



CHANGE STARTS LOCAL(L)Y

A YOUTH WORKERS' TOOLKIT ON COMMUNITY-BASED
INITIATIVES AND INTERVENTIONS, AIMING TO
EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

LOCALY: Local Capacity
and Awareness of Life for Youth

In response to the pressing challenges of climate change and environmental degradation, particularly felt in urban areas across Europe, EU-funded project LOCALY proposes an innovative approach to empower young people to address local environmental issues, while acquiring essential skills for their future. With 75% of the European population residing in towns and cities, there is much potential for youth-led solutions. Recognizing the role of youth organizations in engaging young people, LOCALY aims to fill the gap by providing hands-on methodologies and tools, specifically designed for non-formal education.



LOCALY Project is coordinated by Goethe-Institut Athen, Greece
<https://www.goethe.de/ins/gr/el/sta/ath.html>



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FOREWORD

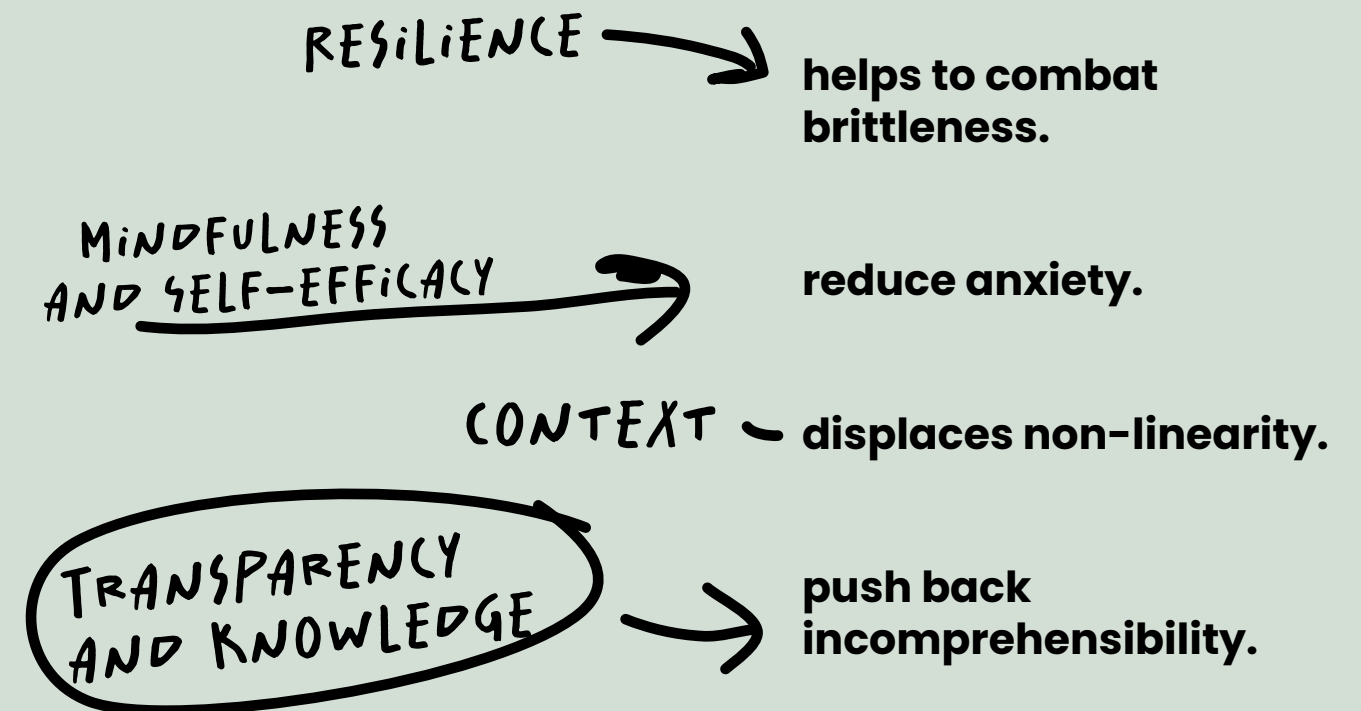
Dear youth worker,

today, we are confronted with a chaotic and rapidly changing world, shaken by complex, large-scale challenges such as the climate crisis, a recent global pandemic, reinvigorated fascist movements in Europe, high-speed digitalisation, and many more.

Human-driven climate change is seen as one of the major threats to humanity because of its direct and indirect consequences. The 2023 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report states that globally 3.3 to 3.6 billion people (which is almost half of world's population) live in contexts highly vulnerable to climate change. The situation of humanity is directly interrelated to the surrounding ecosystems, threatened by extreme weather events and the general destruction of landscapes, which reduces food, health, and habitual security for all living beings, locally and globally. As a result, many species are endangered – one out of five are considered being in risk of **extinction**. Furthermore, **refugee movements** due to climate related issues are expected to rise rapidly in the future.

Futurologists describe the modern world's state as Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible (BANI). As studies show, young people are highly affected from this state, with rising numbers of them suffering from mental health problems like depression and anxiety. Additionally, the social isolation in offline life during the Covid-19 pandemic led to a high social insecurity, while the use of digital media exploded. As an effect, many young people suffer from a **lack of self-confidence and self-efficacy**.

As a youth worker however, you have the possibility to supply young people with the skills they need to handle modern challenges:



Project work can empower young people: they experience that their visions, ideas, and opinions are valuable, that they can achieve goals when being proactive, and even influence the society and leave a long-lasting impact. Further, working in a group can build trust, foster knowledge through exchange, and builds real friendships.

Through guiding a local environmental project, you can show youngsters that there are many ways to shape the future themselves and to act against human-driven climate change, nature destruction and injustice.

So, unite a group of teens, spark their ideas and back their project! Change starts LOCAL(L)Y.

CHAPTER ONE: ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

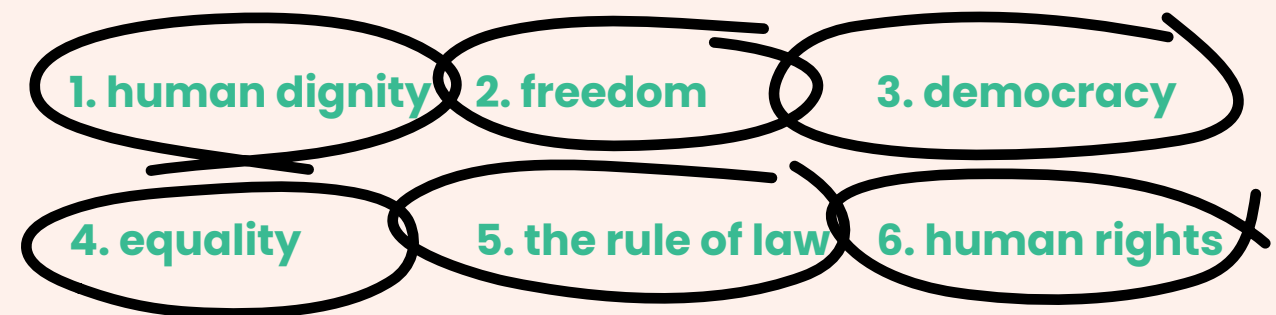
This toolkit provides a holistic concept for youth workers throughout Europe to conduct a project work with a group of young people, with the young people being actively involved in all steps, from idea generation up to reflection and presentation of the project in the end. Youth workers should mostly accompany their group, while the young people themselves identify, address, and even solve environmental (and social) problems in their local communities.

The toolkit comes with background information, activities and recommendations for further learning and digital tools. It is structured along the process of a project work, but we recommend skim-reading as well. For example, possibilities of involving the community, advocacy and presentation should get some basic consideration already when deciding for a project topic. The toolkit addresses youth workers 18 and above, working with young people, from 13-17 years old. However, much of the material is also transferable to other age groups or other contexts.



General Context

Developed and composed by a consortium of experts from Greece, Spain, Germany and Italy, our initial point are the European values, which all EU-states agreed on with the Treaty of Lisbon (2009, Art. 2):



To ensure the endurance of these values for future generations, the fight against human-driven climate change is essential, as being one of the main threads for stable societies and humans living in dignity. For educating young people as agents for change, an empowering, hands-on, transversal concept is needed.

The LOCALY Toolkit aims to become educational material for those youth workers, trainers, and/or facilitators who are working with young people and want to incorporate environmental education into their approach. In particular, the toolkit provides fit-for purpose, innovative tools for the conduct of environmental community-based initiatives, which have the goal to act against climate crisis through local actions with global impact.

The first, current version of the Toolkit will be used as the training material of a capacity building course for youth workers in Spain, in July 2024. Afterwards, the youth workers will test the content through a minimum of five pilots, planned to be implemented at four different countries (Greece, Germany, Spain, and Italy). The aim of the methodology is to ensure that the Toolkit, after the initial testing phase, will be revised, republished, and extensively applicable in diverse contexts.

This process intends to create a multiplying effect, with the goal of mainstreaming environmental education amongst young people and their educators, raising relevant awareness, and strengthening the ability of citizens to respond creatively and effectively to the events which highly impact them and their quality of life.

Essential Information

Who is this toolkit for?

A toolkit for professionals who want to integrate an environmentally sensitized approach to their practices and activities, targeting young people, within diverse educational contexts.

What is there in it?

Educational background, methodological tools and approaches, suggested activities and contextual principles are some of the most important elements out of which the toolkit consists of. It is important to underline that the materials included are in their vast majority coming from the in-depth knowledge from professionals who have practiced and piloted them in diverse fields, with a lot of consciousness and care.

Therefore, at many parts it is not about the what of what is presented. The innovation is primarily based on the how it is presented and on the why so, the purpose so to say, which stands behind the tailor-made details.

Kindly note, at several parts throughout the chapters, certain points are highlighted differently. For those points, more information, digital tools, and resources can be found at the end of each chapter.

What this toolkit is, and what not

The pages that follow do not intent to offer solutions which can be applicable at any reality, and we do not want to claim that solutions as such are available in general. What we intend to do is to share knowledge acquired and methodological approaches that might enable us to maintain present in the climate challenges we are facing. And to make those correct distinctions which will enable us to encourage young people to create what they desire and the best they can.

Therefore, the toolkit aims to be applied to the maximum through project-based work. It should be constantly enriched through adaptations required each time for the different individuals and groups and for the new bottlenecks, constantly arising on our way towards combating

HUMAN-DRIVEN CLIMATE CHANGE.

Educational Background

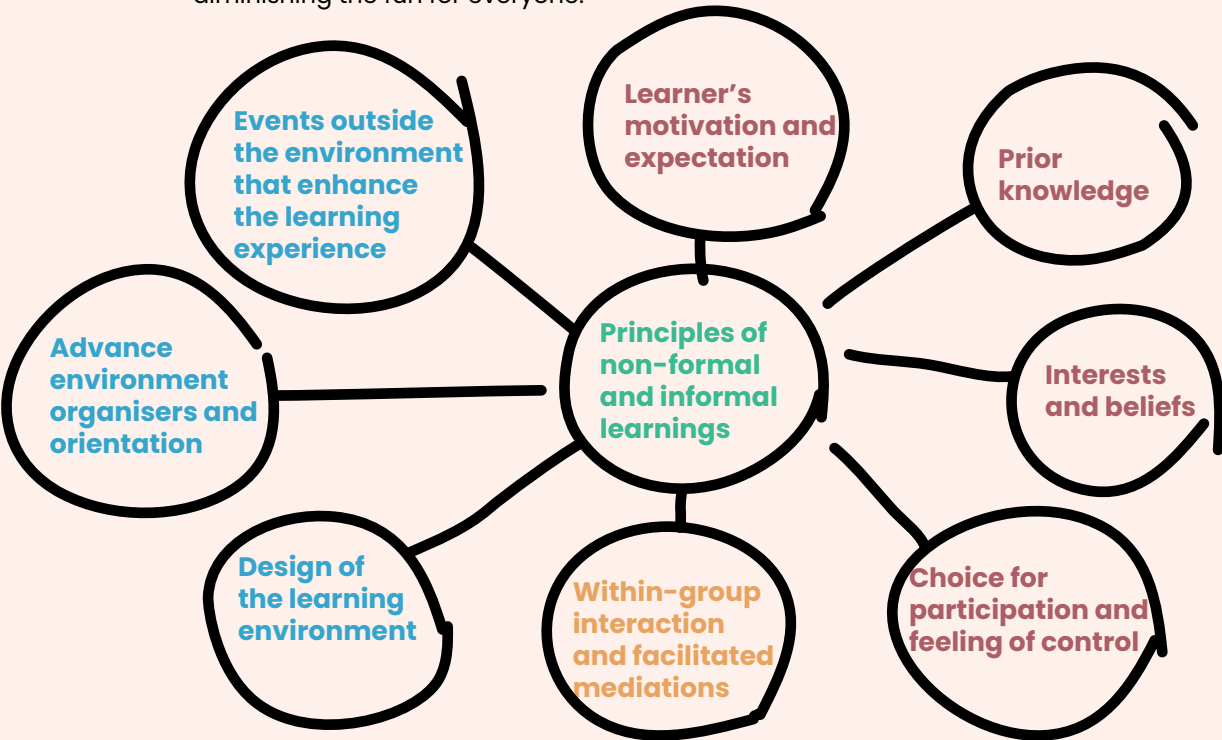
In preparation of this toolkit, we took into consideration several educational approaches. They have overlaps and differences, but we believe that in today's complexity there is no one-fitting-all.

Non-formal Education

Education doesn't begin with knowledge, but with curiosity and interest. People learn most effectively when experiencing, with fun and motion, together with peers. To foster curiosity, people need – in best case – a positive emotional connection to a topic. That is what **non-formal education** is about.

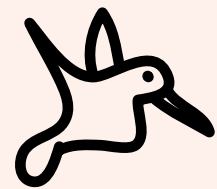
As diverse as your group of young people is, as diverse are also their interests, needs and preconditions. Therefore, methodological variety is key. If you manage to meet the needs of all group members and create positive experiences for every one of them, chances that your project work will be successful are the highest, since motivation of all group members is essential.

What exactly works best for your group, and in how far certain methods work as educational tools, is strongly dependent on a lot of different factors, like age, group size, background knowledge and many more. Try to get a regular feedback of your group members, ask what expectations they have on certain topics and activities, or try to develop activities together with the group, so you find ways to work also on difficult and complex topics, without diminishing the fun for everyone.

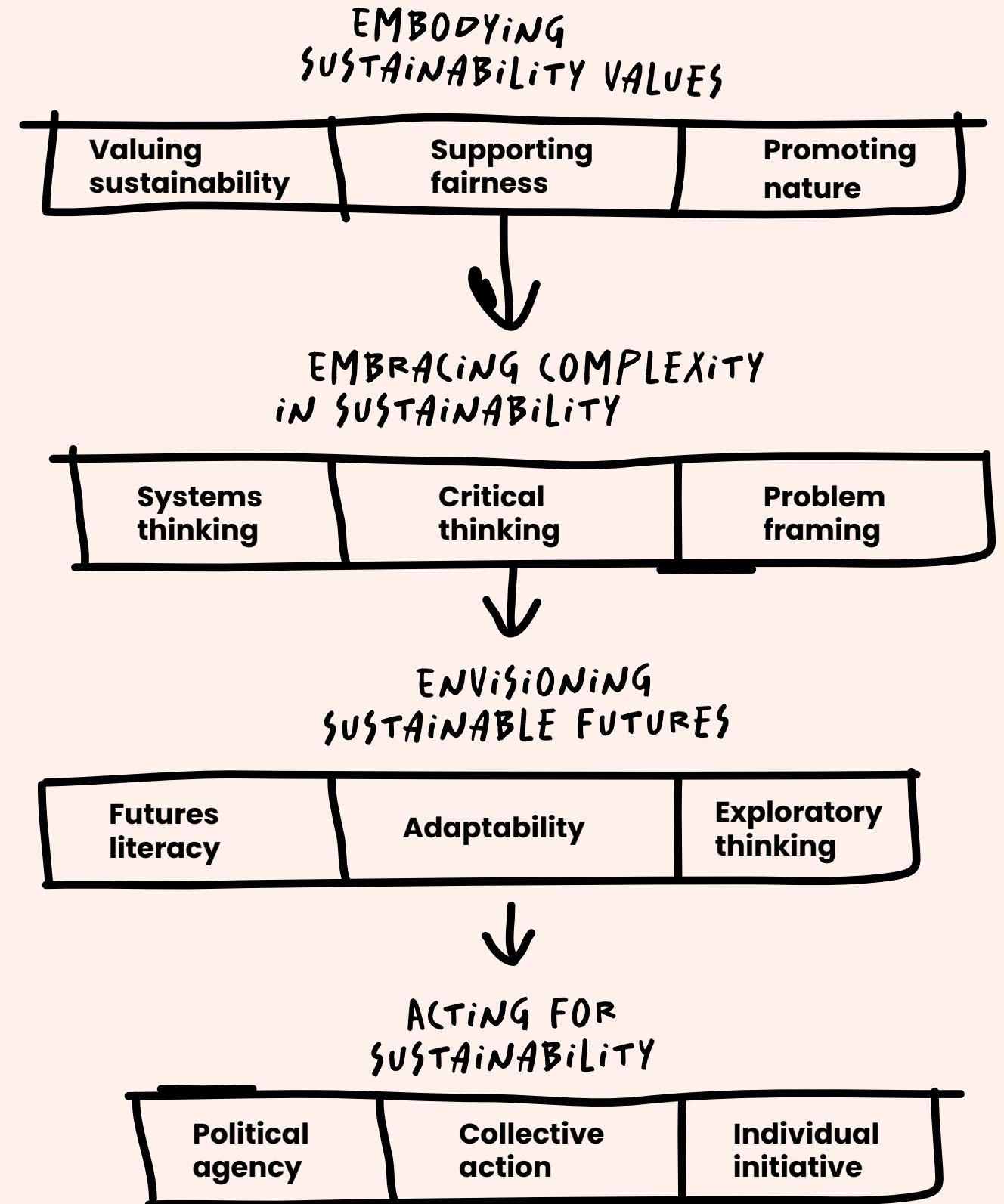


Green education

In 2022, the European Union published **GreenComp**, the European sustainability competence framework, as part of the European Green Deal, and made it available in many different languages. It is meant to spread sustainability education throughout the European Union, to enable learners to act with empathy and responsibility to our planet and to public health.



It defines four main competence areas which are interrelated:



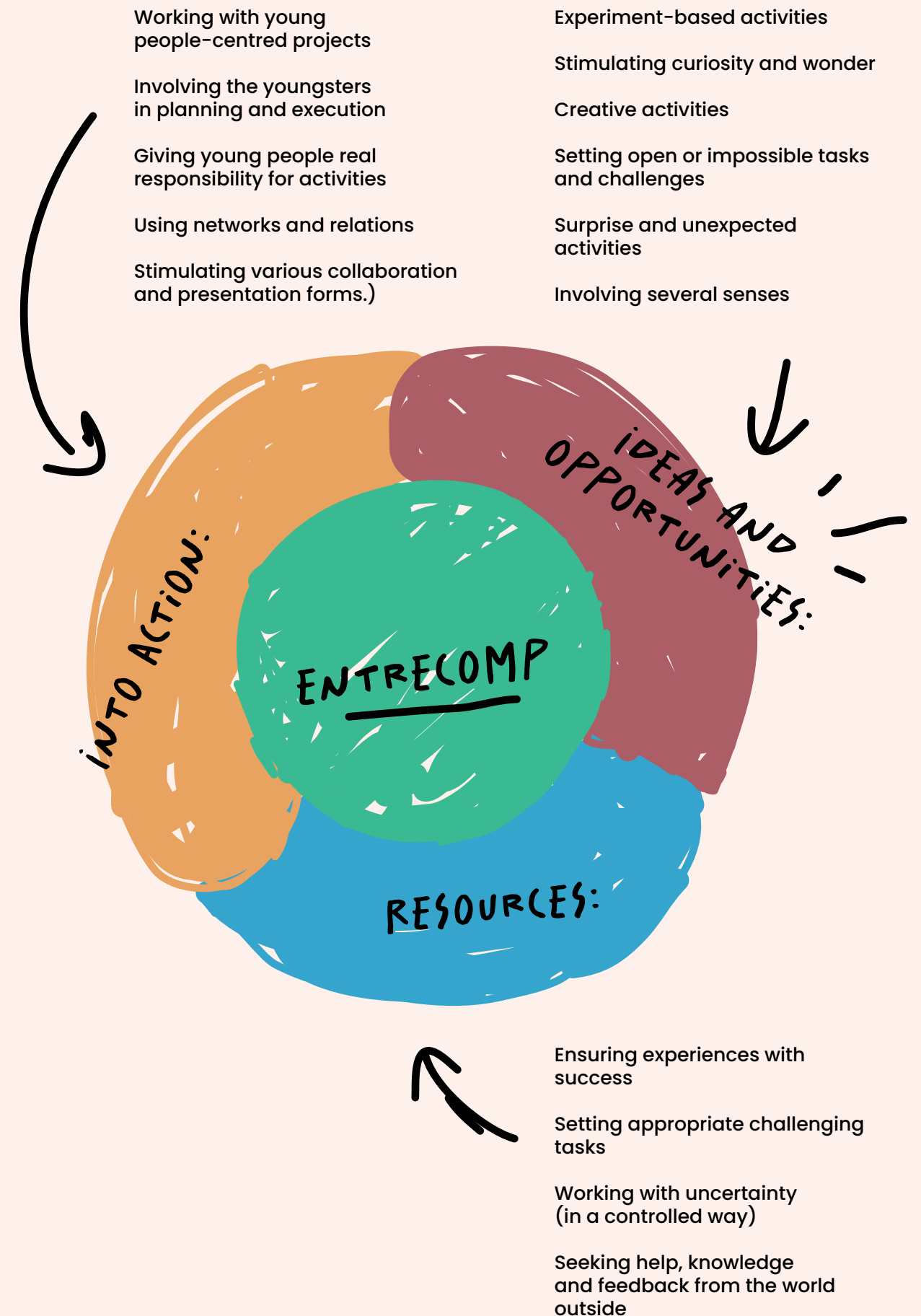
Entrepreneurship education

In 2016, the European Union published **EntreComp**, the Entrepreneurship competence framework. The framework has three areas: Ideas & Opportunities, Resources and Into Action. The general idea is that these competence areas are important and valuable assets for people and societies, now and in the future. More in particular:

Ideas & Opportunities: This refers to creativity and especially the young people's curiosity and ability to develop relevant ideas within a topic, to imagine desirable future scenarios, and to give examples of valuable ideas in general.

Resources: This area stresses the importance of sustaining and developing youngsters' belief in their own abilities as well as their willingness to get support from peers, facilitators and parents when needed, recognising that communication skills are a desired outcome. Another resource is the young person's ability to recognise her/his/their own learning.

Into Action: This area embraces the competences of basic planning, execution, and presentation, taking responsibility for tasks, working alone and with others, respecting peers and coping with uncertainty. e new bottlenecks, constantly arising on our way towards combating



Education for sustainable development

Education for sustainable development is an increasingly popular concept which is based on the 17 **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) by the United Nations. In 2015, all member states of the United Nations (what makes up almost all countries in the world) agreed on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to foster world's peace and prosperity.

The SDGs represent a bold and collective endeavour to address pressing global challenges. With a core mission to eradicate poverty, diminish inequalities, and combat climate change, the 17 interconnected goals resonate across social, economic, and environmental spheres. As youth workers, understanding the SDGs is not just about awareness but about empowerment, too. By grasping the intricacies of each goal and its interrelation with broader policy frameworks, youth workers can effectively accompany young people towards meaningful action. Moreover, recognizing the commitment of entities like the European Union (EU) to integrate the SDGs into both internal and external policies underscores the global momentum behind the transformative agenda.

Education for Sustainable Development allows every human to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to shape a sustainable future. It prepares learners to adapt to the impact of human-driven climate change, builds resilience, and empowers them to address its causes. It means including key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning, for example disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, and sustainable consumption. It uses participatory, innovative, learner-centred teaching and learning styles and promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios and making decisions in a collaborative way.

In that way, learners are motivated to choose sustainable lifestyles and get equipped with skills for green jobs that help preserve or restore our environment and improve human well-being and social equity. It empowers learners by making them agents in the educational process, from early childhood to old age, and promotes learning beyond the boundaries of educational institutions. The aim is that learners develop a critical and self-effective learning style, beyond the simple "savoir" (knowledge) about things. They should understand the situation and the outlook, the effect of situations and activities on themselves and their surroundings, and the needs of people and the environment, locally in the now as well as in other parts of the world, different generations, and diverse circumstances.



However, there is also criticism on the SDGs. Especially in SDG 8, there is a general contradiction within the goal, and to all other SDGs. The goal targets "decent work and economic growth", however, studies show that we will not be able to reduce global CO2 emissions fast enough to reach the two-degree climate target if global economy continues to rise by 3%.

Digital Tools and further learning

IPCC 2023 Report: <u>AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023 (ipcc.ch)</u>	Non-formal Education: <u>(15) Non-formal learning in a nutshell - YouTube</u>
Species Extinction: <u>Adaptation, speciation and extinction in the Anthropocene, Sarah P. Otto (The Royal Society Publishing)</u>	GreenComp: <u>the European sustainability competence framework - European Commission (europa.eu)</u>
Climate Refugees: <u>Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts UNHCR + Climate Refugees (nationalgeographic.org)</u>	EntreComp: <u>EntreComp: The entrepreneurship competence framework - European Commission (europa.eu)</u>
BANI World: <u>What BANI Really Means (And How It Corrects Your World View) (forbes.com)</u>	SDGs: <u>THE 17 GOALS Sustainable Development (un.org)</u>
Mental State of Youngsters: <u>Uncertainty as a driver of the youth mental health crisis - ScienceDirect</u>	Critical Views on SGDs: <u>SDG 8: Economic Growth or Degrowth? (King's College London Blog)</u>
Treaty of Lisbon: <u>Treaty of Lisbon (europa.eu)</u>	

CHAPTER TWO: MAIN PRINCIPLES

Before you start working on projects, you should think of some principles on how you want to work, what you as a youth worker want to achieve, and what kind of environment you want to create for your group.

Especially when working with environmental topics, speaking about the climate crisis, and starting something big like a project, we recommend that you make sure there is mutual respect and sensibility for the emotional side of the topics. Especially young people often feel overwhelmed by future perspectives related to human-driven climate change.

CONVERSATION TACTICS, RESILIENCE,
AND MINDFULNESS CAN HELP WITH THAT.



When starting on planning a project, you should also take some basic principles for project work with young people in consideration, to make sure the project reaches the goal of empowering the young people and having a successful outcome in the end.

Further, reflection is a crucial part of learning processes. In fact, learning happens through reflecting on the lived experience, extracting conclusions from it and applying them to your own life. It is a process that should be stimulated and supported continuously (and not only at the end of a project). We recommend organising daily reflection moments with the people you work with.

REAL TALK about the climate crisis

We should all be talking about the climate crisis – so why aren't we? Everyday conversations about human-driven climate change – with friends, family, work colleagues, strangers – are not always easy. Even if you are concerned about the implications of the climate crisis, you may find yourself hesitating to talk about it, or feeling awkward when you do.

Good conversations aren't only about exchanging information or about winning an argument – they are about intimacy, experiencing a sense of connection and feeling you have been understood. Conversations about the climate crisis are no different.

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Principles of REAL TALK:

R

E

A

L

Respect your conversational partner and find common ground
Non-violent communication.
Avoid fear, guilt, shame, obligation – they compromise connection.
Find the values you share, the ones you both care about.

Enjoy the conversation
It's much easier if you don't have stress. Relax and take your time. Choose your moment.
Use positive body-language.
"Can we talk about this again?" Try to end on a positive note!

Ask questions
Instead of lecturing about your views, ask those you are talking to, what the climate crisis means to them.
Ask about personal experiences.

Listen, and show you've heard
Reflect what you hear, show that you have listened. Do not interrupt. Learn from them.
Give them space to think about their own story.

T

A

L

K

Tell your story
Research shows that people are not motivated by statistics. We are motivated by stories.
Your personal story is a powerful communication tool, no matter who you talk to and no matter how much technical information you know.

Action makes it easier (but doesn't fix it)
Action influences other people – people make decisions about their behaviour partly based on what others, whom they respect and trust, do. So, what you do can change what someone else thinks is possible. You need a sense of efficacy – the belief that it is possible to do something and that what you do can make a difference. Emphasize that every action you take is achievable and realistic.
Action makes you happier – people who engage in 'green' behaviours report higher well-being.

Learn from the conversation
See your discussion as a way to find out how others think about the climate crisis, about the issue itself, and about how to have a good discussion.
Treat each discussion as a small, informal experiment, learning as you go.

Keep going and keep connected
Every conversation matters.
Keep telling your climate story and connecting the world!



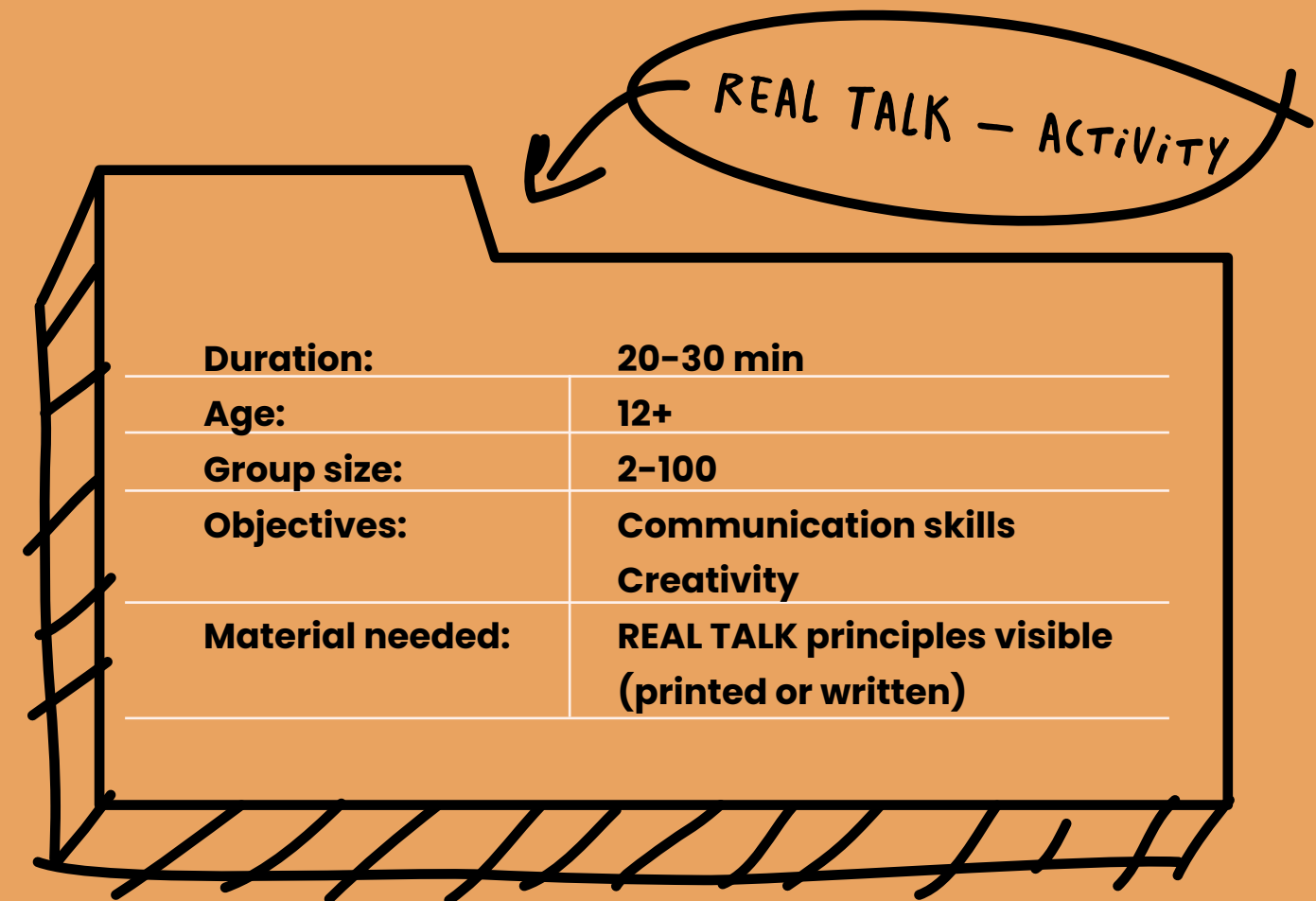
Some small, related to the above, warm-up exercises to choose from:

Deep listening exercise: Set up a conversation with a friend, ask them what they think about the climate crisis and listen to them for four minutes without interrupting them once.

Reflect on a conversation that moved deeply: What happened in it? Why were you affected? How did you react at the time?

Practise telling your own 'climate story': How did you get interested in our climate? Were there any particular events in your life that affected you?

Have a conversation with a friend. Get another friend to listen and give feedback on what they thought of it. Jot down phrases you find yourself using.



Duration:	20-30 min
Age:	12+
Group size:	2-100
Objectives:	Communication skills Creativity
Material needed:	REAL TALK principles visible (printed or written)

Ask participants to form pairs. Invite them to talk about the climate crisis, using the principles of REAL TALK. One person will be the presenter, while the other takes a role. She/He/ They listens/listen carefully and answers like a child, parent, etc (see below). Then roles change. You can also rotate the groups after each round.

In the end, come together with the whole group and discuss what you have experienced.

Examples of roles:

- A CHILD
- MY PARENTS
- AN ELDERLY PERSON
- A PERSON LIVING IN A SMALL, ISOLATED VILLAGE
- SOMEONE WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE IN CLIMATE CRISIS

Of course you can think of other hypothetical conversations.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness means that a person is fully aware of what is happening, what they are doing, and what is around them. That might sound easy, in fact however we are often losing attention or get overwhelmed of our surroundings. This might lead to overreactions, resulting in conflicts. Such conflicts can be that group members become judgemental for each other's ways of communicating, behaving, and doing; or members are getting easily itchy and angry to one another.

Mindfulness can give you the ability to prevent and handle such conflicts, individually and within the group. Below, easy to apply exercises and activities are introduced, the use of which can increase mindfulness and, consequently, project performance and output. But they can, in the long term, also support your group members in daily life, as they provide techniques for individual stress reduction and self-reflection.



Duration:	15-20 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	1-100
Objectives:	Mindfulness Appreciating nature Relaxation Team Building
Material needed:	Natural surroundings

Find a place as natural as possible, with minimal human activity, if available. Engage in a brief discussion about the five senses: Sight (vision), Hearing (audition), Taste (gustation), Smell (olfaction), and Touch (haptics), ensuring everyone understands each concept. Then, silently explore your own senses one by one: What do you see, hear, taste, smell, and feel through touch in this moment? Use your five fingers as a guide. Afterwards, discuss the experience. This method can also serve as a relaxation/meditation technique. You can encourage participants to practice it individually for calming purposes.

SOURCES OF SUCCESS

Duration:	5-15 min daily for minimum 10 days
Age:	All ages
Group size:	1-100
Objectives:	Mindfulness Self-reflection
Material needed:	If possible, a small notebook for everybody

The assignment is simple, still it requires daily determination. Invite everyone to take 5 to 15 minutes daily, for a certain period of time (minimum 10 days) to write down successes. You can also do it on your own. Below you may find 5 areas where it is supportive to look at to identify successes, namely: Sources of successes (where to look at to identify them):

- ① Results: what you have achieved on the level of results and outcome – not comparing with the final desired result, but focusing on results achieved up to now, even those who look minor to you.
- 2 Actions (planned and taken/ hesitated to do and still did): which are the actions which you have planned and took, but also which are the ones that you hesitated for a period of time to take, or even to plan, and eventually you did.
- 3 Identified Mistake (the success is the willingness to correct): an important area in the context of which successes can be discovered is the area of mistakes. There, the success is not the mistake itself, but your own courage to identify the mistake and having the willingness and the desire to correct it.
- ④ New Understanding: formulating and/or gain additional understanding within an area already known, such as cooperation, communication, teamwork, community work, is considered a success, since it expands knowledge and opens new possibilities.
- 5 Insight: an insight is equal to a light bulb idea. It is a success, worth to be noted down, if you had a moment of insight, of a coin dropped, as it is an opening full of new options.

You can encourage your group members to proceed with the activity also after your project, applied to other tasks and challenges they face.

SELF & GROUP, + EXTERNAL AWARENESS

Duration:	30-60 min
Age:	12+
Group size:	1-100
Objectives:	Mindfulness Self-reflection Identify group-vision for the project
Material needed:	Pens Paper (blank or certain templates)

Prepare the following four tables:

- one table to write individual and/or group skills
- one table to fill in what you like/find important – this can support also in the direction of identifying own values/value systems
- one table to fill in what another member of the group is capable of, while working with competencies
- one table to write down what people need. This table might be of great use, when working with projects aiming to conduct a community-based intervention.

Fill them with the whole group, in small groups, or individually.

WAY OF COUNCIL

Duration:	1h 30min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	Around 5-20
Objectives:	Mindfulness Team Building Communication skills Resilience
Material needed:	

- **Talking piece (stone, feather, acorn, or any other natural material holding a special meaning for the council leader)**
- **Signs with the invitations and the principles**
- **Tingsha cymbals or similar**
- ♥ **Candle, preferably from bee's wax, and matches or lighter to kindle it**
- ▲ **Incense (jasmine is preferred, as it aids concentration) and incense holder**
- ♥ **Decorations: flowers, leaves or any other material for the centre of the circle**

Look for a quiet place in nature where the floor is mostly flat and where all participants can fit comfortably sitting in a circle. Make sure the place is not under the full sun. Places under very big trees are particularly suitable. The activity can also happen indoors, but it is generally more powerful if held outdoors. Make sure it's a place where you won't have any external disturbances for the duration of the session.

Prepare a circular "altar" in the middle of the space. This could be done with natural materials such as flowers, stones, twigs, and leaves, but also with scarfs of different colours and/or candles.

5 min - Mindful slow walk towards the place where the Council will be held, in silence, thinking of why we are here right now.

10 min - Introduction to Council. Introduce the practice of Council as follows:

People from all cultures have been sitting in circles around the fire for millennia. Circular gatherings, also called councils, have been used over the years to connect to others and build community. This is done through sharing stories authentically. The Way of Council is a ceremony based on the tradition of the native Americans.

There are 4 invitations, 1 principle, a talking piece, and a guiding question.

The 4 invitations are:

1

Listen from the heart – When someone is speaking, concentrate your attention on what that person is trying to communicate. Pay attention to both verbal and non-verbal communication. Listen between and beyond the spoken words. Refrain from judging, practice empathy.

2

Speak from the heart – Not from your brain. Talk about what moves you. You may share in the shape of a story, a song, a poem, gestures, silence, tears, laughter, or any other form of expression that serves you to convey your message.

3

Be lean of expression (speak the essence) – Be mindful of the time available. Go straight to what's important. Distil the essence of your message and communicate only what serves you or the group. Speak on your behalf (I), not on anyone else's behalf (we).

4

Be spontaneous – Follow your instinct. You will know when it's your turn to speak, wait for that urge to come and claim your turn.

The principle is “the principle of confidentiality”: What is shared in the circle, stays in the circle.

The talking piece is placed in the middle of the circle. Only the person who holds the talking piece can speak. The rest listens. Once the council ceremony is opened, whoever feels the urge to share a story stands up, grabs the talking piece, sits back in place, and shares her/his/their story from there.

Make sure that everyone can see everyone else's faces clearly. An explanation about the particular talking piece is given (why it is special, what's its story or what does it represent), and the piece is passed around the circle once, so that everyone has the chance to hold it and to have her/his/their voice heard in the Council for the first time: the ice-breaking question could be “Where do you come from?”, and the facilitator starts by completing the sentence “I come from...” and then inviting participants to do the same, while passing the piece to her/his/their left.

After the talking piece comes back, it is placed in the middle of the circle. Ask if there are any questions to the procedure. If there are, they are clarified, and then the opening ceremony starts.

The guiding question is the prompt that guides the theme of each Council.

60 min – Council.

Present the guiding question, so that participants can already start reflecting on it, while the ceremony is being opened. Some examples of guiding questions are: “What moved me to be here now?”, “Which is my biggest dream?”, “What would I do if I had no fears?”, “What's the story of my environmental awakening?”, “What's my story of transformation?”, “When I go back home after this activity/project/training, what story will I tell?”, “What's my motivation for being here/being part of this group/project?”, ...

Ask for a volunteer to light up the candle in the middle, while setting an intention for the council. Tell the volunteer that she/he can express the intention out loud or in silence. Now explain, “we have 60 minutes for this Council, we will go on until there are stories, or until there is time”, and then, ring the chime. “The Council is open”.

10 min – Closing of the experience and leaving the place.

After the 60 minutes, or after everyone (or almost everyone) has spoken and there is a very long silence, slowly take the chime and look around everyone's eyes to give one last chance for anyone who still has something to share. If that's not the case, ring the chime.

Notify that the council has come to an end and thank participants for sharing their stories, asking everyone to remember the principle of confidentiality. A song can be sung at this point.

Everyone is invited to crawl to the middle to blow out the fire together at the count of 3.

Now, ask participants to stand up and hold hands. Say: “Let the circle open, but unbroken”. Then slowly leave the place of the Council.

Resilience

Dealing with climate emotions can be challenging. Especially young people often feel anxious about their future, sad or angry about global injustice, and helpless in the face of the power of large cooperations. Resilience can give people the ability to find a way to change course, cope emotionally, and continue moving towards your own, and your community goals.

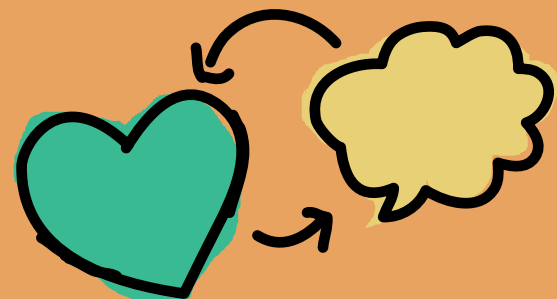
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14 Strategies for dealing with the climate crisis

- ① Acceptance of feelings: Can I recognize fear and other feelings as a meaningful response to the crisis?
- 2 Processing of feelings: Which are my feelings about the climate crisis and how do I deal with them?
- 3 Engagement: What exactly do I want to do? How do I want to get involved into the action for a better future?
- 4 Friendships: With whom do I feel connected? With whom can I talk about how I feel about my commitment and the climate crisis? When?
- ⑤ Crises as opportunities: What do I want to learn, how can I grow (beyond myself) in the crisis?
- 6 Meaning & Values: Which values do I want to live by? Which meaning do I want to give to my life?

- 7 Gratitude: What am I thankful for now, given the climate crisis?
- 8 Self-care: How do I want to take good care of myself so that I don't burn out?
- ⑨ Healthy ability to distance oneself: What do I want to do less/more in the future to set myself apart appropriately?
- 10 Healthy modesty/ healthy acceptance of reality: Can I accept (in addition to my commitment) that my influence on the world has limits and that not everything always goes as I see fitting?
- ⑪ Mindfulness (Instead of catastrophising): How do I cultivate mindfulness so that I lose myself less in worry and brooding, and take good care of my feelings?
- 12 Hope instead of hopelessness: What is a reasonable hope that gives me strength?
- 13 Hope-free instead of false hope – Trust, courage & love: What can I do concretely to develop more confidence and thus courage?
- 14 Self-acceptance instead of self-criticism (=Bad conscience & guilt): What would a wise, good friend tell me if I suffered from the climate crisis?

Psychologists for future



FEELINGS + VALUES

Duration:	60–90 min
Age:	12+
Group size:	Ideally groups of 3–5 people, min. 2 groups
Objectives:	Resilience
Mindfulness	Team Building
	Communication skills
	Self-reflection
Material needed:	2 posters per group

Split your group in groups of ideally 3–5 people. Ask them to exchange with each other how they feel about the climate crisis and the general state our world is in. Let them collect their results on a poster. Ask them to be as concrete as possible, for example: “I am afraid that our forests die, because they are home to many animals” or: “I feel helpless when hearing about natural hazards in the news”.

Explain that there also might be positive feelings like: “I feel motivated to recycle plastics, so that ocean pollution is reduced.” Underline, that it is important everybody respects whatever feelings participants might mention. Be available for emotional support, if necessary. (30 min)
Afterwards, let the groups rotate, so that every group gets the poster from another group. Ask them at first, if they read similar things as what they wrote down before. There can be a small discussion about it. Explain that feelings we have (like anxiety, anger, sadness etc.) are a representation of our view on the world and our values. They can be a guideline on what really matters to us, so having them is reasonable.

Then, ask them to identify the values and motivations which stand behind the feelings written down by the other group and let them write those on a poster as well. For example: loving animals, thinking globally, seeing beauty in nature, feeling responsible for other beings, being informed about the world, etc. (20 min)

At the end, come together with the whole group and collect the posters with the values. Go through the different values and ask participants to raise their hand if they share this value. Detect together that you probably have a lot of shared values which assumably also a lot of other people in the world share. Conclude, that even if you have negative feelings and you have the feeling you might not be able to do much about it, there are many other people sharing these feelings and together you can be able to make a change. Give room for discussions. (10 min).

You can watch or hear the **Ted Talk of Psychologists for Future** after the activity (10 min).

SYSTEMS THINKING (I): THE "GAME"

Duration:	1h
Age:	All ages
Group size:	-
Objectives:	Resilience Team Building Mindfulness
Material needed:	-

First part: Standing in a circle, each participant chooses 2 other people. At the count of 3, their task is to situate themselves at an equal distance from both persons, so they form the shape of an equilateral triangle. The movement goes on and on, and it sometimes never comes to an end.

Debriefing: What happened? How did you feel? Were you paying attention to what was going on around you?

What were the rules governing this system? Did you respect them? Could anyone from outside orchestrate/regulate this system? (it's self-regulating)

Can you find any analogies between this and anything else? (the Universe, an ecosystem, etc) Which are the rules governing those systems?

Can you extract any conclusion from this exercise that you could apply to your life?

Second part: This time the rules will be the same (to form an equilateral triangle), but we will introduce an external factor.

At any given point, the facilitator will tap somebody on the shoulder. This person will start counting to her/himself/themselves from 10 down to 0, at a slow pace, and when they get to 0, they will sit down on the floor. The people who have chosen this person for their triangle, when they see her/him/them on the floor, they will start the countdown (without stopping their movement) and sit down when they end. And so on until everyone is sat.

Debriefing: What did you observe? How did you feel? How would you translate this to the analogy of a system? What could the tap on the shoulder be? (virus, extinction...) Do you have any more observations?

Can you extract any conclusion from this exercise that you could apply to your life?

Third part: We have the same task again (triangle), and the same external disturbance (shoulder tapping), but this time the person touched will count down from 10 to 0 out loud. During the countdown, any person close to them (without leaving her/his/their position in the triangle) can touch her and save her from the disturbance, stopping the countdown. Here the trainer will have to tap shoulders of different people fast, to try to collapse the system.

Debriefing: What happened? How did you feel? Did you respect the rules governing this system?

How would you call this capacity to recover from an external disturbance? (hopefully someone will say "resilience") How resilient do you think this system was?

In this analogy with a system: what would the countdown be? (this one is harder, but someone may say "feedback") How did the feedback influence the resilience (the capacity to recover)? In natural systems sometimes there is no feedback or we are not able to recognise it.

Can you extract any conclusion from this exercise that you could apply to your life?

SYSTEMS THINKING (ii): THE ICEBERG

Duration:	1 h 30 min
Age:	14+
Group size:	
Objectives:	analysing underlying causes of issues discovering where to intervene in a system for maximum impact
Material needed:	1 paper or poster per person Pens

Systems thinking: the philosophy.

Systems thinking introduction: what is it?

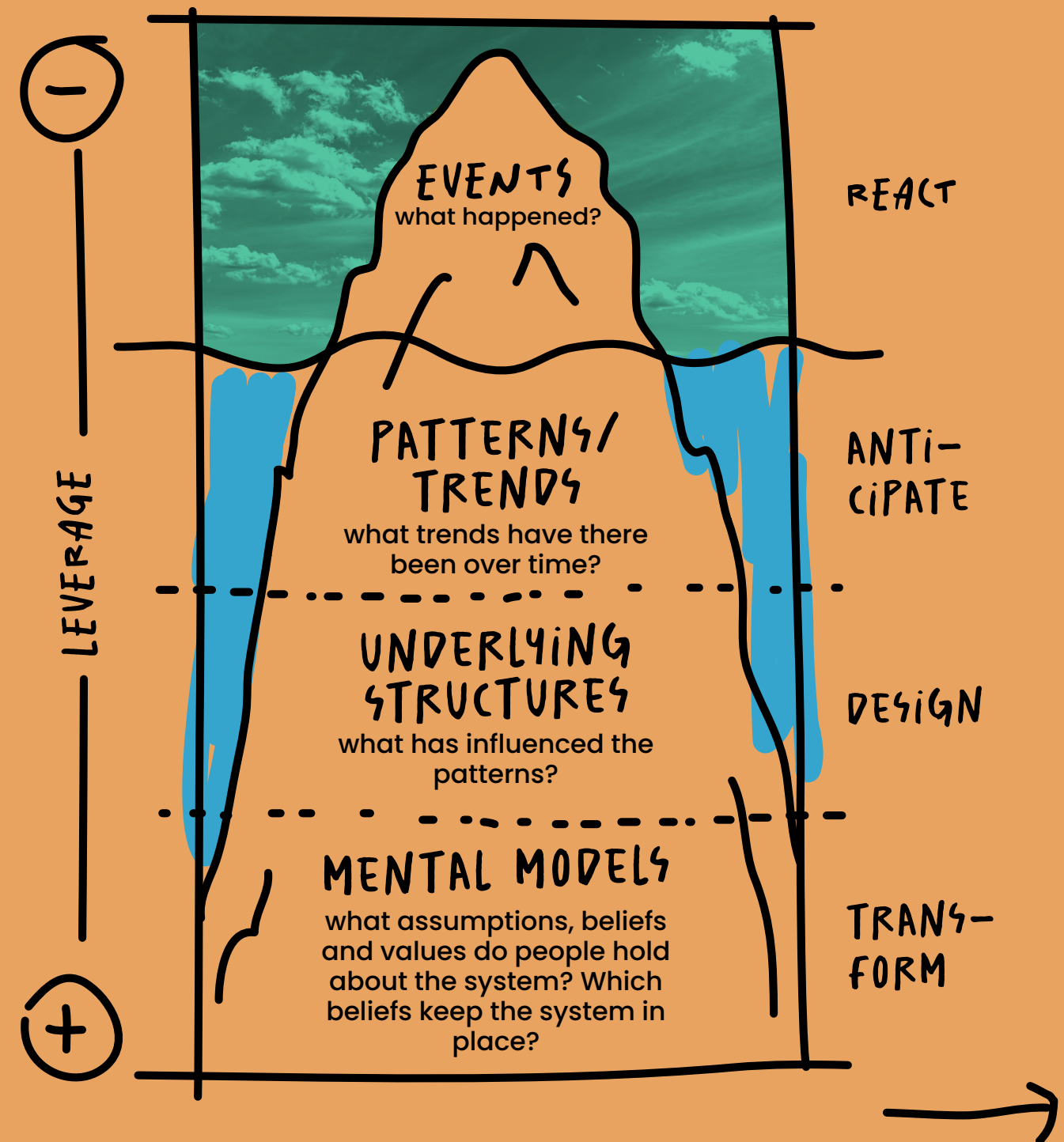
Systems thinking is a way of making sense of the complexity of the world by looking at it in terms of wholes, relationships, patterns, connectedness, and context, rather than by splitting it down into its parts. The opposite view is reductionism or mechanistic thinking.

It has been used as a way of exploring and developing effective action in complex contexts, enabling systems' change.

In a system, the essential properties of the whole derive from the relationships among the parts, and the processes in which the parts are involved.

All living organisms at all levels of complexity organise themselves as networks. Network is the basic pattern of organisation of all living systems. Community. No individual organism can exist in isolation.

The **iceberg model** as a tool for systems thinking:



**Presentation of the iceberg:
The mental model used to
perceive the world is what
generates the structures,
patterns, and events that we
see. It's the attitudes, beliefs,
morals, values, culture that
allow structures to continue
functioning as they are.**

Individual: work out the iceberg of an issue
that bothers you (10 min)

Pair share: Find a pair and share your
model (15 min)

Plenary debriefing: Was this useful? How?
What did this model help you realise/
discover? How can you apply this to your
own life? (20 min)

Project work with young people

Project work is realised through a series of activities, which allow young people to explore, research and achieve results by capitalising on their abilities, interests, and personal experiences. When working on projects, youngsters act by themselves or under the guidance and monitoring of the youth workers. Project work is extended beyond the given context and is young people-centred rather than facilitator-directed.

Project work with young people usually focuses on a real-world subject matter, in a context of an umbrella theme (environment for instance) that is interesting to young people and provides relevant life experiences for them. It is traditionally co-operative rather than competitive. Youngsters can work individually, in pairs, in small groups or as a whole group. It is motivating, stimulating, and empowering, but also challenging.

Project work with young people typically has a real-life purpose, creates value for the community, is meaningful for the youngsters and almost always ends up with some kind of tangible product or result.

instruc- tions

The 10 golden rules for your **Project Work**

1. Make sure a project topic is chosen which all young people will like and approve of.
2. Allow the project to be flexible so that different young people can approach it from different angles according to preference and level.
3. Provide a variety of pace and activity, so youngsters can get involved into diverse activities, at different times.
4. Don't get overwhelmed by the project and don't allow it to overwhelm young people either.
5. Be sensitive and avoid imposing ideas. Encourage young people's imagination, instead, and respect their ownership of their project. This will support autonomous learning and boost their confidence.

6. Set limits on whatever part of project work young people are involved in. This reduces stress both for the more ambitious youngsters, who could produce a lot, as well as for slower learners and under-achievers, who could be discouraged by ambiguities surrounding the expected products.

7. At the public spaces where young people will conduct activities, inform beforehand that a project is being done and that youngsters may be carrying out surveys, short interviews, or anything else planned.

8. Choose the project topic to be relevant to youngster's age, also taking into account materials, resources and equipment available to them. The project should not make them feel bad about not having resources at home.

9. Set aside enough time for the different activities. Timing of project work is crucial since each project needs time to evolve. Allow time for proper feedback, so that young people enjoy the results of the effort they have invested in the project.

10. Make sure young people feel happy and excited during the project. Project work should encourage children to express themselves, their individual talents, and different intelligences. Working on projects requires a long-term commitment on the part of the youth-worker, flexibility, patience, and a lot of respect for the youngsters.

instruc- tions

Reflection

Reflection is a pause from the chaos.

It can improve understanding of the context you are in, transform perspective and deepen understanding while digging into your emotional states and finding links with experiences. It enables you to retrieve and reorganise memories and to investigate conditions, behaviours, thoughts, attitudes, and motivations that led to specific events. Based on that, you can make plans for future change or action. We recommend taking daily reflection rounds during the whole duration of your project. Additionally, reflection for special activities or events are useful, too.

Tips for reflection

Be clear with your goal:

“Let’s spend x minutes reflecting. Everyone here has valid contributions and wants to improve. Our goal is to improve x and think of ways to x.”

Make good questions:

Make sure questions are straightforward and use accessible language. One question at a time.

Start simple, go deep:

Start with simple questions. Progression is critical in supporting learners to dive deeper.

Tips for plenary reflection

Let participants do most of the talking.

Allow time for questions to sink in and don’t be afraid of silence.

Connect participants contributions to create a more conversational setting.

Use different configurations during plenary (buzz groups, individual reflection, etc...).

Remember the 4 Fs: Facts, Feelings, Findings and Future.

From **Anita Silva: Online Youthpass Workshop**

5-FINGER REFLECTION

Duration:	Depending on group size and topic, 5-60 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	3-30
Objectives:	Reflection Team Building
Material needed:	-

Ask Participants to say their opinion per finger, with each finger representing a specific viewpoint. For example: Thumb: I liked that; Index finger: I'd like to point out; Middle finger: I didn't like that; Ring finger: That is important to me; Pinky finger: That was too short.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

Duration:	Depending on group size and topic, 5-60 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	3-30
Objectives:	Reflection Team Building
Material needed:	Poster Pens

Prepare a large empty poster. Ask participants to fill it in with keywords about their experience. In each round, you can ask more profound questions. In the end, invite everybody to read each other's input and mark what resonates with them.

Active recall: Invite participants to recount their experience. This can be done in pairs or in a group. Participants can add to each other's testimonials.

DRAWING THE JOURNEY

Duration:	Depending on group size and topic, 5–60 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	3–30
Objectives:	Reflection Team Building
Material needed:	Poster Pens

Invite participants to recount their experiences by drawing them on a joint poster. If applying this to a project or training context, you can already have the program divided by days and ask participants to draw what they remember about each day. Give time, in the end, to look at each other's drawings and clarify what they refer to.

HIGHLIGHTS

Duration:	15 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	3–30
Objectives:	Reflection Team Building
Material needed:	Poster Natural items (e.g. stones, flowers, wood)

Prepare a poster showing your project/ training/activity along a time bar, highlighting special events. Ask participants to evaluate (positively, negatively, or neutrally). with the materials (maybe discuss beforehand what each represents) how their experience was. Discuss afterwards.

Digital Tools and further learning

About Real Talk: Talking climate handbook - how to have a climate change conversation - Climate Outreach	How your climate emotions can save the world: Ted Talk by Katharina Van Bronswijk (Psychologists for Future)
What is Mindfulness? What is Mindfulness? (mindful.org)	Why Whole Systems Thinking? Thich Nhat Hahn's poem
Way of Council: Video Tutorial on how to use the method in youth work: The Way of Council (Method Video Tutorial)	Systems thinking: The Iceberg Model: Systems Thinking: The Iceberg Model SessionLab
About resilience: Resilience Psychology Today	Project Work: CRADLE - Creating Activity Designed Language Learning Environments for Entrepreneurship Education - Goethe-Institut Greece
Psychologists for future: Strengthening climate resilience: 14 Strategies for dealing emotionally with the climate crisis	Anita Silva: Tips on Reflection, from Online Youthpass workshops for trainers project organised by SALTO Training & Cooperation Resource Centre

CHAPTER THREE: EXPLORATION

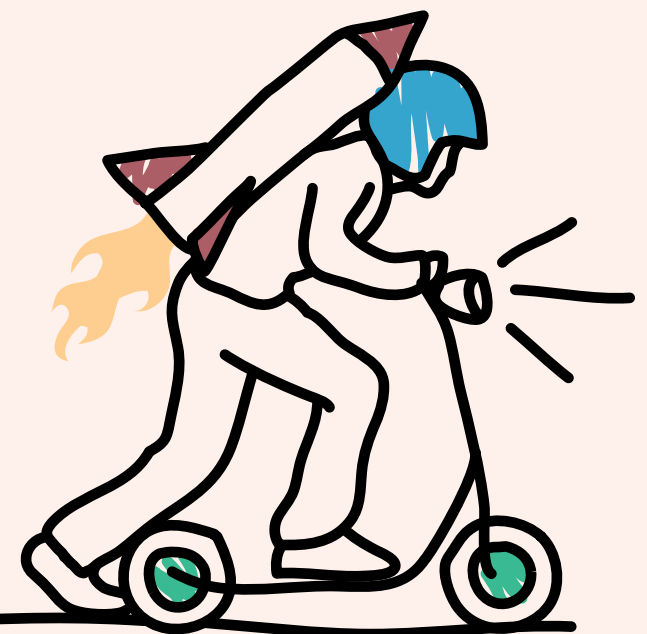
Before planning starts, you and your group will need time for exploring: your group, yourselves, and your surroundings.

Especially when you are working with a new group or in new constellations, Team Building should always go first. For the best experience, best results, but also to make it as easy as possible for you as a youth worker, a good atmosphere in the group is crucial.

For you as the group leader, this includes understanding roles which certain group members may take, general dynamics, preconditions of the participants and more. The more the whole group gets a feeling for those dynamics, too, the better your project work will evolve.

In that sense, also you and every individual in your group will embark on a journey of **self-exploration**. Participating in a self-designed, collaborative project work is the perfect possibility to learn about your own strengths and weaknesses, your ideals, and your capabilities.

Finally, you should **GO OUT** and get an image of your local community and your natural environment.



Me and my Group

Team Building consists of three aspects: getting to know each other, building trust, and having mutual valuable, (ideally) positive experiences. But even if sometimes things don't work out as planned, with proper reflection and appreciation amongst the group members, you can create value of negative experiences, too.

In the following you find a collection of Team Building activities. But even if you are not strong on methods or dislike games, there are many more possibilities for group strengthening activities. How about cooking together, a bonfire evening with stick bread or a bike tour to the next lake for a swimming day? If you need ideas, ask your group members what they would like.

THE HUMAN KNOT

Duration:	10-20 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	Ideally around 7-16
Objectives:	Team Building Energizer
Material needed:	-

Ask participants to form a circle, standing shoulder to shoulder. Tell everyone to put her/his/their right hand up in the air and then grab the hand of someone else in the circle. Do the same with the left hand.

Check to make sure that everyone is holding the hands of two different people and that nobody is holding hands with someone directly next to her/him/them.
Now, tell group members to untangle themselves to make a circle without breaking the chain of hands. If group members break the chain, they need to start again.

HUMAN CONTINUUM

Duration:	5-15 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	5-100
Objectives:	Team Building Energizer
Material needed:	-

Ask participants to physically position themselves in the room according to specific attributes or opinions. Let them, for example, line up according to age, travel distance, shoe size, birth month, level of experience in a particular field or topic, opinion on a statement (from agree to disagree), current emotional state (e.g. from excited to anxious), etc.

SALT AND PEPPER

Duration:	20-40 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	6-40
Objectives:	Team Building Energizer Communication skills
Material needed:	Pen Tape Small sheets of paper or post-its

Write one half of each pair on a separated piece of paper, for example salt on one paper, pepper on another one. Tape one piece of paper on the back or forehead of each person, making sure they can't see it. Now, invite everyone to walk around asking each other yes or no questions to find out the word they have taped to their backs/foreheads. Each person can only ask one question to the same person. Then, she/he/they has/have to move forward to the next person. Once they figure that out, they will be able to find the person who is their match in their pair. If everybody has found their partner, ask them to sit down and learn three to five interesting facts about one another. Optional step: have the pairs introduce their partners and the interesting facts they learned about them to the whole group.

Examples of pairs: salt/pepper, jelly/peanut butter, yin/yang, shadow/light, Mickey/Minnie, Rain/Hail, Thunderstorm/Lightning, flower/bee, sun/moon

ALL THOSE WHO

Duration:	10-20 min
Age:	Children and younger teenager
Group size:	8-25
Objectives:	Energizer Team Building
Material needed:	Chairs (one less then players)

Ask participants to form a chair circle with one person standing in the middle, who then asks «all those who... (like cookies, are wearing green socks, have been to France before, enjoy cycling, ...)» to change their seats, while trying to grab one of the vacant seats. Whoever doesn't find a seat asks the next question.

ICE FLOE GAME

Duration:	20-40 min
Age:	Preferably children and younger teenagers, but suitable for all ages
Group size:	6-25
Objectives:	Team Building
Material needed:	Tiles (one per person), for example made of cardboard, large enough for two people to stand on, with one foot each

Narrate a fictive scenario where participants need to cross an ice river (for example). The width of the "river" should be wide enough that the whole group can build a line over it and still has a few steps to go. Give each person a tile. The goal is for the whole group to cross the river safely together. However, there's a dangerous creature (like a shark) lurking in the river. If a tile is left uncovered by a foot for more than a second, you take it away from the group. Usually, groups will not succeed without coordination and teamwork. Assist or offer tips if needed and give them the possibility to restart.

A dynamic whole

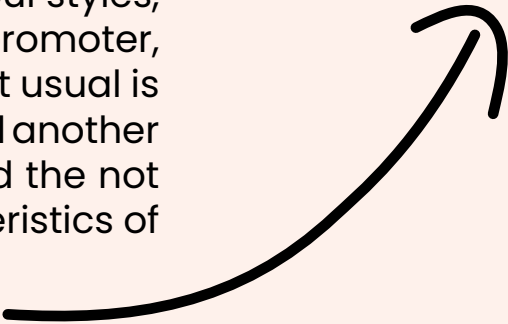
People are different, and that is okay. In fact, diversity is wonderful. **Studies** show that teams perform best when being as diverse as possible, so long as the diversity is valued and respected amongst the team members.

Especially in behaviour, people can differ a lot. Below, we introduce schemes to identify different communication styles, personality types and team roles. The observation, understanding and adaption to them can prevent conflicts. Further, based on that, you can share tasks and responsibilities during your project. As a group leader, you should take a special eye on dominant and less dominant characters. In group processes, like discussions or taking decisions, it is important to include all team members equally and not only based on “who is the loudest?” or “who has the most sophisticated language?”.

Communication styles

One of the many relevant theories of communication and behaviour, introduces four different **communication styles** of individuals. In particular, the promoting, the supporting, the controlling, and the analysing style of communication. It is important to note that all people are using all four styles, and there is no person who can be a so-called promoter, supporter, controller, or analyser. What is the most usual is that each one of us has one which is dominant, and another one which is the less used, which is as well called the not admitted one. Below you may find basic characteristics of each style:

PROMOTING STYLE	SUPPORTING STYLE
● High energy ● Enjoyable to be around ● Creative imagination ● Initiates relationships ● Motivating ● Competitive spirit ● Goal-oriented	● Dedicated and committed ● Loyal team member ● Good listener ● Patient ● Good at reconciling relationships ● Cause-oriented ● Dependable
CONTROLLING STYLE	ANALYZING STYLE
● Task accomplisher ● Bottom-line results ● Self-motivated ● Forward looking ● Fast decision-maker ● Initiates activities ● Disciplined ● Likes to control others	● Objective ● Conscientious ● Defines, clarifies ● Concerned with accuracy ● Gathers needed data and information ● Tests data ● Maintains standards



In big lines, promoting and controlling are more dominant styles of communication, whereas analysing and supporting are more passive. Further on, promoting and supporting are more informal, analysing and controlling more formal. So, another way to observe oneself is to first identify if you, personally, or another person applies mostly a more formal/dominant communication or a more informal/passive, and so on.

Below, you find a table which suggests ways to approach diverse collaboration with different styles. As you can see at the horizontal line you first place yourself based on the one style you use more frequently, and then, through the vertical one, you see what to provide to another person, based on the style she/he/they are using.

You ▶ Others ▼	Controlling	Analysing	Supporting	Promoting	
Controlling	Agreement in advance on goals. Freedom to work within agreed upon limits. Let them win and be in charge.	Summarize facts. Let them decide. Rely on self-discipline. Recognize results tangibly.	Be businesslike. Let them decide. Stick to the agenda. Don't insist on personal relationship. Let them tell you what they want.	Back up ideas and enthusiasm with results. Keep agreements. Let them choose. Demonstrate workability of ideas.	
Analysing	Bring facts and logic in writing. Be patient while they evaluate. Assist in making decisions. Work with time limits.	Recognize need to set timetables for decisions. Encourage risk-taking. Provide perspective on decision at hand.	Demonstrate technical competence. Acknowledge need for facts and data. Work with time limits.	Talk facts, not opinions. Provide detail. Back up facts with detail. Be patient.	
Supporting	Show personal concern for them. Provide details and specifics. Acknowledge their contribution. Be supportive of efforts and accomplishments. Build relationship.	Establish personal relationship. Encourage them to increase goals and upgrade prospects.	Be strong, insistent, and directive. Encourage and support work through interpersonal relationship.	Slow down the pace and volume. Allow time for relationship. Work on one agenda at a time. Move on after completion. Encourage suggestions and participation.	
Promoting	Be more open about self and emotions. Give importance to relaxation time. Give incentives. Let them win. Provide public recognition. Loosen up. Play.	Spend informal time with them. Recognize need for excitement. Ask for ideas. Move quickly. Take risks.	Be firm when challenged. Give public acknowledgement. Provide focus and follow-up. Be in a relationship.	Provide discipline and focus. Stay on track. Move quickly. Use creativity and excitement.	

Personality types

Today, there are many pseudoscientific, psychological personality tests on the internet. As fun as it may be to take those tests, most of them shouldn't be taken too seriously. However, there is one questionnaire which is widely used in diverse contexts, such as businesses, universities, and governmental agencies. Officially known as Myers-Brigg Type Indicator (MBTI), commonly simply called "personality types" or "16 personalities". It is assigning a binary value to four categories: introversion-extraversion, sensing-intuition, thinking-feeling, and judging-perceiving. With all possible combinations there are 16 personalities for which you find detailed descriptions of strengths and weaknesses, recommendations on relationships, career paths and more. Although you shouldn't base too many decisions on only one questionnaire, it might help with the examination of your own personality. If you take it together with your team, it might help to better understand the dynamics in the group and decide about effective combinations of team roles. You can take the test **online for free**.

Team roles

In every social context we play some kind of role. We act differently when being with family, in school or at work, or with our friends. The roles are strongly dependent on the group and their perception of the person. Different from your personality, the role you take is more flexible. However often, these roles develop automatically and are difficult to change, once established. If everybody is happy with their role, the group is harmonic. If else, there might be conflicts rising. In many cases, people struggle to identify the role-conflict as the core reason standing behind a conflicting situation. Therefore, it makes sense to identify and maybe distribute the roles in your group to avoid role conflicts. Moreover, you can share tasks and responsibilities in your project depending on roles and competences. According to **Meredith Belbin** there are nine classical roles which people in teams usually take:

1. **COORDINATORS** - align the team
2. **SHAPERS** - push things forward
3. **MONITOR-EVALUATORS** - Track what is working
4. **RESOURCE INVESTIGATORS** - find what is out there
5. **TEAM WORKERS** - spread positive team vibes
6. **COMPLETER-FINISHERS** - think things through
7. **IMPLEMENTERS** - turn ideas into reality
8. **SPECIALISTS** - use invaluable knowledge
9. **PLANTS** - dream up new solutions

That doesn't mean that you always need teams of nine people, and generally not every role has to be fulfilled. Especially in smaller teams, roles might even change for different tasks. However, there are a few assumptions for well-working teams:

- More than one coordinator, shaper or plant might lead to conflicts. For the benefit of the team, it can be an option that people intentionally resign from those "strong" roles.
- With many plants you will never finish any project.
- In bigger teams you can always benefit of having more than one implementer, team worker and completer.
- Ideally, your team contains as many roles as possible.

instruc- tions

Go out!

To address local environmental issues, you and your group need to know your locality. Further, the motivation for nature protection psychologically mostly comes from appreciation for nature and the feeling of being connected to it. Especially in urban environments, many people lose their connectedness, although psychological studies clearly show that (un-) natural environments influence our feelings, moods, and health significantly.

For the success of your project, it might also be of need to know your neighbourhood and speak to people. And eventually you might want to find a location to conduct your project, or parts of it.

In the following you find basic considerations when planning a trip or activity, and several activities and methods for exploration of your surroundings, in natural as well as urban areas. Apart from that, it is also fine to explore for example by foot, bike, or public transport, without any special tasks or methods.

Basic considerations when planning a trip or activity with young people:

Date and time: clear communication, easy reachable meeting point, planning and communication well in advance.

Location: easy (and ideally climate-friendly) travel to reach and on-site, barrier-free if needed. Additionally, think about a bad weather alternative.

Food: If you meet for more than two or three hours, probably people will get hungry (and thirsty). Tell them to bring food and water if necessary. If you can provide food, ask for special diets or allergies in advance. For providing food, think about all aspects: costs, purchase, storage, preparation, serving, ...

Finances: Make estimates on money you will spend (if necessary). If you have no financing, you might divide the costs between the participants. If you need to do so, consider if everybody can spend this money. If not, think about changes. Think also about costs your participants might have themselves during the activity. For example, not everybody might have a bus ticket. Further, you should tell in advance if they need money on-site. Always think about unforeseen things and plan with reserves where applicable.

Program planning: Plan your time schedule in advance. We recommend using a timetable. Plan regular breaks and not too tight schedules. Things might take longer than you think, unforeseen things might happen, etc. So, planning to get home with the last possible connection is not a really good idea.

Material: if you want to use material (for example for crafting or building), also always consider all aspects: costs, purchase, transportation, storage, after-use, ...

Further, you can use the **CLIMATEs App by Naturfreundejugend**. It is a tool which supports youth workers when planning activities with young people: from day trips to longer activities like youth camps. You can calculate your CO2 emissions for travel, used materials, food and more, to make your activity as sustainable as possible. CLIMATEs also provides background information, tips for planning and activities, educational resources, and recipes for climate-friendly cooking with large groups.

WHAT I LIKE IN NATURE

Duration:	30 minutes
Age:	All ages
Group size:	3-15
Objectives:	Appreciating nature Mindfulness Team Building
Material needed:	Natural surroundings

Take a relaxed seat in nature or take a walk. Start an exchange on the group members' favourite natural surroundings or spots, and emotions about nature. Questions can be:

- Which place do I like most when I want to relax from school/work?
- Which place or natural features inspire me?
- Where would I feel safe and secure, for example when I am sad?
- Which natural places do I find exciting?
- Which place or natural features feel for me like holiday?
- Which is a landscape/place in the world I really want to visit?

We recommend working with the "popcorn method": there is no order and not everybody has to say something. Whoever feels like answering, speaks. Give all members the time to think and go into themselves to access their emotions. If you are on a walk in your locality, you can think of visiting spots the group members are naming. Also, you can decide with the group to visit a spot afterwards, a spot everybody likes.

NATURAL MANDALA

Duration:	30 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	2-30
Objectives:	Appreciating nature Creativity Team Building Self-efficacy
Material needed:	Natural surroundings with potential on finding material (e.g. a forest)

Find a nice spot in nature. Invite everybody to collect materials which they like for a few minutes (for example leaves, flowers, pinecones, seeds, ...). Afterwards, come together again at a flat surface and create a mandala: arrange the materials in a circular pattern, explore symmetry and be creative. Depending on the group size, you can do it all together or in small groups. It's also possible to let the participants "draw" what they like (alone or in a group) or you stipulate other motives, for example animals.

APPLE-SWAP-GAME

Duration:	60 min up to half a day
Age:	Children, teenagers, young adults
Group size:	2-10 in one group, several groups possible
Objectives:	Getting to know your neighbourhood Self-efficacy Building confidence Team Building
Material needed:	One apple per group (or other item) Human activity in the surroundings

The group (or every group) gets an apple (it can be anything else, too. But it should be one singular item with no huge monetary value). A time limit might be set. The task is, to swap this apple to another item and continue the swapping game until either the time is over, or the group has the feeling they have the best possible output (for example ice cream for everybody).

Encourage the group to walk around in the neighbourhood and ask strangers if they like to swap their item with something else (usually it should be some kind of "upgrade", the group must discuss and decide if they want to take the offer or not). Let the group choose together where to go and whom to ask. You can ask people on the streets or go into shops, cafés, etc. Try to support every group member to gain and/or discover within her/himself/themselves the courage to ask a stranger at least once (maybe you do the first example, maybe some people feel better asking together with another person/others, etc.)

RALLYE/PUZZLE HUNT

Duration:	From 30 min up to whole day
Age:	Depending on complexity, all ages or teenagers and adults
Group size:	3-10 for one group, several groups possible
Objectives:	Getting to know the locality Self-efficacy Team Building
Material needed:	Depends. Chalk or nothing/ prepared papers with tasks/ smartphone for geocaching/ special material might be needed for certain tasks or stations/ costumes when playing with a story

This real classic of outdoor games can be played in many ways. The basic idea is that a group must find a predefined way and/or reach a certain place in the end while accomplishing tasks along the way. Doing so, they get to know the locality better and work together as a group. The easiest version is, to mark a way with signs (using chalk, sticks and stones, or "drawing" in the soil), this can be conducted well in natural surroundings. You can introduce some more signs than simple arrows to make it more exciting.

Another approach is to hand out papers with puzzles and tasks. This is working well in more urban surroundings. Puzzles could be things like “In which year was this church build?”, “How many pillars has the bridge?”, “What is the person behind the statue known for?”, “Which is the name of the street where the oldest building of the town is located?”, “Guess how many people are working in that building”, etc.

A modern version of the game is geocaching.

In case you are working with several youth workers and groups, there can be stations on the way where the groups must accomplish special tasks. Also, running stations are an option, where the group has to find the person or the person tries to catch the group, for example. You can also give the game a fictional story or theme so that every person at a station plays a role.

EMOTION COLLAGE	
Duration:	60 min (with option of longer project)
Age:	14+
Group size:	2-100
Objectives:	Appreciating nature Creativity Mindfulness Self-efficacy
Material needed:	Paper Drawing pens Scissors (Phone) cameras

Invite all participants to draw things that represent emotions for them (20 minutes). For example, they could draw a cartoon character they like with a happy face, a crying emoji, a heart, a graffiti saying «nice», or whatever comes to their minds. It's helpful to prepare some examples for inspiration. Afterwards, give them 40 minutes to explore their surroundings (outdoors, but indoors is also possible) and take pictures with their phone cameras of things that evoke their emotions, such as things they like, dislike, or find surprising, together with the fitting drawing. Groups might be formed independently or predefined. The game can also be continued for the duration of a few days for example during a camp or activity week.

Afterwards, collect the pictures and invite to a diashow. Give it a little festive vibe so you make sure everybody's pictures get appreciated. Give room for discussions if necessary. As a souvenir, the pictures can be used for a group collage (digital or analog).

Research & Knowledge

For conducting an environmental project, some knowledge about the environment and the climate crisis is useful. However, you don't have to become an expert to understand some basic correlations. In fact, many things can become comprehensible simply through deeper observation of your surroundings, and of course when speaking to the right people. For your project, you could research if there is an expert on environmental issues or climate change in your locality and ask for an interview with your group. In some areas there are also museums about environmental topics. Apart from that, there is plenty of digital offers which provide fun approaches for deepening your knowledge.

The Goethe Institute's **digital children-university** offers 150 video lectures, translated into 30 languages, bringing fun to exploring nature, medicine, and technology. It is especially suitable for younger teenagers and children and is free of charge. Its main purposes are to arouse curiosity about the world of knowledge and provide exciting content for interdisciplinary learning and extracurricular teaching.

"Your Plan, Your Planet" is a new platform created by Google which aims to raise awareness among users about waste and excessive use of the Earth's resources. Through four categories (stuff, water, energy, and food) one can learn how to make small changes that have a big impact on the environment. It works with tips, simple games, badges, and goals and offers estimates of the environmental impact of our consumption habits.

The **SDGs benchmarking tool** offers support to regional governments in achieving the SDGs. It presents indicators to measure and monitor the SDGs and benchmark similar regions. For project work with young people, it can be a useful tool to find out how your region stands in multiple indicators for the different SDGs. Further, it can be used as a basis for advocacy and policymaking initiatives. Armed with data and insights from the tool, young people can collaborate with regional governments to identify priority areas for action and advocate for policies and programs.

The **SDG Academy** offers free access to open educational materials curated by world-renowned experts on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Further, it offers a global platform for sharing insights and best practices for achieving them.

Digital Tools and further learning

Why Diverse Teams are Smarter: <u>Diversity and Inclusion: Why Diverse Teams are smarter (Harvard Business Review)</u>	The digital children-university: <u>The Digital Kinderuniversität (Goethe-Institut)</u>
Communication Styles: <u>Effective communication skills for business and personal success - Four Styles of Communication (maximumadvantage.com)</u>	Your Plan, Your Planet: <u>Google Sustainability Tool</u>
Personality types: <u>16 personalities: free online test</u>	SDGs benchmarking tool: <u>ESPON's SDGs benchmarking tool</u>
Team roles: <u>The Nine Belbin Team Roles</u>	SDG Academy: <u>Free, open educational resources from the world's leading experts on sustainable development</u>
CliMATEs App for sustainable planning of activities: <u>cliMATEs (for smartphones also available over your Appstore)</u>	

CHAPTER FOUR: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Before going into the process of choosing a project topic, you should have gone through at least some of the previous steps, presented in the toolkit. Your group should be stable and (mostly) harmonic, and you should have explored yourselves and your locality. In the best case, you might already have a rough idea about what your project could look like, emerging from the topics you were talking about until now. Otherwise, in the following chapter a few more methods for **creative idea development** are presented which might also support you to get it clearer, together with your group, what exactly your topic will be. Also, you can conduct research on those exact environmental problems your locality is facing. For example, you can research for climate change effects in your region or country, as well as topics which came up during the previous work with the group. Further, you can conduct a **survey** with the neighbourhood, asking them what they feel as problematic in the locality related to the climate crisis or sustainability.

Eventually, it is best to discuss and decide together with your group the project topic you will choose. Whatever it is, it should be something the whole group agrees on and is somehow excited for. The process of finding a topic together can be difficult, but you will have the best outcome when taking your time to find a project idea in a group process. During the process, you should consider different aspects and perspectives. Of course, not every good idea is realistic. But at the same time not every idea which seems unrealistic at first, is determined to fail. Keep the dreamer and the critic in balance! To examine your project further, give it structure, and keep all aspects into consideration, in the second part different approaches for **project design** are presented.



Creative Idea Development

In the following, we introduce a few more methods on finding a project topic in a creative way. Those can support on inspiration or on clarification regarding what exactly your project topic will be. Moreover, you can also use some easy brainstorming methods, like drawing a mind map or writing down associations to a certain topic from A to Z.

HANDPRINT PAPER GAME	
Duration:	5-10 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	4-100
Objectives:	Creating new ideas Team Building
Material needed:	1 paper (din a5 works best) per person Pens

Every person gets a paper, divided in four parts. In each part there is a question:

1. Who? 2. What? 3. Why? (For what reason or purpose?) 4. With the help of what/whom?

When explaining, underline that especially the last part is important since there are not so many bigger things which you can do without any help or material. Now, every person fills in the first question on their own without the others seeing it. Afterwards, everybody folds the paper to the back, so they can give it to another person who can write on the same side without seeing what was written before. The paper is given to the next person on the left, who then answers the second question. That continues until the last question. Now, the papers are passed one more time, and everybody can unfold and read what was written. Invite people to read out loud to the group.

FIND YOUR CLIMATE SUPERPOWER

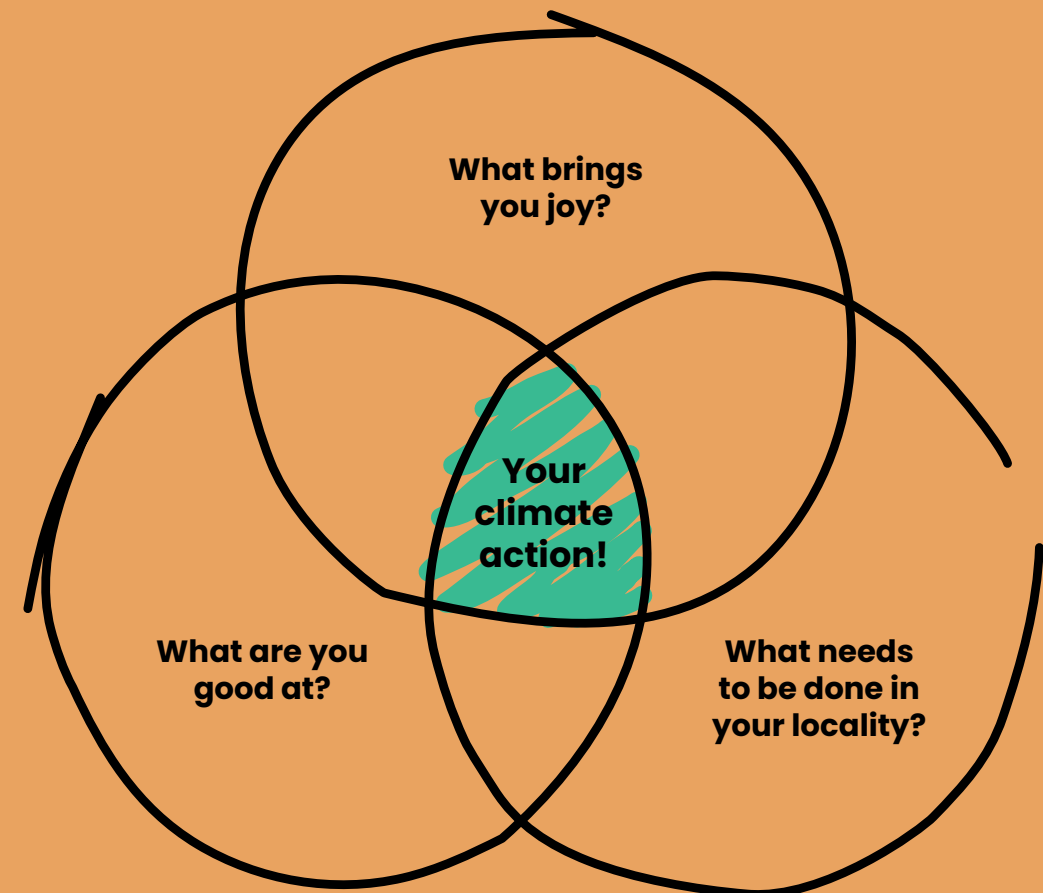
Duration:	60–120 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	1–15
Objectives:	Finding a project topic Mindfulness Self-reflection
Material needed:	Paper or poster Pen

Draw your own Climate Action Venn Diagram, every person on their own, or together as a group.

If you are familiar with the Japanese concept of Ikigai, think of this as a simplified, climate-focused version of that. For introducing the method you can listen to the TED Talk or the Podcast by Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, who is also the creator of this diagram.

1. What are you good at? Think about your skills, resources, and networks. Which are your areas of expertise? Who and what do you have access to? What can you bring to the table?
2. What is the work that needs to be done, in general and in your locality? Are there particular climate and justice solutions that interest you? Maybe starting a composting program, protecting forests, saving water, or getting climate candidates elected? Heaps of options.
3. What brings you joy and satisfaction? What gets you out of bed in the morning? Don't pick things that make you miserable and will burn you out! This is the long haul – find things that enliven and energize you.

The goal is to be in the heart of your Venn diagram, where these three circles overlap. In a group diagram you should find in best case your project topic there. If you do it as an individual exercise, discuss together afterwards, which projects you might want to take on and who could take which responsibilities.



WHAT MATTERS MORE?

Duration:	Depending on group size around 60–180 min
Age:	14+
Group size:	2–30
Objectives:	Research and presentation skills Communication skills Knowledge Self-efficacy
Material needed:	Laptops or phones for research Laptop/posters/Flipchart for presentation Pens Possibly crafting materials

You can let the participants choose pairs (or assign them randomly) or let them do the activity individually.

Ask each group member or pair to choose a specific environmental topic, such as recycling, composting, renewable energy, water resources, biodiversity conservation, etc. Now they get 45 min time to research on key facts and potential solutions, and further, on how far your locality/city/region/country is dealing with the topic.

Set a time limit for each presentation, for example 5 or 10 minutes per speaker. Each participant can choose how to present their assigned topic. Encourage creativity in presentation format, such as slideshows, posters, or interactive demonstrations. After each presentation, allow time for questions and discussion from the audience. Take care of respectful criticism and ensure that everyone's work is appreciated. Rotate the speakers until everyone has presented her/his/their topic.

Another way to develop your idea can be to let yourselves be inspired by the SDGs, as they provide a comprehensive overview of the world's most pressing issues.

Some ideas for possible projects could be:



No Poverty: Find a creative way to collect donations for less privileged people, for example to give young refugees the possibility to participate in a youth camp.

Zero Hunger: Ask in local shops if it is possible to collect food which is still good but would be thrown away or look on the internet for local foodsharing/foodsaving organisations/activists. Prepare one or more food events where you cook a meal and invite the local community, or especially people who suffer from poverty.

Good Health and Wellbeing: Organise an outdoor sport or recreational event for the local community, to support health and connectedness to nature.

Clean Water and Sanitation: Support the collection and reuse of rainwater in your local community, by providing information or building up structures.

Decent Work: Inform about fast fashion and organise a workshop for re- or upcycling of old clothes in your locality.

Sustainable Cities and Communities: Build an urban garden with your neighbourhood.

Climate Action: Organise a tree-planting event, clean-up actions, a youth-led climate march or an advocacy campaign.

Life Below Water: Organise beach or river clean-ups.

Life on Land: Support wild bees by planting flowers and providing nesting sites with the help of neighbours, the city administration or property owners.

Project Design

When going into the process of project design, you should have an idea of what your project is supposed to be. It doesn't have to be super concrete by now, because with the following methods you will get the possibility to elaborate it further, what we highly recommend.

The goal is to envision the bigger picture and not only certain aspects, and to practice some regular revisions, reflections, and success checks.

Sustainable Creative Project Canvas

Based on the Sustainable Creative Project Canvas, below you find a scheme to visualise a brief however clear and straightforward project plan. It consists of 4 main parts:

PART 1: VALUE. What is your core idea? What is the main topic of your project? What is your vision? What do you want to improve?

PART 2: PRACTICAL PART. Divided into a) activities: Which are your planned actions? What possibilities for actions do you have? b) Time & Equipment: Which are your resources? What kind of equipment could you organise? c) Local networks: What kind of possibilities do you have to work together with stakeholders and the community? With whom do you have connections, which new ones could you establish?

PART 3: EXTERNAL PERCEPTION. Who is affected by your project? Think of your locality and all possible stakeholders.

PART 4: SUSTAINABILITY. Divided in a) Short term effects: Which are short term gains and losses? B) Long term effects: Which is the long-term outcome? What makes your project sustainable?

Short term effects		Long term effects		
Your core idea and its value (not monetary)	Activities	Local networks	Affected people in the locality/ stakeholders	
	Time & Equipment			

At first, collect your answers from part 1 to 4, afterwards review and modify. Further, we suggest reviewing continuously over the duration of project implementation.

Circle Of Creativity

While designing the planning of a project, the below tool, namely Circle of Creativity, introduces two points: a. A definition of Creativity: How to create something out of nothing, and b. An introduction to authentic planning: How to plan based on what is, and not based on what is not.

In particular, the tool works out of the principle (see above point a.) that project work is best to be perceived not only as a synthesis of pre-existing knowledge, but mainly as an introduction of something new, which is created out of nothing. Further on (see point b), the tool is there to support users to avoid creating project ideas and planning their implementation out of the circle of HAVE-DO-BE, which starts from what is missing, and leads to planning backwards, in a neither effective nor authentic manner. For example:

“There is no political action for the impact of climate crisis in the urban settings, and we do not want that (HAVE). We want it different. So, we will start doing actions (DO) to change that, and, then, we will have an environment where everyone can feel healthy and included (BE).”

The tool suggests working through the circle of BE-DO-HAVE, which starts from what is there in the reality of the context where you want to plan your intervention, includes the vision out of which you are working, plans actions driven by the vision, and creates results. For example:

“We are living in the urban setting of..., and we are observing this challenge/problem... we want to raise and tackle this issue, as a group within which everyone feels healthy and included (BE). We are going to do an intervention (DO), lasting..., aiming to create a little change with big impact on the daily life of the community members (HAVE).”

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In other words, the tool suggests authentic planning through placing what is usually there as a desired outcome at the level of the vision, to the level of what is there already, to have it as a constant drive for engaging into further actions and achieve desired results. In particular:

Circle of Creativity:

1

Reality Check: Finding and writing down the facts of your group: How many people are there, what are their ages, where are they living, which are their main values, what do they observe in their close environment (related to the umbrella topic), which are their skills, what kind of knowledge do they hold individually and as a whole group – “we are a group of seven individuals, we are four people under 15 and three above 15 years old, we are living in.., etc.”

2

Vision: The group members are setting for themselves a vision. A vision is usually composed out of core/important to the values of the individuals of the group and is more effective if stated at the present tense. Important is, that the vision is something that is never and ever fulfilled, and its main function is to be for the group and its members to be a drive, a fuel for the continuation of their actions, despite the challenges and the bottlenecks which will occur – “we are care and support for ourselves, for each other, and for the members of our community, etc.”.

3

Goal: At the level of the goal, the group defines what they want to achieve, and they make it at this point measurable, concrete, and specific. The goal has to be realistic, as well, so it does not become a self-fulfilling prophecy of not being possible to make it – “we want to implement an environmental intervention, in the context of our local community, lasting for maximum 20 days in total, and being completed by latest November 2024, etc.”.

4

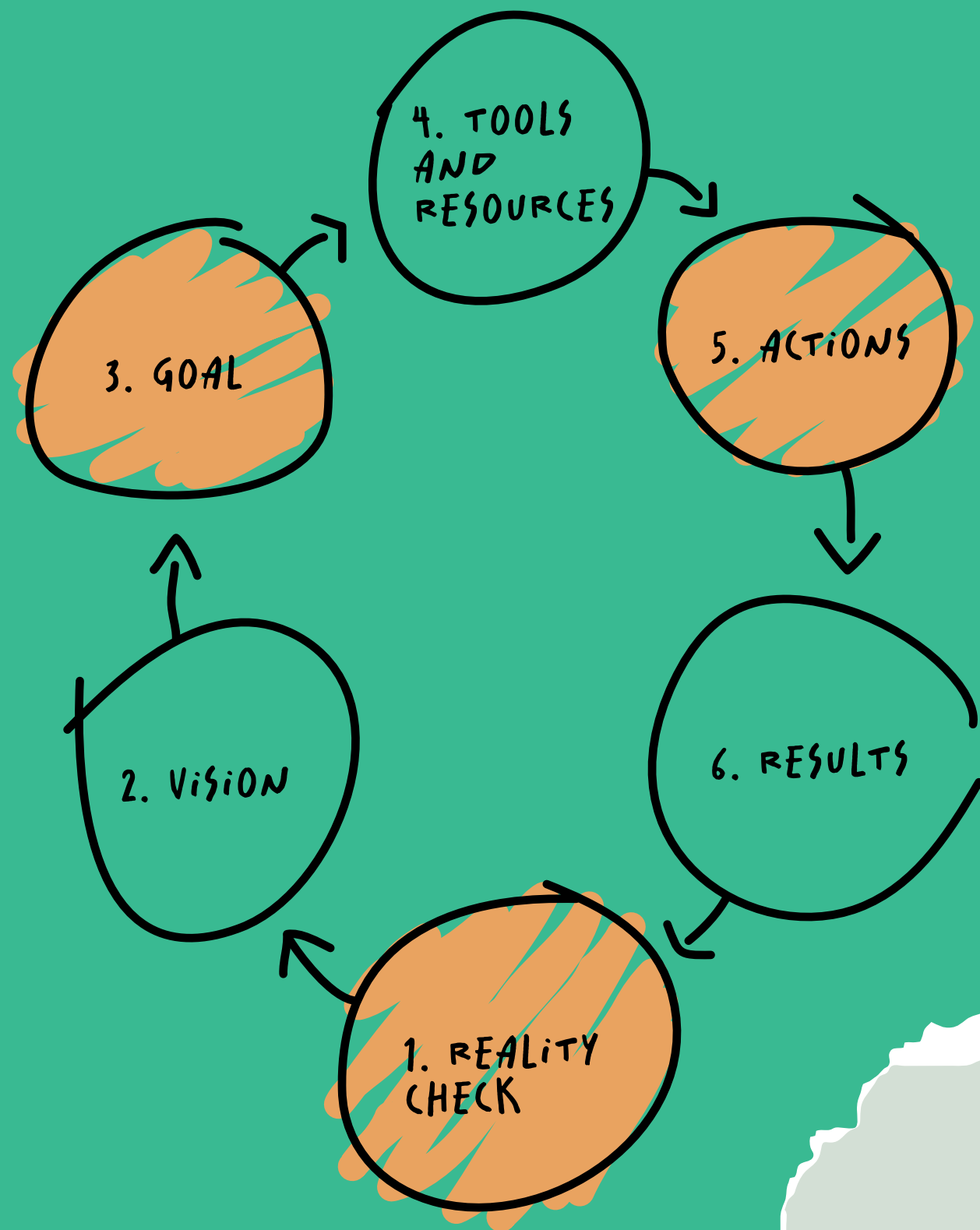
Tools and Resources: At this point the group, first, writes down in details the support system they have, including tools, online and offline/human resources, network, outreach to local community (members of the community, organizations, as well as local authorities and policy-making entities). This process takes place within a brainstorming atmosphere, without evaluating what is going to be needed at the end or not. In the tools and resources, the group members are encouraged to include their individual strong points, areas of interest, and areas of expertise. Afterwards, the group conducts backwards planning, and sets and divides priority actions which need to be taken immediately (within the first week after the planning is finalized).

5

Actions: At this stage, the group starts to implement actions and dives into implementation. What is of utmost importance for the group members and the project process is a) to keep to agreements made, and b) not to start being creative in action – meaning to start changing plans once something does not work out easily directly – but communicate instead, in openness and transparency, difficulties and struggles so the group can support, and/or plans can be finetuned or corrected.

6

Results: Consequently, implementation will bring result, gradual as well as final ones. It is important to remember, results are there to provide input to step one (1. Reality check), to give potentially feedback to points four and five (4. Tools and Resources & 5. Actions) – meaning how the planning has been done, what can be improved, what other resources are needed, what can be corrected, but NOT to give feedback to steps two and three (2. Vision & 3. Goal), which are there to provide fuel and direction not in a linear, but in a dynamic manner.



Plan Do Check Cycle

The **Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, also known as Action Research**, is a four-step model used as a project planning tool for the control and continual improvement of projects, processes, products and change in general. It is considered a never-ending iterative design and management method that should be repeated, again and again, for continuous improvement. In education, there are four main types of action research design: individual, collaborative, organization-wide, and district-wide.

Mertler, an educational consultant and researcher, conducted a study on classroom-based action research as a form of professional development for educators. He observed that traditional training sessions were not impactful and did not align with actual classroom practices. Action research, on the other hand, allows teachers to study their own classrooms and improve their effectiveness. It is a structured four-step cyclical process that empowers educators and focuses on data-driven decision making. The action research process involves planning, acting, developing action plans for future cycles, and reflecting on the process. It meets the individual needs of educators and serves as a self-evaluation methodology.

Collaborative action research and professional learning communities are also valuable, as they involve practices like working together, focusing on common issues or goals, and creating momentum for greater insight and learning. Professional learning communities share key components with collaborative action research, such as a shared mission, collaborative culture, collective inquiry, action orientation, commitment to continuous improvement, and result-focused orientation.

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Deming's PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act):

Plan

Get Clear: Define together exactly what you want to achieve with your environmental project. Whether it is cutting down on plastic waste, boosting recycling efforts, or protecting local wildlife, make sure everyone knows the goals.

Map Out Strategies: Brainstorm with your team to figure out the best ways to reach those goals. This might mean organising clean-up events, spreading awareness, or pushing for policy changes.

Sort Out Resources: Figure out what you need to make it happen (money, materials, support from the community, ...) and make sure it is all lined up.

Do

Put Plans into Action: Start doing the actions you planned out. Get everyone involved in making things happen, from organizing events to carrying out research.

Keep an Eye on Progress: Check in regularly to see how things are going. If something is not working, tweak the plan or try something different.

Deal with Problems: If you hit a snag, don't panic. Work together to find solutions and keep moving forward.

Check

See How You are Doing: Take a step back and look at what you have accomplished so far. Measure things like pollution levels or community involvement to see how you are making a difference.

Compare with the Plan: Check your progress against your original goals. Are you on track, or do you need to adjust your approach?

Learn from Experience: Take a good look at what went well and what didn't. Use that knowledge to make your next steps even better.

Act

Make Changes: Based on what you've learned, make adjustments to your project. If something is not working, try a new approach. Keep improving as you go.

Put Improvements into Practice: Take what you've learned and apply it to your project. Share successes with the team to keep everyone motivated.

Set Standards: Create guidelines so that others can learn from your experience. Make it easier for future projects to succeed by sharing what you have learned.

Digital Tools and further learning

Creating a survey: [How to create an effective survey in 15 simple tips](#)

How to Find Your Climate Superpower: [Ted Talk by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson: How to Find Joy in Action](#)

How to Find Your Climate Superpower: [Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson Helps You Find Your Climate Superpower \(Podcast\)](#)

About Foodsharing/Foodsaving: [Foodsharing and Foodsaving worldwide – a global and distributed grassroots movement against food waste \(collective green\)](#)

Creative Project Canvas: [A useful tool to visualize, detail and reflect on your projects to make them sustainable \(materahub\)](#)

Action Research / PDCA: [What Is the PDCA \(Plan-Do-Check-Act\) Cycle?](#)

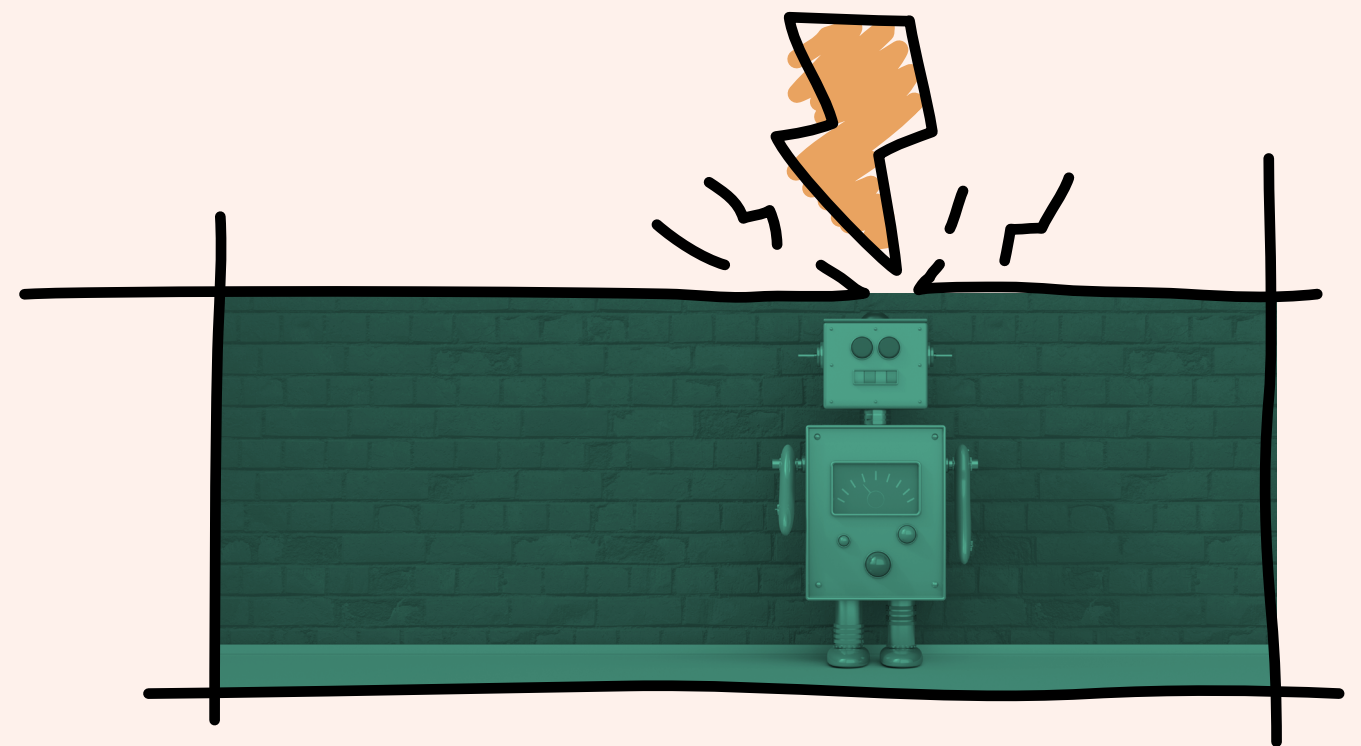
CHAPTER FIVE: FROM IDEA TO ACTION

Conducting a project in your local community is a significant contribution to democracy and civil society. For handling modern world's problems and feeling self-efficient, the understanding of the meaning and relation of society to the individual and learning possibilities of involvement can have very empowering effects. There are a lot of different ways for engaging politically and involving the local community, reaching from dissemination and communication to full involvement of members of the local community or acting as advocates for change.

The key to the above opportunities is to take a breath and take the step, together with your group, to bring yourselves from the level of knowing, thinking, exploring, and identifying to the level of wanting, daring, and doing what you feel as impactful and what you have organised, despite and beyond the doubt and the risk.

Apart from the abstract sense of courage and the decision to move forward with action, in the present chapter, you may find terms, approaches and suggested frameworks, which can strongly support the transformative process of turning your idea into action. The below are methodological tools which will position you and your group at a place where action becomes possible, results are enabled, and ideas can create actual impact. Indicatively, you will get the chance to contextualize your project work by using a deeper understanding of terms such as:

CIVIL ENGAGEMENT, ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP,
COMMUNITY-BASED ACTION, AND ADVOCACY.

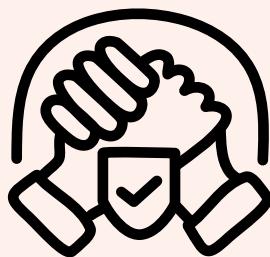


Civic Engagement & Active Citizenship

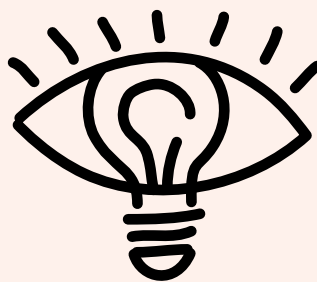
The term Civic Engagement is used to describe the way in which individuals in a community actively engage with issues that affect different sectors of society to have a positive impact on their own lives and the lives of others. Always keep in mind that: no social or community reform can be achieved without the support of the local community and the identification of the parties with the same vision.



participation is essential between members



the links must be based on trust



the community to share the same vision

Civic Engagement is an integral part of democracy and the evolution of society. Through Civic Engagement, citizens gain a voice, promote issues they consider important, challenge, and change conditions and situations that hamper the lives of their fellow citizens. Examples of civic engagement include:

- Voting in elections: Participating in the electoral process by voting for political candidates or ballot measures.
- Volunteering: Donating time and effort to community organizations, non-profit groups, or grassroots initiatives.
- Civic education: Learning about government structures, political processes, and social issues to become informed and engaged citizens.
- Social entrepreneurship: Creating innovative business ventures or non-profit organizations to address social and environmental challenges.
- Digital Campaigning & Digital Democracy: Using digital tools for political purposes, for example through blogging or taking active political stands on social media.
- Advocacy and activism: Speaking out on social and political issues, lobbying policymakers, organising protests or rallies or campaigning for specific causes.

Active citizenship refers to the proactive and engaged participation of individuals within their communities and societies. It involves taking an active role in social, political, and civic affairs to promote positive change and contribute to the common good. What this means to a group:

- Increased Engagement: Active citizenship encourages members of the group to become more involved and engaged in the group's activities and initiatives.
- Diverse Perspectives: Active citizenship brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds, each with their own perspectives, experiences, and skills.
- Collective Action: Active citizenship often leads to collective action within the group. When members are passionate about a particular issue or cause, they are more likely to work together to address it.
- Empowerment, impact, and influence.

PROMOTE YOUR PROJECT

Duration:	30–60 min
Age:	All ages
Group size:	3–5 per group, several groups possible
Objectives:	Create dissemination strategy Communication skills Research skills
Material needed:	Papers Pens Smartphone or computer for research Possibly computer and projector or monitor for presentation

Divide the participants into groups of up to 3–5 people. Write down different communication channels on separate sheets of paper.

Possible channels: YouTube, Video, Forum discussion, E-Mail, Elevator's pitch, Podcast, Facebook, Instagram, Padlet, Info board, Newsletter, Leaflets, WhatsApp, Telegram, Blog, Homepage, Photo collage, ..., you can add more.

Now, let the groups choose one channel each, or more than one, to combine.

Give them 30 minutes time to answer the following questions:

Target: WHO do you want to communicate the project to? Identify your target audience (age, gender, location, etc.), for your project and the channel – not every channel might be suitable.

Message: WHAT do you want to communicate? Depending on the communication channel used, it can be for example more extended and detailed, or a payoff, a short sentence that, in a very small space, expresses the core values of your project in an easily understandable, effective, coherent, and truthful way.

Editorial Plan: WHEN will your project be published? Based on the decisions made during the previous steps, an editorial plan can be drawn up to schedule the publication of content. Is it to publish one Facebook post per week? Or a podcast season with one episode every month? Or a newsletter every 6 months? The possibilities are endless.

Purpose: WHY are you publicising your project? Which is the result you want to achieve? For example, you could obtain participation in an event, make yourself known, provide information, raise awareness.

After time is up, every group presents what they have prepared and you can discuss together, which channel(s) you want to use.

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Community-based action

In senses of sustainability and to get maximum support for your project, we recommend working together with the local community as much as possible. In the following, you find information on which considerations to process and what kind of steps to take, as well as an activity to get a feeling on the importance of involvement of locals. Community-based project implementation involves initiating and executing initiatives that are designed to address specific needs, challenges, or opportunities within a community. These projects are typically led by community members themselves or in collaboration with local organizations, governmental agencies, or non-profit groups.

How To Do Community-Based Implementation

Identify Needs: The first step in implementing a community-based project is to identify the needs and priorities of the community. This may involve conducting surveys, holding community meetings, or consulting with stakeholders to understand the issues that need to be addressed.

Project Planning: Once the needs have been identified, the next step is to develop a plan for the project. This includes defining the project goals, objectives, scope, timeline, budget, and resources needed. It is essential to involve community members in the planning process to ensure that the project aligns with their needs and interests.

Build Partnerships: Community-based projects often require collaboration and partnerships with various stakeholders, including local government, businesses, schools, non-profit organizations, and residents. Building strong partnerships can help leverage resources, expertise, and support for the project.

Mobilize Resources: Securing funding, volunteers, materials, and other resources is crucial for the successful implementation of community-based projects. This may involve applying for grants, fundraising, soliciting donations, or leveraging in-kind contributions from partners.

Implementation: With the plan in place and resources secured, the project can be implemented according to the timeline and milestones established during the planning phase. This may involve organising work teams, coordinating activities, and managing project tasks to ensure smooth execution. Also, feedback will be solicited from community partners during implementation, to establish a culture of feedback while the project is happening.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Throughout the implementation process, it is important to monitor progress, track outcomes, and evaluate the effectiveness of the project. This allows for adjustments to be made as needed and helps measure project's impact on the community.

Sustainability and Capacity Building: Community-based projects should aim to create long-term, sustainable change within the community. This may involve building local capacity, empowering community members, and fostering ownership of the project beyond its initial implementation.

Communication and Outreach: Effective communication and outreach are essential for engaging community members, soliciting feedback, and raising awareness about the project. This may include using various communication channels, such as meetings, social media, newsletters, and community events.

Celebrating Successes: Celebrating achievements and milestones along the way can help maintain momentum, boost morale, and reinforce the sense of community pride and accomplishment.

ROLEPLAY: A NEW HOTEL

Duration:	Short version: 30 min; Long version: 60–90 min
Age:	All ages easy (short) version, 14+ more difficult (long) version
Group size:	5–30
Objectives:	Communication skills Political education Team Building
Material needed:	Role cards Easy version: possibly a rope Complex version: possibly one poster per group

Prepare role cards for each participant.

Story: A new hotel is planned in your locality. Each participant gets a role (see below). In larger groups there can be certain double or triple roles (for example farmer, local teenager, nature protection activists, tourists). You can also adapt the story to your locality.

Depending on the available time and the age of your participants, there are two different versions from which you can choose:

Version 1 (easier, shorter): Participants keep their roles in secret. Define a line on the floor, for example with a rope. Explain that one end is agreement and the other disagreement. Everybody starts in the middle of the line. Now you make some statements (see below), and the participants are invited to take a step in the direction of agreement or disagreement, or they stay at their places

if they see the statement neutral, according to their role. Afterwards, let the participants guess each other's roles, discuss the final positions, and ask how the participants felt.

Version 2 (longer, more complex): Everybody knows every role. Provide some statements (examples see below) for building up a fictional setting. Discuss at first, who could build interest groups together. Ideally, form interest groups of 3–6 people. They don't have to be the same group size, as it is in reality. Now give the groups time to prepare: which are the arguments they have pro and which are the ones contra the hotel (while considering which the arguments of the other interest groups might be)? Which are your demands for the hotel in order for your needs to be fulfilled? The groups can prepare a poster with their main arguments.

After the preparation phase (30 min), let the groups come together for the discussion (30–60 min). At first, everybody can state their main argument, without having the other groups responding. Following this procedure, have a controlled discussion. Make sure, every group gets about the same space for expression and that there is a respectful atmosphere. Try to develop a mutual result, so that every stakeholder can have a benefit of the new hotel. Precondition for that will be that participants (or roles) are open for compromises.

Possible roles: Hotel owner, farmer, local accommodation owner with small vacation apartments, conservationist/nature protection activist, package/all-inclusive tourist, local job seeker, restaurant owner, mayor, backpacking tourist, local teenager.

Possible statements:

- Up to 20.000 hotel guests are expected annually, who -in their vast majority- arrive by plane.
- The hotel will have its own section of a beach, for which reason a part of the publicly accessible beach will be closed.
- The hotel is looking for a lot of staff members.
- A rental car company which found out about the hotel plans, considers to open a shop.
- Most of the hotel guests only speak English.
- The prices of the hotel are very reasonable.
- The hotel will be built right next to a nature reserve so that hotel guests have a beautiful view from their window. The hotel owner wants to build a large pool that will be filled with groundwater, which is normally used as drinking water.
- Since fewer guests come to the hotel during winter, many employees are only hired for the summer months.
- The hotel orders all the food for its hotel restaurant from a wholesaler which delivers its goods to the island by plane.

Advocacy Tools and Tactics

Advocacy is an umbrella term. It does not have to be identified through or connected with a legal context and/or legal procedures. Advocacy is very wide and has numerous, diverse applications and each time it is shaped as well by the context, within which it manifests itself.

The term indicates the person who speaks for or on behalf of someone as a witness or advocate. It also refers to an eager/strong support of a person or a cause. Advocacy means influencing policies and practices through the implementation of evidence-based strategies to ultimately bring positive change.

Advocacy principles

- Advocacy is a process, not an activity.
 - It must be based on an analysis done strategically and in a coordinated way.
- You can do it alone or with others.
 - An advocate can be a group of people, an organization, or an individual.
 - An advocate is calling for change or improvement, either for parts of the community, or the community as a whole.
- Advocates are acting in favour of a cause which they believe is just and right.

How to design an advocacy strategy:

- 1 Identify the problem/ issue you want to address. (The problem which we have identified under the umbrella theme we are working.)
- 2 Know what you want to change, and how this change will look like. (The change we want to see at an idealistic level.)
- 3 Define your goal. (The intermediate changes which will support to reach the change we want to bring forward.)
- 4 Choose the best influencing strategy. (See below)
- 5 Develop your action plan.
- 6 Implement your action plan.
- 7 Monitor & Evaluate progress (this is continuous).

Considerations for choosing an influence strategy:

- 1 Who will exercise advocacy (one person, the whole group, other?)
- 2 What context do we have? Also, practicalities, timeframes, etc.
- 3 Mapping of allies and of opponents (Organizations, Parties, Authorities, Institutions)
- 4 Mapping of institutional bodies and of independent authorities
- 5 Which addressing tool best fits our target?

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List Of Potential Advocacy Tools

A CONCRETE INFLUENCING STRATEGIES:

- 1 Open letters, position papers.
- 2 Meeting with decision makers, policy makers, and influencers.
- 3 Other documents, such as briefing papers, relevant to the topic, reports, etc.
- 4 Using media as a tool for advocacy (interviews, article publications).
- 5 Organization of press releases, editorials, press conferences.
- 6 Conduct of public mobilization: petition, street events, exhibition, campaign.

B ONGOING ADVOCACY TOOLS, THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS:

- 1 Participation in working groups which are open, and in other coordination mechanisms.
- 2 Representation at related workshops, conferences, symposiums.
- 3 Building and strengthening networks of support.
- 4 Establishing strong partnerships and organizing joint representations.
- 5 Utilization of relevant to the topic expertise through scientific publications, online speeches, etc.

For inspiration, we recommend looking into best practice examples.

A very big project is the advocacy campaign Greenpeace Organization conducted about the **impact of the palm oil industry**. Beyond opinions related to its impact, accuracy, or anything as such, you can focus on the diverse tools they are using.

When it comes to how to engage young people into advocacy, amongst other resources, **UNICEF has an online toolkit**, which can be applied to diverse settings. It provides skills and information youngsters need to stand up for what is important to them. If you are a teacher, facilitator, youth worker, you can also use this toolkit with your group to inspire young people to work out which children's rights issues they care about and how to go about creating the change they want to see.

In addition, UNICEF also published a **Youth Advocacy Guide** which is intended to help young people navigate and advocate for change. It aims to lead youngsters through the process of advocacy, combining clear 'how to' steps with inspirational stories from other young people who are striving to bring about change.

As UNICEF mentions:

“When you read these stories of triumph and challenge, ranging from preventing child marriage to inspiring environmental activism, you’ll be reminded that you are not alone. Rather, you belong to a growing community of young people who slowly and systematically are changing the world”.

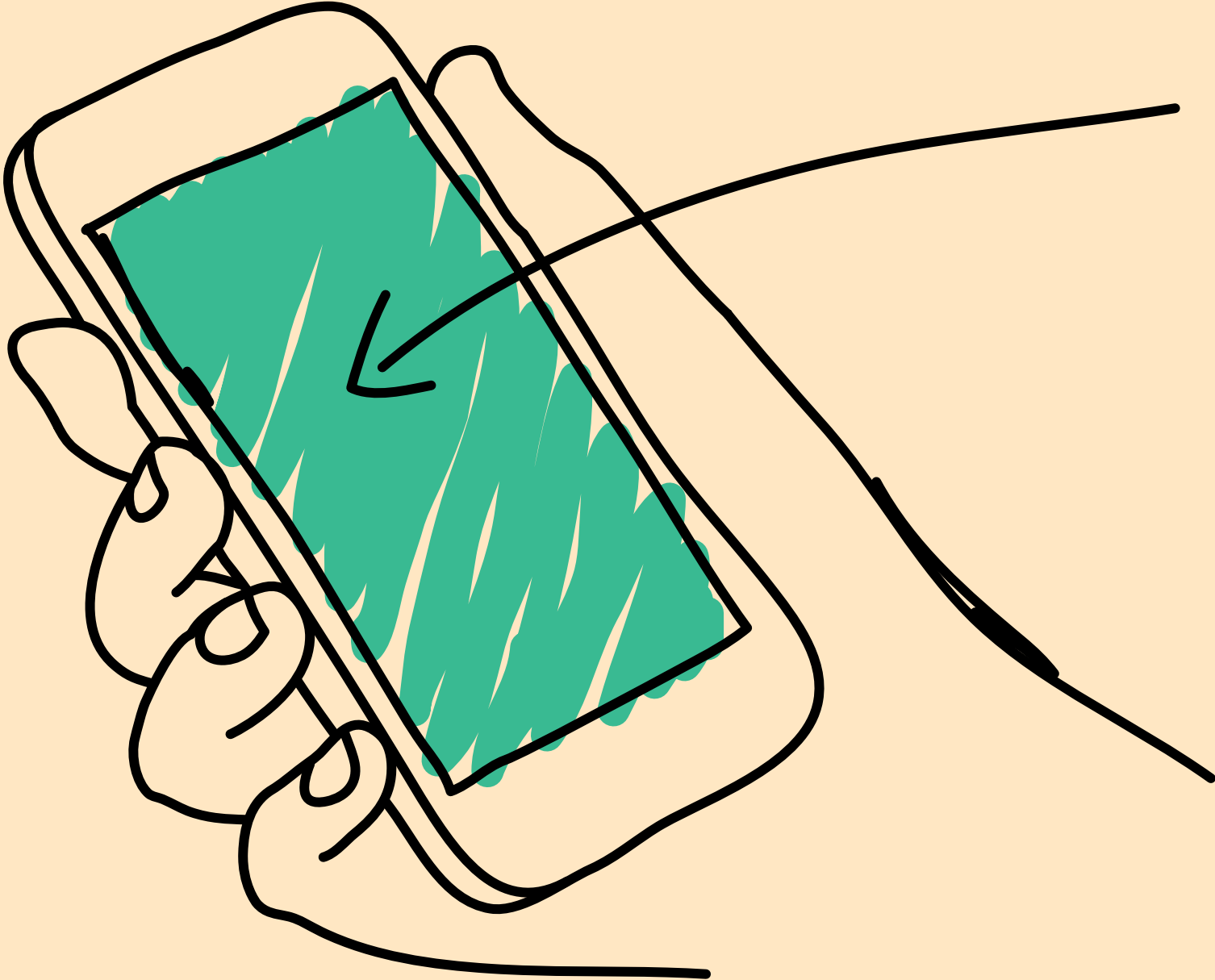
Digital Tools and further learning

Palm oil campaign: [Palm Oil \(Greenpeace\)](#)

Palm oil campaign: [Report: Final countdown: now or never to reform the palm oil industry](#)

UNICEF Youth Advocacy Toolkit: [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#)

UNICEF Youth Advocacy Guide: [Youth Advocacy Guide](#)



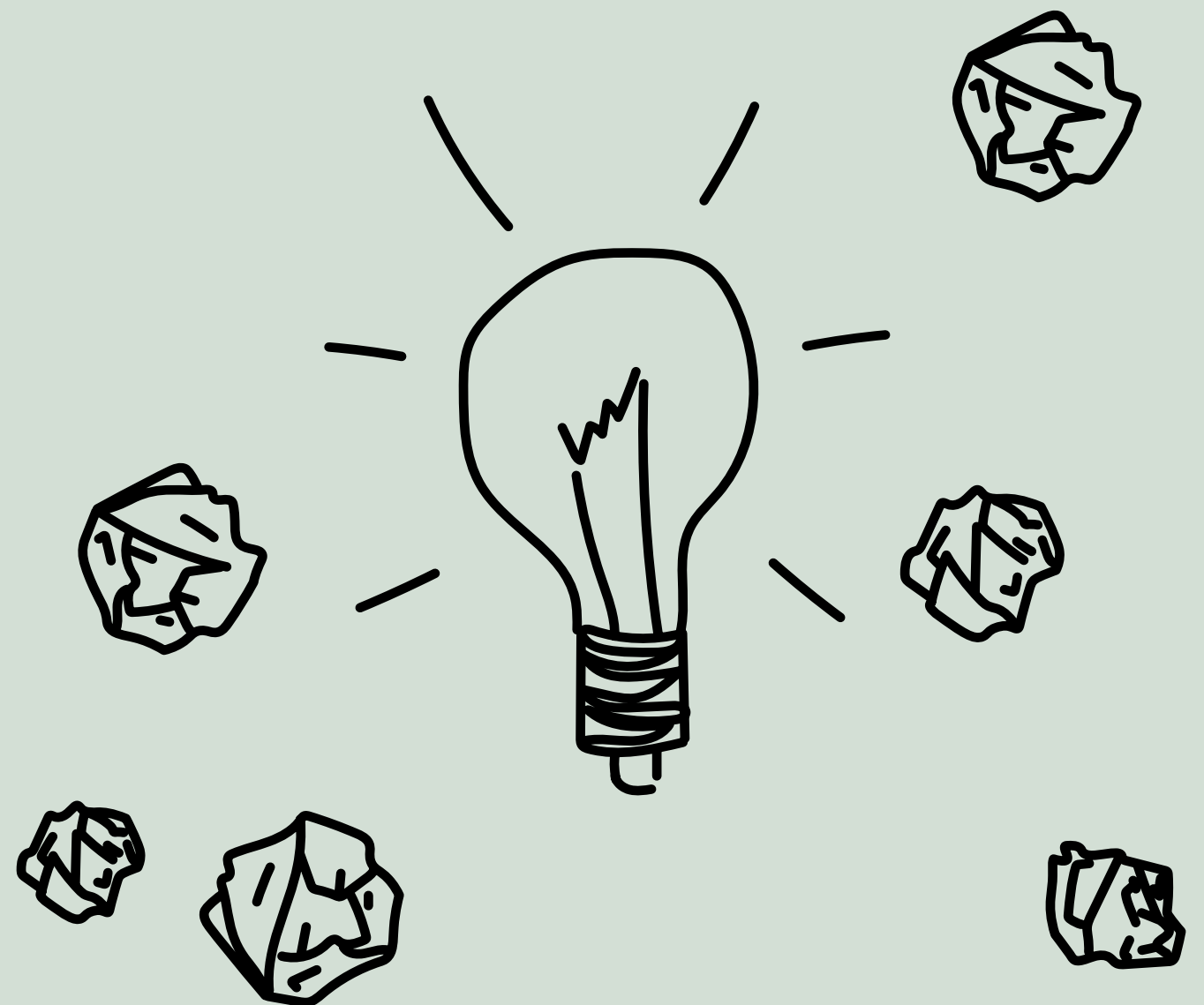
POSTSCRIPT: WHAT TO DO WITH WHAT YOU'VE DONE

In daily life, young people are rarely asked about their experiences, because many people believe that only after a long life lived you have stories to tell. To give young people a stronger voice in our societies, their stories should be told and made visible. Further, through reflection, as well as structured and successful presentation of their experiences, participants get the possibility to learn that they can influence the society through being proactive. Important is here that the young people decide for themselves the content and the context of their presentation. Finally, presentation is also a way to make your project long-lasting, and therefore sustainable. Spread your good idea to inspire others!

Especially when uploading (or sharing) material to the internet, you should however be conscious of privacy, data protection and intimacy of each participant. Do not upload anything without the explicit consent of everyone involved. Agree with all group members on that before, for example, starting recordings or taking pictures. On the other hand, the internet and social media play a major role in the life of most young people. Therefore, for using channels which are well known by the participants and popular among the target group, we recommend considering the use of digital dissemination forms.



Generally, there are multiple possibilities for presentation, online as well as offline. You can choose more than one approach or combine options.



Examples of actual projects

TRAFFIC SIGNS OF JUSTICE

In the context of this project, there are a total of eight signs on the following topics: environmental pollution, respect, solidarity, equal rights, war, mobbing, racism, and the rights of the LGBT+ community. The traffic signs of justice are accompanied by a hands-on calendar that offers schools instructions on how to work artistically with the signs in their own school class. The students are given 6 tasks, and they can get started. They work in groups or independently. They write, stick and paint their experiences and results of the individual work on the calendar. In road traffic, it has been possible to develop an international visual language that is accepted and understood worldwide. In this sense, the traffic signs of justice should also become international symbols to promote fairer coexistence between people and the environment.

SUPERHEROES MAKE SUPER PROJECTS

In order to develop a consistent European identity, European narratives are required in which both the cultural differences of the community and the common values of Europe are presented positively, concretely and clearly. Heroes are suitable for this type of narrative, because, as positive identification figures, they provide orientation, especially to children and young people. Through their actions, they can create awareness of European values and strengthen a European identity. This anthology is the result of an education-oriented youth dialogue project in which reflection on Europe and one's own culture played a major role. The aim of the program is for the participants to create a series of heroes who act either individually or as part of a group and represent Europe both in its diversity and in its shared values. These heroes are each characterized by a particular origin story, according to which their roots can be European as well as non-European. Traditional figures, legends, and myths from the culture of the countries participating in the program will be the trigger for the discussion. A separate personality will be created for each hero. Each hero will develop skills but also recognize their weaknesses. What will unite these heroes will be their common motivation? They act together for the common good.

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Examples for creative presentation

- Draw or craft a comic.
- Create a theatre play and show for example on a place in your neighbourhood (with leaflets before) or in front of family and friends of participants.
- Invite to a public dinner to celebrate your success: families, friends, neighbours, everybody who was involved, ... Cook together, decide together with the participants what everybody likes.
- Organise an exhibition for example of your project result, photos from the process of your project work, or let the participants prepare something related to the project (for example drawings, collages).

- Plan and shoot a movie. This is even possible with smartphone cameras. Upload on social media.
- Plan and record a podcast.
- Invite to a festival, if you can organise a location and some program (or participants perform) or (live) music.
- Create a digital story of what you experienced.
- Write and perform a song together about your main topic.

Digital Tools and further learning

Traffic signs of Justice: <https://www.goethe.de/ins/gr/de/spr/unt/vdg.html>

Traffic signs project applied: https://erasmusplus.schule/fileadmin/Dateien/Bilder/Dossiers/Teilhabe-Demokratie/Flyer_Together_Europe.pdf + <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Ql6lCQAdwg>

Super heroes make super projects: <https://www.goethe.de/ins/gr/de/spr/unt/wuv/jub/esp/she.html>

CLOSURE NOTE

We hope that you have found this toolkit useful and have been inspired to incorporate some aspects of it in your own work. We are very keen to hear about your experiences on working with young people in the context of environmental education, implementing community-based initiatives to eliminate the drastic developments of human-driven climate change.

But most importantly, we want to invite ourselves and you, to move forward with bravery, out of the comfort zone. To find new solutions and form new alliances, creating new spaces for our wider communities.

Embrace your discomfort – it's a catalyst for change.

CHANGE
STARTS
LOCAL(L)Y