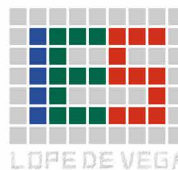


# EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT TOOLS TO FIGHT SOCIAL MEDIA DEPENDENCY





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## INTRODUCTION

The Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships for School Education named “EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT: Tool to Fight Social Media Dependency” started in October 2019 and although it was originally planned to last 24 months, it got lengthened due to COVID-19, to 35 months. The project was created as the local and international cooperation of secondary schools, NGOs and local governments from Spain, Portugal, and Romania in order to train teachers and parents in emotional management, to enable them to support high school age students facing social media and internet caused addiction and other negative effects.

It was coordinated by the Youth Association from Transylvania who works in partnership with Liceul Teoretic “Orbán Balázs” and Oraşul Cristuru Secuiesc from Romania, with Permacultura Cantabria, IES Lope De Vega and Ayuntamiento de Santa Maria de Cayon from Spain and with Aventura Marao Clube, Escola Secundária de Amarante and Município de Amarante from Portugal.

The innovative solution offered by this cooperation is that it trained the teachers and parents on how to realize the false images teenagers have, and its destructive nature. The training focused on emotional management at the schools as well as at home. We believe that emotional management can be the key to the success of reducing digital bullying, false need to belong, peer pressure, lack of confidence and depression.

To make sure that all our plans are achieved, we created and extensive research for finding out the state of affairs in the 3 countries. A publication presents the results of the research that set down the basis of all our further activities. Then we organized three job shadowing activities to understand how each of the 3 schools operate and a training course for the transfer of emotional management as a tool to fight social media dependency. Then, teachers tested out emotional management practices in schools in order to create this Toolkit for teachers form across Europe and the world to use.

The Toolkit starts with the theory of Emotional Management, detailing not only how the mind works but also ways everyday people, including students, teachers, and parents can be aware of their emotions, manage them and help their peers and those around them manage theirs. Then it goes on presenting 81 games, activities, happenings advice and ways to conduct activities by teachers to students indoors and outdoors. All these have been researched and tested in the 3 high schools in the project. Then, to conclude, the book includes six testimonies of those teachers who worked the most on the project and the creation of this resource.

This project is funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ Program.





# THE HUMAN MIND

## HOW THE MIND WORKS. INTRODUCTION

Before we learn to manage emotions, it is important to understand how the mind works, in terms of emotional management.

After conducting thousands of studies about our neuronal system, we still have limited (and still evolving) understanding of these issues.

Neuroanatomists are beginning to find clues as to how the brain encodes the information we receive, and how we are able to store different sensations, experiences, and learning.

It is known that we have a very perfect chaos of different codes working to defragment our experiences into electrical impulses, thus, being able to accumulate billions of pieces of data to be used, at a later time.

The next conclusions give an approximate idea of how the mind works, being the best current perspective that we have, based upon practical experiences.

# HOW EXPERIENCES ARE STORED

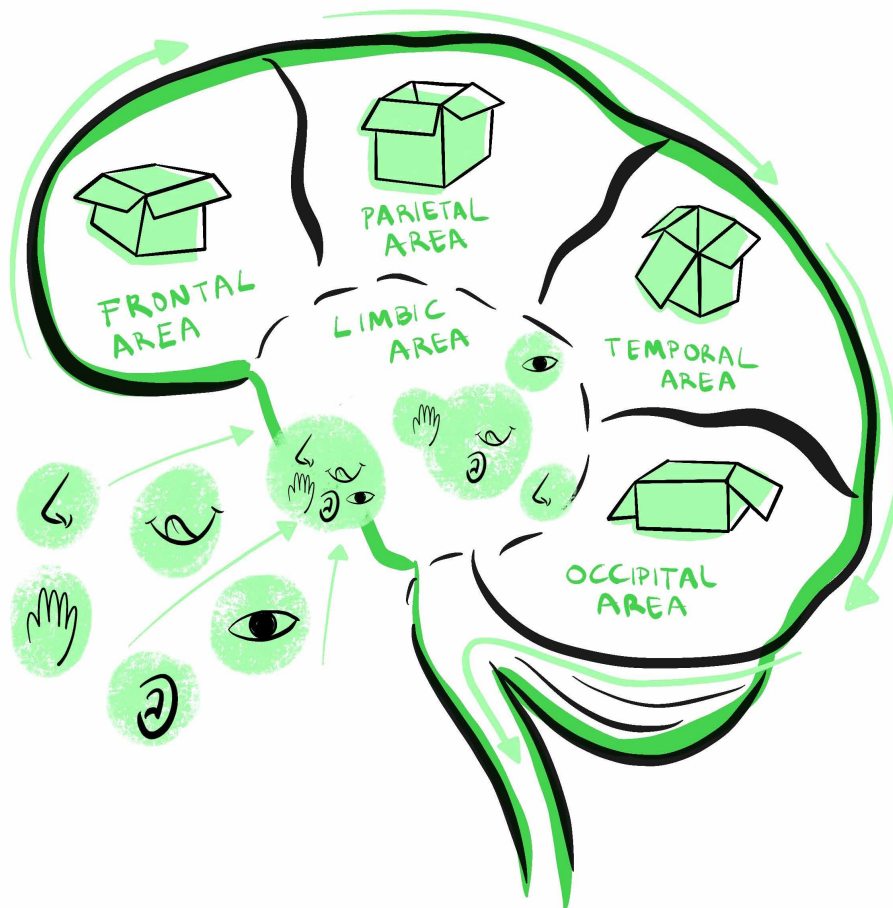
We perceive the external environment, the internal processes, and daily experiences, through our sensory channels (sight, hearing, taste, smell, temperatures, balance, kinaesthesia, etc.).

All this continuous information is processed in the brain's hippocampus, defragmented into data, coded, and stored into neural impulses and connections, for later use.

For example, if we go out one sunny morning to have a cup of tea, the whole experience is absorbed and fragmented into pieces by our senses (images, smells, temperature, sounds, atmospheric pressure, tastes, how we feel and so on).

This work can be done by up to a thousand different types of neurons, each of which has its own specific task transforming the experience into small bits of information.

These details can be extremely specific. For example, the optic nerve is made up of axons from 20 different types of retinal cells. Some of these cells indicate movement of the cardinal directions, others specialise in signalling the general brightness or local contrast of an image; others carry information relating to colour, etc. (Koch and Marcus, 2014).

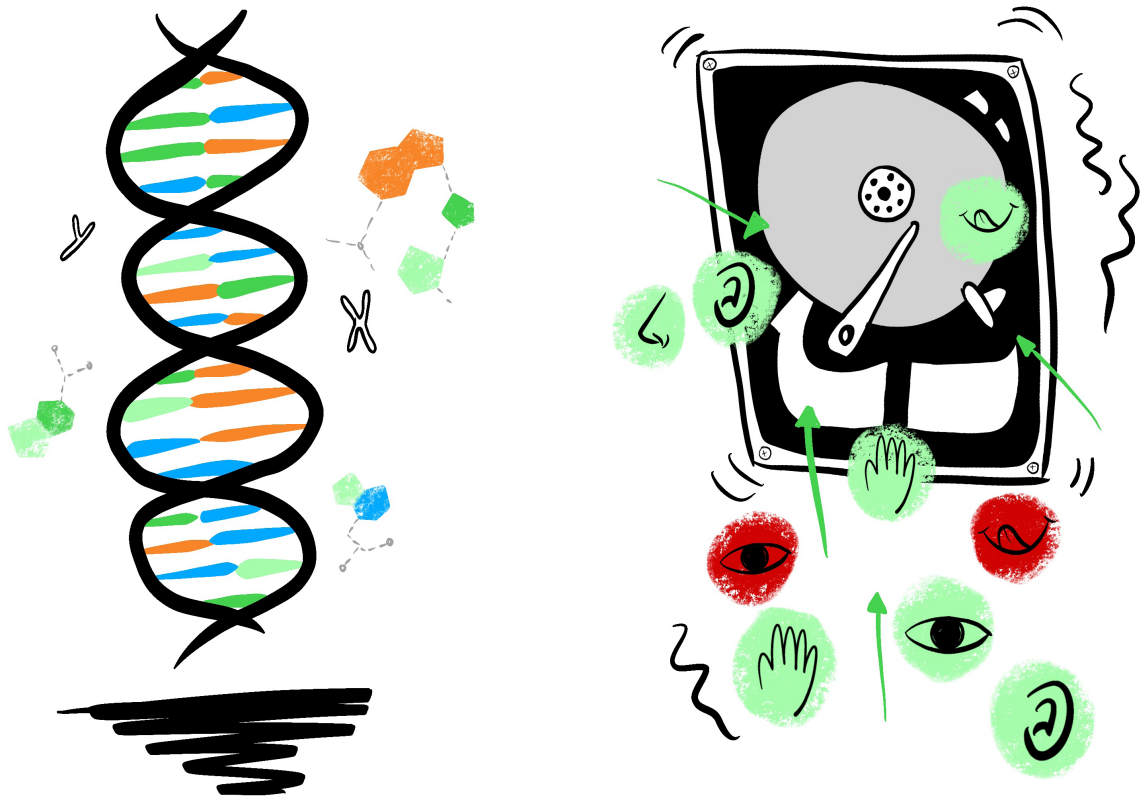


# WHERE WE STOCK INFORMATION

Defragmented information is stocked in two different locations:

- The nucleus of our cells, where our chromosomes hide chains of DNA with all our basic human information. This information is very stable, constant and governs the principles of our life.
- A kind of “hard drive” formed by billions of cells around our entire body, especially by the neurons that make up the brain. All the information that we experience, through our senses, is kept and handled here, being variable, reactive, and changing.

Both systems communicate and are in close contact, though their behaviours and functions are different.



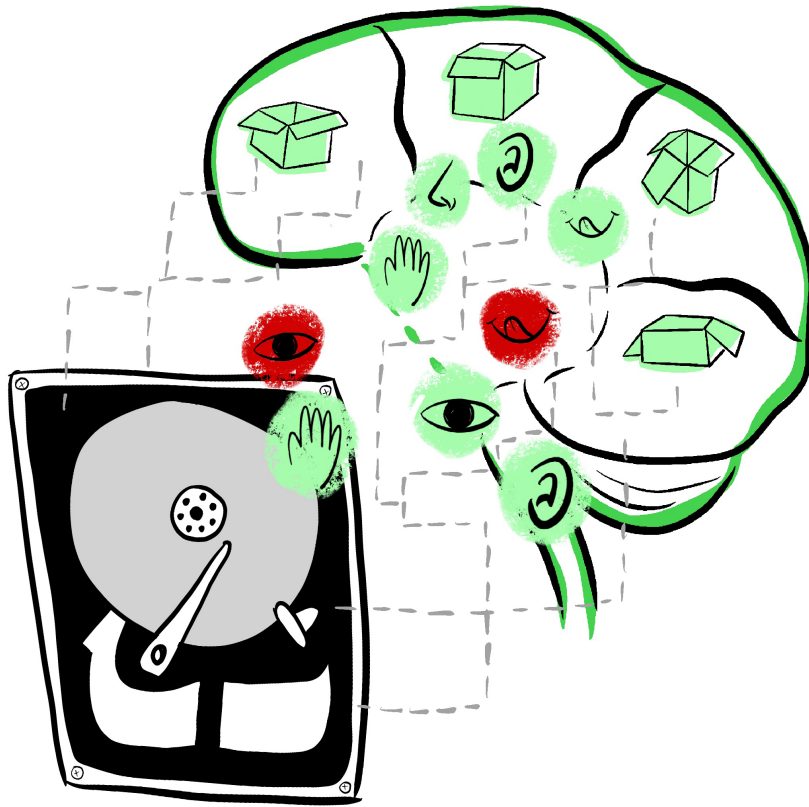
# INSTANT, FRESH AND SUCCESSFUL DECISION MAKING

The continuous present information entering through our senses is compared with past experiences and evaluated, on our neuronal tissues, by the conscious and (more often) unconscious mind, at incredible speeds.

We make millions of moment-appropriate micro-decisions, archiving and accumulating similar results for future use, in neuron connections, thus leaving storage room for completely new information on our internal network of experiences.

This is what we call “intelligence”: the natural process in which the mind receives, defragments, manages, contrasts, evaluates and correctly stores daily experiences’ detailed data.

It is inherent to all human beings, regardless of the skills, abilities, school achievements or intelligence coefficients that each person develops.



## SOMETIMES WE CANNOT PROCESS EXPERIENCES

The mind performs millions of actions per second, adapts to the present situation, with new answers, in the most accurate way possible. Still, sometimes our brains cannot digest all the information received.

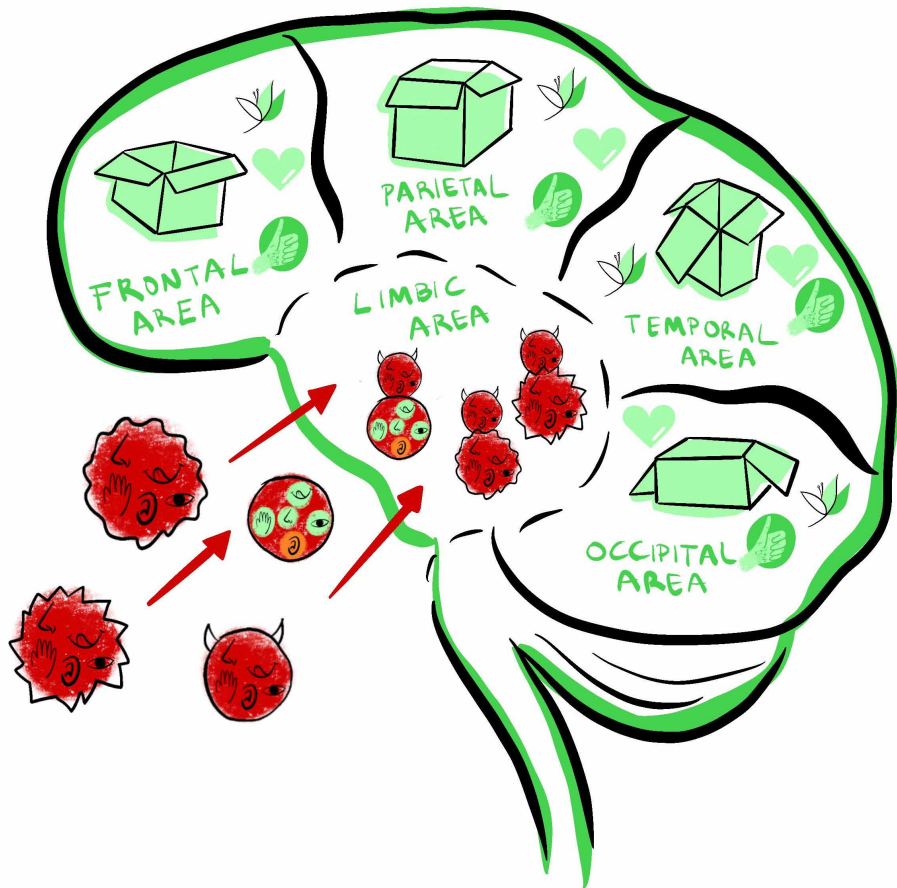
When we are subjected to certain circumstances (pain, stress, fear, abuse), the mind wisely focuses and gives priority to our immediate survival (like sending out hormone producing signals) and all the information entering the brain, simultaneously, remains without a proper storage.

Some of these circumstances are:

- Intoxication (drugs, anaesthetics, electro-magnetic fields, etc.).
- Information that is contrary to our natural expectations (loneliness, neglect, lack of encouragement, humiliation, abuse, violence, disregard, etc.).
- Stress, emergency, or survival situations.
- Physical injuries.
- Large amounts of information (a lot of noise, sudden changes in lighting, extreme temperatures, etc.).

For example, a sudden unexpected noise will make our body invest a large amount of its resources to immediately send signals, to the adrenal glands, to produce adrenaline, to dilate pupils, increase blood supply to the extremities, etc., so as to help react, move, and flee effectively.

In these moments, all the detailed bits of information entering through the senses will just be accumulated in the limbic area of the brain, waiting for a better moment to be properly processed, thus generating confusion.



CONTRARY INFORMATION  
TO OUR NATURAL PERSPECTIVES

INTOXICATION

PHYSICAL  
INJURIES

LARGE  
AMOUNT OF  
INFORMATION



## HOW THE INFORMATION THAT COULD NOT BE DEFRAGMENTED IS PROCESSED IN THE BRAIN

Our body has the innate ability to recover from the emotional damages and injuries that we experience, by regulating the hormonal processes that take place during stressful moments.

Our innate regulatory physical mechanisms (or emotional discharges) are **laughter, crying, yawning, and trembling**. (More information about Emotions on page 25).

These 4 emotions help us expel the excessive hormones produced or, in other cases, produce extra hormones, if needed, (adrenaline, dopamine, oxytocin, ACTH, Beta-endorphins, enkephalins, acetylcholine, Nitric Oxide, GABA, serotonin, glutamate, MSH, etc.).

After that, it is possible for us to relax and for the mind to start processing and defragmenting the confusing information that could not be attended to, in the stressful moment, and finally placing it, in the right place, for later use.

Unfortunately, our basic emotional discharge mechanisms are very mistreated and oppressed in our societies, and it can often be challenging and difficult to process the confusing information left by a distressful experience.

When we are not able to access emotional discharges, we end up accumulating different sets of associated tangled information, that from now on we will call **“distresses”**.

## CONSEQUENCES OF HAVING UNPROCESSED INFORMATION IN OUR MINDS

Modern societies suppress the natural emotional recovery mechanisms, in a number of ways, from a young age.

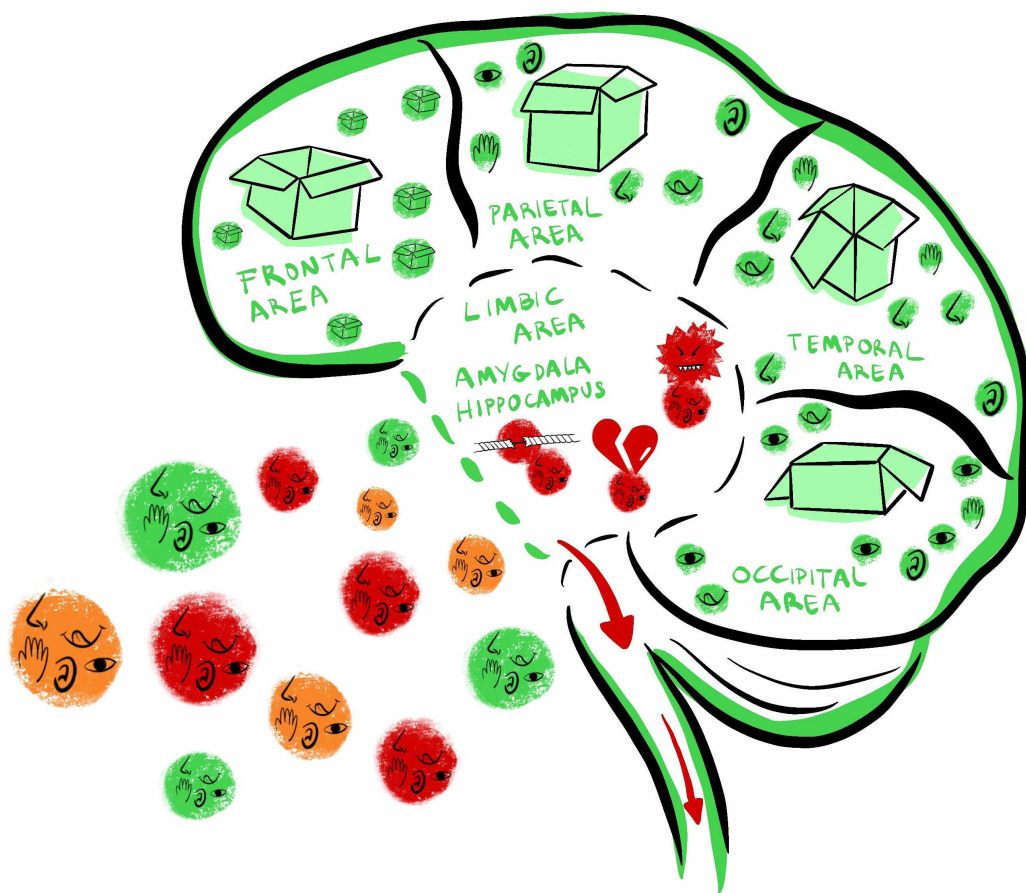
We try hard to recover from stressful experiences, by demonstrating how we feel, through emotional discharges (crying, yawning, laughter and in some cases trembling), but, as time goes by, we end up repressing these vital impulses ourselves, due to constant oppression and misunderstandings.

Thus, the mind accumulates unprocessed information (distresses) in the limbic system or the ‘emotional memory’, interfering, slowing down and contaminating the tasks it has to do (evaluating and defragmenting new information).

Another consequence is that new information can be contaminated by “similar” past unprocessed information (sometimes in very subtle ways...), triggering the neurotransmitters of the amygdala to the hippocampus, and reviving (re-stimulating) the old memories, with their old feelings and sensations.

This makes the present situation seem practically the same as the old one, confusing the body and stimulating a torrent of unnecessary hormones. This process causes even more confused information to be accumulated in regard to the original situation/ memory, making it more prone to be triggered again, in the future.

Little by little, our mind begins to have areas of confusion where we can’t think clearly and don’t function as we want (distresses), affecting the way in which we feel and perceive the world.





# FEELINGS

In order to do in-depth work about emotional management, it is important to differentiate between feelings and emotions.

It is not an easy task, since even professionals have not yet reached a consensus on a unifying criterion to differentiate and catalogue feelings and emotions.

Still, we have reached some conclusions that seem to have no theoretical cracks and that offer us a new solid foundation on which to grow, when learning the complex universe of emotions and feelings.

We realised that there are two large polarised and interconnected groups of feelings. These must be differentiated and studied individually, and as a whole, before differentiating between feelings and emotions.

# KINDS OF FEELINGS

We have differentiated two kinds of feelings: natural feelings (inherent) and distressed feelings (attached). They should be studied individually and as a whole.

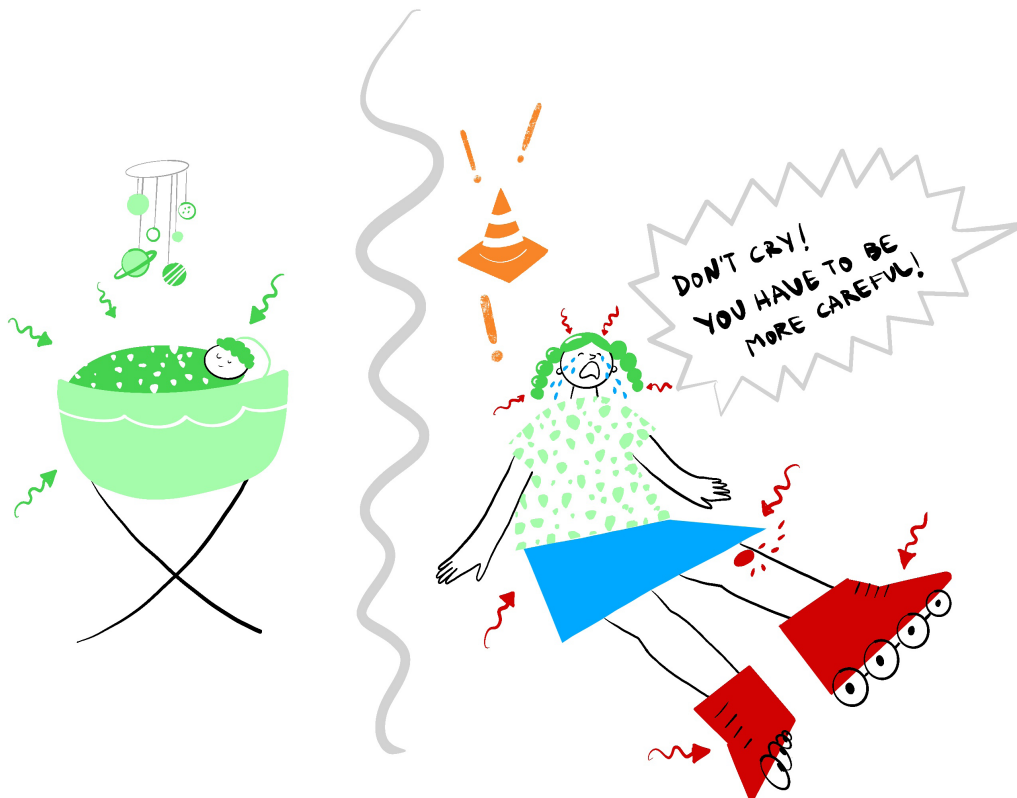
When people are relaxed or happy, when they have interest, desire, and curiosity in life, or when they feel safe, loved, excited, playful, spontaneous, communicative, open, flexible, cheerful, confident, etc., we can say that they feel GOOD.

We call this group of feelings “natural or inherent feelings”, because we can observe them normally (if nothing stressful happens), in everyone, especially during our first years of life (if we have not been damaged). It is the natural state of human beings.

Gradually, we are damaged by certain distressing experiences, their residual confusing information and by the fact that we are not allowed to discharge and use our recovery mechanisms (through the oppression of mental health. See page 30). This series of events prevents us from feeling and perceiving life through the inherent feelings.

On the other hand, generally (although we have become accustomed...), the vast majority of people feel BAD, when they are sad, discouraged, disappointed, bored, angry, lonely, apathetic, stressed, confused, insecure, fearful, ashamed, etc.

We call this group of feelings “attached or distressing” because they just appear after the inherent feelings are “hurt/damaged”, either at a certain distressing moment (if something stressful suddenly happens) or in a more constant manner (if negative events repeat, over time, in someone’s life).



# TABLE OF INHERENT AND ATTACHED FEELINGS

The following table classifies feelings into those that we like and believe to be innate to human beings and the opposite ones: those that we do not like, and which were the result of a specific present or past distressing event and its residual distresses (confusing information).

The innate feelings help us to grow, to explore our potential, to relate to others and to enjoy ourselves, while distressing/attached feelings contract, limit, block, isolate and make us ill.

INHERENT FEELINGS :)	:( ATTACHED FEELINGS
Happiness, Joy	Sadness
Trust	Distrust
Love	Hate
Attraction	Rejection
Connection	Loneliness, isolation
Curiosity, Excitement	Apathy
Abundance	Lack
Innocence	Guilt
Forgiveness	Resentment
Flexibility	Fear of action
Purity / Clean	Impurity / Dirty
Relaxed	Tense
Active	Passive
Sensitive	Insensitive
Empathic	Indifferent
Spontaneous	Rigid
Sense of security, bravery	Insecurity, fear
Tenderness	Hardness

INHERENT FEELINGS :)	:( ATTACHED FEELINGS
Adaptable	Alienated
Uninhibited	Repressed / Pent up
Kindness	Selfishness
Peaceful	Harmful
Confident	Distrustful
Authentic	False
United	Separated
Connected	Disconnected
Playful	Bored
Affectionate	Distant
A sense of clarity	Confusion
Flowing	Blocked
Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Bold	Embarrassed
Enjoyment	Anger, Rage
Calmness	Agitation
Light-hearted	Apathetic
A sense of fullness	A sense of emptiness

# INTERMITTENT, ATTACHED FEELINGS

Distresses (a set of confusing information not processed) confuse us and while we are under their influence, we start feeling “attached feelings” (either intermittent or chronic).

By “intermittent attached feelings” we mean those that pass through our head from time to time, regardless of whether the motive is a memory of the past or an action that may be happening in the present.

This feeling can last a few minutes or even a few hours but then, it dissipates, leaving room for our natural (inherent) good feelings again.

A simple childhood memory can serve to illustrate the concept:

My father used to yell at me from the garage door, startling me each time I heard him open it.

This stressful experience left confusing information in my mind that I could have discharged, so as to place it correctly, in my mind, for future events. But, since in most societies, emotional discharges are interrupted or avoided, I did not discharge the distressing feelings that the experience caused me and stored an array of unprocessed confusing information that distorted my natural perspective of the situation, remaining latent in my head.

From now on, any subsequent similar episode, circumstance, detail, or fact (smell, the sound of a voice, an image, etc.), could remind me of the original situation and trigger (re-stimulate), automatically, the old associated sensations (attached feelings) and confusing messages (distress).

That is why, every time the garage door opened, I tensed up, became alert and all my fear alarms were activated. It didn't matter who opened the door anymore (it could be my little sister or a friend), my mind associated the door hinge with a state of alert and tension. This feeling lasted for a few minutes, then I relaxed and carried on enjoying what I was doing.

These are intermittent attached feelings.



# CHRONIC, ATTACHED FEELINGS

Definition of 'chronic': continuing or occurring again and again for a long period of time / always present and encountered.

Any intermittent attached feeling can become chronic, when stimulated over and over again. It ends up being 'activated' all the time, without dissipating, becoming an integral part of our lives / personality. That sensation or belief seems to have always been there and we live under its influence without even realising it.

A good example is found in relationships:

We are born with the deep desire to connect, share and explore the universe with other people, and we look for it continuously, in our daily lives.

During childhood, we only needed to approach a new group of children and ask them if they wanted to be our friends to establish new relationships. One question and a 'yes' was enough to open up our hearts and be completely open in this new relationship.

Little by little, over time, we accumulate many disappointments in our relationships. If we would have been able to discharge these distressing feelings, we would have maintained the original desire to form relationships that we were born with.

But since we are not able to discharge these bad experiences' information (distresses) and their residual attached feelings, we start to accumulate reluctance and habits which don't contribute to making relationships work well, ending up distrusting people and needing them to show us that they really deserve our friendship.

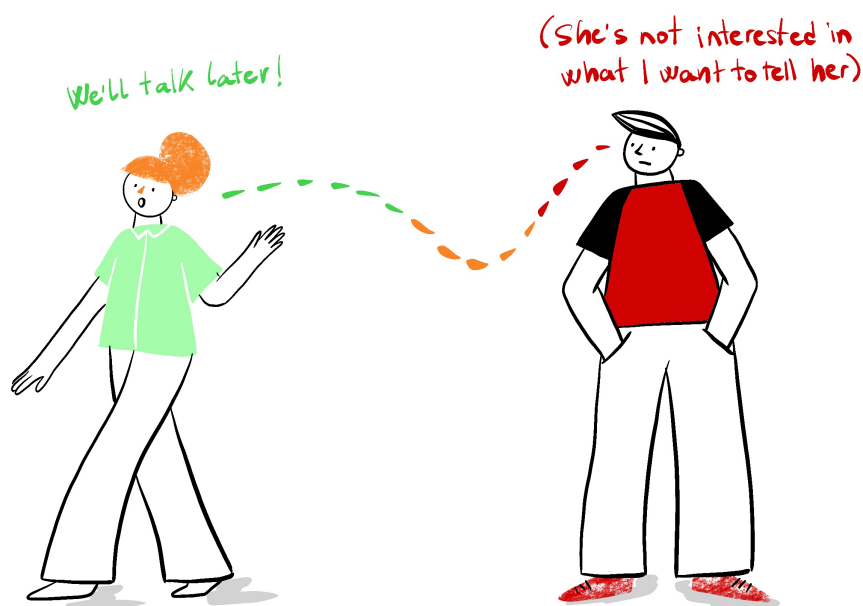
Thus, our relationships (even the new ones) become conditioned and limited by the disappointments we have experienced and accumulated previously.

We have become so used to living under the effect of these chronic beliefs and feelings, accepting that we are better off alone, that we have forgotten how easy and joyful it was to make relationships.

A hint to distinguish between intermittent and chronic feelings is to analyse people's faces:

When we are not under the influence of attached feelings, we have relaxed faces, our eyes are bright, we speak kindly and in general are in a natural state of delight (like children's faces).

When we are under attached feelings' influence (we are sad, scared or angry), it can be quickly identified in our face. If the feeling is intermittent, once the distressing situation is over, we relax and our face returns to its natural relaxed state.



When we live under and accumulate a particular attached feeling over and over again (anger, sadness, fear, embarrassment, etc), and we are not able to recover from them, even if there is no stressful situation in the present, our faces will show us as being angry, sad, scared, shy, etc. all the time (like some old people's faces).

## DISTRESSES

As we explained before, intense stressful situations leave tangled bits of information (smells, sensations, colours, decisions, everything that was around us during the stressful experience) waiting to be 'digested', processed, and stored.

If we do not have the chance to "digest" (discharge) and store the confusing information (distresses), the mind does not understand the content of the situation and we don't learn from the experience. On the contrary, we are left damaged, with a residue of a confused and distorted reality (a distress).

Distresses do not remain passive or harmless in our minds, they seem to have a life of their own, making us believe confusing messages that we internalize, affecting us deeply, in conscious and unconscious ways.

The damages that we have received and have not been discharged have certain common denominators, which is very useful to know, when trying to improve our emotional personal work or support other people's personal work. These characteristics are listed below.





# DISTRESSES' CHARACTERISTICS

## DISTRESSES ARE PERSISTENT

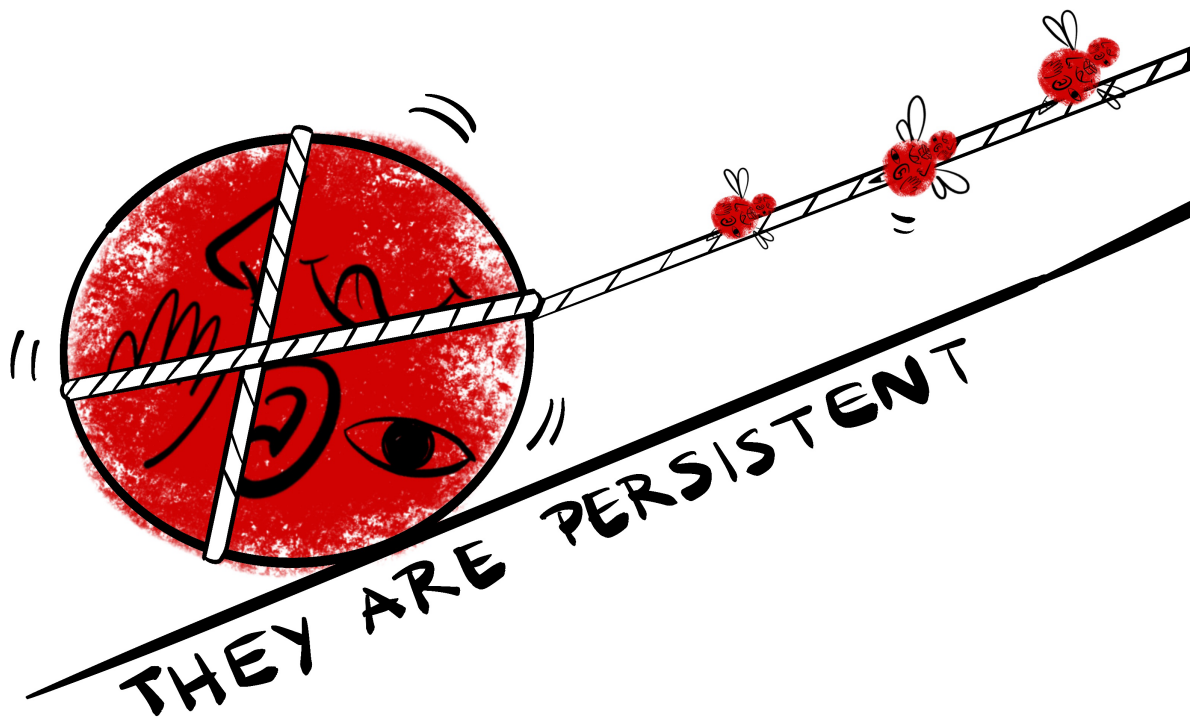
Distresses come into our minds over and over again.

When something harmful, difficult, painful, surprising, intense, or strange happens to us, and we can't discharge it, directly at that moment, the confusing information left in our minds (or distress) won't stop going over and over to the event/ feeling, trying to sort it out correctly.

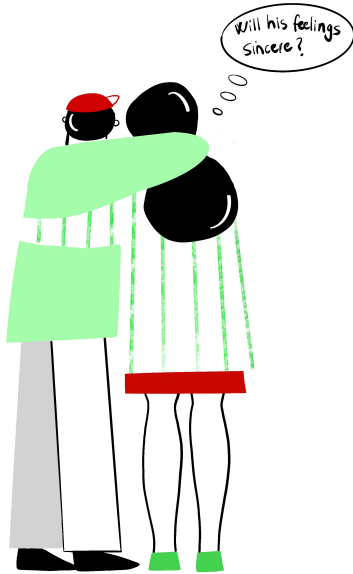
We can try to relax, meditate, concentrate on a difficult task, anesthetize, or distract ourselves, but as soon as we stop doing so, the first thing our minds will do is to bring back the memory that could not be 'digested' yet, so that we pay attention to it, process it and put it in its correct place.

We have been trained to avoid these messages, events, and feelings, control them, give them meaning and learn to live with them. In other words, we have been trained to accept confusing information, their damages, and consequences, instead of learning how to discharge, 'process' and correctly place them in our minds.

Distresses are persistent until a more harmful or intense experience takes its place. Then, the first one becomes more deeply internalised in our minds, moving to what we call "unconsciousness".



## DISTRESSES CONFUSE US



Distresses make us believe distorted messages that we internalize and give us a perturbed perspective of reality. Each distress that we cannot process, and discharge is loaded with unprocessed information. Thus, when we are unable to extract all of the potential learning out of the situation, we are left with confused and distorted residual information.

During our first years of life, it is easy not to get confused with these messages and to more or less succeed in keeping our minds working correctly.

As our confusions grow and settle, we begin to fight with ourselves mentally to find out which option, sensation or mood is correct in each situation.

There comes a time when that fight more or less disappears and we begin to live a life that is dominated by distressing messages; we start believing the distorted information.

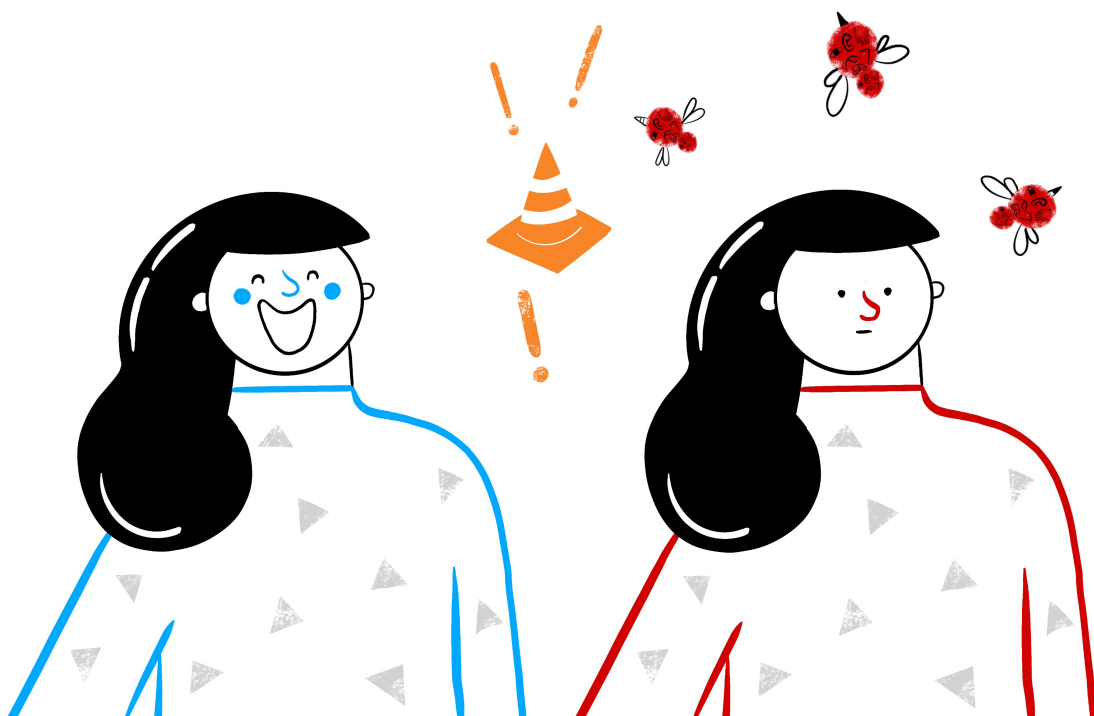
## DISTRESSES MAKE US FORGET

Distresses separate us from who we really are.

Once we believe the distorted information (the distress), we forget what we were really like, who we are and how to perceive the world.

Only occasionally do we live outside of the confusion's reach and influence. These are precious moments that remind us of who we are, although it can also be tough to become aware of what we have lost and what we have become.

Luckily, once we understand the mechanisms of discharging, we can recover a great part of ourselves and live and feel balanced again.



## DISTRESSES ARE RIGID

Distresses are faithful to the message that was recorded in the original distressing situation.

When our mind uses well-processed information (free from distresses) our behaviours are flexible and fresh; we are able to adapt to the present situations, offering new and appropriate responses to the environment that surrounds us.

This doesn't happen when we are under the influence of distresses and their subsequent attached feelings. Distresses make us behave in rigid, rusty, clumsy, and repetitive ways.

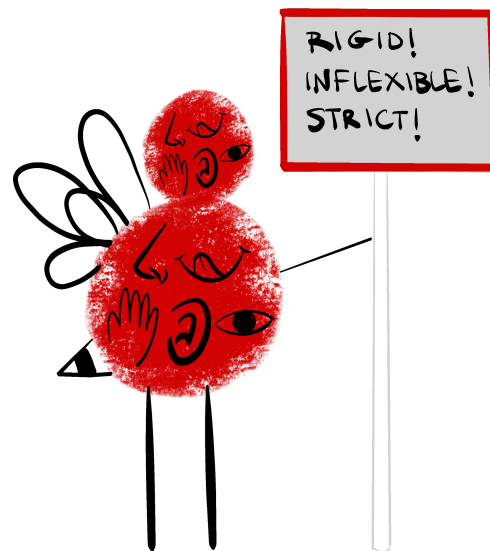
If we suspect that we are experiencing some kind of distress, we can try to challenge and contradict its message (by saying a message contrary to what the distress is making us believe, changing tone of voice, body position, etc). If we do it correctly, and indeed we are immersed in a real distress, we'll see how some kind of emotional discharge happens automatically.

For example, nearly all of us suffer from the effects of certain distresses with regards to our physical appearances. Our distresses send us false messages about things that seem wrong with our bodies/ image.

So, we can try to break this distress and contradict it, just by looking ourselves in the mirror and saying in a proud, animated, fresh, and playful tone of voice: 'mmm look how beautiful you are, you look great...' or other similar types of phrases. We can support this process with exaggerated and appreciative bodily poses (touching, pointing to the mirror, winking an eye, etc.).

If we successfully address the distress, we will automatically see how our bodies use any or several of their recovery mechanisms or emotional discharges: laugh, yawn, tremble, or cry.

Since, we are physically, verbally and mentally contradicting the distress, we are able to activate some of the main discharging emotions to appear immediately, allowing us to re-evaluate the situation, with correct and well-stored information.



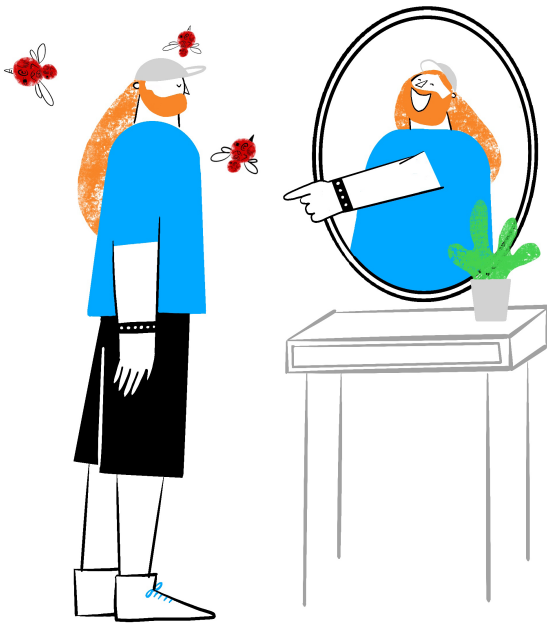
## DISTRESSES DEFEND THEMSELVES

Over time, distresses accompanying us grow stronger and resistant.

When the mind is able to correctly process information, it compares old data with new data and generates new content.

Something very similar happens with unprocessed information (distresses). When new distressing information comes in, it joins with the old distressing information and generates an agonising data network, strengthening itself and making the information more and more confusing.

This makes it difficult to work on specific distresses because some support and defend each other. Following the example before, if you challenge and contradict the body /image distress by giving compliments in front of the mirror, other distresses will quickly jump into your head with new messages telling you to stop being ridiculous.



If an emotional discharge happens, another set of distresses will send other messages to remind you that boys don't cry, that it doesn't really matter, only weak people cry or that it is not so important. We call this whole set of resistances "inhibitory distresses".

## DISTRESSES ARE INVISIBLE

We don't realise that they are there, because they are in our unconsciousness (this only happens with chronic distresses and their associated attached feelings).

Once a set/network of distresses or their attached feelings have been generated and they become chronic, we stop being aware that we live under their influence and that we get re-stimulated, as they get activated by a new similar experience.

Unconsciously, we react as if it were our innate way of being, but in reality, it is a rigid, confusing response created. Thus, our conscious minds can't identify the distresses, preventing the rational part of our minds to deal with their effects.



# TRANSITION FROM INHERENT TO ATTACHED FEELINGS AND ITS PHYSICAL REACTIONS

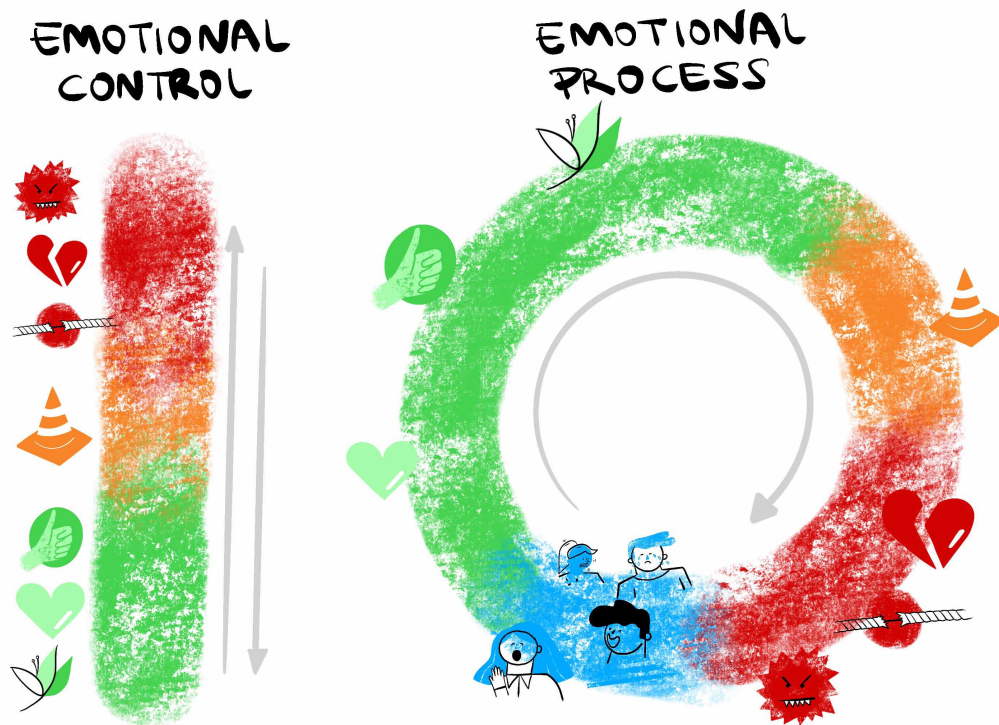
In general, everybody agrees that there is a group of feelings that make us feel good and we like, and another, usually opposite, that makes us feel bad and we do not like.

We also agree that children normally feel happy, relaxed, enthusiastic; they are full of vitality, affection, they want to connect with others; they overflow with curiosity, interest in life, they want to explore and try new things; and that they enjoy being alive (even when the environment is hostile).

This is how human beings are when they are born, as long as the pregnancy and childbirth have not been traumatic and there are no biological alterations.

But as we grow, little by little, we start to suffer distressing experiences and accumulate different types of damages and distresses, generating attached feelings, discomfort, and confusion. Having attached feelings is not bad, it is just uncomfortable.

Thanks to them, our organism naturally sets in motion (either in a subtle or a more intense way) some powerful physical mechanisms to recover: the EMOTIONS.





# SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS OF EMOTIONS

## EMOTIONS

We have seen that we experience natural, pleasant feelings from birth that enhance our growth, allow us to enjoy life and live it to the fullest.

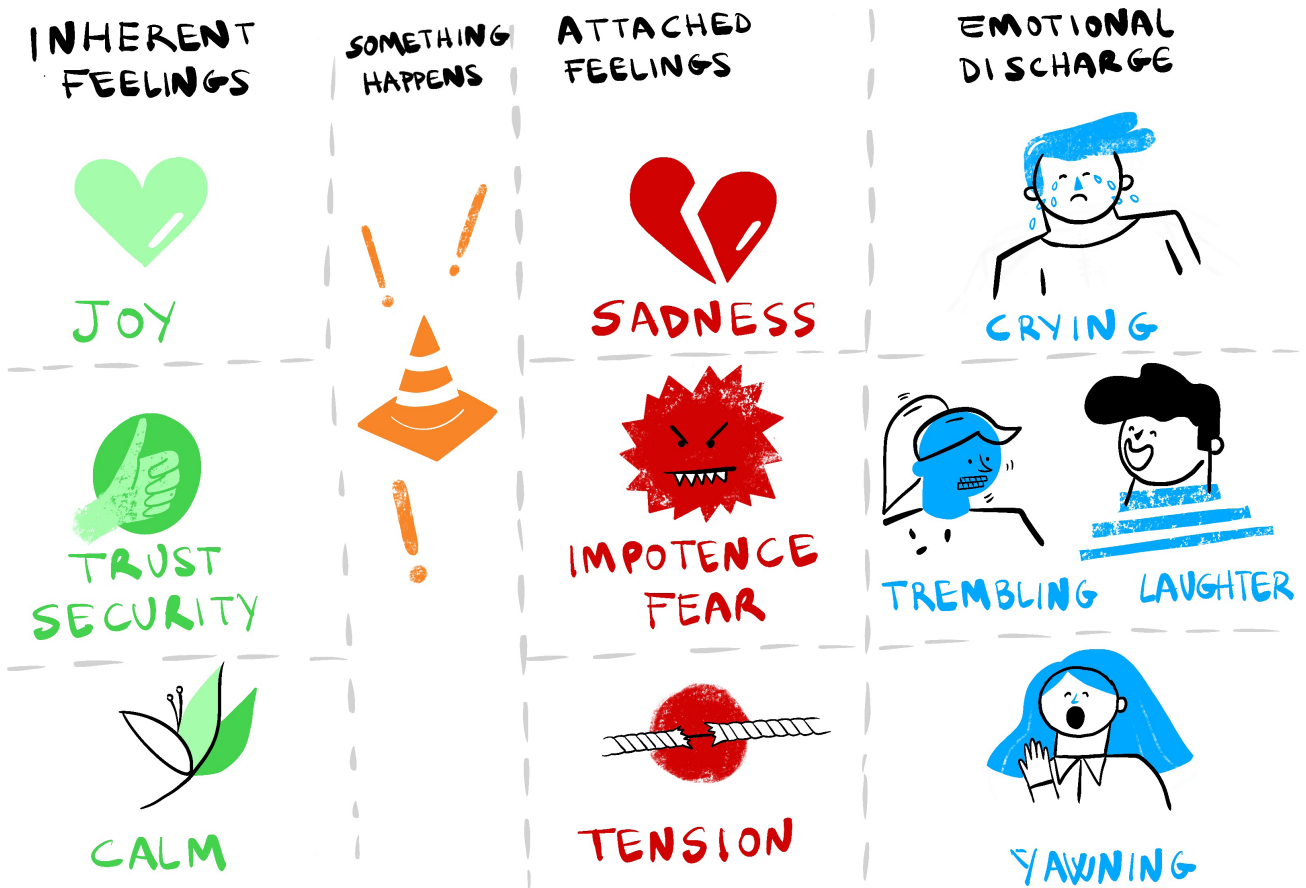
When something hurts us, we experience unpleasant feelings and emotions show up, as a cleaning and discharging mechanism, towards recovery.

The Latin Etymological Dictionary explains that the word 'emotion' derives from the Latin verb 'emovere'. This verb is composed by the prefix e- / ex (out of, from), meaning 'retract, evict from a place, make move'; and by the verb 'movere', which means "move or change place".

As the word suggests, an emotion has the capacity to dislodge (move out) an attached or unpleasant feeling that has been acquired/attached.

As mentioned before, the four main forms of emotional discharge or "emotions" are: **Crying, Yawning, Laughter, and Trembling.**

\*Note that it is common to wrongly define "emotions" as: joy, sadness, disgust, anger, fear and surprise.



During emotional discharges, our brain is subjected to neuronal stimuli that helps us to process information that is stuck and to overcome complex situations.

Each emotion (emotional discharge mechanism) is accompanied by a specific process of hormonal regulations, by either producing hormones where there is a deficit or by reducing an excess of them. Each emotion has a certain hormonal function, which helps with a specific damage or attached feeling.

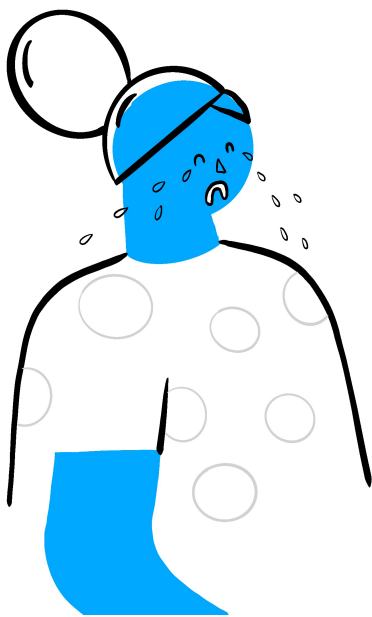
For example, when we are hurt or suffer a loss, our tendency is to **Cry**; when we are very scared, we might **Tremble**; when we are tense or bored, we tend to **Yawn**; and when something makes us slightly nervous or embarrassed, we use to **Laugh**.

All these actions / discharges are spontaneous, they are neurological responses that take place, offering our minds the ideal conditions to process and store data from any “intense” experience, thus correctly learning and being able to use the acquired knowledge in future similar events and preventing the establishment of distresses.

## **CRYING: discharging deep grief, loss, and frustrations**

Crying helps with the organism’s proper functioning; it makes us feel good and makes us function better. This is a natural process and can be experienced consciously or unconsciously (without knowing why we cry).

Tears caused by emotions have a different chemical composition than those that are produced to lubricate the eyes. When we cry tears produced after feelings, we regulate large amounts of the following two hormones in our body:



### **Prolactin: Responsible for boosting libido.**

Increases the production of milk proteins.

Improves the prostate and impotence problems.

Stimulates the adrenal glands.

### **Adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH):**

Helps with sleep disorders.

Reduces Stress.

Increases memory and concentration.

Improves digestion (ulcers, diabetes, malnutrition, etc.).

Strengthens the immune system.

### **Some direct emotional benefits of crying are:**

Pain relief (physical and emotional).

Increased enthusiasm and hope.

Greater curiosity and the desire to learn and have new experiences.

Overcoming grief and loss.

Feelings of well-being and delight. (If the crying process is completed).

# **YAWNING: discharging small and large amounts of tension**

When we yawn, either naturally or forcedly, a very interesting area of our brain, the “prae cuneus”, is stimulated.

Yawning is a great regulator of tensions, facilitating relaxation. It speeds up our mind and helps us to pay more attention to what we are doing. When our brain gets tired (bored) we yawn to regain attention and interest. A continuous and prolonged yawn significantly improves health and, specifically, mental agility and sociability.

When we yawn, we send torrents of substances to the blood that help us to relax and feel better.

## **Hormones that come into play, while yawning are:**

Acetylcholine.

Nitric oxide.

ACTH.

GABA.

Serotonin.

Glutamate.

MSH.Dopamine.

Oxytocin.

Etc.



## **Some direct emotional benefits of yawning:**

Relaxation.

Stress reduction.

Relieves physical pain and tensions.

Increased attention and interest.

Neuronal functioning's readjustment.

Improved memory.

Increases empathy.

Activation of pleasure, sensuality, and intimate relationships.

Increases the ability to self-reflect.

Cognitive improvement.

Brain temperature's regulation.

Helps with multiple sclerosis, migraines, stage fright, hypertension, sequelae produced by reactions to different drugs and pharmaceuticals, etc.

## LAUGHTER AND TREMBLING: discharging small and large amounts of fear

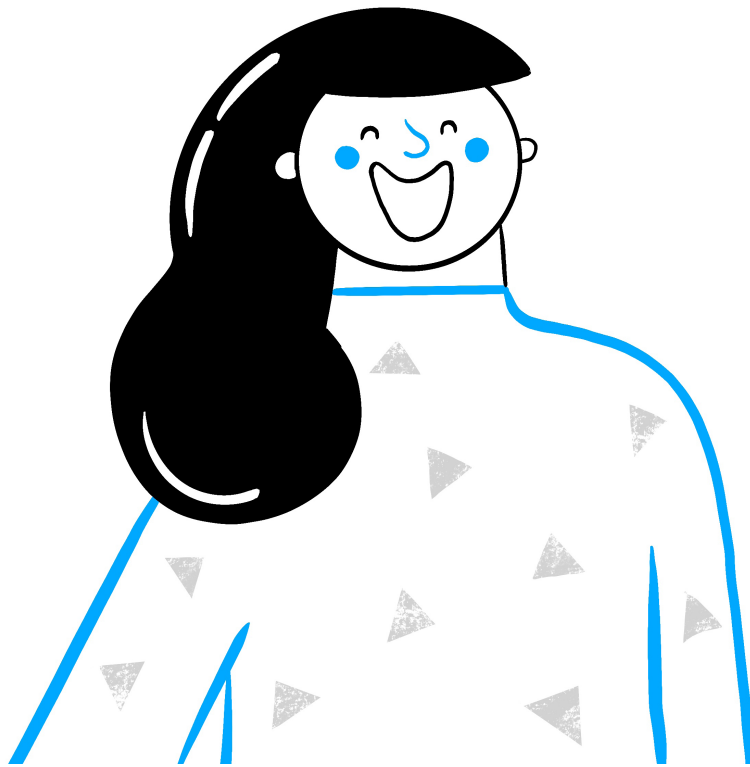
Although it doesn't seem like it and it is difficult for us to understand, laughter is actually closely linked to fear.

When we laugh, we discharge small or large amounts of tension, fear, or embarrassment, and we quickly feel better.

Laughter helps us to dissipate fear; kidneys get activated (the adrenal glands), making us want to urinate; our body starts to sweat, and we can even have tics, tremors, or spasms... Has this ever happened to you when public speaking on an important subject? It is what we normally call "being nervous".

Sometimes, we also may laugh in violent, stressful, and uncomfortable situations (when someone stumbles, gets confused, makes a big mistake, etc.), as a tension releasing mechanism, with the purpose of reorganising and processing complex intense information.

Thus, we can use laughter to work on our deep concerns or fears; to dispel anger; and to help us or other people when they have suffered humiliation or some other kind of abuse.



When the body relaxes enough and is in a safe environment, it can get to work on deeper fears, using another emotional discharge mechanism: tremors. Trembling can be intense and continuous or can be slight and intermittent (spasms or tics). In any case, they indicate that the mind is working on deep fears or accumulated tensions.

Among emotional discharges, trembling is the least studied and analysed, and the one that most frightens people when it happens, because it is usually accompanied by a very intense state of fear (since that is what the mind is trying to free itself from).

That is why, people who suffer panic attacks, frequent tremors and nervous tics or similar episodes often end up under psychiatric treatment, which suppresses and inhibits this body's natural emotional discharge and therefore, its ability to recover from the state of fear.



### **While laughing, we stimulate:**

Production of enkephalins (polypeptides that act as neurotransmitters).

Production and release of 'beta-endorphin' hormones.

This natural morphine makes us feel better, that's why it's called the "hormone of happiness".

After a good laugh, these hormones stay active in our blood for the following twenty-four hours.

### **Some direct emotional benefits of laughing:**

Increased sense of security, confidence, initiative, acceptance, closeness, and joy.

Increases heart rate and the pulse.

Improves the elasticity of the coronary arteries.

Helps reduce blood glucose.

Improves the immune system by producing antitumor and antiviral defences.

Frees us of nervousness and reduces stress.

## **EMOTIONS ARE OPPRESSED AND AVOIDED**

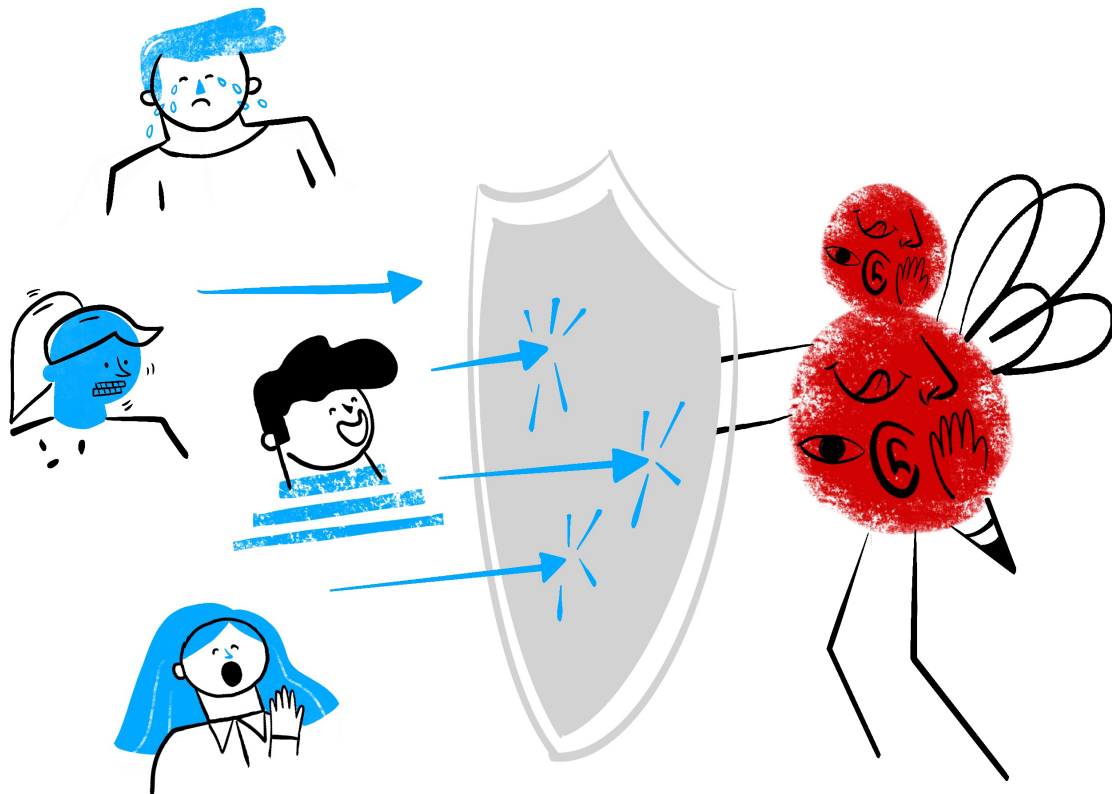
Emotions help us recover from different kinds of damages / distresses.

If people are allowed, encouraged, and listened (with full attention and respect) while they tell their stories, share their feelings and show their emotions, they will be able to recover from their past distressing experiences (and their consequences) and feel good again.

Without this recovery, any kind of anger, grief or fear from the past will continue to affect the quality and the course of the person's life in the present, both in conscious and unconscious ways.

Unfortunately, since we are born, modern societies suppress them, in various ways (subtle and not so subtle):

- **Crying:** giving us pacifiers, distracting us, giving us food, leaving us alone “until you calm down”, calling us “weak”, saying things like: “boys don’t cry”, etc. Since we are born, each time that we try to cry, all the adults around us try to make you stop crying, as if this would stop the attached feelings arisen. Sadly, what they are really stopping is our recovery mechanism.
- **Yawning:** it is considered to be impolite; a lack of attention, education and respect; you should try to hide while yawning, people get annoyed thinking that you are bored of them or of the conversation. It is also considered to be rude behaviour if you make a loud noise or stretch your arms while yawning.
- **Laughing:** it is accepted, but only with a certain intensity and within a limited and short time. Laughing alone or too much seems inappropriate, disproportionate and ridiculous. It is considered to be a sign of lack of control or as an expression of unbalance, psychopathology, schizophrenia, mania or drug addiction. It can also be considered to be rude (if someone suspects you are laughing about them) and annoying (if it is too loud).
- **Trembling:** unless it is for very low temperatures, trembling frightens people intensively, because it is considered a sign of lack of control. For this reason, panic attacks, frequent tremors, nervous tics or similar episodes are strongly and immediately stopped with psychiatric medication, even letting the person almost unable to move or talk.





# EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT TOOLS TO FIGHT SOCIAL MEDIA DEPENDENCY

In this chapter we will present more than 80 emotional management tools to fight social management dependency and not only.

Before going deeper into social media dependency, we start with a few specific ones on how to facilitate emotional discharges and recover from emotional damages that can be used as a roadmap for the others in the next four main chapters.

## How to facilitate emotional discharges and recover from emotional damages

Emotional discharges help distresses ('confusing or damaging' information) to be correctly processed, in the limbic system, and the information to be stored properly, in the mind, to be used in the future. This process of 'relocating information' or "re-evaluation" can occur right after the stressful incident or much later (if circumstances or inadequate environments does not allow it).

Experience tells us that the mind is always trying to cleanse and restore accumulated damaging or confusing information (distresses), which is a great relief for those of us who have been suppressing our emotions, consciously or unconsciously, for many years.

### 1. THE SESSIONS

During our lives, we all accumulate hundreds of distresses of different intensities in our minds (depending on the quantity of abuse we have experienced).

Recovering from these distresses and experiences is not a quick or easy job. Many of us resist it. We may feel that we already overcome these issues, that it is unbearable to remember them or that others will judge us.

We end up surviving by 'anesthetizing' ourselves with different addictions and trying to secretly control those feelings inside, the way we have been taught by society (oppressing our emotions and emotional discharge attempts).

A useful tool to facilitate emotional discharges and recover our full intelligence, flexibility and humanity again are the **sessions**.

A session consists of two or more people taking turns to listen and support each other (find someone with whom you want to meet regularly), with the aim of reaching an emotional discharge and recovering from a certain distress and its attached feelings.

## For sessions to be effective, certain conditions must be agreed and sought:

- absolute confidentiality.
- sense of security and a safe environment (where we can make noises and discharge loudly).
- normal (or minimal) sound, light, temperature, and other external agents/ stimuli (food, phones, work, etc), so that we can focus on the accumulated unprocessed information, and not distract ourselves.
- the amount of time that you both have and split this time equally, for each person (a timer is useful).
- who will participate in the first turn ('participant') and who will listen ('listener').
- change turns.
- after each session do a small review of appreciation. This will help to learn how to listen to the other person better and improve our listening relationship.

## Possible review questions:

What have you done well as a listener?

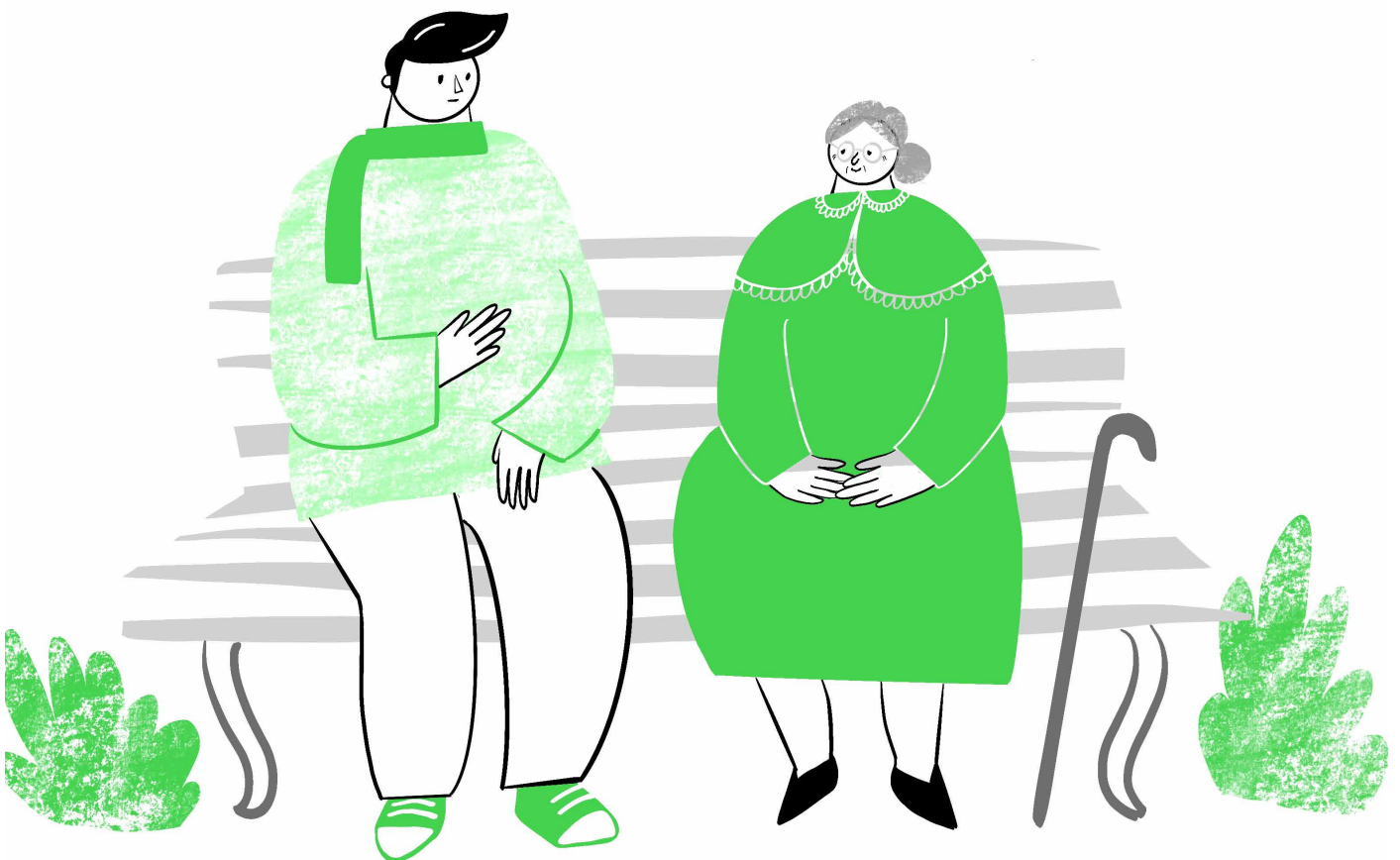
What did you like about the other person as a participant?

What did you like about yourself as a participant?

What did you like about the other as a listener?

- make an appointment for the next session.

To help your recovery process, we recommend trying to do at least one or two sessions a week, of 20-30 minutes of attention for each person.



## 2. HOW TO LISTEN, SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE EMOTIONAL DISCHARGES

During a session, when we are in the “listener” role/ turn, our task is to accompany with respect, interest, attention and understanding the “participant”, so that they are able to access their emotions and release them.

Accompanying someone well is difficult, since many of our old habits normally show up, undermining the “participants” ability to explore their own mind, in the way they really need to. We tend to interrupt by analysing or commenting on the situation, how we feel about it, sharing our own similar experiences, giving advice, recommendations, solutions, etc.).

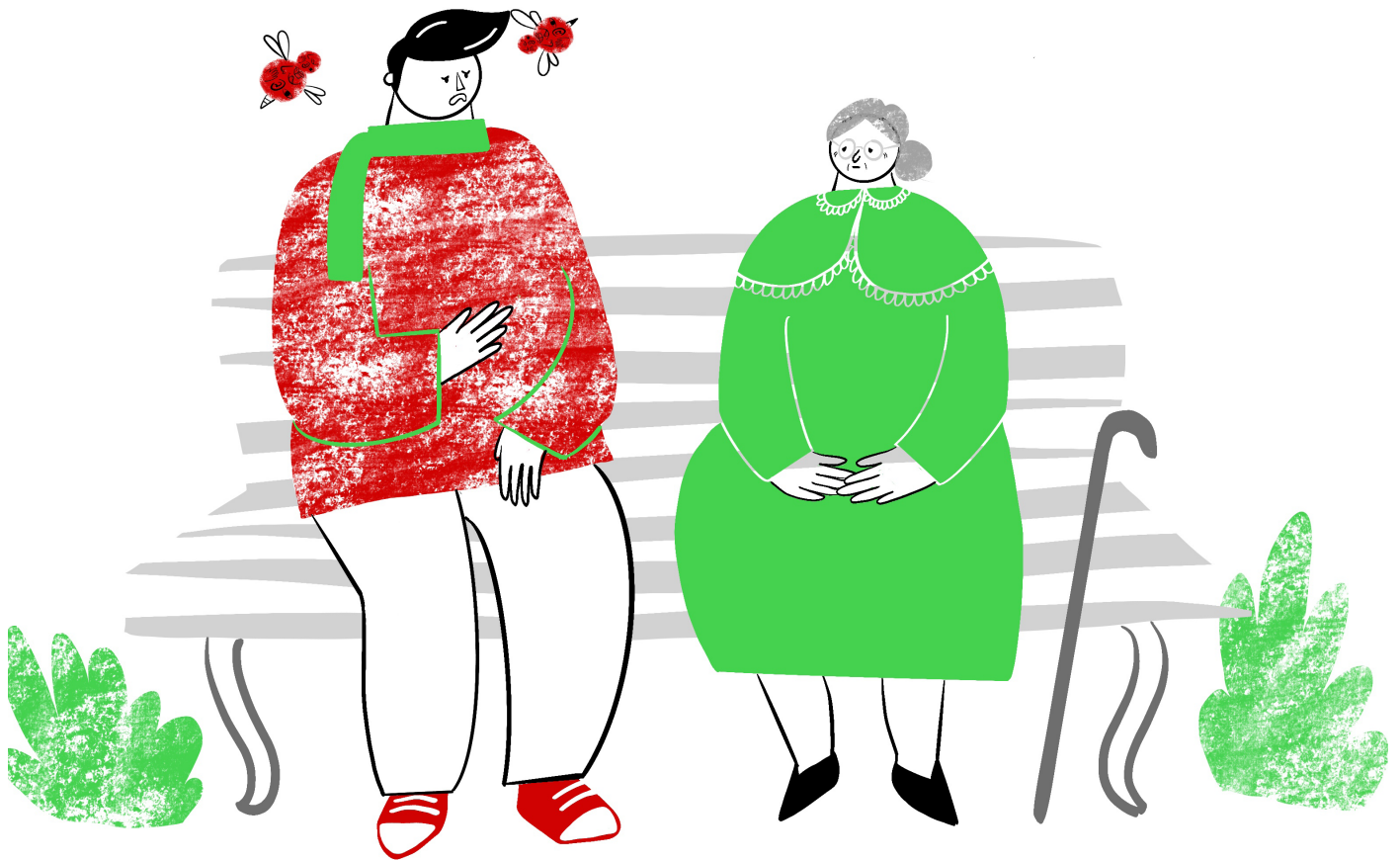
Sessions are effective at addressing emotional distresses, when listeners follow certain attitudes that help participants to feel comfortable, close and safe, and open up to show their emotions more easily. These noble attitudes are:

- Confidentiality: never address other people’s topics with no one. This includes the participants themselves (unless you are in a session).
- Closeness (respectful and relaxed physical and eye contact).
- Showing affection, approval, trust, commitment, and delight in the participant’s company, assuming that this person is intelligent, powerful and caring. Remind yourself that the participant is important and strong and has great decision-making capacity, although they also need support to get out of their distress/confusion.
- Being interested in knowing their story and the details that accompany any important event of their lives (either good or bad; but most importantly those that happened early in their lives), without interruptions.
- Make sure to keep the focus on the participant. This is time to pay attention to the other person’s issues, not yours. Try to put aside anything that could interfere with your listening ability. Say little or even nothing. It is more efficient to trust in the mind of the participant and give them space to process.
- Show high (and relaxed) expectations. Being relaxed, without hurries or personal interests/expectations of what should happen during the session. Finding the balance between being relaxed and interested is very important and makes a big difference in the results.
- Try to identify the participant’s distress.
- Think about how to contradict the distress: say or do something that allows the participant to see the distress and separate it from reality.
- Contradict the distress sufficiently and stimulate the emotional discharge.
- If an emotional discharge shows up in a session, do not interrupt it, try to sustain it and appreciate it softly (maybe just with a smile). Keep redirecting the attention of the participant to the emotional discharge and remind them that it is positive that they are recovering from past damages.
- You don’t do the work of the participant, but you simply do not leave that person alone in their process against the distress, its internalized messages and attached feelings. Before the session, you can think about that person and design possible specific contradictions for them.

Keep your attention on the person and listen by displaying all of the previous attitudes.

‘90% of being a good listener is simply paying good attention to those who share their stories’, Harvey Jackins.

Listening does not only have profound effects and benefits on the participants’ minds, but also in the listeners’, since we feel useful and caring and it gives us a better understanding of the different realities that surround us.



### 3. HOW TO PARTICIPATE AND SEEK EMOTIONAL DISCHARGES

As a participant, there are also several attitudes that can help you to reach emotional discharges and recover from distressing experiences:

- Previously think about what you want to work on and how to make the session go well, by sharing your thoughts and feelings.
- Take your time to explore your environment, who you are with and comment on the first things that come to your mind (memories, sensations, curiosities, etc). That will help you relax, focus and notice that this time is for yourself.
- Tell your listener something good that has happened to you lately (even if it is very little) or value something about yourself. This helps you focus on reality and gives an idea on how deep you are confused or not. Focusing only on 'bad news' makes people feel a profound discouragement and helplessness.
- See what feelings or situations have been affecting you lately and share some of them.

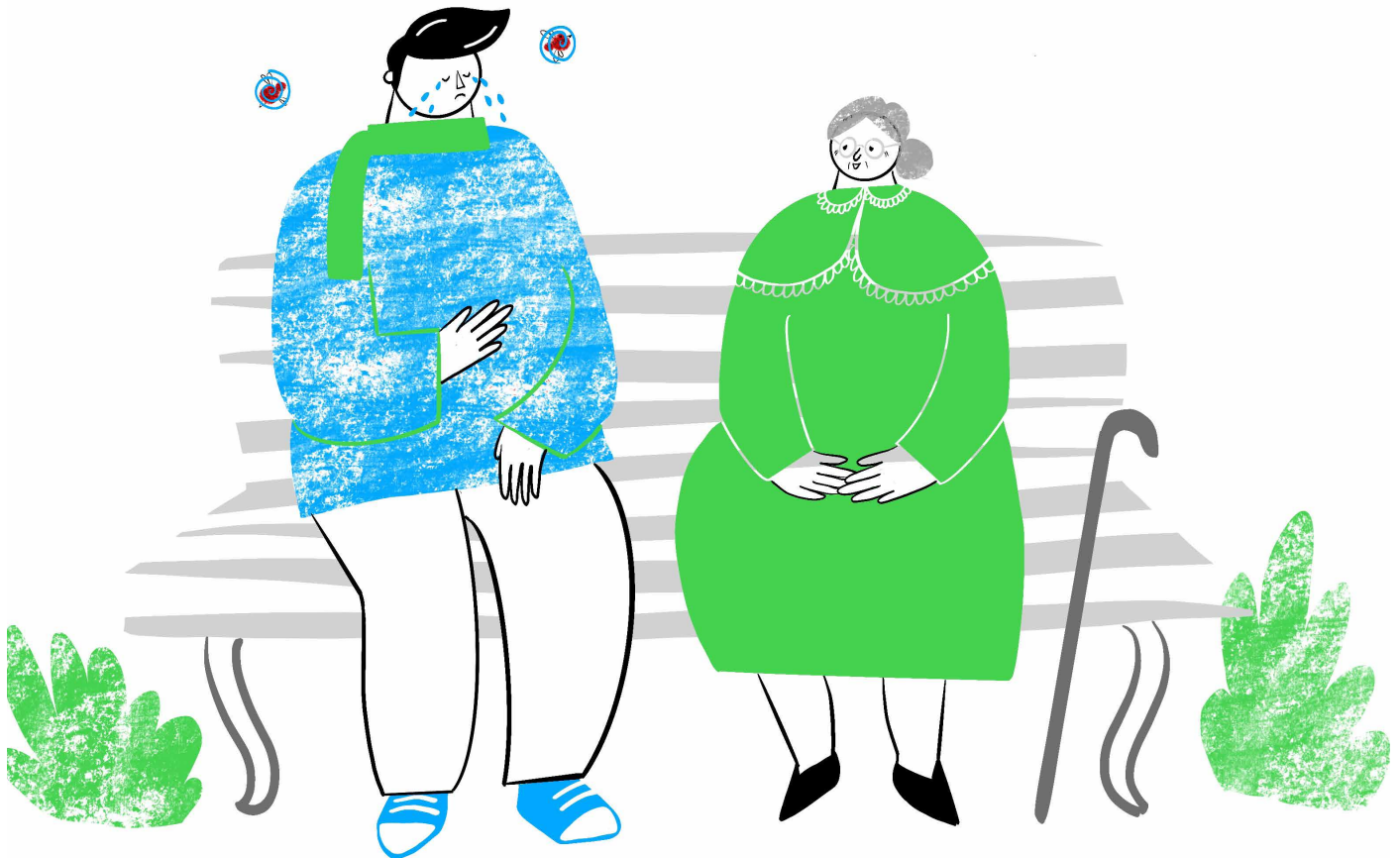
Normally, what we feel in the present comes from the past, so it could be useful to try to remember when the first time was that we remember having a similar feeling to the one being experienced now (early memories). Take a little time and when you have a specific memory in your head (whatever it is) go ahead and tell it to your listener, in detail. It will allow you to have a better perspective of what happened and find fresh and new solutions on how to proceed in the future.

- Trying to connect and follow the proposals of your listener, while trying to favour emotional discharges.

- If an emotional discharge shows up in a session, try to stay in it, as long as possible.

Our main work as participants is to tell the stories of your life, with all kinds of details, regardless of our unwillingness to do so or the little sense we believe it makes.

Telling stories usually brings about large amounts of emotional discharges, relief and helps us restore old information that got stuck in our minds.



## 4. DEVELOPING THE ABILITY TO LISTEN AND PARTICIPATE/ DISCHARGE

Feelings can overwhelm and take us over, making us function and feel in ways that we don't really want to.

Distressing feelings that bother us in our daily lives are locked in our minds, waiting to be processed. Letting them out and expressing them, through emotional discharges, can free us from their negative influence.

The art of listening gives us and others the opportunity to free ourselves of all of these difficulties and resistances.

Unfortunately, letting them out is not an easy task. After many years of oppressing emotional discharges and accumulating confusing information (inherited by modern societies, cultural beliefs and our personal distressing experiences), we have created different internal resistances.

In order to get rid of distressing feelings and harming beliefs, we need to be able to access emotional discharges. For that, it is firstly important to recognise the different existing resistances (locks) and then, to learn several strategies (keys) to unlock them.


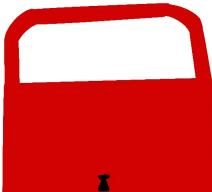
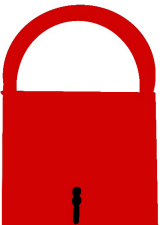


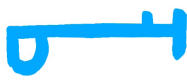


Here are some strategies that help to overcome internal resistances and facilitate someone to access their emotional discharges:

<b>Internal resistance (LOCK)</b>	<b>Attitude to show (KEY)</b>	<b>What to do</b>	<b>What to avoid</b>
Isolation, Loneliness.	Closeness, Affection.	Visual and physical contact; show interest.	Make nothing of it; distract yourself; think about something else.
Fear, Anxiety, Insecurity.	Privacy; Security.	Agree to confidentiality; to a safe place to talk.	Distrusting; allowing interruptions and distractions.
Pressure, Obligation.	Tranquillity; Understanding.	Be relaxed, take time.	Being in a hurry and try to resolve the problem quickly.
Disappointment in people and being skeptical about finding support.	Trust; Hope.	Listen; appreciate and acknowledge. Offer quality information, briefly.	Interrupt, advise, calm the person down, talk about your own problems.

Different kinds of feelings need different kinds of emotional discharges:

<b>Distressing Feeling = Block</b>	<b>Emotional Discharge = Liberation</b>	<b>What do we recover?</b>
Pain, grief, loss, misfortune.	Crying, tears, sobs.	Enthusiasm, connection, desire, delight.
Fear, insecurity.	Trembling, cold sweating, active kidneys.	Security, trust, initiative.
Embarrassment, humiliation, anger.	Laughing, hot sweats, making angry noises.	Closeness, acceptance, joy.
Stress, tension, physical pain, boredom.	Yawning, stretching, sighing.	Peace, Calm, interest.

Deeply listening to someone, using our best judgment, helps them to enjoy life and make better decisions.

INTERNAL RESISTANCE				
ATTITUDE TO SHOW	 PROXIMITY AFFECTION	 CONFIDENTIALITY SECURITY	 CALM UNDERSTANDING	 TRUST HOPE
WHAT TO DO?	Physical and eye contact; show interest	Agree on confidentiality and a safe place to talk	Be relaxed and take time	Listen, appreciate and acknowledge. Briefly offer quality information
WHAT TO AVOID?	To play down; to distract; to think of something else.	Distrust, allow interruptions and distractions.	Being in a hurry and trying to solve the problem quickly.	Interrupting, advising, calming the person, talking about your own problems.

## We continue with a few tools to learn to differentiate between emotions and feelings.

The goal of this set of tools is to explain and explore, in a participative way, the different feelings that exist and to analyse the difference that exists between feelings and emotions, reflecting about the confusion that exists regarding this topic.

## 5. INHERENT FEELINGS AND ATTACHED FEELINGS LIST

**Aim:** to have a big list of as many feelings as possible.

**Implementation:** For this activity, we will need green and pink post-its and markers.

The teacher will give one marker and two post-its (one of each colour) to each participant. If the group is small, each participant can use 2-3 post-its from each colour.

Then, they will be asked to write in the green post-it a feeling that they like and, in the pink post-it, what they think is the opposite feeling. For example, "joy" written in the green post-it, and its opposite "sadness", written in the pink post-it.

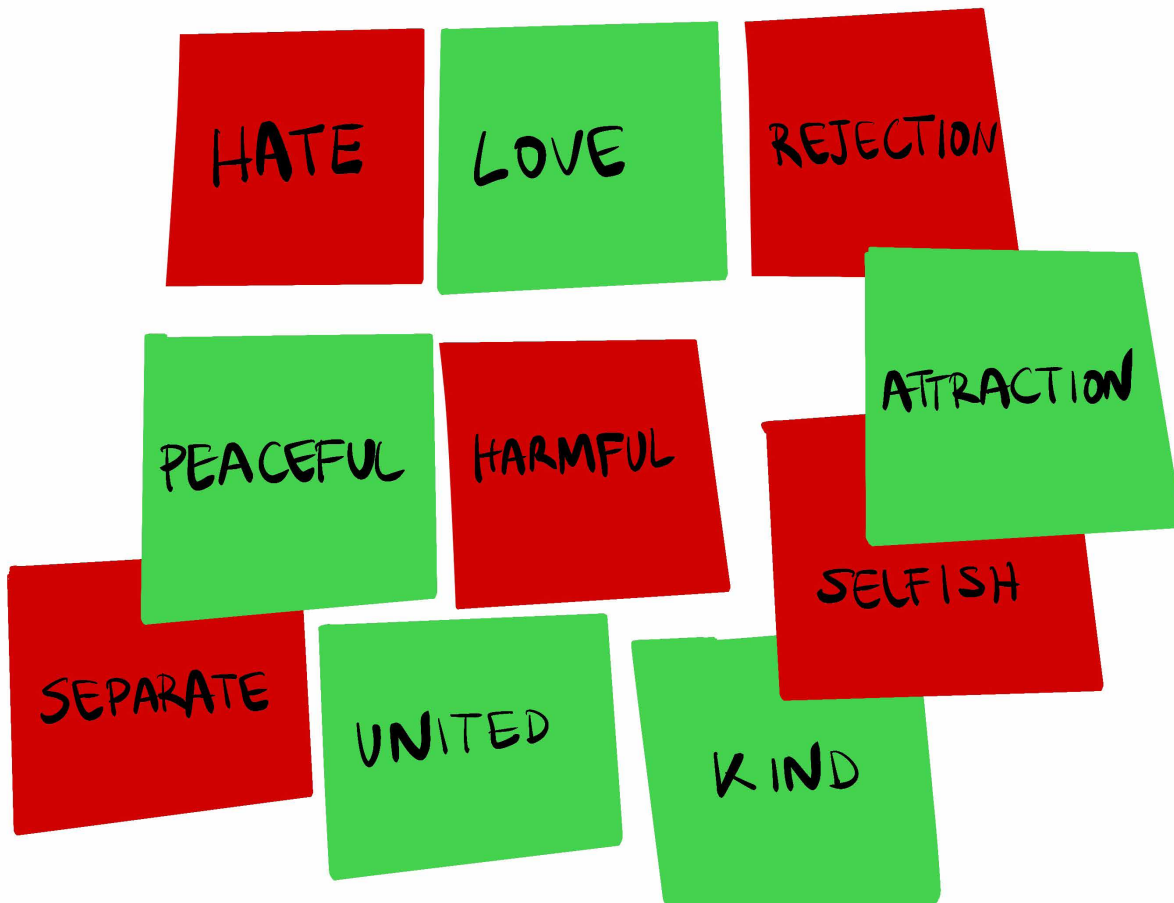
Once people have written their post-its, they come out, and while telling the whole group what they wrote, they will place them on an available wall. On the left side, the list of the green ones and on the right side, the list of the pink ones.

The idea is to make visible that these feelings are polarized. When you are secure then you are not afraid; if you are calm, you are not stressed; if you trust in yourself, you are not ashamed, etc.

For example: I was happy and then someone informed me of an important loss. Because of that incident, my feelings changed from happy into sad.

By this, we do not mean that we are either 100% at one end or the other, but that our feelings work as a dial that changes from one end to the other, where many in-betweens can occur.

At the end of the activity, we will have a list of “green” feelings that we will call “inherent” to human beings and another list of “pink” feelings that we will call “attached”, since they just appear, as the effect of an event.



## 6. TRAFFIC LIGHTS OF FEELINGS VS EMOTIONS (OR EMOTIONAL DISCHARGES)

This activity is, largely, a continuation of the previous one but can be done independently also.

**Aim:** With the previous activity, we have already managed to formulate two main categories of feelings (inherent and attached) and with this proposal we will try to find out, with the group, what emotions are.

This is very confusing for many people, making it necessary to investigate and work more about these basic ideas and the importance of differentiating feelings from emotions.

**Implementation:** The activity is very simple and consists of the group trying to find out what an emotion is, since all that has come out so far are only feelings.

To do so, the group will be standing around the room and the teacher will start saying several words

one by one: love, security, sadness, **laugh**, fear, shame, **cry**, insecurity, hate, **trembling**, boredom, **yawn**, frustration, etc. Each time one word is said, participants have a few minutes to figure out if that concept is a feeling or an emotion.

When they decide, they place themselves in the room, in such way that if they are sure that it is a feeling, they have to go to the right wall of the room; if they are not sure in the middle; if they think it is an emotion they have to go to the left wall of the room. Like traffic lights (green, orange, and red). To make it more interesting and to extract more thought from the debate, it may be interesting to also express what criteria people are using in order to differentiate between feelings and emotions.

The teacher can ask participants (or some of them if there are many...), which criteria they used to come up with the conclusion that it is a feeling or an emotion and why they are on the left or the right wall.

Some might say it depends on the time you feel the feeling, others will talk about the intensity of the feelings, about if it is intermittent or chronic, about the origins of the feeling (if it comes from our interior or from external events), about how we react, etc.

Slowly, the teacher gradually unveils what emotions are.

**The following three tools will help us work about internalized messages.**

## 7. THE BOASTFUL CHICKENS

**Aim:** to make visible how when we are under competitive pressure, stress, haste or urgency, we do not think of smart solutions, nor care for others.

**Implementation:** We need approximately 10 people, who will be the chickens and whose feathers are represented by clothes pegs.

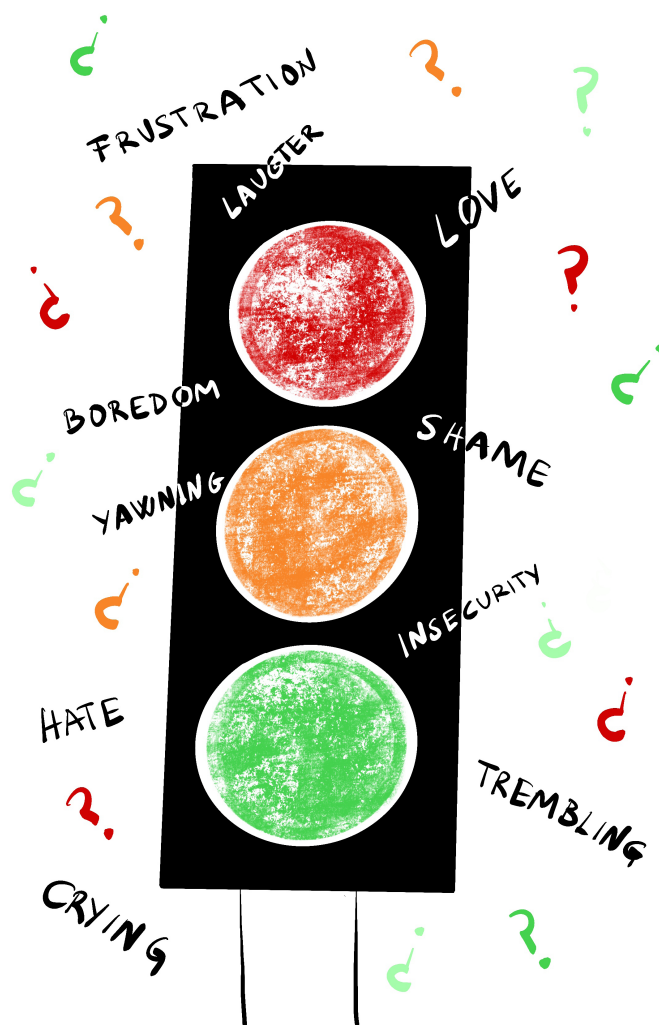
If it is a 20-people group, 10 people can hold hands and delimit the yard while the others play.

To start, those who play will walk around the “yard”, with 5 clothes pegs hanging from their clothes, in a visible spot.

Presentation Speech for the first round:

“We are going to play at being chickens and, as everyone knows, chickens like to show off their feathers. Each person has 5 “feathers” (showing the clothes pegs), but in the yard, the chickens are always trying to get new feathers to be more beautiful. You have two minutes to see who gets more feathers.”

We make a first round of 2 minutes, where each chicken will try to use their skills to try to get as many



clothes pegs as possible (feathers).

Presentation Speech for the second round:

“I forgot to tell you that the chickens with more feathers are the first ones to be sacrificed... So, now you have the chance to save yourselves and get out of the yard, whenever you get rid of all the feathers.”

In the second round (also of 2 minutes) each chicken plays with all the clothes pegs that they accumulated in the previous round. This time, the goal is to get rid of as many clothes pegs as possible, by putting them on other chicken's clothes.

When someone thinks that s/he doesn't have any more clothes pegs hanging, s/he can leave the yard, through the hands of two people from those who are making the yard.

These 2 people and the teacher check if it is true that there are no more “feathers”. Otherwise, they will have to go back into the yard and continue fighting to get rid of them.

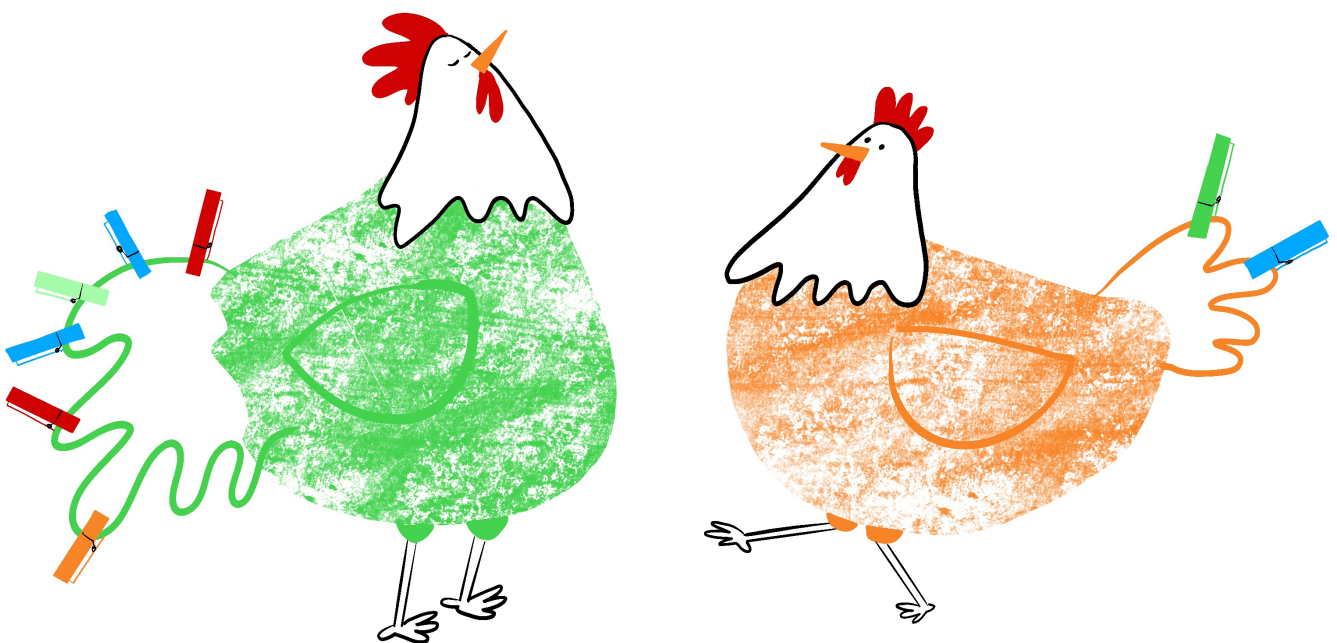
When the time is over, everyone shares what has happened to them and how they felt.

Usually, we observe that, during the two rounds, the yard becomes a battlefield where everyone tries to use their capacities and strength, trying to accumulate or get rid of the clothes pegs, in the fastest and often aggressive ways, without worrying about others.

People often use physical advantages (speed, strength, height ...), striking each other, involuntarily, and no one thinks about kindly asking or convincing others to give or take their clothes pegs.

The teacher can draw attention to how when we are under competitive pressure, haste or urgency, we do not think of smart solutions, nor care for others, at all, linking this exercise with the theory on how the brain works in stressful situations.

It can also be pointed out how, at some point, people didn't even respect the rules of the game, because in the attempt to hang them on others, many clothes pegs fell to the ground, and were never picked up by anyone.



## 8. THE GAME OF “THE STICKS”

**Aim:** to realize how important it is to make alliances and help each other.

**Implementation:** The ground / room is delimited in two halves (preferably against a wall, so that the dividing line comes out perpendicular to it).

The group is divided into two groups and each one is placed inside one of the two delimited sectors. Two volunteers, one from each group, are asked to stand outside the sectors.

Each person in both sectors will become like a “stick”: they will not be able to bend their knees and both legs and hands will be glued to their body, throughout the game. This way, they will be rigid and will not be able to hug, grab or run.

The teacher explains that the goal of the game is that the volunteers try to take out of the delimited sectors, as many people (“sticks”) as possible. It must be presented in such a way that it looks like a competition, but without saying, at any time, that it is. Volunteers usually think it’s a competition and they try to get more “sticks” than the other volunteer.

The teacher explains that “sticks” within the same sector can organize themselves and help each other, trying to prevent the volunteers taking them out. At no time, will they be able to fold their legs or arms or mix with those of the other sector.

After 4-5 minutes the teacher stops the game and proposes to play again.

This time, only one volunteer is asked to play and the teacher plays instead of the second volunteer. The teacher will, privately, suggest the volunteer to work together as a team and both of them remove all the “sticks” from one sector and then from the other. They will then be much more effective and quicker.

Thus, this activity will help the teacher explain, metaphorically, how we usually work in isolation towards our problems (on our emotional management), instead of collaborating and helping each other (listening to each other).

The “sticks” represent the rigidity of the distresses in our minds and the person who enters to take them out would be the listener in a session that seeks to clean old damages and attached feelings.

Each sector represents the brain of one of the two volunteers who are trying to clear their minds of distresses, when they listen and help each other, in their emotional management.

Other emotional facts that we can illustrate with this tool:

- Distresses defend each other.
- Distresses are stirred when we go for them, if we do not go for them, they are quiet.
- Sometimes, distresses are very strong.
- Sometimes, we try to go and work on one specific distress, but we end up working (eliminating) another very different distress, because it came into our way.
- Two people are much more efficient than one.
- Sometimes, if we go alone, distresses are many and are strong and drive us into a corner. We get lost in our problems and we don’t find a way out.

It is possible to play a third time, already having in mind that “sticks” are distresses. This time, the sticks, apart from defending themselves, can try to scare or discourage the person with negative messages. Also, those that have already been eliminated and have become fresh intelligence can encourage the volunteers with new ideas about how to defeat the distresses, or value them with positive messages.

After each attempt, participants can share how they felt, what they have noticed that was happening or what similarities they see, in regard to the theory of the functioning of the mind and the distresses.



## 9. BLA BLA BLA BLA (CONTAGION OF EMOTIONS)

**Aim:** to analyse which feelings we like, which ones we dislike and how the contagion or re-stimulation effect works, in society and relationships.

It can be used to visualize how we pass distresses from one to another and how we like some distressing states more than others.

**Implementation:** Start with these instructions to the group: "During the game, you will walk around the room and follow the instructions I give. Every time I say "stop", everyone must stop and listen, and when I say "Go", you have to continue walking. Throughout the game, you can only say "Bla Bla Bla", no other words are allowed."

**Instructions 1** (during 2 or 3 minutes): People should walk happily and greet each other cheerfully, for a few seconds, then they have to say goodbye and greet another person, happily. We can encourage them to take some time to tell each other how they are, in a happy way, but only with dramatized "Bla Bla Bla".

**Instructions 2:** The teacher stops the whole group and greets one happy person scolding, insulting and showing a lot of anger (still only with gestures and "Bla Bla Bla"). Then, the teacher explains that the person who faced our anger becomes infected. So, now, there are two angry people. As we continue walking around happily, those greeted by an angry person will become infected with anger. When the whole group is angry, the teacher will introduce another feeling just to one person.

**Instructions 3:** Now, the teacher's role will be to be very kind and listen calmly to what the angry person tells us. Being empathic and trying to dismantle the anger. As before, people will be infected with our good attention, until the whole group is very kind.

**Instructions 4:** Now, the teacher will greet a kind person with a sad and heavy tone. We will bore our kind listeners, and soon we will end up depressing the whole group.

We can play as many phases (“superiority”, “frightened”, “tough guy”, “talkative”, etc.) as we want, as long as the group is having a good time.

At the end of the activity, it is a time for analysis and debate. Participants can talk about what they have observed. Facilitators can ask in which roles participants have felt most comfortable and liked the most, and which have been most unpleasant. This will point out interesting facts about our real relationships.



## 10. FIVE-STAR LISTENING

**Aim:** We continue with a tool to listen to each other better. We want to analyse the most common mistakes, when we listen to others, pointing out 5 key aspects for a good listening.

**Implementation:** Start with these instructions to the group:

“We are going to learn to listen better, by listening the worst we can. This way, we will be able to clearly visualize our most common mistakes while listening to others.”

We divide the group into couples: one will be the listener and the other one the participant of a session.

Then, we will start 5 rounds of exercises where one person will start talking about something (it could be something really important), while the other person will listen. The roles (participant - listener) or the couples can be exchanged, in each round.

In each round, the person listening will commit, on purpose, 1 exaggerated mistake in relation to one of the 5 key aspects of what is a “good” listening.

Five Keys for an efficient good listening and the most typical mistakes when we listen:

- The importance of a “relaxed” gaze. Managing the gaze when we listen is not easy, because it generates many feelings. It should show enough interest, while not making the participant feel deeply observed.

**1st Round:** Listeners can choose how to exaggerate and do it badly: they can look very fixedly (obsessed mode) at the participants while they speak or completely the contrary: looking elsewhere else distracted.

- The importance of paying attention. A very common bad habit is to interrupt, comment or change subjects while the other person talks.

**2nd Round:** This time, listeners will interrupt and change subjects continuously, asking questions that interest them, but have little to do with what the person is talking about. Listeners can also distract themselves by looking at their mobile phones.

- The importance of the listener trusting our intelligence, judgement and process. Normally, when someone tells us their problems, we try to find quick solutions, advising, telling our similar experiences, judge them or instruct them. This way, participants cannot trust that the listener is really understanding them, and on their side.

**3rd Round:** This time, listeners will interrupt by teaching and advising, showing how much they know and how much the one speaking still has to learn. They could also show faces of mistrust and non-approval.

- The importance of being balanced in the way we listen. This is especially interesting when someone tells us something “serious”, because we tend to seriously worry about it or play it down.

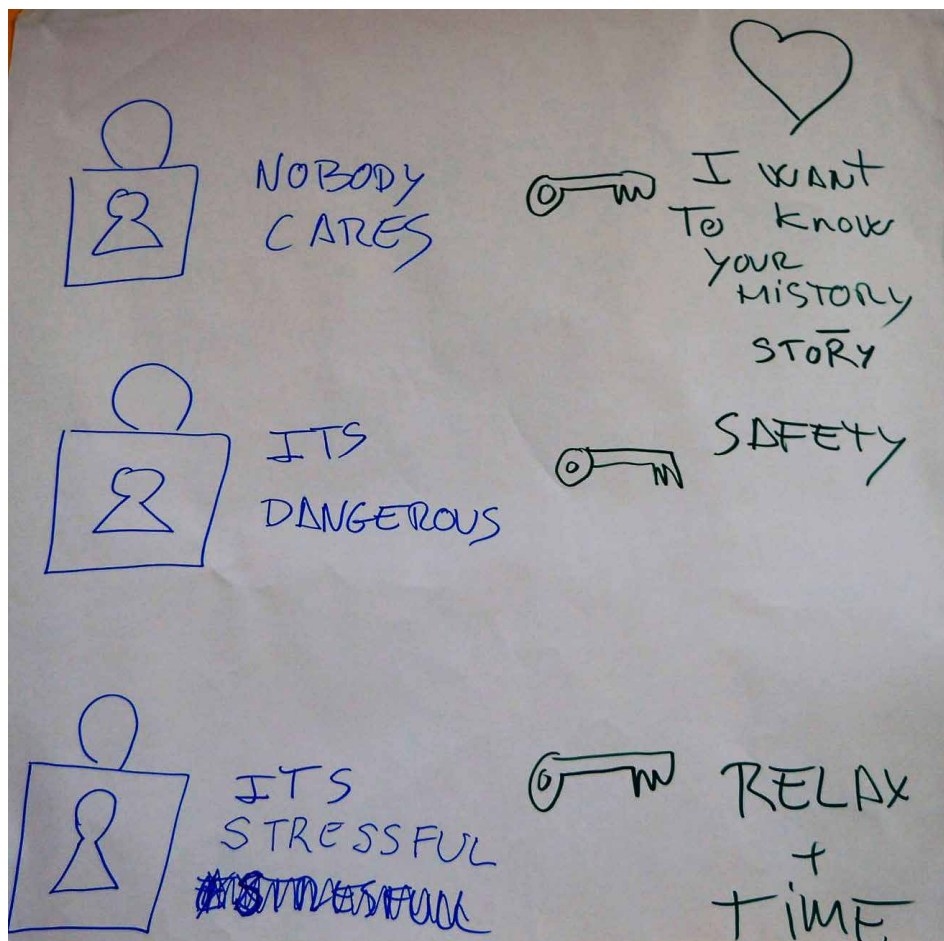
**4th Round:** The idea this time is for listeners to exaggerate the topics' importance or pretend as if nothing really important happens.

- The importance of security and confidentiality. The possibility of gossip and rumours always makes it difficult for people to trust others and share with them important things. Even more nowadays with the existence of social media.

**5th Round:** This time, listeners will try to record the conversation with the telephone, they will pretend to call someone else to tell them about what the one speaking is saying or they will look for other ways to break the security and confidentiality.

With this activity, we are trying to make people laugh at the things we do wrong. We can share our typical mistakes, how we felt in each role and what we have learnt.

When we are able to handle the previous 5 keys in a balanced way, we can say that we are five-star listeners.

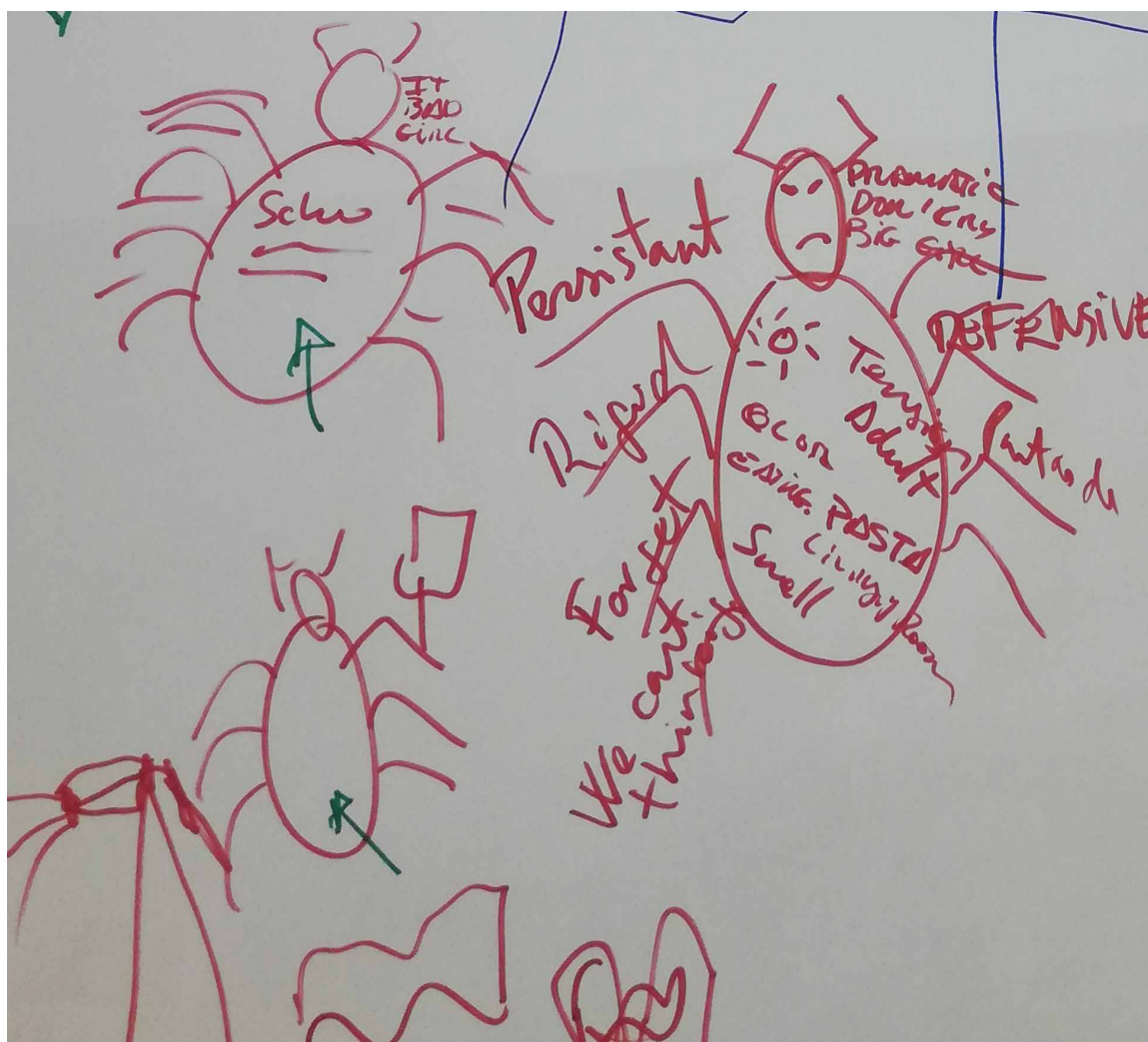


## 11. A METAPHOR ON DISTRESSES: THE GREAT EMOTIONAL TICK

**Aim:** to be able to identify the characteristics of the distresses.

**Implementation:** Draw a great emotional tick to your target groups, which will become a metaphor of how a distress behaves, and talk about its parts:

- belly: specific incident that relates to the distress we are talking about, and all its details.
- legs: examples of messages that this specific distress is making us believe.
- head: mental health oppression messages.



### Watch Out!

This subchapter of the tools, presents activities for teachers to do for students, focusing on:

- Online dependency/addiction: addiction to gaming and gambling, smartphone
- Internet danger: identify theft, exposure to inappropriate content, scam, hacking
- Do not be fooled: pornography, fake content
- Paying attention and attention deficit (at home and in class)

These are for groups of students or classes ranging from 8 to 24 students and the majority of them can be done both indoors and outdoors.



## 12. HOW TO USE FAKE NEWS CRITICALLY IN THE CLASSROOM

**Aim:** to be able to identify fake news and read them critically

**Implementation:** Introduce the idea, challenge students to identify misused images.

Buzzfeed published fake news quizzes<sup>1</sup>. In each quiz, some questions use images that have been altered, while others use images or quotes taken out of context.

This mix of the two give you a starting point for discussion on how image authenticity alone doesn't guarantee truth.

Context is crucial. For example, in the fake news quiz link above, there are two real (not doctored) photographs. But they are taken out of context.

Pause at the fourth photo (the fawn and bobcat cub) and ask students what they see, and what it might mean. Encourage speculative language like 'they might be pets' or 'the photo could have been staged.'

When the students have guessed whether the news is real or fake, click to reveal the photo. This photo is real, but it was taken in a rescue centre where the two baby animals were housed together due to overcrowding.

1 <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/janelytvynenko/fake-news-quiz-nov-18>

In fact, this true version still tells a heart-warming story and raises awareness of the devastation caused by wildfires. However, someone thought the photo would have even more impact if the animals were seen to be hiding out together.

## Challenge with activities

To hone your students' critical thinking skills, give them ten minutes in pairs to look at photos relating to real stories in today's news.

Challenge them to come up with ideas of how they could misuse the real pictures to support a fictional headline of their own.

The whole class can then vote for the most convincing (or creative) fake news story.

You can also challenge students to guess the true story behind one another's pictures.

## Reverse image search

You can show students how to use Google or TinEye<sup>2</sup> to reverse search. Get them to reverse search an image to see if it has been altered or taken out of context. This doesn't take much longer than a regular search.

Google's page on how to reverse image search<sup>3</sup> is written in simple English. The page is simple enough for B1 students to access independently, and for lower-level students to access with a little support.

Research<sup>4</sup> shows that authentic reading comprehension activities like this increase student motivation and result in better vocabulary retention.

## Notice deepfakes

Deepfakes<sup>5</sup> are videos of people and events that look and sound real but are in fact simulated using Artificial Intelligence (AI).

They are produced by exposing an artificial intelligence to enough photos and videos of a person that it can manipulate that person's face to mouth words they have never said.

The person's voice can then be synthesised or recorded by an impersonator and combined with the visuals to create a video that is fake.

Currently, there are still elements that deepfake producers struggle to get right, for example the teeth.

This makes deepfakes a great area for practising language for speculation (as needed in Cambridge First and speaking exams). You can pre-teach or review adverbs of probability, and speculative modal forms like:

It could be real.

It must be fake, because...

It might be fake - they could have used....

Show students a selection of videos and ask them to speculate about which are real and which are deepfakes. Learners can do this in teams, with each team rewarded points for correct answers to add a competitive element.

The technologies behind fake news are still emerging. That makes it a great topic for practising speculative and hedging language in an authentic context. For example, students can talk about what technologies might emerge next, or what could happen in legislation to combat these new technologies.

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2 <https://www.tineye.com/>

3 <https://support.google.com/websearch/answer/1325808?co=GENIE.Platform%3DAndroid&hl=en>

4 <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17501229.2017.1364252>

5 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cdei-publishes-its-first-series-of-three-snapshot-papers-ethical-issues-in-ai/snapshot-paper-deepfakes-and-audiovisual-disinformation>



## Practice real debates

New legislation is appearing all over the world in the fight against fake news.

Governments' responsibility is an ongoing debate with the emergence of events like the European fake news conference<sup>6</sup>.

In this context, it would be realistic to hold a mock parliamentary debate on a topic such as 'This house proposes (like a 12-month minimum custodial sentence for creating or spreading fake news)'.

If you want to do this as a British parliamentary style debate, there's a good video on how to introduce BP style to your students<sup>7</sup> on YouTube.

You hold the debate over a number of lessons. Plan time for students to prepare these steps:

- research your own arguments
- research the arguments your opponents might use, and how you will counter-argue
- practice delivering your arguments and counter arguments with a partner.

Before step three, pre-teach some language for presenting arguments and disagreeing. Many websites have pages with useful language for debating<sup>8</sup>.

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6 <https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/european-media-literacy-events/spain-conference-how-tackle-disinformation-and-fake-news>

7 <https://youtu.be/d1ype0Toqo4>

8 [https://www.myenglishpages.com/site\\_php\\_files/communication-lesson-useful-expressions-for-debating.php](https://www.myenglishpages.com/site_php_files/communication-lesson-useful-expressions-for-debating.php)

If your students prefer a more conversational approach to discussion, they could 'think-pair-share'. Think individually, pair with a partner, then share ideas with the group on these questions up to a B2 language level:

How can fake news influence people? Is it dangerous, or just good fun?

Is fake news a modern problem or has it always existed?

Would you believe a story about one of your heroes as quickly as a story about someone you don't like?

Do we all just believe what we want to believe?

How much of the blame for fake news is with the people who produce it, the people who believe it, or the people who pass it on?

Or at higher levels:

What could be the future of deepfakes? Will people eventually stop making them as we get better at detecting them? Or will they continue to get more convincing?

Who has a biggest responsibility to stop the spread of fake news: governments, individuals or social media platforms?

Should people be punished for creating or spreading fake news? If yes, in what circumstances?

Do you think the future will see laws introduced 'banning' fake news? How practical is this?

Fake news is a critical thinking opportunity

By discussing fake news in the classroom, we help students understand that there is more to knowledge than reading and remembering. The truth of what we read now has become a more fluid concept.

Understanding how we receive news through official channels and what choices journalists make when reporting can help students spot fake news and think about how it can be countered.

## **Beware of fake news about fake news**

There are many misunderstandings about fake news. One of the most frequent is the difference between misinformation and disinformation.

Disinformation is untruth that is spread with intent, whereas misinformation is unintentionally mistaken.

For example, an incorrect story published hastily, without adequate fact-checking, is misinformation. The same story circulated by someone who knows it to be untrue is disinformation.

However, many resources incorrectly give the example that misinformation is an authentic photograph taken out of context and disinformation uses tampered photographs.

Learners should treat any resources they access on the subject of fake news with the same healthy scepticism as these resources tell them to apply elsewhere.

There's no right answer

Some students might feel that the teacher has all the answers, and that there is one definitive answer to every question. The term 'fake news' itself reinforces this idea, as it implies that we live in a binary world of 'fake and 'true' news.

Very few sources, if any, are wholly right or wrong. For example, a liberal and conservative newspaper might report the same story differently according to their politics.

They may choose different language or even cherry pick which facts to include. But is this fake news?

It is important to acknowledge these grey areas to help students understand the complexity of truth as a concept.



## 13. GAMBLING ADDICTION AND PROBLEM GAMBLING

**Aim:** To make students understand what is gambling addiction and problem gambling?

**Implementation:** Start by explaining that gambling problems can happen to anyone from any walk of life. Your gambling goes from a fun, harmless diversion to an unhealthy obsession with serious consequences. Whether you bet on sports, scratch cards, roulette, poker, or slots—in a casino, at the track, or online—a gambling problem can strain your relationships, interfere with work, and lead to financial disaster. You may even do things you never thought you would, like running up huge debts or even stealing money to gamble.

Gambling addiction—also known as pathological gambling, compulsive gambling, or gambling disorder—is an impulse-control disorder. If you're a compulsive gambler, you can't control the impulse to gamble, even when it has negative consequences for you or your loved ones. You'll gamble whether you're up or down, broke or flush, and you'll keep gambling regardless of the consequences—even when you know that the odds are against you, or you can't afford to lose.

Of course, you can also have a gambling problem without being totally out of control. Problem gambling is any gambling behaviour that disrupts your life. If you're preoccupied with gambling, spending more and more time and money on it, chasing losses, or gambling despite serious consequences in your life, you have a gambling problem.

A gambling addiction or problem is often associated with other behaviour or mood disorders. Many problem gamblers also suffer with substance abuse issues, unmanaged ADHD, stress, depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder. To overcome your gambling problems, you'll also need to address these

and any other underlying causes as well.

Although it may feel like you're powerless to stop gambling, there are plenty of things you can do to overcome the problem, repair your relationships and finances, and finally regain control of your life.

The first step is to separate the myths from the facts about gambling problems:

<b>Myths and Facts about Gambling Problems</b>
<p>Myth: You have to gamble every day to be a problem gambler.</p> <p>Fact: A problem gambler may gamble frequently or infrequently. Gambling is a problem if it causes problems.</p>
<p>Myth: Problem gambling is not really a problem if the gambler can afford it.</p> <p>Fact: Problems caused by excessive gambling are not just financial. Too much time spent on gambling can also lead to relationship and legal problems, job loss, mental health problems including depression and anxiety, and even suicide.</p>
<p>Myth: Having a gambling problem is just a case of being weak-willed, irresponsible, or unintelligent.</p> <p>Fact: Gambling problems affect people of all levels of intelligence and all backgrounds. Previously responsible and strong-willed people are just as likely to develop a gambling problem as anyone else.</p>
<p>Myth: Partners of problem gamblers often drive their loved ones to gamble.</p> <p>Fact: Problem gamblers often try to rationalize their behaviour. Blaming others is one way to avoid taking responsibility for their actions, including what is needed to overcome the problem.</p>
<p>Myth: If a problem gambler builds up a debt, you should help them take care of it.</p> <p>Fact: Quick fix solutions may appear to be the right thing to do. However, bailing the gambler out of debt may actually make matters worse by enabling their gambling problems to continue.</p>

## **Gambling addiction signs and symptoms**

Gambling addiction is sometimes referred to as a "hidden illness" because there are no obvious physical signs or symptoms like there are in drug or alcohol addiction. Problem gamblers also typically deny or minimize the problem—even to themselves. However, you may have a gambling problem if you:

Feel the need to be secretive about your gambling. You might gamble in secret or lie about how much you gamble, feeling others won't understand or that you will surprise them with a big win.

Have trouble controlling your gambling. Once you start gambling, can you walk away? Or are you compelled to gamble until you've spent your last dollar, upping your bets in a bid to win lost money back?

Gamble even when you don't have the money. You may gamble until you've spent your last dollar, and then move on to money you don't have—money to pay bills, credit cards, or things for your children. You may feel pushed to borrow, sell, or even steal things for gambling money.

Have family and friends worried about you. Denial keeps problem gambling going. If friends and family are worried, listen to them carefully. It's not a sign of weakness to ask for help. Many older gamblers are reluctant to reach out to their adult children if they've gambled away their inheritance, but it's never too late to make changes for the better.



## Self-help for gambling problems

The biggest step to overcoming a gambling addiction is realizing that you have a problem. It takes tremendous strength and courage to own up to this, especially if you have lost a lot of money and strained or broken relationships along the way. Don't despair, and don't try to go it alone. Many others have been in your shoes and have been able to break the habit and rebuild their lives. You can, too.

Learn to relieve unpleasant feelings in healthier ways. Do you gamble when you're lonely or bored? Or after a stressful day at work or following an argument with your spouse? Gambling may be a way to self-soothe unpleasant emotions, unwind, or socialize. But there are healthier and more effective ways of managing your moods and relieving boredom, such as exercising, spending time with friends who don't gamble, taking up new hobbies, or practicing relaxation techniques<sup>9</sup>.

Strengthen your support network. It's tough to battle any addiction without support, so reach out to friends and family. If your support network is limited, there are ways to make new friends<sup>10</sup> without relying on visiting casinos or gambling online. Try reaching out to colleagues at work, joining a sports team or book club, enrolling in an education class, or volunteering for a good cause.

Join a peer support group. Gamblers Anonymous, for example, is a 12-step recovery program patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. A key part of the program is finding a sponsor, a former gambler who has experience remaining free from addiction and can provide you invaluable guidance and support.

9 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/relaxation-techniques-for-stress-relief.htm>

10 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/dealing-with-loneliness-and-shyness.htm>

We recommend reading about Support Groups: Types, Benefits, and What to Expect<sup>11</sup>. Seek help for underlying mood disorders. Depression<sup>12</sup>, stress<sup>13</sup>, substance abuse<sup>14</sup>, or anxiety<sup>15</sup> can both trigger gambling problems and be made worse by compulsive gambling. Even when gambling is no longer a part of your life, these problems will still remain, so it's important to address them.

## How to stop gambling for good

For many problem gamblers, it's not quitting gambling that's the biggest challenge, but rather staying in recovery—making a permanent commitment to stay away from gambling. The Internet has made gambling far more accessible and, therefore, harder for recovering addicts to avoid relapse. Online casinos and bookmakers are open all day, every day for anyone with a smartphone or access to a computer. But maintaining recovery from gambling addiction or problem gambling is still possible if you surround yourself with people to whom you're accountable, avoid tempting environments and websites, give up control of your finances (at least at first), and find healthier activities to replace gambling in your life.

## Making healthier choices

One way to stop gambling is to remove the elements necessary for gambling to occur in your life and replace them with healthier choices. The four elements needed for gambling to continue are:

**A decision:** For gambling to happen, you need to make the decision to gamble. If you have an urge: **stop** what you are doing and call someone, **think** about the consequences to your actions, **tell** yourself to stop thinking about gambling, and **find** something else to do immediately.

**Money:** Gambling cannot occur without money. Get rid of your credit cards, let someone else be in charge of your money, have the bank make automatic payments for you, close online betting accounts, and keep only a limited amount of cash on you.

**Time:** Even online gambling cannot occur if you don't have the time. Schedule enjoyable recreational time for yourself that has nothing to do with gambling. If you're gambling on your smartphone, find other ways to fill the quiet moments during your day.

**A game:** Without a game or activity to bet on there is no opportunity to gamble. Don't put yourself in tempting environments. Tell gambling establishments you frequent that you have a gambling problem and ask them to restrict you from entering. Remove gambling apps and block gambling sites on your smartphone and computer.

## Finding alternatives to gambling

Maintaining recovery from gambling addiction depends a lot on finding alternative behaviours you can substitute for gambling. Some examples include:

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11 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/therapy-medication/support-groups.htm>

12 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/depression-symptoms-and-warning-signs.htm>

13 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-symptoms-signs-and-causes.htm>

14 <https://www.helpguide.org/home-pages/addictions.htm>

15 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/anxiety/anxiety-disorders-and-anxiety-attacks.htm>

Reason for gambling	Sample substitute behaviours
To provide excitement, get a rush of adrenaline	Sport or a challenging hobby, such as mountain biking, rock climbing, or Go Kart racing
To be more social, overcome shyness or isolation	Counselling, enrol in a public speaking class, join a social group, connect with family and friends, volunteer <sup>16</sup> , find new friends
To numb unpleasant feelings, not think about problems	Try therapy or use HelpGuide's free Emotional Intelligence toolkit <sup>17</sup>
Boredom or loneliness	Find something you're passionate about such as art, music, sports, or books and then find others with the same interests <sup>18</sup>
To relax after a stressful day	As little as 15 minutes of daily exercise can relieve stress <sup>19</sup> . Or deep breathing, meditation, or massage
To solve money problems	The odds are always stacked against you so it's far better to seek help with debts <sup>20</sup> from a credit counsellor

## Dealing with gambling cravings

Feeling the urge to gamble is normal, but as you build healthier choices and a strong support network, resisting cravings will become easier. When a gambling craving strikes:

Avoid isolation. Call a trusted family member, meet a friend for coffee, or go to a Gamblers Anonymous meeting.

Postpone gambling. Tell yourself that you'll wait 5 minutes, fifteen minutes, or an hour. As you wait, the urge to gamble may pass or become weak enough to resist.

Visualize what will happen if you give in to the urge to gamble. Think about how you'll feel after all your money is gone and you've disappointed yourself and your family again.

Distract yourself with another activity, such as going to the gym, watching a movie, or practicing a relaxation exercise<sup>21</sup> for gambling cravings.

## Coping with lapses

If you aren't able to resist the gambling craving, don't be too hard on yourself or use it as an excuse to give up. Overcoming a gambling addiction is a tough process. You may slip from time to time; the important thing is to learn from your mistakes and continue working towards recovery.

16 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/volunteering-and-its-surprising-benefits.htm>

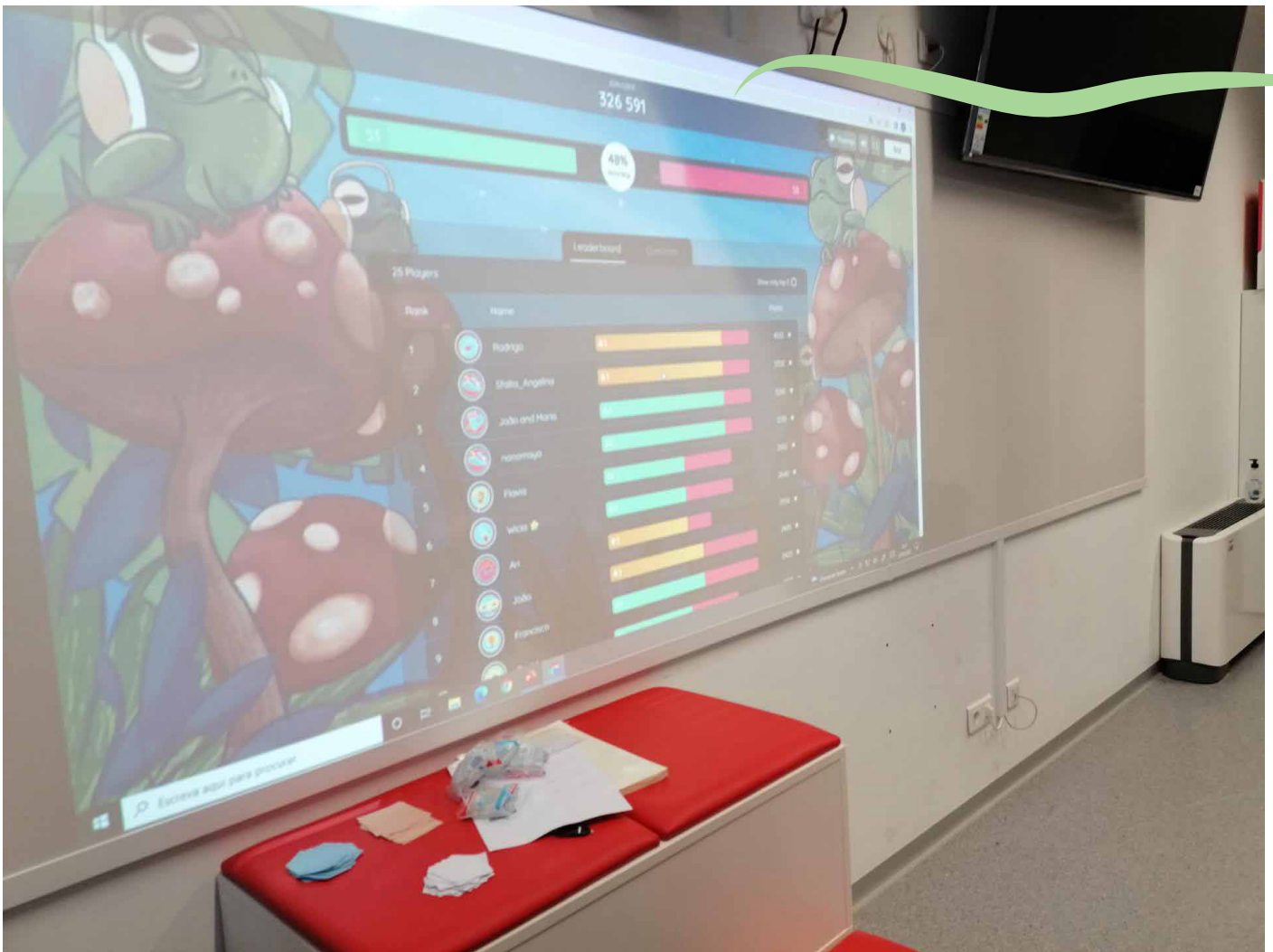
17 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/emotional-intelligence-toolkit.htm>

18 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/making-good-friends.htm>

19 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/the-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise.htm>

20 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/coping-with-financial-stress.htm>

21 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/relaxation-techniques-for-stress-relief.htm>



## Gambling addiction treatment

Overcoming a gambling problem is never easy and seeking professional treatment doesn't mean that you're weak in some way or can't handle your problems. But it's important to remember that every gambler is unique, so you need a recovery program tailored specifically to your needs and situation. Talk to your doctor or mental health professional about different treatment options, including:

Inpatient or residential treatment and rehab programs. These are aimed at those with severe gambling addiction who are unable to avoid gambling without round-the-clock support.

Treatment for underlying conditions contributing to your compulsive gambling, including substance abuse or mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, OCD, or ADHD. This could include therapy, medication, and lifestyle changes. Problem gambling can sometimes be a symptom of bipolar disorder<sup>22</sup>, so your doctor or therapist may need to rule this out before making a diagnosis.

Cognitive-behavioural therapy. CBT for gambling addiction focuses on changing unhealthy gambling behaviours and thoughts, such as rationalizations and false beliefs. It can also teach you how to fight gambling urges and solve financial, work, and relationship problems caused by problem gambling. Therapy<sup>23</sup> can provide you with the tools for coping with your addiction that will last a lifetime.

Family therapy and marriage, career, and credit counselling. These can help you work through the specific issues that have been created by your problem gambling and lay the foundation for repairing your relationships and finances<sup>24</sup>.

22 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/bipolar-disorder/bipolar-disorder-signs-and-symptoms.htm>

23 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/finding-a-therapist-who-can-help-you-heal.htm>

24 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/coping-with-financial-stress.htm>

## How to help someone stop gambling

If your loved one has a gambling problem, you likely have many conflicting emotions. You may have spent a lot of time and energy trying to keep your loved one from gambling or having to cover for them. At the same time, you might be furious at your loved one for gambling again and tired of trying to keep up the charade. Your loved one may have borrowed or even stolen money with no way to pay it back. They may have sold family possessions or run up huge debts on joint credit cards.

While compulsive and problem gamblers need the support of their family and friends to help them in their struggle to stop gambling, the decision to quit has to be theirs. As much as you may want to, and as hard as it is seeing the effects, you cannot make someone stop gambling. However, you can encourage them to seek help, support them in their efforts, protect yourself, and take any talk of suicide seriously.

## Preventing suicide in problem gamblers

When faced with the consequences of their actions, problem gamblers can suffer a crushing drop in self-esteem. This is one reason why there is a high rate of suicide among compulsive gamblers. If you suspect your loved one is feeling suicidal, visit Befrienders Worldwide<sup>25</sup> to find a suicide helpline in your country.

Four tips for family members:

1. Start by helping yourself. You have a right to protect yourself emotionally and financially. Don't blame yourself for the gambler's problems or let his or her addiction dominate your life. Ignoring your own needs can be a recipe for burnout<sup>26</sup>.
2. Don't go it alone. It can feel so overwhelming coping with a loved one's gambling addiction that it may seem easier to rationalize their requests "this one last time." Or you might feel ashamed, feeling like you are the only one who has problems like this. Reaching out for support will make you realize that many families have struggled with this problem.
3. Set boundaries in managing money. To ensure the gambler stays accountable and to prevent relapse, consider taking over the family finances. However, this does not mean you are responsible for micromanaging the problem gambler's impulses to gamble. Your first responsibilities are to ensure that your own finances and credit are not at risk.
4. Consider how you will handle requests for money. Problem gamblers often become very good at asking for money, either directly or indirectly. They may use pleading, manipulation, or even threats to get it. It takes practice to ensure you are not enabling your loved one's gambling addiction.

## Do's and Don'ts for Partners of Problem Gamblers

Do...

- Talk to your partner about their problem gambling and its consequences when you're calm and not stressed or angry.
- Look for support. Self-help groups for families of problem gamblers, such as Gam-Anon, for example, can introduce you to people who've faced the same obstacles.
- Explain to your partner that you're seeking help because of how their gambling affects you and the family.
- Talk to your children about your partner's problem gambling.
- Take over management of your family finances, carefully monitoring bank and credit card statements.

25 <http://www.befrienders.org/>

26 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/caregiver-stress-and-burnout.htm>

- Encourage and support your loved one during treatment of their gambling problem, even though it may be a long process peppered with setbacks.

### Don't...

- Lose your temper, preach, lecture, or issue threats and ultimatums that you're unable to follow through on.
- Overlook your partner's positive qualities.
- Prevent your partner from participating in family life and activities.
- Expect your partner's recovery from problem gambling to be smooth or easy. Even when their gambling stops, other underlying problems may surface.
- Bail your partner out of debt or enable their gambling in any way.
- Cover-up or deny your partner's problem to yourself or others.



## 14. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM THE HARMFUL IMPACTS OF PORNOGRAPHY

**Aim:** To make students understand that pornographic content can harm children.

**Implementation:** Explain students that exposure to pornography at a young age may lead to poor mental health, sexism and objectification, sexual violence, and other negative outcomes. Among other risks, when children view pornography that portrays abusive and misogynistic acts, they may come to view such behaviour as normal and acceptable.

Talk to your class about this and present that UNICEF<sup>27</sup> is alarmed by the massive quantity of pornography available online, including increasingly graphic and extreme content that is easily accessible to children of all ages. Efforts to regulate content and restrict children's access to pornography have not kept pace with technological shifts that have profoundly altered the landscape for the consumption of pornography. While many jurisdictions have effectively restricted children's access to pornography in non-digital media, including by making it illegal to distribute pornography to children or knowingly expose them to it, efforts to do the same in digital environments have not been effective.

UNICEF supports the efforts of governments to ensure that children are protected from harmful

27 <https://www.unicef.org/harmful-content-online>

content in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the authoritative guidance from the Committee on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF also recognizes the tremendous opportunities that the digital environment provides for children's learning, play, creativity, participation, and socialization. Children should be able to access and safely engage in the digital environment without being harmed by exposure to pornography. It is also important that the protection of children from harmful content does not unjustifiably impinge on other rights children have under the Convention.

UNICEF calls for comprehensive approaches to promote children's safety online. Governments should introduce and ensure that digital service providers comply with relevant guidelines, standards and codes and enforce lawful, necessary, and proportionate content moderation rules and controls. While regulatory and technological initiatives are essential, they are not sufficient on their own. There is also a need to educate and empower children to navigate the digital environment with critical reasoning skills, media literacy, and information on healthy relationships. Parents, carers, teachers, communities, and others who work with children should be trained and supported to assist them in this endeavour. The perspectives of children should be given due weight in matters that affect them, including in the design and implementation of initiatives aimed at fostering online safety.

UNICEF works in all regions of the world to support children's online safety. Work with governments to strengthen legislative and policy frameworks, criminal justice response and victim support is central to this goal. It also includes support to education programmes for children through school-based initiatives, peer-to-peer networks, dedicated online platforms, and mass media campaigns and for parents, carers, teachers, and other professionals who work with children, so they are better prepared to keep children safe from harm.



## 15. WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO BE DECEIVED?

**Aim:** Promotion of reflection on the feelings triggered in people who are deceived.

**Implementation:** Start with a brief talk about people who are cheated on the net: adults through phishing, young people with virtual friends, sending fake photographs. It can even be asked if someone has known a case or has already been deceived (however small that deception may have been).

Continue with group work: imagining a situation where a person is cheated; they must then identify

feelings and consequences for the people involved in these situations.

The systematization of learning takes place through the sharing of work carried out in the previous phase.

The teacher must be able to promote a dialogue and develop the identified scenarios.

## 16. PLAYING ON THE NET: FUN WITHOUT DANGER?

**Aim:** Promotion of reflection on games that enable contacts via the internet. Work on the theme of gender identity is also provided.

**Implementation:** The teacher introduces the issue of games in a virtual environment. You should explore what kind of games the group is familiar with, which ones are preferred, and which ones are not. It also tries to explore concrete experiences. If you provide, you can also explore the preferences of boys and girls. In this way, the next phase of the activity is introduced.

Then divide the class into two groups (or more if this option is not functional), regardless of gender: one half will invent a girl/girl addicted to games, imagine her lifestyle, as well as her favourite games. The other half will embrace the same task, this time for a male character.

Large group sharing follows. The teacher must explore what kind of games, what motivations, are different for boys and girls. You should also explore what dangers can be detected in each of the games, as well as what to do in these situations. If it is structuring, you can opt for further work in small groups on this topic.

## 17. TALK ABOUT WHAT?

**Aim:** Reflect on 'over-communication': people in internet chat almost without any reason for the interaction.

**Implementation:** It is important that this activity is not explained too much in the start. The teacher can adopt an evasive attitude, explaining that later on they will understand why the activity of today. He distributes small objects like this to half of the class: an eraser, a sharpener, a pencil... He asks everyone to stand up and walk around the room. When the teacher says "now" those who don't have object look for those who have, so pairs are formed. That's when each pair is asked to practice a five-minute conversation about the object that fell to them.

Then, some volunteer pairs replicate the conversation in front of the class. The procedure is repeated until questions start to arise about "what is this for?" At that moment, the teacher interrupts the activity and relaunches the question... After several attempts to answer, the teacher says, "it really doesn't make much sense to talk about erasers and sharpeners... to invent a conversation... but that doesn't happen either in internet or even with the exchange of messages via mobile phone?"

Group work follows that seeks to identify situations in that you talk without a real subject. Then, the usual sharing takes place. In this sharing, the teacher must ask if these practices are really worth it or if it would be better to stop doing them. The positions of each participant are listened to and problematized.



## 18. HOW TO DEAL WITH...

**Aim:** Increase the group's skills in dealing with problematic cases related to the Internet. The skills should not only be individual, but also consider the potentials of the school and the family.

**Implementation:** The teacher conducts a brief dialogue about cases in which young people know people who cheat them or give personal data in contexts they don't know well.

Each group formed at the beginning of this stage will build a problem case related to the internet. We suggest the following areas of work: virtual infatuation, attempted prostitution, virtual sex, semi-virtual infatuation (the person looks spectacular on the net but is completely different in reality).

Once the construction of the cases is finished, they are provided to the other groups. Each of them will have to try to come up with answers and attempted solutions for each of the situations identified.

Systematization of learning ends the activity. Solutions must be explored not only in relation to each concrete case but also include preventive measures related to the environment itself

## 19. THE PREDATOR

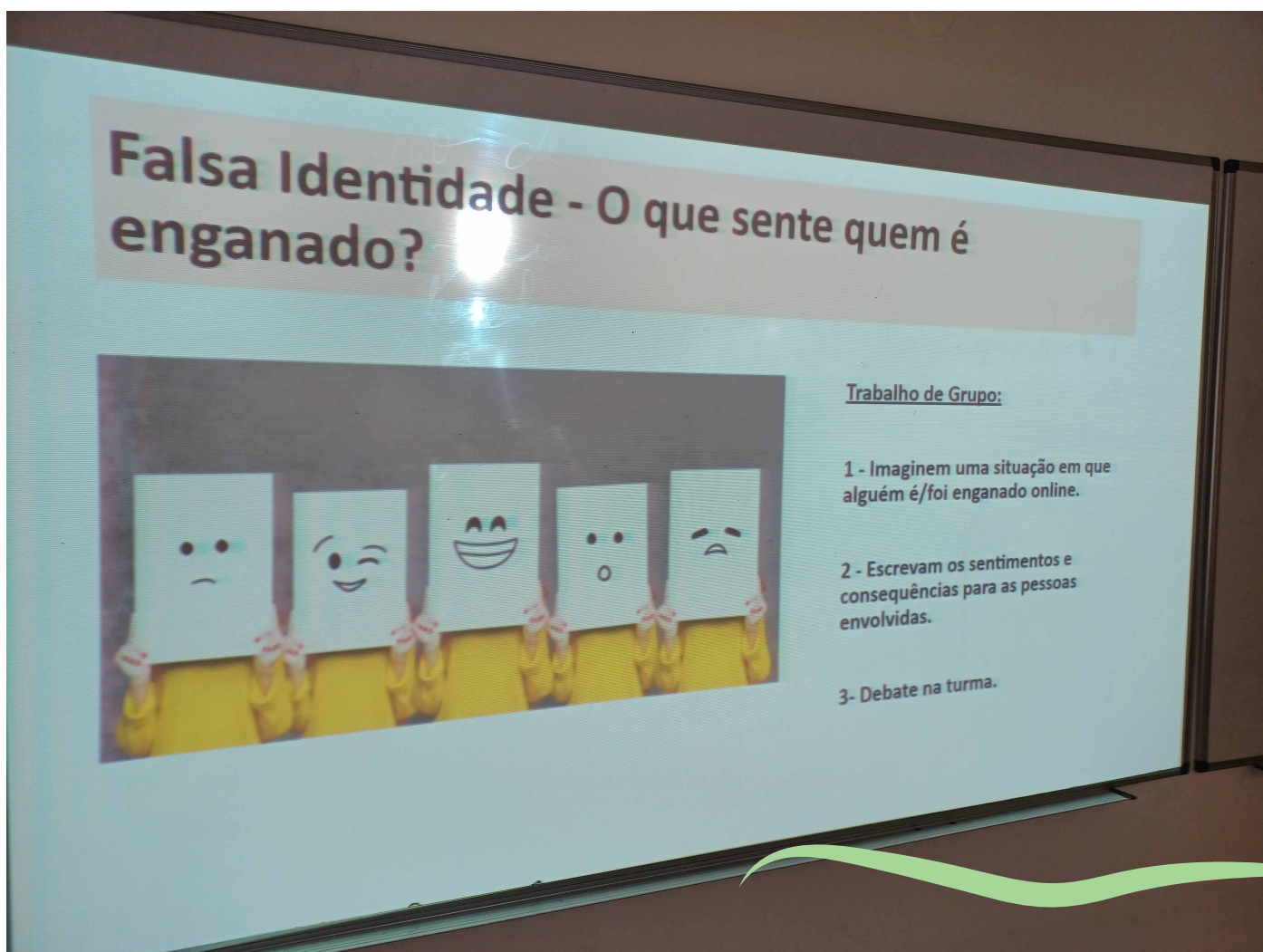
**Aim:** Identify potential profiles, as well as strategies, of the so-called virtual “predator”.

**Implementation:** The teacher promotes an initial conversation about the existence of certain internet users who intend to cheat others, here called “predators”. We highlight some situations: phishing (trying to get someone else’s bank details), paedophilia, rape, hooking up, theft, fictitious sales, among others.

Students are then asked to put themselves in the shoes of a predator and identify one way or strategy to try to gain someone’s trust on the internet (in a social network, in a chat, through email...). Each of them should write one of these strategies in large letters on a sheet of paper.

Then, a volunteer is asked to be the predator and will select the most effective strategies. The bearers of these strategies should stand up. The predator arranges them in descending order of effectiveness. When finished, another predator can stand up and say if he agrees. If it does not agree, it makes the changes it considers pertinent. The procedure can be repeated as many times as deemed necessary.

Systematization of learning ends the activity



**Falsa Identidade - O que sente quem é enganado?**

Trabalho de Grupo:

- 1 - Imaginem uma situação em que alguém é/foi enganado online.
- 2 - Escrevam os sentimentos e consequências para as pessoas envolvidas.
- 3- Debate na turma.

## 20. WHERE IS THE DANGER?

**Aim:** Reflection on the danger levels associated with each of the online activities.

**Implementation:** the teacher gives an initial talk about the dangers related to internet activity, naming some of them and talking about the various internet media.

Various spaces are organized in the room, each of them identified with posters with the following words: “very dangerous”, “dangerous”, “little dangerous”, “no danger at all”. The teacher lists the following situations, and the adolescents have to go to the part of the room which, in their opinion, is most related to the degree of danger they feel exists in that practice: talking to strangers, giving mail, chatting, posting pictures on the net, chatting via webcam with strangers and other situations. You can, in the same way, ask a student to come and play the role of the teacher, listing other situations. Conversation with systematization of the contributions follow. The teacher should resume the examples identified throughout the activity, trying to get the group to express themselves as completely as possible.

## 21. DISTORTED MESSAGES

**Aim:** to make students aware of how information gets distorted as it is relayed, to improve active listening

**Implementation:** For starters, you will need pen, paper, book of choice

Five students are asked to leave the room. The rest of the group invent a short story with lots of details or choose an excerpt from a book. One of the five students is called into the room, and somebody reads the text aloud for him. He then passes the information he has retained to the next student who comes in, and so on, until the last of the 5 students has heard the story. He/she then retells the story to the class.

To conclude, students are asked to reflect on how and why the story has changed.



# Set Boundaries!

This second subchapter of the tools, presents activities for teachers to do for students, focusing on:

- In class use of phone
- Time management
- Monitoring online activities
- Free time at home and at school (no technology)
- Building trust

These are also for groups of students or classes ranging from 8 to 24 students and the majority of them can be done both indoors and outdoors.



## 22. STORYTIME!

**Aim:** This game is ideal for promoting communication, as well as a creative collaboration.

**Implementation:** Gather your students in a circle and give each student a picture of an animal, object, place, ... You could also give each student a certain emoji, such as a snail, a church, skis, a dancer, a baby, and so on.

Now, start a story by creating an introduction of your own. The next student goes further on the previous storyline and adds an extra narrative with the picture they're holding. This process continues until you reach the last student. Together, you created a very complex and creative story. Every student took part in the story.

## 23. TWENTY ANSWERS

**Aim:** This exercise encourages students to reflect on themselves and how they would describe themselves. It introduces different categories of information that one might use.

### **Implementation:**

1. Ask students to take an empty sheet of paper and write the question 'Who am I?' on the top of it. Below they should write all the numbers starting from 1 up to 20.
2. Allow some time for students to find 20 answers to the question 'Who am I?' They should not worry about logic or importance of the numbering. Also tell students that they will not be asked to share their list with anyone if they do not want to.
3. Once all students are finished with their list, ask them to indicate with symbols or colours four different categories of answers:
  - a. Physical description, (I'm tall, I have blue eyes, etc.)
  - b. social roles, (I'm a student, a husband, a member of a football team, etc.)
  - c. Personal Traits, (I'm impulsive, I'm patient, I'm loud, etc.)
  - d. Abstract, existential statements, (I'm a child of the universe, I'm human, I'm alive, etc.).

During the debriefing it is important to go through the three different stages of reflection, generalisation, and application.

### **Reflection**

Was it difficult to find 20 answers? Why?

What did you first think of?

How many of your answers referred to long-term and how many to short-term traits about yourself?

Did you use one category of answers more than others? Why?

Would your best friend come up with the same 20 answers about you? Why?

Would your parents? Why?

Are you surprised about the categorisations you use the most to describe yourself? Would you rather focus on other layers of yourself?

### **Generalisation**

When meeting new people, what do we show them first?

Is it important to have a very differentiated picture of yourself? Why?

What can we learn from this?

### **Application**

In what way is this relevant to your life?

How far can a differentiated picture of yourself be an aid to you, how far can it be an obstacle?

### **Adaptations**

If it is possible, repeat this activity after a year or so and see if the categories that the students used have changed.

## 24. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HOUR

**Aim:** Regular physical activity and exercise can help boost a person's self-esteem. Hence, an active lifestyle will not only make your teen healthy but also confident.

**Implementation:** Encourage the teen to choose any sport that involves considerable physical activity (walk, yoga, football, ballet, etc.). Tell them to spend at least an hour a day on that physical activity. It would be great if you can play with them.

Playing any sport will make the teen realize that winning and losing are a part of life and not a great deal. It will also instil a sense of sportsmanship in them.

Teenagers go through a lot of stress and struggle with low self-esteem. Hence, it is important to help them develop self-esteem and boost their confidence to face the world.

This activity can be suggested by a teacher to parents also.



## 25. STEP BY STEP

**Aim:** Find ways to communicate their personal boundaries to others

**Implementation:** Brief conversation about personal limits and the difficulty in communicating them to others, starting with questions about personal experiences and introducing the activity.

Example:

Has anyone here ever dealt with a 'very close' person? Do you know this kind of people? They get too close, pat the back, abuse the touch, etc. They talk about their personal lives and ask questions about yours. Anyone who knows someone like that, raise your hand!

Now, who has ever dealt with a 'quite cold' person? The kind of person who doesn't smile a lot, talks about the rules and how things should be done your way. Who knows?

This can lead to unassertive behaviour on our part. For example, instead of just saying, 'Look, I'd rather you not get too close', or 'we say something aggressive like, 'Hey, look!' or passively we don't

do anything and let's tell the other person how unpleasant the 'too close' person is. Is this the most, correct?

In this game we're going to find out how you can tell the difference between behaviours you feel personally uncomfortable with and behaviours you really can't stand. The game will also show you ways to communicate your feelings to another person effectively.

Formation of groups of pairs, placing each element face to face, with a few meters of distance between them.

Ask the pairs to slowly move towards each other, one small step at a time, until one of the students starts to feel that they are close enough. This will be Person A for the rest of the game. Person A should say, "This is the closest position to me" and should stop moving. Person B must also stop.

When all pairs stop, Person B continue to advance very slowly, one small step at a time, until they have reached their own comfort limit, that is, the distance is comfortable for Person B, but very close to Person A.

Person B are asked to look their partners in the eye and empathically apologize.

Person A (those who set the first threshold) are asked to politely ask their partners to step back. Example: "Sorry, but would you mind if we stay a little further apart? It bothers me to have people so physically close to me."

Person B are asked to acknowledge the request with a smile and to remain exactly where they are. Faced with this reaction, person A does not give up dealing with the situation and insists on setting limits, expressing what he feels and warning the other about the consequences of not respecting their needs.

Students return to their seats and discuss the following issues in a large group:

- How difficult or easy was it to be Person A and set boundaries?
- How did it feel to be person B and ignore requests?
- What are the reasons that might explain why someone might ignore even an assertive request?
- What thoughts and emotions do we have when other people do not respect our requests in the face of our limits? How do these thoughts and feelings help us find or prevent us from finding an effective solution?
- After this activity, do you feel able to get closer to a friend who is facing problems related to the excessive use of social media, without going beyond the limits imposed by him?

## 26. SELF-PORTRAIT AND MUSICAL ENCOUNTER

**Aim:** Think about the personal information we decide to share with others.

**Implementation:** Each student must imagine that they are a painter and draw a picture that represents them, that speaks about themselves, their personality, what they like to do...

Music is played while students walk around the room, in any direction. When the music stops, each student gives an arm to the person closest to them.

The pairs formed in this way shake hands and introduce themselves. Then they exchange the drawings with each other.

Starting from the partner's drawing, each student tries to describe the personality and tastes of their author.

Each student will confirm or not the description that the partner made of themselves.

Students return to their seats and discuss the following issues in a large group:

Do the descriptions made correspond to what the author of the drawing wanted to show?

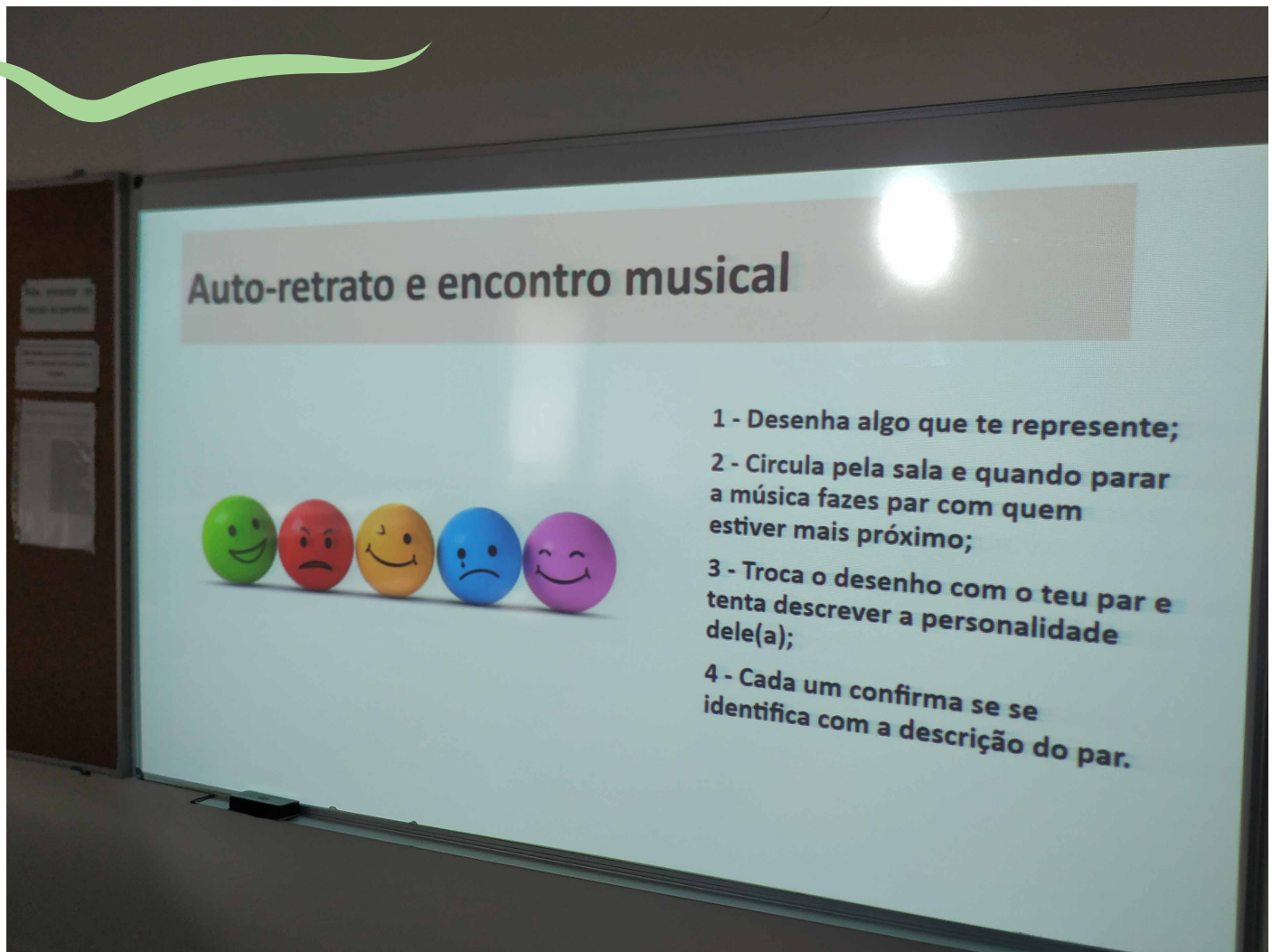
Did people choose to share relevant aspects of their personality?

Has the person making the description been able to obtain relevant information about the other?

How do we select the information we want to share? Do we really want to show who we are or who they want us to be?

To what extent do we want to make ourselves known and how?

Are we aware of how much or how little we share on social media?



## 27. THE KEYBOARDER'S PROFILE

**Aim:** What are the profiles of Internet users? Promote reflection on motivations and generic characteristics for each age group considered.

**Implementation:** Brief conversation about the profile of keyboarders (internet users) and that this profile will necessarily be different depending on the age group considered.

Then, form groups. Each group will draw a silhouette of a human figure on A3 paper. Each group is then assigned an age group. The silhouettes should be covered with words related to the typical motivations and characteristics of a user of the age in question.

Silhouette fair follows, where the groups should now circulate around the room and come into contact with the works constructed by the others. They are free to write further contributions on the other silhouettes. It would be interesting if each group had a colour marker, so that the contributions

of each group could be easily identified.

The silhouettes are placed in a place in the room that is visible to all members. Systematization should be done from this material.

## 28. THE WHITE OF THE BLACK AND THE BLACK OF THE WHITE

**Aim:** Identify positive and negative aspects of meeting people over the Internet.

**Implementation:** Each group member writes on a sheet of paper positive and negative aspects of meeting people on the internet. If the group does not have much knowledge about this kind of interaction, it will be necessary to have a conversation before starting the activity: there are people who join social networks for professional purposes or just to exchange ideas... others who have other goals...

The teacher asks everyone to roam around the room. Whenever they find someone, they have to write something negative on that person's sheet. He can exaggerate the request: "now write something even more negative". Then make the same instruction for a positive aspect. Let people cross paths several times.

Sharing of content follows. There are people with leaves with both positive and negative aspects. Summing up of learning and experiences.

Note: the activity can be done with a variant in which each student is a social network or other internet platform.



## 29. WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE CHEATED

**Aim:** Promoting reflection on the feelings triggered in people who are deceived.

**Implementation:** A short talk about people who get cheated on the net: adults by phishing, young people with virtual friends, sending fake pictures. You can even ask if anyone knows of any cases or has been deceived (however small the deception may have been).

Group work imagine a situation where a person is deceived; they should then identify feelings and consequences for the people involved in these situations.

The systematization of learning takes place through the sharing of the work done in the previous phase. The teacher should be able to promote a dialogue and develop the identified scenarios.

## Know, Love, Respect Yourself

This third subchapter of the tools, presents activities for teachers to do for students, focusing on:

- Distorted self- imagine
- Understand myself and the relation with the technology

Again, these are for groups of students or classes ranging from 8 to 24 students and the majority of them can be done both indoors and outdoors.

## 30. THE FLIP BOOK OF MISTAKES

**Aim:** This activity will help your student to learn lessons from their past mistakes and grow above them. It will help them to 'flip' their failures into success.

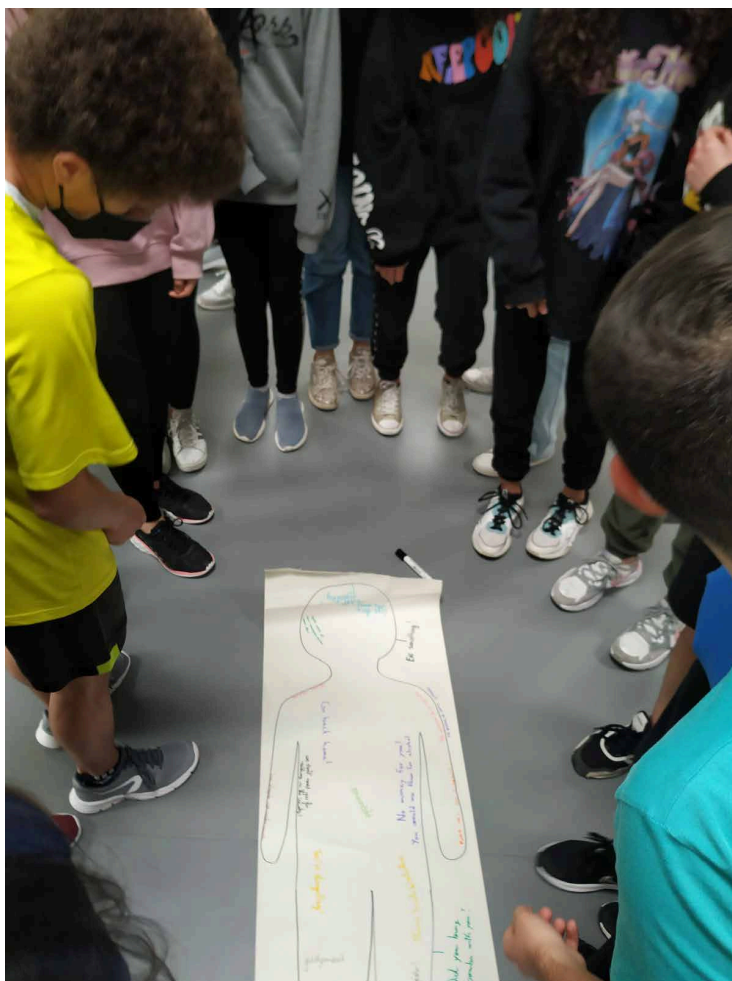
**Implementation:** Instruct your students to write down their failures or the mistakes from the past that have affected them the most. Tell them to note down what they think are the possible reasons for the failures. In the next section, encourage them to come up with solutions to avoid similar problems in the future.

This activity helps your students realize that failure is a part of life and failures can be utilized for greater successes. This helps them curb the negativity from any failure in their life.

## 31. THREE COMPLIMENTS JOURNAL

**Aim:** This activity helps teens gain confidence and like themselves without the need to seek approval of others. This boosts their confidence in themselves.

**Implementation:** Give your teenager a journal. Ask them to wake up each morning and write three



things that they like about themselves. KidsHealth.org recommends this activity as it helps your teen love themselves. This also helps teens gain confidence and like themselves without the need to seek approval of others. This boosts their confidence in themselves. Give your teen a large poster board. Ask them to find pictures from magazines, the internet, or any other place that they think represents them. It can be any picture representing hopes, talents, and aspirations. Hang this poster in a prominent place so that it reminds them of their worth.

This will also remind them of their abilities, hopes, dreams and aspirations. In addition, it will also tell them that they have an individual personality that they should be proud of.

## 32. IDENTITY MOLECULE

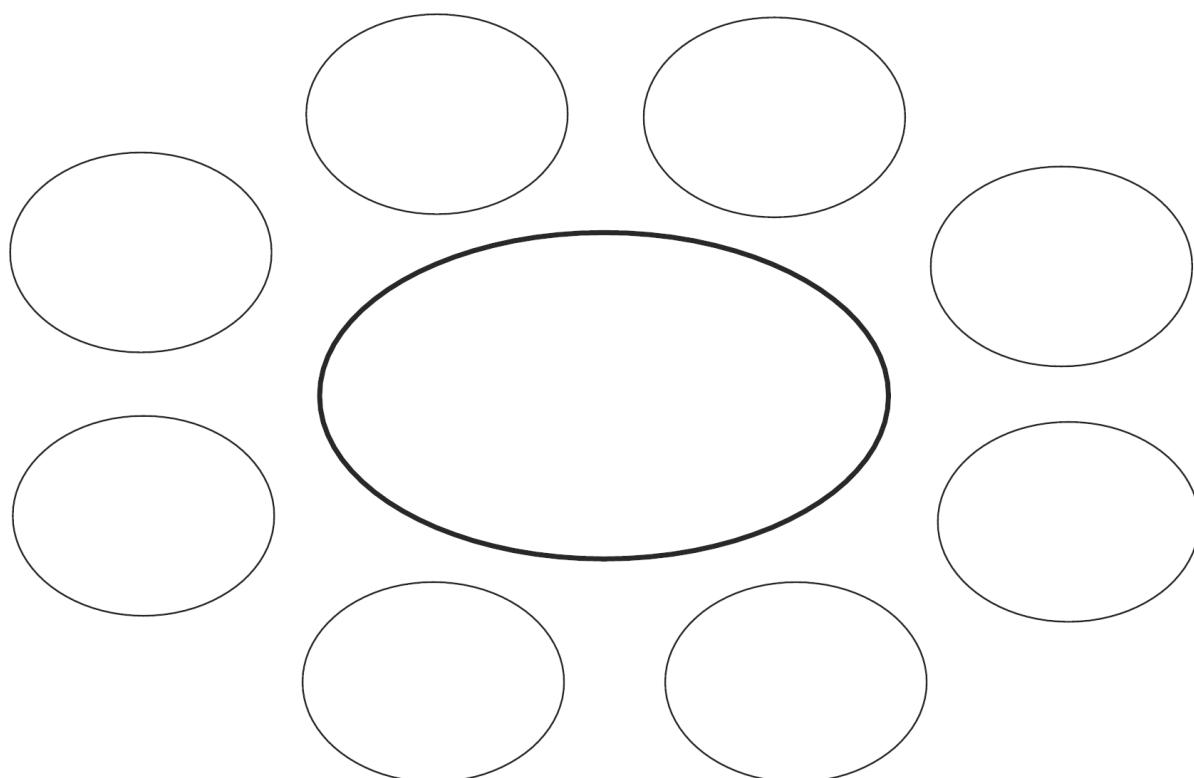
**Aim:** This exercise provides students with an opportunity to explore their own personal and cultural identities and to understand the role identity plays in how people perceive the world.

**Note:** It's recommended that students engage in a discussion about the different aspects that make up identity prior to this activity.

### **Implementation:**

1. Explain the rationale for this activity.
2. Distribute a copy of the Identity Molecule Worksheet to each person. Instruct students to write their names in the centre circle. Tell them that they will be writing five groups with which they identify in the five outside circles. Reassure people that you are looking for quick responses and that their choices might be different on another day.
3. Model your own response. In modelling, avoid the following: hobbies, personality traits, family relationships. These identifiers are frequently included in student responses, and it will be helpful in promoting an understanding of identity if teachers model the activity using a variety of cultural identifiers instead. A well-balanced story-telling style will draw the best results from the group.

### Identity Molecule



4. Allow a few minutes for students to complete their worksheets. Note: If asked, be flexible in allowing students to add or delete circles.

5. When students have completed this task, ask them to select one category that is a primary source of identification for them and to draw a circle around it. Note: Using the term primary instead of most important prevents situations in which students feel they are being asked to choose whether their children, partners or career are more important to them.

6. Explain to students that you will now conduct a stand-up activity. Note: A variation of this process appears at the end of the activity.

7. Tell students that you will read a list of categories, and that, after each category is read, they are invited to briefly stand if the category is represented in one of their five circles. Ask students to remain standing if the category is the one, they circled as a primary source of identification.

8. Before beginning the stand-ups, provide the following important caution to the group: The Stand-ups are an invitation to stand and openly declare your membership in particular groups. It is each person's choice whether or not to stand for a given category. Remember that there are some identifiers that may be central to who someone is, but that a person may not feel safe or comfortable disclosing in a large group setting. The purpose of this exercise is to build understanding of personal and group identity, and not to out people or make anyone feel uncomfortable.

9. Read the following categories, one at a time, allowing time for students to stand. Encourage people to look around the room while the stand-ups are taking place. Remember to tell those people who have remained standing to sit down before reading the next category on the list.

a. age

b. ethnic or national origin

c. gender

d. race e. religion

f. sexual orientation

g. profession

h. socioeconomic class

i. hobby/pastime/ activity you enjoy

j. family k. language

l. political belief m. friend

k. language

l. political belief

m. friend

n. neighbourhood or geography

o. volunteer activity

p. health, fitness, diet, etc.

q. college, school, or alumni affiliation

r. music or other arts

s. ask if anyone has another group not covered in this list that he or she would like to see called, and elicit all responses.

10. After the stand-ups, ask students to find someone they don't know (or do not know well) and discuss the positive and negative aspects of being connected to the identifier each has selected as primary. Tell students that each member of the pair will have about 3 minutes to talk. After 3 minutes, announce you should change roles, if you haven't already. 11. Reconvene the whole group and lead a

discussion, using some or all of the questions below.

## Discussion questions

- a. What is the role of identity in addressing prejudice?
- b. During the stand-ups, how did it feel to stand when you were part of a large group? c. How did it feel to stand when you were alone or almost alone?
- d. Did anyone notice any interesting patterns during the stand-ups? For example, were only women left standing in the gender category? Were People of Colour the only ones left standing for race?
- e. Were there any categories that no one stood for? Why do you think that happened?
- f. Can you think of situations when students might feel that they are standing alone?
- g. What might a person do to help someone in that situation feel like they are not alone?



## 33. I WOULD LIKE YOU TO...

**Aim:** know your own wishes and fears when dealing with

**Implementation:** The teacher asks the students to split into pairs by choosing a partner they have not yet related to. The two students stand facing each other. Both participate in the game at the same time.

The teacher says aloud: The person who starts the game says to the partner the following sentence: "I would like you to tell me that..." and completes the sentence to his liking. Afterwards, he says: I would not like you to tell me that ... and concludes the sentence to his liking. The partner listens in silence".

The teacher, when everyone has expressed themselves, proceeds with the inversion of roles: the

partner who answered starts to ask, and the one who asked starts to answer. The two sentences begin in the same way: "I would like you to tell me that..." and "I would not like you to tell me that..." The pairs then have ten minutes to exchange views on the experience.

At the end, the group forms a circle, and a discussion opens about the fears and expectations that arose during the exercise.

Suggestion: This game is useful in the first group encounter. By completing the sentences, each student expresses what they most fear: fear of not being accepted, fear of not being liked, fear of not being friendly...

Also, it is important to emphasize that no one is immunized against fear and that the desire to be accepted is a common experience for everyone.

## 34. AND YOU, WHICH ANIMAL ARE YOU?

**Aim:** understand the relationship between the way people see us and the way we see ourselves.

**Implementation:** You will firstly need pen and pencil.

This game is recommended for people who already know each other.

The teacher, on the sheets of paper - as many as there are students - writes the name of each one and distributes them to everyone, so that each one has another classmate's sheet.

The teacher asks the group to draw an animal that has the psychological and behavioural characteristics of the person whose name is on the sheet given to them. The design must be clear. If not, the author can indicate under the drawing the name of the animal he/she represented. The final product is anonymous.

Once the drawings are collected, the teacher circulates them, one by one, among the group members. On a large sheet are written all the observations relating to the design and characteristics of the animal-person.

After this phase, the teacher distributes a blank sheet to everyone and this time, invites each member to draw the animal that best represents the way they perceive themselves.

At the end, each student has two drawings of animals in front of him: his and his colleague's. The teacher reads aloud the attributes written on the large sheet, and suggested by the group, relating to the animal that each one has chosen.

At the end, the discussion opens, and everyone can assess whether the animal chosen by the colleague corresponds and is appropriate to the perception they have of themselves. Vice versa, the group assesses whether the animal chosen by each member to represent itself is corresponding and appropriate. In this way, the perceptions, their own and those of the group, intersect. The result should be an increase in self-knowledge modulated by their own perceptions and by the perceptions of the group

Suggestion: During the observation of the drawings, it is useful to ask everyone to contribute in the interpretation of the psychological characteristics attributed to the animal-person and to encourage, during the comparison of the two drawings, the analysis of possible differences in perception.



## 35. I AM SPECIAL BECAUSE...

**Aim:** Think about one's positive features and value our small but important deeds;

**Implementation:** A sheet of paper is provided to each student, and it contains the following table that everyone must complete:

Things I am good at:	Things I like in my physical appearance:
☺ ☺ ☺ ☺	☺ ☺ ☺ ☺
I have already helped others to:	Challenges I have overcome:
☺ ☺ ☺ ☺	☺ ☺ ☺ ☺
Situations in which I have made the others happy:	Compliments I have received:
☺ ☺ ☺ ☺	☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Students are asked to share some of their answers to understand how important and useful they are to others.

Note: This activity helps to increase self-esteem and self-worth.

## 36. I AM SOMEBODY

**Aim:** To realize personal values; to perceive oneself as unique and different from others.

**Implementation:** Sheets of paper and pencils will be required for this activity.

With the group seated in a circle, a sheet of paper is distributed to each person, asking them to list at least ten characteristics of their own. Allow time.

Ask them to turn over the sheet of paper, divide it in half, and rank the characteristics listed, putting on one side those that make their life easier and on the other those that make it harder. Allow time.

In subgroups, share your own conclusions.

In the large group, discuss: - Which side weighed the most? - What did each person discover about themselves by doing the activity?

Note: Self-awareness is the starting point for everyone to become aware of their own self and characteristics. With this work, it is possible to help students to perceive themselves, allowing them to reflect on and express their feelings about themselves. It should be used in smaller groups, about twenty students.



## 37. SELF-PORTRAIT

**Aim:** promote reciprocal knowledge.

**Implementation:** A5 sheets of paper and pencils are needed in this activity.

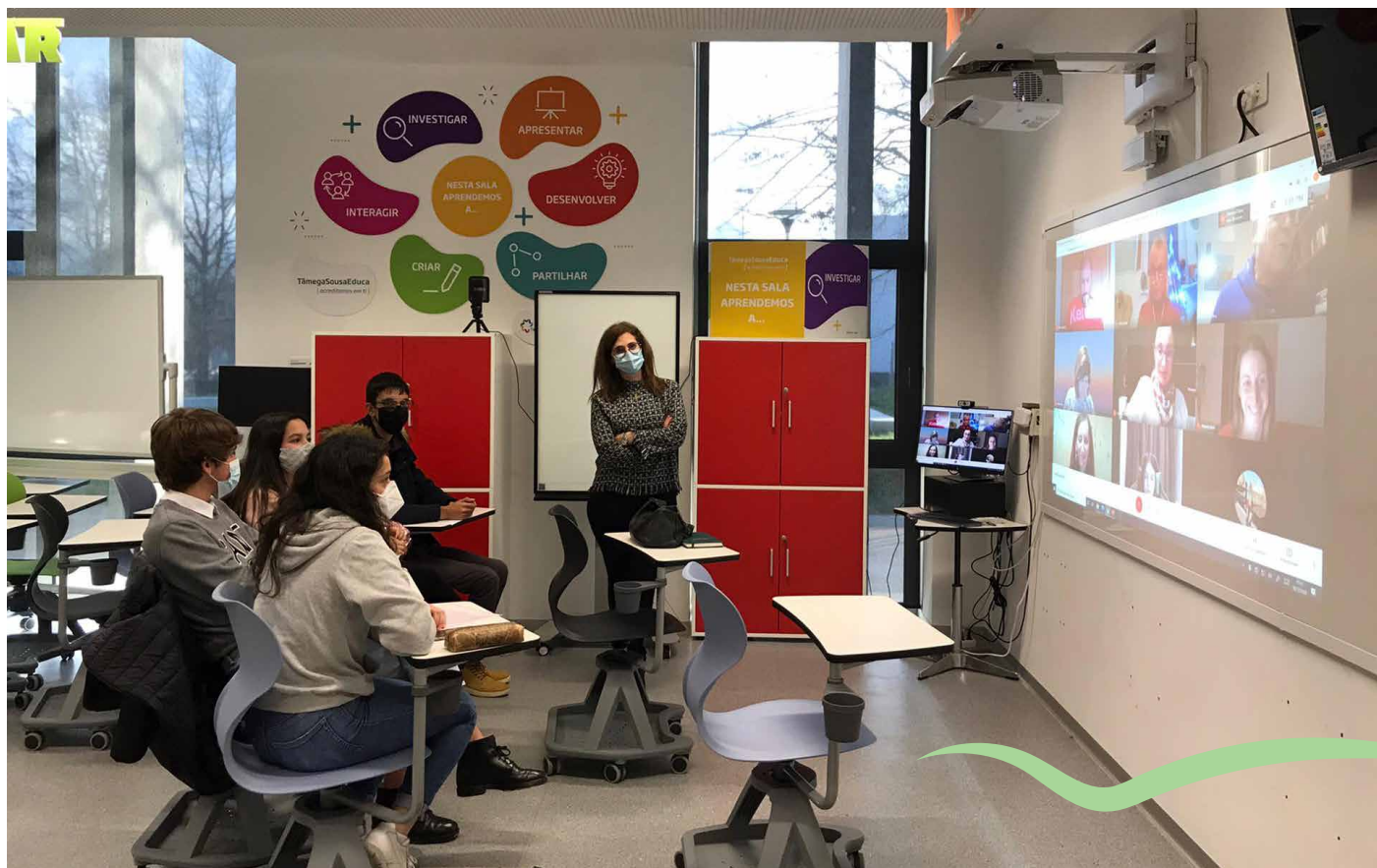
The teacher gives each student an A5 sheet of paper and a pencil. He invites them to draw a picture or write a sentence which is representative of themselves, or which describes their way of being or feeling. The written text can also be the title of a movie, a poem, a novel, the chorus of a song, or something else that expresses the perception that each person has of him/herself at that moment.

The students, maintaining the anonymity of their works, give them to the teacher, who then circulates them, one at a time, to all the members of the group. The students, after attentively observing the works, express their opinion and considerations about the character and personality of the author.

When all the entries have been commented on, the teacher invites the author to reveal his or her own work to the group and to explain why the drawing or phrase was made.

Free final discussion ends the activity.

Suggestion: it is important to avoid initial comments on the students' work in order not to constrain the group's interpretations. On the contrary, it is good to note who participated more or less, and to emphasize the interpretative contributions of the material produced. Also note the ability of each student to take in and elaborate on the comments made on their work.



## 38. HOW DO YOU SEE ME...AND ME, HOW DO I SEE MYSELF?

**Aim:** to promote observation and awareness of the positive and negative aspects of one's own personality and the personality of others.

**Implementation:** Sheets of paper and pencils are needed in this activity.

The teacher invites the students to sit in a circle and distributes to each member a sheet of paper and a pencil.

Each member has a number that represents him or her. A progressive sequence of numbers, as many as the number of people involved in the game, is placed on the sheet given to you.

The students, in the space on the sheet after the number representing each person, write a brief appreciation, or an adjective, or a characteristic concerning the member who has that number, not forgetting to write their own number as well.

The teacher collects the sheets of paper - which must be anonymous - and reads out loud everything written by the group about a particular member identified by the number given earlier. In this way, a set of personality traits is obtained for each of the group members, as they appear to the eyes of the others.

Suggestion: The teacher invites each of the students to comment, accept, disagree, or approve everything that has been said and underlined by the other members of the group.

## 39. THREE WISHES

**Aim:** to articulate needs and desires, to elicit empathy

**Implementation:** Pens, sheets of paper are needed in this activity.

Students are told that they are granted three wishes and are asked to write their wishes on a piece of paper. They can ask for something for themselves, a family member or anyone else for that matter. They take turns presenting and explaining their wishes.

To finish, do a discussion on the notions of selflessness and the importance of helping others end the activity.



## 40. GUARDIAN ANGEL

**Aim:** to raise awareness and treatment of emotional tension, sympathy and dislike, conscious exercise of active love and care

**Implementation:** pens, small pieces of paper, a cardboard box are needed in this activity.

Students' names written on a piece of paper are introduced in a box. Each student draws a name and becomes the guardian angel of the respective student for two weeks: they look out for them, help and support them in any way they can.

At the end of the two-week period experiences are discussed at group level.



## 41. PORTRAIT



**Aim:** to develop self-knowledge, to get positive feedback

**Implementation:** markers, crayons, sheets of paper, glue, scissors, coloured magazines, pictures are needed in this activity.

Students' silhouettes are traced on pieces of paper. Each student finalizes their own portrait by adding details, comments, pictures, etc. They then find a partner and interview each other while adding further details to each other's portraits. At the end they add three accessories (earrings, sunglasses, scarf, hat, etc) by mutual consent and display the portraits on the classroom wall.

For reflection, students assess their feelings related to sharing information about themselves and how the activity changed their perception of themselves and others.





## Know, Love, Respect Others

The last subchapter of the tools, presents activities for teachers to do for students, focusing on:

- Online/social relations: disruptive behaviour in class and at home
- Develop Compassion: bullying and cyberbullying

Again, these are for groups of students or classes ranging from 8 to 24 students and the majority of them can be done both indoors and outdoors.

## 44. COOPERATION, TOLERANCE, ARGUMENTATION

**Aim:** To develop argumentation skills, to increase tolerance, to cooperate, and to improve the ability to compromise

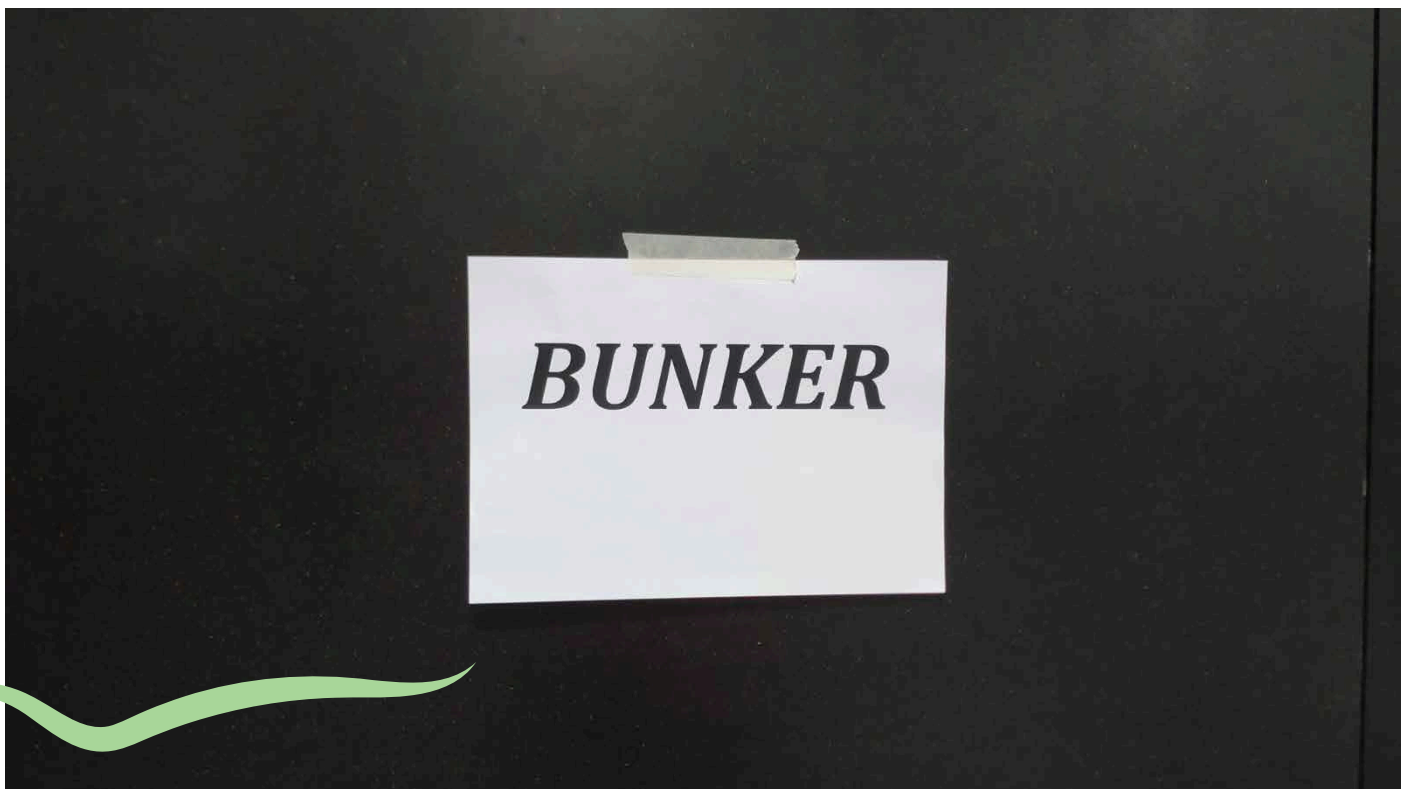
**Implementation:** The teacher hands out the story for each student. The teacher arranges the room for groups of 13 students and an outside circle for observers.

The teacher tells this story: “During an atomic attack, the Earth’s population is dying, leaving only 13 people alive in a bunker. However, they only have enough food for 8 people. select the 5 people that should be left out (the ones who are needed the least), provided that the remaining 8 people can later become a healthy society again.”

The roles are distributed among the players. Everyone takes on the role he or she has been given and the group has to decide together who to put out of the bunker. Of course, everyone tries to argue

why he or she should stay in the bunker. If there are more than 13 players, the others are observers. These are the role-cards received by the students:

1. A 16-year-old girl, expelled from high school, currently pregnant.
2. An officer dismissed for violent police behaviour. He has a gun. Handsome man.
3. A 75-year-old pastor.
4. A 36-year-old female doctor, with no child.
5. A 46-year-old male violinist. Alcoholic. 84
6. A 20-year-old conscript soldier, Syrian refugee, unskilled.
7. A 39-year-old female, former prostitute (abandoned this activity four years ago).
8. A homosexual architect.
9. A 26-year-old male law student.
10. The law student's 25 years old wife, who has spent the past 9 months in a mental department and is still heavily sedated. They do not want to divorce.
11. A 38-year-old teacher who has been physically disabled since birth because of a genetic defect and his future children have a high probability of inheriting the disability.



## 45. POSITIVE FOCUS GROUP

**Aim:** It lets each teenager in the group know that others appreciate the traits that they have.

**Implementation:** Positive focus group is a group activity for teens. The activity is simple. All you have to do is gather around a group of teenagers and break them into groups or pairs. Focusing on one teen at a time, give them a time limit and ask them to describe the things that they like the most in that person.

Do this for every teen in the group. This will boost their confidence and will let them know that they are appreciated and loved. This boosts their self-esteem and gives them the confidence they need to carry on with life.

## 46. CAMPAIGN: CYBERBULLYING: WHAT IS IT AND HOW TO STOP IT

**Aim:** This campaign is a perfect guide to understand Cyberbullying and make a self-reflection on their relationship with social medias.

**Implementation:** Before starting the activity, the teacher must check this extensive resource to understand it better: <https://www.unicef.org/end-violence/how-to-stop-cyberbullying>

After that watch this short video [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jFYPyC9n\\_0&t=2s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jFYPyC9n_0&t=2s) and then ask the youths to discuss it in small groups or have a debate about it as one big group.



## 47. SENSITIVITY

**Aim:** to improve the group's sensitivity, concentration, and socialization

**Implementation:** Make two circles with equal number of students, one inside and one outside. The insiders turn outwards, and the outsiders turn inwards. Everyone must hold hands, feel them, touch them well, study them.

Then everyone in the inner group should close their eyes and walk inside the outer circle.

At the signal, the teacher asks them to make a new circle facing outwards, within the respective circle. Still with their eyes closed, forbidden to open them, they go hand in hand to find out who gave them a hand before.

The outside group is the one who must move. If he finds his correct hand he should say This is the one! If it's true, the pair leaves and if it's a lie, they close their eyes again and try again.

## 48. TEDDY BEAR

**Aim:** to show that the other is important to our lives

**Implementation:** Firstly, a teddy bear is needed in this activity. Form a circle with everyone and pass the bear from hand to hand, whoever is with the bear must say what he wants to do with it. At the end of everyone talking, they must be asked to do the same thing they did with the bear with the person next to it.

## 49. BE THE FOG (REGULATE YOUR EMOTIONS)

**Aim:** Regulate your emotions. It can be very difficult for many of us to accept criticism, especially if receiving criticism provokes strong emotions. This simple exercise will help you “be the fog” and learn how to regulate and modulate your emotions in a difficult situation.

**Implementation:** Tell students to “Act like a fog! Imagine you are a fog. When someone throws a stone at you, you absorb that stone without throwing the stone back. This is a very easy and effective technique to use against people who keep criticizing you repeatedly.”

For example, if someone tells you something like:

- “You just don’t understand.”
- “You are lazy.”
- “You are always late.”
- “You don’t feel responsible.”

Respond with:

- “Yes, I just don’t understand.”
- “Yes, I am lazy sometimes.”
- “Yes, I was late.”
- “Yes, I just don’t take responsibility.”

When you accept the criticism that is thrown your way (without actually taking it to heart), you will find that you disarm the person criticizing you. To practice, ask someone you know well to criticize you at rapid speed, one after the other, and employ the fogging technique to counter it.



## 50. A TRIP ON THE NET

**Aim:** Explore positive and negative attitudes that the internet can have in terms of interpersonal and even affective relationships.

**Implementation:** The teacher asks for two volunteers. One of them will be the teenager who is happy with his experience on the net: he has met people; he thinks he is in control of the situation... The other will be the unhappy teenager who has fallen in love with a person he has met and with whom he has an unhappy relationship.

All the members of the group write possible care that each of these teenagers should have on post-it notes. When they have written them down, they stand up and stick them on the volunteers. Then the contributions are read, and the discussion is opened.

The teacher then explains that a year has passed and that a year is an eternity on the Internet. He asks the whole group to get up and walk around the room, including the “teenagers”. When they run into the teenagers, they should tell them something that may have happened to them. When one of the students makes the contribution, they sit down. In this way, all the students make their contribution.

The teacher, who has pointed out the contributions, promotes a final discussion centred around the positive and negative consequences that the internet might have. You can ask the volunteers, who embody the role of teenagers, whether the consequences imagined by their colleagues are plausible or not.

## 51. I WONDER WHAT THEY ARE THINKING AND FEELING?

**Aim:** Promote joint reflection on the thinking and feeling of young internet users.

**Implementation:** The teacher promotes a brief conversation about the fact that many young people know the dangers associated with using the Internet but think that “bad luck” only happens to others. Many of them develop a sense of security that can prove dangerous.

Through group work, we will try to characterize the self-confident teenager: how do they behave on the Internet? If the leader thinks it pertinent, each group can be assigned a certain number of virtual platforms (such as social networks, chats, games...)

Activity ends with scenario sharing and discussion. The teacher can also focus on the feeling of knowing the other person; sharing a lot but not knowing their face; he/she can also focus on time distortion (days on the internet can feel like years “out here”).



## 52. ALTERNATIVES TO “BULLYING”

**Aim:** To facilitate understanding of causes and consequences of bullying. To explore ways to facilitate control of the phenomenon.

**Implementation:** You will first need to print out the bullying scenes, one on each sheet (see handouts) Introduce the topic with a “brainstorm” about identifying acts of bullying. Divide the students into three groups and give each group one of the scenes about bullying (handout 1).

Each group will have 15 minutes to analyse the text and prepare their assigned scene representation. After the presentation of the 3 dramatizations, promote the debate.

Proposed topics for the first debate:

- What did you like best and what did you like least? Why?
- Are the scenes realistic? What did you rely on to depict them?
- In scene 1, what was done to improve the situation? What made it worse?
- In scene 2, how did you feel talking to a bully? Which techniques might have the most positive effect? And more negative?
- Regarding scene 3, how should you talk to a person who is being bullied? How can solutions be found that are acceptable to the victim?

Read aloud the 3 stories about bullying that are attached (handout 2) and have a further discussion.

Proposed topics for the second debate:

- How do the victims of bullying feel?
- Is the victim of bullying responsible for the violence he or she is being subjected to?
- Are the bullying bullies trying to prove something?
- Is bullying a question of power?
- What can a friend of a bullying victim do?
- What are the most frequent prejudices towards victims?
- Who can be responsible for controlling a bullying problem?
- How can each of us contribute to help solve this problem?

### Handout 1

**Scene 1:** A student goes to several people in authority in the school and tries to explain to them that one of his classmates is being bullied. The school principal assumes an authoritarian and traditionalist role by referring to the maladjusted behavioural patterns of today’s students. The class director does not want to take responsibility. The other teachers underestimate the problem, not recognizing it as bullying.

**Scene 2:** A group of male and female students try to talk to the classmate who is bullying a younger classmate.

**Scene 3:** Several students get together to talk about a friend who is being bullied by a group of older students. They want to help their friend and try to analyse the various possibilities.

## Handout 2

Stories about bullying to read and discuss

**Story 1:** I am 13 years old, and I hate going to school because nobody likes me. There's a group of kids who call me names all the time: they say I'm ugly and fat and that my parents must not like me. My best friend now avoids me and has joined another group. I hate her. I feel alone and scared and I'm afraid that what they say about my parents is true.

**Story 2:** This year I started going to a different school because I had to change cities. Some girls laugh when I walk by. I think they are jealous because the boys at school look at me a lot. Besides stealing my school supplies and insulting me, they make anonymous phone calls to my house. I can't take this situation anymore. I am scared and angry. I've tried to complain to the principal, but she thinks I'm the one who has to try to fit in. I don't know what to do.

**Story 3:** My best friend told me that some of his classmates are bothering him at school. When he told me this, I went to talk to those boys. But from then on, they started doing the same to me. Now we are both victims of their insults and threats. We decided to keep quiet, because if we do anything, everything is likely to get worse.

## 53. SPEECHLESS

**Aim:** to practise non-verbal communication and make students aware of how different people interpret messages differently

**Implementation:** pens, sheets of paper are needed in this activity.

The students sit in a circle and take turns delivering messages using gestures, facial expressions, drawings, etc. Once the 'speaker' has delivered their message, the rest of the group give their own interpretation of its meaning.

To finish, the students discuss how they felt while doing the activity, elucidate misunderstandings and draw conclusions about the process of communication.



## 54. NOSY DICE

**Aim:** to ask for and share information, to identify feelings

**Implementation:** a dice with a question word (who, what, where, when, etc.) on each side of it per group are needed in this activity.

Student A rolls the dice, student B asks a question starting with the question word on the top, students C and D answer. Then student B rolls, C asks the question, A and D answer and so on.

For feedback, students discuss their feelings related to sharing information about themselves.



## 55. TREE OF SKILLS

**Aim:** to notice and appreciate each other's skills and qualities

**Implementation:** coloured markers, large sheet of paper are needed in this activity.

The students draw a tree together. The number of the branches equals the number of students in class. Each student writes their name on a branch and draws a leaf for each skill/quality of theirs for which they have been endorsed by their classmates. The tree can remain on the classroom wall for the whole year and leaves can be added as students gain a new skill or develop a new quality.

For feedback, students assess their progress at the end of each term.



## 56. DREAMS AND WAYS

**Aim:** to experience the effectiveness and joy of working together, to develop creativity

**Implementation:** wrapping paper, felt-tip pen, coloured paper, glue, scissors, paint, brush, crayons are needed in this activity.

Each student will receive coloured sheets of paper from which they tear out different shapes. They have to use the shapes to create a house by gluing them on a large sheet of wrapping paper. Afterwards, everyone can design the environment around the house and decorate it as they like. When they have finished, they look at the residences that have been created and choose another one they would like to live in. Finally, they draw paths to connect their own house to the one they like.

For feedback, students discuss why they created their house the way they did and interview partners to discover things they have in common.



## 57. DRAWING TOGETHER

**Aim:** to improve cooperation skills

**Implementation:** pens, sheets of paper are needed in this activity.

While playing soft music, the teacher asks the students to imagine a picture containing a house, a tree and a dog. They can include any other details they like. The students then work in pairs to make a common drawing that includes the things named by the teacher. They must hold the pencil together, so drawing is only possible by mutual agreement. They can't talk while during the activity.

For feedback, ask students who was in control? Who was more submissive?



## 58. GROUP PHOTO FOR YOU

**Aim:** to reflect on personal relationships

**Implementation:** a camera is needed in this activity.

One person turns his/her back on the group while the rest of the class pose for a group photo meant especially for him/her. Gestures, facial expressions can be used to indicate their relationship with the person the photo is for. Once everyone is in place, they freeze, and invite the student to turn and look at (take) the photo.

For feedback, each student is invited to reflect on his/her relationship with the rest of the group.



## 59. RADIO INTERVIEW

**Aim:** to get to know each other, to improve communication skills, to share personal information

**Implementation:** an object imitating a microphone (a marker, a pencil case, etc.) is needed in this activity. Students sit in a circle. One of them is asked to play the role of a radio reporter. The reporter chooses a group member to make a five-minute interview with him/her. After the interview the listeners are invited to 'phone in' and ask the interviewee any additional questions. A twist can be added by defining the topic of the interview beforehand (fashion, diets, online games, etc.)

For feedback, students describe their experiences and point out new information they learned about each other.







## 62. MUTED TV

**Aim:** to infer meaning based on actions and body language

**Implementation:** electronic whiteboard/TV set/computer are needed in this activity.

A part of a movie (which the students are not likely to be familiar with) is shown to the class with no sound at all. Rewinds are allowed if necessary. Students have to guess what was happening and how each character felt. Once consensus has been reached, the fragment is played once again this time with the soundtrack.

For feedback, students assess their ability to read and interpret gestures and facial expressions.



## 63. DID I SAY CHEEK?

**Aim:** to encourage active listening

**Implementation:** The teacher tells the class to listen to him carefully and do what he tells them to. When all the students are paying attention to him, he tells them to put both their hands on their cheeks while he himself places both his hands under his cheek. Once hands are placed, they cannot be moved.

To finish, together they look at who was following the instructions and who was just copying the teacher's movements.

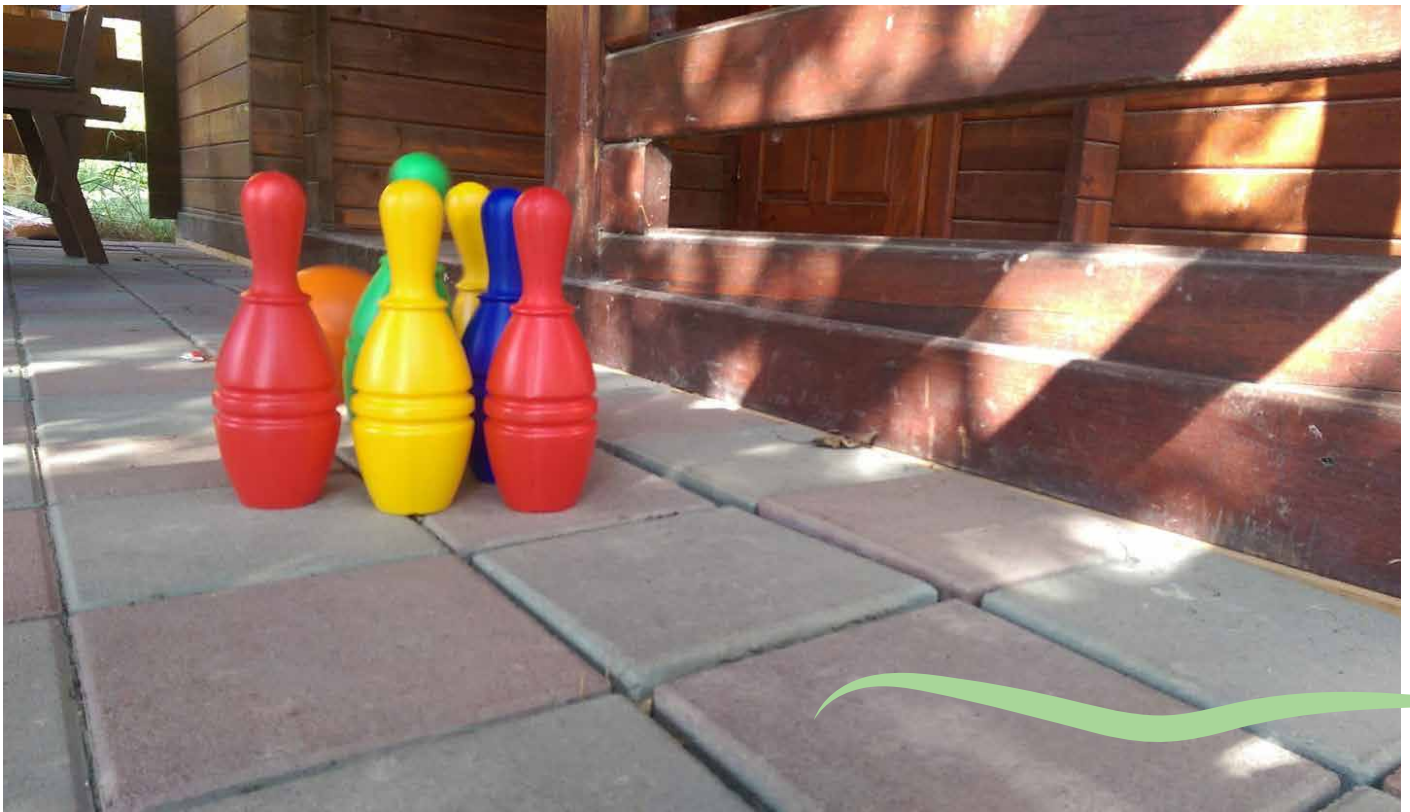


## 64. ACTING OUT SITUATIONS

**Aim:** to practise assertive communication

**Implementation:** Students volunteer in pairs to act out situations in front of the class: the food is cold in a restaurant, the teacher made a mistake while correcting a paper, you have been overcharged at the cash desk, somebody cut in front of you while standing in line, etc. Students observe how the situations were handled, what seemed right and what should have been done differently.

The activity is followed by a discussion on assertive communication.



## 65. GIBBERISH

**Aim:** to practise nonverbal communication

**Implementation:** Students in groups of 2 or 3 volunteer to have a conversation in front of the class in 'gibberish', relying on tone of voice, facial expressions, and gestures to convey meaning. One of them starts the 'conversation' and the others join in. Students are then asked to guess what the conversation was about and how the interlocutors may have felt. Finally, the two speakers give their impression of what they were talking about.

For feedback, you do an analysis of the way the task was carried out, reflections on how messages can be conveyed without using intelligible language, discussing how students felt during the game.



## 66. PAPER SNOWBALLS



**Aim:** to release tension, to provide outlet for aggression

**Implementation:** a stack of old newspapers are needed in this activity.

Students are given 5 minutes to make as many 'snowballs' from old newspapers as they can. They are then divided into two groups standing at a distance of 3 meters from each other and a snowball fight begins. The game ends when they run out of snowballs.

For feedback students are asked to comment on how they felt during and after the game.

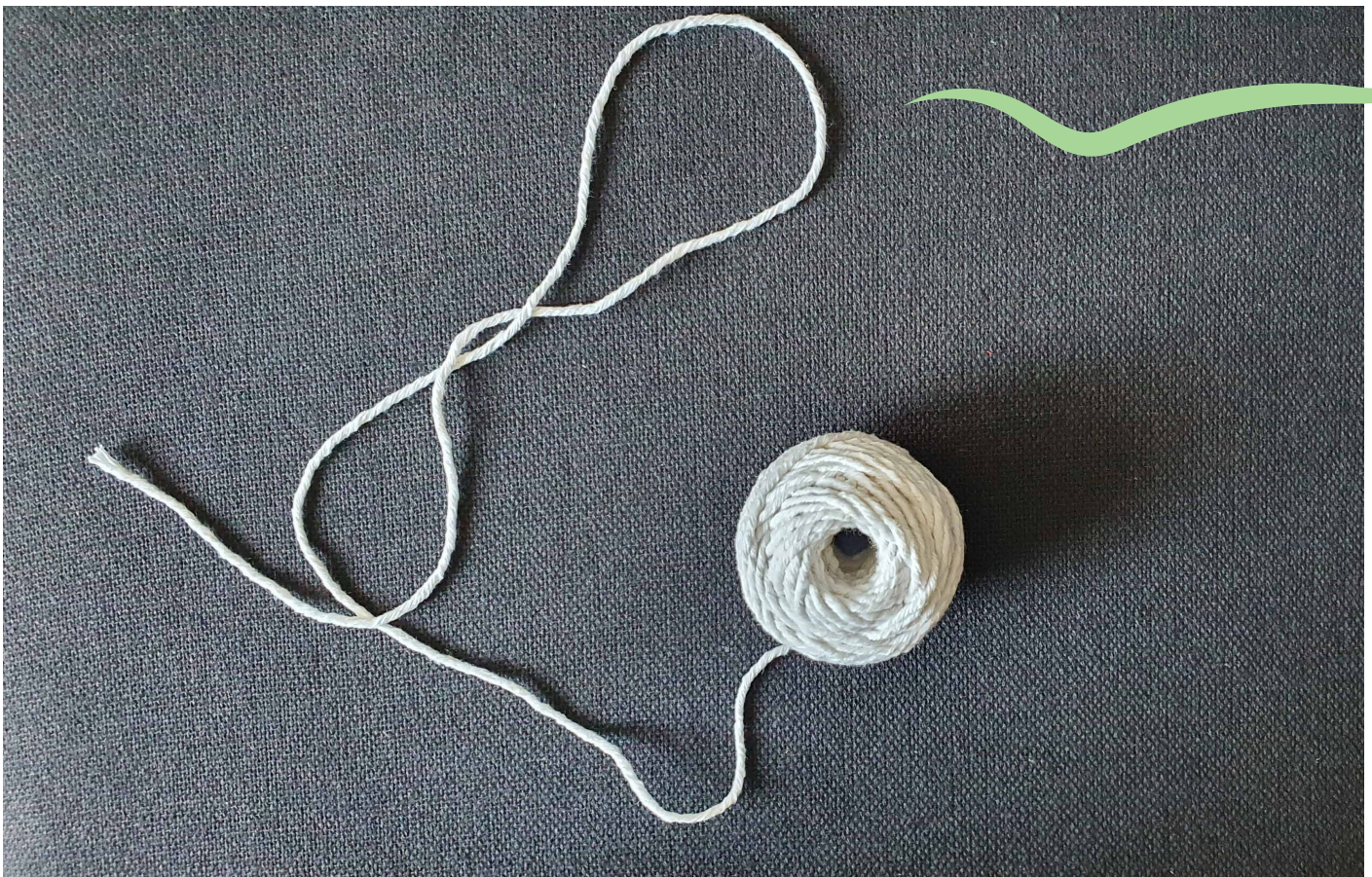
## 67. TUG OF WAR

**Aim:** to exert self-control, to work towards achieving a common goal

**Implementation:** a long piece of thin yarn is needed in this activity.

Students are divided into two teams and are asked to play tug of war, but instead of a rope a piece of thin yarn is used. They have to pretend to be pulling as hard as they can at the rope, but without allowing the yarn to break.

For feedback, students are asked to comment on what each of them had to do in order to achieve the common goal.



## 68. FULL OF BEANS

**Aim:** to relax, to release tension, to have fun

**Implementation:** Students are standing in a circle, each of them being a sack full of beans: with stiff muscles and tense body. At a given sign the sack gets pierced and the beans start pouring out. The students have to loosen up and gradually relax their muscles as the sacks are slowly getting empty. Finally, everybody ends up lying on the floor.

For feedback, students are asked to comment on how they felt during and after the game.



## 69. MAKE THEM LAUGH

**Aim:** to provide emotional discharge

**Implementation:** Students are divided into two teams. In team one the students are supposed to stay serious while members of the opposite team are doing all they can to make them laugh. As soon as someone started laughing, they move over to the other team. The game finishes when all the students are in the same group.

For feedback, students are asked to comment on how they felt during and after the game.



## 70. GROUP DRAWING

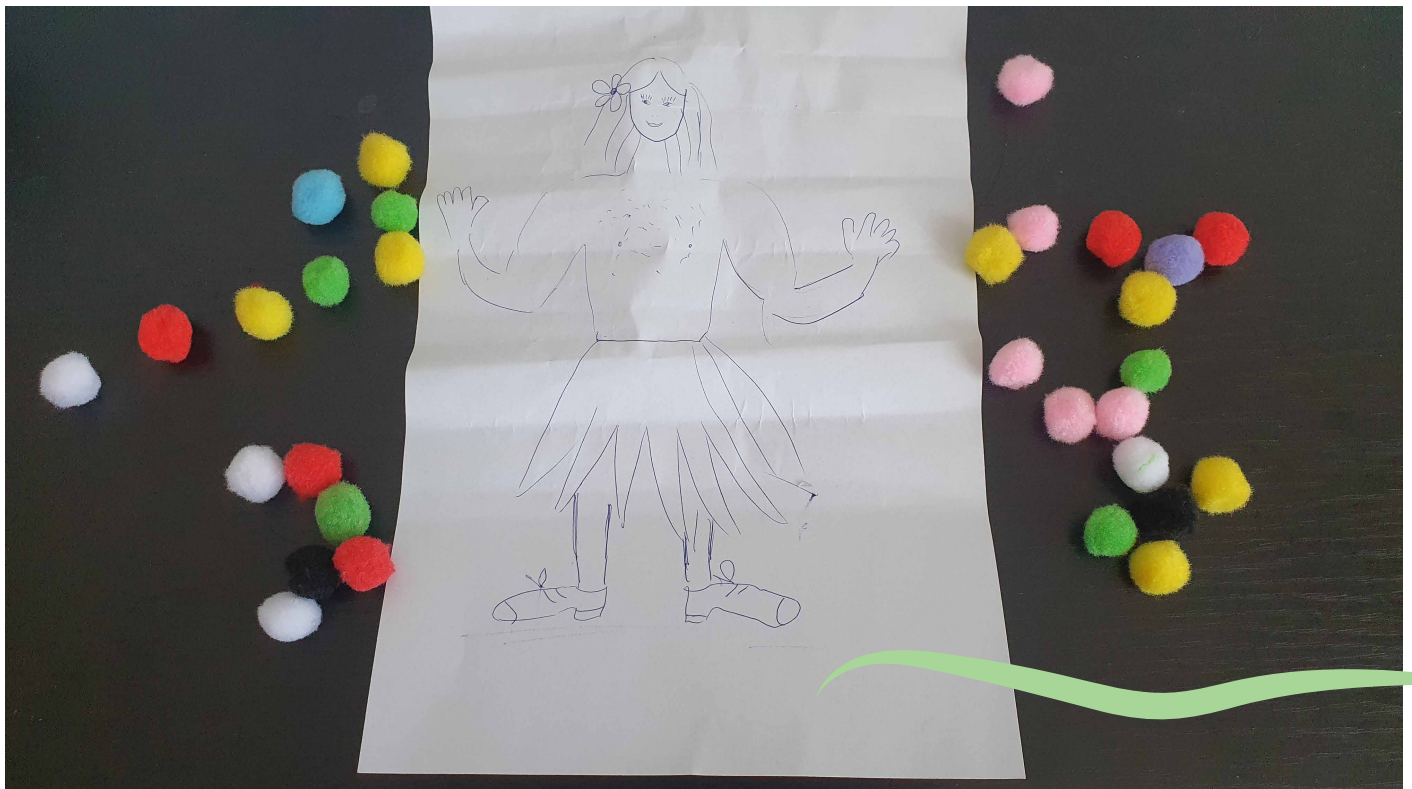
**Aim:** to recognize the importance of knowing

**Implementation:** coloured pens, sheets of paper are needed in this activity.

Students are given a sheet of paper and are asked to draw a person's head on it. Then they fold the paper so that only the two lines of the neck are visible. They pass the paper over to their neighbour, who continues with drawing the torso and folds the paper again so that the hips can be seen. The next person finishes the drawing by adding the legs. Students are encouraged to include lots of details (pieces of clothing, accessories, special features, etc.)

Students then present and describe their characters to the rest of the class. They can also invent a story related to it.

For feedback, comments are made on the way each student carried out the task and on the final outcomes. Students realize the importance of knowing your partners' ideas when you have to work together.



## 71. MORNING IN THE JUNGLE

**Aim:** to release tension, to have fun

**Implementation:** Each student plays the role of an animal that lives in the jungle. The teacher tells the students that morning has broken, and the animals of the jungle start waking up. Students have to make noises to imitate the sounds made by the animals, which are weak at first, but are gradually getting louder and louder, until every animal is fully awake.

For feedback, students are asked to comment on their feelings while doing the activity.



## 72. CAR PARTS

**Aim:** teambuilding, to make students aware of their role in a group, to improve self-awareness

**Implementation:** picture of a car showing all car parts / a list of car parts are needed in this activity.

The teacher gives students a list containing parts of a car. Students decide which part of a car they want to be and what their role is in making the car work. Each student presents their choice and the reasons for it; the rest of the group may agree or suggest another role for them. The activity ends when everyone has found the part they want to be. They then discuss the role each car part plays to ensure that the car runs smoothly. It is important for the teacher to point out that each role is equally important.

Possible interpretations:

- wheel: helps the group move forward and supports the weight of the problems that may occur

within the group

- spare wheel: provides solutions to problems
- fuel: provides group dynamics
- steering wheel: is able to lead the others
- chassis: a person others can rely on
- seat: a person who helps others find their place
- gear shift: can set energies free at the right time
- engine: a person who sets the group in motion, who ensures performance
- wiper: provides a shoulder to cry on
- boot: a person who accepts everyone
- spark plug: a person who initiates activities
- carburettor: a person who spreads information in the group
- first aid kit: helps people in need
- headlights: shed light on things, can see the light at the end of the tunnel
- windshield: protects the group
- accelerator: a person who speeds things up
- brake: a person who knows when to stop or slow down
- seatbelt: mitigates conflicts
- indicator: signals the right direction

For feedback, students discuss how appropriate their choices were and reflect on their roles within the group.

## Car parts:

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- |   |  |                                    |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> wheel          | <input type="checkbox"/> boot          | <input type="checkbox"/> indicator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spare wheel    | <input type="checkbox"/> spark plug    | <input type="checkbox"/> seatbelt  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fuel           | <input type="checkbox"/> carburettor   | <input type="checkbox"/> wiper     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> steering wheel | <input type="checkbox"/> first aid kit | <input type="checkbox"/> brake     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> chassis        | <input type="checkbox"/> headlights    |                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> seat           | <input type="checkbox"/> windshield    |                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> gear shift     | <input type="checkbox"/> accelerator   |                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> engine         |  |                                    |



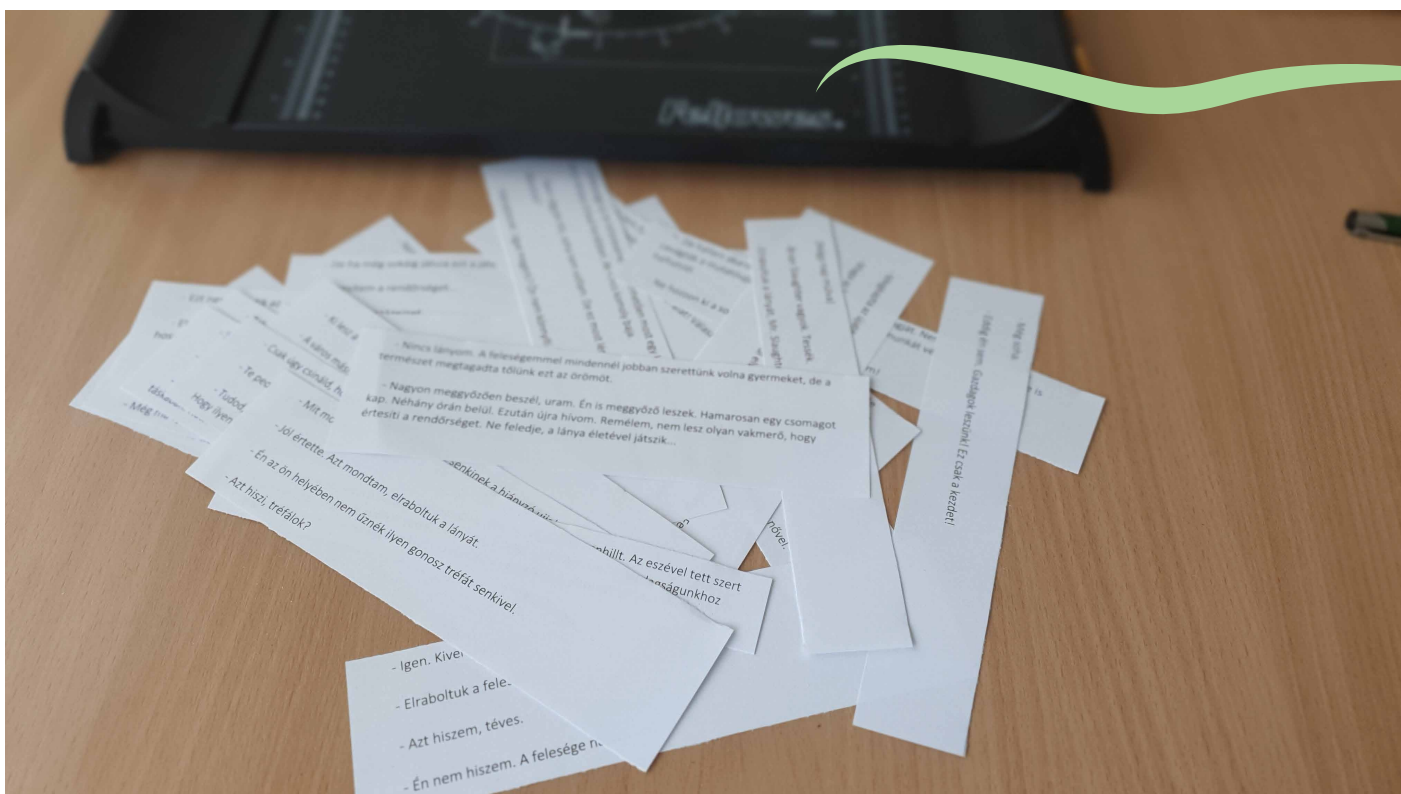
## 73. WHAT HAPPENED?

**Aim:** to improve communication skills, to notice the importance of listening to each other

**Implementation:** events/information from a detective story written on separate pieces of paper are needed in this activity.

Students sit in a circle. Each of them gets a piece of paper with information from the story. They have to work out what happened in 25 minutes. They can read their text out any number of times, but they cannot show or give the piece of paper to other students.

For feedback, ask students the following: Did they manage to solve the puzzle? How happy are they with their own performance? How active were they? Who took the lead during the activity? What strategies were used? Is there a real-life situation to which similar strategies could be applied?



## 74. STAND UP IN A CIRCLE

**Aim:** to warm up and energize the group, to improve cooperation between group members

**Implementation:** Students are squatting arm in arm facing outward in a circle. At a given sign they all have to stand up together without breaking the circle. The closer they are to each other, the easier it is to stand up.

For feedback, everyone can talk about relying on and helping each other.



## 75. YOU ARE AWESOME!

**Aim:** to boost self-confidence, to provide positive feedback

**Implementation:** pens, sheets of paper, safety pins are needed in this activity.

A sheet of paper is pinned on the back of everyone in the group. Members walk around and write positive messages on each other's backs. The messages should be about the person's strengths and good qualities. Once they have finished, everyone takes their sheet off and reads the messages.

For feedback, ask the students: Were they surprised at any of the messages? Do they feel motivated to accomplish something new after the activity?



## 76.MIRRORING

**Aim:** to practise empathy and paying attention to others

**Implementation:** Students stand in pairs facing each other. One of them is the mirror, who copies the other student's posture and facial expressions. It is important for the latter to be creative and for the mirror to adapt. Roles must be reversed after 2 minutes.

For feedback, ask the students which of the two roles did they find easier?



## 77. GATE OF LOVE

**Aim:** to develop empathy, intuition, to recognize and express feelings of love

**Implementation:** Students stand in a circle with their shoulders touching. One person leaves the room while the others decide which two of them will act as a gate to allow the person who left the room to pass. When the person comes in, he/she will have to find the gate by looking at faces and establishing eye contact. The people acting as a gate should signal trust and acceptance with their eyes. The others should look dismissive. The person has three attempts to find the gate.

For feedback, ask the students how difficult was it to find the gate? Why?



## 78. I'M A SHOE

Aim: to express / identify feelings through movements, self-expression

Implementation: Students sit in a circle. Everyone chooses an object they can identify with and names three of its characteristic features. E.g., I'm a shoe, I'm warm, soft and comfortable. Then they go around and get in contact with their classmates, shake hands, etc. trying to express these characteristics. Someone else can say I'm a rock, I'm hard, smooth and unshakable. Then they act accordingly.

For feedback, ask the students how difficult was it to find the object? Did you learn anything new about yourself/the others?



## 79. TIME TRAVEL

Aim: to express feelings through movements and verbally, to reflect on personal changes

Implementation: Students imagine being in a time machine. Now we are going 5 years back in time. 'Try to remember what you were like 5 years ago and act like it!' Everyone presents their younger version to the group. then they go into the future and do the same.

For feedback, ask the students which one was easier, to imagine the future or relive the past?

At what age did you feel best? Why?



## 80. FUNNY STORY

Aim: to break the ice, to get to know one another

Implementation: pens, sheets of paper are needed in this activity.

On a piece of paper students describe a funny incident that happened to them. The teacher reads each story. The students write a keyword for each story on another piece of paper. (keyhole, ice-cream, skating, etc.) Then they go around asking each other to find out who the stories belong to and write the names next to the keywords.

For feedback, ask the students how easy/difficult was it to find the 'owners'? Whose story was the hardest to identify?



## 81. QUEUING

Aim: to break the ice, to practise cooperation between group members

Implementation: chairs equalling the number of students are needed in this activity.

We place the chairs in a single line and ask the students to stand on a chair each. Then we ask them to align themselves according to their date of birth starting from the oldest in the group without stepping on the ground.

For feedback, ask the students what strategy did you use during the game? Is there anything you should have done differently? How did you help each other?





## TESTIMONIES

Here are the testimonies of six teachers from the 3 high schools from Portugal, Romania, and Spain:

### **Bruno from Portugal - Escola Secundária de Amarante**

I have been part in EM since September 2021, firstly with the participation in the training course in Spain, then with the Job Shadowing in Portugal and then Romania and finally I was part of the implementation of the IO2 with some of my students.

When I entered in this project I felt welcomed by the group, but I must admit, though, at first, I was very hesitant about the EM method. I didn't think it could work in my school. With a great surprise and mostly during the implementation of the IO2 with my students, I understood the big vision of the project and definitely helped me to improve the interaction with my students and colleagues.

While I was implementing the workshops in IO2 it made me honoured to get to understand better the opinion of my students in topic such as bullying and media dependency. Some of them needed this dedicated time to explore the topic and also to share with the others some personal issues related with bullying and media dependency.

I was sharing the outcomes of the workshops with my colleagues, and I realized that it helped them to also adopt the same methods in their classes in order to deal with these complex topics.

Having problematic such this one in a classroom is more and more common, and many students have no one to ask questions to and often end up on an unreliable website getting inaccurate information or a website that directs them to another website, which directs them to another website and on and on.

I feel it is my duty to share these methods that I applied, because of how helpful were for me and my students.

### **Laura from Portugal - Escola Secundária de Amarante**

As a coordinator of the current project, I may say it has been quite a challenge, due to the huge hardships we had to face, especially the ones connected with the pandemics of COVID-19, in order to achieve all the goals, we had settled. Nevertheless, I am proud to affirm that we managed to overcome all of them, and the final outcomes of this project are high quality intellectual outputs.

As responsible for the implementation of the activities I participated in some of them. Firstly, I was one of the teachers whose classes have been observed by the NGO and Municipality staff. It was an enriching experience since we learn by listening to the others constructive criticism. The students were very involved in the lessons, and I realized they made an extra effort because they knew there was someone observing them, and they wanted to cause a good impression. Thus, we can see that they tried to behave even better than usual because they were aware of the external observation.

I also participated in the workshops organized by the Marcella Serra, about Emotional management, for teachers. I enjoyed deeply the activities and the strategies used since they made me think about some basic behaviours, I should implement in order to help my students, such as avoiding using the mobile phone during breaks so that I can be more available to listen to them and to their interests.

The last activity I must cover is the research work about the activities which can be used by teachers and parents to help teenagers to foster their ability of doing emotional management. This was hard work, but it made me realize there are simple games and tasks which we (teachers and parents) can use briefly and that will help adolescents to get more mature and to think about and improve their attitudes and behaviours towards others and themselves.

All in all, this has been a rather inspiring experience that has fostered some of my personal and professional skills.

## **Enikő from Romania - Liceul Teoretic Orbán Balázs**

Taking part in the project has been a really rewarding experience. On a professional level it has offered me the chance to expand my knowledge in the field of Emotional Management and to develop a new perspective on dealing with problems caused by excessive internet and social media use. Rather than simply insisting on appropriate behaviour and enforcing rules in the classroom, this new approach involves a deeper understanding of what lies behind misconduct or poor academic performance. Moreover, it affords effective strategies and techniques that can help people overcome negative emotions, react constructively to high-stress situations, and build healthy relationships with others. Putting some of these techniques to the test I have come to know my students a lot better, have become more conscious of their needs and more competent in addressing them.

Working together with colleagues from our institution and from the partner schools is another benefit worth mentioning. Exchanging ideas and sharing experiences enabled us to connect both on a professional and personal level and made us realize once more that being a teacher – despite all the negative aspects – is a rewarding job after all, which goes far beyond instruction and requires a group of psychological competencies and interpersonal skills, which will ultimately benefit all our students. I honestly feel I have grown a lot in this respect owing to my involvement in this project.

Finally, I would like to say thanks to Youth Association from Transylvania for giving us the opportunity to participate in the project, for coordinating the work that we carried out and for the constant support they offered us in achieving our goals.

## **Laura from Romania - Liceul Teoretic Orbán Balázs**

Our project entitled Emotional Management – Tool to fight social media dependency has addressed truly relevant problems. As teachers, we are witnesses to the effects of excessive social media use on our students, therefore we were only too glad to accept the invitation to participate in the project. When the project was launched, we did not have any idea of how much our lives were going to be affected by COVID 19; the consequences of online education, the increased chances for (cyber)bullying and the need for appropriate means to cope with frustration caused by the restrictions made dealing with the issue all the more urgent.

As a school counsellor, I am fully aware of the importance of emotional learning. From my point of view, one of the major benefits of the project was that it made my colleagues more conscious of it, too. Another advantage was that it brought staff members closer together, we got to know each other better throughout project-related events and activities like focus groups and mobilities, while putting together questionnaires, preparing Job Shadowing activities and working on the Intellectual Outputs have boosted our motivation and fostered cooperation. Focus group discussions have highlighted

the importance of personal contacts and joining efforts to identify and solve problems. Working together and sharing experiences will always yield faster and better results.

The main beneficiaries of the project are, of course, the students. The main goal of each project event and activity was to prevent problems deriving from excessive internet use, to cut back on bullying and to provide them with tools to deal with emotionally difficult situations. Thanks to this Intellectual Output, the teachers will have access to resources that do not only supply knowledge of emotional management but will also enable them to apply it through a range of specific activities.

During the mobilities we had the opportunity to learn about the everyday life and work of our Spanish and Portuguese partners. We were able to exchange ideas and good practices. We met new people and made new friends. We gained insight into different cultures being guided by local people, which gave us much deeper understanding of their lifestyle than as if we had only been tourists.

Last, but not least, the project has enabled us to tighten our links with different local and international institutions: by working together we found out more about each other's strengths, which can lay the foundations for our future cooperation.

Thank you for the opportunity!

## **Lucia from Spain - IES Lope de Vega**

As a teacher who has accompanied the students in the development of the activities related to the project "Emotional Management- Tool to Fight Social Media Dependency" I can say that it has been a very interesting project and of great value both for me as an educator, and for my students.

Some aspects I would like to highlight are the high interest of the students in connecting emotional management with their daily difficulties, such as relationships or decision-making. Associating their personal difficulties with the use and consumption of addictive substances, such as alcohol, tobacco, or screen use (which was the main objective of the project) generated a lot of interest and questions from them.

On a professional level, I think we should pay more attention to the feelings that young students deal with in their day-to-day life because it directly affects their school performance. It is easy to observe how they use social networks to connect and interact in their daily relationships, but we also begin to notice how in some cases this use is addictive and generates isolation, increased fears, insecurities and in some cases even mistreatment among peers.

Another very noteworthy point of the project has been the Job Shadowing exchanges with schools in Portugal and Romania. Getting to know their work routines and daily dynamics, their methodologies and facilities has been of great value on a personal and professional level.

## **Mary from Spain - IES Lope de Vega**

During the past two years we have been working on the European project called "Emotional Management- Tool to Fight Social Media Dependency".

Within this project we have collaborated with schools, town halls and associations from three countries: Portugal, Romania, and Spain.

One of the objectives of the project was to better understand the use that young people give to new technologies and specifically the cases of an addiction to mobile phones. For this reason, we have made visits to schools, conducted surveys among students, their families, our teachers, and organised work meetings and training with both teachers and students.

I personally wish to emphasize that the training received on feelings and emotions has been very use-

ful to better understand how addictions come into our lives. Being aware of the fact that addictions are a mechanism to “anesthetise” us and not feel the difficulties that both adults and young people are suffering has opened my eyes and helped me understand that families, teachers, and students are or can be victims of addictions and that depending on the difficulty of our problems and the resources available, we can fall into more or less aggressive addictions.

I also think that my personal feeling about the project is also attributable to colleagues with whom I have shared this experience.



