



ERASMUS+ TRAINING COURSE

Listen to Listen

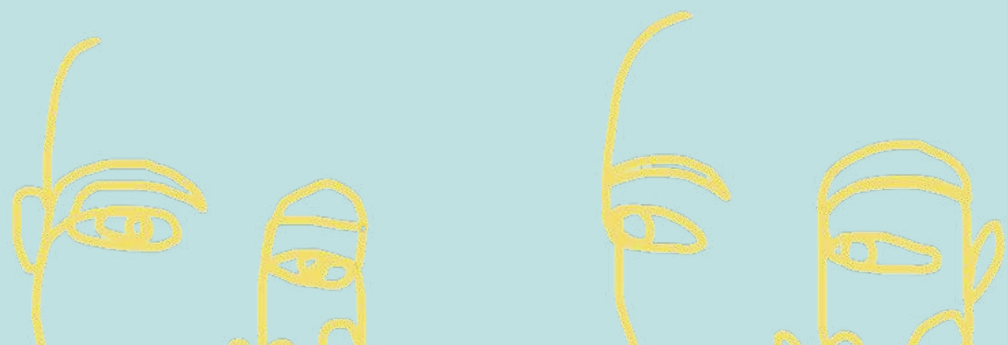
The art of listening - Tool-kit

Participants of “Listen to Listen” Training Course which happened in beautiful October of 2019 in North – East Latvia were guided on a journey of the Art of Listening, to reconnect with themselves, to express openly and creatively, and being invited to get out of their comfort zone to cultivate trust, openness and connection with themselves, others and nature as the foundation for becoming a source of heart-based positive transformation for the community.

In this material there are 6 methods and activity ideas described that participants experienced as very powerful and chose to share.

These activities involve not just our ears as “listening organs”.

There is physical body, senses, mind, emotions and much more involved.



In order to try out these tools
especially with other people we invite
you to:

- slow down
- breath
- be open for anything
- welcome any emotion and feeling
that appears for you and others
- do not expect any particular result
- give opportunity, challenge but do
not push anything or anyone
- no judgement
- and make sure that you are in a
safe environment to express



*Feeling safe and welcome is the key for sharing
and being open to receive is the key for listening.*

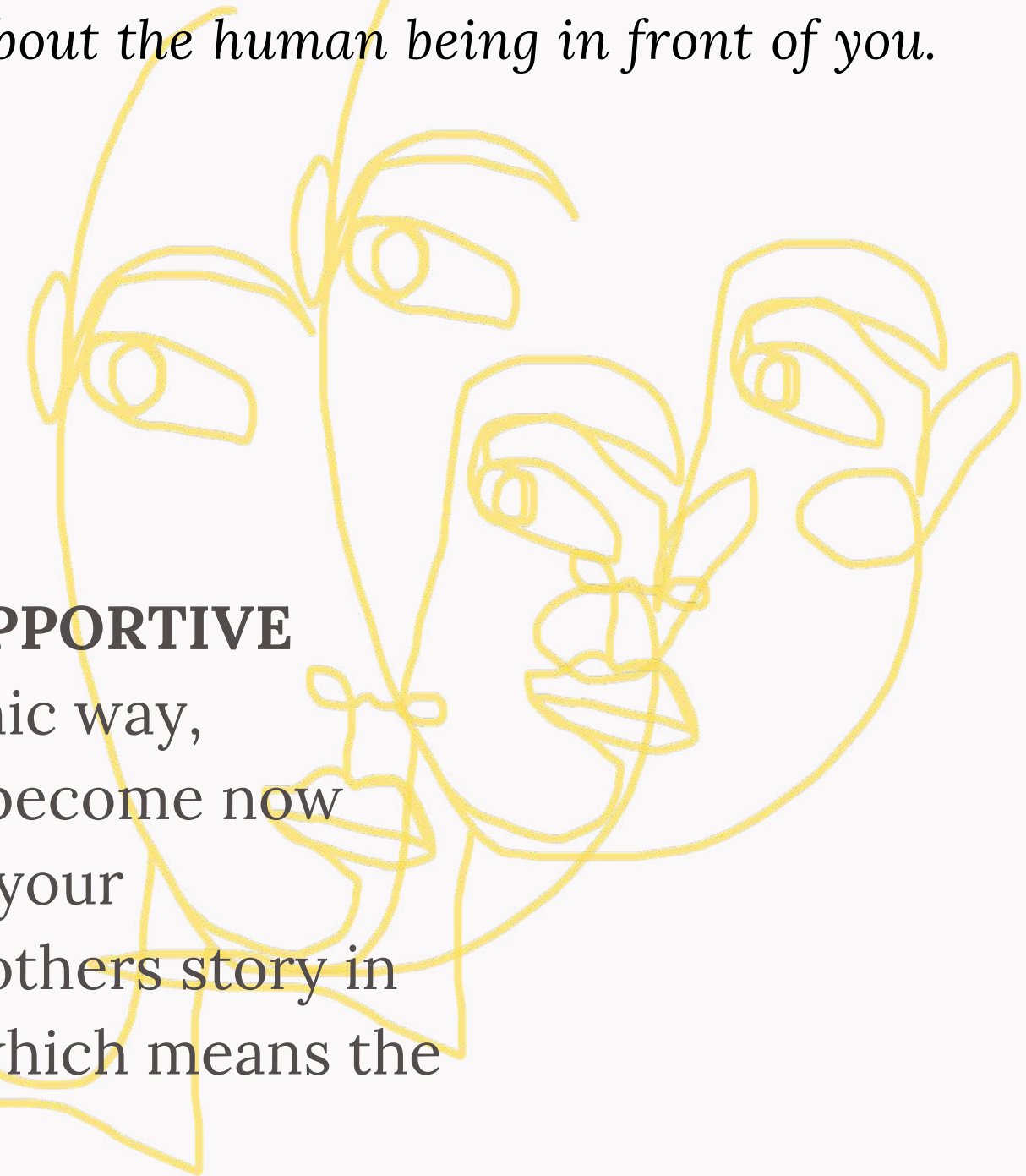
Be kind to yourself and be kind to others.

Asking questions

When you ask questions you have the opportunity to find out new things about the human being in front of you. So use this chance to come a little bit closer to the inner world of the person.

You might want to ask just for your curiosity, something that is called selfish curiosity ("how does your boyfriend/girlfriend look like"). This would be though quite a superficial level of conversation.

So what about trying to go deeper and ask questions based on **SUPPORTIVE CURIOSITY**, in order to listen to the teller in a deeper and empathic way, respecting his or her own rhythm? So the previous question would become now something like "tell me more about what you appreciate or like in your boyfriend/girlfriend"? That means that you first try to follow the other's story in order first to try to identify where are the **INTENSE SPOTS** of it, which means the most important aspects which invite you to explore through **OPEN QUESTIONS**.



Asking questions

Open questions usually start with
HOW? WHERE? WHEN? WHO? WHAT?

For instance:

WHAT is your opinion about/on/regarding...?

HOW did you feel in that moment?

Tell me more about...

When you are asking questions you can either encourage the teller to be more inventive or you can lead the flow according to your own needs.

Sometimes you might ask closed questions, which require YES or NO answers, such as “Was it fine for you? Did you feel sad?” This might also be good in a conversation, but if you want to know better the person you are talking to, then asking open questions with supportive curiosity would reveal a bit more of the person's soul, would encourage him or her to speak more and would comfort a lot the person as he or she feels to be seen and heard.

This ability can be practiced in pairs or trios of listener-teller-observer.



Active listening

In each conversation there are two or more people involved. For meaningful listening and connection it can be very valuable to try out following roles: listener, speaker or observer.

Aim

To improve our ability to listen,
ask open questions and observe intense spots.

Description

This activity starts with one person that speaks and one or more who are listening to speaker looking after intense spots for open questions. Meanwhile observer is witnessing whole conversation. In the end observers and others share their opinion and feelings. Whole session lasts around 7 min. 3 - 4 min are for speaker and listener part. In the last 3 min observer shares observations.

Active listening

Steps

1. Teller speaks from heart connecting with his or her story.
2. Listener listens to speaker looking for intense spots. When teller finishes story listener asks open questions following supportive curiosity.
3. Observer analyzes both (teller and listener) focusing on eye contact, gestures, flow of the questions.
4. In the end observer shares what he or she saw during the conversation.



Soul painting

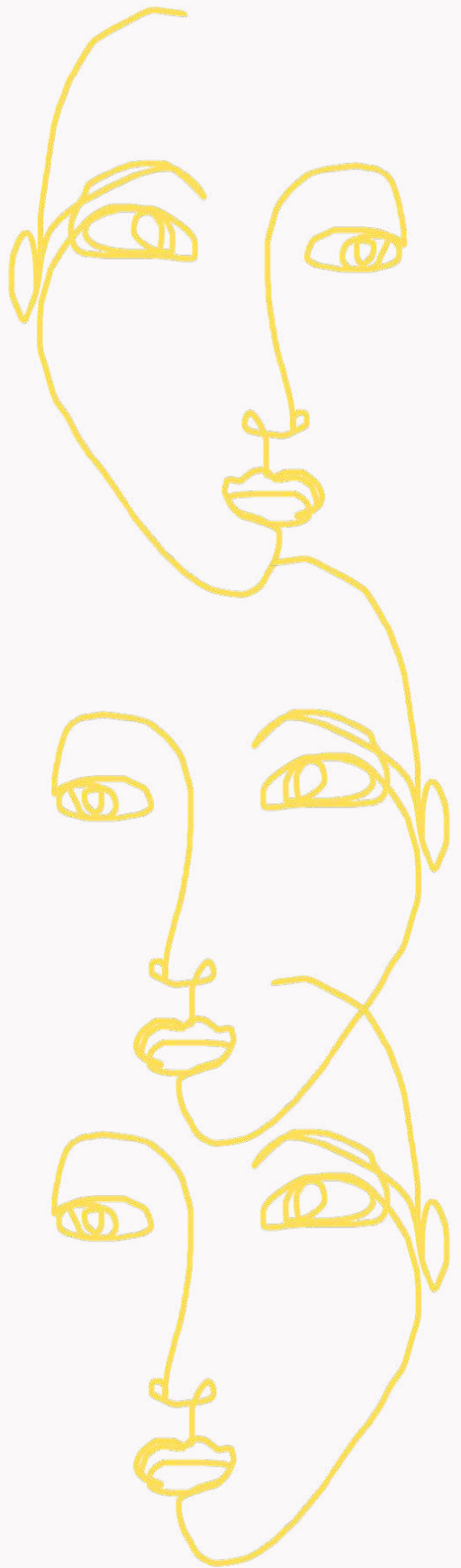
Everyone has an artist inside them, every being has something within them that wants become real in a creative way.

Aim

Expressing inner being, reflecting emotions and stories by painting, drawing and using other different art techniques and styles. Paying attention to choosing colors, shapes, patterns.

Description and materials

- Gathering preferred art supplies (paper, canvas, paint, watercolors, pencils etc.) that you feel comfortable using.
- Finding a place where you feel the most comfortable at (inside, table, floor, bed etc. or outside) create cozy atmosphere with some music, candles or anything that makes you feel inspired.
- Listen to your inner being and let the unique journey of expression begin.
- Activity can be complemented with guiding questions, some poetry or story that helps imagination flow.



Say yourself loud without words

Aim

To acknowledge how it is to be this body, to be grateful for it, feel it as a safe place to be and express yourself through it.

Preparation

- Choose a room with space to move.
- Good quality audio system.
- 2 to 5 songs, different styles and mood or same depending on the intentions.
- Prepare some guidance like “Start walking slowly... Notice how it is to be in this body...”.
- Offer a review of what happened after the moving part.
- Plan some time for participants to share their experience.

Description

- Wake up the body – start with slow and familiar movements.
- How am I in this moment – check with yourself how you are right here and now.
- Acknowledge how am I – listen and notice what is going on with and in your body without doing anything about it.
- Embrace – how am I and how grateful I am for having this body.
- Expression and flow – let it move freely and spontaneously respecting and caring about what your body wants to say.
- Notice – give yourself time and space to acknowledge that you passed through this process with yourself and say some words if you want to.



Reality – self – guardian angel

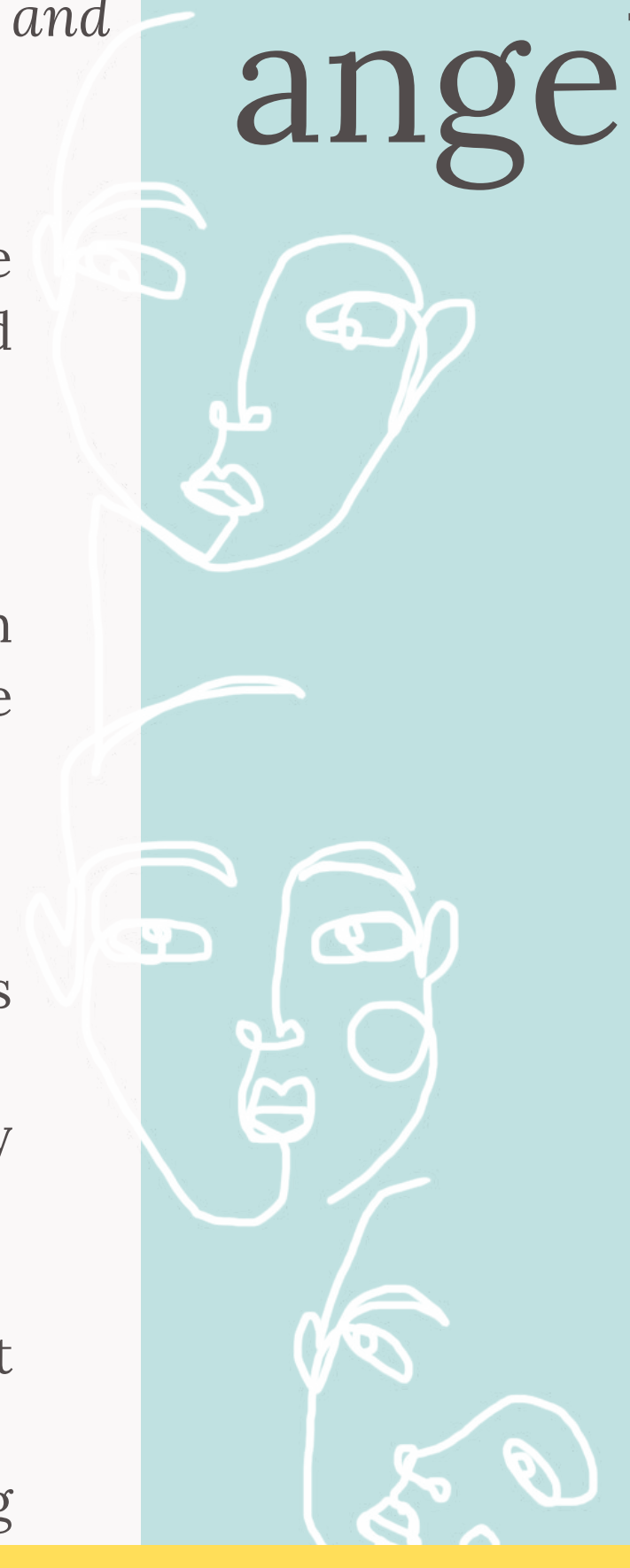
Sometimes it is very necessary to distance ourselves from ourselves in order to see how we act and react, what are our patterns and how does this affect our perceptions.

Aim

To think about our real life reality, how we react when we are facing our own reality, what does the guardian angel means to us. The aim in general is to observe ourselves and each other, how we act and react in all roles.

Description

- The activity is performed in trios, where each person plays one role at a time. Every time one person is himself/herSELF, the other one is his/hers. GUARDIAN ANGEL and the third one is playing the REALITY.
- All of the space is available for trios to move around.
- The SELF is acting as he/she feels, moving around, expressing in whatever way prefers.
- REALITY is expressing itself any way participant feels like. Participant can put obstacles in the SELFs way, or be a kind reality, or even bad.
- GUARDIAN ANGEL holds his/hers palm at the SELFs back or shoulder and expressing itself any way participant feels like.
- SELF is reacting to REALITY and is aware of the presence of the GUARDIAN ANGEL.
- After each 3 minutes participants change roles in their trios. This way each participant has tried out all 3 roles – SELF, REALITY AND GUARDIAN ANGEL.
- In the final part of activity participants share how they felt during the activity, how they felt playing each role, how did it affect them and what they can connect this to their realities.



The way of the council

Aim

Creating a safe, intimate space for open sharing very personal stories, thoughts, dreams, feelings, concerns in order to deepen the connection between group members and to offer the opportunity to be deeply and truly listened to.

Description

- Pick a space large enough for a big circle and make sure it will be quiet and without distractions during the whole activity.
- Prepare the space in advance, arranging the props: - circular sitting arrangement for equality and empowerment;
- Centre created from: cloth, fire, natural props, talking object. The centre is very important because it offers participants something to look at while sharing and in moments when they don't know where to focus their attention. It also gives a stronger sensation of belongingness to the group and allows sharing stories with the group, not with individuals.
- Make sure your participants arrive on time and in the most quiet way possible. Optionally, play some chill-out / relaxing / peaceful / soothing music in the background as they join the circle.
- Narrator welcomes participants to the circle, in silence, and after all of them are seated, he/she invites participants to take time and think for a moment about what is calling them and share it when the time is right.

The way of the council

There are a few rules and guidelines to be followed

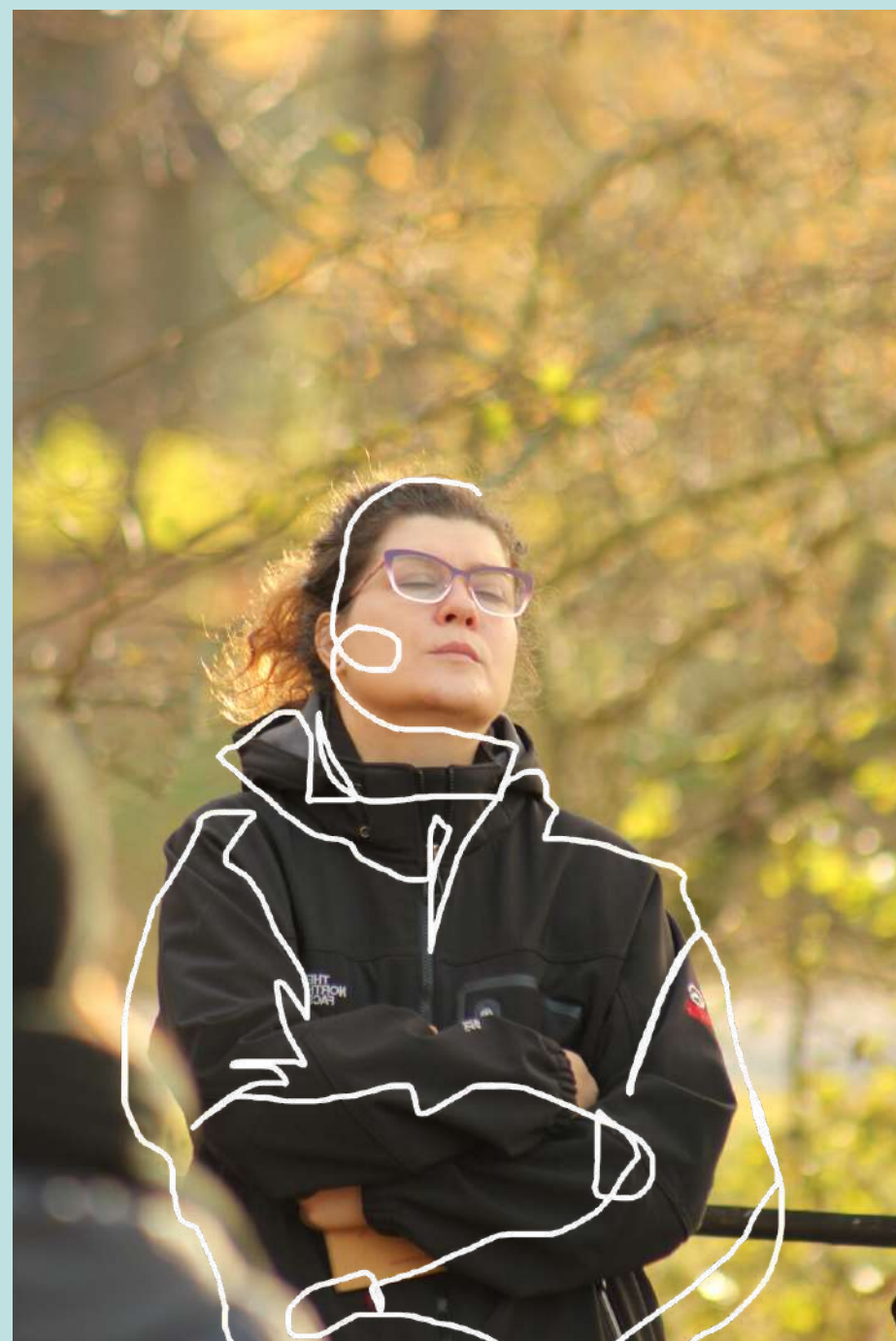
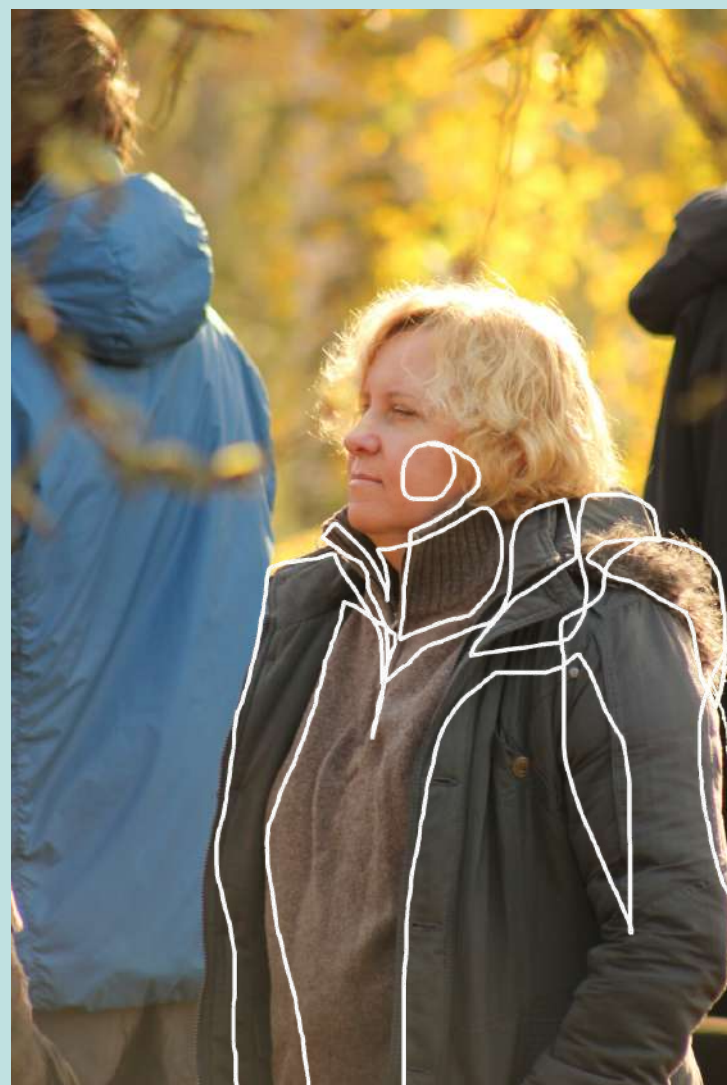
- Whatever is shared will not leave the space and not be retold.
- Stories should be shared without advance planning of the speech.
- The person holding the talking object has the power to speak and the rest have the power to listen.
- Each participant has 3 minutes and they will be notified when 2.5 minutes have passed, with a discreet noise.
- Each participant can only speak once.

The flow and order of speakers is to be decided upon by narrators, according to the group size and the overall context. Should there be any moments of silence, they will be respected. If participants do not take initiative sharing, narrator will say a few soothing and inviting words, in order to encourage.

Materials needed

- candles (fire)
- cloth, small carpet, piece of fabric to be put in the centre of the circle
- fruit, leaves, tree branches, stones, any other seasonal natural item from the nearby environment (used as decorations, optional)
- pillows, beanbags, yoga mattresses, blankets, any other items to sit on at ground level
- talking object
- tissues





The material is created during project “Listen to Listen” which gathered 24 youth workers from Latvia, Romaina, Poland, Czeck Republik, Slovenia, Greece and Portugal in order to develop the resources and competencies of youth workers in The Art of Listening, to create profound and sustainable learning environments for supporting youth inclusion in personal, social and professional life.

The program was built around these 4 intentions:

- Discover how can we listen to the inner resources we have within. We will explore the 4 facets connected to the 4 directions of the human psyche based on the model of The Nature based Map of the Human Psyche in order to live our life from wholeness.
- Explore how can we listen the others heart-centeredly by experiencing the practice of Deepening Questions, Mirroring, Tracking, The Way of Council in order to find the gifts of the stories and honouring and enabling the individual transformation.
- Bring to life the hidden resources of the human self through embodiment practices and nature-based practices.
- Create a commUNITY of heart-minded, dedicated people who create transformational learning environments in order to support and guide the authentic growth of young people.



ALŪKSNES UN APES NOVADA FONDS



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Agency for International
Programs for Youth
Republic of Latvia

The project is implemented by Aluksne and Apes Community Foundation in cooperation with *Familija - izobrazevalni in terapevtski center* (Slovenia), *Stowarzyszenie Dorosli-Dzieciom* (Poland), *Asociatia Actions for Change* (Romania), *Hives Project* (Greece), *Centrum pro pomoc detem a mladezi o.p.s.* (Czech Republic), *ProAtlântico - Associação Juvenil* (Portugal)

Project “Listen to Listen” is co-financed by European Union programme “Erasmus+”. The program is administrated by Agency of International Programs for Youth Republic of Latvia. The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

