

CSI:
MART

E-BOOK

COOPERATION FOR SOCIAL
INCLUSION OF THE
VISUALLY IMPAIRED YOUTH
THROUGH MINDFUL ART
THERAPY



ITALY - ONDAMIND APS
CROATIA - CABPS
GREECE - PROSVASI

C^SI:
M^AR^T



Co-funded by
the European Union

2021-2-ITO3-KA210-YOU-000045090

INTRODUCTION

CSI:MART PROJECT

E-BOOK

ERASMUS PLUS

SMALL-SCALE PARTNERSHIPS IN YOUTH



CSI:MART Project is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



2021-2-ITO3-KA210-YOU-000045090

COOPERATION FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED YOUTH THROUGH MINDFUL ART THERAPY

CSI:MART PROJECT

HANDBOOK AND AUDIOBOOK

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“You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.”

– Jon Kabat-Zinn

INTRODUCTION

CSI:MART PROJECT

Cooperation for social inclusion of the visually impaired youth through mindful art therapy

PROJECT SUMMARY

This project aims to increase quality, innovation and recognition of youth work by combining creativity, arts and culture in order to promote inclusion, equality and non discrimination regarding young persons with visual impairments. Through a mutual collaboration between organizations that work with youth with disabilities and an organization that is a provider of quality and innovative youth work methodologies based on mindfulness philosophy we aim to develop a powerful network that will answer to the needs of the most disadvantaged youth group - youth with disabilities

mindfulness and art therapy



What is Visual Impairment?



Visual impairment is a term experts use to describe any kind of vision loss, whether it's someone who cannot see at all or someone who has partial vision loss.

Some people are completely blind, but many others have different illness related to the visual

what's called legal blindness. They haven't lost their sight completely but have lost enough vision that they'd have to stand 20 feet from an object to see it as well as someone with perfect vision could from 200 feet away.

PROJECT PARTNERS



Italy - ONDAMIND APS

In order to do good, we start by feeling good.

Ondamind aims at improving the individual and relational process that allows us to live with a healthy mind and get a positive mindset to support the social actions.

Our goal is to build resilience and change based on mindfulness approach and empathy; observing deeply our schemes of action, accept them in order to analyze them with serenity and to find solutions according to our values. Through a unique combination of mindfulness meditation and non - formal education, in group work and organizational intervention, we create occasions to train an open and non-judging mind towards one's experiences and diversities.

Croatia - CAPBS

The Association of the Blind in Split, Croatia, is a non-governmental, non-profit organization dedicated to individuals with special needs. CAPBS actively engages in the development and implementation of projects at the local, national, and international levels, aiming directly at the personal and professional development of the blind. The Association was founded with the purpose of working for the common and public good of individuals with visual impairments. Its primary goal is to contribute to the creation of an equitable society by promoting human rights, implementing anti-discrimination policies, and organizing public activities to foster individual understanding, acceptance, and respect for the differences of people with disabilities, especially those with limited vision. Croatia - CAPBS.

Greece - PROSVASI

The structures of KDAP MEA PROSVASI come to meet the unique needs of every person with a disability in the cities of Larissa, Karditsa, Kallithea, Tavro and Metamorfofi, Mytilene, Piraeus and in the Suburbs of Attica. In our structures, the capabilities of each individual are first assessed and then we organize an educational program that meets their uniqueness and needs. Some of our activities are independent living, theatrical game, psychomotor education, visual art workshops, cooking workshops and also outdoors activities like hiking in nature and plenty of sports activities.

All our services and actions are completely free through the 'Reconciliation of Family and Professional Life'; program of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF).



NATIONAL RESEARCH PER COUNTRY

Italy

.In 2019 The WHO, Word Health Organization, published a recommendation named The World report on vision based on the willingness to set out concrete strategies to address the needs of blindness and visual impairments. It aimed to support all Member States and their partners to achieve the goals regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG target 3.8 on universal health coverage and to promote an integrated new model.

In Italy in 2020 there were approximately 2.8 million people affected with moderate-severe vision loss, compared to around two million in 1990. According to a governative Italian study of 2021, there are 108.856 people with vision impairment (total and partial) out of the total Italian population, approximately 59.236.213. Including all soft forms of myopia and cases of total blindness, the results of statistics analysis shows how the number of Italian people with visual impairments has been increasing since 1990. In fact, in 2021 the average of people affected by these illnesses is around 43 out 100 people and 18% are under the age of 15.

On the one hand, the current and national context describe how the needs of interventions for visual rehabilitation have been increased and, on the other hand, how the numbers of centers has been reduced and especially the distribution on the national territory is very dishomogeneity.



The most concerned sections of these analyses paid attention to the numbers of visual prevention and rehabilitation centers and their distribution on the Italian territory. Specifically, we can mention that in 2017 there were 51 specialized structures and this number has been continuously decreasing since 2015, when there were 70 centers (59 in 2016). Regarding their distribution 8 Regions (out of 21) and the two Autonomous Provinces have declared that they only have one regularly active: among these we can find also three large Regions Of south Italy (Campania, Calabria and Sicily) where, in 2017, 9 out of 10 centers did not have renewed the official agreements (National Report of Health Italian Department of policies regarding blindness, education and visual rehabilitation, Italy 2018).

Italian Government and non-profit institutes for people with visual impairments
The National Health Service and the provincial health departments promote the health assistance on a regular basis for basic needs, specialist services and pharmaceutical helps, free of charge to those with disabilities, such as visually impaired people who have pensions with low incomes. These services are provided by public bodies but the costs and the materials, indispensable for independence and rehabilitation, are covered with the assistance of private institutes and non profit associations. Specifically, the main services carry out by public bodies are the following:

- assistance to visually impaired people who live in vulnerable conditions and located in rural areas
- home nursing and general care for the basic and primary needs
- fiscal and economics allowances (Special partially blind Allowance, Total Blind pension, Partially blind Pension, etc..)

These basic services need to be integrated with programs and services provided by private and non profit institutes.

The Italian Union of the Blind and Partially Sighted

One of the most historic and important organizations in this field is the UICI, The Italian Union of the Blind and Partially Sighted, an independent organization founded on 6th October 1920 inspired by some militarys who had lost their sight during World War I.



Currently, the UICI promotes the rights of visual impairments and provides many services for prevention, interventions, and treatments. The UICI has local units in all Italian regions and the headquarters is located in Rome. Moreover, in the last decades, many non profit organizations in this field have been established at the local, regional and national level. Currently, we can count a huge numbers of organization targeted on people who have visual impairments, the main areas of interest are the following:

- support for legal and financial issues
- medical intervention and treatments
- education and personal life

Education and work context for visually impaired people

Blind and visually impaired children and youth usually attend ordinary schools (elementary, middle, high as well) with special teachers who work implementing a specific program based on the types of disabilities.

The current Italian debate shows how there are still different viewpoints regarding the proper approach to address the needs of students with visual impairment (vision impairment, vision disability) in formal education.

In addition, there are several good practice examples of initiatives that integrated the formal education with non formal education activities and the positive impacts of this process to children, youth and adults with visual impairments and their families.

Regarding the Access to the world of work, Public employment services, in collaboration with companies and private institutes, aim to promote a meeting point between companies and people with visual disabilities, supporting them during all phases of the job placement process.

Currently, in Italy there are an estimated 900,000 people with visual impairment, which means approximately 1.5% of the population: 150,000 are blind people and 750,000 are partially sighted (workers with disabilities, World Health Organization, European Blind Union).



CROATIA

The World Health Organization estimates that there are 39 million blind people in the world, and the prevalence of blindness is about 5 per 1,000 population. (WHO, Key facts, October 2021.)

According to the latest available data (Croatian Institute of Public Health, dated 3 May 2019, Report on persons with disabilities in the Republic of Croatia), 511,281 persons with disabilities were registered in the Republic of Croatia. Out of the stated total number, 27,092 of them are registered as persons with visual impairment, which makes a share of 5.3% in the total number of persons with disabilities. More than half (14,321) of those registered with visual impairment are diagnosed with "visual impairment and blindness".

From the same report we come to the data of 51,009 persons with disabilities that live in the area of Split-Dalmatia County. That is approximately 10% of the total number of people with disabilities in Croatia. Further on, in our county we had 2882 persons with a visual impairment, which makes a share of 5.6% or 6 people per 1000 inhabitants. More than half of the registered persons with visual impairment (1606) in Split-Dalmatia County have been diagnosed with "visual disorders and blindness".

In the Republic of Croatia the number of young people with disabilities aged 18-30 is 45,676 (Croatian Institute of Public Health, report on 25 January 2022). Almost 10% or 4,951 of total number of young people with disabilities are from the Split-Dalmatia County.

Thanks to the data provided to us by the Croatian Institute of Public Health, we have the current number of people who make up our target group, young people with visual impairments. At the state level, there are 1,618 young people with visual impairments. Approximately 12% of young people with visual impairments live in the area of Split-Dalmatia County where our NGO is registered.

County Association of the Blind People Split has 19 members who belong to our target group, that is approximately 10% of the total number of our active members (CABPS, own research, 01.2022.).



Governmental facilities for people with disabilities

Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities

The Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities is an independent state institution whose purpose is to protect, monitor and promote the rights and interests of persons with disabilities in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, international treaties and laws.

The Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities is Anka Slonjšak, BA Economics. Anka Slonjšak was appointed by the Croatian Parliament in 2008 based on the proposal of the Croatian Government and reappointed for a second mandate in 2016.

Vision is to contribute to the creation of a society of equal possibilities for all citizens on the territory of the Republic of Croatia, for all categories of persons with disabilities irrespective of their life situation, age and occupation.

Mission is to serve as a link between persons with disabilities, civil society and institutions which can systematically solve problems facing persons with disabilities and contribute to their higher quality of life, using the latest knowledge, research, technologies and best practices through cooperation with all bodies working to protect and promote the rights and interest of persons with disabilities and children with developmental difficulties.

FORMAL EDUCATION

Unfortunately, in Croatia there is only 1 state institution for formal education of blind people. It is the Vinko Bek Center for Education located in the capital, Zagreb. Primary and secondary education programs for the blind youth and psychosocial rehabilitation of the adults are available at the Center.

Primary education lasts the same as regular primary education in Croatia, 8 years. The Center provides accommodation and care for students coming from other cities.

Regarding secondary education, 3 programs are currently available at the Center:

1. Business Secretary (students are trained to perform all administrative and secretarial work in companies and state institutions - communication with clients, use of means and aids of office communication, especially computers with special equipment for the blind and visually impaired.



-

2. Telephone operator (students acquire highly functional knowledge and skills - knowledge of traffic, position and role of telecommunications, master the skills and techniques of telephony and computer typing and the basics of working in contact centers)

3. Administrator (students are educated for simple office work)

In addition to the Vinko Bek Center, there is another public institution of social care for the blind and partially sighted in Croatia, the Silver Center.

The Silver Rehabilitation Center is a unique social care institution in this part of Europe, which includes work with assistance dogs (guide dogs, rehabilitation and therapy dogs) in the rehabilitation of people with disabilities and children with disabilities. Rehabilitation services provided are based on the principles of equality, fairness and quality of services in accordance with the individual needs and capabilities of users in order to better integrate into the local community. The basic determinants of all activities are rehabilitation in order to fully involve users. The founder of the Center is the City of Zagreb.

INFORMAL EDUCATION

Non-formal education of blind people in Croatia is available only in some of the projects, so private universities organize it only as part of some of the project activities.

One of the most widespread private universities in Croatia, Algebra, was probably the first to conduct this type of education in the EU project, funded by IPA, in the period 2008-2009. The holder of the project is the Croatian Association for the Promotion and Development of Typhlotechnics (HPURT), and in addition to the Public Open University Algebra, the Croatian Informatics Association is also a partner. The overall goal of the project is to contribute to the competitiveness of blind and partially sighted people in the labor market.



During the project, the IT literature was adapted for blind and partially sighted people, printed in Braille and stored in digital form, which enables blind and partially sighted people to follow classes independently. 30 blind and partially sighted people were allowed to attend a verified training program in basic and advanced computer use, ECDL operator. In addition, a specialized IT training center for the blind and visually impaired in Zagreb has been established and equipped, and an interactive portal for the blind and visually impaired has been developed.

HPURT is an association founded in 1991 with the aim of improving the quality of life and meeting the daily needs of blind and partially sighted people. The association carries out activities of information, education, application of modern scientific and technological knowledge in the improvement of typhlotechnical aids for everyday life. The association is continuously working on organizing certified ECDL education for the visually impaired.

EMPLOYMENT

The problems of employment of people with visual impairments are multiple, from non-competitive occupations for which blind people are educated to prejudices of the environment and employers and discrimination in employment. According to the latest data from the Croatian Employment Service, out of 2,352 employed persons with disabilities, only 74 are persons with visual impairments. They work as telephone operators in call centers, masseurs and administrative secretaries, and those who have obtained higher education are most often employed as professors, lawyers, physiotherapists and work in specialized institutions operating in the fields of education, rehabilitation or other support for the blind.



GREECE

The World Health Organisation (WHO) tried to estimate the total number of blind globally. In 1990 it was reported that there might be 38 million blind in the world while 75% of them live in Africa and Asia. The number of persons with low vision was estimated to be 110 millions.

In Greece, the estimate is 21.000 blind people for 1990, while the blind people registered in the Prefecture of Thessaloniki are 1031 (approximately 1% of the total population). But it is likely that the real number will be different on account of the fact either many blind live in distant regions or some families avoid registering their child's disability.

Currently there are no official statistics on the blind population in Greece. We do not know how many are young, how many are children, how many work, how many live per municipality. They are estimated at around 50,000-55,000.

THE PANHELLENIC ASSOCIATION OF THE BLIND (PAB)

Address: Verantzerou 31 street, Athens, 10432

Phone: +302105202408

Fax: +302105222112

The Panhellenic Association of the Blind (PAB) was established in 1932 and is the first Organization of the blind and all other handicapped in Greece. PAB has seven local Branches all over Greece, and there are about 5,000 registered members. It is the exclusive representative of Greek blind people in the National Confederation of Disabled People and in all the official international organizations of the blind. It is also a member of the European Blind Union and the World Blind Union and the Balkan Consultants Committee. The activities are beyond the narrow syndicalistic initiatives. PAB has established services for Blind people such as: Orientation Mobility and Daily Living Skills, a Talking Books Library, Employment and Career Advising Service, Social Workers Service, and others.

LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND

Address: Athinas 17 street, Kallithea, Athens, 17673

Phone: +302109415222

Fax: +302109415271



The Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece is an association specifically, non-profit, subsidized and overseen by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Solidarity (Welfare). Founded in 1946, their aim being to support blind individuals, reduce the consequences from the loss of sight and to raise awareness of the public and the State about the problems that they face. For over 60 years the activities of the Lighthouse, in the areas of information, education and employment of visually-impaired individuals, have made the association as one of the main reference sectors of blindness in Greece. The association provides the following in brief: Lending Library with Braille and Audio books, Braille Printing Center, Audio Books recording studio, Metal Works Unit, Brushes - Brooms Workshop, Ceramics Workshop, Gymnasium and workout areas, Tactual Museum with exhibitions from all periods of cultural civilization, Event hall and Theatre, Training and Rehabilitation Center for the visually impaired, Hostel.

"SUN" SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND IN NORTHERN GREECE (SBNG)

Address: 32 Vassilisis Olgas avenue, 54641, Thessaloniki
Phone: +30 2310830095
Fax: +30 2310830787

The "SUN" School for the Blind in Northern Greece (SBNG); is the only institution in the region of Northern Greece to host and train people with impaired vision. There are established services such as: Orientation Mobility and Daily Living Skills, a Talking Books Library, Employment and Career Advising Service, Social Workers Service, and others. Also the specific school provides courses for the Braille code to teachers and students from special and general education.

CENTER FOR EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION OF THE BLIND (C.E.R.B)

Address: Eleftheriou Venizelou 210 street, Kallithea, Athens, 17675
Phone: +302109595880
Fax: +302109595868

The Center for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind (C.E.R.B) is a Legal Entity of Public Law, supervised by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Solidarity (Welfare).



The C.E.R.B is active in many ways in order to offer the best possible support to visually impaired individuals. More analytically it comprises departments such as Social Service, boardinghouse, library, psychological support, teaching aids workshop, Mobility - Orientation and Daily Living Skills. The C.E.R.B supports visually impaired individuals from all over Greece, with the objective of creating equal opportunities for them by providing them education and thus enabling their accession in society.

GREEK GUIDE DOGS

Address: Veranzerou 31,5th floor, Athens
Phone: +302105200140

The organization "Hellenic Center for Training and Development of Guide Dogs and Mobility for the Blind and Assistant Dogs for People with Disabilities -" GREEK GUIDE DOGS "was founded on July 25, 2008.

The main goal of the Center "Dogs Guides of Greece" is:

- a) to manage and meet the need of people with visual disabilities to use for their safest mobility DOG GUIDE.
- b) Parallel goal: People with Disabilities to meet the need to move and be served by the use of Help Dogs.

The service of providing a Guide Dog to a Person with Visual Disability is a valuable provision, which is believed that in the coming years will be developed in order to meet the growing needs nationwide. It is important that the following Bodies with many years of experience in the problems of people with Disabilities participate in this effort.

Together they join forces for the implementation of this new pioneering idea for Greek data with the Sponsors of the Company PETLINE S.A. (EUCANUBA Foods, ROGZ Accessories and KONG Toys) and BAYER HELLAS S.A .Without the valuable support of the MacHill Celebrity Breeder and the substantial help of Ms. Margarite Weber, the Center could not have had its upward trajectory.



GOOD PRACTICE

EXAMPLE ACTIVITES

TOOLS

RESOURCES



2.1 ABSTRACT

The World Health Organization has declared that blindness and visual impairment affect 37 million and 124 million individuals worldwide, respectively. Of these, 30 million are blind, and 14 million are children. Recent studies have shown that visual disability affects a person's life by limiting social interactions and independence. Thus, evaluation of the influence of visual impairment on daily activities, emotional state, social participation, and mobility is very valuable. Demographic variables included age, sex, education level, marital status, and employment status.

The most common causes of childhood blindness globally are retinopathy of prematurity, cataracts and corneal opacity, and in high-income and middle-income countries cerebral visual impairment, optic nerve hypoplasia and inherited retinal disorders.

CSI: MART European project is carried out by three organizations from Greece with KDAP MEA PROSVASI, Italy with Ondamind and Croatia with CAPBS. The partnership for this activity involves organizations operating in two countries, with similar circumstances. Specifically, KDAP MEA PROSVASI which is a Creative Center for people with disabilities in Larisa, KDAP MEA DIAPLISIS another Creative Center at west Greece, Sports Club «IFAISTOS» Association for persons with impaired vision and Organizations like «FAROS» and «KEAT», for people with disabilities.



2.2 Art and Sports activities

The focus of this study discusses **art and sports activities conducted by visually impaired people in Greece and Sweden.**

People with visual impairment have their uniqueness and strengths in fulfilling self-expression. Sensitivity possessed is related to the ability of gradual cognition including the discovery and imitation of object characters, techniques and the use of art therapy in understanding contextual concepts. **Sports activities encompass entertainment, Cultivation of cognitive and motor skills and Increase self-esteem and self-confidence.**

For this purpose, an indicative sample of 100 people with disabilities will take part in activities from each organization equal. This will promote the socialization of people with visually disabilities, provide improved behavioral outcomes and lead them to a better mental-physical well-being and quality of life.

Furthermore, based on the results of this study, we recommend the **promotion of education, community participation, and leisure programs** in addition to providing rehabilitation services, training for mobility, self-care, and daily activities for individuals with blindness and low vision.

MAIN

There is an important need to expand physical activity and athletic opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The benefits of physical activity and athletic programs are equally important for individuals with disabilities as they are for all individuals. **Physical activity is an effective intervention for addressing the obesity epidemic that is especially problematic for individuals with disabilities.** Individuals with disabilities who participate in physical activity have higher self-esteem, better body images and higher rates of academic success. Despite these benefits, individuals with disabilities are not getting the same amount of physical activity and athletic opportunities as individuals without disabilities.



KDAP MEA PROSVASI is a Creative Center for Children and Adults with Disabilities in Greece. The Prosvasi has managed to offer both beneficiaries programs in the development of individual skills and in intergration into society to people with disabilities.

It provides free Participation without any exclusion of a child or Adult through NSRF (National Strategic Reference Framework) program: "Harmonization of Family and Professional Life" and includes actions and activities for people with disabilities but also for their parents.

Many of them are the following:

- Physical Education
- Visual Arts workshop
- Yoga
- Taekwon Do
- Paralympic sports
- Pottery/Decoupage workshop
- Theatrical Game
- Psychomotor education
- Swimming
- Football
- Horse Riding
- Badminton
- Socialization programs
- Sailing
- Goalball



KDAP MEA DIAPLISIS

Creative Center for people with disabilities.

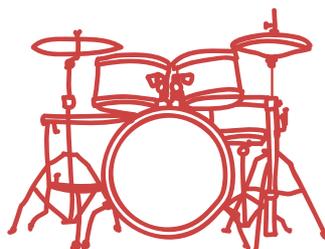
The main objectives of the organization are:

- the education of children in functional ways of feeding
- their training in social feeding rules and
- to improve their eating habits.

Moreover, it provides to their participants activities like Gymnastics and Musical Motor Education. Gymnastics programme contribute both the entertainment and relaxation of the trainees, as well as to the maintenance or development of their physical condition, which is directly linked to their health.

Although the purpose of music-motor education is the creative musical occupation of children and the development of their musical skills (music, teaching). **Through musical games, singing and dancing, children will get to know musical instruments and explore the basic elements of music** (rhythm, melody, timbre) in an experiential way.

In addition, the goal of music-motor education is the **social and emotional development of children as well as the cultivation of teamwork and cooperation within a safe musical environment**. Through music they can express themselves and communicate better.



«IFAISTOS»

Sports Club Of Visually Impaired People

Some of the activities people can take part are the following

Goalball

Goalball is a purely Paralympic sport and is aimed at athletes with visual impairments. It was created in 1946 in an effort to rehabilitate blind World War II veterans and was introduced in 1976 at the Toronto Paralympics. The first Greek participation was carried out by A.S.T. HEFAESTOS in 2001 at the international tournament in Madrid representing our country. The ball has bells inside that help the players orient themselves by showing them the direction of the ball. For this reason, while the game is in progress, complete silence is required in the area in order for the players to concentrate and react immediately to the ball. Goalball's governing body is the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA), <http://www.ibsasport.org/> and the sport is played in over 120 countries worldwide.

Judo

A basic principle of Judo is respect for the opponent. Blind Judo (Men) was included in the competition program of the Seoul Paralympic Games in 1988 and Women's Judo in the Athens Paralympic Games in 2004. The Judo athlete (Judoga) wears the Judo uniform of Judogi. In a race one time blue and the other white.

The Lighthouse

The Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece, under operation since 1946, is a Non-profit Association, Specially Recognized as Philanthropic and specially certified as Social Care Service Provider. Its activities are supervised by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and it is financially supported by the Prefecture of Attica on behalf of the Greek state.

The mission and fundamental aims of the association as defined in its articles are:

- The social integration and the professional training of the visually impaired ones, along with the development of their other skills, abilities and dexterities to the higher possible degree, as equal members of the society.
- The support of the visually impaired one's and the elimination of the blindness' consequences for their independence both in their daily lives and their profession, through special methods and tools and the assistance of modern technology
- The provision of social services to the visually impaired ones (blind, partially sighted and newly-blinded ones) and their families.

The average number of its beneficiaries per year is over 2,000 people, in Greece, Cyprus and expatriates abroad.

The Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece provides its beneficiaries with opportunities for creative employment, socialization and skills development.

- Ceramic & Sculpture
- Theatrical Workshop
- Braille courses
- Knitting & Macrame
- Chess



CENTER FOR EDUCATION & REHABILITATION FOR THE BLIND

The Centre for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind (CERB), former "Home of the Blind", was founded in 1906 by G. Drosini and D. Vikela, at the expense of Ampet brothers. Its initial cause was to protect the blind. Until 1979, it was a charitable association, chaired by the current Archbishop of Athens.

The Center for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind (CERB), with two Units in Athens and in Thessaloniki, provides services to visually impaired people of all ages, concerning education and rehabilitation, on a national level. The main objective of the Center is the complete independence of the visually impaired person and his / her integration into society. With the appropriate training and support of our staff, and in an environment of mutual respect, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students, is aimed and promoted.

In more detail, the objectives of CERB are:

- Information, support and training for families with visually impaired children, from their birth on.
- Coverage and confrontation of educational, occupational and spiritual needs of visually impaired people.
- Applied modern methods and educational programs – usage and provision of modern technology.
- Research for the improvement of rehabilitation methods.
- Physical Education and Sport Activities
- Orientation – Mobility and Daily Living Skills
- Teaching Braille – Braille Certification

Sweden's national objective of disability is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Sweden's policy is to 'achieve equitable living conditions and full participation in a diverse society for people with disabilities. There are local and county-based councils of disabled persons all over Sweden.

The organisations provide crucial input by reporting on the positions and circumstances of people with disabilities. They also help shape public opinion by presenting their members' demands and proposing improvements. Around fifty disabled people's organisations receive state funding to help them pursue their activities.

The Government has established a disability commission to serve as a forum for discussions and exchanges of information between the state and the disabled people's organisations.

Some of them are the following:

- NKCDB (Swedish National Knowledge Centre for the Deaf-Blind)
- FSDB (Swedish National Deaf-Blind Association),
- SRF (Swedish National Org. for the Visually Impaired),
- SPSM (National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools),

Sweden sports

Women's blind football – Wetterstrom on Sweden's game

Sweden's emerging women's blind football team has their plates full with big upcoming events over the next few years. Astrid Wetterstrom, one of Sweden's goalkeepers and guides, is at the forefront of building women's blind football in the country. Blind football was introduced to the country in 2014 as an effort to save a local sports ground, Axelsbergs bollplan, which was threatened to be used for apartment buildings.



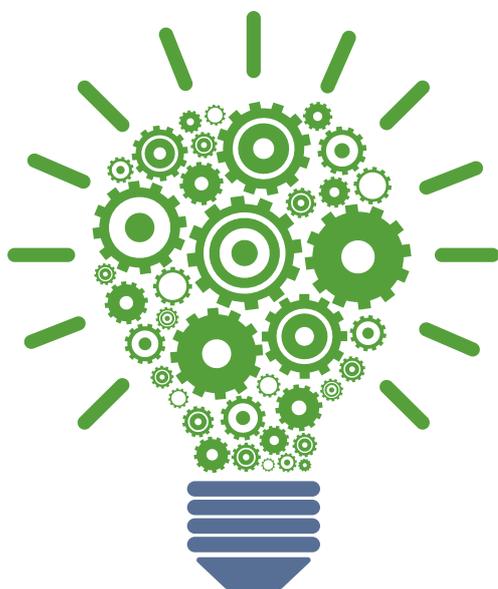
Para-cycling tandem Tandem is a para-cycling classification for cyclists that require a sighted pilot for a non-sighted rider. A tandem bike is for a rider with a visual impairment. The name is given because this athlete focuses on pedalling and provides most of the propulsive force. Louise Jannering (born 8 July 1997) is a **visually impaired Swedish racing cyclist** who competes in para-cycling tandem road and track events. She competed at the 2020 Summer Paralympics, winning a bronze medal in Women's Time trial.

Mangosteen artwork created by people with low vision in Sweden.

Fruit-shaped artwork with clay material made by people with near blindness consists of four types: water apple, snake fruit, guava and apples in the making works technique. Some oval shapes were made by pitching and texture techniques of point-depth grooving. Fineness of the surface of the work was made on the type of water apple and apple, but the results were not perfect and had the impression of fruit skin texture. Art therapy had shown some success in previous research, however much of this research was dated. Lastly, it aimed to assess the impact of art interaction on the participant's feelings of self-worth.

RESULTS

The project developed an interaction and cooperation between Greece and Sweden by people of the same target group which can be used as an example for the acceptance of the different from society. Our purpose is to build a connection between society and the communities of people with visual disabilities and the use of new and innovative items in creative employment through our activities. Last but not least it's our responsibility to create a society that provides equal opportunities and ACCESS (PROSVASI) everywhere and for everyone. Results for this project are not yet available. They might become available after the project's end date.



2.3 Benefits of mindfulness activities for people with vision impairments

Generally speaking, mindfulness is very helpful to reduce stress, anxiety and overthinking. Through mindfulness, everyone can improve soft skills, such as self-awareness and relational skills as well. Many people find mindful practices the tools in order to work on self-compassion, build sane relationships and deal with issues related to sleep, and dietary habits.

According to the academic Sandra Docherty from West College Scotland, Mindfulness can offer many tools for people with vision impairments, contributing to their wellbeing. The mindfulness methodology can be included in complementary therapies with many benefits for people with disabilities.

Mindfulness practices can support blind and partially sighted people to be focused on the present moment, taking the awareness of the connection between body and mind. Meditation can offer a new attitude helping the sense of control and the development of healthy and effective coping strategies.

The usefulness is different for each person and it is very personal and individual, but generally speaking, we can see several significant positive impacts regarding the decrease of physical symptoms, as well as improving mental wellness.



2.4 Mindfulness good practices

Based on the expertise of this Italian organization, in May 2022 a Training Course for youth workers, co-funded by Erasmus Plus Programme, was implemented regarding the topics of mindfulness and female entrepreneurs. The training took place in a seaside and very colorful Italian city and the participants, 24 girls and 2 guys had the opportunity to improve their entrepreneurship competencies and to cultivate a right mindset for the individual and community wellbeing.

Out of the European projects, it is possible to mention several mindfulness-based workshops which have been set out since the organization was established in December 2019.

Ondamind's methodology includes mindfulness practices and non-formal education activities. Several MBSRs have been carried out. This international program was approved by the scientific and international academic context in 1979. The Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction is 8 weeks of training (plus a full immersion day). It aims to reduce stress and to become aware of own behavior patterns, especially concerning stressful situations.

The initiatives promoted by Ondamind offer a space that allows everyone to experience the change they want. **Through a unique combination of mindfulness meditation and non-formal education, in group work and organizational intervention, Ondamind aims to create occasions to train an open and non-judging mind towards one's experiences and diversities.**



Some of the first exercises in order to get an introduction to the mindfulness approach is the following:

The facilitator can ask the participants to find a safe place, lie down and lead them to pay attention to the present moment. Step by step they can be led with the voice of the facilitator into the meditation session: get the focus on what the participants can see and observe, without judging themselves and without any result to achieve.

The activity means paying attention at the present moment.

Get the focus on what they can hear around them;

get the focus on what they can smell around them;

Get the focus on what they can smell around them;

Get the focus on what they can feel.

Keep at least some minutes focusing on each sense.

The facilitator can help the participants with her/his voice, remind them to just pay attention to the present moment, without DOING anything, but try just to BE there.

With acceptance and truth.



Furthermore, we would like to mention one of the most famous physical places for mindfulness practitioners: Plum Village, a monastery near Bordeaux, France.

As an article published on Washington Post reminds us the attitude of Thích Nhất Hạnh with the following words taken out from his book "The Miracle of Mindfulness" (1975):

"While washing the dishes, one should only be washing the dishes, which means that while washing the dishes one should be completely aware of the fact that one is washing the dishes."



2.6. Erasmus+ examples

TECH.LIBRARY PROJECT

The City Library of Rijeka participates as a partner in the TECH.LIBRARY project, which is part of the Erasmus+ program in the field of strategic partnership in adult education.

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2020-1-IT02-KA204-079967>

The aim of the project is to improve public library services for blind and partially sighted users, which is achieved through the use of ICT tools and training of library staff with the establishment of an international network of libraries to cooperate in response to the needs of blind and partially sighted users. Digital technologies and networking tools are key drivers of fostering improved library services for visually impaired redars.



<https://www.rijeka.hr/gradska-uprava/eu-projekti/aktualni-projekti/tech-library/>

In most EU countries: librarians are not fully aware of the scope and potential of ICT tools and services to involve visually impaired users, and **there is little awareness of valuable experiences and best practices that could be replicated locally and internationally; digital competencies of library staff are often insufficient for effective integration of digital tools.**

TECH.LIBRARY focuses on 3 main goals>

- prefer to exchange of best practices among the staff of different libraries on services and ICT tools to involve visually impaired users
- expand the digital competencies of library staff through customized training activities on ICT tools
- establish a network of libraries for cooperation in response to the needs of visually impaired users.

2.6. Erasmus+ examples

In order to achieve the envisaged goals, the following activities will be carried out:

- coordination of the project, which will guarantee good technical and financial management of the project
- exchange of best practices and study visits to give each participant the opportunity to learn and understand how other libraries and countries use ICT to involve visually impaired users
- development of a web platform that enables users to train, exchange experiences and opinions, communicate, network and disseminate project activities and initiatives
- short-term joint training of staff on the latest ICT technologies to provide services to users with visual impairments
- targeted dissemination and exploitation activities: 6 conferences (3 at transnational level) to disseminate project achievements and involve stakeholders within the TECH.LIBRARY online platform.

In addition to the City Library of Rijeka, the project also involves six partners from five European countries, five public libraries and one national library. The Community of Municipalities of Romagna Faentina from Italy is the main coordinator of the project, and the partners are the City Library of Ljubljana from Slovenia, the National Library of Romania, the Regional Library of Veliko Tarnovo from Bulgaria and the Municipality of Maszalaca from Latvia.

The project will involve 122 participants in training and exchange of best practices, while 260 will participate in multiplication events.



2.6. Erasmus+ examples

Moreover, a significant number of external libraries will be involved in networking and sharing experiences through a web platform, which will also provide useful information, videos and training materials, demonstrations and much more content to improve the digital competences of their staff.

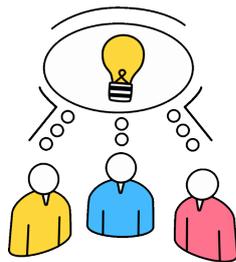


Expected project results:

TECH.LIBRARY internet platform

Training video in 7 different languages

Practical guide and best practice recommendations in 7 different languages



The expected impact of the project is to promote the professional development of library staff in ICT methodologies, while improving their key competencies and encouraging much greater involvement in libraries by improving key services for blind and partially sighted users across Europe.

Becoming a truly inclusive library for visually impaired readers is not only about being able to adapt to ever changing digital technologies, but also about enabling library staff to play a comprehensive role.

The project will start operating in the fall of 2022 and will last until the end of August 2022. The total value of the project is EUR 250,130.00, and it is financed from Erasmus+ KA2, the key activity "Strategic Partnership in Adult Education".

2.6. Erasmus+ examples

MISSING STEP

The Croatian Association of the Blind implemented the “Missing Step” project, funded by the European Social Fund. The overall goal of the project is to increase the social inclusion of unemployed people with visual impairments by **building the necessary competencies and skills for active and competitive inclusion in the labor market.**

<https://savez-slijepih.hr/project/zavrzeni/2021-2/eu-korak-koji-nedostaje/>

Specific objectives:

- training of unemployed persons with visual impairments for the labor market through inclusion in verified adult education programs.
- strengthening the skills and competencies of unemployed persons with visual impairments for the labor market through communication and rehabilitation training.
- strengthening the capacity of professionals working with unemployed people in marginalized groups and improving the professional skills of professionals from the applicant organization.

Target groups:

- unemployed persons with visual impairments
- professionals working with unemployed people belonging to marginalized groups

Project Partners: Center for Education “Vinko Bek” and Centre for Inclusive Support “Idem”.

In accordance with the planned activities and goals within the project “Missing Step” in Zagreb, verified education programs for masseurs and ECDL operations for the unemployed with visual impairments were implemented.



2.6. Erasmus+ examples

Six unemployed people with visual impairments participated in the program for masseurs, and during the program, partners in the project organized accommodation in Zagreb to ensure the optimal level of support and availability of all content important for the successful implementation of the program.

The program was implemented in cooperation with the Medical School in the period from October 21 to December 16 2020, the participants listened to lectures, completed an internship and successfully passed the exam.

The program “ECDL operator” includes 10 unemployed people with visual impairments. During the program, participants were provided with technical support for successfully mastering the material and taking exams.

The mission of the Coordinator is to contribute to the affirmation of blind persons in the Republic of Croatia by promoting and implementing anti/discrimination, equal opportunities and universal design.

Their vision is a society in which the dignity of each person will be respected and mutual respect and solidarity will be nurtured, and a society in which being blind will not mean less valuable, but different.



TC4SEE

The main purpose of the project “Transnational Cooperation For Social Exclusion Escape” (TC4SEE) is to tackle social exclusion of the most disadvantaged youth groups by finding and creating innovative learning opportunities that allow them to equally participate in learning activities, so that they can gain much needed skills while collaborating with their peers without obstacles.

<https://erasmus.udrugaslijepih.hr/>

2.6. Erasmus+ examples

Addressing digital transformation through the development of digital readiness, resilience and capacity priority is being addressed through the creation of an e-book / audiobook that will present the most innovative solutions in educational youth work with disadvantaged target groups, as well as bring new innovative educational activities and tools that can be used in order to improve soft skills and digital skills in the target group.

Main aim of this project is an establishment of a transnational consortium that works with the most disadvantaged youth groups in order to **share good practices and experiences regarding youth work and creative solutions** for non-formal education practices.



Project partners:

The consortium of this project covers a wide range of experience related to the scope and the aims of the project. Project Coordinator is “The County Association of Blind People Split” from Split, Croatia. This organization has a lot of experience in managing big scale EU projects and plenty of resources for engaging their youngest members in their activities.

“**Citizens in Power**” (C.I.P.) is Cypriot partner which offers expertise and good practice solutions in working with disadvantaged youth groups by developing innovative and creative resources for Non-formal education activities.

“**WALK TOGETHER**”, the Bulgarian partner has experience in creating and implementing activities with the target group but they lack innovative materials that will upskill their youth workers capacities and innovate their teaching activities and methodologies.

Finally, “**EUROPA 2020**” is a Spanish partner known for many collaborations with multiple local stakeholders that work with youth with disabilities, but they also lack resources and skills to implement those activities in the most creative and useful way.

2.6. Erasmus+ examples

Project Objectives:

- To promote and develop non-formal education methodologies that tackle inclusion, equity, excellence, creativity, diversity and innovation in education, training and youth through the use of **innovative methodologies such as gamification and e-learning** specifically designed for disadvantaged youth.
- Establish and develop transnational cooperation between organizations that work with youth with disabilities and youth with fewer opportunities in order to **exchange knowledge, information and resources for innovate such youth work.**
- To utilize **digital tools, resources and creative digital and game/based methodologies** in order to innovate learning processes and increase their quality so that they address the issues of social exclusion of the specific target group.

This project was Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. The total grant is EUR 60,000.00, and project activities will take place from November 1st 2021 to November 1st 2022

DIFFERENT OR EQUAL

Museum of Contemporary Art wants to develop continuous educational programs for adults, with particular emphasis on marginalized groups of visitors - persons with disabilities, senior citizens etc.

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2019-1-HR01-KA104-060497>

The program would consist of workshops, for example educating senior citizens about access to computer programs and internet administrators. For persons with disabilities and marginalized groups of visitors (ethnic minorities, asylum seekers etc.), in cooperation with the already existing Club of Youth MSU will design and implement workshops to include socially vulnerable groups through the prism of socially engaged art.



2.6. Erasmus+ examples

Participants in mobility activities will be staff members of the Pedagogical Department of the Museum of Contemporary Art. Beside the professional staff of the Department, curators of museum will be included in the project, to learn more about adapting programs to disabled people and their inclusion in regular museum activities.

The expected outcome of the project is to encourage persons with disabilities to leave the shadows, and make the museum and its programs accessible, because art must be accessible to everyone.

The aim of the project is to raise awareness about the value of each person as an individual.

"Different or equal" project was Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, under a key action Learning Mobility of Individuals. It is also an example of a good practice project. The project ended in November 2020.



Regarding the European projects focused on mindfulness output we can mention the following.

GO Alive

Through the results of this project it is possible to find some suggestions for developing mindful and art activities for visual impairment youth.

" Based on the above mentioned framework of all the above, the aim of this Transnational (Greece, Portugal and Italy) Youth Initiative "GO Alive", with duration of 2 years, is the self-empowerment of young people with fewer opportunities in Siatista, Rio Tindo and San Cesario di Lecce, using Mindfulness, Leadership, and Community Building tools of non formal education, in order for them to discover their true selves and their role in their community."

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2018-2-EL02-KA205-004425>

2.6. Erasmus+ examples

The second Erasmus + project we would like to mention is related to the target group of refugees.

The Safe and Mindful Movement of Young Refugees and Migrants into Youth Groups.

"The partnership promoted outreach material and the use and value of mindfulness in youth work. The preliminary meetings in each participating country provided the group with the context of the partners' organisations and current outreach and youth group tools in order to inform the detailed learning event in the UK. The main learning event included comprehensive mindfulness workshops, collaborative meetings and first hand experiences of outreach and mindfulness in UK based youth groups."

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2018-3-UK01-KA205-059896>

"I see! I can! I will!"

The main goal of the project was to enable visually impaired and blind young people get aware of their ability to organize and run events. A valuable benefit was the practical experience of working together with sighted young people. Additionally, we wanted sighted young people to practise working together with young people with visual impairments to break prejudices and stereotypes and understand their needs.

All this was facilitated by joint activities during the implementation of the project.

Cooperation with young people from other EU countries created a positive communication experience, strengthened knowledge of foreign languages, and expanded knowledge of Polish and Latvian culture. It encouraged them to broaden their horizons, dare and look for new challenges.

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2020-3-LV02-KA205-003618>

(Wellbeing and Visual Impairment) (Bien-Etre and VI)

We aim to explore varied ways to positively manage mental health and wellbeing through a range of interventions, exploration and training with our parallel cohorts of young adult visually impaired (VI) students in France and in UK. This is a focus students particularly want to address as does the government in supporting development of resilience in young people as part of their mental health and on-going wellbeing. RNC students aided by residential care and counselling staff members organised a Mental Health and Wellbeing week beginning 4th March 2019 (programme attached in Annex.) We intend using practical measures, various exercise activities and short surveys (accessible online) where self-reporting can be compared and contrasted with measured and perceived change alongside continued and stronger engagement with their education. Students come to our specialist residential facilities for intensive and broad training

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2019-1-UK01-KA229-062098>

2.6. Erasmus+ examples

SportSense project

The aim of the SportSense project is to build a connection between society and the communities of people with visual disabilities through sport.SportSense

Goals:

- Involvement in sports activities a total of 100 persons with visual disabilities, coming from Romania, Poland, Hungary, Portugal, North Macedonia
- To increase social inclusion through sports activities for at least 100 persons with visual disabilities from Romania, Poland, Portugal, Hungary, North Macedonia
- Creating a sports activities GuideBook for the visually impaired that can be multiplied by any other organization or initiative group.

To succeed and reach these events we will implement

- 4 transnational events (Opening conference, study visit, training course, closing conference)
- 5 local events (Sports events that have the role of giving the disabled people the social connection they need)
- A Guidebook (the content of this book will contain working methods with people with visual disabilities, sports adapted to these people, methods to implement this kind of sports, rules and safety methods).
- A Guidebook audio version (contains the same information as the printed version, only adapted to the blind).

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/622901-EPP-1-2020-1-RO-SPO-SSCP>

A Journey to Independence

The aim of the project "A Journey to Independence" is to support young people with visual impairment towards the development of soft skills in the field of: teamwork, entrepreneurship, foreign languages, communication, establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, and exchange of experience at international level.

The project also provides for increasing the professional skills of people working with blind and visually impaired youth and developing effective methods of using non-formal education to support formal education of people with visual disabilities through intersectoral cooperation and strengthening the attitude of continuous improvement of professional qualifications and personal development. The project will support social integration and increase the chances of young people with vision impairment as potential workers.

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2020-1-PL01-KA205-080709>

3. CHAPTER

MINDFULNESS PHILOSOPHY AND ART THERAPY



3.1 History of Mindfulness philosophy

For many philosophers, the term philosophy means “love of wisdom”.

Mindfulness, literally speaking, means awareness.

What do these 2 terms have in common?

Mindful philosophy is related to that knowledge, consciousness and truth.

Being a mindful philosophy could mean observing the inner states and around; not judging the present experience and disconnecting from the automatic pilot.

The mindfulness philosophy includes the following keywords: wisdom, non-duality of body and mind, consciousness and awareness.

Thich Nhat Hanh, a global spiritual leader, poet and peace activist was one of the most important individuals for the evolution of the mindfulness approach in North, Central and South America and Europe. This movement started around the 1960s: Thich Nhat Hanh started to inspire people to pay attention to the present moment, observing inside and outside, without judging the feelings, thoughts, and body sensations, converting it into acceptance of the experience of the present moment.

The energy of mindfulness can support daily life with formal activities and informal activities (such as while we are walking, breathing, speaking, etc..) Mindfulness facilitates the connection between body and mind deeply on a regular basis. In this framework, Thich Nhat Hanh became the most important promoter of an approach that focuses on using the mindfulness attitude for social changes, indeed he established the School of Youth and Social Service aimed at non-violence and compassionate action for Peace in the world.

Both Thích Nhất Hạnh and Jon Kabat-Zinn have created important contributions to the promotion of mindfulness practices.

On one hand, it is possible to say that Thích Nhất Hạnh’s teachings are more related to the spiritual aspects in connection with the action's aim of Peace and human rights. On the other hand, John Kabat-Zinn's contributions are more focused on the scientific aspects and daily benefits of its practice.



3.1 History of Mindfulness philosophy

John Kabat-Zinn, microbiologist at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester (UMass Medical School), was introduced to meditation by Zen missionary Philip Kapleau, he studied with Thích Nhất Hạnh and Seung Sahn, and at the Insight Meditation Society.

Later, in 1979, Jon Kabat-Zinn founded the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Here, he studied an international protocol, using the mindfulness approach in a scientific contest: he named it MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction).

3.1.1 What does Mindfulness mean?

“Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.” (Jon Kabat-Zinn).

It doesn't mean relaxing at all, but over time it provides tools for self-awareness and self-confidence in order to take the right actions for your well-being.

The main processes are the following:

Go with the flow.

Once disconnecting the automatic pilot, it is possible to observe the flow of inner thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations without judging them as good or bad.

Pay attention.

Once disconnecting the automatic pilot, it is possible to notice the external sensations such as sounds, sights, and touch that make up your moment-to-moment experience.

Stay with it.



3.1.2 The 7 Pillars of Mindfulness

The 7 pillars are the principles that Jon Kabat-Zin had to develop to point out the main process and put them into action easily.

Inside this Manual, we would like to use the EHN Canada in order to describe them (<https://www.edgewoodhealthnetwork.com/resources/blog/the-seven-pillars-of-mindfulness/>):

2. Non-judging

The world isn't black and white. However, many of us see judgments as just that. Something is either good or bad; this automatic judgment takes over and informs your choices in ways that you may not even realize. It is critical that you find awareness. Not action, but awareness. You must be able to recognize the judgments you automatically make so you can begin to work around them.

3.1 History of Mindfulness philosophy

2. Patience

As the saying goes, patience is a virtue. The same point is made in the principles of mindfulness. You must understand that the events of your life will unfold in time and accept that. There is no need to rush. You should live the moment for what it is and not become too transfixed on the future.

3. Beginner's Mind

It's easy to lose yourself if you begin to believe that you have heard, seen and experienced everything. This principle brings forward the idea that life is ever changing. No moment is the same as another. Each one is unique in nature and contains unique possibilities. The beginner's mind reminds us of this simplicity. The focus here is to not let your experiences become filtered by what you believe you already know.

4. Trust

Having trust in yourself, your beliefs and your intuition is necessary to find peace. Being your own person and letting your ideals guide you are the only way to be sure that you are on the right path. You should be open to learning and be listening, but ultimately know that the choices you make should be decided based on what you think and believe.

5. Non-Striving

Being and trusting yourself is crucial within the principles of mindfulness. Non-striving is the practice of recognizing that who you are is enough and that striving to be "different" or "better" can be distracting. Embrace who you are and find comfort in that. This allows you to concentrate on the things that matter in the present moment.

6. Acceptance

Acceptance can sometimes be misconstrued. This principle is not about being complacent and choosing to be content with things you may not like. Instead, the idea is that you learn to accept the way that things really are. Don't be clouded by your biases. Instead, you should learn to see the facts within our world and accept them as they are.

7. Letting Go

Letting go...it seems simple enough, doesn't it? The truth is that relaxing can be difficult when naturally people become fixated on their own thoughts and ideas. It elevates stress and doesn't allow us to really focus on what matters. To be mindful, you need to be able to free ourselves of worry and focus on the present.

3.2 Contemporary Mindfulness Philosophy

3.2.1 Mindfulness benefits

Since the 1970' many studies show how the practices are in connection with stress and in which areas we can find considerable benefits.

In fact, mindfulness was recognized as an effective mental health practice for supporting almost all people to improve their physical and psychological well-being.

Among them we can find the following:

- Reduced Depression and stress
- Improved Emotional Regulation
- Reduced Anxiety Depression and Stress
- Better Memory and Cognitive abilities
- Stronger and sane Relationships
- Better Physical Health, easily to listen to the bodily sensation
- Enhanced ability to deal with illness, issues
- Facilitation of recovery
- Decreased depressive symptoms
- Improved general health

3.2.2 International protocols

Here, there are the main international programs based on mindfulness. All these protocols are developed in a scientific context.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)

Compassion-focused therapy (CFT)

Mindful Compassion Care Program (MCCP)

Mindful-Compassion Art-based Therapy (MCAT)

Mindfulness-based Art Therapy (MBAT)

3.2.3 Mindfulness new millennial: the current field of work

In the last decades, mindfulness studies achieved different fields of work, implementing mindfulness-based intervention in other areas, out from the clinical contexts where the first mindfulness intervention grew up.

In this new framework, it is possible to easily find mindfulness programs in the following sectors: sports, education and schools, organizational management, social issues, and social projects.

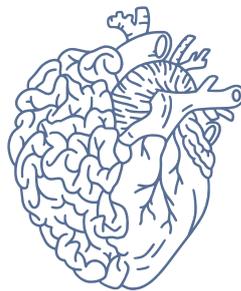
2.4 Program MBAT (Mindfulness-Based Art Therapy)

Starting from the principles combined into this methodology, the official definition of Mindfulness is the following:

“Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally.”

(Jon Kabat-Zinn)

Meanwhile, Art therapy was used in psychology and psychotherapy as the art tools utilized to generate an emotional process. Specifically, it can be used to create art related to emotions and it can be used by the psychotherapist as a tool of therapy.



What does Mindfulness art therapy mean?

The psychotherapist Lauren Rappaport was the pioneer in this field: blending mindfulness attitudes with art therapy outcomes within a therapeutic treatment framework.

In summary, it is possible to describe this program as luggage full of creative tools to make art, as a method to explore the inner aspects of itself with a mindful attitude.

According to the experts who lead this program, it is possible to find it with another name "focusing-oriented art therapy," which underlines the focus based on lived experiences.

According to the official studies, the authors who also published on the newspaper verywellmind.com, we can mention, among others, that the following issues have been dealt with mindfulness-based art therapy: anxiety and depressive disorders, eating disorders, anger-related issues, and stress-related issues.

Among the concrete benefits, we can find the following: improved quality of life (QoL), increased self-esteem and self-acceptance, improved intuition and trust in your own body (how you are feeling and what it means), increased emotional awareness.

In conclusion, we can say that art and mindfulness activities can contribute to improving the skills of self-awareness and finding a safe place where emotions, body sensations and thoughts come up, naturally.

How can a person find further information regarding mindfulness practices?

Currently, it is possible to find a huge number of websites, Apps, online platforms and guided meditations where a person can start to get an introduction focusing on the formal and informal practices and the life philosophy the mindfulness approach promotes.

Some of the main and first-level practices that is possible to find online are the following:

Mindful eating;

Walking meditation;

Body scanning.

Some of the resources useful to find out information and guided meditations are the following:

<https://www.mindful.org/>

<https://www.headspace.com/>

<https://www.calm.com/>

Conclusion

Through this chapter we aimed to point out what mindfulness means and how this approach works: in this way every person can bring her/his life into the hands and choose which actions are better to take in order to promote the individual and community wellbeing.

ACTIVITIES TOOLS AND RESOURCE: NEWS IDEAS



4. CHAPTER

LET YOU BE INSPIRED FROM THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES

TARGET GROUPS:

Young persons 13-30 belonging to disadvantaged target group (youth with visual impairment).

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES FOR INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES MANUAL:

This handbook or resource guide provides activities specifically designed for young people aged 13-30 who belong to disadvantaged groups, with a particular focus on those with visual impairments.

The activities can also be adapted for youth with other disabilities. These activities are intended to be implemented and managed by structured centers and organizations.

This is a great initiative to ensure that young individuals with visual impairments and other disabilities have access to meaningful and inclusive activities.

In order to create these activities we used the following criteria:

1. Introduction and Accessibility Guidelines: Provide guidelines on how to adapt the activities for various disabilities, including visual impairments.
2. Age Appropriateness: Activities should be tailored to the age range of 13-30, considering the cognitive, emotional, and social development stages of participants.
3. Adaptability: Activities should be flexible and adaptable to accommodate a wide range of disabilities beyond visual impairments, such as hearing impairments, mobility challenges, and cognitive disabilities.
4. Safety and Supervision: Safety considerations should be integrated into activity design, ensuring that participants are not put at risk. Clear guidelines for supervision should be provided.
5. Cultural Sensitivity Activities should be culturally sensitive and avoid any elements that might exclude or offend certain groups.

These methodological notes should serve as a strong foundation for developing an inclusive activities manual that can make a positive impact on the lives of young individuals with disabilities. Remember to involve experts in the field of disability inclusion and accessibility to ensure that your criteria are well-informed and effective

Broken Picture Telephone

Activity duration: 45 minutes

Methods: Input from trainers, work in pairs, getting to know activities, reflection, game based learning, creativity

Number of participants: 6-10

Pedagogical objectives:

To increase the social inclusion understanding to the participants

To teach and promote the values

To understand one's values

To improve communication and collaboration

To enhance soft skills (abstract thinking, deduction)

To improve creative expression

To learn how important is the pair work

To increase the trust in another person

Inspiration origin: The street game broken phone and board game Telephone Pictionary

Steps for implementation:

Like the children's game called broken telephone, this game relies on the breakdown of communications for entertainment value and enhancement of the participant's soft skills. Broken Picture Telephone's gameplay involves a series of 2 or more rounds per game. For drawing rounds, the tools provided are rudimentary, consisting of six tempera colors and a few brushes. The game is played in a team of two players. Each team has a maximum of ten minutes to submit their drawing.

Step 1. All players gather around the table. On the table trainers display all the material needed for the game. The participants are divided into teams of 2 players.

Step 2. The first player picks up the brush and one tempera color. Players hold each other's hands. The first player makes a stroke with a brush, and the second player must imitate the movement.

Step 3. After 10 minutes, players switch places and it's time for a second round.

Step 4. At the end of the game, participants need to reflect on gameplay experience.

Requirements: A0 paper size or larger, tempera colors, brushes

Additional material: Mindful Inquiry

The facilitator can invite the participants to reflect on the activity with the following questions: Am I feeling now? Do I prefer the phase when I conducted the activity or the other one where I was conducted by my partner?

Can I recognize some emotions regarding the first step? and what about the second one?

Can I notice some specific body sensations regarding the hands? (if I felt hot, cold, some in particular, or nothing).

Untitled emotions

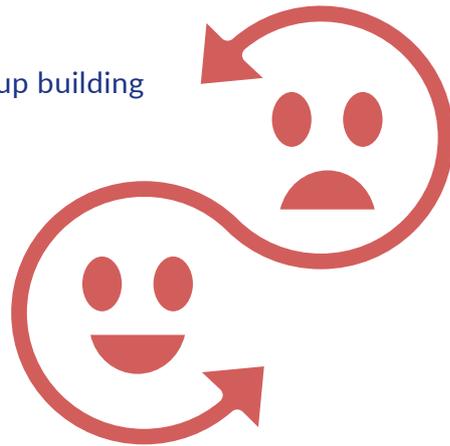
Activity duration: 45 minutes

Methods: Active participation, creativity, reflection, group building

Number of participants: 6-10

Pedagogical objectives:

- To understand one's values
- To improve communication and collaboration
- To enhance emotional intelligence
- To enhance the group dynamics among the learners
- To improve motor skills and creativity



Inspiration origin: Basic Emotions Infographic / List of Human Emotions

Steps for implementation:

Trainers start the activity with the short intro.

There are many different types of emotions that have an influence on how we live and interact with others. At times, it may seem like we are ruled by these emotions. The choices we make, the actions we take, and the perceptions we have are all influenced by the emotions we are experiencing at any given moment. During the 1970s, psychologist Paul Eckman identified six basic emotions that he suggested were universally experienced in all human cultures. The emotions he identified were happiness, sadness, disgust, fear, surprise, and anger. The aim of the activity Untitled emotions is to encourage participants to dwell into their emotions and talk openly about their mental health in group.

Step 1. Trainers introduce the players with the available materials for the activity. The players have 5 minutes to feel the material on the table.

Step 2. Trainers depict one of the basic emotions (happiness, sadness, disgust, fear, surprise or anger) and they share an A5 piece of paper to each participant. This game is played individually.

Step 3. Each participant uses available material to showcase his/hers experience of the chosen emotion.

Step 4. Participants have 15 minutes to create their artwork (to glue all the chosen materials on the paper in various shapes and combinations)

Step 5. Open discussion with the participants. Activity reflection.

Requirements: A5 paper size, various materials (wool, tread, colored paper, cloth stripes, small decorations etc.), scissors, glue

Additional material: Tips on Developing Non-Judgement mindset

Take a moment now: Pause for 25 seconds to sit here, and try just to experience the present moment without thinking about whether this moment and everything it holds, is good or bad – just observe the sensations of the moment. All emotions, positive or negative are accepted: negative emotions can bring us to our depth and put us in touch with our deeper selves. They can facilitate learning, understanding of ourselves and knowledge of the world.

Happy decorations

Activity duration: 2 - 3 hours

Methods: Motor skills development, creativity, critical and strategic thinking, self-autonomy

Number of participants: 6-10

Pedagogical objectives:

To raise the level of self-confidence

To improve the motor skills

To promote personal autonomy

To develop problem-solving skills

To improve concentration and configuration

Inspiration origin: Craft activities for visually impaired persons

Steps for implementation:

Many people commonly use plastic foam balls to create home decor, holiday decorations and art projects for youth. Craft-size plastic foam balls come in a variety of sizes ranging from about 1 to 12 inches. Because of plastic foam's porous makeup, youth with visual impairment can easily decorate these balls by inserting sharp objects such as sticks and pins. Participants will need help from the trainers when it comes to painting or gluing decoration objects.

Step 1. Each participant will choose the styrofoam decoration and decide on the materials and colors he/she would like to use.

Step 2. Creative process begins by inserting a long wooden skewer into a plastic foam object to act as a handle while decorating, so that the participants can easily maneuver the object in all directions.

Step 3. Participants start with painting the ball with tempera colors or another paint whose label specifically mentions that it is suitable for use on plastic foam. Make sure that the participants cover the ball with at least two coats of paint to ensure that the entire surface is covered and white holes do not show through.

Step 4. With the help of trainers and volunteers, participants will glue decorations onto the plastic foam object using standard white glue. Add glitter if preferred.

Step 5. (optional) Participants can try to connect several balls/objects together by inserting one end of a toothpick into one ball/object and the other end into another object and pressing the two objects together, so that the toothpick does not show.

Step 6. Dry the balls after decorating them by inserting the long wooden skewer handles into a deep, rectangular plastic foam block. Once they're dry, pull the balls out of the block by the skewers and remove the skewers from the balls.

Step 7. (optional) Organize a small exhibition or decorate a Christmas tree.

Step 8. Reflection with the participants.

Requirements: wooden skewers, tempera paint, brushes, white glue, styrofoam decorations (various shapes and sizes), glitter, small plastic decoration objects

Happy Loops Bracelets

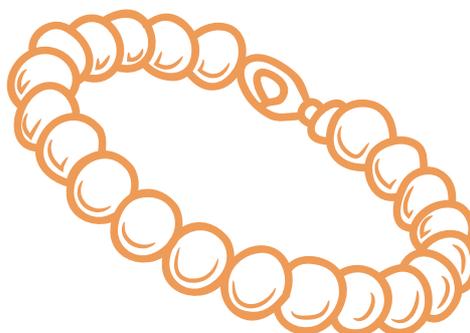
Activity duration: 2 - 3 hours

Methods: Input from trainers, motor skills development, creativity, critical and strategic thinking, self-autonomy

Number of participants: 6

Pedagogical objectives:

- To raise the level of self-confidence
- To improve the motor skills
- To promote personal autonomy
- To develop problem-solving skills
- To improve concentration and configuration



Inspiration origin: Basic Loom Bands Bracelet DIY

Steps for implementation:

For this activity trainers/volunteers need to work individually with each participant. The aim of the activity is to teach youth with visual impairment how to make basic Loom Bands Bracelets.

Step 1. Gather your materials! Trainer presents to participants the loom bands kit. Participants need to count the number of bands for the bracelets. They will probably need around 20 for a child's bracelet and around 30 for an adult's bracelet. For the brading they will need one C-clip (sometimes the clips are included with the loom bands kit).

Step 2. Participants can make a striped bracelet by alternating between two colors, or a fun rainbow pattern by using a mix of colors. Participants will learn how to make loom bands by using 2 pencils or their fingers.

Step 3. Twist one band into a figure "8" and fold it over so it forms a circle. Slide this circle inside the C-clip. This is the beginning of the bracelet or band #1.

Step 4. Pinch one band between your fingers. Slide this band (#2) halfway through the circle you made in Step 3. Pull the ends up and hold them together.

Step 5. Pinch another band and slide it through the loops formed by band #2. Make sure you keep holding the ends of the band #2 together while you do this or the chain will come undone. Now band #2 is securely part of the chain, and band #3 looks just like band #2 in the previous step.

Step 6. Repeat the pinch and slide until the bracelet is long enough. Slip one loop of the final band through the other loop and pull tightly. Slide the last band's remaining loop into the C-clip from Step 3. To make sure you have the right length, wrap the bracelet around your wrist. Also, make sure that the bracelet is not too tight.

Step 7. Showcase the final product.

Step 8. Reflection with the participants.

Requirements: rainbow loom kit or another rubber band loom bands, c-clips, loom hook or a small crochet hook

Caps for the heads

Activity duration: 2 - 3 hours

Methods: Input from trainers, motor skills development, creativity, critical and strategic thinking, self-autonomy

Number of participants: 6

Pedagogical objectives:

To improve motor skills

To enhance soft skills (decision making)

To improve concentration and configuration

To help the development of quick reflexes

To raise the level of self-confidence

To promote personal autonomy

Inspiration origin: Knitting techniques for people without visual impairment

Steps for implementation:

The aim of the activity is to make a woolen cap. The trainers will prepare all the materials up front: plastic modules/callupes for knitting woolen caps. The callupes have round form and cones at the top (like crown). The number of round models needs to be the same as the number of the participants.

To make it simpler for participants with visual impairment our advice is to use the needles medium to big in size. Also, when preparing the materials, choose a tightly woven yarn or wool so that it will be simpler for the participants to see and feel the stitches as they make them, and as the pattern as it develops. Advice is to use bright colored wool.

Step 1. Each participant will choose a ball of wool of different color. Trainers will give the participants a pair of needles and a knitting hook.

Step 2. Trainers/volunteers will work individually with each participant. They will show the participants how to knit the cap by using the round module and the needles.

Step 3. The first woolen tread needs to be tied up at the bottom of the first cone. Participants need to repeat the same movement on each cone, paying attention that they don't tie the knot too tight. When they reach the end of the module, they need to start again, but this time without tying up the knot at the bottom. When they are done with the second round, they need to pause. With the special hook the participants need to transfer the first tie to the next cone, and continue to repeat the movement until they make a final product - the woolen cap.

Step 4. When they reach the end of the plastic module, they need to take the needle and the tread and sew the end of the cap.

Step 5. Trainers will lead the reflection section with the participants. Finishing a knitting project gives them a great sense of success, especially if it is something that they can wear proudly.

Requirements: 6 plastic modules for the woolen caps, 6 pair of the needles, 6 hooks, tread, 6 balls of wool (different color)

The path of memory

Activity duration: 4-5 Hours

Methods: Motor skills development, Group building, team work, game-based learning, reflection

Number of participants: 20

Pedagogical objectives:

To stay in the fresh air

To have fun

To improve motor skills

To improve navigation in space

To raise self-confidence

To provide opportunities for socially inclusive educational and sport activities

To promote diversity among youth

To learn how important is the team work

To promote personal autonomy

To learn information about places

Inspiration origin: Hiking, Project: The Disabled Hikers

Steps for implementation:

Step 1: To organize a team. We divide our participants into groups of 4 in each team with 1 instructor/leader. If it is necessary, we can have two instructors in each group.

Step 2: Determine the goal for the adventure.

Exercise and/or experience fresh air? Spending time with family and friends?

Experiencing and/or learning something new?

Step 3: Research the location.

How many miles and what gradient is the hike?

Is the hike shaded?

Are there any steep drop-offs from the trail or overlooks?

Is the trail paved, packed dirt, grass or rocky? How wide?

How likely will we have cell service?

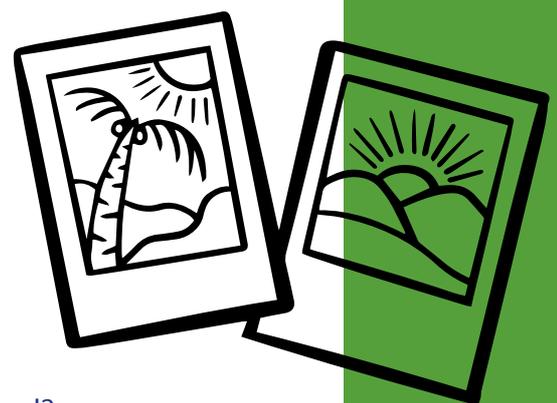
How long would it take us to get back if there is an emergency?

Step 4: Determine what equipment is necessary.

Are there any medical equipment or medications that we might need?

Do we need a fan, or changes of clothes?

Will the wheelchair, adaptive jogger, or soft structured carrier be most appropriate on the trail?



The path of memory

Step 5: Adapt plans if needed.

Weather, health/strength/mood, who else is able to join and many other things can change – it is important to be aware and adapt as needed! This really comes back to the goals for the day.

Step 6: Take note of what did or did not work.

Step 7: Don't forget to leave the marks!

Adaptations:

Appropriate information must be provided at the start of each path with an information sign, designed to be read in Braille, which must include the following information:

- o The length of the route
- o The type of surface of the route
- o Standard and minimum track width
- o The degree of difficulty of the route
- o Standard and maximum slope of the route

It's our priority to protect our children, so for their safety expect for the cases that we have two instructors in each group

For those people who are in a wheelchair, they will have one instructor for their own.

Equipment: backpack, bottle of water, clothes, flashlight, first aid kit, sunscreen and bug spray, hat, sunglasses, snacks, medicine (in any case)

Notes** At the end of each route we mark the area to make our path in Thessaly

Additional mindful material: 4 senses practice

Focusing on our senses invites us to pay attention to the present moment by disconnecting from the automatic pilot.

The facilitator can invite the participants to:

- Notice four things that you can feel. Tune in to your sense of touch. Notice and describe the texture of four things you can touch.
- Notice three things you can hear. Listen carefully. Notice and name three sounds you hear in your environment.
- Notice two things you can smell. Notice and name two smells you recognize.
- (if it's possible) Notice one thing you can taste. Focus and name one thing that you can taste right now. You can take a sip or bite of something, or simply notice the current taste in your mouth.

How are you feeling now? Do you feel more connected to your surroundings and the present moment?

Newspaper craft ideas

Activity duration: 45-50 minutes

Methods: Active participation, creativity, crafts and hobbies.

Number of participants: 6-10

Pedagogical objectives:

To promote social inclusion

To improve creativity and art thinking skills

To raise positive group dynamics

Inspiration origin: Arts and crafts

Steps for implementation:

For instant to make Rolled Newspaper Roses you just have to follow these steps:

Step 1: Take the circular piece of paper and draw a spiral shape on it. You needn't be too precise as this will give your rose a more random look.

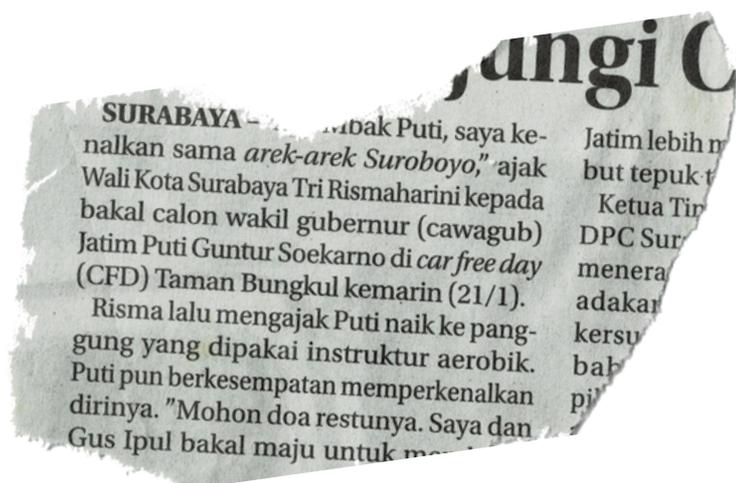
Step 2: Starting at the outer edge, start cutting the spiral, till you reach the centre of the paper and are left with one small round bit in the middle. You should now have one long spiral strip.

Step 3: Start at the outer edge and start rolling the entire length of the spiral. Make sure that you roll it tightly.

Step 4: When you have rolled it all up, paste the last circular bit at the base of your roll. Make sure to adjust the tightness of the rolls before you do this. glue the bottom of the roll together.

Step 5: When you let go of the rose, the petals will open out, the glued part being the bottom of the flower. Stick it to whatever you like – an ice-cream stick, a dried twig, wooden skewers, etc. – to add some floral flavour to it.

Requirements: Tables, to work on them, Square pieces of paper, Scissors, Pencil/pen, Glue



The masks

Activity duration: 2 Hours

Methods: active participation, creativity, crafts and hobbies.

Number of participants: 6-10

Pedagogical objectives:

To promote social inclusion

To improve creativity and art thinking skills

To raise positive group dynamics

Inspiration origin: Art Uncut

Steps for implementation:

Step 1: Shaping Your Mask

Use 4" diameter PVC pipe cut in half lengthwise or make mask form by curving magazine into a semi-circle and taping it. Push wadded newspaper into the back to make a more stable mold form. Place this in a plastic bag so that clay will not stick to mask form. Set aside to use later. Cut a slab off block of clay and place on canvas and use rolling kit.

Use the ¼" slats with the kit to roll out clay. If kit is not available use wooden paint sticks and a rolling pin. Make sure to always use the slats with the rolling pin. Press lace or texture into clay by rolling the pin over the clay still using the slats. Do this before cutting out the shape. Cut out the desired shape with skewer and place on mask form.

Step 2: Add Detail and Features to Your Mask

Cut out eye holes and mouth if desired. Add other features by rolling clay into a snake and scratching lines on both pieces to be joined.

Make a slip to adhere pieces by adding a small amount of water to clay and brushing this on both pieces to be joined. Gently press the pieces together to make sure they are stuck together.

Step 3: Make Holes If You Wish to Hang Your Mask

Use a straw to punch holes on sides to hang the mask with a wire. Allow the mask to dry slowly overnight with a plastic bag placed loosely on top of it. The more complicated and thick the mask is the slower you should allow it to dry to prevent cracks and warping.

Step 4: Paint Your Mask

Once dry, it is time to paint your Mask. Paint with acrylic paint, powdered metallic powders or mica paints for a beautiful finish!

Requirements: Tables, to work on them, Clay, Paints to paint the figures, Clay Roller kit, Wooden skewer for cutting clay, Texture for clay such as pre-made clay stamps, rubber stamps, buttons, lace or anything that can be pressed into the clay, Piece of canvas or cloth to roll mask on Old magazine, masking tape and wadded up newsprint to make mask form or use 4" PVC pipe cut in half lengthwise 10" long, Plastic bag to cover mask form. Wire cut off to slice clay (use a piece of fishing line or jewelry wire), Small cup of water with small brush Acrylic paint

The “Tiritoba” Project

Activity duration: 45-50 minutes /per day

Methods: Group work, critical and strategic thinking,

Number of participants: 20

Pedagogical objectives:

- To Expand self-awareness
- To Develop imagination
- To Think independently
- To Work cooperatively
- To Improve communication skills
- To Express a healthy release of emotions
- To Build social awareness

Inspiration origin: Theatrical game and Doll museum in Larisa

Steps for implementation:

- Step 1: Learn the history of the dolls
- Step 2: Observation / processing of characteristics of the dolls (clothes, face, e.t.c)
- Step 3: Exercise how to hold a doll? (it's not so easy)
- Step 4: Find a script
- Step 5: Read the story (again and again)
- Step 6: Separation of roles (according to physical characteristics of individuals)
7. Rehearsals
8. Performance
9. Ready for the performance.

Requirements: Script, scenery, sets, clothes, dolls

Additional material: mindful reflection

"How did you feel?"

"Have you experienced any body sensations, emotions or thoughts you would like to share with us?"

"Tell me more about what you meant by..."

Solar System Umbrella

Activity duration: 45-50 minutes

Methods: Social inclusion, opportunity to participate, communication skills, enhance cognitive skills

Number of participants: Adjustable

Pedagogical objectives:

To develop problem-solving & decision-making skills

To improve concentration and configuration

To improve strategic thinking skills

To improve cognitive skills

To develop a sense of belonging to a group

To develop teamwork skills

Inspiration origin: Portable Planetarium, Astronomy

Steps for implementation:

Making the Sun and Gas Giants

Step 1: Find a cardboard box. The planets in your solar system model will hang down inside this box. You'll need to fit nine planets plus the sun into this.

Step 2: Paint the box black. Cover the inside of the box with black acrylic paint, along with the short outer sides. Set the box aside on newspaper to dry. For a more even background, trace the box onto black paper. Cut out the paper rectangle and tape it to the base of the box.

Step 3: Gather five polystyrene balls. If possible, find these in three different sizes. They should all fit in the box with a little room left over, although they don't have to squeeze in all in a row. You'll need:

One large ball to make the sun (maximum 4" / 10 cm across)

Two medium balls to make Jupiter and Saturn (maximum 3" / 7.5 cm)

Two small balls to make Uranus and Neptune (maximum 2" / 5 cm)

Step 4: Choose your paints. Acrylic paint is your best option, since some other paints can dissolve polystyrene. Choose a variety of colors to paint your planets, including orange or gold, yellow, red, white, and dark blue.

A stenciling brush or other short-bristled brush will help you get the paint to stick into the nooks and crannies on your polystyrene ball. You might need to let the first coat dry and use a larger brush to paint over it for an even color.

If the paint doesn't stick at all, cover the ball with a thin layer of spackle, let it dry, and paint over that.

Step 5: Paint the sun. Stick a long skewer into your largest polystyrene ball to hold it in place. Paint the entire surface with gold, yellow, or orange paint to make the sun. Place the skewer in a tall jug or stick the end in a polystyrene block and leave the ball to dry.

Solar System Umbrella

Step 6: Paint the large planets the same way. The two medium balls are the two largest planets, Jupiter and Saturn. These are called gas giants. They each have a diameter about ten times larger than Earth's, and are made mostly of a heavy layer of gas surrounding a rocky core.[3] Skewer these and place them in a polystyrene block or separate jugs, so the wet painted surfaces don't touch.

- Jupiter's clouds form bands and spiral storms. Paint this planet with red, orange, and white paint, swirled into patterns.
- Saturn is pale yellow (a mix of yellow and white paint).

Step 7: Paint the ice giants. Your last two balls will represent Neptune and Uranus, the smaller gas giants or "ice giants." About four times the size of Earth in diameter, these planets formed from balls of ice and heavy elements. Since then these materials have turned into a fluid core, surrounded by a layer of swirling gas.

- Paint Uranus a pale blue, made by mixing blue and white paint together. White clouds sometimes form over the solid blue atmosphere
- Neptune is almost the same color as Uranus, but looks darker because it's farther away and receives less light. Paint it blue.

Step 8: Add Saturn's rings. Find a drinking glass with an opening the same size as the ball you used to make Saturn. Put the glass down on gold or yellow construction paper and trace around it with a pencil. To make a ring shape, put down a larger glass over your pencil circle, and trace around that as well. Cut out this ring, then glue it around Saturn and let dry.

- Poke the hole through Saturn at an angle, so the rings will be tilted when the planet is hanging down. This will look better and give you a little extra room to arrange the planets.
- To cut out the ring, start by cutting out the larger circle. Fold the circle gently in half without creasing it, then cut around the smaller circle.

Making the Rocky Planets

Step 1: Shape five rocky planets out of clay. You can use polymer clay, air dry clay, or homemade polymer clay substitute. Roll five small balls (maximum 1" / 2.5 cm across) using several colors of clay:

- Mercury is a brownish gray rock, with no cloud cover. You can make it out of red or gold clay instead for a prettier model.
- Make Earth out of blue clay for now.
- Make Venus out of pale yellow clay.
- Pluto is technically not a planet (it's too small), but it can sneak in anyway. Make it out of light brown clay, maybe with some charcoal mixed in to imitate its blotchy surface.

Step 2: Poke a hole through each ball of clay. Use a large needle to pierce each rocky planet through the center. You'll run thread through this hole later to hang the planets inside your box.

Solar System Umbrella

Step 3: Let the clay dry. Follow the dry instructions on the clay packaging. Air dry clay dries on its own, while other types of polymer clay needs a low-temperature oven to harden.

Step 4: Paint the land onto earth. Once the Earth clay is hard, paint on the continents with green acrylic paint.

- Assembling the Model

Step 1: Paint on stars. Once the black paint on the box has dried, use a white paint pen or small brush to paint white dots onto the inside of the box.

Step 2: Thread the polystyrene balls. Once the sun is dry, stick a skewer all the way through the ball, then remove it. Tape a piece of clear beading thread to the end of the skewer, and push it through the same hole. Repeat for each polystyrene ball.

Step 3: Glue on the thread. Hold the end of the thread and withdraw the skewer. Knot the beading thread two or three times, then attach the knot to the polystyrene ball using a drop of glue from a hot glue gun.

Step 4: Thread the clay planets. Once the clay planets are dry, drop the clear thread through the holes you made earlier. Attach the thread with a hot glue gun, as you did with the larger planets.

Step 5: Arrange the planets in the model. Put the box on its side and hold up the threads on the ceiling. Stagger the position of the planets at different heights (top/bottom) and depths (front/back) so you can fit them all in the box. The balls should go in this order: Sun, Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto

Step 6: Hang the planets in the box. Once you find an arrangement that looks good and fits in the box, mark the box at the ten points where you'll hang the sun and planets. Cut through the box at these points with a sharp knife, and feed the thread the planets are hanging from through each hole. Tape down the thread with strong tape and cut off the extra thread.

Step 7: Cover the top of the box with black paper. Trace the side of the box onto black paper and cut out the rectangle. Glue this over the top of the box to hide the tape. Now you're ready to display your solar system model.

Requirements: Nine styrofoam balls of varying sizes, One pipe cleaner, Wooden sticks, Black marker, Paint and paintbrushes

Introduction Morning Mindfulness Session

Activity duration: At least 15 minutes Up to 30 minutes

Methods: Mindfulness practices, non formal activity, input from the facilitator, sharing experiences.

Number of participants: Up to 15 Young people

Pedagogical objectives:

To understand the principles of mindfulness

To develop an attitude of understanding and collaboration

To improve a non-judgemental attitude respect on own experiences and others as well

To develop a sense of community

Inspiration origin: MBRS activities (International protocol - Mindfulness Based Reduction Stress)

Websites:

<https://jonkabat-zinn.com/mindfulness-in-action/>

<https://plumvillage.org/thich-nhat-hanh/>

<http://www.mindfulness.tools/>

<https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>

Steps for implementation:

1 Introduction of Mindfulness definition and the rules of participation in Introduction of mindfulness practices (this step includes the creation of the sustainable context for sharing their experience in the group). (5 minutes)

1.1 A short description of Mindfulness history (The contributions of Thich Nhat Hanh Jon Kabat-Zinn)

1.2 The main rules of the mindfulness practices in group: how the privacy is important, try to not compare the experience, try to use a active listen ability when another person shares her/his experience)

(from activity number 1 to number 1.2 are not mandatory, you can use it if you want to give a framework of mindfulness history)

1.2 Formal practice 001

1.2.1 The participants can start to sit down on the chair or the yoga mat, take a comfortable position with the straight back and the shoulders back in a comfortable erect standing.

Take it slowly. Try to build up your practice bit by bit. No one requests You to achieve any result, with the mindful approach it doesn't exist: in fact, there are not any goals and there is not the right or wrong way.

Remember, you're learning a new skill that will take time to develop.

Don't worry about whether you're doing it right. Try not to worry about doing the exercises correctly. Focus on using them in the ways that are most helpful for you. Many people find it takes a while to feel comfortable doing mindfulness exercises.

Introduction Morning Mindfulness Session

1.2.2 The participants can start to pay attention at the present moment, focusing on the sounds that they can listen to. The facilitator can lead them to observe what they are listening to without trying to catch something in particular, but just follow the flow. The facilitator can lead them to accept every body sensation, emotion and thought they are experienced in the present moment. (2 minutes)

1.2.3 Breath Practice 5 minutes (5 minutes)

The facilitator can start with the following instruction:

I invite you to focus on your breath, you can kindly close your eyes or you can keep a soft gaze, with your eyes partially closed but without focusing on anything in particular.

Please find a relaxed and comfortable position, with your hands in resting position as well as your mouth and your tongue.

You can feel the rhythm of your breath with kindness. We can try to observe the natural flow of our breath, choosing the place where it is most comfortable. You don't need to change it, it doesn't need to be long or short, just as it appears it's perfect.

You could notice your breath in your body, such as in your abdomen, chest, throat or nostrils.

When one breath ends a new one begins.

You may notice that your mind may start to wander, going somewhere else. It is very natural and when it happens you can bring gently back your mind to the present moment and your breath

If your mind is wandering somewhere else, you can kindly bring her back to the present moment, by trying to not judge yourself, just observing the process. There is not a right or wrong, we can observe the process. We are more connected to certain areas of the body than others, at different times of day. Pay attention to the moment and the air inside and outside your body, use it as an anchor. Now we can move our attention to a simple question: How am I?

We can observe the body sensations, the emotions and the thoughts come out: trying to not push them back, but just observing the process.

Even if you don't notice anything it is fine, this means you can observe your present moment as it is now. I invite you to keep this observing process for some more seconds, enjoying the present moment and experiencing a non judgemental attitude in regard to "How am I?"

Please, I gently to invite you to move the focus back to your breath as it is most comfortable, by observing the feelings, the body sensations and if any thought comes out at the present moment.

You can now kindly open your eyes, slowly, maintaining the focus of your body sensations and starting to see around you.

Introduction Morning Mindfulness Session

1.3 Reflection step activity

1.3.1 The facilitator can invite the participant to share their experiences, by asking them: did you experience any body sensations, emotions or thoughts that you would like to share?

Please, regarding your experiences described into 3 levels (body sensations, emotions and thoughts), May you give me another feedback? I would like to know if there is an art painting or an artsing that can be representative of your experiences, something that is related to experiences you just have done.

.13.2 The facilitator can take in consideration to use these answers for new activities based on working on emotional and physical dimensions through art therapy.

General Requirements for mindfulness practices: The facilitator can find a comfortable and safe place, where they are not disturbed and distracted, it can be a room or a place surrounded by nature.



Walk drawing meditation practice

Activity duration: At least 25 minutes Up to 45 minutes

Methods: Mindfulness practices, non formal activity, input from the facilitator, sharing experiences.

Number of participants: Up to 15 Young people

Pedagogical objectives:

To understand the principles of mindfulness

To develop an attitude of understanding and collaboration

To improve a non-judgemental attitude

To improve physical health

To improve focus and concentration skills

Inspiration origin: MBRS activities (International protocol - Mindfulness Based Reduction Stress)

- Mindfulness-based art therapy (MBAT)
- www.befriend-yourself.com
- www.mindfuldoodles.com
- teach.mindfulnessercises.com
- www.innerhealthstudio.com
- kimberlypoppe.com
- ggia.berkeley.edu

Steps for implementation:

02.1 The facilitator can start the first phase of this activity by preparing the space. The facilitator can prepare the space with different painting techniques. Among the others we can use the following: water colors, house painting, acrylic paint.

The facilitator can prepare the box with several color materials. They can choose to put paper on the floor and the boxes there.

Suggestions regarding the location:

It should be a relatively peaceful place, when it is possible to hear silence and the sounds of nature. where you won't be disturbed The lane doesn't have to be very long since the goal is not to reach a specific destination, just to practice a very intentional form of walking where you're mostly retracing your steps.

Once that space, it can be indoor or outdoor as well, they can invite all participants to take a seat and listen to the facilitator's instructions.

The participant can have an individual facilitator or a person that can help everyone (it depends on the number of participants and the level of disabilities)



Drawing meditation practice

2.2 Formal practice on the breath (5 minutes)

The facilitator can lead the formal practice.

2.3 Art therapy walking practice (10 minutes)

3.1 The facilitator can lead this practice by inviting the participants to pay attention around them (the sounds).

3.1 The first part is a walk mindfulness practice. The participants can walk to the color boxes, put inside their feet and walk back.

Once the participants put their feet in the color materials the facilitator can start to lead the walk meditation practice with her/his voice (it can be in total 10 - 15 paces). Specifically here there is a guide as an example:

"Here we are and I kindly invite you to start to walk. You can choose the speed you prefer, we suggest slow speed in order to be aware of each second of the action.

The walking meditation supports the disconnection from the automatic pilot focus on an action that we use to do normally and automatically. Paying attention at the present moment means to notice every second of this action: the lighting of one foot, the moving of the foot, the foot on the floor, every part of the foot, heel first, the weights of the body into the forward leg, the toes of that foot remain touching the floor or the ground and how it presents a continued cycle.

You can observe the process while you have different materials on your feet. You can feel several body sensations, cold, hot, a pain somewhere, etc...

If your mind starts to wonder, it is something natural, You can kindly return with your mind to the walk meditation, observing every moment of your action with the focus on how your body part is moving to the next step.

Observing the back foot totally off the ground, as it swings forward and lowers.

Hands drawing activity - alternative practice

Taking into consideration the specific target group, it is possible to implement this activity with the hands.

The participants can put their hands in the boxes and create the shapes of their hands on a white paper, with consciousness.

2.4 Reflection step

The facilitator can lead the Inquiry:

"Would someone like to start sharing her/his experience?

What did you feel?" Any body sensation, emotions and thoughts?

You can repeat the activity and change the color material for participants.

Requirements: The facilitator can find a comfortable and safe place, where they are not disturbed and distracted, it can be a room or a place surrounded by nature.

Use art to express emotions, get in touch with yourself and others

Activity duration: at least 1h up to 1:30h

Methods: Mindfulness practices, non formal activity, input from the facilitator, sharing experiences.

Number of participants: Up to 15 Young people

Pedagogical objectives:

To improve self-awareness skills

To rise the awareness of the individual and group dimensions

To improve empathy skills

To get new habits with a non-judgemental attitude

Inspiration origin: MBSR,

<https://www.mindful.org/daily-mindful-walking-practice/>

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/art-activities-for-blind-students.html>

<https://www.macularsociety.org/professionals/teaching-resources/teaching-art/>

<https://www.perkins.org/touch-explore-creat>

Steps for implementation:

- Introduction and explanation of the activity 5 minutes
- Circle names with an artist 5 minutes
- From 5 up to 25 minutes depending on the group
- Reflect activity: 5-15 minutes
- Art work: 10-20 minutes
- Conclusion 5 - 15 minutes

3.1 Introduction and explanation of the activity

The facilitator can prepare the space and support the participant to be welcomed

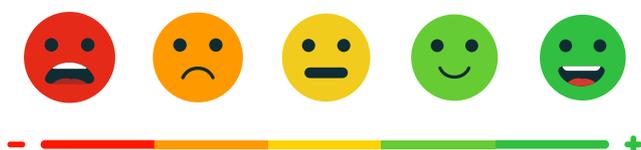
3.2 Ice breakers:

Circle names with an artist.

The facilitators can invite all participants to introduce themselves with an artist who refers to their current mood, like an example "How are you right now? What are the feelings you are experiencing?"

You can take some seconds to think about it, an artist who can be the representative of your actual status.

"You can answer the question "How am I" with the name of an artist (she/he can be a painter, photographer, etc..)



Use art to express emotions, get in touch with yourself and others

3.3 Formal practice: (5 minutes)

The practice should take a seat in front of another.

In order to get the focus on the present activity, letting the concerns regarding the past and the future go, the facilitator can lead a formal short practice on the breath (5 minutes).

3.4 Reflection moment 5-15 minutes

The facilitator can ask to the participants the same question she/he has done previously:

circle names with an artist (regarding the current emotional status)

3.5 Artwork: 10-20 minutes

3.5.1 The facilitator can introduce the art activity: 2 persons will be one in front of the other, they have a big white sheet (they also can have different materials and the participants can choose which one they want to use). They also can choose the kind of pencil they want.

3.5.2 Please, you can create a painting or "draw the line of your emotions": take the pencil you prefer and you feel free to draw as many lines as you want by paying attention to the movement of your hand on the paper, the intensity of the pencil and the emotions of the present moment. At the same time you can notice the hand movement of your peers. that includes your emotions and the emotions of the other person close to you that you can feel, without saying what is from you and what is from the second person.

3.6 Final reflection moment 5- 15 minutes

In order to implement this step, you can use some of the follow suggestions:

How do you feel right now?

Can you notice something new compared with the beginning of this activity? any

Body sensations, feelings or thoughts?

How have you experienced the art work activity?

Have you figured out something new related to your emotional status?

How was the process of trying to feel the emotion of another person?

How was the aware process to know that another person tried to feel your emotions?

Five Finger Breathing Art Activity to reduce Anxiety

Activity duration: from 60 minutes up to 1:45 minutes

Methods: Mindfulness practices, non formal activity, input from the facilitator, sharing experiences.

Number of participants: Up to 15 Young people

Pedagogical objectives:

To reduce Anxiety

To improve the self awareness skills

To get a clearer mind

To figure out the personal and emotional needs

Inspiration **origin:** MBSR,

Freeperiodpress.com

Www.wonderbaby.or

mandala for visually impairment

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/five-finger-breathing/>

Steps for implementation:

- Introduction and explanation of the activity 5 minutes
- Formal practice Five Finger Breathing 5 minutes + daily practice advises 5 minutes
- Mandala ArtWork + reflection moment 40 minutes (it depends from the number of participants)
- The benefits of this practice and how it works 5 minutes

4.1 Introduction and explanation of the activity 5 minutes

The facilitator can prepare the space with several materials the participants can use to paint.

4.2 Formal practice Five Finger Breathing

The facilitator can now make an introduction of the formal mindfulness practice, explaining that it can be helpful anytime a person feels anxiety and it is a very helpful tool to calm down the emotions, the body sensations and thoughts as well.

The name of this practice is Five Finger Breathing. The facilitator can invite participants to experiment: “you can kindly hold your hand in front of you and with the other hand you can trace your fingers. Gently, you can inhale on the way up and exhale when you go down. You can repeat with the opposite hand.”

The facilitator can lead this activity with the following:

“would you like to share something that you notice before and after the mindful practice”?

“May I ask if there is any body sensation you would like to share regarding your hands?”

Five Finger Breathing Art Activity to reduce Anxiety

4.3 Mandata ArtWork

4.3.1 The facilitators use a mandala book (also the mandala book for visual impairment). The participant can use any available material.

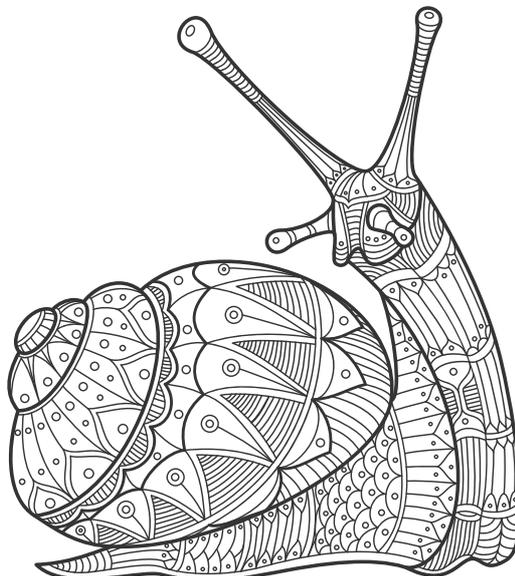
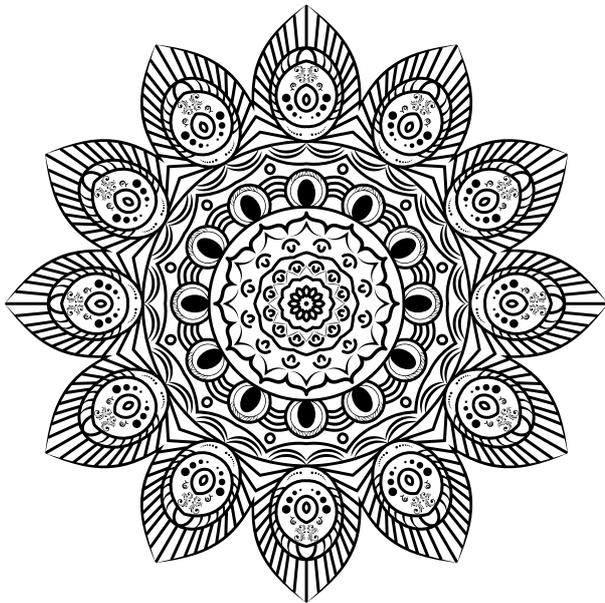
4.3.2 Reflection moment: Are there any body sensations, emotions or thoughts you would like to share?

There is nothing wrong, everything is the right one and we can accept all of them.

4.6 The benefits of this practice and how it works

Requirements:

Mandala, mandala for visually impairment



Mindful Colors - Sounds - Emotions

Activity duration: from 60 minutes up to 1:45 minutes

Methods: art methodology, mindfulness practices, non formal activity, input from the facilitator, sharing experiences.

Number of participants: Up to 15 Young people

Pedagogical objectives:

To improve emotional intelligence

To raise the ability to others and oneself with kindness, acceptance and compassion

To improve a non-judgemental attitude

To be more equanimity, flexibility

Inspiration origin: MBSR,

www.fastcompany.com

www.mindful.org

mashable.com

5.1 Ice breaker activity

The participants can introduce themselves with a sound that expresses their relaxed and calm emotions and a sound refers to sadness/anger emotions.

5.2 First introduced mindful activity

5.2.1 A short mindful session based on the external sound and the internal sounds (the heart, breath, etc..)

5.2.2 Reflection moment 10 minutes

5.3 Body sensations and emotions

Activity explanation, practice and reflection moment

The facilitator can introduce the topic with some simple explanation regarding how our emotions, body and mind are connected.

Among the other studies we can mention the following one:

“Do body parts have emotions?”

Many people feel emotions in certain parts of their bodies—stress in their neck or anxiety in their stomach, maybe happiness in their chest. As you can see in the map below, “anger” is a heady, top-of-body emotion, while “love” and “happiness” is felt rather strongly all over. Feelings such as “sadness” and “depression,” however, are experienced as a relative deactivation of sensations, compared to normal states.

It’s all part of the fascinating new Body Atlas, produced from research conducted by Finnish scientists, which shows a heat map of where in our bodies we can expect different emotions to manifest the most.”

Mindful Colors - Sounds - Emotions

1. Restlessness or burning? Tension, clenching, or heat? Maybe a pit in your stomach or a buzzing or vibration? Simply feel it and get curious. What is most predominant right now?
2. Notice where the sensation is in your body. Is it more on the right side or the left side? Is it more in the front, the middle, or the back of your body? Where do you feel it most strongly?
3. Explore what else you can feel in your body right now. If the sensation is still there, see if you can get curious and notice what else is there as well. Are there other sensations you're feeling? What happens when you get curious about those? Do they change? What happens when you really get curious about what they feel like?
4. Simply follow this procedure over the next couple of minutes. See what's most predominant in your experience. What are the sensations? Don't try to do anything about them. Simply observe them. Do they change when you observe them? What happens when you bring a really solid attitude of curiosity?
5. It's often helpful to check in with your attitude, to see if you're truly being curious or *trying* to be curious. I find it helpful to simply check to see if my mind is going *hmm*. *What's happening in my body right now?* as compared to trying to force myself to be curious. So whether it's out loud or just an inner *hmm*, you can check from time to time to see if your mind is truly being curious or if it's trying to be curious or thinking too much.
6. If you notice that you're trying or you're thinking, you can simply get curious about that. *Hmm*. There's a thought. *Hmm*. What does trying feel like in my body? Just continue this noticing for the next couple of minutes. And as you practice, whatever the challenging emotion is, simply get curious. Where do I feel it? Do the sensations change over time? Where do I feel the most strongly in my body?

As we finished up, I hope this short exercise has helped you get a taste of curiosity as a way to support your natural capacity to be aware of what's happening in your body right now. Even with challenging emotions, we can bring this attitude of kindness and curiosity to our experience, moment to moment. What do I feel? Where do I feel it? What does it feel like? *Hmm*. And each time, we're naturally bringing in that curiosity.

If you've noticed that by being curious, you've gained even a microsecond of being aware of those thoughts, those emotions, those body sensations, and that you can actually be with these rather than running away from them, you've taken a huge step forward. Thank yourself for taking this time to take care of yourself, and notice what that feels like as well.

Mindful Colors - Sounds - Emotions

As you move into the rest of your day, see if you can bring some of this curiosity with you as you go. Each moment, maybe even just taking a moment to notice when you're caught up in an emotion or when you're resisting something. And maybe drop in a little *hmm*. What does this feel like? And see what happens next. Onward!

[\(https://www.mindful.org/a-mindfulness-practice-to-meet-tough-emotions-with-curiosity/\)](https://www.mindful.org/a-mindfulness-practice-to-meet-tough-emotions-with-curiosity/)

Reflection moment

5.4 Art and emotions activity

5.4.1 The participants can choose among the available art methods they have, such as 3D printing, Braille in art forms, Tactile art and all other tools and art forms that are available.

The facilitator can invite the participant to create an art work getting the inspiration from the previous formal practice, this means to try to convert the emotions, the body sensations and the thoughts into an art work. They can choose to focus on getting the focus on a specific emotions/body sensations or taking in consideration a more general dimension.

The participants can create more art works, or just one.

5.4.2 Reflection moment 10 minutes

5.5 Check out art works - body sensation - emotion activity 15 minutes

5.5.1 Evaluation moment based on the activity: what do you bring home today

The facilitator can lead the practice by supporting the participant to focus on the emotions during the art activity, bringing them to their mind.

Observing their emotions during the art activity, they body sensations thoughts.

CONCLUSIONS

Croatia - CAPBS

CSI: MART project stands as a dynamic and innovative endeavor that aspires to elevate the standards of youth work by infusing creativity, arts, and culture. By focusing on the inclusion, equality, and non-discrimination of young individuals with visual impairments, it addresses a critical need in our society.

The collaborative synergy between organizations dedicated to youth with disabilities and pioneering entity well-versed in youth work methodologies rooted in mindfulness philosophy is a promising approach.

The establishment of such a robust network holds the potential to be a transformative force, providing essential support and empowerment to one of the most marginalized youth groups, namely those with disabilities. Through this project, we embarked on a journey toward a more inclusive and enlightened future for young people, guided by the principles of equality and innovation.



CONCLUSIONS

Greece - PROSVASI

The results of CSI: MART open new horizons and pioneer innovative practices for individuals with disabilities, enhancing creativity, arts, and culture. Our goal is always the inclusion and non-discrimination of youth with visual impairments, as well as, more broadly, all individuals in society who have lived under the "stigma" of disability.

The collaboration among the above organizations, dedicated to youth with disabilities, reflects a commitment to contribute to the preservation of our country's culture and the dissemination of our history, both domestically and internationally.

Through the services we provide as an organization, we aim to disseminate our work and significantly achieve the socialization of our children.



CONCLUSIONS

Italy - ONDAMIND APS

The achievements of CSI:MART underscore the power of mindfulness in creating positive changes in the lives of disadvantaged individuals (youth with disabilities and visually impaired youth).

Networking, collaborations, and successful focus on tailored mindfulness and art practices collectively reflect a holistic approach to promoting well-being, inclusion, and empowerment. The project's efforts serve as an inspirational example of how dedicated initiatives can make a substantial difference in the lives of those who need it most.

In summary, extending mindfulness practices to marginalized groups requires a multifaceted approach. The creation of personalized activities, the promotion of collaboration among organizations, and the building of a supportive community have contributed to the success of the project. Through these efforts, mindfulness has become a tool for empowerment, well-being, and integration for individuals with disabilities and visual impairments.



CONCLUSIONS

Italy - ONDAMIND APS

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Croatia - CAPBS

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Greece - PROSVASI



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CSI:MART

COOPERATION FOR SOCIAL
INCLUSION OF THE VISUALLY
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