

CURIE Roadmap To Effective EI Youth Learning

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CURIE

"Changes for youth education in relationship
management with Emotional Intelligence"



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PARTNERS

CSA Impresa Sociale



Centro Servizi Associati (CSA) is a non-profit social cooperative founded in 1986, specialized in the design and management of services in the territory in favor of public bodies and private companies.

CSA and its associates work every day to develop social inclusion and well-being through quality management according to values of dignity, social participation, integration, sustainable development and global citizenship.

CSA is also involved in the design of regional and European projects in the fields of young people, Adult (Accreditation 21/27 Erasmus ADU) and social inclusion (from the definition of the project idea to the partnership construction, from drafting to financial reporting, passing through the coordination of the project and the relation management with the regional or European Authority).

Fundación Cruz de los Ángeles



FCA is a non-profit social foundation with more than 50 years of experience in direct care in the field of childhood, family and youth, which promotes the fundamental rights of young people in their communities with the aim of improving their present and future quality of life based on equal opportunities, making them protagonists in collaborative projects with a high social impact.

This youth participation as a fundamental right offers them opportunities from all areas of knowledge, research, experience and action, allowing them to act both at local and European level.

The Entity's project management can be divided into two large blocks:

Residential Accommodation Programmes (social protection of the family, minors and young people) that address obstacles related to disability, health, culture, social or economic difficulties....

In a second large block, Community Implementation Programmes are promoted, managed and developed with services and projects with a strong innovative capacity, integrated in local communities and their territories. These are programmes and projects that, in addition to activating young people's commitment to their environment, work on emotional culture, personal relationships and social connection and cohesion, incorporating technological innovation as part of present and future challenges.



Fundacja MODE

Fundacja MODE – Move and Develop Foundation is an organisation focused on providing educational opportunities and fostering mobility among young people and adults with special focus on the preparation

of the beneficiaries for the challenges of the labour market. Other important goals include promoting active citizenship, volunteering and core European values as well as contributing to the development of civil society, entrepreneurship and European integration.

MODE Foundation is based in Wrocław, Poland, where many of the organisations' local activities take place. Young people are provided with opportunities to learn about other cultures, spend free time, learn foreign languages and participate in numerous non-formal education initiatives. MODE Foundation supports local NGOs, as well as cultural and educational institutions by assisting them in the development of volunteering programmes, both at the national level and within the framework of the European Solidarity Corps. The Foundation also provides them with assistance in obtaining funding and managing projects. MODE has a well-developed network of business partners, who cooperate closely with the organisation in the fields of CSR and vocational education.



Startup Greece

Startup Greece is a leading organization in Greece that focuses on fostering entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainability. It serves as a central hub for startups and small businesses by providing valuable resources, expertise, and networking opportunities to help new ventures grow. The organization collaborates with a wide range of stakeholders, including public institutions, private companies, and international organizations, to cultivate a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Startup Greece is especially dedicated to supporting projects in digitalization, sustainability, and social inclusion, working closely with both local and international networks to empower entrepreneurs.

Through its various programs, Startup Greece promotes cross-border collaboration, aligning with EU strategies to boost innovation and employment opportunities. The organization's commitment to creating socially impactful and sustainable startups is central to its mission.



OggiTreviso

OggiTreviso is the first online newspaper in the province of Treviso. It is one of the first local newspapers in Italy.

NGO «Non-formal education for youth»



NGO «Non-formal education for youth» is a non-profit, non-governmental youth organisation established in Dnipro in 2010 and working nationally as well as internationally. Our mission is in the building of more tolerant, understanding and accepting society in Ukraine. We focused on the topics of peace building, intercultural interreligious dialogue, human rights, inclusion of minorities and refugees (IDP), tolerance and diversity, and active citizenship and participation of young people.

INTRODUCTION

The CURIE Project was created in response to the growing mental health and emotional well-being crisis among young people in Europe, which has been exacerbated by factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, social isolation, and uncertainty about the future. There has been an alarming increase in issues such as depression, anxiety, and a lack of socio-emotional skills among youth, which has led to difficulties in their social, academic, and professional integration.

Main reasons behind the creation of the CURIE Project:

Increase in emotional problems among young people: Rising levels of stress, anxiety, and isolation have been observed among European youth, affecting their well-being and their ability to cope with challenges.

Lack of training in Emotional Intelligence (EI): Youth organizations have identified that workers in the sector lack effective tools and methodologies to develop emotional competencies in young people.

Need for innovation in youth work: There are successful theoretical frameworks and techniques used in the business and human resources sectors, but these have not been systematically implemented in the youth sector.

Gap between research and practice: A disconnection has been identified between scientific studies on Emotional Intelligence and their application in educational and youth settings.

Promoting well-being in educational and work environments: Developing effective Emotional Intelligence training models will help young people better integrate into society and the labor market, supporting their adaptation to changing environments.

The ultimate goal of CURIE is to create a training and evaluation model in Emotional Intelligence that can be implemented in youth organizations across Europe, helping to improve the quality of youth work and their emotional well-being.

The long-term impact of CURIE aims for its Emotional Intelligence model to be widely adopted by youth institutions, promoting the well-being and adaptability of young people in changing environments and improving their social and professional inclusion.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the CURIE Project are:

- To develop key emotional competencies in youth sector workers, based on successful techniques from the private sector and human resource management, grounded in the theory of Emotional Intelligence.
- To provide innovative tools and methodologies to improve the quality of the youth sector and strengthen the links between research and practice in youth work-
- To define and implement new theoretical frameworks for Emotional Intelligence initiatives targeting young people, through the needs analysis of various stakeholders and the integration of effective techniques used in academic and business settings.
- To pilot an Emotional Intelligence model by producing specific learning materials to train 15 staff members from partner organizations, enabling them to replicate and adapt the intervention according to their needs.
- To design support tools and methodologies for youth workers in their daily activities, enhancing their Emotional Intelligence skills and promoting the use of both scientific and practical approaches.
- To create practical and scientifically grounded guidelines for the effective application of Emotional Intelligence in the youth field, with the long-term goal of implementing the CURIE model in youth institutions within the project's network.
- To contribute to the harmonization of Emotional Intelligence practices at the European and international levels, promoting a standardized approach to the development of emotional and social skills among young people.

GOOD PRACTICES

SPAIN

Due to the importance of emotional intelligence in the different areas of our lives (work, personal and social), different actions have been carried out in Spain to promote its development, which are shown below.

Responsible Education Programme of the Marcelino Botín Foundation

The Botín Foundation was created in 1964 by Marcelino Botín Sanz de Sautuola and his wife, Carmen Yllera, to promote the social development of Cantabria. Today it maintains its focus on Cantabria and is active throughout Spain and Latin America, contributing to the integral development of society by exploring new ways of detecting creative talent and using it to generate wealth.

Its main headquarters are in Santander, and since 2012 it has had a branch in Madrid. The Foundation's most important project is the Botín Centre. Inaugurated in June 2017 in Santander, it is an art centre that aims to generate social development and wealth by harnessing the potential of the arts to awaken creative capacity.

Description

"Responsible Education" is a pioneering and innovative programme, created and promoted by the Botín Foundation, which promotes the emotional, social and creative development of children and young people between the ages of 3 and 16, boosting their talent and creativity to help them become autonomous, competent, supportive and happy. Through a series of educational resources based on different creative disciplines such as literature, music or plastic and visual arts, more than a thousand learning situations have been developed to work on the different curricular areas through work with teachers, students and families.

The "Responsible Education" programme helps students to know and trust themselves, understand others, recognise and express emotions and ideas, develop self-control, learn to make responsible decisions, value and care for their health, improve their social skills and develop their creative abilities.

Currently, more than 700 national and international schools are part of the "Network of Responsible Education Centres". In Spain, schools from Cantabria, Madrid, La Rioja, Navarra, Galicia, Murcia, Castilla y León, Aragón, Valencia and Catalonia participate. In addition, the international extension is located in Uruguay, with the fundamental support of the Asociación Civil Emocionarte and Plan Ceibal, Chile, with the help of the Corporación Adelanto Amigos de Panguipulli, Mexico, promoted by PROED with the invaluable help of the Fundación Gigante and three countries in Central America (Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador) with the support of the Fundación Terra.

How to join

The "Responsible Education" programme is aimed at public, state-subsidised or private educational centres that wish to participate in this initiative and are committed to doing so for at least three years, which is the estimated time required for its implementation. Participation must be voluntary, and will be supported by the institutional collaboration and

accompaniment of the Botín Foundation's Education Area and the external evaluation of its implementation.

In addition, public and private institutions have established agreements with the Botín Foundation to develop the programme in each location, creating a base team made up of a general coordinator and educational advisors. These are in charge of training and monitoring the centres to ensure that the programme is properly implemented and extended, accompanied at all times by the Botín Foundation.

In Madrid and Cantabria, the Botín Foundation launches a call each year to incorporate new centres. Participants are selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Motivational criteria: Willingness and commitment of the school to be involved in the programme; Copy of the link to the school's video.
- Pedagogical criteria: Prior training on personal and social competences.
- Organisational criteria: Human resources; Technical resources.

In the rest of the Spanish regions, it is the Education Departments involved who lead the extension of the programme, accrediting all the training processes and issuing their own annual call for applications. In Uruguay and Chile, implementation is made possible through collaboration between public-private institutions.

Methodology

The process of implementing the programme in each school lasts three years. The participation of the teaching staff, with the support of the management team, is essential in order to integrate the Responsible Education programme throughout the educational community. For this reason, it is a fundamental requirement to take it on voluntarily as one of the priority lines of the centre's educational project.

Each centre creates its Responsible Education team, made up of a coordinator and a group of teachers who are responsible for each of the educational resources that make up the programme: Reading and Emotions (LEE); Literature, Emotions and Creativity (LEC); The Choir of Emotions; ReflejArte and the Tool Bank.

The profile of the coordinator is responsible for leading the programme, being in contact with those responsible for the resources and being the main link between the school and, in each case, the Botín Foundation or the Regional Ministry of Education.

During the implementation period, the school gradually expands the application of the educational resources from small groups of teachers and pupils to the whole school. The teaching staff receive face-to-face training to improve their affective, social and creative skills during this time and are involved in the overall evaluation process.

YEAR 1: INITIAL PHASE

Initial training for the team

ER of the Centre

Online training

Face-to-Face Training: Effective Development Module

YEAR 2: EXPANSION PHASE

Creation of Working Groups

Face-to-Face Training: Social Development Module

YEAR 3: CONSOLIDATION

Outreach Working Groups

Face-to-Face Training: Creativity Development Module

At the end of this period, the centres are considered "graduated centres", being identified as centres belonging to the Network of Responsible Education Centres. Thus, they become a reference for other centres and benefit from a complementary training plan and special content on the programme's website.

Resources

The Responsible Education programme is based on the application, from different curricular areas and school contexts, of its educational resources, materials that are developed from literature, music, plastic and visual arts... adapting to the different educational stages from infant to secondary (3-16 years) and attending to different profiles of educational centres integrated in the Network. Teachers are also trained in the application of these educational resources in the classroom.

- Bank of audiovisual tools (from 3 to 16 years old): Ideas and proposals for the promotion of well-being and the integral development of pupils through audiovisual supports and group work techniques that encourage and facilitate their active participation.
- Reading and emotions (3 to 5 years old): Books, activities and strategies that promote the identification and emotional expression and the approach to reading from the pre-reading stage of infancy.
- The choir of emotions (from 3 to 16 years old): Choral singing is a powerful playful tool available to anyone. Regardless of their musical talent. It is used in the infant, primary and secondary stages with the whole class.
- Reflejarte (from 6 to 16 years old): Through the plastic arts, the ER variables in primary and secondary school are strengthened. It proposes work divided into three interrelated and consecutive phases articulated around an exhibition.
- Playing emotions (from 14 to 16 years old): The resource that will help you to work on Responsible Education competences from contemporary narratives, independent video games. Related activities in three consecutive phases around a video game.
- Literature, emotions and creativity (from 6 to 16 years old): Resource to work on ER variables in primary and secondary school through literature. Playful activities with books that are carried out before, during and after reading.

Evaluation

Numerous studies have shown the benefits of emotional education in the learning, wellbeing and overall development of students. The intensive application of the Botín Foundation's Responsible Education programme is evaluated externally in order to determine its impact

and effectiveness in the classroom. In this sense, a pedagogical and a psychological evaluation is carried out periodically.

- The external pedagogical evaluation is carried out annually and analyses the degree of teacher satisfaction with the training received, the usefulness of the resources provided to implement the programme in the classroom, as well as the development of students' socio-emotional and creative skills.
- The external psychological evaluation consists of a longitudinal study of the psychological impact of the Responsible Education programme on the socioemotional development and creativity of pupils, the improvement of coexistence and the school climate in the educational centres of the ER Network.

Pending the finalisation of a new evaluation, the latest results published in 2018 on the psychological impact of the Responsible Education programme demonstrate a double effect: functioning as a promoter of emotional development and, at the same time, protective against violent and socially withdrawn behaviour.

1. Students improve in identifying and understanding their emotions, as well as in their creativity.
2. Teachers observe a decrease in aggressive behaviour, social withdrawal and a decrease in anxiety in pupils.
3. Families perceive improvement in emotional skills and pro-social behaviours such as generosity, empathy and collaboration.
4. In the schools, an improvement in coexistence, school climate and pupils' wellbeing can be observed.

Benefits

Research carried out so far by the Faculty of Education of the University of Cantabria shows that there are significant relationships between the skills trained by the Responsible Education (RE) programme and important aspects of students' lives, both inside and outside the classroom.

Studies show that Responsible Education promotes emotional, social and creative development, and acts as a protective factor against violent behaviour and social withdrawal; these effects last over time.

The main findings on the benefits of the programme point in three directions:

Firstly, the scores indicate greater emotional self-awareness (+8%), better stress management (+3%) and less withdrawal (-19.8%) at 12 years of age. The Responsible Education programme proposes the implementation of activities in which skills related to emotional identification, regulation and expression are developed. It also offers strategies that allow students to reduce stress and anxiety levels in different situations; exams, novel events or unexpected events.

Improved stress management and decreased anxiety levels are also related to students' improvement in tasks related to memorisation, recall and problem solving.

Secondly, the results point to an increase in creative capacity (+15%) in children aged 5 to 9 years who participate in the ER programme on an ongoing basis. All the educational resources (Reading and Emotions; Choir of Emotions; Reflejarte; Tool Bank; Literature,

Emotions and Creativity) are designed to work from the arts, curricular areas, or tutorials, and are based on active methodologies that propose to generate experiential learning spaces that favour the establishment of bonds of trust between the learner and the educator. And these spaces, as empirical experience shows, help to promote talent and the development of creativity in the classroom. In this way, they stimulate the flow of ideas, the willingness and initiative to create, the development of autonomy, the increase of curiosity and the development of critical and divergent thinking in students.

Thirdly, the findings show a reduction in the occurrence of aggressive behaviour (-23%) in older pupils. In the youngest students, a particular improvement is observed in skills related to prosocial orientation. Both teachers and families appreciate the improvement in students' ability to put themselves in the place of others, a greater willingness to collaborate and more generous behaviours with peers and in the family environment. This research, in addition to confirming the benefits for children and young people of systematic training in Emotional, Social and Creative Intelligence skills, reveals the strong influence that teachers have on the development of these competences in their students.

Emotional Intelligence" Programme of the Provincial Council of Guipúzcoa

The Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa, through the Department of Innovation and Knowledge Society, is committed to the development of Emotional Intelligence in the school, family, organisational/business and socio-community spheres. This commitment translates into promoting and integrating an emotionally intelligent territory and an innovative territory: Gipuzkoa. In fact, the development of Emotional Intelligence is one of the four strategic objectives of the Department.

For this reason, in the educational field, the training of management teams and teachers is promoted through a training itinerary, awareness-raising actions, pilot actions in schools, impact assessments, etc.

Description

The aim of this project is to offer the entire educational community of Gipuzkoa, from 3 to 20 years of age, a practical and orientative programme, as well as a transversal one, for the development of Emotional Intelligence, from "tutorial action", with the aim of ensuring that young people, at the end of their academic training process, have also acquired emotional competences that will allow them to:

Increase their level of personal well-being.

To become responsible, committed and cooperative individuals.

Improve their quality of life, both physically and emotionally, on a journey to be happier than previous generations.

Increase their professional achievements.

Methodology

Following the programme model, the project has the following phases:

1. Context analysis: environmental context, structure, format (duration), resources, situation of the teaching staff, school climate, etc.
2. Identification of needs: target groups, objectives...
3. Design: rationale, formulation of objectives, contents to be developed, selection of activities, resources, deadlines, target groups, evaluation criteria and costs.
4. Execution: implementation of activities. Attention to possible variations.
5. Evaluation: it is not enough to provide assessments, evaluation is one of the basic elements.

Resources

The materials, available free of charge on the Euskadi.eus website, are divided into different guides and practical information sheets depending on the educational stage of the target audience: • Infant 3/ 4 years • Infant 5 years old • Primary 6- 8 years • Primary 8-10 years • Primary 10-12 years • Secondary 12-14 years • Secondary 14-16 years • Baccalaureate 16-18 years

Evaluation

The foundations of this procedure are to be found in the systematic elaboration of a "Session Diary" and in the "Analysis of the products of the activities". Two tools are proposed for this purpose:

- The diary, in which everything that happens is described. By means of a narrative register, the diary records the behaviours that appeared, the contents that are expressed and the products of each activity (drawings, stories, masks...). If the dimensions are larger than those of the diary, it is advisable to take a photo corresponding to the product produced.
- The questionnaire is the tool that at the end of each activity offers a reflection on the functioning of the programme, helping us to identify ways of improvement and developing new strategies for action in the face of the difficulties or situations observed. Taking into account the activity diary, the questionnaire contains various evaluation indicators which should be taken into consideration in each activity and which help to evaluate the activity: degree of enjoyment, degree of participation, group climate, communication-listening and degree of achievement of objectives.
- Level of pleasure: observe what emotions the participants in the group show when they experience the activity. Assess spontaneous emotional expressions, such as laughter, facial expressions, happiness, etc.
- Degree of participation: observe whether small group or whole group activities involve all learners.
- Group climate: observe the emotional expression of the students. Observe whether in group activities respect, dialogue, coordination or resistance, aggressiveness or even passivity are appreciated.
- Communication and listening: to assess whether the instructions of the activity offered by the adult are listened to, whether the participants actively listen to each other during the

sharing or reflection, and whether communication within the group is effective during the development of the activity.

- Degree to which the objectives have been achieved: to assess whether and to what extent the objectives proposed at the beginning of the activity have been achieved. These indicators will be evaluated on an estimation scale from 1 to 10.

To conclude the questionnaire, two more aspects to be assessed by the adult are proposed:

- Positive elements and difficulties of the session and how to improve them.
- Description of the subjective impression of the session

INTEMO/ INTEMO+ Programme of the University of Malaga

The Emotions Lab, a research group at the University of Malaga, has been investigating the vital role of emotions in people's health and well-being since 1996. Its focus is on understanding the origin and nature of emotions in order to provide practical tools to help people understand, use and manage their emotions in an intelligent and positive way. This knowledge not only improves individual and professional well-being, but also contributes to social and economic development, fostering healthy relationships and building an emotionally intelligent society.

Among the different actions they have developed over the years is the "INTEMO" and "INTEMO +" programme, financed by the Spanish Government and the Andalusian Regional Government.

Description

It is a programme aimed at promoting long-term mental health through the development of emotional intelligence, based on the emotional skills model of Mayer and Salovey. The 2016 version "INTEMO +" is the updated version of this programme and presents greater complexity and dynamism in the activities, suggesting that a gender perspective is provided to them; the connection with other contexts (family or friends) is more favoured; and an attempt is made to make a transversal integration of emotional intelligence in the school curriculum.

In addition, this programme also attaches great importance to the training of educators in their own emotional intelligence and in how the INTEMO programme is applied so that they can deliver it in schools, as well as to the evaluation of the application at the end of the programme.

Methodology

This programme is implemented both by members of the UMA Emotions Laboratory and by external staff, who are trained in EI, providing them with the necessary skills to carry out the programme.

It is based on a theoretical model of EI that assumes that it is a skill composed of four branches: Emotional Perception, Emotional Assimilation, Emotional Understanding and Emotional Regulation (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

It is structured in twelve one-hour sessions (three for each branch of EI), once a week, usually at the time established for tutorials. In addition, the INTEMO+ programme includes 2 more sessions to train the four skills together.

It is eminently practical. After a brief theoretical introduction, the activity begins, which may include games, role-playing or video forum, designed to encourage maximum student participation, most of which are worked on in groups. Afterwards, an activity is sent home with the aim of generalising what they have learnt in class to their daily lives.

Resources

It is a book with activities: games, role-playing, art activities, film forums and reflective activities. Its reference is as follows:

Cabello, R., Castillo, R., Rueda, P., & Fernández-Berrocal, P. (2016). INTEMO+ Programme. Improving the emotional intelligence of adolescents. Madrid: Pirámide

Evaluation

In the 'Closing of the Programme' session, suggestions are collected from the students regarding the best and worst rated activities of the programme and a sharing of all that has been learnt and their personal experience during the EI training sessions. It also contains pre- and post-intervention self-report questionnaires to assess effectiveness.

Benefits

Several quasi-experimental trials have been carried out to test the INTEMO Programme to assess the benefits in the development of different skills and in the minimisation of mental health problems, obtaining positive effects in the improvement of empathy and the reduction of aggression.

It has also been shown to be effective in promoting other mental health-related skills, decreasing risk factors that may lead to associated disorders (negative affect scores and symptoms such as anxiety, social stress, depression, feelings of helplessness and somatization are decreased in studies, while the MH-5 mental health measure increases); beyond 6 months after the intervention.

Ultimately, participants reported better psychosocial adjustment, with lower levels of depression and anxiety, less atypicality, somatization and social stress, and higher self-esteem, compared to students in the control groups.

Ulysses" Programme of the National Plan on Drugs

The National Plan on Drugs (PNSD) proposed this programme several years ago for the prevention of risk behaviours related to drug use, focusing on working on the capacity for emotional self-control as a protective factor against risk behaviours, providing useful strategies for adaptive coping with anxiety and anger.

Description

This is a programme for learning and developing emotional self-control aimed at pupils in the 3rd cycle of Primary Education (10-12 years) or first cycle of ESO (12-14 years) that we found very interesting and practical to use with them and with their peer groups.

It takes as its point of reference the figure and experiences of Ulysses and his men during their long journey home after the Trojan War, masterfully recounted by Homer in the *Odyssey*.

The analysis of the different characters, and their emotional reactions, offers an attractive perspective on emotions. The figure of Ulysses is intended as an illustrative reference for the ability to manage emotional self-control.

Methodology

The programme consists of 10 practical work sessions of variable duration, designed to be carried out by monitors and educators in the non-formal educational environment, in which, through a dynamic, active and entertaining methodology, students learn to stimulate and strengthen their emotional self-control, while discovering one of the most relevant passages of universal literature.

It is structured in three parts:

- "A journey through the world of emotions". It is made up of sessions 1, 2 and 3, in which the concept of emotion, negative emotions and the relationship between emotions and interpersonal relationships are worked on.
- "Exploring our emotional control". It is made up of sessions 4 and 5, in which we work on coping styles and the components of emotional responses.
- "A journey through the world of emotions". It is made up of sessions 7,8,9 and 10, in which language, physiological responses, emotional expression and social skills are worked on. The closing session of the programme is a game whose materials are made by the students themselves and which constitutes a playful and fun synthesis of what has been learnt throughout the work sessions.

The line of work in each of the sessions is always the same: first there is a short reading of one of Ulysses' experiences after the battle of Troy, then a series of activities related to the content of each of the sessions and, at the end of the sessions, there is an activity called "remember", which aims to summarise and consolidate the knowledge acquired.

Resources

The Programme has two booklets, one for the monitor and one for the student, available free of charge on the Ministry of Health's website.

Monitor's Notebook: designed to facilitate their educational task, consisting of a theoretical support and a series of activities structured around the development of emotional self-control.

Student's Notebook: intended to be a fun, clear and entertaining work tool for students, combining a series of cartoons of Ulysses' journey, the core of the programme, with work activities and key ideas.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the design and materials of the programme is carried out at the same time as they are being developed, through continuous feedback between the drafting team and the team of experts in the evaluation work. For this work, the evaluation is carried out by a "Group of Experts", psychologists, pedagogues and sociologists, with experience in drug addiction prevention and numerous actions in programmes of this type.

The process is evaluated by means of a Process Protocol that collects information regarding the implementation of each of the sessions and the evaluations of the contents by the monitors who lead the sessions and the subjects who participate.

REMO Company

Remo is a company, based in Malaga, whose objective is to analyse the environment of organisations in order to implement EI programmes that increase their potential and improve the working environment.

Specifically, Remo works with managers and middle management to improve their leadership skills; improve team motivation to achieve an attitude conducive to conflict resolution, both internal and external, within and outside the organisation; improve the work climate and job satisfaction, and greater personal knowledge, among other things.

Government of the Canary Islands

In the Canarian educational panorama, emotions and creativity have been included in the curriculum since 2014, through a subject of free autonomous configuration called "Emotional Education and Creativity" which promotes, from an absolutely educational approach, the emotional and creative development of students, assuming it from an integrated and cross-cutting perspective.

This subject, whose main purpose is the personal and social well-being of the individual, is a unique opportunity for teachers to educate children to learn to be happy, and to be more successful in schools.

It is important to highlight that this subject arises from the need to address, from an educational point of view, the relevant role that emotions and creativity play at school (both those of the pupils and those of the teaching staff and, in general, of the whole educational community). In this respect, it is the support and validation of the educational practices that, from a large part of the teaching staff, have been carried out in the Canarian educational system. It is also an incentive for these same teachers (and for those who have less in-depth knowledge of emotional education and education for creativity) to investigate the most successful practices that make Canarian schools a privileged place for personal and social fulfilment.

Specific University Master's Degrees

Spanish universities, aware of the importance of developing specific training in this area, have developed specific master's degrees for the development of emotional intelligence skills. The following are some of the most outstanding ones:

Master's Degree in Emotional Intelligence at the University of Malaga.

It aims to train professionals from any branch in the development of emotional skills, following an experiential, dynamic and creative training for a comprehensive personal and professional development that complements the theoretical and scientific aspects with intensive practical work led by an expert tutor.

Postgraduate in Emotional Education and Well-being from the University of Barcelona.

This master's degree is aimed at graduates who are interested in teaching classes at any age (children, teenagers, university students, etc.), as well as any worker who is responsible for human resources, or support professionals such as doctors, nurses, psychologists or lawyers, among others.

Master's Degree in Emotional Intelligence and Coaching in the Work Environment at the University of Barcelona.

The aim of this master's degree is to develop the skills and competencies needed to manage human resources based on EI, as well as to prepare managers and human resources managers to help work teams face problems and take on challenges.

Master's Degree in Educational Emotional Intelligence from the Universidad Europea Online.

This master's degree aims to train experts in emotional education in the classroom through communication techniques, tools and innovative methodologies.

Master of Lifelong Learning - Emotional Intelligence and Intervention in Emotions and Health of the Complutense University of Madrid.

It includes a wide range of contents with a view to providing students with a complete and solid theoretical and applied training in the field of emotional intelligence.

Master's Degree in Emotional Intelligence from the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia.

Its objective is to train professionals competent in assessing emotional intelligence, as well as in designing, applying and evaluating actions aimed at improving the emotional intelligence of others in different areas of intervention (health, personal growth, organisations and work, educational centres).

Guide to good practices in EI applied to occupational risk prevention by Muprespa

Fraternidad Muprespa is a mutual society that collaborates with the Social Security and considers emotional intelligence a key aspect to be addressed in Spanish companies, which is why it has created an applied guide on good practices in emotional intelligence within the field of occupational risk prevention.

Description

This guide aims to help improve the emotional intelligence of people in organisations. It is also intended to serve as a compendium of a series of good practices to be adopted by workers and organisations.

The guidelines set out in the following sections serve as a guide:

- Raise awareness among both employers and employees of the importance of emotional intelligence.

- Providing workers with guidelines to improve it.
- Fostering emotional leadership within organisations.
- Applying emotional intelligence in the prevention of occupational risks.

Fraternidad-Muprespa aims to provide organisations with tools to further improve their cultural performance in health and safety.

Methodology

The guide is divided into the following sections:

A brief introduction, where the guide is put in context.

A section on presentation and objectives, reflecting what is intended with this guide and the target audience.

A central part with the different chapters, within which practical and accessible content is included for all those who follow the guide. Each chapter includes:

Introduction.

Content associated with the chapter.

Summary or conclusions.

Final reflection questions.

Solutions to these questions.

A final section with the bibliography used for the elaboration of the guide.

Resources

This guide is available free of charge on the fraternity.com website.

"XII Conference on Emotional Education".

During the different editions of the emotional education days, the concept of teaching is approached in a different way, in a more interactive way and through Physical Education. In addition, the ultimate goal of the project is to use emotions in an active way, an approach that is a bit different from traditional education.

During the conference, neuroscience is a sector that is continually advancing and that makes a wide-ranging contribution to emotional education. In fact, the most recent findings support the fact that a characteristic of our brain that we could define as "neuroplasticity" means that its structure is constantly changing and never stops modifying. It is important to be aware of how emotions affect our brain on a daily basis in all the products we consume, social networks, such as Instagram, tik-tok, and all the stimuli that are generated in our brain. Taking all this into account, we can deduce that the importance of our physical and mental wellbeing directly affects the changes and structure of our neurons, the impulses of our brain can be atrophied or reinforced depending on the activity of our day to day.

Lleicop rules: emotions in physical education

During the XII Conference on Emotional Education, special emphasis was placed on neuroscience. The project coordinators were Blanca Barredo Gutiérrez, Rafael Bisquerra Alzina, Núria García Aguilar, Antoni Giner Tarrida, Núria Pérez Escoda and Amelia Tey Teijón.

During the process of creation and evolution of this initiative, different research and studies were collected that could help to establish relations between the aforementioned scientific concepts and education, which resulted in the project called "LLEICOP RULES: EMOTIONS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION".

This idea aims to combine the development of emotional education using alternative tools that function as rather physical communication techniques. This type of activity stimulates the motor system as well as creativity and rhythm, and can be combined with cultural practices that define us as a society.

Purpose of the programme

Developing emotions, giving them the necessary importance, getting our body used to moving in a natural way and strengthening its capacities within physical education. It is especially important that the physical body itself is the protagonist.

The project approach

Motivate Emotional Education in the youngest members of society through the implementation of certain activities that will form part of a programme. These are some of its characteristics:

- The programme has as a reference a certain guide related to Emotional Intelligence whose creators were Mayer and Salovey at the end of the last century.
- According to this model, this field of intellect would enhance certain skills of perception, esteem and the ability to express emotions.
- In the paradigm presented in this project, there are four emotional skills or tools within the framework of teaching and learning.

The idea came up thanks to the activities proposed by the physical education of a programme with the aim of benefiting the school system of Emotional Education in Primary School. The activities included all kinds of tasks previously devised to include sufficient body and motor expression, creative activities and also relaxation.

Development

Among his theories it can be discerned that this concept links several skills: the first one is to perceive, evaluate and express emotions, the next one is to access and create feelings, there is one more to understand these same emotions and the last one is to regulate them in a way that benefits both emotional and intellectual development.

In this kind of intelligence, we had also anticipated that four tools or situations stand out that can occur within the framework of teaching and learning:

Emotional perception: Only involves the identification and recognition of the feelings of those around us.

Emotional assimilation: Once we have recognised other people's emotions, we learn to act accordingly and become aware of how these other people's feelings influence our emotional state and our decision making.

Emotional understanding: Understanding helps us to identify and classify emotions, discover why we feel them and establish possible short- or long-term consequences.

Emotional regulation: Once we have mastered the previous tools, it is time for the worst part. Regulation attempts to achieve the ability to embrace both our positive and negative feelings and to select them according to our own convenience.

Objectives

- Empowering the Emotional Intellect and being aware of our own emotions.
- Use our motor system through activities and apply them in physical education.
- Gain body awareness and come to understand both our emotions and those of others.
- Give importance to rhythm, creativity and music and integrate them into the way of learning.
- Obtain new relationship and emotional intelligence tools to communicate and express ourselves better.
- To be able to create bonds of affection through our own means

This research, application and development work laid the theoretical foundations that led to the creation of the LLEICOP RULES: EMOTIONS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION programme. The importance of the subject of physical education in primary education is essential and this programme aims to go a step further and include elements related to the rhythm and expression of our body, as well as focusing on the individual aptitudes of each pupil.

ITALY

L'Emozionario dei Professionisti Sanitari: a narrative approach to self-care in highly stressful professions

Objectives

The Emozionario dei Professionisti Sanitari project stems from the observation of the growing burnout rate among medical professionals, notably nurses, a phenomenon which has spiked dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project has started organically in February 2021 via the "Laboratorio di Nursing Narrativo Milano" Facebook group, thanks to the efforts of nurses Paola Gobbi, Rosanna Alagna and Titti de Simone.

The project's objective is to create a community of professionals offering emotional and psychological support with each other through narrative means, that is the sharing of stories and perspectives on personal experiences in the field.

While maintaining its spontaneous approach, the group has become a space to foster emotional well-being and professional resilience in the face of an unprecedented time of crisis, through actions aimed at developing Emotional Intelligence language and skills, to provide tools to deal with practical situations Italian nurses may find themselves in.

The overall goal is to provide the framework and skills for a better management of the emotions medical professionals experience every day, by increasing awareness to develop Emotional Intelligence and interpersonal skills through training, sharing moments and working groups. Stakeholders and Partners.

The grass-roots social project has stemmed from the existing "Laboratorio di Nursing Narrativo Milano", a group of YOUNG nurses and communication experts whose goal is to analyze nursing care under the lens of bioethics and deontology.

Through the tools of storytelling, the nurse will thus be able to reclaim a profound dimension of his or her own nursing actions.

The working group, which is composed by about twenty YOUNG people, mainly nurses, is the formalization of various study, training, and research experiences involving dozens of nurses (and other health professionals) over the past two decades.

What was the process?

In their training and professional development courses, the starting point are always the stories of the people being cared for: the behaviors of the different actors involved (user, family members, nurses, caregivers, administrators, volunteers) are analyzed in light of the ethical-deontological principles of the nursing profession. Through the years the group has experimented with and adapted methods and tools from Narrative Medicine and the Medical Humanities to the projects purposes; they have then designed and implemented in different contexts (health care companies, nursing homes, professional orders) an innovative field training course, already offered to more than two hundred colleagues.

Validation

The growing participation and sharing of narratives among colleagues via the original Facebook group (3.000 registered users) has brought the unprecedented levels of emotional distress and burnout rates experienced during the pandemic to the forefront of the conversation at the managerial and organizational level of Italian national health service.

Understanding the growing need for a more structured approach, the theoretical framework of Emotional Intelligence used in the Emozionario project has been applied to a professional course with validation by ECM certification (Continuous Medical Education Credits), organized by the Region of Lombardy's divisions of the National Association of Nursing Professions and the National Consortium for Medical Research.

Impact

The last edition of the course has reached more than 100 participants, the majority of whom did not know about the project and, when surveyed, felt more engaged with the topic.

To this date, the project has also reached thousands of professionals in many Italian cities through the organisation of live dissemination events and other initiatives, i.e. the "Nursing Awareness Week" with the occasion of International Nurses' Day, and the "Well-Being Backpack": a handbook of practical tools for managing "emotional emergencies."

Success Factors

The grass-root, participative nature of the social project set no entry barriers to professionals, while allowing them to take part in any measure they felt appropriate. This has translated in a easier and more open discussion of sensible issues, and a more attentive response to the dissemination of Emotional Intelligence notions and skills.

Constraints

The project has refined its narrative, horizontal approach, attractive new personnel to its core working group. and stimulating the design of new initiatives. While its volunteering nature may pose some constraints to reach of the project, its innovative response to a clear and widespread need is ensuring that the core themes and aims of the project are being multiplied and disseminated by high profile stakeholders in the medical-sanitary field of Italy.

Lessons learned

The high levels of engagement registered by the original working group of the Emozionario project, as well as the increasing number of follow-up initiatives on the topic highlight the scale of the need addressed by its members, and qualify its approach as an efficient Good Practice in Emotional Intelligence mainstreaming. Sustainability By virtue of its social, spontaneous approach, the project has virtually no costs of implementation, making it extremely sustainable and easily applicable to a number of high-stress working environments.

Replicability and up-scaling

The core working group of the Emozionario is currently taking the experience from native Lombardy to other Italian regions: in Liguria, for example, a newly set-up working group is already active, and contacts have been made in Piedmont. The current goal is to establish collaborations with high-level organisation and interest groups in the field on the national level, sharing Good Practices, knowledge and values. In this sense contacts have recently been made with the central division of the National Association of Nursing Professions, with a number Scientific Societies working in the health field and with the Italian Institute of Bioethics. This project, initiated by nurses, is an invitation to all health care professionals to reflect on the importance of relationship as a tool of care and self-care. Starting from the knowledge that good management of emotions can contribute to being better professionals and human beings, we evaluate this project's approach as a remarkable Good Practice to promote a healthier organizational culture, more responsive to the needs of individuals and communities.

GREECE

Mastering Emotional Intelligence: A Comprehensive Guide to Enhancing Awareness, Regulation, and Interpersonal Skills

Introduction to Emotional Intelligence

Understanding Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the skill that allows people to recognize, understand, use, and manage their own emotions and the emotions of others effectively. It plays a key role in helping individuals handle social interactions smoothly and achieve success both personally and professionally.

Key Aspects of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence consists of two main areas that are important for developing strong personal skills and good relationships with others:

Personal Competence: This part of EI deals with self-awareness and self-management. Self-awareness means knowing what you are feeling and understanding how those feelings can affect your decisions and actions. This knowledge helps guide how you behave and interact with others. Self-management involves controlling your emotions, even in difficult situations, to stay focused and keep a stable mood.

Social Competence: This area focuses on social awareness and relationship management. Social awareness is about noticing and understanding other people's emotions, needs, and concerns. This ability helps you get along better with others and be more sensitive in social situations. Relationship management uses these insights about emotions to handle interactions successfully. This includes influencing and inspiring others, positively resolving conflicts, and maintaining strong relationships both at work and in personal life.

The Wide-Ranging Importance of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is crucial not just for personal development but as a fundamental part of interacting with others:

In Personal Development: EI is essential for managing stress, adapting to changes, and overcoming challenges. It leads to better mental health and a more satisfying life.

In Relationships: Strong emotional intelligence skills are vital for creating and keeping healthy personal relationships. They help people communicate more clearly, understand each other better, and handle difficulties in relationships more effectively.

In the Workplace: In professional settings, EI enhances teamwork, leadership, and overall performance. It helps create a supportive work environment, improves problem-solving, and increases job satisfaction among employees.

In Academic Settings: Students with high EI tend to do better in school. They can handle the pressures of school better, including managing stress during exams and building positive relationships with classmates and teachers.

In Leadership: Emotional intelligence is increasingly seen as a key quality in effective leaders. Leaders with good EI can motivate their teams, understand the emotional needs of their employees, and make smarter decisions. They are often more respected and can create a trusting and positive workplace.

Increasing Focus on EI Education and Training

As the benefits of emotional intelligence become more recognized, education and training in EI are being added to school programs, professional training, and personal development courses. These initiatives aim to equip people with the necessary EI skills to succeed in all areas of life.

Chapter 1: Self-Awareness Practices

Understanding Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is a key part of emotional intelligence. It means being able to notice and understand your own feelings and how they affect your thoughts and actions. This understanding is important for controlling your behavior, making smart decisions, and understanding other people's feelings too.

Identifying Personal Emotions

Learning to identify your emotions accurately is the first important step in developing self-awareness. Here are some methods that can help you get better at recognizing and naming your emotions:

Maintaining a Daily Emotion Journal: Writing down your emotions and what caused them each day can be very helpful. This habit helps you see patterns in how you react emotionally and understand what triggers these feelings.

Engaging in Introspective Practices: Activities like mindfulness meditation help you observe your thoughts and feelings without judging them. This practice deepens your understanding of your emotional state and can make emotional reactions less intense over time.

Using Technology: Mood-tracking apps are great tools for recording your emotions throughout the day. These apps can spot triggers and trends in your emotional responses, giving you a clear picture of your emotional health.

The Power of Feedback

Getting feedback from others is crucial for improving self-awareness:

Feedback from Peers, Mentors, or Coaches: Regular and constructive feedback from others can give you an outsider's view of how you express your emotions and how they impact others. This feedback is valuable for personal growth.

Structured Feedback Sessions: These sessions can be formal, with a clear agenda and goals, or informal, like a chat with a friend you trust. They help you understand how your emotions affect your interactions with others.

Reflective Practices for Enhanced Self-Awareness

Building a habit of reflection can greatly boost your emotional intelligence:

- **Self-Reflection:** Taking time regularly to think about your actions and emotional reactions helps you understand why you feel a certain way and how you can handle your emotions better.
- **Emotional Awareness Exercises:** Simple activities, such as checking in with your emotions several times a day, help develop a routine of self-reflection that supports greater emotional awareness.
- **Role-Playing:** Taking part in role-play is a good way to practice and watch emotions in a controlled setting, which you can then analyze to improve how you respond emotionally in real situations.

Emotional Literacy

Being able to clearly understand and express emotions is known as 'emotional literacy,' a vital part of self awareness:

- **Naming Emotions Accurately:** Learning to identify and describe emotions precisely helps you communicate your feelings better and leads to healthier interactions with others.
- **Understanding the Causes of Emotions:** Knowing what triggers your emotional responses allows you to manage these triggers more deliberately and keep your emotions under control during tough times.

Chapter 2: Self-Regulation Techniques

Understanding Self-Regulation

Self-regulation is a crucial part of emotional intelligence that involves managing your emotions and behavior in various situations. It helps you keep control over your impulses and react appropriately, even during difficult or stressful times.

Controlling Impulsive Behaviors

Impulsive actions can often lead to unfavorable results in both personal and professional interactions. Learning to manage these impulses is key to maintaining healthy relationships and achieving long-term goals.

- **Practicing Controlled Breathing:** Controlled breathing is a powerful method for managing impulses. Techniques like the 4-7-8 breathing method, where you breathe in for four seconds, hold for seven, and exhale for eight, are especially helpful. This can calm your mind and body, allowing you to think before you act.

- **Physical Activities:** Regular exercise is another effective way to reduce stress and control impulses. Physical activities release endorphins, which are chemicals in the brain that act as natural stress relievers and mood lifters.
- **Setting up Preventive Systems:** Creating personal rules, such as taking a moment to think before you speak or act, can prevent impulsive reactions, especially in emotionally charged situations.

Adaptability in Adverse Conditions

Adaptability and maintaining emotional stability when things change or get tough are important aspects of self-regulation.

- **Cognitive Restructuring Techniques:** This involves changing negative thought patterns to more positive ones, which can lead to better emotional responses. Techniques include challenging negative thoughts, using positive affirmations, and focusing on positive outcomes.
- **Exposure to Varied Environments:** Regularly putting yourself in new or challenging situations can improve your adaptability. This could mean travelling to new places, trying new activities, or changing your daily routine to include unfamiliar tasks.
- **Mental Agility Exercises:** Exercises that boost your ability to think on your feet, such as problem-solving under pressure, brainstorming, or playing strategic games, can help you stay calm and clear-headed under stress.

Building Consistency in Self-Regulation

Consistency is essential for developing and maintaining the ability to regulate your emotions effectively.

- **Routine Development:** Establishing routines that promote emotional regulation, like morning meditation, regular exercise, or evening journaling, can strengthen this skill.
- **Emotional Coping Strategies:** Building a set of emotional coping strategies, such as talking to a friend, listening to music, or reading, can offer alternatives to impulsive reactions.
- **Continuous Learning and Practice:** Improving self-regulation skills requires ongoing practice and education. Participating in workshops, reading books, and taking online courses can offer new techniques and insights for better emotional control.

Integrating Self-Regulation into Daily Life

To effectively incorporate self-regulation into your daily routine, consider the following steps:

- **Set Clear Goals:** Define what successful self-regulation looks like in different aspects of your life and set specific, achievable goals to improve these areas.
- **Monitor Progress:** Keep a regular check on your emotional reactions and behaviors to track your progress and make necessary adjustments.
- **Seek Feedback:** Getting feedback from others about how you handle emotional situations can provide valuable insights and help you refine your self-regulation strategies.

Chapter 3: Motivational Strategies

The Role of Motivation in Emotional Intelligence

Motivation is a key factor in driving behavior and achieving success. Within the context of emotional intelligence, motivation — both intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) — is crucial for continuing to work towards personal and professional goals, even when faced with challenges.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations

Utilizing both types of motivation is essential for well-rounded personal development:

- **Intrinsic Motivation:** This type of motivation comes from within the individual and is driven by personal enjoyment or the satisfaction gained from doing an activity. Ways to enhance intrinsic motivation include:
 - **Connecting Tasks to Personal Values:** Make daily tasks align with your deeper values and beliefs. This connection makes activities more meaningful and increases your overall interest and happiness in doing them.
 - **Pursuing Interests and Passions:** Regularly participate in activities that you love or that deeply interest you. This not only brings joy but also keeps your motivation high.
 - **Setting Personal Challenges:** Create enjoyable challenges that spark your curiosity and drive your personal growth.
- **Extrinsic Motivation:** This motivation is fueled by external rewards such as money, recognition, or praise. Strategies to boost extrinsic motivation include:
 - **Setting and Achieving Tangible Goals:** Define clear, specific, and achievable goals that guide you to success and give you a sense of achievement when reached.
 - **Seeking Feedback and Recognition:** Regular praise and feedback from others can greatly enhance your motivation by affirming your efforts and achievements.
 - **Rewarding Achievements:** Establish a rewards system for meeting certain milestones, such as treating yourself to a favourite activity or a small purchase.

Consistency and Persistence

Keeping motivated requires steady effort and determination, especially when you encounter obstacles.

- **Developing Routines:** Set up daily or weekly routines that include motivational practices, like reflecting on your goals, monitoring your progress, or planning upcoming tasks.
- **Creating Supportive Environments:** Be around positive people and a supportive community that boosts your motivation. This could mean joining groups or clubs that share your interests.
- **Using Motivational Affirmations:** Regularly use positive and empowering statements that strengthen your ability to face challenges and focus on your goals. These affirmations should be personal, believable, and in line with what you value most.

Leveraging Emotional Intelligence for Motivation

Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in maintaining motivation:

- **Emotional Awareness and Regulation:** Knowing and managing your emotions can keep you motivated, even during tough times or after receiving negative feedback. Being emotionally resilient helps you push through difficult periods.
- **Empathy and Social Skills:** Building strong connections with others through empathy and effective communication can provide emotional support from others, which boosts your enthusiasm and commitment to achieving your goals.

Chapter 4: Empathy Development

Understanding the Importance of Empathy

Empathy is a key part of emotional intelligence that involves understanding and sharing the feelings of others. It helps improve how we connect with people and can greatly enhance both personal relationships and professional interactions.

Enhancing Emotional Attunement

To truly connect with others and understand their feelings, developing a strong sense of emotional attunement is crucial.

- **Role-Playing Exercises:** These activities help you put yourself in someone else's shoes and see the world from their perspective. Role-playing can show how different situations may affect people emotionally, providing deeper insights into their feelings.
- **Engaging in Diverse Cultural Experiences:** Exploring different cultures and lifestyles can expand your understanding and appreciation for various emotional expressions and reactions. Traveling, attending cultural festivals, and consuming media from diverse sources are effective ways to grow this understanding.
- **Active Involvement in Emotional Support Groups:** Joining groups that provide emotional support can also help develop empathy. These groups offer a safe place to share feelings and experiences, which can help you understand and relate to a wide range of emotions.

Practicing Compassionate Responses

Empathy also means responding to others' emotions in a supportive and caring way.

- **Training Sessions on Compassionate Communication:** Learning how to communicate with compassion can greatly improve how you respond to others emotionally. These training sessions typically teach how to listen actively, speak kindly, and stay present in conversations.
- **Conflict Resolution Training:** Empathy is crucial for resolving disagreements. Training in conflict resolution provides skills needed to understand different viewpoints and settle disputes effectively without making emotions worse.
- **Empathy Workshops:** Workshops on empathy offer practical techniques for understanding and connecting emotionally with others. These may include activities like emotional mirroring, validating others' feelings, and using creative methods like art or music to explore emotions.

Daily Practices for Cultivating Empathy

Adopting daily practices that promote empathetic engagement can further develop this important skill.

- **Mindful Listening:** Make an effort to listen attentively to others without thinking about how you will respond. This practice helps you focus fully on the speaker and develop a deeper connection.
- **Expressing Understanding:** Frequently acknowledge and validate others' feelings, whether in personal talks or professional settings. This can strengthen relationships and build trust.
- **Reflective Journaling on Interactions:** Keeping a journal to reflect on your daily interactions and the emotions involved can improve your empathy. It encourages regular analysis of how well you understood and responded to others' feelings.

Chapter 5: Enhancing Social Skills

The Foundation of Social Skills

Social skills are a key part of emotional intelligence that helps improve how we interact with others in both personal and work settings. Good social skills make it easier to communicate, work together, and connect with others, increasing overall happiness and performance.

Effective Communication

Being able to communicate effectively is fundamental to good social skills and involves several important practices:

- **Clear and Confident Speaking:** It's important to express your thoughts clearly and with confidence. You can practice this at public speaking workshops, Toastmasters clubs, or on online platforms that let you present ideas to an audience.
- **Active Listening:** Listening is as crucial as speaking. Active listening means paying full attention to the speaker, understanding their message, responding thoughtfully, and remembering what was said. This skill can be improved through exercises focused on feedback and repeating back what was said to ensure it was understood correctly.
- **Nonverbal Communication:** Using body language effectively is also part of good communication. Nonverbal signals like eye contact, gestures, and facial expressions are key in showing emotions and attitudes, which can enhance or undermine your words.
- **Workshops and Seminars:** Attending regular workshops and seminars on communication skills can provide new methods and expert feedback, helping you continually improve these important skills.

Conflict Resolution

Being skilled at resolving conflicts is essential for keeping healthy relationships and a positive work environment.

- **Understanding Conflict Styles:** Everyone handles conflicts differently. Knowing the various styles of conflict resolution and identifying your own style can help you manage disagreements more effectively. Workshops that explain different styles, such as being assertive, accommodating, or avoiding, can offer helpful insights.
- **Negotiation Skills:** Good negotiation means being able to reach an agreement that all parties are happy with, without causing bad feelings. Practicing negotiation in controlled settings, like role playing scenarios, can enhance your ability to positively influence outcomes.
- **Mediation Techniques:** Mediation involves understanding both sides of a conflict and helping them find a resolution. Mediation training can teach valuable strategies for guiding discussions and achieving agreeable solutions.

Building and Maintaining Relationships

In addition to managing conflicts, social skills also include the ability to create and keep lasting relationships.

- **Empathy and Responsiveness:** Showing true empathy and responding well to others' needs can lead to stronger relationships. Regular participation in team activities that require cooperation and mutual understanding can enhance these abilities.
- **Social Networking:** Strong social skills are crucial for networking, which is important for professional growth and personal enrichment. Going to networking events, joining interest groups, or doing community service can broaden your social network and offer chances to practice and boost your social skills.
- **Consistent Engagement:** Keeping relationships strong demands regular effort. Setting up frequent check-ins, whether for work or personal reasons, helps ensure that these relationships are cared for over time.

Conclusion: Integrating Emotional Intelligence into Everyday Life

Synthesizing Lessons Learned

Throughout our detailed exploration of emotional intelligence, we've examined essential aspects of understanding and managing both our emotions and those of others. We've discussed how to develop self awareness, control impulses, boost motivation, cultivate empathy, and improve social skills. These topics offer a solid foundation for both personal and professional growth.

Practical Application of Emotional Intelligence

Applying emotional intelligence in daily life is both practical and beneficial. Each chapter provided clear strategies that can be used right away:

- **Self-Awareness Practices:** Keeping an emotion journal, practising mindfulness, and seeking feedback help us better understand our emotional triggers and habits.
- **Self-Regulation Techniques:** Managing impulsive behaviours and adapting to changes through mindfulness and thought restructuring enhances our emotional stability and effectiveness in various situations.

- **Motivational Strategies:** Using both internal and external motivations and creating supportive environments can greatly increase our drive and success.
- **Empathy Development:** Engaging in exercises that enhance emotional understanding and training in compassionate responses improves our relationships and our ability to handle social interactions.
- **Enhancing Social Skills:** Learning to communicate effectively and resolve conflicts are key skills for maintaining successful relationships and navigating social challenges.

Lifelong Learning and Continuous Improvement

Emotional intelligence is a dynamic skill set that grows with ongoing practice and commitment. It is not a one-time achievement but a lifelong path of learning. By continuously practising the skills discussed, individuals can further develop and refine their abilities. This continuous improvement is essential not just for personal satisfaction but also for professional success.

The Broader Impact of Emotional Intelligence

The advantages of developing emotional intelligence go beyond individual achievements and well-being. Emotionally intelligent individuals help build healthier, more resilient communities. They lead empathetically, solve conflicts wisely, and motivate others towards positive changes. In workplaces, such leaders and employees can change company cultures, sparking innovation and improving dynamics.

Encouragement for Future Growth

As we wrap up this guide, it's important to recognize that improving emotional intelligence is a personal journey that varies for each individual. Encouraging a spirit of kindness and patience towards oneself during this journey is crucial. Seek out communities and resources that support emotional learning and share your experiences with others. This not only deepens your own understanding but also promotes a wider appreciation of emotional intelligence.

Final Thoughts

Adopting the principles and practices of emotional intelligence can profoundly transform how we see ourselves and interact with others. With every step forward, we better navigate the complexities of emotions and relationships, leading to a more satisfying and balanced life.

This guide offers more than just insights into emotional intelligence—it provides a variety of practical approaches that can be tailored to different personal and professional situations. By methodically applying these strategies, individuals can improve their ability to handle social interactions and professional challenges, resulting in a more successful and fulfilling life.

POLAND

In Poland, there are several best practices in the field of emotional intelligence education focused on developing skills in recognizing and managing emotions in children and adolescents. Here are some examples:

Understanding Emotions: It's crucial to teach children how to identify various emotions and understand their triggers. This aids in emotion management and building healthy responses.

Developing Empathy and Social Skills: Empathy, the ability to understand and feel the emotions of others, is a key component of emotional intelligence. In practice, this may involve games and group activities that teach children to identify others' emotions and model empathetic behaviors.

Impulse Control and Self-Regulation: Education can also include learning impulse control and emotional self-regulation techniques, such as deep breathing and positive self-talk.

Games and Activities Developing Emotional Intelligence: Using educational games and activities is vital as they provide a safe environment where children can experiment with emotions and learn how to handle various social situations.

Education in Schools: Many schools integrate emotional education into their programs through various exercises, projects, or educational games. Teachers may offer activities that help develop emotional intelligence, such as role-playing or brainstorming sessions.

Good Practice: EPSILON Prevention and Education Program

Implementation:

The EPSILON prevention and education program, based on promoting mental health by developing children's personal and social skills and improving their psychosocial functioning, was implemented by the EPSILON Association.

- o The program was aimed at children aged 7-9, their parents, and educators from the Silesian Voivodeship.

Goals:

Main Goal: To ensure a lasting sense of well-being and reduce the risk of pathologies and social exclusion by improving life skills. Equipping children with personal resources enabling effective confrontation with life events, in the form of elements of emotional intelligence and a sense of coherence.

Specific Goals:

Increasing the participation of constructive communication patterns in children's interactions.

Increasing the ability to resolve conflicts and cope with difficult situations in accordance with social norms, increasing the number of peer assistance behaviors.

Increasing the sense of connection with the school and the sense of belonging to a strong class team, integrated around positive attitudes and values. Increasing the role of the educator as a key implementer of prevention in the school.

Assumptions:

Preventive actions aimed at children aged 7-9 are very effective because peer group pressure at this age plays a smaller role compared to adolescence.

The school should be an environment in which the needs for security, acceptance, and belonging to a group are met to the greatest extent possible.

Thanks to the support of people significant to the child (educator), the child should transform new stressful situations into task-oriented ones.

Methods of Work:

Activities for children in the form of workshops using drama methods, controlled discussions, skills training, introduction of "class rituals," introduction and implementation of a class agreement regarding behavior patterns in conflict situations.

Training for teachers.

Description:

The program's implementation included 60 hours divided into three modules: work with students (24 hours), work with the educator (30 hours), work with parents (6 hours). o The program was conducted in the form of classes in the school classroom using educational drama techniques.

Between program modules, the educator reinforced the introduced program content during educational lessons and meetings with parents.

The program was implemented based on lesson scenarios contained in the handbook.

As part of the program, teachers participated in consultations and training devoted to the topics: drama in group work, rituals in class work, work with parents.

Evaluation:

The program was evaluated twice. The goal was to assess the adequacy of actions aimed at achieving goals in the context of conditions occurring in individual cities and schools. o The evaluation concerned the number of participants, attendance at classes, problems noticed by the implementers (mid-term evaluation), and after the program's completion – participant satisfaction (students and educators) with participation in the program, evaluation of the implementers, evaluation of implementation difficulties.

The evaluation was conducted in the form of auditorium surveys, questionnaires, and process evaluation sheets.

Evaluation Results:

The process evaluation showed that the program's implementation was effective. □ The percentage of students participating in at least 75% of program-related activities was 82%, of which 94% of students declared satisfaction with participation

This result was achieved, among other things, thanks to the attractive form of classes, the high commitment of the instructors – their interest in the participants' problems.

The sequence of classes performed according to the plan, taking into account the activity of the educators, was maintained in all classes, which indicates the high discipline of the implementers and allows for a high assessment of the effectiveness of cooperation between the implementing team and the educators.

The weakest result was achieved in the area of parental involvement. Parents did not always meet the deadlines for implementing joint activities with their children as part of the program's implementation.

In subsequent editions of the program, the implementer planned to introduce additional procedures to strengthen the level of control over the implementation of program elements aimed at parents.

NEEDS ANALYSIS

In order to identify key emotional competencies within the youth population, an assessment questionnaire was developed and administered, grounded in Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence model. This well-established framework, widely acknowledged in both academic and professional contexts, conceptualizes emotional intelligence across five core dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Drawing on this theoretical foundation, the instrument enabled a comprehensive analysis of the participants' developmental levels across these competencies, yielding critical insights to inform the design and implementation of targeted interventions within the CURIE project.

Participants:

The survey was completed by a total of 372 individuals. The average age of participants is 23.13 years, indicating that the sample is predominantly composed of young people.

Age distribution:

The most common ages among respondents are as follows:

Most frequent age (18 years): 48 responses

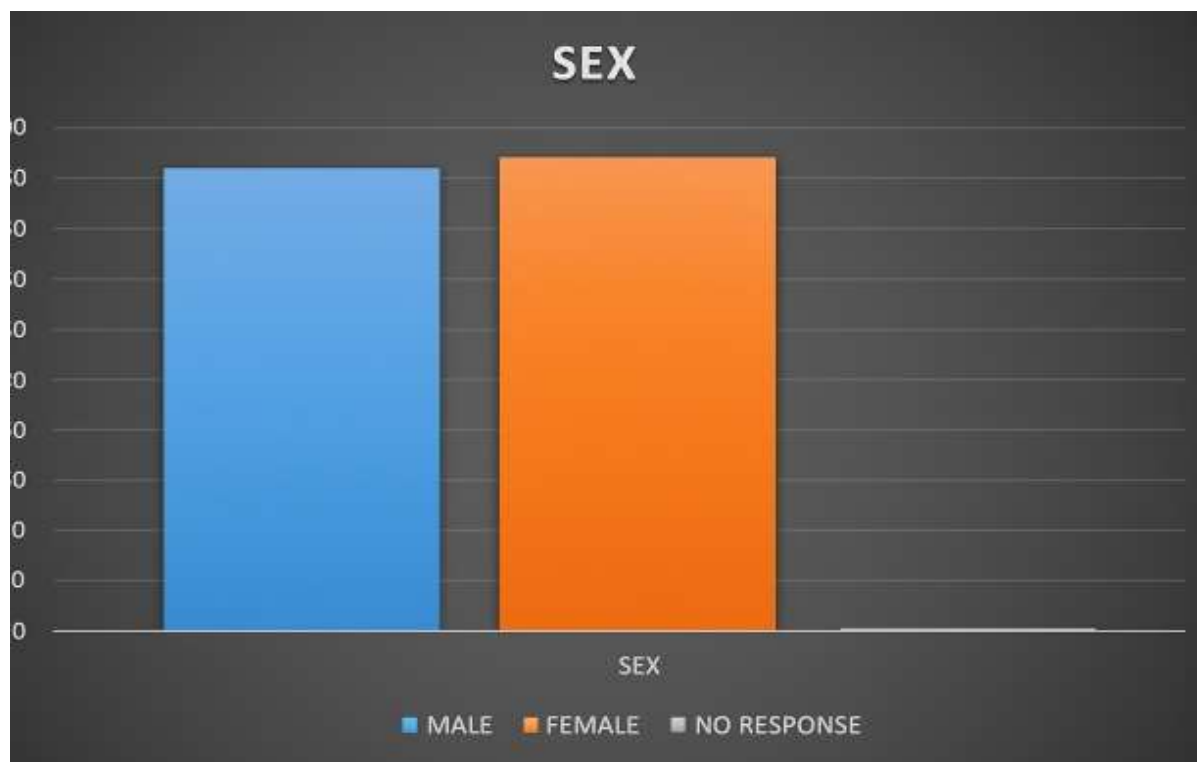
Second most frequent age (17 years): 37 responses

Third most frequent ages (19, 21, and 35 years): 31 responses each.

Demographic characteristics:

The sample includes data on gender, employment status, job situation, and educational level.

Gender: 185 male participants and 186 female participants, with 1 non-response.



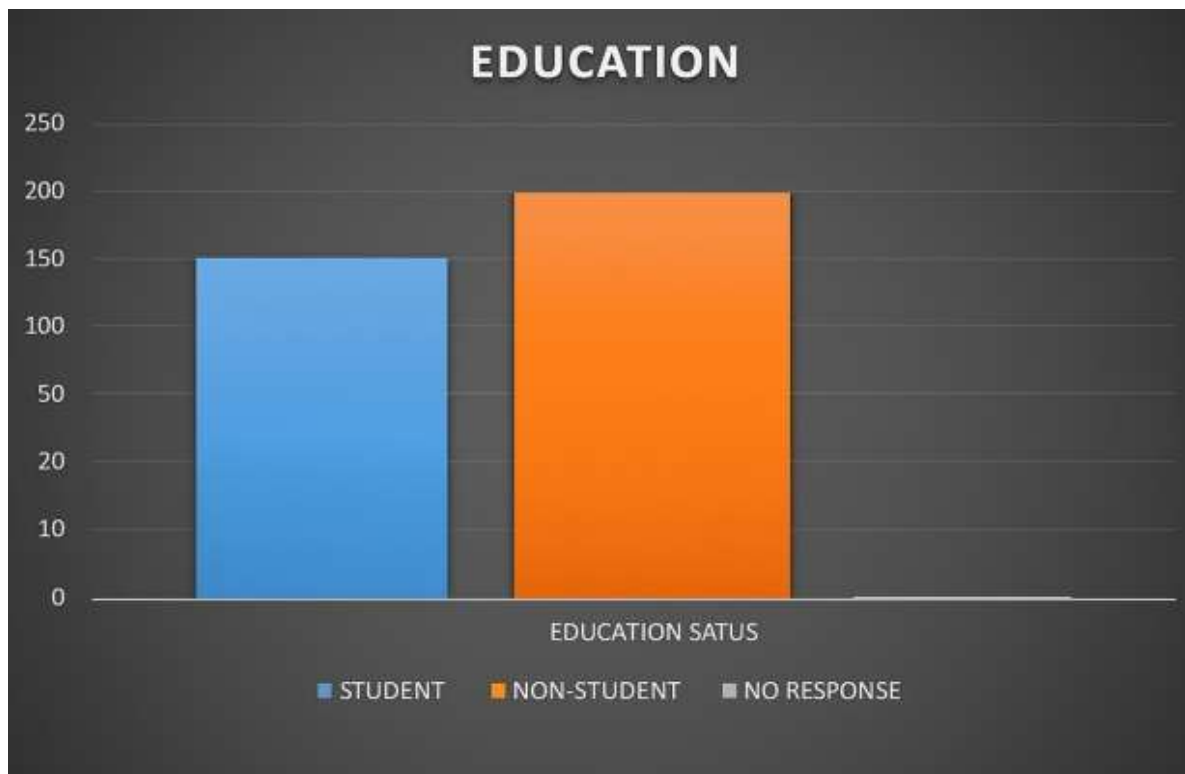
Employment status: 149 active workers and 220 non-active individuals, with 3 non-responses.



Employment condition:

155 unemployed and 213 not unemployed, with 4 non-responses.

171 students and 199 non-students, with 2 non-responses.



Geographical Distribution:

The distribution of surveyed individuals by country of origin is as follows:

Spain: 104 respondents

Greece (ΕΛΛΑΔΑ): 101 respondents

Poland (Polska): 140 respondents

Ukraine: 16 respondents

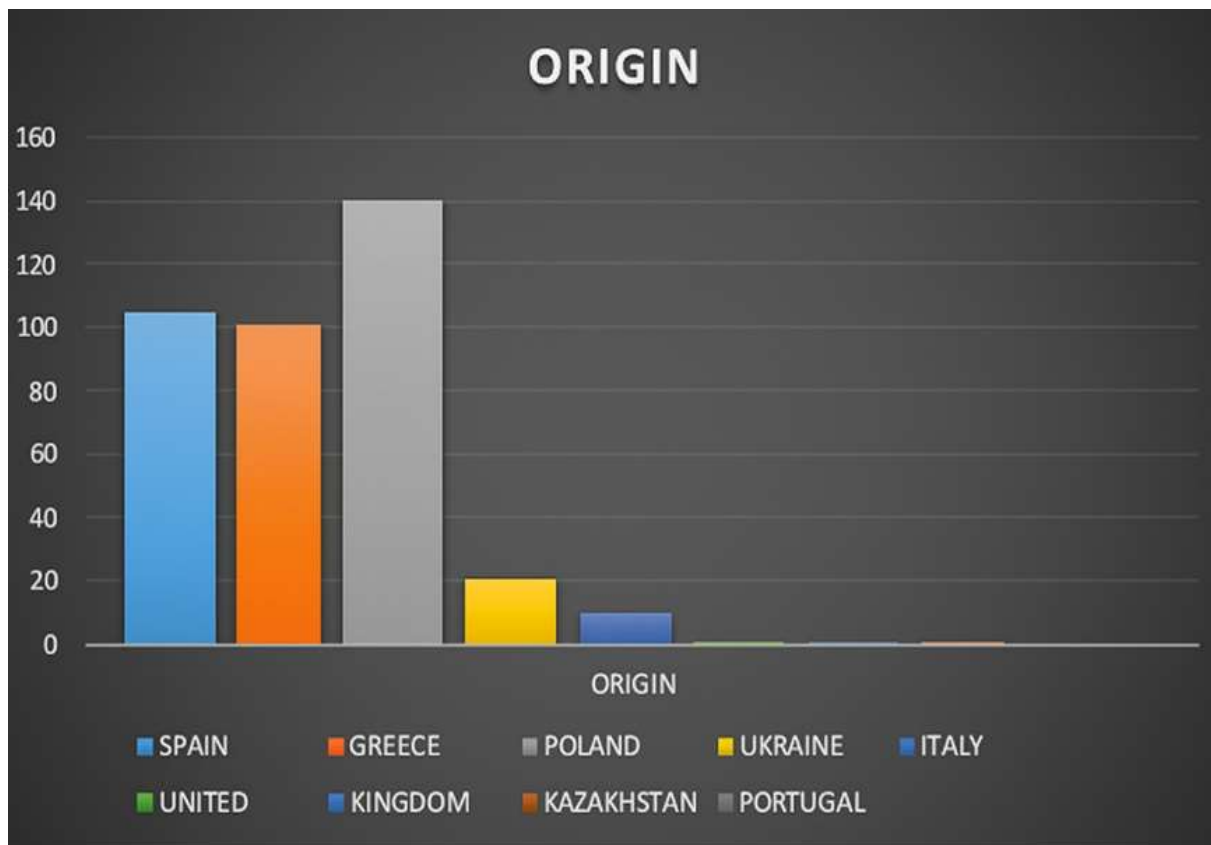
Italy: 7 respondents

United Kingdom (England): 1 respondent

Kazakhstan: 1 respondent

Portugal: 1 respondent

United States (USA): 1 respondent

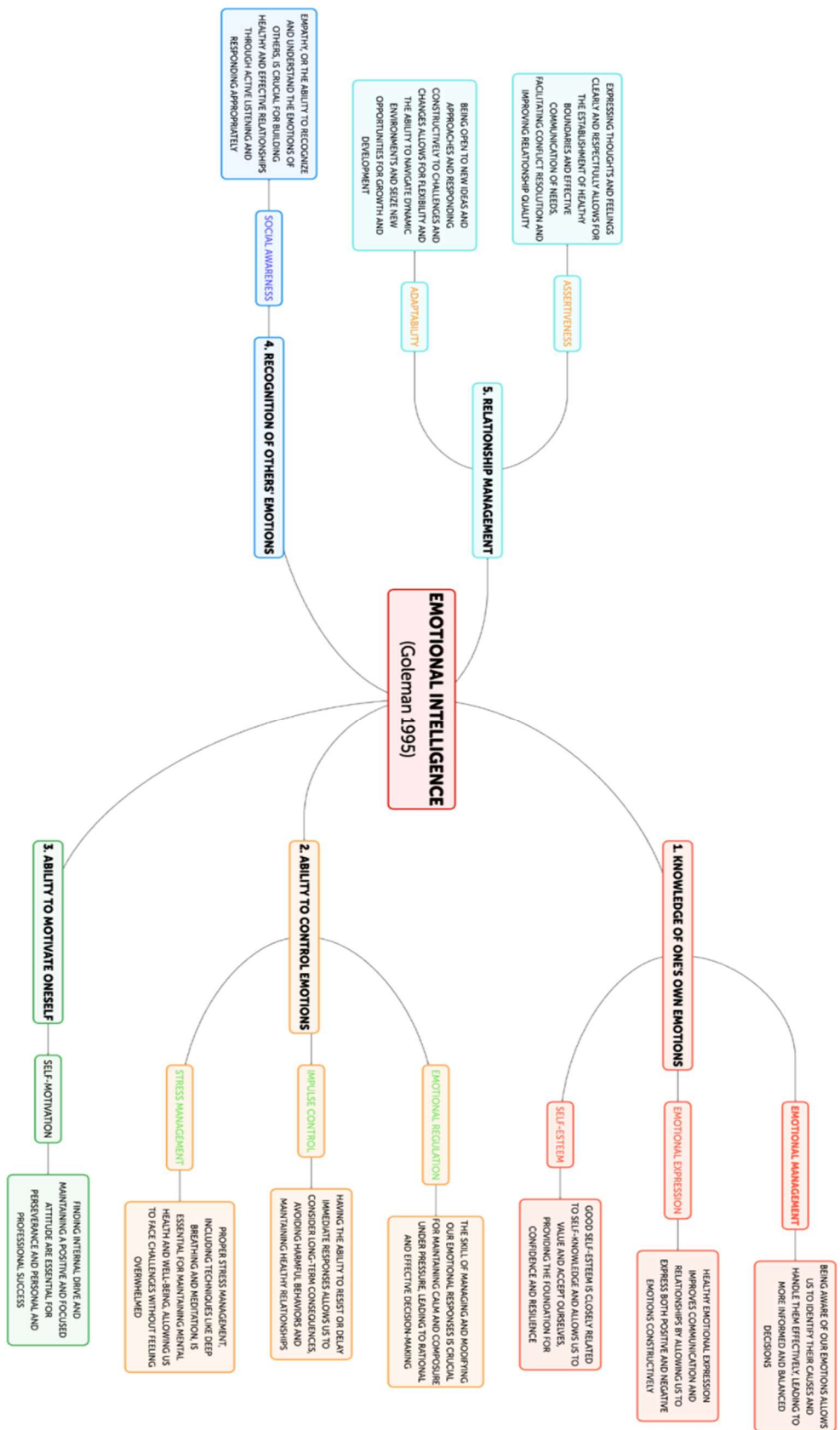


Results

Notably low scores were identified in the following ten key competencies:

- Skill 1: Stress Management
- Skill 2: Self-Esteem
- Skill 3: Emotion Management
- Skill 4: Social Awareness
- Skill 5: Adaptability
- Skill 6: Emotion Regulation
- Skill 7: Emotion Expression
- Skill 8: Assertiveness
- Skill 9: Impulse Control
- Skill 10: Self-Motivation

According to Daniel Goleman (1995), Emotional Intelligence is “the capacity to recognize our own feelings, the feelings of others, motivate ourselves, and manage appropriately the relationships we have with others and with ourselves.” His model is structured into five blocks that encompass the 10 identified socio-emotional skills:



Source: Own elaboration

1. Stress Management

"When there is a problem or argument at work, I find it difficult to stay in control of the situation."

Average score: 3.28 / 46.9%

The assessed youth demonstrated a low tolerance to stress, with responses indicating a tendency to avoid emotionally demanding situations. This lack of coping mechanisms is particularly concerning at this stage of life, which is marked by numerous academic, social, and personal changes, as well as identity formation. The absence of effective stress management strategies may negatively impact academic performance, self-esteem, and interpersonal relationships, potentially leading to a cycle of frustration and demotivation.

These findings highlight the need to develop educational resources that strengthen emotional resilience, as proposed in PR1. In a context of global transformation and socioeconomic crisis, young people require effective strategies to manage stress, prevent emotional burnout, and support their psychological well-being.

2. Self-Esteem

"I find it hard to enjoy life."

Average score: 3.39 / 48.4%

The low scores on these items indicate a negative self-concept. This perception may lead to insecurity, social withdrawal, and a lack of personal initiative. An absence of internal self-worth can hinder autonomy, motivation, and social relationships, thereby affecting the young person's overall development.

3. Emotion Management

"I find it hard to control my emotions."

Average score: 3.59 / 51.3%

During adolescence and early adulthood, developing emotional awareness is essential for psychological well-being and building healthy relationships. Difficulties in identifying, labeling, and regulating one's emotions can lead to persistent discomfort, disproportionate reactions, or lack of self-control. This deficit also impairs young people's ability to seek help, resolve conflicts, and set boundaries—skills that are critical in the transition to adulthood.

4. Social Awareness

"In general, I'm not aware of the emotions and feelings others are experiencing."

Average score: 2.96 / 42.3%

Empathy and social awareness are essential skills for community life. Among young people, their development is directly linked to the quality of relationships, group participation, and collaborative abilities. Low scores in this dimension reflect an emotional disconnection from others, which may lead to social isolation, difficulty in forming meaningful friendships, or challenges in coexistence. Promoting empathy from an early age is critical to preventing egocentric behaviors or even disruptive conduct.

5. Adaptability

"I find it difficult to adapt to change."

Average score: 3.27 / 46.7%

These results indicate rigidity in the face of change and new situations. The low levels of cognitive and emotional flexibility reflected in the responses may hinder the development of autonomy, personal initiative, and the ability to face unexpected challenges with creativity and composure.

6. Emotion Regulation

"I often get into trouble because I can't control myself."

Average score: 3.37 / 48.2%

These items reveal a clear difficulty in managing intense emotional states. A lack of emotional regulation increases the risk of interpersonal conflict, emotional blockages, demotivation, and psychological exhaustion. It also negatively impacts the stability of interpersonal relationships.

7. Emotion Expression

"I find it hard to tell someone that I love them."

Average score: 3.45 / 49.3%

These responses indicate a tendency toward emotional silence. Limited emotional expression can negatively affect the quality of relationships and may lead to frustration, lack of communication, and emotional isolation. Emotional expression is essential for building emotional connection and supporting psychological well-being.

8. Assertiveness

"I find it hard to change my behavior."

Average score: 3.47 / 49.6%

The low scores in assertiveness reveal a marked tendency among young people to adopt a passive stance in the face of conflict, often avoiding confrontation even when it is necessary. This difficulty in expressing opinions, setting boundaries, and defending one's rights can lead to situations of submission, dependency, or low personal autonomy. Strengthening communication and social skills is essential to help young people express themselves confidently, participate actively in their environments, and build relationships based on mutual respect and equity.

9. Impulse Control

"I can control my impulses."

Average score: 4.22 / 60.3%

The low scores on these items indicate a tendency toward reactive behavior. Limited emotional and behavioral self-restraint can lead to negative consequences in academic,

social, and personal domains, impacting decision-making, planning, and self-care. These findings highlight the urgent need to strengthen this competency through activities that promote self-awareness, planning, and critical reflection.

10. Self-Motivation

"I find it hard to feel motivated by what I do."

Average score: 4.09 / 58.4%

These responses indicate that the evaluated youth predominantly exhibit extrinsic motivation and a low capacity for self-mobilization in the face of challenges. This weakness reduces perseverance, initiative, and commitment to tasks, negatively affecting goal achievement and self-esteem derived from effort. The CURIE project identifies this gap as a priority, as strong self-motivation is a key factor for success in personal, social, and professional environments. Therefore, the designed materials aim to foster intrinsic motivation and goal orientation through the recognition of effort and personal satisfaction.

ENHANCING SOCIAL SKILLS

Once the needs of young people were analyzed, 'content capsules' were developed based on the theoretical foundations outlined below. These capsules provide an innovative and engaging way to train youth workers through an interactive platform available on the project's website: <https://www.curieproject.eu/>

SKILL 1: STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress management has been identified as the first lowest rated basic skill of emotional intelligence among the young people surveyed. The theoretical framework for its practical application through learning nuggets is presented below.

Theoretical concept

Stress is a concept that originated in Mechanical Physics and was introduced by Selye, Lazarus, Deese and Osler in 1946 in an article in the Psychological Bulletin of the American Psychological Association (APA).

Stress is considered the epidemic of the 21st century. Adapting to permanent social, economic, scientific and technological changes requires a great deal of human effort and resilience. Over time, stressful situations can lead to tension, fatigue, physical and mental exhaustion, as well as trigger psychosomatic responses or pathological disorders, which are often severe.

The OMS (2004) defines stress as a group of physical and emotional actions that prepares the individual to face a possible aggression; it is a procession that puts the body in a state of alert; it has been necessary as a survival system since the origins of mankind.

Everyday circumstances that activate this mechanism are job changes, public presentations, job interviews, moving house, all these situations, among others, can provoke stress.

Work-related stress, according to the European Commission on Safety and Health at Work, is defined as "the harmful physical and emotional reactions that occur when the demands of the job do not match the worker's abilities, resources or needs". The ILO (2016) has defined it as both the physical and cognitive response to a instability between the demands of the job, the tools the individual possesses and his or her ability to solve problems in the work environment.

The work environment can cause stressful situations such as pressure to be efficient, the need to complete tasks quickly, frequent changes in job responsibilities and management styles that may contribute to employee stress. In fact, work-related stress is now considered a public health problem due to its negative impacts.

It is also conditioned by peer relationships, the work environment, the employee's family dynamics and his or her perception of his or her value within the work environment.

In this context, a new concept of action has arisen: occupational health, which seeks, in the organisational sphere, to promote knowledge that allows for the analysis of new ways of understanding the company's workers. This involves identifying possible risk factors, understanding how to deal with them and providing strategies and tools to help them manage events that could directly affect their health.

It is the co-responsibility of organisations to undertake a process of reorganisation of work tasks that promotes occupational health and thereby ensures the success of the enterprise. This includes adjusting work demands, ensuring that employees have or can acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively, and improving the quality of support employees receive.

1.1. Types of stress:

In relation to the types of stress, following Carranco and Pando (2019), there are two:

Eustress or positive stress is a state of mind in which thoughts, emotions and sensations are organised in a way that generates an overall feeling of joy, satisfaction and vitality. This type of stress stimulates people to deal with challenges in a positive way. It enables them to be creative, take initiatives and respond effectively to situations that require it. Eustress motivates people and gives them the energy to complete tasks without becoming over-stressed or detrimental. By managing stress in a way that constructive, it does not experience the tension associated with being overwhelmed by negative stress, which greatly benefits health.

PRACTICAL CASE

Imagine the feeling of excitement before you ride a roller coaster, spark of energy before you get on stage. Pride after a marathon or handing in a complicated job.

A caffeine shot for the soul.

IS A POWERFUL TOOL FOR SUCCESS, SELF-REALISATION, CREATIVITY

Distress or negative stress is defined as unwanted or unpleasant stress. This type of stress occurs when the perceived burden exceeds the resources available to cope with it.

PRACTICAL CASE:

Imagine being in a car with the handbrake on, no matter how much you want to move forward, something is holding you back, a constant resistance.

It is felt in situations such as: unpaid bills, approaching deadlines, accumulated family and couple conflicts.

Causes sleep headaches, such as hypertension or heart disease

RECOGNISING IT IS THE FIRST STEP TO MANAGING IT

It is always associated with a physiological imbalance, resulting in an increase in bodily functions that move away from the point of equilibrium. This can manifest as hyperactivity, muscle tension and somatisation.

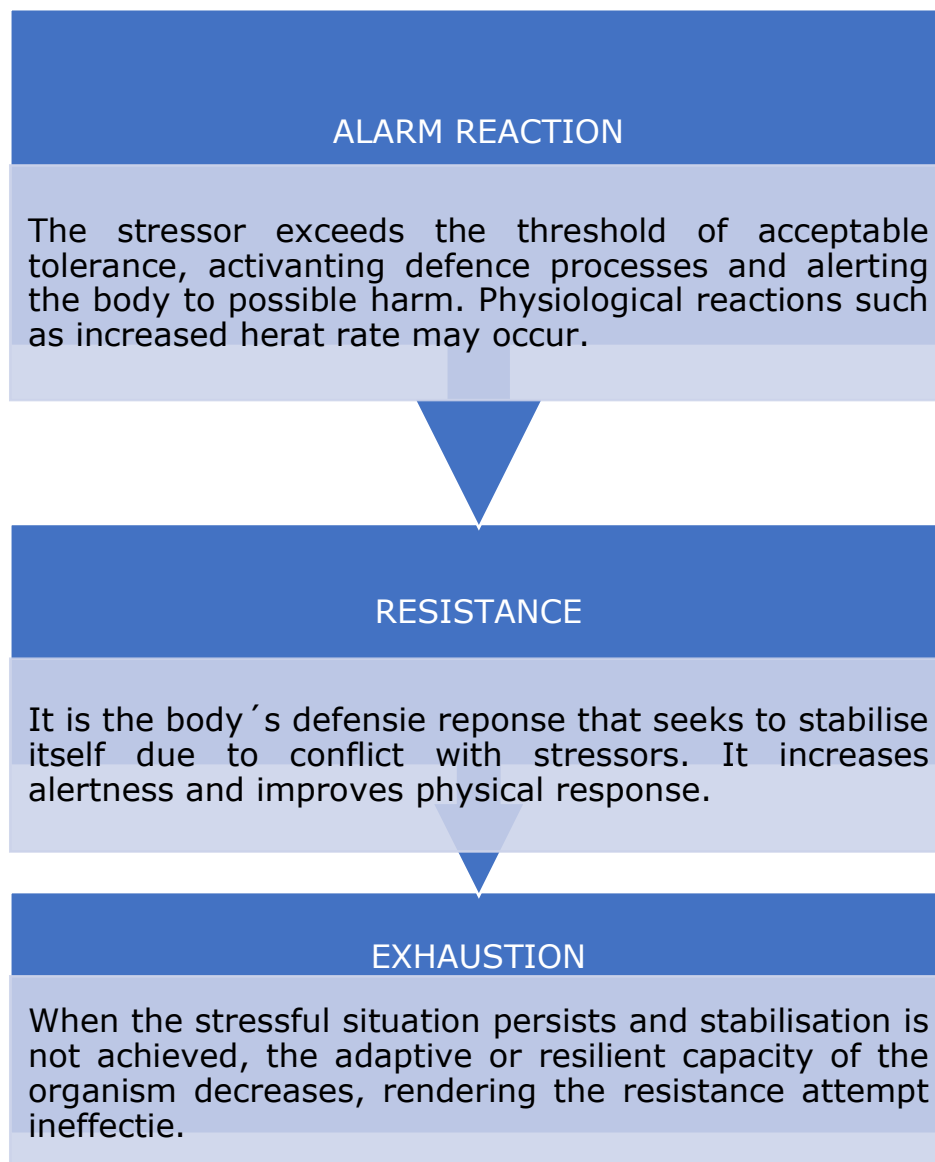
In terms of the type of work-related stress, following Posada (2011) there are two:

Episodic stress is stress that arises momentarily and does not persist for long. It is a situation that is resolved once it is faced or solved, and all symptoms disappear once it is overcome. An example of this type of stress is when a person is fired from his or her job.

Chronic stress is stress that occurs continuously and recurrently when a person is constantly confronted with a stressful situation. The symptoms of stress appear each time the stressful situation arises, and as long as the person does not deal with the problem effectively, the stress will persist.

1.2. Phases of stress. General Adaptation Syndrome

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XADIs-A1iiM>



Source: own elaboration based on Hans Selye (1950).

1.3. Causes of stress:

- Stressors that come from external circumstances such as the environment, family, work, study, among others.
- Stress produced by the person him/herself, i.e. by his/her own personality characteristics and by his/her particular way of coping with and solving problems.

2. Stress management strategies:

Relaxation techniques are the most common resources for stress management. These skills can be acquired through formal and informal practice techniques:

Formal techniques:

- Progressive muscle relaxation: It is a technique that involves tensing and then relaxing different muscle groups in a systematic way. The process helps to reduce physical and mental tension, thus improving the overall relaxation of the body
- Breathing exercises: These exercises focus on breathing conscious and controlled to reduce stress and promote relaxation. They include techniques such as abdominal breathing, diaphragmatic breathing and breathing deep.
- Visualisation: It is a technique that involves imagining pleasant and relaxing mental images to calm the mind and reduce anxiety. It may include visualising peaceful scenes, calm places or positive situations. To induce a state of relaxation.
- Relaxation through language: Technique that uses words, phrases or narratives to induce a state from relaxation and calmness in the individual.
- Informal relaxing activities: Practising sports, listening to music, reading, dancing, encounters with nature, healthy eating, etc.
- Deviggiano (2017) recommends other practices such as:
 - Recognise and accept things that cannot be changed.
 - Change perspective with a positive attitude towards challenges.
 - Learn ways to relax (deep breathing, meditation, yoga).
 - Connect with loved ones, let nothing get in the way of your social life, spend time with family and friends.
 - Learning to say no. Be assertive. Setting limits is fundamental to balance.
- Hernández (2014) to intervene in the prevention and (or) reduction of professional burnout:
- Individual coping: considering cognitive-behavioural strategies to mitigate its sources, avoid the associated experiences or neutralise its negative effects.
- Interpersonal: enhancing social skills training and strategies related to the social support of teams of professionals.

Organisational: eliminating or reducing stressors in the institutional environment.

Other tools:

- Practical book: "Stress management and the vital hexagon" by Raul Puliti (2004) invites to regulate stress through six aspects: good nutrition, Hatha Yoga, positive thinking, meditation, friendships and recreation.
- Hervat de Ortíz's (2016) Neuroeducational Hervat Programme, from a neuroscientific approach to stress management, indicates:
 - Perform neuroplasticity activities through repetitive, regular and precise training to improve communication between neurons.
 - Ensure adequate hydration and oxygenation of the brain through deep breathing.
 - Performing short and engaging exercises to maintain concentration and focus.
 - Spend one minute moving the eyes and another minute doing passive tactile discrimination exercises.

SKILL 2: SELF-ESTEEM

Theoretical concept:

Self-esteem, according to Branden, 2007 is:

Confidence in our ability to think, in our ability to face the basic challenges of life.

Confidence in our right to succeed and to be happy; the feeling of being respectable, of being worthy, and of having the right to assert our needs and wants, to achieve our moral principles and to enjoy the fruits of our efforts.

Ferrerós (2007) considers self-esteem to be the most important competence of emotional intelligence. This is because in today's competitive and complex society, self-confidence is necessary, as well as knowledge and intelligence, in order to get ahead.

As Alcántara (2001) states, self-esteem is generated as a result of the history of each person. This refers to the fact that the set of experiences, experiences, relationships... that a person experiences throughout his or her life will condition his or her self-esteem.

In relation to the structure of self-esteem, although some authors have argued that it is a single, global dimension, at present it is predominantly considered as a multidimensional structure, i.e., made up, in turn, of multiple dimensions (Ruiz de Arana, 1997). According to this approach, we have a concept of ourselves and, consequently, an evaluation of it, which is different in each of the relevant areas or contexts of our lives, such as, for example, the family, academic, physical or intellectual spheres. In this sense, a person may have a good self-concept in the family sphere, but not in the academic sphere, or vice versa. A consequence of this consideration is the need to enhance the different dimensions of self-esteem.

2. Difference between self-esteem and self-concept

Self-esteem and self-concept are two sides of the same coin. Self-esteem is the positive or negative assessment we make of our self-concept based on the experiences, feelings and thoughts we have had throughout our lives. Both self-concept and self-esteem develop gradually throughout life, starting in childhood.

Importance of Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a fundamental human need. It is important because self-worth is a source of mental health and socio-emotional development, and positive self-esteem is the fundamental prerequisite for a fulfilling life. Whether we admit it or not, we cannot remain indifferent to our self-evaluation.

Its effect requires neither our understanding nor our consent, but works within us and directly influences our actions in a reciprocal causality, i.e. there is a permanent feedback between our worldly actions and our self-esteem. Our level of self-esteem influences our actions, and our actions in turn influence our self-esteem.

Healthy self-esteem correlates positively with our ability to achieve and be happy.

The higher and healthier our self-esteem, the more ambitious we tend to be, the more effectively we solve the problems in our lives, the more willing we are to have relationships that are more rewarding than harmful, the more open and appropriate our communications are because we believe our thoughts have value.

Traits of high and low self-esteem:

The characteristics of people with good or low self-esteem, in order to be able to observe and develop programmes to promote self-esteem:

GOOD SELF-ESTEEM:

Competent, confident, valuable, motivated by learning, will ask for help, responsible, supportive, effective communication, understanding, open, supportive, emotionally balanced, initiative, autonomous, optimistic, creative, makes an effort, seeks solutions to problems, recognises his or her mistakes...

LOW SELF-ESTEEM:

Mistrust of self and others, feeling of inferiority, shy, critical, uncreative, inappropriate behaviour (aggressiveness, sudden changes of mood...), anguish and anxiety crises, indecision, discouragement, laziness, shame, guilt complex, fears, hypersensitivity, envy, avoids activities to avoid making mistakes, deceives, lies and blames others, the opinion of others dominates his decisions... (Martínez-Otero Pérez 2007, p.72).

Strategies for building self-esteem:

Consciously implementing the following strategies can help young people develop healthy self-esteem, which is crucial to their overall well-being and success in life:

1. Recognition and praise:

- a: Specific praise: Instead of giving general praise such as "Good job", use specific praise that recognises specific efforts, e.g. "You did a great job organising your homework today".
- b: Recognise effort:
- c: Value the effort and not just the result. This helps young people understand that the process is as important as the end result.

2. Encourage independence:

- a: Decision-making, feeling more in control and empowered.

3. Develop social skills:

- a: Sense of belonging to a group.
- b: Open communication: expression of thoughts and feelings.

4. Model healthy self-esteem:

- a: Being a positive role model
- b: See "buts" as learning opportunities.
- c: Positive and supportive environment:

5. Constructive feedback:

a:Provide constructive feedback rather than negative criticism, focusing on how they can improve rather than what they did wrong.

6. Promote self-acceptance:

a.Self-acceptance: Encourages the idea that it is okay to be imperfect and that everyone has strengths and weaknesses.

b.Avoid comparisons: help young people understand that comparing themselves to others can be harmful and that each person has their own pace and path.

SKILL 3: EMOTION MANAGEMENT

This scale refers to the perceived ability to manage other people's emotional states. People with low scores are unable to influence and manage the feelings of others. They feel overwhelmed when dealing with other people's emotional outbursts and are less likely to enjoy socialising and networking.

Theoretical concept:

Emotions hold a central place in the life process of individuals, highlighting experiences, developing or inhibiting a person from progressing toward their own project. Learning to recognize and manage one's own emotions is an invaluable tool.

Emotional management consists of the ability to identify, understand, and manage our own emotions as well as those of others. Proper emotion management is essential for mental well-being, interpersonal relationships, and performance in different areas of life, such as work and education.

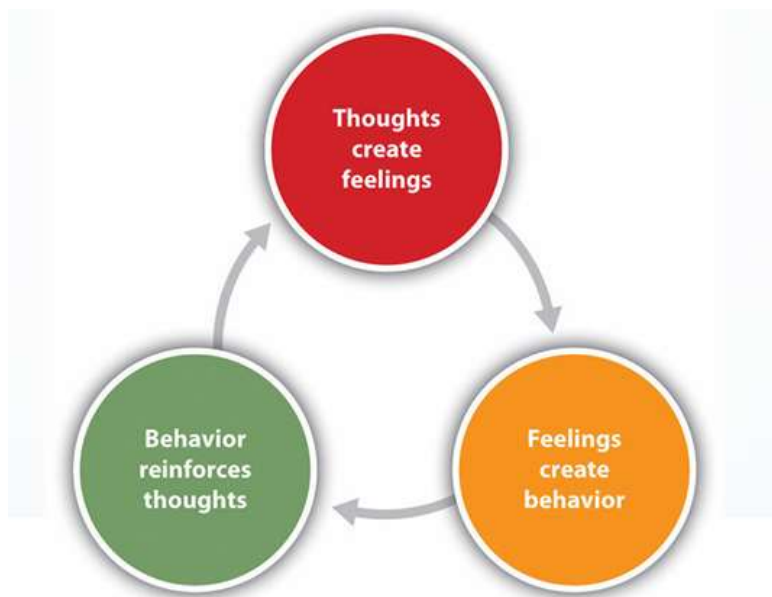
Emotional education is a long and continuous process of lifelong learning, one that is advisable to start as early as possible—from birth—to become emotionally competent individuals, for the benefit of oneself and society.

For an emotion to arise, according to Bisquerra (2000), our body and mind must be activated. First, an event occurs, either internal or external; our sensory information reaches the brain's emotional centers, and a neurophysiological response is automatically generated, which the neocortex interprets.

When evaluating an emotion, two phases must be considered: the first is a primary evaluation, where the event is judged as beneficial or harmful. Then, there is a secondary evaluation, where all personal conditions to face the situation are assessed.

According to Bisquerra (2000), three components act when an emotion occurs:

1. The neurophysiological component, which is related to involuntary bodily alterations (sweating, palpitations, increased body temperature, etc.);
 2. The behavioral component, referring to gestures, body posture, non-verbal language, tone of voice, etc.;
 3. The cognitive component, where we evaluate our emotional state and give it a name.
- After these three components are processed, a response is emitted.



Source: <https://cogbtherapy.com/cbt-model-of-emotions>

In classifying emotions, Bisquerra (2000) divides them into: positive, negative, ambiguous, and aesthetic. It is important to note that this classification does not imply that some emotions are better than others; all emotions exist and are necessary, as they arise spontaneously.

Positive emotions:

- Joy: enthusiasm, euphoria, excitement, amusement, contentment, pleasure, satisfaction, whimsy, etc.
- Humor: provokes a smile, laughter, giggle, hilarity.
- Love: affection, tenderness, sympathy, empathy, acceptance, cordiality, trust, kindness, respect, devotion, etc.
- Happiness: joy, tranquility, inner peace, calm, well-being, etc.

Negative emotions:

- Anger: rage, wrath, resentment, hatred, fury, indignation, jealousy, envy, frustration, etc.
- Fear: terror, panic, horror, phobia, fright, etc.
- Anxiety: distress, despair, restlessness, stress, worry, nervousness, etc.
- Sadness: depression, disappointment, sorrow, pain, pessimism, melancholy, loneliness, disgust, etc.
- Shame: guilt, shyness, insecurity, modesty, bashfulness, blushing, etc.
- Aversion: hostility, contempt, antipathy, resentment, rejection, disgust, repugnance, etc.

It is important to highlight that so-called negative emotions are entirely necessary for survival and should not be confused with harmful emotions that need to be avoided. For example, fear, in certain situations, helps us be cautious and avoid disasters. Similarly, indignation can

be positive when a situation bothers us or is seen as unjust, as it implies a critical capacity in ourselves.

Ambiguous emotions: these are considered ambiguous because they can be viewed as positive or negative depending on the circumstances: surprise, hope, compassion.

Aesthetic emotions: these are emotional reactions to artistic expressions (music, dance, painting, etc.).

Despite Bisquerra's classification, the most important thing is to be able to identify and become aware of any emotion that arises—whether positive, negative, ambiguous, or aesthetic—and know how to generate a response for personal benefit.

Use of emotions:

According to neuroscientist Francisco Mora (2004), humans experience emotions "to defend ourselves from harmful stimuli or to approach pleasurable stimuli that maintain survival." Emotions are necessary because they drive us to seek out beneficial experiences and avoid harmful ones.

Another important factor is that emotions make an individual's response unpredictable and flexible. This adaptability of behavior is very useful for the survival of the species.

Emotions alert individuals to specific impulses, activating many bodily systems such as the respiratory or cardiovascular systems.

Emotions maintain curiosity and interest in the new and are crucial for the individual's survival. Additionally, they are a powerful and effective way of communicating between people and serve as reminders of past events, facilitating effective memory.

It should be noted that the positive effect of Emotional Intelligence on personal well being has been evidenced, particularly in reducing stress, anxiety, indiscipline, etc. Positive emotions contribute to strengthening our immune defenses, thus having a preventive effect. Negative emotions, on the other hand, weaken the immune system and consequently increase the risk of diseases (Ader, 1991; Vidal, 2000). There are more than forty psychosomatic diseases related to emotion management, including asthma, muscle tension, and tics. It is clear, then, that an emotionally competent person is better prepared to avoid risky behaviors that may arise in life compared to someone who lacks these skills.

Strategies to Develop Better Emotional Management:

Applying the following strategies consistently can help develop better emotional management, contributing to general well-being, improving interpersonal relationships, and increasing productivity and satisfaction in both work and personal environments:

1. Emotional Awareness:

Self-awareness: Foster self-awareness to recognize and understand one's own emotions. Emotion Wheel. <https://express.adobe.com/page/6Byqv/>

Emotional diaries: Encourage keeping an emotional diary to identify patterns and triggers of certain emotions

2. Education and Training:

Read books and materials on emotional management and emotional intelligence.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yd6hR1qCfSM>

Participate in workshops or seminars that offer emotional management resources.

3. Resilience Building:

Accepting change: Encourage acceptance of change as a natural part of life and develop the ability to adapt to new circumstances.

Positive perspective: Maintain a positive outlook and focus on solutions rather than problems.

4. Coping Skills Development:

Problem-solving: Learn effective problem-solving techniques to face stressful situations constructively.



Cognitive restructuring: Use cognitive restructuring to change negative and self critical thoughts into more positive and realistic ones.

CBT COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING		
Name: _____ Date: _____		
1. Situation -what happened?	2. Thoughts -what went through my mind?	3. Feelings -how did I feel? Emotions, physical sensations.
4. Evidence -what is the evidence for this thought?	5. Evidence -what is the evidence against this thought?	6. Perspective -after weighing up the evidence, what is a new, more balance perspective?

5. Relaxation Techniques and Mindfulness:

Meditation and breathing: Practice meditation and deep breathing to reduce stress and increase calmness. Meditation video

Mindfulness: Implement mindfulness practices to help be present and better manage emotions.

SKILL 4: SOCIAL AWARENESS

Theoretical concept:

Platón says, "Conscience is a compass for good and a brake for evil." A well-formed conscience is a leap towards intelligence and human development.

Social consciousness, according to Goleman (1995), refers to the ability to perceive what others are feeling and experiencing and to respond appropriately to those emotions. It is fundamental for empathy and the creation of meaningful and collaborative relationships. This competency is based on three components:

- Empathy: Feeling and understanding the emotions of others.
- Organizational Awareness: Detecting and understanding social dynamics within a group or community.
- Service: Having a genuine desire to help and support others.

Developing social awareness is crucial for both individuals and organizations, as it fosters healthy relationships, mutual respect, and a more inclusive and equitable society.

Social consciousness, according to Bisquerra (2017), is the ability to maintain good relationships with other people and contribute as a member of the community to which we belong. This involves mastering basic social skills such as respect, cooperation, prosocial attitudes like gratitude, acceptance of others' ideas and opinions, seeking and offering help, appreciating differences, and more.

Importance of educating with social awareness

Educating with social awareness equips young people with socio-emotional skills that help them understand others' situations. It also helps them understand the behavior of others and realize that the actions of oneself or others have consequences for all members of society.

When educating with social awareness, young people develop the ability to:

- Understand the norms of behavior in different environments.
- Recognize the demands and opportunities in a particular context or situation.
- Acknowledge their own strengths and those of others.
- Identify social norms, including those that are unjust.
- Understand the influence of organizations, systems, and ideologies on their own behavior and that of others.

Strategies to improve Social Awareness:

Fostering Empathy

The pandemic highlighted the need to foster empathy as a key value to face social challenges. Educational initiatives and awareness campaigns on the importance of

understanding others' emotions can strengthen social awareness (Decety & Lamm, 2006).
Why practice empathy?:

- Helps people help others.
- Reduces discrimination.
- Promotes altruistic acts.
- Encourages actions against inequality.
- Contributes to personal well-being.

According to Martínez and Pérez (2011), empathy allows us to perceive, share, and understand the emotional states of others, and it is essential for successfully navigating the social world.

- Narratives and testimonies: Using personal stories and testimonies to foster empathy and understanding of others' experiences.
- Volunteering: Encouraging participation in volunteer activities that expose people to different social realities.

Promoting Dialogue and Active Listening

- Discussion groups: Create safe spaces for people to share their experiences and viewpoints.
- Active listening: Promote active listening and respect for others' opinions and feelings.

Promotion of Diversity and Inclusion

It is crucial for institutions, both public and private, to promote social awareness through inclusive policies and support for communities most affected by the crisis. Organizations must facilitate spaces for dialogue and cooperation to address emerging social dynamics.

- Inclusive policies: Implement policies that promote diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organization or community.
- Celebration of diversity: Celebrate and recognize cultural, ethnic, gender, and sexual orientation diversity through events and activities.

Reflection and Self-Criticism:

- Self-reflection: Encourage self-reflection on personal biases and stereotypes, and actively work to dismantle them.
- Constructive feedback: Create a culture where constructive feedback on non-inclusive behaviors or attitudes is well received and taken seriously.

Activities to develop Social Awareness and Empathy:

Role-Playing (Simulation):

Objectives:

- Put yourself in the shoes of others by representing and observing everyday situations.
- Reflect on empathy through concrete situations.

Development:

Represent everyday situations in groups of 3 or 4 students, for example, scenarios where a classmate was upset because they were mocked, or moments of tension before an evaluation. These representations will visualize emotions and difficulties related to the lack of empathy. After the role-play, observers comment on what they saw in each scene, and then, those who performed the role-play explain what they were trying to represent, leading to a group discussion.

Incomplete Sentences:

Objectives:

- Reflect on the practice of empathy by exploring different situations.

Instructions:

Complete the following trigger sentences.

1. Complete the sentences:
 - When I help others, I feel...
 - When others help me, I feel...
 - I would like to...
2. Recognizing emotions in different situations:
 - i. Your dog is very sick, and you need to take him to the vet.
 - ii. Your friend lent you a pencil, and you don't want to give it back.
 - iii. Your friend lent you one of their things, and you accidentally broke it.
 - iv. No one wants to play with you.

SKILL 5: ADAPTABILITY

Theoretical concept

Adaptability is the ability to adjust to new changes, challenges, and environments efficiently and positively. It is an essential skill in both personal and professional life, as it enables individuals to face uncertainty, solve problems effectively, and seize opportunities in changing contexts. Developing adaptability is crucial in a rapidly changing world.

It is based on four key components:

- Cognitive Flexibility: The ability to change thought patterns and consider multiple perspectives.
- Emotional Resilience: The capacity to manage and recover from stress and adversity.
- Openness to Experience: The willingness to try new things and take calculated risks.
- Problem Solving: The skill to find creative and effective solutions to unforeseen problems.

Adaptability has been an essential skill during the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing individuals and organizations to face unexpected challenges and rapid transformations. Individuals have had to learn to adapt to new realities, such as remote work, distance learning, and social restrictions. This adaptability has been essential for maintaining mental health and well-being (Besser & Nissly, 2020).

People have had to develop emotional resilience and adapt their coping strategies in response to the stress and anxiety caused by the health crisis (González & Martínez, 2021).

Communities have had to adapt to new social norms and public health behaviors, such as wearing masks and physical distancing. This social adaptability has been key to controlling the spread of the virus (Gollust, Nagler & Fowler, 2020).

The lack of adaptation can have significant consequences that affect mental health, interpersonal relationships, and overall well-being. Therefore, developing adaptability skills is essential for thriving in a constantly changing world.

Adaptability is crucial in the modern workplace. Those who fail to adapt may face poor job performance, limitations in their professional development, and problems in their work relationships. Fostering a flexible mindset and openness to change is fundamental for both individual success and the growth and sustainability of organizations.

Methods to Develop Adaptability

Developing adaptability not only enhances the ability to face changes but also increases resilience and personal and professional effectiveness, better preparing you for an uncertain and ever-evolving future.

Fostering a Growth Mindset

- Embrace Change: View change as an opportunity for growth and learning rather than a threat.
- Continuous Learning: Be willing to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge regularly.

Developing Resilience

- Learn to quickly recover from failures and see them as learning opportunities.

Improving Cognitive Flexibility

- Problem Solving: Practice problem-solving and decision-making in diverse situations.
- Exposure to New Ideas: Read, travel, and expose yourself to different cultures and ideas to broaden your perspective.

Encouraging Innovation and Creativity

- Creative Thinking: Engage in activities that stimulate creativity, such as brainstorming and unconventional problem-solving.
- Strengthening Teamwork Skills.

Practical Activity:

The Six Thinking Hats technique aims to think from each of those differentiated viewpoints, making perspectives conscious and providing a broader overview of the case, more efficient pros and cons, and other paths that might not have been considered.



Focus on facts

Focus on describing the design as it is, without any personal opinions or biases, used to focus on facts and information.



Optimist

Focus on identifying the benefits of the design and why it is a good solution, used to focus on the positive aspects of the design.



Devil's Advocate

Focus on identifying the risks and challenges of the design, used to focus on the negative aspects of the design.



Emotional

Focus on how the design makes you feel, used to express emotions and feelings about the design.



Idea Generator

Focus on coming up with new ideas to improve the design, used to generate new ideas and solutions.



Manager

Focus on summarizing the discussion and making decisions about the design, used to summarize the discussion and make decisions.

Reference: Six Thinking Hats by Dr. Edward de Bono

SKILL 6: EMOTION REGULATION

Difference between emotional regulation and emotion management (SKILL 3)

The concepts of emotional regulation and emotion management are related, but they are not the same. Both involve handling emotions, but they differ in focus and application.

Emotional Regulation:

This refers to the internal, automatic, or conscious process by which a person modifies, maintains, or controls their emotions to adapt to different situations or contexts. It involves:

- Recognizing one's own emotions and those of others.
- Modulating the intensity of emotions (e.g., calming down when angry or motivating oneself when feeling discouraged).
- A more holistic approach to maintaining emotional balance.

Example: When someone receives criticism in public, instead of reacting impulsively, they take a deep breath, assess the situation, and respond calmly.

Emotion Management:

This concept is more practical and specific, focusing on how to act when faced with a particular emotion. It refers to the tools or strategies used to handle strong or challenging emotions. It is more behavioral and often involves external or immediate actions.

Example: If you're feeling anxious before public speaking, you might practice a relaxation technique, such as meditation, to calm yourself.

Key differences:

ASPECT	EMOTIONAL REGULATION	EMOTION MANAGEMENT
FOCUS	Global, balancing emotions.	Specific, addressing a particular emotion.
LEVEL	Internal and long-term	Practical and immediate
INVOLVES	Understanding, modulating, and processing emotions.	Applying specific behavioral strategies.
EXAMPLE	Recognizing, frustration and calming yourself	Exercising to release frustration.

Both concepts are essential for personal development and are interconnected: learning to regulate emotions improves your ability to manage them in specific situations.

Theoretical concept:

Bisquerra (2012) describes five competencies that promote better social adaptation and coping with the challenges and difficulties that arise every day: emotional awareness, emotional autonomy, social competence, emotional regulation, and skills for life and well-being. Among them, emotional regulation is understood as the ability to control emotions

appropriately, where both repression and losing control are equally negative. Therefore, having good strategies for self-regulation is essential.

In summary, emotional regulation refers to the ability to control and modify our emotions in response to different situations. It focuses more specifically on the strategies we use to influence which emotions we experience, when we experience them, and how we express and process them.

1 The Importance of Emotional Regulation in Life

Emotional regulation is an essential component of daily life, significantly influencing psychological well-being, decision-making, and interpersonal relationships. According to Gross (1998), emotional regulation refers to the processes through which individuals influence the emotions they have, when they experience them, and how they express or experience those emotions. Effectively managing emotions is critical not only for mental health but also for academic, professional, and social performance.

One of the main benefits of effective emotional regulation is its relationship with mental health. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) emphasize that emotions play a central role in coping with stress. Effective emotional regulation can reduce the negative impact of stress, fostering greater resilience in the face of adversity. For instance, using adaptive strategies like cognitive reappraisal instead of maladaptive ones like avoidance is associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression (Gross & Thompson, 2007).

Furthermore, emotional regulation is crucial in interpersonal relationships. According to Mayer and Salovey (1997), the ability to manage both one's own and others' emotions—a component of emotional intelligence—enhances communication, promotes empathy, and strengthens social bonds. Individuals who can regulate their emotions are more likely to resolve conflicts constructively and maintain fulfilling relationships. Conversely, a lack of regulation can lead to interpersonal problems and impulsive behaviors.

In professional and academic settings, emotional regulation also plays a decisive role. Lopes et al. (2006) found that individuals with emotional regulation skills demonstrate better job performance due to their ability to handle stress and adapt to challenges. Similarly, in educational contexts, emotional regulation contributes to the development of autonomous learning skills and coping with pressure during critical moments such as exams or presentations.

Lastly, it is essential to note that emotional regulation is not an innate ability but one that can be cultivated through practice and intervention. Programs such as mindfulness and emotional intelligence training have proven effective in enhancing these skills (Baer, 2003). These tools not only promote individual well-being but also contribute to a more empathetic and resilient society.

In conclusion, emotional regulation is a fundamental aspect of human life, influencing areas such as mental health, social relationships, and professional performance. Authors such as Gross (1998), Lazarus and Folkman (1984), and Mayer and Salovey (1997) have highlighted its importance, emphasizing the need to develop these skills to improve overall quality of life.

1 Regulation strategies

Emotional regulation involves the use of various strategies to control and modify emotions in response to different situations. Each strategy has its role and may be more suitable in specific contexts, making it useful to develop a variety of tools to address diverse emotional situations.

Below are some key strategies:

Cognitive Reappraisal:

This strategy involves reinterpreting a situation to change its emotional meaning. It is used to transform a negative perception into one that is more positive or less stressful.

Application:

- Identifying Negative Thoughts: Recognize when you have negative thoughts about a situation.
- Question and Reframe: Ask yourself if there is another way to view the situation. Is there a positive aspect? Could it hold a lesson or an opportunity for growth?
- Practice Regularly: Make a conscious effort to reframe everyday situations. For example, instead of seeing an additional work project as a burden, view it as an opportunity to learn new skills.

Example: Instead of thinking, "I'm failing at this project, and everyone will notice," you can reframe it as, "This is a challenging task, but it's an opportunity to demonstrate my problem-solving skills."

Suppression:

Suppression involves inhibiting the external expression of an emotion. Although it does not address the underlying emotion, it can be useful in situations where an immediate emotional reaction could be harmful.

Application:

- Recognize the Emotion: Identify that you are experiencing an intense emotion like anger or frustration.
- Count to 10: Before reacting, count to 10 to give the emotion time to subside.
- Take Deep Breaths: Practice deep breathing to calm down.
- Focus on Responding, Not Reacting: Think about a controlled, constructive response instead of an impulsive reaction.

Example: During a meeting where you feel attacked, instead of immediately responding with anger, count to 10, take deep breaths, and calmly say something like, "I appreciate your feedback. I'd like to discuss this further after the meeting."

Distraction:

Distraction involves diverting attention from a negative emotion to another activity or thought unrelated to the source of emotional stress.

Application:

- **Physical Activities:** Engage in exercise or movement.
- **Hobbies:** Get involved in activities you enjoy, such as reading, painting, or playing a musical instrument.
- **Socializing:** Talk with friends or family about pleasant and comforting topics.
- **Entertainment Media:** Watch a movie, listen to music, or play a video game.

Example: If you feel overwhelmed by a stressful situation, you can take a break to go for a walk outdoors, which helps clear your mind and calm your emotions.

Acceptance:

Acceptance is the willingness to experience emotions without trying to change, resist, or judge them. This strategy focuses on acknowledging and accepting emotions as they are.

Application:

- **Self-Compassion:** Be kind to yourself when experiencing difficult emotions, recognizing that they are a natural part of the human experience.
- **Label the Emotions:** Name and describe your emotions to fully acknowledge them.
- **Practice Patience:** Allow yourself time to process and accept emotions without rushing to overcome them.

Example: If you feel sadness over the loss of a loved one, you allow the sadness to be present rather than avoiding or suppressing it. You permit yourself to cry and process your feelings at your own pace.

SKILL 7: EMOTION EXPRESSION

Theoretical concept:

As Aristotle said: *Getting angry is easy; but doing it with the right person, at the right time, and in the right way and intensity, is an art.*

Emotional expression is essential for the development of personal and social well-being. According to Bisquerra (2003), emotional expression is one of the key competencies within emotional intelligence, as it allows us to manage emotions appropriately and, in turn, establish more satisfying and healthy relationships. Goleman (1995), for his part, emphasizes that the ability to express emotions is directly related to the development of social skills and the improvement of interpersonal communication.

Reasons why it is important to express oneself emotionally:

- Promotes emotional well-being: Expressing emotions helps prevent them from building up and causing negative effects such as stress, anxiety, or even somatization. Bisquerra and Pérez (2007) point out that proper emotional expression helps channel feelings constructively, helping to maintain emotional balance.
- Improves interpersonal relationships: Goleman (1995) explains that emotional expression is a foundation for empathy and social skills, as it allows others to understand our emotional needs. This improves the quality of human interactions, reduces conflicts, and fosters more positive and stable relationships.
- Increases self-understanding: Emotional expression not only benefits our relationships but also helps us understand ourselves better. According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), expressing emotions requires identifying and reflecting on what we feel, which strengthens self-awareness and emotional regulation.
- Facilitates conflict resolution: According to Bisquerra (2003), expressing emotions assertively is key to addressing disagreements and interpersonal problems constructively, avoiding impulsive reactions or avoidance behaviors.
- Reduces emotional burden: Holding back or repressing emotions can create internal tension. Gross (1998) points out that proper emotional expression helps release tension, prevent emotional burnout, and promote overall well-being.

Types of Emotional Expression

1. Verbal: Expressing emotions through spoken or written language.
 - *Example:* Saying "I'm so happy for your achievement" or writing a letter expressing gratitude.
2. Non-Verbal: Using gestures, body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice to communicate emotions.
 - *Example:* Smiling when you are happy, frowning when you are angry.
3. Behavioral: Expressing emotions through actions or behaviors.
 - *Example:* Giving someone a hug to show support, going for a run when you are stressed.

4. Artistic: Using art forms such as music, painting, dance, or creative writing to express emotions.
 - o *Example:* Composing a song about an emotional experience, painting a picture to express sadness.

Techniques or Strategies for Emotional Expression

- **“I” Statements:** Use first-person statements to express your feelings and needs without blaming others. For example, "I feel frustrated when my deadlines are not respected because it affects my work."
- **Emotional Writing:**
James Pennebaker (1997) highlights the benefits of writing about what we feel, as this practice helps organize thoughts and release repressed emotions. Writing a journal or drafting letters (even if they are not sent) can be an effective technique. Malchiodi (2005) points out that activities such as drawing, painting, or sculpting allow us to express complex emotions, especially when it's difficult to put them into words.
- **Assertiveness:**
According to Alberti and Emmons (2001), assertiveness is the ability to express feelings and needs clearly, directly, and respectfully. This technique fosters self-confidence and improves interpersonal relationships. In skill 7, you will explore this concept further.

SKILL 8: ASSERTIVENESS

Theoretical concept:

In today's world, the way we interact and relate to others on an interpersonal level is highly relevant. We live in a social environment where the skills we possess to understand and empathize with others, as well as to express or communicate our opinions and feelings, play a crucial role in developing a healthy relationship. Assertiveness is oriented toward both effective and affective communication. It is related to the ability to generate pleasant feelings and practice values essential for coexistence, such as empathy and honesty. It involves being able to speak in the first person, taking responsibility for what one thinks, feels, needs, and desires. Assertiveness training helps reduce discomfort, as it teaches us to defend and assert our rights without aggression, and without being aggressive or passive. It also allows us to increase our ability to communicate our opinions or feelings effectively without feeling bad about it. Developing assertiveness requires practice and continuous reflection. Regularly using these exercises can help strengthen your ability to communicate effectively and respectfully, thereby improving your personal and professional relationships. Below are some exercises to develop and strengthen assertiveness:

Assertive Response Practice

- **Role-playing:** Practice common situations with a friend. Rehearse assertive responses for various scenarios, such as saying no to an unreasonable request, expressing a complaint, or asking for a favour.
- **Assertive Phrases:** Prepare and memorize assertive phrases you can use in difficult situations. For example, "I feel uncomfortable when you do that," or "I prefer doing this another way."
- **Improving Non-Verbal Communication**
- **Posture and Eye Contact:** Practice maintaining an upright posture and making direct eye contact when speaking. This conveys confidence and assertiveness.
- **Tone of Voice:** Work on maintaining a calm and firm tone of voice. Avoid speaking in an aggressive or passive tone.

Assertive Communication Techniques to Say No:

Broken Record Technique: This involves saying no as many times as needed, without getting angry, without deviating from the topic, and without responding to manipulative attempts.

Example:

"No thanks, I don't want to..."

"Sorry, but you know I can't..."

"No, don't confuse me, I said no."

Fogging Technique: Yielding ground, but without agreeing to the proposal. Each criticism or situation will be evaluated from the perspective of the person making the judgment.

Example:

"You may be right, but I'm not going to..."

"Maybe you all think the same way, but I don't."

"I might be wrong, but I might not be either."

Assertive Delaying: When you're unsure whether you want something or not, you need to take time to think and ask for a delay.

Example:

"Well, we'll see."

"I can't give you an answer right now, let's talk tomorrow."

"Maybe yes, but not today, maybe another day."

"I'll think about it."

Mirroring Technique: Make the other person see what they're saying to you. Reflect their attempt at manipulation.

Example:

"So, if I don't do this, I'm boring?"

"So, if I don't go... I'm ruining the party?"

Viable Commitment: Assertive negotiation, seeking solutions that satisfy both parties.

Example:

"What do you think if, instead of going with them, we go to...?"

"Why don't we buy something to eat or go to the burger place instead of just getting drinks?"

"No, forget it, let's go to..."

Assertive Feedback

- **Constructive Feedback:** Practice giving constructive feedback assertively. Use the formula: "When you [action], I feel [emotion], because [reason]. I would prefer [solution]."
- **Requesting Feedback:** Ask for feedback assertively to improve your communication skills. For example, "How do you think I handled the meeting today? Is there anything I could improve?"

These techniques help build a respectful and effective communication style that fosters healthy interpersonal relationships and promotes emotional well-being.



HOW TO BE ASSERTIVE

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Identify your needs - everyone has needs and yours ARE valid

Be clear with the other person - this might take some courage

Look for a win-win and be positive in the exchange

Listen carefully to the other person and try to see things from their perspective

Offer solutions to issues that come up

Aim for collaboration to get a win-win outcome for you both

Watch your body language

- ◆ Assertive people:
- ◆ Make eye contact
- ◆ Have congruence in facial expressions
- ◆ Have an upright posture

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SKILL 9: IMPULSE CONTROL

Theoretical concept:

Impulsivity is defined as the tendency to act quickly and without adequate reflection, often without considering the consequences of actions (American Psychiatric Association, 2022). It is a multidimensional trait related to behavioral, cognitive, and emotional aspects. According to Barratt (1994), impulsivity comprises three main dimensions:

- Motor impulsivity: Tendency to act without thinking.
- Lack of planning: Inability to anticipate and evaluate future consequences.
- Sensation seeking: Inclination toward novel or risky experiences.

Impulse control is the ability to manage and regulate immediate impulses or desires, postponing short-term gratification in favor of long-term benefits. It is a crucial skill for self-regulation and effective functioning in various aspects of life, including personal, social, and professional domains.

Factors influencing impulsivity control:

- Biological Factors: Research in neuroscience has identified that the prefrontal cortex plays a key role in impulse control (Chambers et al., 2009). Insufficient development or dysfunction in this area can hinder behavioral regulation.
- Psychological and Environmental Factors: Factors such as stress, lack of emotional regulation strategies, and a disorganized environment can exacerbate impulsivity.

Types of Impulse Control:

Emotional Control: The ability to manage intense emotions such as anger, sadness, or frustration without reacting impulsively.

Example: *Staying calm during a discussion instead of yelling or insulting.*

Cognitive Control: The ability to regulate thoughts and distractions, focusing on important tasks and avoiding impulsive thinking.

Example: *Concentrating on work despite the temptation to check social media.*

Behavioral Control: The ability to regulate impulsive actions, resisting the temptation to engage in harmful or inappropriate behaviors.

Example: *Avoiding unhealthy foods while on a diet.*

Social Control: The ability to adjust behavior according to social norms, resisting the temptation to act inappropriately in social contexts.

Example: *Not interrupting someone who is speaking, despite feeling a strong urge to do so.*

Techniques to Improve Impulse Control:

Developing impulse control is essential for a balanced and successful life. Using various techniques and strategies can enhance this skill, leading to better emotional, cognitive, and behavioral self-regulation. Practicing these techniques regularly can result in a greater ability to handle challenging situations and make more rational and beneficial long-term decisions.

- **Breathing Technique:** When you feel a strong impulse, practice the 4-7-8 breathing method (inhale for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, exhale for 8 seconds).
- **Count to 10:** Whenever you feel a strong urge to act impulsively, stop and slowly count to 10.
- **Cognitive Reevaluation:** Reassess the situation and consider the long-term consequences of impulsive actions. Ask yourself: "How will I feel about this tomorrow? How will this affect my long-term goals?"
- Emotional regulation techniques described earlier can also be used.

The prefrontal cortex, responsible for inhibitory control, is key to managing impulses. In impulsive individuals, this area may be less active, making self-regulation more challenging (Barkley, 1997).

Practical Activity:

Effective Exercise: Think of a recent situation where you acted impulsively. (It can be something small, like responding quickly to someone, or something more significant, like making an important decision without reflection).

Answer the following questions:

1. What happened? Briefly describe the context and what triggered your reaction.
2. What emotion did you feel at that moment? Identify whether it was anger, frustration, fear, joy, etc.
3. What did you do? Write down the impulsive action you took.
4. What was the outcome? Reflect on whether it had positive or negative consequences.

Reflect on an alternative:

1. What could you have done differently to better manage the situation?
2. What technique or tool could you have used (e.g., pausing, counting to 10, practicing mindfulness)?

Practical Example:

Situation: Your coworker made a mistake that affected you, and you reacted by raising your voice at that moment.

Emotion: Frustration and anger.

Impulsive Action: Criticized your coworker in front of others.

Consequences: Created tension in the environment and felt guilt afterward.

Alternative: You could have taken a deep breath, waited until you were calmer, and spoken privately to explain how the mistake affected you.

SKILL 10: SELF-MOTIVATION

Theoretical concept:

Self-motivation is the ability to drive oneself to achieve personal or professional goals, even in the absence of external pressure or rewards. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), self-motivation is closely linked to the concept of intrinsic motivation, which refers to the internal desire to perform a task for its inherent value rather than for external rewards.

It is a key skill in personal development as it fosters resilience, commitment, and productivity in various areas of life.

Factors influencing self-motivation:

1. Internal factors:
 - o Clarity of personal values.
 - o Resilience in the face of adversity.
 - o Emotional self-regulation.
2. External factors:
 - o An environment that fosters personal growth.
 - o Supportive relationships that build confidence.

Types of Self-Motivation:

1. Intrinsic Self-Motivation: Originates from the enjoyment and personal satisfaction obtained from performing an activity or achieving a goal. It is driven by personal interests, passions, and values.
 - *Example: Practicing a sport because you enjoy it and it makes you feel good, not because you expect an external reward.*
2. Extrinsic Self-Motivation: Is based on external rewards or the avoidance of negative consequences. It is driven by incentives such as money, recognition, or the approval of others.
 - *Example: Studying hard to receive good grades and obtain a scholarship.*
3. Positive Self-Motivation: Focuses on the benefits and rewards of achieving a goal. It involves visualizing success and the positive outcomes that will be achieved.
 - *Example: Imagining getting a promotion and enjoying a higher standard of living as motivation to work diligently.*
4. Negative Self-Motivation: Is driven by the desire to avoid negative consequences or fear of failure.

- *Example: Working hard on a project to avoid reprimands or dismissal.*

Strategies to Develop and Maintain Self-Motivation:

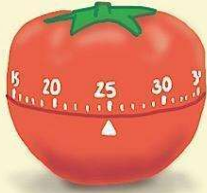
- SMART Methodology: Define your goals in a Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound manner. This methodology is used to establish clear and achievable goals in any type of project or planning



- Self-discipline and Time Management: Develop a daily routine and use time management techniques such as the Pomodoro Technique

THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE®

A SIMPLE METHOD TO BALANCE FOCUS WITH DELIBERATE BREAKS



1 PLAN YOUR TASKS
How many pomodoros might you need?

2 DO 1 POMODORO
Time for 25 mins then take a 5 min break

NO SNEAKY
WORKING!

PROTECT
YOUR POMODORO!



3 REPEAT x 4 POMODOROS
Then take a longer break



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sketchplanations

The close relationship between motivation and self-motivation, according to Robbins (1999), is the ability to do things independently; however, motivation is needed to accomplish this, which can be triggered by the external world or generated internally.

The study by Hernández and Matheus proposes various strategies and workshops to enhance self-motivation in the operational staff of the Floralp Company. These strategies aim not only to improve the quality of production and services but also the professional and personal growth of employees through an integral and psychological approach. Among the strategies are:

Motivational Workshops:

- “What does self-motivation and enthusiasm teach us?”: Identifying personal lessons about self-motivation and enthusiasm.
- “Do I have good self-esteem?”: Evaluating self-esteem through reflective and personal questions.

- “Useful advice”: Using personal affirmations to reinforce self-motivation.
- “Do I believe in myself?": Strengthening self-confidence through positive feedback interpretation.
- “It all depends on my effort”: Sharing actions for self-fulfillment and applicability in the company.

Periodic Evaluations and Diagnostics:

- Organizational climate and culture evaluations every six months.
- Diagnostics of self-motivation to identify areas for improvement.

Training and Therapeutic Sessions:

- Group and individual sessions to work on self-motivation.
- Use of emotional intelligence models (Goleman's theory) and self-awareness.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

The most relevant results of the project regard the upskilling of youth workers across partner countries, as well as the production of digestible, open-access learning resources for maximum dissemination, with the aim of encouraging more and more peer-learning activities (between youth workers subscribed to the CURIE platform and those who aren't). The vision of the project is for a wide-spread adoption of the CURIE model and integration of structured learning activities in youth organizations. While the CURIE digital platform, with its rich repository of multimedia recourses invites individual, portable and flexible learning, the partnership has also experimented with blended and in-person learning methodologies. Specifically, the project has measured the efficacy of its learning tools by testing the skill development of youth workers engaged in both the online course and the practical pilot project. These results also allows for fascinating reflections on the different impacts of online and practical learning methodologies, although these are outside the scope of this project.

ONLINE LEARNING RESULTS

Target: 50 youth workers among all website users

Methodology: Pre- and post-course self-assessment with 25 items measuring 5 Emotional Intelligence (EI) dimensions (based on Goleman, 1997). Responses were collected on a 5-point Likert scale.

Overall outcomes:

The course produced a **positive impact across all five EI dimensions**, with the strongest growth in the intrapersonal areas of **Self-Awareness (+32%)** and **Self-Regulation (+26%)**. More moderate but still meaningful increases were observed in **Empathy (+18%)**, **Social Skills (+12%)**, and **Motivation (+8%)**.

DIMENSIONS	SELF-AWARENESS	SELF-REGULATION	MOTIVATION	EMPATHY	SOCIAL SKILLS
AVG INCREASE PRE/POST COURSE	32%	26%	8%	18%	12%

Following are the results for specific items. Each items is color-coded following the 5 dimensions above:

ANALYSIS ITEMS (COLOR-CODED DIMENSIONS)	PRE CURIE SUBSCRIPTION AVG (1-5)	POST CURIE SUBSCRIPTION AVG (1-5)	INCREASE
I remain calm under pressure.	2,4	3,8	58%
I can accurately describe my emotional states.	2,6	3,8	46%
I am aware of my emotions as they happen.	2,8	3,8	36%

I recognize the impact of my emotions on others.	2,8	3,8	36%
I think before I act, even in emotionally charged situations.	3,4	4,6	35%
I communicate clearly, even when emotions are involved.	3	3,8	27%
I know my personal strengths and weaknesses.	3	3,8	27%
I listen attentively and without interrupting.	3,6	4,4	22%
I respond with care and respect to others' emotions.	3,6	4,4	22%
I am passionate about the work I do.	3,8	4,6	21%
I handle frustration without losing my temper.	3	3,6	20%
I can sense how others are feeling, even when they don't say it.	3,2	3,8	19%
I work well in teams and build strong relationships.	3,2	3,8	19%
I understand the causes of my emotional reactions.	3,4	4	18%
I try to see situations from others' perspectives.	4	4,6	15%
I stay committed to tasks even when they become difficult.	3,4	3,8	12%
I can recognize when someone is uncomfortable, even if they don't say it.	4	4,4	10%
I am able to adapt my behavior to different situations.	4,2	4,6	10%
I can control my impulses when needed.	3,8	4	5%
I influence others positively without being forceful.	3,8	4	5%
I manage conflict in a respectful and constructive way.	3,8	4	5%
I make an effort to maintain connections with people.	4	4,2	5%
I set challenging goals and work hard to achieve them.	4	4,2	5%
I remain optimistic even when facing obstacles.	3,4	3,4	0%
I am consistently motivated to improve myself.	4	4	0%

A notable effect of the course was its “**equalizing function**”: while pre-course scores ranged widely (from 2.4 to 4.2), post-course results converged within a narrower band (3.8 to 4.6). This suggests the training helped practitioners strengthen weaker areas while consolidating stronger ones, resulting in a more balanced emotional intelligence profile.

Most Improved Skills:

The items with the greatest increases highlight significant progress in **emotional literacy, resilience, and impulse control**:

- *Remaining calm under pressure (+58%)*
- *Accurately describing emotional states (+46%)*
- *Awareness of emotions as they happen (+36%)*
- *Recognizing the impact of emotions on others (+36%)*
- *Thinking before acting in emotionally charged situations (+35%)*

These results suggest that youth workers gained essential tools for **handling stress, self-monitoring emotions, and managing reactions constructively**.

Moderate Gains:

Several items showed steady but more moderate growth, particularly in **communication and relational capacities**:

- *Communicating clearly under emotional strain (+27%)*
- *Listening attentively without interrupting (+22%)*
- *Responding with care and respect to others' emotions (+22%)*
- *Passion for work (+21%)*

These improvements reflect better interpersonal awareness and a stronger sense of professional engagement.

Areas of Stability:

Some skills showed **minimal or no change**, largely because baseline levels were already relatively high:

- *Optimism when facing obstacles (0%)*
- *Consistent motivation for self-improvement (0%)*
- *Conflict management (+5%)*
- *Maintaining personal connections (+5%)*

This indicates the course was especially effective in strengthening **weaker or more vulnerable dimensions**, while consolidating areas that participants already managed well.

Implications for Youth Work:

The findings confirm that **youth workers benefit most from structured opportunities to improve self-awareness and self-regulation**, which are essential in emotionally demanding contexts. Gains in empathy and communication, though smaller, still enhance the ability to build trust and manage relationships with young people.

Overall, the course provided participants with a **more balanced and resilient emotional intelligence skill set**, equipping them to work more effectively with youth and to navigate the emotional challenges inherent in their role.

PILOT PROJECT

To assess the effectiveness of the content capsules in a real-life environment, a pilot test was conducted focusing on five of the ten skills addressed by the project (emotion management, self-esteem, adaptability, stress management, social awareness). These skills were practiced through various activities designed and implemented by the youth workers from the participating organizations.

The pilot test took place on May 27, 2025, at the technical institute Zespół Szkół nr 2, located in Wrocław, Poland. It engaged over 100 students, of which 72 have actively participated in the following feedback and data gathering.

As part of the evaluation, various types of feedback were collected:

- Reports prepared by the youth workers who implemented the activities.
- Pre- and post-questionnaires completed by the youth workers who participated in the pilot (target group) and those who did not (control group).
- Pre- and post-questionnaires completed by the young people who took part in the activities.

Specific reports

Emotion Management

Facilitator: Nadia Paraschou, Startup Greece (EL)

On May 27th, a creative emotional intelligence workshop was held in Wrocław for a group of Polish teenagers aged 15 to 18. The session, titled "Emotional Management Through Art," aimed to foster emotional awareness and expression through creative engagement—specifically, the technique of "dot drawing."

Participants were invited to invent and illustrate an imaginary creature representing their current emotional state and unmet needs. This creature then became a narrative companion, offering insight into each participant's internal world. Through this symbolic storytelling, teens explored both visible and hidden emotions in a non-threatening and engaging way.

Throughout the session, participants were remarkably open, cooperative, and actively involved. A recurring theme emerged: a strong desire "to always be happy." While this reflects a hopeful outlook, it also opened a space for critical reflection on emotional expectations within their social environment.

Encouragingly, some participants candidly shared their more difficult emotions—an indicator of the safe, trusting atmosphere that had been cultivated.

This dynamic prompts a broader reflection on the cultural norms surrounding emotional expression in Poland:

To what extent does Polish society make room for the open expression of negative emotions? And how are such emotions typically received or managed?

The participants' willingness to engage with both light and shadow aspects of their emotional lives reveals a readiness for deeper emotional dialogue, perhaps in contrast to societal tendencies to suppress or bypass discomfort.

To close the session, each participant received a symbolic message from their creature—a piece of loving advice or a reminder of inner wisdom. These messages served as gentle affirmations of self-

compassion, encouraging each teen to stay grounded in the present moment, honor their emotions, and use creativity as a tool for emotional regulation.

Key Takeaways

- Creative expression (drawing and storytelling) can unlock emotional insight in a safe and playful manner.
- Teens crave emotional positivity but also need permission and space to express more difficult emotions.
- The use of imaginary creatures allowed for externalization and reflection without judgment.
- Symbolic closure (receiving advice from their creature) reinforced self-awareness and inner nurturing.

Impact

This workshop demonstrated how art-based interventions can support emotional literacy, particularly during adolescence—a time when internal complexity is high, but tools for understanding it are often limited. The experience not only enhanced participants' self-awareness but also gently challenged cultural norms around emotional expression.

Self- esteem

Facilitator: Giovanni Ferrazzano, Laura Zanon, CSA (IT)

Workshop Objective

The objective of this session was to help participants explore and strengthen their self-esteem using tools from Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence framework. The workshop aimed to guide students through a process of emotional self-awareness, positive self-affirmation, and peer recognition in a supportive group environment.

Methodology

The workshop followed a participatory approach, using experiential activities to engage students with the emotionally reflective topic of self-esteem. It was divided into three structured exercises, each followed by discussion and reflection time.

Workshop Development

Exercise 1: Mirror Mapping – Discovering Strengths

- Description: Students were asked to write five affirming statements about themselves based on their strengths, achievements, and positive qualities. The exercise encouraged introspection and personal reflection.

- Specific Objective: To promote self-awareness and boost internal self-esteem through personal recognition of one's value.
- Observed Outcomes: This first exercise revealed initial resistance among students. Many appeared hesitant or uncertain, likely due to the vulnerable nature of the task. Reflecting on personal strengths proved more challenging than expected, with several participants expressing discomfort or doubt in naming their own qualities. Some students did not manage to list 5 of them.

Exercise 2: Mood Map – Emotional Self-Awareness

- Description: Students plotted their current emotional state on a Mood Map grid (pleasant/unpleasant × high/low energy), and reflected on what influenced their mood and how they might shift it.
- Specific Objective: To increase emotional self-awareness and identify personal patterns in emotional responses.
- Observed Outcomes: This activity served as a warm-up for emotional expression. Participants engaged more easily than in Exercise 1, and many were able to articulate their feelings more clearly. The visual framework of the Mood Map made the experience accessible and relatable. Exercising imagination to confront different scenarios of emotional state development tackle reason, problem-solving, emotional projection.

Exercise 3: Strength Circle – Peer Affirmation

- Description: In small groups, students wrote positive comments or strengths about their peers. Each participant then received a collection of affirmations from others in the group.
- Specific Objective: To build self-esteem through social recognition and strengthen empathy and group connection.
- Observed Outcomes: This was the most engaging part of the workshop. Students participated enthusiastically and responded positively to affirmations from their peers. Interestingly, it appeared easier for them to recognize strengths in others than in themselves, underscoring the importance of peer feedback in self-esteem development.

Conclusions

Although the session began with some hesitation, particularly during the self-reflective Mirror Mapping exercise, student engagement increased significantly during the Mood Map and Strength Circle activities. The shift from internal reflection to external recognition made the topic more accessible and emotionally safe.

This experience confirmed that self-esteem, while deeply personal, can be effectively nurtured through group-based emotional learning and peer connection. The workshop highlighted the value of creating spaces where young people feel seen, affirmed, and supported.

Recommendations

- Design a quieter space for the exercise, to foster focus and self-reflection.
- Begin self-esteem workshops with less introspective activities to ease participants into deeper reflection.

- Use peer-based exercises (like the Strength Circle) to build trust and openness before individual tasks.
- Encourage follow-up activities where students revisit their affirmations or track emotional changes over time.
- Offer emotional vocabulary tools to help students name their feelings and strengths with more confidence.

Adaptability

Facilitator: Mónica Villalobos Vaquero, Fundación Cruz de los Ángeles (ES)

Workshop Objective

The main objective was to strengthen the participants' adaptability through hands-on, experience-based activities that encouraged them to reflect on and develop strategies to face unfamiliar, uncertain, or stressful situations.

Methodology

The workshop used experiential learning methods and participatory dynamics. It was divided into two main activities, each followed by a group reflection session to reinforce learning outcomes.

Workshop Development

Activity 1: Experiencing a Controlled Stressful Situation

- Description: A stressful situation was created deliberately (a task with a time limit and changing rules). Participants were not given any preparation and had to react spontaneously in real time.
- Specific Objective: To allow participants to observe their own emotional and cognitive responses to stress and begin identifying effective personal and collective coping strategies.
- Observed Outcomes: Participants showed a range of responses, from initial frustration and emotional blocks to the emergence of teamwork and improvised solutions. In the reflection session, they identified different personal tools and social resources they used to deal with pressure, such as humor, delegation, and quick communication.

Activity 2: Collaborative Problem Solving with Evolving Challenges

- Description: A fictional school-based scenario was presented to small groups, who were asked to propose possible solutions. Once they shared their plans, their peers added new obstacles or complications, forcing them to adapt and rethink their strategies.
- Specific Objective: To encourage mental flexibility, group collaboration, and the ability to improvise under changing circumstances.

- Observed Outcomes: At first, participants tended to search for technical solutions, often relying on internet-based answers or rigid approaches. As the activity progressed, however, their focus gradually shifted toward more social, collaborative, and creative strategies. They began incorporating improvisation, communication, and peer cooperation into their problem-solving processes.

During the final group reflections, several students expressed that they rarely have opportunities to work together or speak in front of others. As mechanical students, their training is typically individual and technically oriented, with limited emphasis on teamwork or oral presentations. This made the activity especially challenging for them—but also a meaningful opportunity for growth.

Furthermore, a spontaneous and highly valuable dynamic emerged: some participants had limited English language skills, while others, more fluent in English, stepped in to support them by translating, explaining instructions, and helping them share their reflections with the group. This interaction served as a powerful example of both adaptability and empathy in action, and reinforced the value of peer-to-peer support.

Conclusions

The experience proved highly enriching, not only in fostering adaptability but also in developing social and emotional competencies. Through trial and error, improvisation, and teamwork, the students expanded their range of strategies for responding to complex situations. The shift from technical, individual solutions to more human and cooperative approaches was a clear indicator of personal and group growth.

Recommendations

- Incorporate this type of workshop more regularly into technical education settings, where opportunities for group work, public speaking, and social-emotional learning are often limited.
- Complement future workshops with focused activities on emotional regulation and active listening.
- Allow time for group reflection after each dynamic to solidify learning and validate individual experiences.

Stress Management

Facilitator: Ruth Vallina Pascual, Fundación Cruz de los Ángeles (ES)

Workshop Objective

Development of personal skills to identify, understand and manage stressful situations through group dynamics, promoting reflection as a starting point for the development of adaptive strategies, as well as emotional self-regulation to deal with stress in a healthy way in order to improve well-being and personal performance.

Methodology

The session is carried out using a participatory and very dynamic methodology among a group of 20 young people.

The facilitator, using English as the language of communication, addresses the group throughout the session using informal, simple and colloquial language, avoiding technical terms and overly formal words. From the beginning, the goals and objectives of the activity are described to the group in a clear and concise way, in order to keep them focused.

On the other hand, using empathetic strategies, from the very beginning a genuine interest is shown in listening to their opinions and feelings, giving importance to their personal perceptions as a key aspect to be picked up in this session and in the overall framework of the European CURIE project. Humour is also introduced to create a relaxed atmosphere and a personal interaction is sought, addressing them individually, making them aware of the importance of their personal perceptions as a key aspect to be picked up in this session and in the overall framework of the CURIE European project.

Personal questions (without being intrusive) related to the activity and their feelings about it. Once the workshop comes to an end, they are acknowledged and praised for their efforts and involvement.

With all of this, the aim is to awaken the interest, active participation and involvement of all the participants in the different actions in which the workshop is structured, contributing to the joint reflection of ideas that arise spontaneously. The union of different perspectives means joint learning that is practical and applicable in the daily lives of young people.

Workshop Development

- Description: The session is designed to address the concept of stress and its management through an active and participatory methodology. It is divided into three phases: visual theoretical introduction, exchange of experiences through dynamics and role playing, and closing with conclusions and evaluation. Throughout the session, theoretical content, practical activities and group reflections are combined to promote understanding and internalisation of stress coping strategies.
- Specific Objective: To foster in participants a comprehensive understanding of stress (definition, types, phases and causes), in a very practical way, as well as the development of skills to identify it, manage it properly and control impulses in stressful situations, especially in the adolescent context.
- Observed Outcomes:
 - Participants identify and differentiate the types of stress (eustress and distress) and their characteristics.
 - They recognise the phases of stress (alarm, resistance and exhaustion) through bodily and emotional representation.
 - They share personal experiences and reflect on their own reactions to stressful situations.
 - They co-create an "anti-stress toolbox" with practical strategies for emotional management in very specific situations that they identify in this session and workshop as frequent in their daily lives.
 - They demonstrate greater awareness of the importance of normalising stress and learning how to manage it in order to avoid negative consequences on their physical and mental well-being.

Social awareness

Facilitator: Paulina Bilska-Marek, Fundacja MODE (PL)

Explanation – What is Social Awareness?

Social Awareness is the ability to recognize and understand the emotions, perspectives, and social dynamics of other people. It is a key component of Emotional Intelligence, alongside self-awareness, self-regulation, and relationship management (Goleman, 1995).

During the workshop, students explored the concept of Social Awareness in a very practical and interactive way. The facilitator introduced the idea that social awareness means much more than just “being polite” – it is about empathy, active listening, noticing hidden signals, and responding with sensitivity to others’ needs.

Examples given included:

- Recognizing when someone feels excluded even if they do not verbalize it.
- Being aware of social norms that may differ across cultures.
- Understanding how group dynamics can impact individuals’ sense of belonging.
- Noticing injustice or inequality and reflecting on personal responsibility to act.

The explanation phase provided students with a theoretical foundation but was constantly linked to their own realities: classrooms with mixed cultural groups, Erasmus+ experiences abroad, and the challenges of adjusting to new environments.

Behaviour – How do socially aware people behave?

The students reflected on the behaviours that demonstrate high social awareness. With guidance from the facilitator, they discussed the difference between simply “hearing” and truly “listening.” Many admitted that in their everyday interactions they often listen only to respond, rather than to understand.

Key behaviours highlighted during the workshop included:

- Active listening: paying full attention, avoiding interruptions, and showing genuine interest.
- Sensitivity to nonverbal communication: reading body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions.
- Empathetic response: acknowledging emotions, validating experiences, and responding respectfully.
- Adaptability: adjusting communication to the needs of newcomers, younger peers, or people from different backgrounds.
- Awareness of context: recognizing how cultural, social, or situational factors shape interactions.

The group gave vivid examples: one student described adapting his way of speaking when supporting a new Ukrainian classmate who struggled with Polish; another mentioned the role of humour in easing tension but also recognized that jokes can sometimes unintentionally exclude.

Experience – Real-life case study from the workshop

The workshop environment itself became a living example of social awareness in practice. With over 30 participants – both Polish and Ukrainian students – there were diverse perspectives in the room. Some had already taken part in Erasmus+ projects abroad and felt confident in multicultural contexts. Others had never travelled outside Poland and admitted to feeling uncertain when meeting people from different cultures.

One particularly powerful moment occurred when a Ukrainian student shared how, at first, he avoided group activities because of language barriers and fear of being misunderstood. Several Polish students admitted they had noticed his silence but assumed he was simply shy. This opened a discussion on how important it is not to jump to conclusions, but instead to ask and include. The honesty of this exchange shifted the atmosphere in the room, leading to a more open and supportive dialogue.

Another student spoke about his Erasmus+ mobility experience in Spain, where he realized how much cultural awareness mattered when navigating daily life abroad. He said that recognizing and respecting local customs – from meal times to communication styles – was just as important as professional skills.

These real-life experiences demonstrated to all participants that social awareness is not an abstract idea but a skill they practice – or neglect – every day.

Tips – How to develop Social Awareness

The workshop concluded with practical tips tailored for young people, especially those preparing for international exchanges or working in multicultural classrooms:

- Observe before speaking – pay attention to atmosphere, body language, and tone of voice.
- Practice active listening – paraphrase what others say, ask clarifying questions, and avoid distractions.
- Learn about different cultures and perspectives – be curious and avoid assumptions based on stereotypes.
- Reflect on your own reactions – notice situations where you feel uncomfortable and ask yourself why.
- Seek feedback – ask peers or teachers how your communication is perceived.
- Encourage inclusion – make sure no one is left out of conversations, games, or group projects.

The facilitator emphasized that social awareness is a skill that improves with practice and reflection. By creating inclusive environments at school, students contribute not only to their own growth but also to the cohesion of the group.

Conclusion – Why Social Awareness matters

The Social Awareness workshop at Zespół Szkół nr 2 in Wrocław showed how relevant this competence is in today's classrooms. With more than 30 students – including Polish and Ukrainian youth, most of them male, aged 16–19 – the group represented a microcosm of multicultural and social diversity. The lively discussion revealed that young people are eager to talk about issues of empathy, inclusion, and cultural sensitivity. They recognize both the opportunities and the challenges of living in increasingly diverse communities. Many shared personal experiences of either feeling excluded or noticing exclusion in others, which created a sense of mutual understanding. The session confirmed that Social Awareness is not just a “soft skill” but a core element of Emotional Intelligence that shapes learning environments, friendships, and communities. As one student concluded during the discussion: “When you feel seen, you feel stronger. And when you help others feel seen, you create respect.”

Pilot project: youth workers' learning outcomes evaluation

The pilot activity was implemented with the overarching goal of **strengthening the Emotional Intelligence (EI) competences of youth workers**. Emotional Intelligence, as defined in Goleman (1997), encompasses five domains—Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy, and Social Skills—which are critical for fostering meaningful, supportive, and resilient relationships with young people.

The pilot activities were directed at 14 youth workers from across the partner countries. These were the domains that we aimed to strengthen.

Purpose

The purpose of the activity was twofold:

1 Capacity building for youth workers:

to provide them with practical opportunities to apply EI theoretical concepts on which they were trained beforehand, enhancing their ability to manage emotions, navigate relationships, and create positive group dynamics.

2 Impact on young people:

to engage high school students in experiential exercises that not only supported the youth workers' practice but also introduced the younger participants to Emotional Intelligence as a lifelong skill for personal growth and social inclusion.

Methodology

The pilot was designed as a **hands-on, experiential workshop** involving over 70 high school students. Youth workers first received a theoretical grounding in Emotional Intelligence and then directly applied this knowledge in practice through a series of interactive exercises with the students. This **learning-by-doing approach** enabled youth workers to:

- Translate theoretical understanding into concrete skills.
- Observe immediate effects of EI strategies in real group settings.
- Reflect on their practice and evaluate their growth through a structured self-assessment process.

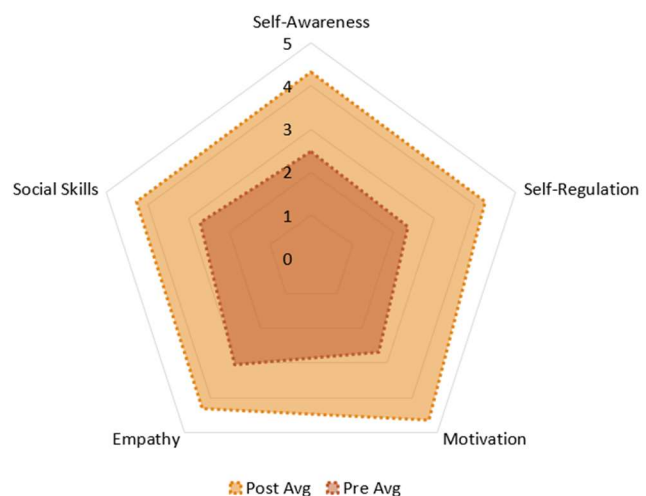
To measure the impact, youth workers completed a **self-assessment report** before and after the activity, rating their competences across the five domains on a Likert scale (1–5). The comparison of baseline and post-workshop results provided both quantitative and qualitative evidence of progress. Following are the key findings from the reporting process.

Average Scores by Domain (Pre → Post)

- **Motivation:** 2.68 → 4.64 (+1.96)
- **Self-Regulation:** 2.36 → 4.24 (+1.88)
- **Self-Awareness:** 2.48 → 4.32 (+1.84)
- **Social Skills:** 2.72 → 4.28 (+1.56)
- **Empathy:** 3.04 → 4.32 (+1.28)

Likert scale evaluation (1-5 points)

Domain	Change (pts.)
Motivation	+1.96
Self-Regulation	+1.88
Self-Awareness	+1.84
Social Skills	+1.56
Empathy	+1.28



1. Strong growth in Motivation and Self-Regulation

- **Motivation (+1.96 avg gain):** Youth workers left the workshop with a stronger sense of purpose, commitment, and optimism. This suggests that the **hands-on activities with students** fueled intrinsic motivation—seeing the impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in action reinforced their own drive to improve.
- **Self-Regulation (+1.88 avg gain):** Significant growth here means participants are now better able to **stay calm, manage impulses, and adapt in dynamic environments**—skills essential when dealing with teenagers, who often bring unpredictability and emotional intensity.

Practical implication: Youth workers will be more resilient in challenging youth work contexts, better able to handle conflicts, frustrations, and stressful group dynamics without escalating situations.

2. Clear progress in Self-Awareness (+1.84)

- Youth workers reported being more conscious of their emotions, recognizing their triggers, and understanding their impact on others.
- This is crucial because in youth work, **modeling emotional awareness** helps young people mirror healthy emotional expression.

Practical implication: Improved self-awareness makes youth workers role models of emotional literacy, helping young people articulate and regulate their own emotions.

3. Growth in Social Skills (+1.56) and Empathy (+1.28)

- **Empathy:** Already the strongest area before the workshop (3.04 baseline), but still improved. Youth workers sharpened their ability to **listen actively, sense discomfort, and respond with care.**
- **Social Skills:** The improvement indicates better abilities in **teamwork, constructive conflict management, and maintaining positive relationships.**

Practical implication: These are the very skills that **translate into daily youth work practice**—building trust with young people, fostering inclusive group dynamics, and de-escalating peer conflicts.

4. The value of learning by doing

The **hands-on format** (working directly with 70+ high school students) seems to have been decisive:

- Youth workers not only studied EI in theory but **applied it immediately in a real-life context.**
- The dual benefit: youth workers **consolidated their skills**, and young people themselves gained awareness of Emotional Intelligence.

Practical implication: This experiential approach is a powerful model for **training multipliers**—by practicing with young people, youth workers both learn and spread EI competences simultaneously.

It is also notable how the Motivation dimension was significantly more impacted by practical approaches than by digital self-paced course (in which case, it was the least impacted dimension).

5. Broader impact for Erasmus+ objectives

- The workshop **empowered youth workers** with stronger EI skills, directly enhancing the quality of their professional interactions.
- It also created **positive spillover effects** for young people, who experienced the benefits of EI in practice.
- This aligns perfectly with Erasmus+ goals of **capacity building, innovation in youth work, and equipping professionals with transversal competences.**

In sum: The workshop was successful not only in raising self-reported Emotional Intelligence skills across all domains, but also in demonstrating that **practical, participatory learning** enhances motivation, resilience, and the ability to apply EI in real contexts with youth.

Recommendations for Future Workshops

1. Maintain Experiential Formats

- Practical, real-life application with young people should remain central. It provides immediate reinforcement of learning and maximises impact for both youth workers and students.

2. Integrate Reflection Moments

- Structured debriefing sessions should be included to allow participants to connect practice with self-assessment results, deepening awareness of progress.

3. Extend Duration and Repetition

- A series of shorter, recurring workshops could provide continuous reinforcement of skills, supporting long-term behavioural change rather than one-off improvement.
- 4. **Strengthen Peer Learning Among Youth Workers**
 - Facilitate small group exchanges where participants share challenges and strategies in applying EI with young people, fostering a supportive professional community.
- 5. **Monitor Impact on Young People**
 - Collecting structured feedback from student participants will provide valuable insights into how improved youth worker competences translate into tangible benefits for young learners.
- 6. **Scale and Disseminate the Model**
 - The workshop format should be shared across partner organisations and other youth-serving institutions as a replicable model for **practical Emotional Intelligence training** within Erasmus+ and beyond.

Pilot project: analysis of the young participants' questionnaires

Participants: 71 high school students

Purpose: Evaluate engagement, learning outcomes, and interest in future Emotional Intelligence (EI) workshops to inform the design of upcoming sessions.

Introduction

The secondary aim of the international pilot activity is to introduce high school students to Emotional Intelligence (EI) concepts and practical self-awareness and self-management exercises. Students were grouped for interactive activities, fostering collaboration and hands-on learning. This feedback survey collected their perceptions on session enjoyment, understanding, group dynamics, and practical relevance.

Methodology

- **Participants:** 71 high school students.
- **Data Collection:** Post-workshop feedback survey.
- **Question Types:**
 - **Qualitative:** Open-ended questions on feelings, understanding, and experiences.
 - **Quantitative:** Multiple-choice questions allowing students to rate enjoyment, understanding, and perceived learning.

Results

3.1 Engagement & Enjoyment (Q1)

- **Qualitative:** Most students found the workshop “interesting” (31) or “really enjoyed it” (25). Few were neutral (13) or negative (2).
- **Quantitative:** ~77% reported positive feelings.
Insight: High engagement overall; very few students were disengaged. Some neutral responses suggest minor room for activity variety or pacing adjustments.

3.2 Understanding of the Topic (Q2)

- **Qualitative:** Majority “mostly understood it” (34) or “totally got it” (29), while 8 students felt “a bit confused.”
- **Quantitative:** 88.3% reported understanding.
Insight: Workshop delivery was generally clear; a small proportion may benefit from more structured explanations or visual aids.

3.3 Group Dynamics (Q3)

- **Qualitative:** Most described teamwork positively (“pretty good” – 35, “great teamwork” – 28), with 8 mixed experiences.
- **Quantitative:** ~84% had positive experiences.
Insight: Collaboration was largely successful; mixed responses indicate occasional uneven participation or interpersonal challenges.

3.4 Prior Knowledge (Q4)

- Many students had heard of EI, though most lacked deep understanding or personal interest.
- **Quantitative:** 27.9% have heard about EI and were curious about the topic; 14.7% have heard about EI but did not care that much; 13.2% have never heard about EI.
Insight: The workshop effectively engaged participants with some familiarity but low prior engagement—a good baseline for curiosity-driven learning.

3.5 Practical Learning (Q5)

- **Qualitative & Quantitative:** Majority felt they learned something useful (89.7%), with some strong positive answers, though some answered “maybe.”
Insight: Practical relevance was strong; a subset may need more concrete exercises to fully grasp application.

3.6 Emotional Awareness (Q6)

- Many reported being “a little” more aware of emotions; several felt a stronger impact (67.6% overall).
Insight: Initial gains in self-awareness were achieved; follow-up sessions could deepen and reinforce learning.

3.7 Interest in Future Sessions (Q7)

- Strong majority interested; some “maybe,” with only a clear minority not interested (8.8%)

Insight: High demand for additional sessions; the “maybe” group could be engaged with varied activities or topics structure in longer educational pathways.

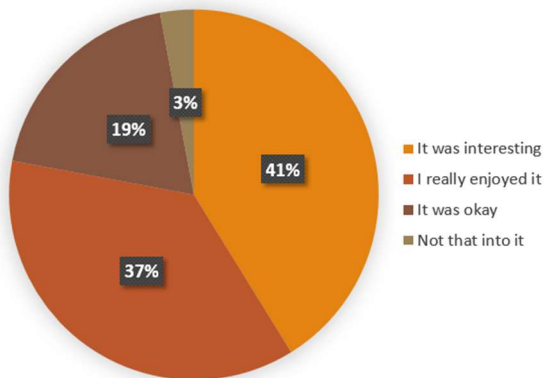
3.8 Importance of EI in Schools (Q8)

- Most students agreed EI should be taught in schools (61.7%); minority were unsure or unconvinced.

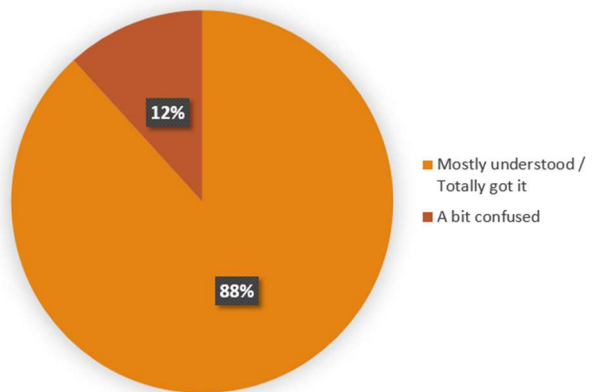
Insight: Students recognize EI’s value for formal education, supporting potential integration into curricula.

Key figures

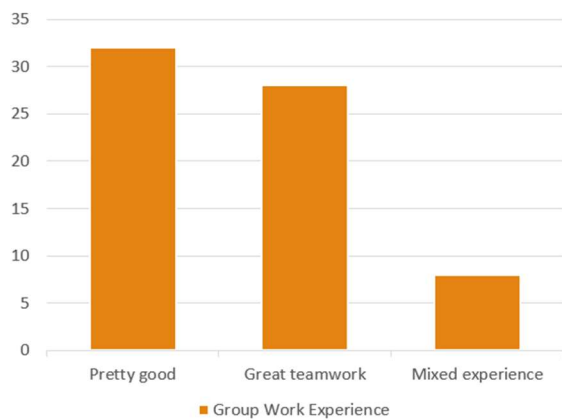
Overall Session Enjoyment



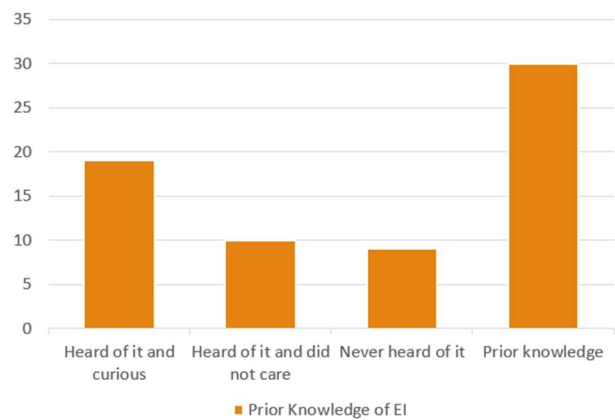
Understanding of Group Topic



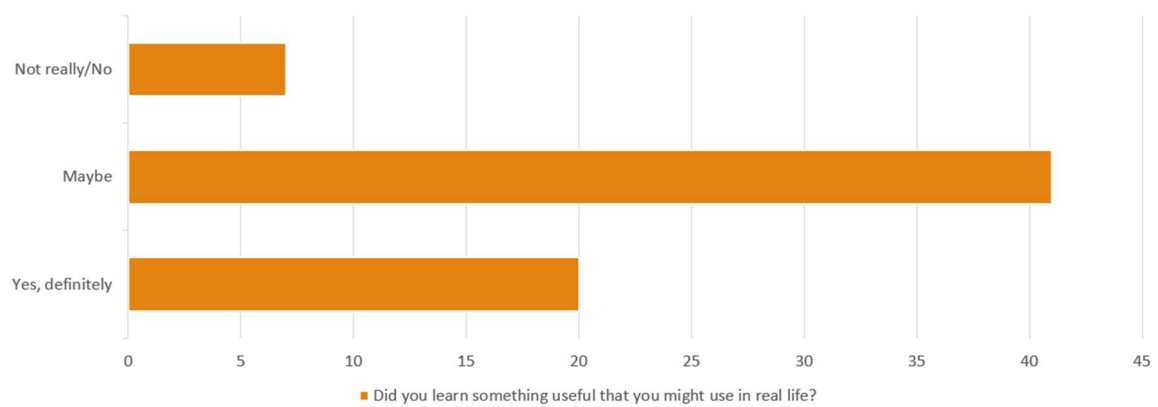
Group Work Experience



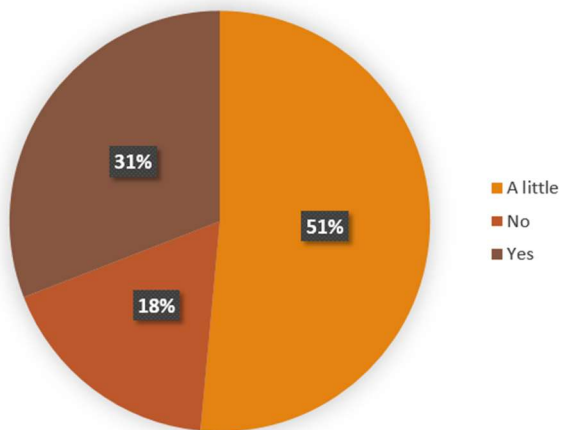
Prior Knowledge of EI



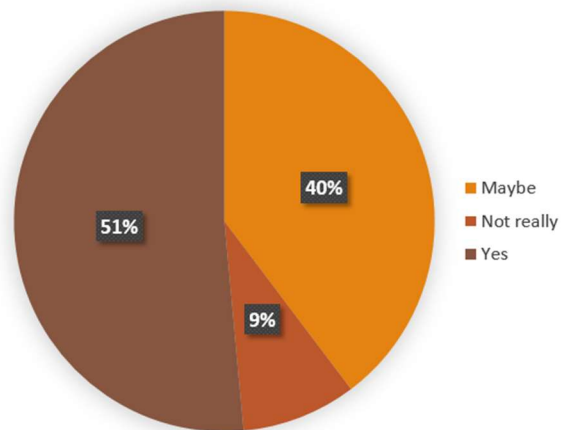
Practical Learning



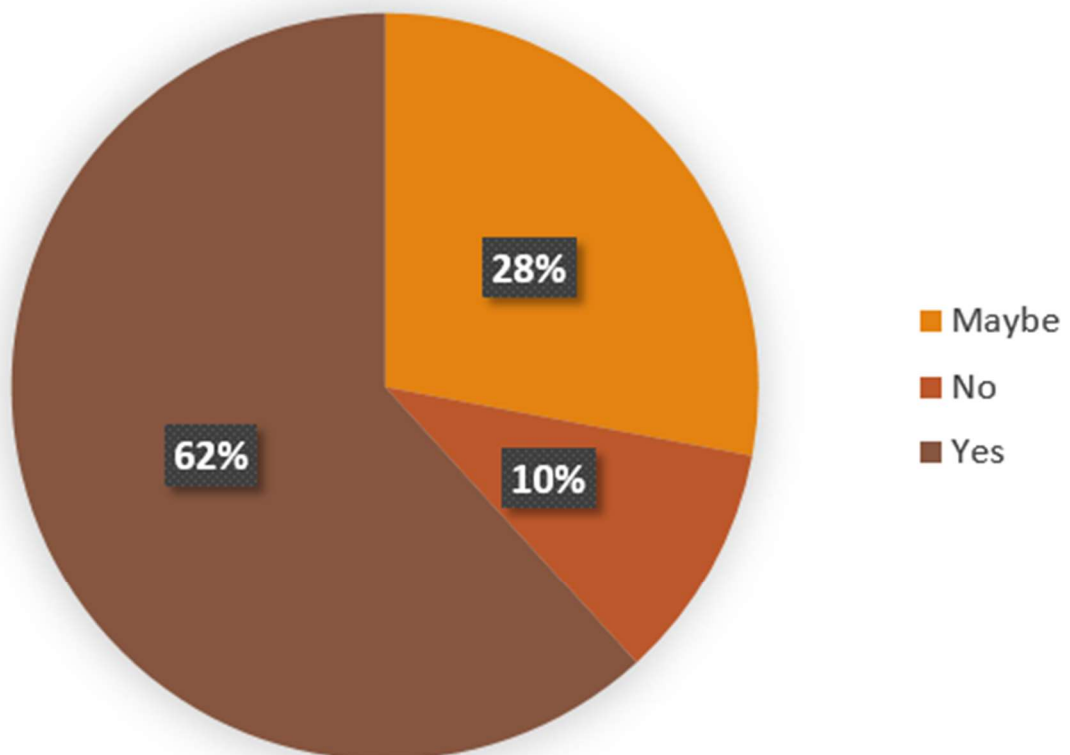
Emotional awareness increase



Interest in future sessions



Need for more EI education pathways



Overall Insights

- **Engagement:** Broadly positive; workshop activities stimulated interest.
- **Learning Outcomes:** Students gained practical EI tools and self-awareness, though depth varied.
- **Group Work:** Mostly effective; some challenges in dynamics.
- **Future Orientation:** Clear appetite for more EI workshops and support for school integration.

Recommendations for Future Workshops

1. **Enhance clarity and structure:** Provide visual aids, step-by-step guides, or short recaps for complex topics.
2. **Diversify activities:** Include different interaction formats to engage students with varying learning preferences.
3. **Follow-up opportunities:** Offer sequential sessions or challenges to deepen emotional awareness and skills.
4. **Facilitate equitable participation:** Monitor group dynamics to ensure balanced involvement.
5. **Integrate practical exercises:** Use real-life scenarios to strengthen perceived relevance and confidence in applying EI concepts.
6. **Communicate value:** Highlight EI's relevance to students' daily lives to convert "maybe" responses into engagement.

Conclusion

The workshop successfully engaged high school students, provided practical learning, and fostered positive group interactions. While most students experienced a meaningful impact on emotional awareness, there is opportunity to refine activities, deepen learning, and ensure consistent engagement across all participants. The feedback strongly supports continuing and expanding EI sessions in both workshops and school curricula.

DISCUSSION

The CURIE project unfolded over a two-year period, combining theoretical exploration with extensive fieldwork to strengthen the Emotional Intelligence (EI) competences of youth workers and their capacity to transfer these skills to young people. The evidence collected across training activities, pilot workshops, and evaluation tools confirms that the project achieved significant impact at both individual and systemic levels.

Integration of Emotional Intelligence into Youth Work

The project demonstrated that Emotional Intelligence is not an abstract construct but a practical competence that can be meaningfully integrated into daily youth work. Through targeted training and applied workshops, youth workers improved across all five EI domains—Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy, and Social Skills. Pre- and post-assessments consistently showed measurable growth, particularly in Motivation and Self-Regulation. These improvements translated into more effective group management, conflict resolution, and the ability to foster inclusive and supportive environments for young people.

Impact on Youth Workers and Young People

Youth workers reported heightened awareness of their own emotional patterns and greater confidence in addressing emotionally charged situations. Importantly, the learning methodology—grounded in experiential, hands-on practice with young people—ensured that competences were not only acquired but internalized. High school students who participated in pilot workshops benefited as well: they gained first-hand exposure to the principles of EI, developing language and tools to reflect on their own emotions. This dual impact underscores the project's multiplier effect, where training youth workers simultaneously benefits their daily target group.

Methodological Innovation

The CURIE project piloted a distinctive **learning-by-doing approach**, integrating structured training with real-life application in school and community contexts. This design proved highly effective in bridging theory and practice. The methodology also highlighted the value of reflective assessment, with youth workers engaging in pre- and post-activity self-evaluations that reinforced their awareness of growth. Collecting qualitative insights alongside quantitative scores enriched the findings and offered a more nuanced picture of competence development.

Contribution to Erasmus+ Objectives and European Policy

The outcomes resonate strongly with Erasmus+ priorities of enhancing the quality of youth work, building transversal competences, and promoting inclusive learning environments. By equipping youth workers with EI competences, the project contributed to reducing barriers in communication, fostering resilience, and cultivating more participatory forms of engagement with young people. Furthermore, the project aligns with the European Youth Strategy by addressing well-being, active citizenship, and the creation of supportive educational ecosystems.

Lessons Learned

Several lessons emerged over the course of implementation:

- Experiential formats are essential for consolidating learning and should be prioritized over purely theoretical instruction.
- Emotional Intelligence training requires continuity; one-off workshops spark growth but must be reinforced through follow-up activities to sustain long-term change.
- Peer exchange among youth workers plays a key role in deepening learning, as shared reflections allow participants to contextualize strategies in their own professional settings.
- Monitoring tools that capture both self-assessment and external observation strengthen the reliability of impact measurement.

Recommendations for Future Iterations

1. **Scale Experiential Learning Models** – Future projects should replicate and expand the hands-on methodology tested in CURIE, ensuring youth workers learn by applying EI competences directly with young people.
2. **Embed Reflection and Peer Support** – Structured debriefing and peer learning circles should be built into training design to reinforce awareness and confidence.
3. **Ensure Continuity and Sustainability** – A series of progressive workshops or modular training paths will support deeper behavioural change, rather than relying on isolated interventions.
4. **Integrate Youth Feedback** – Systematic inclusion of young people's voices in evaluations will offer valuable insights into how improved competences are perceived and experienced by the target group.
5. **Strengthen Policy Links** – Position Emotional Intelligence training as a recognized best practice within Erasmus+ and national youth strategies, ensuring it contributes to long-term systemic change.
6. **Promote Dissemination and Transferability** – Share materials, methodologies, and assessment tools across networks to enable replication in diverse contexts, including non-formal education and community settings.

Conclusion

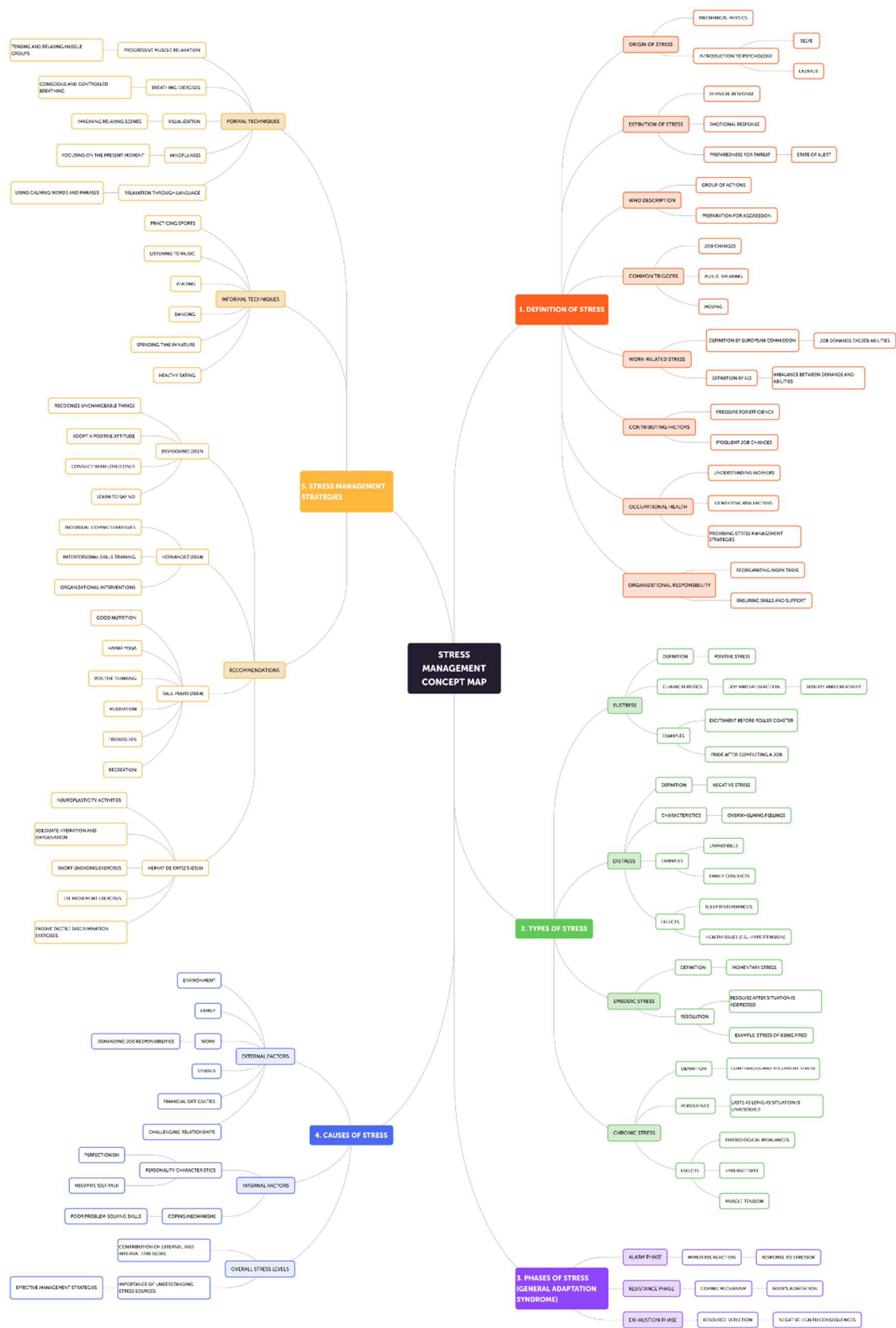
The CURIE project confirmed that Emotional Intelligence is a cornerstone of effective youth work, enabling professionals to navigate complexity, support young people's development, and foster inclusive communities. The results highlight the transformative potential of combining theory with practice, and they point toward scalable models that can be adopted across Europe. Sustaining and expanding these efforts will ensure that both youth workers and young people continue to benefit from enhanced emotional awareness, resilience, and relational competence.

ANNEX 1: CONCEPTUAL MAPS

These conceptual maps are meant to encompass theoretical concepts, good practices, intervention tips and results related to each of the 10 core skills identified by the CURIE project. They allow users to navigate these concepts in a intuitive way, ready for further practical applications and theory developments. For an easier navigation, please visit the CURIE website: <https://www.curieproject.eu/>

Conceptual maps:

1. Stress management
2. Self-esteem
3. Emotion management
4. Social awareness
5. Adaptability
6. Emotion regulation
7. Emotion expression
8. Assertiveness
9. Impulse control
10. Self motivation





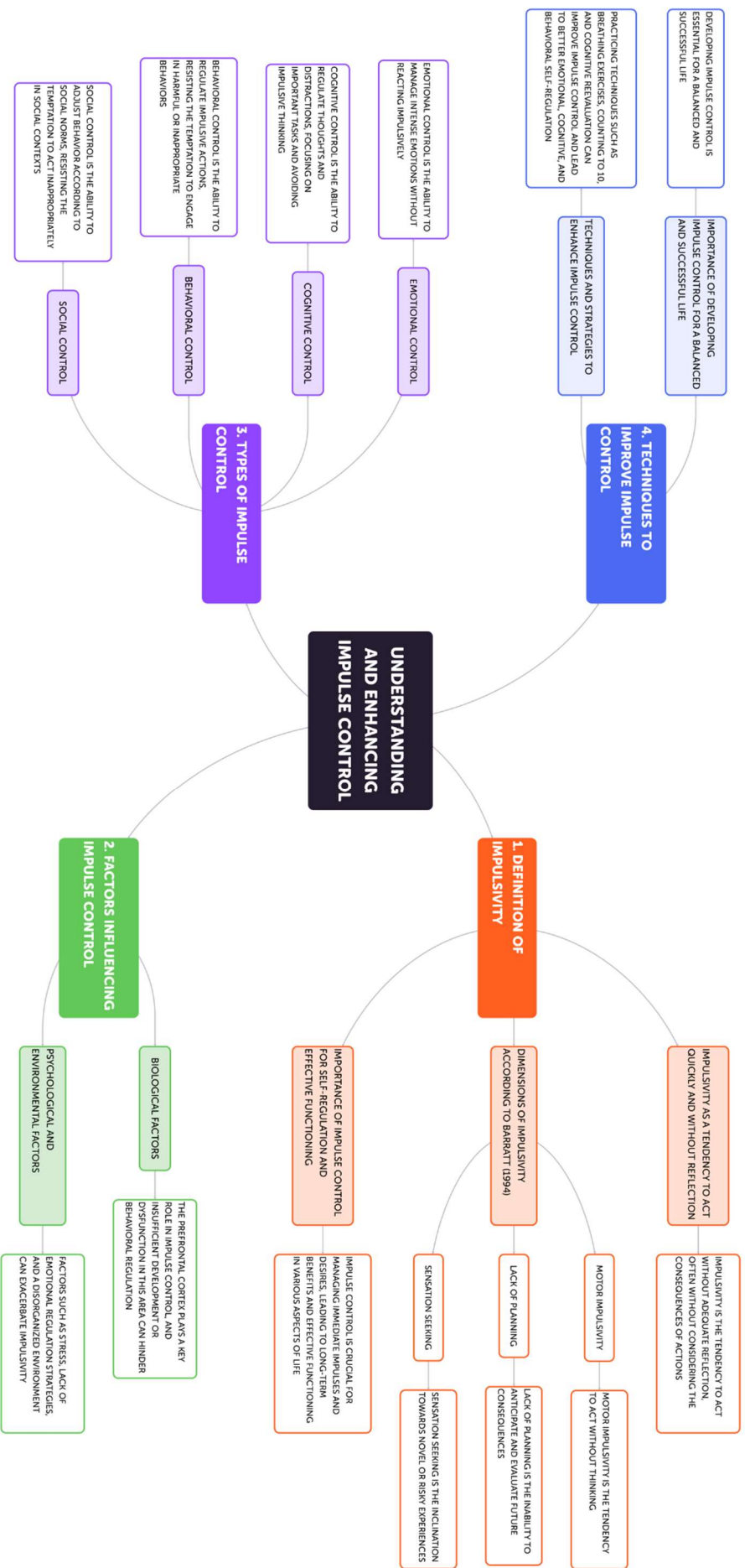


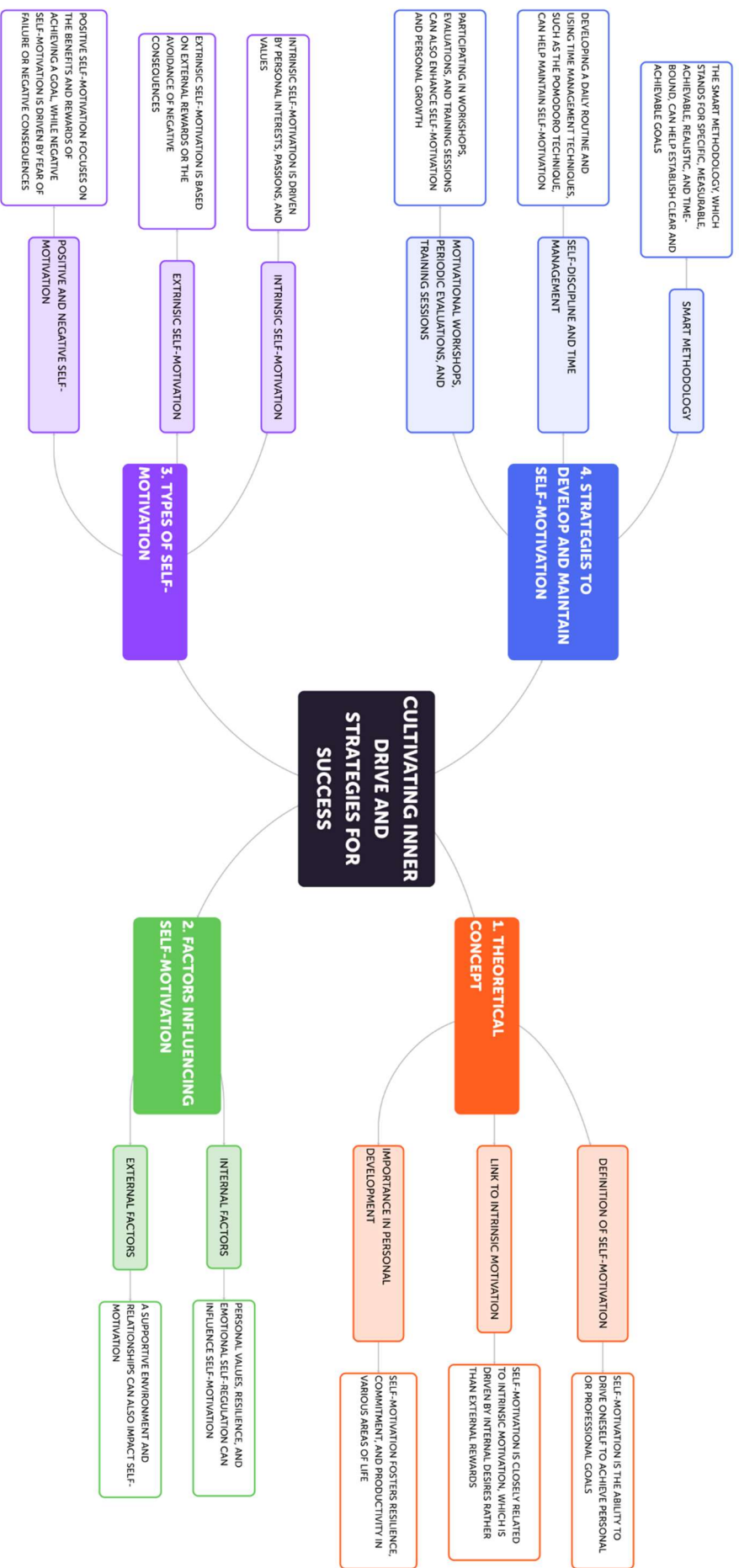












ANNEX 2 PARTICIPATION OF UKRAINIAN YOUTH IN THE PROJECT

We deeply regret that one of our partners – a Ukrainian institution – was unable to actively participate in the project activities due to the ongoing armed conflict. This was a great loss for us, as we firmly believe that direct cooperation would have significantly enriched the content and perspectives of the project.

At the same time, it is important to underline that Poland has become a country where a large number of refugees from Ukraine have settled. According to data from the Office for Foreigners, nearly 1 million Ukrainian citizens, mainly women and children, currently benefit from temporary protection, while approximately 1.55 million hold valid residence permits in Poland. It is estimated that since the beginning of the war, several million people have arrived in Poland, although some have since returned or moved to other countries. In Wrocław, where our organisation's headquarters is located, the presence of the Ukrainian community is particularly visible. Before the war, it was estimated that between 80,000 and 100,000 Ukrainians lived in the city, while after the outbreak of the conflict, this number increased to around 200,000–250,000 residents. Wrocław has thus become one of the main centres of integration and education for Ukrainian youth in Poland.

Children, pupils and young people from Ukraine have been integrated into the Polish education system and provided with additional forms of support. Schools have created new positions for intercultural assistants who help with linguistic and cultural adaptation, translation of educational materials, and communication between teachers, students, and parents. The Ukrainian language has become increasingly present in the public space, while local authorities and educational institutions implement integration programmes, cultural workshops, and psychological support initiatives to help Ukrainian learners adapt to their new school and community environments.

Within the project itself, on the Polish partner's side, students of Ukrainian origin attending schools cooperating with the MODE – Move and Develop Foundation were actively involved. From the planning and recruitment stages, the need to include these learners and ensure equal educational opportunities was taken into account. They were provided with linguistic and cultural preparation as well as continuous mentoring and language support throughout their participation in mobilities and project events. Special emphasis was placed on integrative activities that encouraged the exchange of experiences between young people from Poland, Ukraine, and other partner countries, enabling mutual understanding and appreciation of each other's cultures and values.

During the final project conference, held in Poland in May 2025, Ukrainian students also took part. They actively participated in thematic workshops, sharing their reflections on social awareness, empathy, emotional intelligence, and the process of adaptation to a new educational environment. Their contributions brought an authentic and deeply moving perspective – they spoke about migration experiences, building a sense of safety, and the importance of peer solidarity and teacher support. The discussions with their participation demonstrated the enormous potential of young people who, despite difficult life experiences, show maturity, openness, and readiness to cooperate. For all project participants – both students and teachers – this was a highly enriching educational and emotional experience.

For us, as a non-governmental organisation, it was self-evident that since our Ukrainian partner institution found itself in such a dramatic situation, it was our duty and natural role to express solidarity and provide support – above all through concrete actions aimed at helping young people who found refuge in Poland. Including Ukrainian students in the project

became not only a gesture of empathy but also a way to continue our partnership in a new reality. We believe that this approach – fully in line with the core values of the Erasmus+ programme such as solidarity, inclusion, and equal opportunities – represented an important and symbolic expression of unity within the European educational community.

Fundacja MODE – Move and Develop Foundation

Wrocław, 30/09/2025

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