continue to relax the left foot, from the hip to the knee, and from the knee to the sole and toes.
- Continue to relax the right foot, from the hip to the knee, and from the knee to the sole and toes.
- And when you feel ready, open your eyes at your own pace.

The teacher will start a group discussion:

- How did you feel during the exercise?
- Have you succeeded to relax all your body?
- What parts of the body were more difficult to relax? Why do you think this happened?
- How did you feel at the end of the exercise?
- When do you think it is best for you to use this exercise?



#### 4. Body Scan Exercise



This exercise will guide students to turn their attention to various parts of their body in order to notice where they are holding tension. This technique can be used for self-awareness and relaxation.

Teacher can explain the students the benefits of this exercise and recommend them to practice it on the daily basis.

The exercise may take place outside in a peaceful setting or inside in a spacious and appropriate room.

#### **Methodological clues:**

- To start, find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down. Most people prefer to lie down for this exercise.
- Uncross your arms and legs... let them be supported by the ground or the chair or the floor.
- Close your eyes, if you wish.
- Notice your breath coming in and out of your body.
- Feel it enter through your nose or mouth, move past your airways, and fill your lungs.
- Then feel it moving out of your body. Take a few moments to focus on your breath flowing in and out.
- Now bring your attention to your toes. Continue taking deep, slow breaths. Wiggle your toes slightly and focus your attention there.
- Now bring your attention to the soles of your feet. Continue to breath deeply.



- Now bring your attention to your calves. How do they feel?
- Bring your attention to your knees and move them gently.
- Bring your attention to your thighs. Tense your thigh muscles and then relax them as you continue to breath deeply.
- Now bring your attention to your buttocks, squeeze them together and relax. Are you holding tension there?
- Now bring your attention to your low back. Notice any pain or tightness there. Breathe deeply through this area and let the muscles relax.
- Now bring your attention to your stomach. Pay attention to its movement as you breath in and out.
- Bring your attention to your chest. Pay attention to its movement as you breath in and out.
- Bring your attention to your shoulders. Feel for any tension there and release it with your breath.
- Bring your attention to your neck. Roll your head gently from side to side and relax the muscles.
- Now bring your attention to your face. Feel for any tension in your facial muscles and let it go as you continue to breathe.
- Bring your attention to your head and hair. Feel the air moving around it.
- Continue breathing and release all of your body's tension. Feel your feet connected to the earth. Notice your relaxed state and carry it with you for the rest of your day.
- Remain with your eyes closed for several minutes, then come back at your regular thoughts.
- Keep silent other 2-3 minutes. Breathe deeply and open your eyes and come back fully awake fully relaxed and in a great mood.

The teacher will start a group discussion:

-How did you feel during the exercise?

-Have you succeeded to identify tension in your body? Where was it?



- Where do you think this tension comes from?
- Have you succeeded to release the tension in your body?
- How do you feel now?
- Do you think it will be useful for you to practice it 2-3 times a week?
- Would you like to do it alone or in a small group?
- Where do you see the benefits of this exercise for you?

Task completion time – 1hour 30 minutes to 2 hours.

### 5."Metta" meditation - a simple technique to reduce stress and anxiety



This is a simple technique through for reducing stress and anxiety in students` lives by awakening love and kindness in your being.

A 2008 study, led by researcher Barbara Fredrickson of the University of North Carolina, showed that people who practiced this meditation daily for 7 weeks became more optimistic, having a general well-being, a feeling that life it makes sense and security for all aspects of their lives. Also, the number of positive emotions increased, such as: joy, gratitude, gratitude, hope, respect, etc. An improvement in relationships with other people was also observed.

Teacher will introduce the activity and will explain the students the benefits of this exercise and recommend them to practice it as often as they can.



The exercise is recommended to take place outside in a peaceful setting or inside in a spacious and silent room.

**Methodological clues:**

- Start by sitting or lying down in a comfortable position. Relax and pay attention to your breathing. Breathe in a slow, comfortable rhythm.
- Turn your attention to your heart and say out loud or just in your mind: ``May I be well. May I be happy. May I feel at ease. ``
- Now think of someone you like or love. This time, say out loud or just in your mind: ``May you be well. May you be happy. May you feel at ease. ``
- Do this for everyone you care about. You can name them individually if you want, putting their names in the words above.
- Think of other people in your life, friends, colleagues, people you only see from time to time, and repeat the above, inserting their names.
- Then move on to people you don't get along with.
- Continue until you include a growing circle of people, until you come to wish well-being, happiness and relaxation for the whole world, including those you consider your enemies.
- You do not have to list all the circles at once. A shorter version is the wish for a state of well-being, happiness and relaxation, only for loved ones. You can enlarge the circle as much as you want.
- When you finish keep silent for several more minutes. Breathe deeply. Notice how you feel. Open your eyes.

The teacher will start a group discussion:

- How did you feel during the exercise?
- Have you succeeded to wish well to yourself? Was it difficult?
- Have you succeeded to wish well to your close ones? Have you encountered any difficulties?





- Have you succeeded to wish well to people you are in conflict with? Have you encountered any difficulties?
- How this exercise made you feel?
- Where do find useful to practice this exercise again?
- Do you think it will be useful for you to practice it 2-3 times a week?
- Would you like to do it alone or in a small group?

**Task completion time - up to 2 hours.**



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## 4. Drama workshops

### STEP 1

**No. of participants:** 8 -20

**Duration:** 180 minutes

**Coordinator:** Ana Hegyi – Children’s Palace Iași, ROMANIA

**Resources:** laptop for music, a chair.

Drama workshops are an effective way to boost self-confidence and self-esteem, to combat shyness, stress and stress, and to put young people's creativity and imagination to work. Participation in the workshops is a very important sensory and emotional experience, an experience that can be an important landmark for further development. The workshop coordinator assumes a role of dynamic creator to preserve the energy and dynamism of the group.

Our world involves social relationships and theatre workshops offer participants the opportunity to spend time in a healthy psychological climate.

The game involves total involvement, and skills develop right when a person tastes all the pleasure, life and is ready and open to receive everything the game offers.

The theatrical games we offer help young people to get to know each other, to enjoy a state of comfort, to have confidence in their own strengths, to develop their team spirit, finally obtaining information both behaviourally and attitudinally.

**Objectives:**

- development of sensory and affective skills;
- developing sensitivity, trust, team spirit;
- developing creativity and imagination;
- acquiring information at behavioural and attitudinal level.



## 1. "Joggle"

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Objectives:**

- to energize ourselves;
- to create a group energy.

**How is it done?**

Participants sit randomly, with space between them and are asked to relax and count to 8, shaking, one at a time, slowly, first the right hand, then the left, the pelvis - imagining that he is climbing a mountain, the right foot, respectively left foot. Then they will repeat the same movements 7 times, 6 times, up to 1 gradually increasing, on each declining set, the rhythm.

## 2. "Who am I?!"

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Objectives:**

- to know each other;
- to prepare for the next stage.

**How is it done?**

Participants are asked to sit in a circle and say their first name in syllables. Subsequently, propose a movement for each syllable, and the other participants will repeat what each participant proposed by repeating the proposed syllables and movements. Thus they will associate the name with the movements proposed by each one.

## 3. "I'm ready!"

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Objectives:**

- to be energetic;



- to develop their attention and observational spirit;
- to develop the ability to react.

### **How is it done?**

The participants are seated in a circle. Each participant receives a number in ascending order. One of the participants stays in the middle and has to say 2 numbers from the game. Those who have numbers must change places between them, and the one in the middle must take the place in the circle of one of the 2. If he fails, he stays in the middle and says 2 more numbers until he manages to take a place in the circle and someone else stay in the middle.

## **4. "I know myself"**

**Duration:** 10 minutes

### **Objectives:**

- to focus on one's own body;
- to energize;
- to focus on the partners of the game.

### **How is it done?**

Participants are asked to take a seat in the space. The game coordinator counts from 8 to 1 in descending order. On each issue, the young people go down to the floor to finally lie down. There is only one move on each number. Then they will go up for 8 times, then they will go down for 6 times and they will go up for 6 times, then for 4 times and for 2 times.

## **5. "Imaginary journey"**

**Duration:** 15 minutes

### **Objectives:**

- to develop their imagination;
- be creative;
- to be present and active.



### **How is it done?**

Young people lying on the floor use their imagination to make a journey. They will imagine, with their eyes closed, that they are in different places of the house, then they see certain familiar people, they go out in nature, and at the climax they are on the top of a mountain from where they see a lot of wonders. At the end of the trip we have a discussion about what they saw, what they felt, what they created and if they relaxed. The imaginary journey will be accompanied by relaxing music.

### **6. "Guess what it is!"**

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Objectives:**

- to develop their attention;
- to develop their imagination.

### **How is it done?**

A young man/girl comes forward and thinks of an object that is around him. When focused on that object, others can ask questions to find out which object their colleague is thinking about. The one with the object in mind can answer questions with "YES", "NO" or "MAYBE". Questions must be asked in accordance with this rule. When someone guesses the object, he comes forward and focuses on another object.

### **7. "Sung syllables"**

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Objectives:**

- to develop their creativity;
- to work in a team

### **How is it done?**



One of the participants comes out. The others choose a word, divide it into syllables and divide it into groups according to how many syllables the chosen word has. Each syllable will be sung by a group on different known musical themes. When the participant from outside re-enters the playing space, all the groups sing and he / she, passing by the groups, has to realize which syllables it is about and recognize, pasting the syllables, what is the word behind the small concert.

## 8. "I'm watching you!"

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Objectives:**

- to develop their attention;
- focus on details;
- focus on and get to know your partner.

**How is it done?**

Participants are asked to sit 2 in front of each other. They will examine each other following even the smallest details such as: what earrings the one in front of him wears, if he has earrings, bracelets, chains, etc. Those in the right row sit with their backs to the others, at a distance, and those who remain standing make 3 changes to them. For example, they can give up slippers, or they can make knots in slippers, lift a sleeve, etc. Their game partners will return to their seats, stand, examine their partners and say what the 3 changes are, then change roles - they will make the changes and the others will talk about the changes made.

## 9. "I can imagine what I want!"

**Duration:** 25 minutes

**Objectives:**

- to develop their creativity;
- to develop their playful abilities;
- to focus.



### **How is it done?**

Each young person will choose an object that he has with him: pen, diary, scarf, mirror, lipstick, etc. Focusing on the chosen object, keeping the shape and size of the object, they will show, in turn, without speaking, what that object can be, and the other participants will comment on the metamorphosis proposed by the one in the foreground.

## **10. "I am the KING"**

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Objectives:**

- to empathize with others;
- be creative.

### **How is it done?**

One of the participants is sitting on a chair. The other participants on the side-lines, in turn, will look for solutions to make the one in the chair who is in the role of King, to give up their seat. Those on the side-lines can offer material or spiritual things. The king will be honest and will give way to the one who will convince him.

## **Evaluation**

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Objectives:**

- To receive feedback and to evaluate the impact of the workshop on the participants;
- To encourage participants to evaluate their own participation.

### **How is it done?**

Participants are asked to evaluate the workshop. Sitting in a circle, each participant will describe in one word what they feel at the end of the workshop. The words will be written down by the coordinator. In the end, depending on how they feel they will applaud. The coordinator will note the duration of the applause.



## STEP 2

### Sally Sabotages Stress Serenely

**Number of participants:** 8 -20

**Duration:** 120 minutes

**Resources:** pens, paper, laptop, video projector.

Creativity is defined as “the ability to produce or develop original work, theories, techniques, or thoughts”. A creative individual typically displays originality, imagination, and expressiveness.

Many times, stress is built up because individuals lack the context for expressing themselves. Young children are naturally creative, they invent games and assume characters, without adult intervention. They play because it is fun and constructive. They discover the world through their games, and no one would expect them to stop playing and start learning through complicated methods. Teenagers and adults are expected to give up playing as part of the process of growing up, as if what kept them happy and creative as children must be tossed away later in life. However, there are many great minds who stayed playful all their lives and refused to give in to the assumption that adulthood has nothing in common with games.

The exercises in this workshop are meant to put daily life on hold and to take us back to a time when playing was as natural as breathing.

**Objectives:**

- Get participants in touch with their creativity;
- Relax and amuse them, thus helping them to shift perspective from negative thinking;
- Exercise and improve their ability to work in teams, thus shaping more effective communication. Positive communication with other members of the species is something all mammals lean towards, it is our natural inner wiring. When we are accepted, liked, admired or loved, serotonin levels rise, in the detriment of stress hormones.





Neuroscientists tell us that by repeating happy-like thoughts and moments, we will form neural pathways that will validate happiness, taking away focus from stress.

The **feelings and thoughts** generated during these exercises are meant to encourage participants to stay creative, to look for innovative ways of doing things in general and to offer the inner support in stressful times, when life seems a bit much to handle.

The workshop is **organized as a series of exercises-games** on the afore mentioned theme of creativity. Each game has a certain expected duration, but flexibility is key for achieving the objectives of the workshop.

## 1. Sally's Sharp

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Meet everyone;
- Get focused for the workshop.

**How is it done?**

One by one, participants say their names and an adjective, a verb and a noun that start with the same letter as their name. The others use the words to make sentences about that person and decide on a sentence and then say it all together as a group. For example, *Sally's smart, she saves summer*. Of course, sentences don't need to make sense, they just need to have all the words beginning with the same letter as the person's name.

## 2. Sally Saves Silly Sales

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Enhance creativity;
- Getting used to seeing things from different angles as a means of building strength and reducing stress in situations where we cannot find solutions.



### How is it done?

- Participants meet Sally, a successful sales executive who could sell ice to Eskimos if she had to, and she would rebrand it as massage oil, albeit frozen.
- A picture of Sally is displayed, and participants find out a little bit about her life. Her background story can be adapted according to specific issues participants are facing at the moment. An example of such a life story is attached in the appendix.
- Then, the coordinator gives an example of how Sally once sold a chair as a sturdy umbrella to a blue-blooded lady from York.
- Participants are asked to name a few of Sally's qualities that make her so persuasive (one adjective per participant). The coordinator writes down the words on the board / flipchart or projects them on the screen.
- Participants are asked to prepare a short pitch for an object that would be sold as something different than what it really is. Examples: sell a water plastic bottle as a pillow, a bag as a hat, a chair as a toy house and so on.

The structure of the pitch: What? For whom? Where? Why? / What problems does it solve?

- In the end, the coordinator reminds the participants of Sally's qualities (Named in the beginning) and suggests them to keep an eye out for them when faced with unpleasant situations.

### 3. Sally's Scattered Shelter

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Enhance creativity;
- Get comfortable with accepting that others see things differently and would do things differently, thus increasing flexibility in thinking and acceptance;
- Getting comfortable with doing things that we are not necessarily great at, such as drawing.

### How is it done?

- Participants are told that Sally needs to put drawings on her walls at home



because she sold all the paintings she had to a gallery in Venice. Then, they are given pieces of paper and pencils and are asked to draw any shape they fancy.

- The papers are periodically changed among the participants until the coordinator calls time.
- The drawings are displayed in the room by all participants.

#### 4.Saving Sally

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Raise team spirit;
- Enhance creativity.

**How is it done?**

- Participants play the numbers' game – the coordinator calls numbers and participants have to form groups accordingly. (The coordinator calls “5”, they make groups of 5, etc.)
- Participants are asked to group 3 by 3 and to enact a story based on Sally's drawings. Each group is given 3 minutes to perform and all groups are given 7 minutes to prepare their scene. They are told that Sally tried to sell the drawings to an art dealer, and she has been kidnapped. Unless the people who decorated her walls send him a clip of the drawings being staged, Sally will never be free again.

#### 5.Sally's Safe

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Raise the level of awareness about cause and effect;
- Enhance creativity.

**How is it done?**

Participants are asked to work together to make up an article/ a blog entry / a long social network post about saving Sally. Each person has to contribute with 2 sentences, people talk



when they are chosen by the person who talked before. The article must have introduction, body and conclusions.

### **Evaluation – *Sally Says ...***

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Objectives:**

- To receive feedback and to evaluate the impact of the workshop on the participants;
- To encourage participants to evaluate their own participation.

**How is it done?**

Participants are asked to evaluate the workshop. In the end they will make up a list of what Sally might say about their job in saving her. Each participant needs to contribute with just one word to the list.

### **Appendix -Sally's photo:**



### **Sally's background story:**

Sally was born 34 years ago in a small family. She moved a lot as a child and had to make new friends every time she got to a new home. She learned to be persuasive and friendly, but she developed some issues related to not staying too much in one place. Some of her friends think she is prone to running away when things get too serious. Some of her friends, however, appreciate her independence. Sally was great in school, she is passionate about French, astronomy and dogs. She hated Math, though.



### STEP 3

#### Empathy – Empower the Path to Yourself

**Number of participants:** 8 -20

**Duration:** 120 minutes

**Resources:** pens, paper, laptop, video projector, photos, mirrors.

Empathy is defined as “the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another being”. An empathic individual typically displays the capacity to understand others and to act selflessly in certain situations.

Many times, stress is built up because individuals feel alone, misunderstood or out of place. Humans are wired internally to belong to groups, be they family, friends or society. It is quite common to look for people with similar interests and objectives, which fuels us and makes us work harder and achieve things that are important to us. For example, a person who looks into picking up a sports habit, will affiliate to groups that practice running, yoga, biking, and so on. Humans don't function too well on their own and if life brings us to a point where we cannot connect to others, stress levels might increase up to building a negative outlook on life, depression, maybe worse.

The exercises in this workshop are meant to make participants more sensitive to different perspectives and to strengthen the feeling of belonging to a community.

**Objectives:**

- Get participants in touch with positive thoughts and feelings related to collaboration;
- Relax and amuse them, thus helping them to shift perspective from negative thinking;
- Exercise and improve their ability to work in teams, thus shaping more effective communication.



The **feelings and thoughts** generated during these exercises are meant to encourage participants to stay connected to other people and to offer the inner support in stressful times, when the feeling of belonging to a group is not at its highest.

The workshop is **organized as a series of exercises-games** on the afore mentioned theme of empathy. Each game has a certain expected duration, but flexibility is key for achieving the objectives of the workshop.

## 1. Engaging

**Duration:** 10 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Connect with the other participants based on similar preferences;
- Get focused for the workshop.

**How is it done?**

One by one, participants name one thing they absolutely love and talk about it for a minute. After all the participants had spoken, the coordinator calls teams: “Team 1” - the people who also love the thing named by Participant 1, move close to them. Participants will be part of more than a team, there is no restriction about number, they just group with the ones who love the same things.

## 2. Mindfulness

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Raise awareness on the importance of being aware of our own thoughts and of the fact that they cannot be fully trusted, as what we think and feel is a matter of perspective, rather than one of truth;
- Getting used to seeing things from different angles as a means of building strength and kindness and reducing stress in situations where we cannot find solutions.

**How is it done?**

- Participants are given a set of pictures and are asked to imagine what the



people feel, what is the situation, why are they in that situation, what could they do to make things better.

- Each participant chooses a character from the pictures and makes a list of thoughts and feelings related to that situation and to their life in general.
- Participants are asked to group two by two and to add or modify the list of the other member of the pair.

### 3. Power

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Strengthen the feeling of personal power;
- Get comfortable with accepting that others see things differently and would do things differently, thus increasing flexibility in thinking and acceptance.

**How is it done?**

- Participants are told that Sally, whom they have met in the previous workshop, hires new members for her team. The salary, as well as the work conditions are exquisite, so no one should let the opportunity pass by. The only condition is that she hires teams of two, and not individuals.
- Participants are grouped in pairs and they are asked to work on a powerful pitch “selling” their team.
- Teams present their pitches to Sally, who asks questions according to every pitch. Sally is meant to be a surprise, so the person entrusted to play her should appear on stage at that time with no warning. (The picture of Sally should be replaced with the picture of the actual person who will play Sally. In order to make things even more interesting, pictures should be edited as to place Sally in all sorts of great places and contexts.)



#### **4. Anywhere there's happy/ hard / harsh / harmonious mirroring ...count me in!**

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Encourage flexibility in thinking;
- Raise awareness on the fact that our outlook on life is based on projections, therefore reasons for stress are not all that serious either.

**How is it done?**

Participants are asked to group 4 by 4 and each team is given an improv theme. They will move on stage keeping their back at the audience and their faces will be seen in the mirrors they will be holding.

#### **5. Yes, and ...**

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Objectives:**

- Raise team spirit;
- Enhance creativity.

**How is it done?**

The coordinator utters a sentence related to one of the stories from the previous exercise (the improv). The next participant says “Yes, and ...” (adding to what was previously said) or “Yes, but ...” (contradicting) and continues the “story”. Participants stop only when coordinator calls time. If they have problems coming up with ideas, the coordinator can help.

#### **Evaluation – Sally Says ...**

**Duration:** 5 minutes

**Objectives:**

- To receive feedback and to evaluate the impact of the workshop on the participants;
- To encourage participants to evaluate their own participation.





### **How is it done?**

Participants are asked to evaluate the workshop. In the end they will make up a list of what Sally might say about their job in making up the story in the previous exercise. Each participant needs to contribute with just one word to the list.

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## 5. Outdoor workshops

### 1. Graffiti

The objectives of the workshops are to bring together young people who are in risk of burnout and who are ready to share their passion for culture and arts. By doing this we could improve their sense of belonging to the group and also local community.

We invite you to graffiti workshops which allow self-expression and artistic expression of youth. Workshops help also to examine how graffiti arts can help local communities thrive, especially when artists are embedded in the planning process.

The average age of the participants is 14-20. Those who are minors under 18 years old have to be accompanied by their parents or supervised by the representatives of the youth centres.

Graffiti workshops are a great way to spray street art. Young people had an opportunity to “get their hands on the cans” and create their own graffiti. During the workshops young people developed a better “can control” with a spray can. The participants can gain a theoretical knowledge and practical skills. In technical terms participants learn about different graffiti-style typefaces and trends in graffiti. They experience ‘can control’ the skill required to achieve good results with a spray can. The artists and trainers have to instruct all participants on how to achieve the best results.

After the agreement with Nice municipality, Mitra France team allocated the space (a wall – mur d’expression libre) to organise a 3 full days graffiti workshops which took place on June 22-24, 2021, in Las Planas district of Nice.

Graffiti workshops were a great method to bring our target group together. But not only!

Workshops reached various groups of people from various socio-cultural and religious backgrounds. We made sure that young people’s family members and civil society actors also took part in the workshops. First of all, graffiti allows the organisers to learn about young people’s perspectives using immersive and creative techniques. During the first



days, before creating a final version of the graffiti, young people wrote and sketch responses to a specific issue they are interested in.



Mitra France team dedicated one session to the case studies to identify various instances of graffiti practices. It was useful to learn how to identify these instances by their recognised names. For example, we addressed “Back to back” - a graffiti term that means that the graffiti covers the wall from end to end. We will also see graffiti as a form of “vernacular design” and subcultures.

During the first workshop trainers highlighted the history of graffiti sub-culture that shared many ties to other pop-culture expressions, such as hip-hop/rap music, break dance, beat box, and fashion. The participants could see how these groups shared similar goals in using their specific talents or interests to express either their own identities or other specific issues that they felt needed to be addressed publicly. This discussion allowed put in parallel various views and to see what are the interests, values and aspirations of local contemporary young people. We had an opportunity to observe the interaction of old and new, “traditional” and trendy.



During second workshop

participants prepared the wall (paint it in white colour as a background). Then they developed a sketch on the paper. After participants made a bigger version of the sketch on the wall with the pencils. Only after that participant started using spray cans to colour the wall.

As a result, young people learned how to create and work with a sketchbook, that graffiti artists use to plan and develop artwork ideas. They also learned about concepts such as tag, one-liners', throw-ups, dub, and pieces – the complex, rich graphics that use colours, 3D-effect shapes and various other styles and techniques.



Mitra France team addressed communicative and symbolic aspects of graffiti art. During the facilitated workshops young people could see different cultural or ethnic markings that can be applied to a graffiti in a given area, region or country. In this we examined graffiti art as an active organic symbol system.

Consequently, it will allow Mitra France team to create a certain group dynamic and facilitate participants to exchange in multicultural setting in order to create a common artistic piece. By the end of the workshops, participants are able not only to create their



graffiti piece, but also interpret various nuances in graffiti art. The latter might be also very valuable for local NGO workers and civil society actors.

At all workshops Mitra France trainers used brand new caps making sure the paint flows freely. Also, we have taken care of the safety and provided masks and gloves when it was needed.



These workshops gave participants an opportunity to be visual, and capture feelings and views that might otherwise be missed. This approach highlighted some interesting responses we might not get otherwise.

During workshops the participants gained the holistic knowledge about graffiti arts. On the one hand, they learnt about history, ideas, values that are the pillars of this art. On another hand, participants learnt “technical” aspects of graffiti and now are able to create their own artistic pieces. Moreover, we expect that young people are able to interpret various graffiti as well.

The end goal of the workshops was to prevent burnout, to empower youth by strengthening their connection to their heritage, community and European values.



During the debriefing moments young people loved sharing their views with the organising team. Young people were open and honest telling us about their experiences. This contributed to their involvement into the activity.

The results of the workshops looked promising. In running the graffiti workshops, we have learned some important lessons that can serve as takeaways for other side activities of Mitra France NGO and other organisations involved in workshops.

First of all, the innovative approaches raised from young people. They have changed the initially planned design and have had more diverse and less rigid approach. Mitra France gained the backing of the Nice municipality to implement these workshops, by advancing goals of the preventing burnout in line with the municipality's youth initiatives plan.

Another important lesson is that we were lucky to choose the artist with the right attitude that could connect young people powerfully to their community's goals.

Workshops helped to acknowledge problems and challenges of the local communities, such as need for the mobility outside the area, the need to improve young people's language skills, learn about various opportunities.

Furthermore, workshops allowed to recognise the benefits of artistic creative sessions implemented locally. The positive energy of creative approaches can have cathartic benefits, especially for marginalised and alienated groups of young people.





## 2. Yoga

Burnout refers to the cumulative psychological strain with multiple different stressors. It often manifests itself as a gradual wearing DOWN over time when you bite more than you can chew.

In Yoga because we learn to stay in somewhat of a meditative state 24 hours a day it is really easy to notice when we start to spiral out of control for whatever reason and quickly fix the situation by going back to a neutral state of being. We emphasize discipline and detachment.



In Yoga we try to build healthy living habits, follow a stricter regimen of the day, watching what you eat, when you wake up or go to sleep, reduce consumption of meat, alcohol, drugs and gradually increase the time we spend praying/doing meditation/breathing exercises/posture practice.



We also try to spend more time with like-minded people who support us and motivate us to move forward with life and punch through whatever obstacle we may face in the present.

Self-care includes:

Attending to basic self-care and balancing work/study, play and rest

Adequate diet and exercise

Build solid connection with colleagues and supervisors

Balance with other forms of work/ activities

Identify specific difficulties- looking at personal history or negative coping behaviours

Engage in relationships and activities that restore HOPE

Know yourself

Find help- consultation, therapy

Increase therapeutic arsenal

Develop interests outside work/ school

Learn mindfulness/meditation

Start a spiritual/religious practice

Learn breathing exercises (exciting/calming/neutral)

Get more sunlight on your skin

Wish others happiness

Do things that bring you inside your body- move more, dance, run, stretch, walk in nature, do yoga, do tai-chi or chi-gung





## 6. Non formal methods workshops

Non-formal learning takes place outside formal learning environments but within organizational framework. It is based on mastering an activity and the effort is most important. It does not need to follow a formal syllabus or be governed by an assessment. Non-formal learning usually takes place in local communities. In a school situation, this can take place outside or inside. In this case, all the activities are suggested to be outdoors. Most schools have an outdoor area in the local community.

### Walk and talk

Walk and talk' is a general term that is used to describe a therapeutic activity where the counsellor and client walk together in outdoor settings during therapy sessions (Revell & McLeod, 2016; Doucette, 2004; Hays, 1999).

In this part of the workshop there will be used a method called “walk and talk”. This is a method that can encourage spontaneous conversation because talking becomes easier with walking. By using the body and the senses in the face of nature the participants often feel more comfortable. The method can encourage to more discussion and questioning that may not occur in a room-based setting and contribute to a greater understanding.

Using walk and talk as a method makes it easier to build relationships with others. The experiences you make when you are moving with others are deeper and more meaningful. You communicate and interact with each other and the environment around.

When you use this method, the idea is that you should use the local environment. Figure out what activity you want to carry out but do not plan in detail. It is important that something is created while you are walking for it to be a non-formal method. Feel free to have more options if the original activity cannot be carried out as you intended.



### **Methodological clues:**

Use the local area to carry out all the activities in. If it is an activity that lasts all day or you walk some distance from the school, it is wise to plan for food. Remember that all activities can be carried out, but that the young people must be prepared to dress for the weather.

Before you start an activity, it is important that you familiarize yourself with the "walk and talk" method so that the young people get the most out of the activity.

### **Activities**

Since we are going to interconnect all the toolkits in the project this module will contain activities related to art, crafts, relaxation techniques and drama. All activities in this project will be carried out outdoors.

### **Yoga**

Several studies show an effect of yoga on quality of life via increased well-being, mindfulness and self-compassion, as well as reduced stress, anxiety and depression.

Young people develop and learn through thinking and talking to each other. Strong and healthy relationships create a good base where the individual can grow strong and healthy. Now they will try out what they like, what they want to do and who they want to hang out with. Doing this at the same time as they should hold on to their own values and not lose contact with their body is not easy.

It is important to be clear about what yoga really is before embarking on a yoga session. We carefully explain that it has nothing to do with achievement. We must also explain that everyone does yoga according to their own body and their own conditions, so as not to exceed any limits. Yoga is about listening to one's own body, and finding tools that can work healing for the individual, as well as in groups. Through yoga, young people can come together at a level where they are allowed to meet on equal terms. That way, they can build relationships with each other based on understanding and acceptance.

Yoga has been used in eternal times and in different cultures. By practicing yoga, we see clear positive effects on the body, as it embraces the whole person and creates balance in



body and soul. Mental and physical illnesses are often about blockages in the system, and these blockages can begin and grow in humans at an early age. To prevent and counteract this, we should start living as soon as possible, and offer tools that have a health-promoting effect. These tools are very important for young people as we know that they protect the body while strengthening the mental.

### 1. Outdoor yoga

Is about getting as close to nature and oneself as possible. This activity can be done by the sea, in the mountains, in the woods or any other place you find soothing. The most important thing is that you feel safe and relaxed.

Methodological clues:

You do not need a large area. It is possible to spread out in the area you have available. If you do not have a yoga mat, you can use a towel, but it is best to feel the surface.



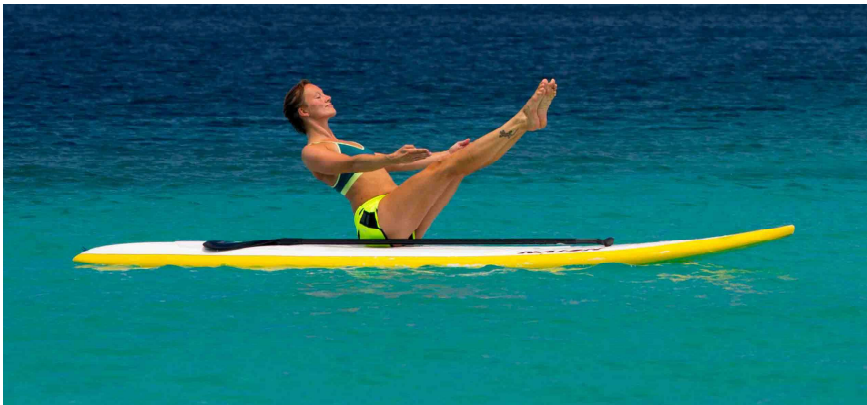
### 2. SUP yoga

This is an activity for the advanced and who want to develop in yoga. You will need a stand up paddle board.



Methodological clues:

In this activity, it is important to think about health, environment and safety. It is therefore important that participants wear life jackets when performing this activity. Carefully read their internal rules related to health, environment and safety before performing an activity.



## **Meditation**

Meditation and mindfulness is about being present. By practicing this you will become better at thinking and being in the present instead of the past or future. Anxiety and depression are often about thoughts and feelings related to the past or future. There are several studies that show that daily meditation exercises can prevent anxiety and depression.

Meditation means lingering or reflecting. It is all about finding inner peace by shutting off the thoughts that are constantly circulating in your head. First of all, it can teach you to take control of your mind. Of all these thousands of thoughts that fly through your head, many of them are about things you may be worried about or stressing about. This can wear your head out occasionally. Meditation can teach you to become an "observer" of your thoughts. By this is meant that you can learn to see the thoughts from the outside, and in that way become your own boss over the thoughts. Due to this, it has been documented that meditation can, among other things, improve concentration, provide more energy, reduce stress.



It may pay to find a fixed place, as you will eventually associate this place with meditation. If you have the opportunity, a place in nature will be excellent. Nature has an effect on our mind, and we open ourselves to impressions, smells and sounds. Thus, this is a nice place to find peace and reflection. Then sit down in a relaxed position. Furthermore, try to clear your head of thoughts and focus only on your breath. This can be difficult the first few times, but as you practice meditation, fewer and fewer disturbing thoughts will appear.

### 1. [Shinrin-Yoku](#)

Shinrin-Yoku is an evidence-based method for supporting health, well-being and profits through close contact with forests and other natural environments. Tips for different activities can be hugging a tree, take a bath in the woods, walking barefoot or listening to all the sounds.

Methodological clues:

It is important that you have plenty of time so that you have the opportunity to stress down.



### 2. [Exercise in presence](#)

Individual task

1. Find a place where you can spend 5-7 minutes at rest. Spend some time just breathing and registering the surroundings. After a few minutes, you consider your



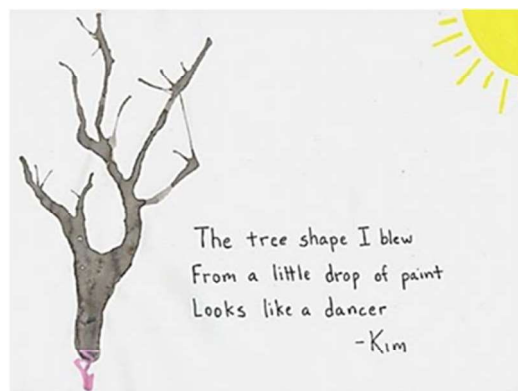
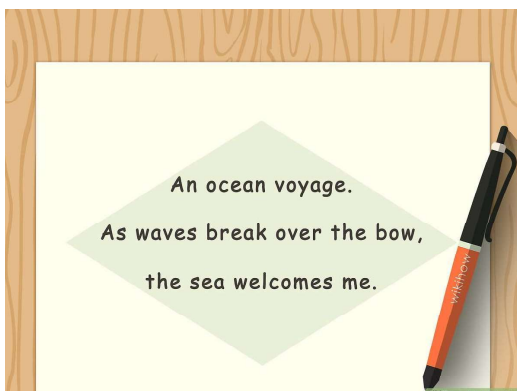
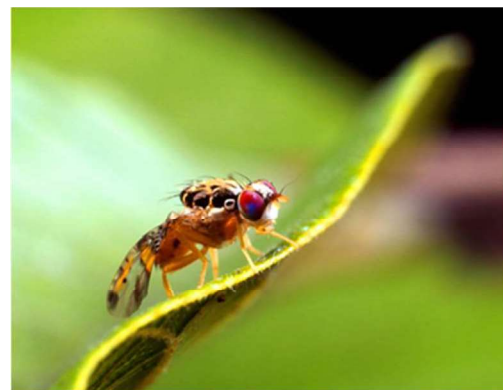
different senses and let the surroundings speak to you. See, listen, taste, smell and feel. Before you move on: is it possible to put into words the mood you feel?

On your further hike, you should stroll very slowly. 1/3 of what you usually do when you are on your way somewhere. Pay attention to the micro aesthetics of nature. Do you find a special "friend" who catches your attention?

- a) Can you make a "Haiku" based on your encounter with this "friend"?
- b) Take a picture of the nature friend and say goodbye.

Methodological clues:

In this assignment you will think of closeness. Use the local environment, limit the task to an area, get the young people to focus on their own presence.





## Art

Art is a collective term for man-made phenomena that are created to decorate and to share an experience, story or feeling. Originally it is painting, sculpture, drawing and graphics. In recent times is also photography, textile or video considered as art.

### 1. Street art tour

Street art is different types of visual art that are created in a public space. Often there is spray or paint on buildings or curbs. It can also be knitting that is integrated into trees and sculptures or it can be light art. Modern street art is used as a way to communicate with people on the street, often on social or political topics.

Most big cities have street art. The idea of this activity is to go for a walk to find this art and create assignments for what you see along the way.

Methodological clues:

Example of general tasks related to street art tour that can be used regardless of city and place. What do you think when you see this art? What emotions does this art evoke in you?



### 2. Land art

Land art is about using nature and the processes in nature as part of a work of art. Projects related to land art have often limited time where one shapes or makes



symbols in snow, fields or sand. There can also be durable constructions that can withstand weather and wind.

In this activity you will take one or more groups out. You will go for a walk in the local area and find a place where you will be inspired to create a kind of land art. Once you have found the place, it is important that you collaborate on obtaining materials and designing the idea.

Methodological clues:

This activity is a great option if you do not live in a big city and have access to street art. Alternative exercise that can be done wherever you are.







### 3. Tagging

Tagging refers to the act of creating some form of artwork on encroached properties such as walls. Tagging is a form of street art and is often referred to as vandalism, but it is important to distinguish between good and bad street art. Many street artists have permission to create their works. When street art is made in a proper way, it can be decorative, and especially if the street art is adapted to its surroundings.

In this activity you will tag a wall, door or plate. If you are going to do it in a public space, it is important that you have permission.

Methodological clues:

You will need spray cans or paint. Possibly paint brushes. If you are going to paint on a plate, you must also get one.



### **Craftmaking**

Crafts are closely linked to culture and nature. It is important to focus on the practical sides of the activity. Outdoor life and crafts promote community and cooperation. Our focus should be what the participants do and what it is about the practice they are engrossed in. The activities require practical arrangements for the participants to have a good experience.



## 1. Hiking stick

Go for a walk in your local community and find a long stick. Then nail a hiking stick. You can decide for yourself whether you just want to nail off the bark and make a handle or whether to make a pattern in the stick.

Methodological clues:

You need knives for all the participants. It does not have to be expensive knives. Make sure that young people do not find a stick that is rotten. Then they will not be able to nail it.



## 2. Dream catcher

Start by collecting natural materials such as branches, straw, leaves, flowers, cones and other things you may find in nature. There is no final decision on how a dream catcher should look like. Below you will find inspiration for different ways to make a dream catcher.

Methodological clues:

This can be a great task to do together. Maybe you can make a big dream catcher that can hang in the classroom?



### 3. Seat pads

Wool is a natural material that can be used to make many different things. In this activity you can make a seat pad. You decide what color, shape and thickness. A nice activity and do outdoors as there may be a little mess with the soapy water you use to felt the wool with.

**THIS IS WHAT YOU NEED**

Carded wool (or wool and cards), approx. 160 g for each seat pad

Balls (one for each scout, possibly two can share)

Liquid green soap (without phosphate)

Spray bottle for soapy water

Bubble wrap or washboard

Scissors



Towel

Access to laundry

### THIS IS WHAT YOU DO

Prepare a tray or other surface with bubble wrap and water for felting. Use about 1 dl green soap for one liter of water. The water should be well hand-warm, about 40 - 45 degrees. Take the water in a spray bottle.

Lay a layer of wool: pull it out into thin flakes and lay them with the fibers in the same direction. The wool shrinks the most in length. By laying at least two intersecting layers of wool, it will shrink about equally in both directions. (Approx. 30%). That is, the seat pad should be 40 cm x 30 cm, you must start with approximately 52 cm x 39 cm.

Spray over the layer with soapy water.

Lay new layers of wool, with the fibres in each direction and spray with soapy water in between. You should have at least 4 teams, preferably 6.

Put on more soapy water, and squeeze the water into the wool. Make sure there is plenty of water throughout. You can check this by taking a layer of bubble wrap over and squeezing evenly over. Then it should drain soapy water around where you press. Feel free to check under the wool as well and make sure that you do not find any dry places. Too much water is better than too little.

When you have enough water, cover the bubble wrap and start rubbing with circular motions. Take some water on the plastic, and it will glide more easily.

If you want to ensure that you get nice edges, you can rub a little evenly all over first so you start the felting process. Then remove the plastic and start folding in the edges as you wish. Take the plastic over again and continue to rub.

When all the layers are rubbed well together (try to lift a little in the fabric and see if they fall apart or if it has become a whole piece), keep the plastic on and roll it all into a sausage. Roll back and forth as you would roll with a rolling pin about 30 times.

Open the sausage again and roll together the opposite way, and roll back and forth.



Open the sausage again, turn the surface over and repeat the roll both ways from the other side.

Open the sausage for the last time and remove the plastic. Rinse and squeeze the substrate in a tub of warm green soapy water to felt it properly one last time.

Finally, rinse it in clean water, squeeze out as much water as you can and roll it in a towel to dry.

If you want it even more felted, you can run it in the washing machine at 60 degrees. Use a laundry bag!

Methodological clues:

This activity requires patience but will give the youths feeling of mastery in the end.



#### 4. Wreath of natural materials

This activity is suitable for all seasons. You only use the natural materials that are in nature at that time. It is possible to make a door wreath, flower wreath for the hair or a flower ornament. Go out and find a place in the woods, along the sea or on a lawn in a park. Bring natural materials along the way and make yourself a wreath.

Methodological clues:

Here it is only the imagination that sets the limits for how you can make a wreath.

Feel free to use the app “Pinterest” for inspiration.



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## Activities related to drama

### 1. Storytelling around a campfire

The storyteller must enjoy telling the story. Make a fool of yourself. Being stiff or formal distracts from the story and makes listeners uncomfortable.

Be in close physical contact. The closer the better. Eye contact is an absolute must.

Set a quiet mood. Scream when it is time to scream.

Methodological clues:

The exercise requires that it is carried out with a group of young people who know each other well and who trust each other and are confident in. It is possible to make a fire wherever you are. Facilitate the environment you are in.



### 2. Circle of feelings

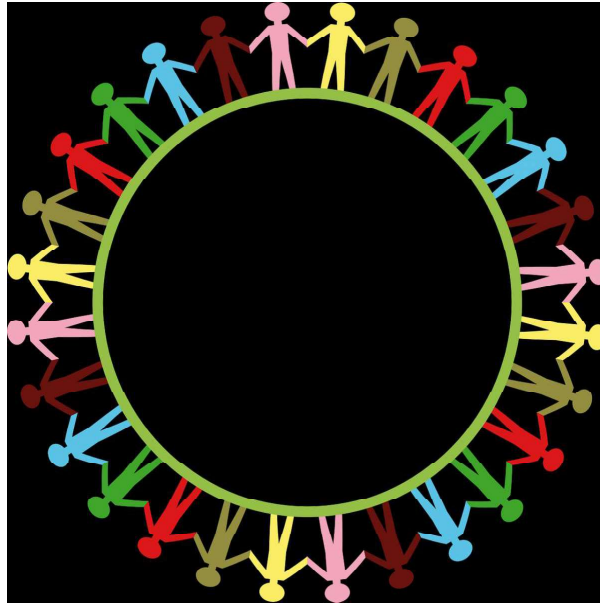
Start the activity with everyone standing in a large ring. A person starts by telling and at the same time dramatizing how they feel today. Here you can use facial expressions, body language and tone of voice. The next person in the circle does the same and then you continue until everyone has told and dramatized how they feel today. The next task is to tell and dramatize how you want to feel. Use the same method as in the previous exercise.

Methodological clues:



A great exercise for those young people who find it difficult to put into words how they feel. It can be challenging for some to be confident enough to be honest about how they feel today.

Try to make the exercise harmless.



### 3. Viking games

In the video below, there are many different activities to choose from. You can do all or choose some of the activities. Some of the exercises are about working together, others about strength and some tactics. The most important thing of all is that this type of exercise should contribute to impulse and playfulness. It should be fun and create good experiences.

<https://www.facebook.com/age.vigane/videos/3993061967381161>

Methodological clues:

It will be an advantage if you have a flat area, such as a lawn. You must bring ropes for some of the exercises, but the sticks you need can be found outdoors.







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Joy

