



WESOUND



Erasmus+

E-MOTIONS

TRAINING COURSE

THE EBOOK

JULY 2024, OULX, ITALY

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“E-Motions” is an international Training Course organised by WeSound that took place in La Cinciarella (Oulx), Italy from 24 June to 3rd of July 2024.

The project gathered 24 youth workers who discovered and experienced new practices and methodologies of Emotional Intelligence as a way to improve the quality of their work with youth; understanding the importance of empathy and emotional awareness as a fundamental key for social inclusion.

This EBook contains the best experiential practices experienced during the course as well as some personal reflections of the experience, let's take a look!

E. I. IN YOUTH WORK

Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, use, understand, manage, and handle emotions.

E.I. includes 4 different pillars that determine our ability to navigate our emotional world. These pillars include: self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy ("other-awareness"), and social skills.

In Youth Work, E.I. is fundamental in order to properly guide groups of young people, understanding their needs and providing relevant activities.

The objective of our project was to increase the awareness of emotional intelligence of our participants through various experiential practices combined with theoretical knowledge and informations about the Emotional sphere, taking into consideration the intrinsic connection between Mind, Emotions and Body.

The flow of the project was guided by the holistic non formal education principals: each day included activities that would include the different types of learners, as well as taking care of 3 sphere above mentioned during the learning

E.I. IN YOUTH WORK

During the week spent together in the beautiful context of Cheateu, an ancient village immersed in the alps, the group connected in different levels, discovering more about their emotional patterns through a program flow that included a self exploration and expression with each day focusing fundamental topic.

During the first day, participants discovered the concept of emotional intelligence and analyzed each of its pillars through specific given questions;
the second day the group explored empathy, the key of connection and inclusion;
the third day was about exploring body expression and movement as a way to connect with emotions;
the forth day was centered on nature, as a fundamental element of well being and emotional balance;
the fifth day the group explored in a safe space, conflict management and anger;
the sixth day participants could explore the villages around the venue and unwind;
the seventh day was about personal regeneration practices;
the eight day came with celebration and follow up

THE SAFE SPACE



As Youth Workers, it's fundamental to create a safe space environment in every session, especially when working with emotions and personal sharings. During our project creating a safe space involved establishing a group agreement that follows 6 important criterias:

- Listening without interrupting,
- Respecting each other's opinions
- The right to pass or not share
- Speaking from personal experience
- No judgement and acceptance of each sharing
- Active listening to the one that is sharing.

THE RECONNECTION CIRCLE



The Reconnecting Circle is a daily practice used at the beginning of each day; it connects the individual to the group by sharing how they feel through words, sounds or movement. Everybody has the time to set the intention for the day, setting the mind, body and emotions and taking the time to listen to oneself and the others.

The Reconnection Circle helps the group to tune in, the facilitators hold the space for each sharing, making sure everybody has the time and space needed.

During the Training Course, it was our morning routine that supported the group in expressing needs and fostering empathy and connection

MY SONG

“My Song” activity carries a great potential if it is done in a safe space, participants can open up emotionally through music , which is an universal language

Goal: Increasing sense of connection and empathy through story telling.

This activity was carried out during the second day of the mobility; each participant was asked to share a song that was meaningful for them in this period of their life. Facilitators created a playlist with all the songs, each of them played randomly while the group was sitting in a circle setting. For each song playing, the volume would turn down and the participant that chose the song would tell the group what that music rapresents for them.

After everybody shares and all the songs have played, the facilitator close the session by asking each participant to share one word or movement that describes their feelings. This exercise empowers individuals to share their feelings to a group as well as fostering active listeing and sense of unity.

THE ALPHABETE OF EMOTIONS

The Alphabet of Emotions is a creative, non-formal education activity that encourages participants to explore and express a range of emotions, building emotional literacy and self-awareness. It's especially useful for youth groups to develop empathy and emotional vocabulary in a fun and engaging way.

Goal

To help participants identify, understand, and express different emotions while fostering empathy and emotional connection within the group.

Emotion Brainstorm (10-15 minutes)

Draw the alphabet (A-Z) on a large sheet of whiteboard.

Ask participants to think of an emotion for each letter. For example, A for Anger, B for Bravery, C for Curiosity, etc. If the group is large, break into smaller groups and assign letters to each group.

THE ALPHABETE OF EMOTIONS

Emotion Mapping (15-20 minutes)

Once each letter has an emotion, participants picked a few emotions that resonate with them; on a sticky note or piece of paper, they write a brief description or a situation where they felt that emotion. This could be a personal experience or a fictional scenario.

Each participant place their sticky note near the corresponding letter/emotion on the alphabet chart.

Group Sharing and Discussion (15-20 minutes)

Invite participants to share one or two of their chosen emotions with the group, explaining why they picked them and describing the scenario. Facilitate a group discussion about common emotions that were chosen and any surprising ones.

Wrap up the session with a group reflection. Participants can share their thoughts on the activity and if they discovered any new emotions or ways to express feelings

THE LETTING GO RITUAL

The practice of letting go is a powerful process of releasing attachment to thoughts, feelings, people, or circumstances that no longer serve our well-being. This act of release is not about avoiding or ignoring issues but rather about accepting what cannot be controlled and cultivating peace with what is.

The goal of the ritual was to identify psychological and emotional charges and practicing acceptance, participants formed couple, each pair was sitting in a dial position and making eye contact. After a moment of connecting together, one person of the couple (A) is invited to ask the question : "what are you letting go of?" The pair (B) starts to answer whatever they are thinking. They are invited to do so without judgement and with complete support and presence by the person asking. When B stops talking, A will keep asking the question "what are you letting go of?" In order to support B going deeper in the process. After around 5/10 minutes depending on the group, the facilitator will ring the cymbals, indicating that now the pair switch roles and now the one that asking will share.

THE LETTING GO RITUAL

After the process is completed and both persons of the couple have shared, facilitator rings the bell and invite each couple to close the moment as they feel, it could be giving thanks, it could be a hug, it could be just staring at the eyes; closing the moment is fundamental as to make sure nothing remained in the open. Always important to make sure to give more times to the ones that need it.

After this first process is completed, participants gather in the circle setting, the facilitator invite the group to a moment of concentration, each individuals put the focus on feeling the emotion of what they want to let go of. The focus is on the internal feeling, and not on the situation or external factors anymore.

THE LETTING GO RITUAL

After that, the facilitator invites the participants to a physical act of letting go, which is holding yarn ball, letting go the emotion through a word, sound or movement, and passing on the string to another person, when everybody has a string in their hand, all intertwined, the facilitator guides the group to a moment of common let go, which is individual from group to group, but in our activity was realized through breathing in and letting go the strings all together when breathing out.

After the ritual, -which is important to do when the group feels already connected, after some day from the beginning of the course- It's important to properly check the general vibe - Sometimes the process is perfectly closed, while some other times the group needs a "shaking off" activity; everytime is important to not force things to happen but read the need of that group at that moment.

Usually the letting go ritual is a powerful tool that brings people to another level of connection.

AESTHETIC DANCE



The Aesthetic Dance is a form of dance in which the dancers, without the need to follow specific steps, release themselves to the rhythm and move freely as the music takes them, leading to feeling of joy.

The goal of the dance is the connection to others, and to their own emotions. The dance serves as a form of meditation helping people to cope with stress and to attain serenity.

During our project, we created a specific playlist that guided the process. The making of the playlist was essential, each song had to follow a specific Flow which we call "The Wave Flow" meaning that it starts with slower bits, and slowing increasing with more upbeat tunes and fading into gentle softer tunes little by little, guiding the group to gently come back to themselves and laying on the floor.

AESTHETIC DANCE

The dance is a powerful tool to connect deeply with the body through movement and one's emotions ; as in every activity, it's important to respect the safe space and respect each other's boundaries. We welcomed participants to the space giving few key words before to start the process (safe space, setting intentions, take the process to connect to themselves)

When the music finishes, the group is invited to lay comfortable on the floor, breathing deeply and observing without labeling and judging what is happening within them.

The facilitator leaves the space and time to the group to unwind after the dance. In a second moment, a debriefing is held to verbalize how was the experience, through specific questions.

MANTRAS AND SPONTANEOUS SINGING

A central element to our activities is the use of the voice as a tool of connection and meditation.

At the beginning or at the end of each day, the group is invited to open or close the session with a Mantra. Mantra chanting involves the rhythmic repetition of sacred sounds, words, or phrases, typically in ancient languages like Sanskrit, but we often adapt it to English words. These sounds are associated with intention, such as peace, healing, love, or gratitude. The word mantra itself comes from Sanskrit, where "man" means "mind" and "tra" means "instrument" or "tool," making mantras tools for centering and focusing the mind.

Mantra singing can be a form of meditation, helping to quiet the mind and focus thoughts. The repetitive nature helps anchor awareness in the present moment, creating a calming and centering effect.

MANTRAS AND SPONTANEOUS SINGING

Mantra singing can be a form of meditation, helping to quiet the mind and focus thoughts. The repetitive nature helps anchor awareness in the present moment, creating a calming and centering effect.

During the project “E-Motions”, we sang different Mantras such as:

Mbele Mama: A chant from Swahili, dedicated to all the Mothers of the world;

Shiva Shambo: A mantra dedicated to the God Shiva, the god of transformation, and it's chanted to invoke the qualities of strength, transformation, and inner peace. We chanted shiva shambo at the end of the session, as a way to invoke the above mentioned qualities

Om Navah Shivaya: dedicated to the power of gratitude and inner peace.

HIKING AT DOWN



During our days spent together in the mountain, one highlight was the early morning hike. We set the alarm at 5 am and started our journey to the mountain cottage, at the altitude of 1745 mt.

The beginning of the hike was in silence as everyone was contemplating the sleeping village in the quiet of the dawn, early birds were chirping and the night sky was slowly clearing up to the east.

After 1 hour and a half of hiking, the group made it to the cottage right on time to witness a beautiful sunrise beyond the mountains.

After a while we gathered in circle and focused on what we are grateful about in our lives, we took a moment to write down everything that would come up in our minds for then sharing it to the circle.

GRATITUDE CIRCLE

The circle of gratitude, especially in a beautiful context such as after a hike in the mountains where everybody felt the openness to the space and the connection with nature, is a powerful tool to bring the focus on the positive things we have in our lives, rather than taking them for granted or focusing only on the negative as sometimes we tend to do.

Participants stated that they felt an uplifting sense of joy and connection after the morning, we highlighted the importance of practicing gratefulness in our everyday lives, identifying moments of presence and journaling are useful ways to keep the sense of gratitude alive.

NAOMIE METHODOLOGY

The first days of the Training were based on experiential learning, living and then reflecting on the proposed practices; during the 6th day of the program participants had the space to experiment what learned the previous day through a specific tool to design and implement their own NFE activities based on emotional intelligence. Each activity was designed for a different group target based on the target groups of the participating youth workers.

The structure given to design the activities was the NAOMIE which stands for

Needs - understanding the needs of our group target is crucial to design relevant activities

Aim - what's the general vision of the activity?
what do we want to achieve?

Objectives -the specific goals, and steps to achieve our general objective

NAOMIE METHODOLOGY

Methods - In the frame of NFE, the methodology that we choose to shape the activity (experiential, role play, debate, etc.)

Implementation - The execution of the activity, following the plan

Evaluation - Did the activity reach the expected objectives? What are the results?

Participants, divided in teams, designed and facilitated their activities with the whole group. Let's have a look to some of them

STRESS MANAGEMENT

AUTHORS

Valērija, Apostolis, Alvaro

Target group: young teenagers 12-16 yrs. old – specifically training for sports and outdoor activities.

Objective: To help youngsters overcome stress, specifically for different competitions and in everyday life.

Method: moving, experimental, communication, team work.

Implementation: if its not windy activity can happen outside, if its windy – inside.

Duration: 45-50 minutes.

Material:

- Balloons (or paper balls);
- Permanent markers;
- Chalkboard or marker board

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Step 1: Introduction (5-7 mins.)

- Introduction and conversation about stress, how it affects different parts of the body. Perfectly if there is a drawn body on the chalkboard and pointers to different parts of the bodies with explanation, how stress affects, for example: brain, skin, hair etc.

Step 2: Dividing in the groups (3 min.)

- Dividing people in groups of 3-4 people.
- Handing out balloons (1 for each group) or paper sheets
- Handing out markers

Step 3: Group work (10 min.)

- Explaining the task: each team has to write down either on the ballons or paper sheets the things that bring stress into their daily lives and discuss that with each other.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Step 4: Discussion (5 min.)

- Each team mentions the things that bring them stress;
- Everybody involves and talk about those things;
- Facilitator writes down all the mentioned things on the chalkboard/marker board (so participants really feel involved and heard)

Step 5: 1st activity (10 min.)

- Facilitator collects the ballons / teams wrinkle paper sheets and make a stress ball;
- 1 volunteer comes in front;
- Volunteer plays with 1 stress balloon or paper ball, throwing it around and trying not to drop the ball/balloon;
- Gradually facilitator adds by one ball more making exercise harder (balloons/balls have to be in the air all the time);
- After it is done everybody talks about how did the volunteer feel during activity and how did it look from the side.
- 2nd volunteer is added to the activity and same exercise continues;
- After activity everybody talks how did it look this time and what changed

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Step 6: 2nd activity (10 min.)

- Participants are divided into 2 groups;
- 1st group comes together and play with stress balls (3-4)
- 2nd group stands around and screams (not offending anyone) making the activity for the 1st group harder and more stressful;
- Facilitator gradually adds 2 more balls/balloons, so the 1st group needs to figure out how to work in a team and not to mess around the exercise.
- After the activity everybody talks how did it feel;
- The groups exchange: 2nd group throws the balls and 1st group stand around and scream;
- After activity 2nd group talks how they felt.

Step 7: Closing activity and reflection (5 min.)

- Everybody sits in the circle and talk about everything that happened during the activity;
- At the end facilitator shares some psychological and philosophical facts

MIKKAMAKKA GROUP

Authors: Gréta, Zsófi, Felícia

Target Group: kids aged 6 to 12 years (might be athletes because the activity focuses mostly on movement, but not necessary)

Needs: moving around, connecting with themselves, others and nature

Aims: learn to acknowledge and express their emotions, listen to other's emotions, improve emotional intelligence and empathy

Objectives: we could measure participation (how many participants we have), involvement (how active and enthusiastic they are) and their attention during the project (whether the project should be shorter or could be longer)

Method: experiential learning, movement and dancing, drama and theatre exercises, outdoor learning

Implementation: the activity takes place in nature if it is possible, with a maximum of 10 participants aged 6 and 12

MIKKAMAKKA GROUP

Evaluation:

- together with the kids: How did you feel during the activity? What did you like/dislike about it? What else would you like to do during a similar activity? Any other ideas?
- with the background team: Did we achieve our aims? Did we catch the kids' attention?

The exercises:

1. Emotion cards: Take a card and read the emotion written on it. Then try to express this emotion through mimics(/dancing). The others have to guess your emotion.

Reminder: As we work with kids, we should use the basic emotions like happy, sad, angry, disgusted, afraid, surprised, bored, excited, tired...

2. Mirror: Walk around and then pair up randomly. One of you is the leader and the other is the follower. The follower should reflect the leader's movements as if there was a mirror between them.

MIKKAMAKKA GROUP

3. Creating situations: We make a circle and then two people enter the circle and create a situation through posing. Others can swap one person in the middle at a time to create a new situation

4. Freezing: Dance while the music plays. Once, when the music stops, every participant should "freeze" in a pose. The facilitator who stopped the music can choose their favorite statue. Then music goes on again, and the chosen statue becomes the next one to stop the music and chooses their favorite statue.

5. Composition: From a circle. One by one, people enter the circle and freeze in a pose in the middle, creating a composition together. Once everybody is in the composition, we can take a photo of us.

MIKKAMAKKA GROUP

6. The way out: We are in a circle. Someone exits the room, and the others decide where is the way out ("the exit") of the circle. The exit should be between two people standing next to each other in the circle. Then the person who was out enters the room and the circle and they have to find out where the exit of the circle is. The two people guarding the exit can only give an inviting signal by their eyes. The others should be neutral.

7. Reflection and evaluation circle with the questions in the description above

EMOTIONS AND MUSIC EXPLORATION

Authors: Anna, Kondylenia and Gabriella

Objective: To help children aged 5 to 10 understand and express their emotions through drawing and music.

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Materials:

- Paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Music player (e.g., smartphone, tablet, or speaker)
- A selection of music tracks (happy, sad, calm, energetic)

Step 1: Introduction (5 minutes):

- Begin by explaining what emotions are and why it's important to recognize and express them.

Step 2: Music and Emotion Discussion (5 minutes):

- Play short snippets of different music tracks (few minutes) and ask the children how each piece of music makes them feel.
- Discuss how music can influence and reflect our emotions.

EMOTIONS AND MUSIC EXPLORATION

Step 3: Drawing Emotions (15 minutes):

- Hand out paper and drawing materials to each child.
- Ask the children to think about a time when they felt a strong emotion (happy, sad, excited, etc.).
- Play a piece of music that corresponds to that emotion (e.g., an upbeat song for happiness, a slow, soft song for sadness).
- Encourage the children to draw a picture that expresses that emotion while listening to the music.

Step 4: Sharing and Discussing (10-15 minutes):

- After the children have completed their drawings, ask them to share their pictures with the group.
- Encourage them to explain what emotion they chose, why they chose it, and how the music helped them express that emotion in their drawing.
- Discuss how different people can feel different emotions in response to the same music or situation and how that's okay.

EMOTIONS AND MUSIC EXPLORATION

Step 5: Closing Activity (5 minutes):

- Conclude with a fun, energetic song that everyone can dance to, helping to release any remaining tension and end the activity on a positive note.
- Remind the children that it's always okay to talk about their feelings and that art and music are great ways to express how they feel.

Anger Trash

Introduce it to the children (around 10 mins)

- It's okay and important to feel angry
- Let it go (Release this feeling) without hurting someone

Materials:

dust bin with a sign "anger trash"

Slips of paper

Explanation: write your reason to feel angry down on a sheet of paper, crumple it and throw it (angrily) into the trash. You can use it any time when you feel like.

Implementation happened at 2024. 07. 17.

Location: Budapest, Ilka Hospital

THE ENCHANTED FOREST



The Enchanted Forest is an experiential activity whose goal is empowering the expression of subtle emotions and sensations through non verbal communication.

This activity requires a specific playlist of ambient/ post rock of 60 minutes music with the initial songs having more dark atmosphere and slowly moving to a more emotional joyful vibes as the playlist plays along.

Step 1: the facilitator creates the ambient in the room, with music playing and diffused lights. Blindfolds and a bowl little paper with different evocative place are disposed at the entrance.

THE ENCHANTED FOREST

Step 2: Participants enter the activity room, one per each, the facilitator give them a blindfold and they take a paper from the bowl. Each paper contains different emotions/ evocative phrases such as: The spring breeze , The care of the grandmother, the curiosity of the child, the whispers of the old tree, etc.;

After everybody took a paper and it is disposed by the facilitator as trees in the forest, the facilitator does a meditation to embody the feelings that are written in the paper, so that participants will get familiar with the feeling and find a way to embody it.

Step 3: The first “tree” person of the forest is invited to put a blindfold on and experience the “forest of emotions” slowly walking following a rope. When the person encounters a “tree”, they will stop to experience the emotion/sensations that this tree has to offer. If the person doesn’t want to be touched, they are instructed to do a specific sign of wrapping the arm together, and the tree respecting the boundary set

THE ENCHANTED FOREST

Step 4: After everybody experienced the enchanted forest, participants are invited to form a circle /lay down on the floor, depending on the vibe / feeling emerged in the group.

Usually the experience is very powerful and the group connects on a deeper level, they might need a group hug, or taking time for themselves, it depends every time.

In a second moment, the group can meet back to verbalize the experience with a debriefing.

Participants that have done the activity shared that it was a powerful cathartic experience, for some other it may result too intense and long.

It's good to place the activity in the second part of the project mobility, making sure that there is 100% safe space in the group, as it's a very delicate practice.

TALES OF THE PROJECT



We are very grateful for having had such a beautiful group that brought so much in our project and lived in the beautiful village of Chateau so fully.

Below are some of their testimonials:

"Above the emotional aspects that really touched my heart, it was one of the most intense learning periods during my life. We had four sessions of experiential learning during each day. I met so many new perspectives and techniques of gathering and sharing knowledge, that I had to write down everything to be able to remember and share this knowledge with my beloved ones back home!"

Felicia, Hungary

TALES OF THE PROJECT

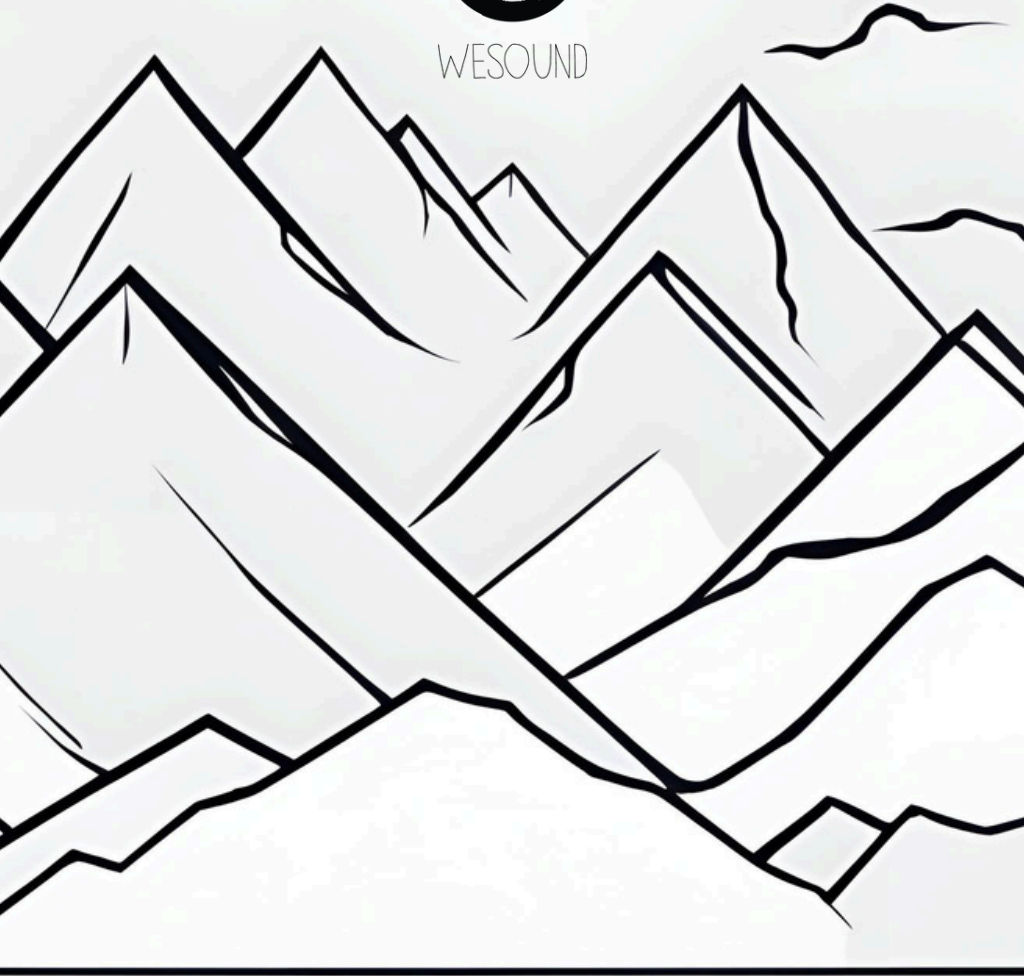
"More than a month after completing such intense 8-day training course, I still savor the echoes of the experience. It provided me with so much energy, motivation, and renewed self-confidence. I danced, laughed, and cried as if I were a child again, and it had been a long time since tears felt so healing. The connection with the other participants was very deep, and even now, I feel incredibly close to some of them. We opened up, shared our stories, and had such meaningful conversations that brought us together in ways I never expected. Moreover, the stunning environment invited us to disconnect from the outside world and connect with nature and us, adding an extra layer of magic to the experience. The journey was beautifully guided by the facilitator team, making it all super impactful... I feel truly grateful for this opportunity."

Raquel, Spain

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