

WELL-BEING TOOLKIT

COLLECTIVE
RESPONSIBILITY
through inner
integrity

PERFORM
FUNDACJA ARTYSTYCZNA



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1. FOR WHOM?

This toolkit is an outcome of the project “CORE: Collective Responsibility” directed to youth workers and youth, however, it can be useful for anyone looking for different ways of taking care of their own well-being and increasing self-awareness.

2. ABOUT THE IDEA

Based on the Nonviolent Communication approach and ways of understanding self-care, we wish to address a broad topic of well-being.

Understanding the relationship between needs that are met and unmet that are the reasons for our emotional states, we wish to propose a few strategies for achieving a state of well-being in everyday life.



As we all have different experiences and limitations, it is best to adjust self-care plans individually. Whether you are a newcomer to the idea of self-care or already an experienced player in the field, we invite you to try out ideas suggested by trainers and participants of the CORE project.

In the last part of this toolkit, we share a few ideas of how you can contribute to To be able to draw conclusions for yourself from the proposed practices and your day to day life, complete your routine with reflection practices. They will help you discover what supports your self-care and well-being most. your local community. Why do we consider it important? Well, “no man is an island”, we are all interconnected. We all need each other for different reasons. We are all social beings, we need others as much as they need us. Having good relations with others is essential for well-being.

This toolkit is however just a drop in the ocean of practices and approaches to well-being. If you wish to broaden your understanding, we encourage you to reach for other sources on the subject after becoming familiar with the tools proposed in this Toolkit.

3. WHY?

We believe that self-awareness and self-care put us in control of our lives and bodies. This allows us to put things that matter first and contribute to our own happiness and well-being. Through taking care of ourselves, we become more ready to share our positive energy with others. We look and see more clearly, we read and hear the needs of others better. This can allow us to feel agency and act, and as a result, contribute to building more empathic and solidary societies and communities :)



4. ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project CORE was designed as a process of exploration of self that led to understanding a broader context of our roles in society. During the training course, we have researched ourselves in the context of a group and widened the understanding of our emotions, values & needs. This helped us develop a sense of civic responsibility. We took the perspective of the community, felt the power of unity and unlocked the creative potential for building engagement, empathy and responsibility in each individual. The outcome of this project is this toolkit which we wish to share with you. We wish it to be a starting point or continuation of a journey of understanding of self in relation to others.



5. DAILY SELF-CARE KIT

The aim behind self-care is to cultivate spending time with yourself and make sure you devote enough attention to yourself. Each proposition has been created based on the experiences of the participants during the CORE training course and their personal self-care practice. You can try proposed ideas, modify and/or adapt them to your needs.

5.1. Forest bath

Objective: to refocus, take a break or begin the day. Take a walk somewhere you are surrounded by nature. We advise not to use your phone and put it on silent. If needed, put the timer on not to worry about the time.



The instructions are simple:

- Be aware of what surrounds you.
- Focus on the way you are walking.
- Observe your breath, movements of body and thoughts.

If you wish, during the walk try to do a breathing exercise like for example the 4-7-8. This exercise consists of inhaling through the nose for 4 seconds then holding the air for 7 seconds and exhaling from the mouth for 8 seconds.

5.2. Make your bed

Objective: to feel like you have accomplished your first task of the day

Open the curtains and let the light in. Open the window so fresh air can come into the room then make your bed. If you make your bed every morning you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride, and it will encourage you to do another task and another and another. By the end of the day, that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed. Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that little things in life matter. And, if by chance you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made — that you made — and a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better.

5.3. Dancing for myself

Objective: to release stress and tension, activate your body.

Find a private space where you have a little bit of room for yourself and feel comfortable. Put the music on, as loud as you like. It can be a song you really like, something energetic or more peaceful. Start dancing as you feel, not judging, just enjoying your body moving.



5.4. Use positive affirmations

Objective: to maintain a positive mood and remind yourself of your worth.

Instructions: Affirmations are statements said with confidence about a perceived truth. An affirmation can work because it has the ability to program your mind into believing the stated concept. This is because the mind doesn't know the difference between what is real and what is fantasy.

Step 1: Make a list of what you've always thought of as your negative qualities and change them into positive ones:

For example, if you always thought of yourself as an impatient person, change it into: I have enough patience to face a difficult situation.

You can also just write your affirmation in a more general way, ex.: "I am enough", "I am valid", "I am beautiful on the inside-out".

Step 2: Speak the affirmation out loud for about five minutes once or more times a day for several days, for example before you go to sleep.

Step 3: Anchor the affirmation in your body as you are repeating it by placing your hand on the area that felt uncomfortable when you were thinking/writing negative thoughts about yourself.

Step 4: Get a friend or coach to repeat your affirmation to you.

5.5. Memories list-making

Objective: to remind yourself about positivity in your life

Location: preferably quiet, private space

Take some time thinking about your past and try to recall some good memories. Make a list of best memories that came to your mind: B-day surprise? Christmas?

Or something that you did not expect? Trip to a beautiful place with a friend? Underline or circle the most meaningful one and read them again. Whenever a good memory comes to your mind, write it down. You can keep the list in your wallet and look at it whenever you wish. You can also start to update it as you move on with your life. Whenever you feel down, have a look at those beautiful moments that happened in your life :) and try to be grateful.

5.6. Taking a day off

Objective: to relieve stress through focusing on yourself and listening to your needs

Plan to take a day to yourself. If you need to wake up late, do so. Read a book that you never have time for or watch a favourite movie. Turn your phone off. Maybe you wish to cook delicious, nutritious meals? Maybe you wish to take a trip to some nice place out of the city? Seaside for example? Remember that you don't always need to be doing something and you can allow yourself to do what you want and need.



5.7. Emotional Writing

Objective: to release thoughts and emotions, understand yourself deeper, open the door to your creativity.

Whenever you feel overwhelmed, or don't understand your thoughts, grab a pen and a notebook. Just simply start writing down whatever you think of and express yourself. You don't have to create sentences, welcome whatever comes to your mind. You can write continuously for 5-10 min with a timer not taking the pen off the paper. Read it straight after or after some time with more distance. Analyse what you have written.

5.8. Soundbath*

Objective: to relax and awake sense of hearing through making and listening to the sounds

*It is best to do this exercise in a small group of people. You need instruments that make sound or you can use your own voice.

Gather in the circle standing. One person enters the middle of the circle, closes his/her eyes. If there is not enough time, there can be

two people at the same time inside. The rest is humming or starting to make sounds, preferably also with eyes closed, so that no expectations are created, and it's easier to trust the process. In the end, people can lie down with heads towards the middle, cover with blankets and close their eyes. The leader of the session can play some instruments like Koshi bells, kalimba etc. to give the rest the time for sound relaxation. It's good to announce that with some sound we will slowly finish the session to make the transition smooth and gentle.

5.9. Self-massage or touch exchange

Objective: to release the tension and awaken the sense of touch.

Find a person you feel comfortable with and you would like to exchange some bodywork/ touch/massage with. It can be a family member or a friend that you trust. Create a safe and comfy space: bring some blankets, candles, maybe incense. Make sure that it will be a quiet place. If you wish, you can put some music on. Ask what the other person needs in terms of touch, what parts they do and don't want to be touched or if there is anything specific. Also, trust your intuition :) We recommend a warm hug at the end as a closure. Even if you don't have a proper environment and time, you can do it somewhere in the meantime just to give your care and attention to the other person. Touch is healing!

5.10. Morning Pages

Objective: to make your brain empty after you wake up and start the day refreshed.

It is a good way to learn to listen to yourself or to get in contact with yourself and your needs. It can be very useful if you need to make an important decision for yourself.

Considered as medicine against overthinking.

This practice can help you clear your mind, unlock your creativity, keep you calm & improve your writing skills.



5.11. Loose Dance Improvisation

Objective: to feel more comfortable with the space, relax your body and mind, reduce self-judgement & improve self-confidence.

Stand upright for a minute or two, loosen your knees, shoulders and jaw. Feel into your body, when you sense a need to move, start moving. Follow your body, leave self-consciousness aside. You can shake, stretch, connect with others, basically anything that your body wants to do. Just cultivate continuous motion in the body, moving through the space. You can play some music or stay in silence. Try to do it by yourself or with other people.

5.12. Just lay down (on the floor/bed/ground)

Objective: relaxation, mindfulness, calmness, clarity of mind.

Lay down on the floor, on the mat if you wish. Make sure you are warm and comfortable. Focus on feeling your body and the sensations in it. Scan your body. You can do it with the support of a guided body scan available on the internet. Notice what is alive and what comes to your mind. Don't judge, just acknowledge and let it pass. With each exhale released to the floor, notice how your body state changes.

5.13. Intuitive drawing

Objective: to encourage inner peace and boost creativity.

If you feel comfortable in nature, go for a walk to admire the landscape, find a spot for you to see the beauty around, take a notebook and a pen or a pencil for the walk.

While sitting, look at what is around you and let the pencil flow on the paper, do whatever you feel, let your creativity and imagination speak for themselves. If you want, you can add some colours.

After this moment, focus on what you are feeling now, observe the emotions and thoughts passing, embrace them and breathe deeply. Find a piece of paper. Write down, whatever you want and whatever comes out of it. Just don't stop writing for half an hour or a specific number of sheets.

You can do it also in a shorter time, just make it fixed before you start. It can be anything, a diary, a to-do list, a story, a thought, an observation, every language or even no language. And a mixture of it. Don't think, just free your mind and write. You can describe your thoughts, emotions, you can write a poem, a song or just write that you don't have any idea what to write.

5.14. Mindful movements

Objective: to become aware of your body sensations, feel gratitude towards your body, release tension in your body, accept the change of your body, take care of your body.

Put on comfortable clothes or PJ's. Close your eyes and focus on your breathing. Move your body in the way it asks for it: stretching, massaging yourself, balance exercises, breathing, jumping. Observe your body, and feel gratitude for every part of your body.

Wish yourself a good day.

Tips: your practice doesn't have to be every day the same, just follow what your body is asking.



6. REFLECTION METHODS

We consider reflecting as an important part of the learning process. Humans learn throughout their whole life and this is a good reason to incorporate ways of looking back at what happened on a particular day or in the week in your life. Once again we invite you to try out methods proposed during the CORE project and those created by participants. See what suits you best and what allows you to reflect most deeply on the events passed.

6.1. Sharing circle

Reflexion question: What is alive in you right now?

Invite a group of your friends to regular sharing circle meetings. Together sit in a circle and make yourself comfortable. Allow space for everyone to express themselves freely with no judgement and practice active listening. It's not necessary for everyone to speak, but everyone is invited. This is a non-formal evaluation methodology based on the group as a means to facilitate the reflection and expression of feelings without being judged. Also, a way to identify with the feelings of other members of the group.
for whom/number of people: 5-25 people

Variations:

- a) sit in front of the mirror and do the exercise by yourself
- b) first do some small sharing circles of 4-5 people and then combine the small sharing circles in one big group and share what emerged from the small groups. This helps the people who are uncomfortable in a big group to have the chance to share as well. Perhaps the small groups can be the same throughout the meetings and can be called a 'family' and they can make up a name and a symbol for each 'family' in order to strengthen their bond. During the small sharing circle each 'family' can write on a piece of paper what they found out about each other's state and the day passed.

6.2. Card- reflection

Reflexion question: What do you remember from your day (actions, sensations, emotions...)?

You can do this with a friend, a group or by yourself. Put cards (like Dixit or emotion cards) on the ground all over the place. Observe the cards and choose 3 to 5 cards that represent your day. Create a story out of what you see in the cards and write it down or share it with others.

6.3. Creative meditation

You can do this reflection practice by yourself or with people. If you are with people, gather everyone into a cosy space. Make them comfortable and warm. Create a calm atmosphere (sound, smell, light). Create a safe space and let them go by themselves for a small meditation. Follow the steps below by yourself or invite everyone for a trip with the following steps:

Become aware of your breathing. Notice things that come to your mind (colours, themes, ideas) and try not to hold to them. Make a step to your memories of the day passed. Think of a story of the day from an external perspective - as a story from the novel, film or fairytale. How does the story resonate with you now? How does the main character resonate with you? What does it mean to you? What would you tell the main character? What would the character tell you?

After analysing the story from the day, invite yourself to come back to the body. Reconnect with your physicality: body position, sounds and smell of the space. Bring your awareness to the body. Finish the meditation softly. Give yourself as much time as you need. Share with people about the experience or make notes for yourself.

6.4. Heart sharing practice

For this reflection, invite one or more friends to join you. Put a timer. Each person will have several minutes (recommended minimum 3-5 minutes) to share whatever is alive in them at the moment. The other person is just listening, not responding or relating, without putting any comment. Swap roles at least once.

6.5. Shaking off

Take a moment to reflect on what you want to release from your mind and body and then spread in the space and shake it off giving also the sounds if they come up. It can be helpful in stressful or traumatising situations (inspired by the TRE method).

6.6. Painting

Creative expression is a good way to reflect and notice what your subconscious mind tells you. Prepare quite a big piece of paper and without planning anything choose a colour and paint a shape on the paper. It can be abstract, it can represent something. Change colours and experiment with techniques. Play with the colour ranges that represent your emotional state today.



6.7. Silent disco

Put headphones on and play some nice music you like. You can do it anywhere you feel comfortable and safe, alone or with others. For around 15-20 minutes just move and listen to the music, focusing on what is alive in your body. If you are dancing with other people, finish the practice by gathering into the circle. Make a small sharing of what just happened. Ask yourself or all in the group the following questions: How did you feel yourself during the practice? What did appear in your mind? Did you feel some blocks/borders/uncomfortable moments? If yes, how did you manage that to go further? How can you get rid of the blocks in your body/mind? Do you think movement practice is helpful? Anything else?

6.8. Collage of thoughts and emotions

We invite you to first go outside of the space to collect the objects that will resonate with you and will reflect your thoughts, memories of the day. It can be anything, but it should rather be small. After returning to your space, create a collage out of them. You can place it somewhere to have your own temple. You can repeat this activity anytime you are in a place outside and an object speaks to you.

6.9. Emotional landscape

Reflection question: What is alive in me after this day?

Take a big canvas and crayons, pencil. Start drawing, don't analyze it, just follow your hand. You can encounter your emotions, don't be scared of them, follow them. You're going to create an emotional landscape of the day. Give yourself some time, spend at least 15 minutes doing that. When you're done, you can share it with someone that you trust, their perspective can give you new insights. You can do it in silence or with music, but try to keep it soft, ambient (sounds of nature, classical music would be good).



6.10. Continuous writing

You can play the music to create the focused space or keep the silence and just start writing without thinking too much and without stopping. Try to write down 2 pages A4 format. Plan to read it the day after and reflect on your own writing.

6.11. Reflect with a friend

Sit with your friend or a person you invited to reflect within a quiet and cosy space, make sure no one will interrupt you, you can make yourself a tea. Ask yourself:

- What happened to you today?
- What amazed you, what did you like?
- What was difficult for you, and how did you manage to go through it?
- What impact did this day have on you, how have you changed?

Each of you will have at least 10 minutes to talk about his/her own experiences. The other person's task is to support and clarify, but without giving advice or taking the attention away from the person who is sharing.

6.12. Reflective walk (in the forest)

Silent walk with self-reflection of the day. Go through the day with your thoughts with 3 guiding questions:

- How do you feel about the day?
- What is the learning from that day?
- What is the memory of the day that catches your attention the most? Why is it important?

Take an alone walk or a silent walk with other(s) for around 20 min. Just walk until 20 minutes have passed. On the way back, if you feel like it, share your observations with others.



7. INSPIRATIONS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Spending time with other people and sharing experiences is the best way of contributing and enriching the lives of others. How can you do it? Very simply. You can volunteer in a local community centre or come up with your own initiatives. These are ideas proposed by CORE training course participants:

7.1. Flash Mob

Invite people for a dance lesson of Jerusalema. Dance in a public place, in the form of FlashMob. This way you will be able to enjoy dancing together and might meet some other interested people, who join you and at the end, you can perform for locals. Of course, you have to learn first. It is easy! Use the clips below.

Gather in a circle. Make sure people learn the steps. Put the music on and dance ALL TOGETHER. You can dance all together whenever you want and engage people in collective activity.

Helpful link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkTmucpbeEs>

7.2. Art activities

Organize creative and artistic activities and workshops for different target groups, for example, for lonely elderly with the involvement of volunteers, so they can spend time with other people, socialize, feel included and develop their creativity.

7.3. International evening

Organize an international evening. Nowadays almost everywhere you can meet a person who is a migrant or has different roots than you have. If you live in a city, you are probably surrounded by people/neighbours/friends who come from many different cultures. It is always good to find out more about their origins and ancestors.

Invite everyone you wish to an international evening. Each person can prepare a traditional dance, music playlist, a dish or anything else they can share.

Have fun together!



7.4. Workshops for local youth

Organize workshops for local young people, so that they can develop basic notions about non-formal education, experience something new and introduce them to the Erasmus+ programme opportunities.

7.5. Circle Dance

Organize a circle dance event. Dancing was always an important part of community gatherings and celebrating life and togetherness. For some, it might seem like a challenging idea, but good music will be a big support ;)

Create an event on FB and make announcements in local community places (post office, church, community centre). Speak to your neighbours and ask them to spread the word around. Everyone can contribute. Speak to the local coffee shop if they would like to be a host. Maybe you have a friend who is a musician?



7.6. Storytelling Around Fireplace

While inviting people to the event, ask them to think of a story or a song/poem from their community beforehand. At the beginning of the meeting prepare the fire all together (searching for woods, setting benches, creating the fire, bringing blankets, preparing foods to be cooked on the fire like marshmallows/sausages/potatoes/chocolate-banana/apples, preparing some hot beverages, instruments around such as drums/bells). Invite people to sit around the fire and share their stories/ songs/poems one by one. You can sing all together and support participants by gifting attention to others.



8. CONTACT & CREDITS

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9. PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

L U B L A

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GREECE



Csoma's Room Foundation
www.csomasroom.org
HUNGARY



Joint Association
www.associazionejoint.org
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www.fundacjaarteego.wixsite.com/lodz
POLAND



Friends of Children in Romania
www.friendsofchildreninromania.org
ROMANIA



Células Durmientes - Sleeping Cells
www.celulasdurmientes.com
SPAIN