



STRENGTH

**STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO-EMOTIONAL
COMPETENCES OF CAREER PRACTITIONERS**

Development of Social- Emotional Competences: Training Program

Ison Psychometrica

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

PROJECT ID: 2019-1-R001-KA202-063198



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Introduction

The purpose of IO3 is to develop a program aiming to train a new generation of creative, entrepreneurial and innovative professionals in the field of guidance able to develop and use Social Emotional Competence in order to face current and future challenges and to convert knowledge and ideas into more client- centered services benefiting diverse target groups and users of career guidance services.

In order to define the content of the training program, the partnership at first made a research and analysis on the definition and factors of Social and emotional Intelligence (SEI), a review of the theories currently used to explain SEI and its dimensions and an exploration of the existing training methodologies, relevant tools and instruments which can be adapted, allowing for the elaboration and further elaboration and development of specific strategies and methods to provide theoretical and practical training for the improvement of career guidance practitioners' skills (IO1). Furthermore, a need analysis on career practitioner's training needs was conducted under IO2, to find out how important career practitioners find social-emotional competences, how they relate to the requirements of daily practice and moreover whether there is a systematic lack of certain social-emotional competences among practitioners, that will be the basis for defining the training modules.

According to IO1 results, 13 social-emotional competences were identified as important for career practitioner's efficacy. For strategic purposes, the 13 social-emotional competences were combined in five **clusters**, as following:

1. **Empathy Skills:** Affective empathy and Perspective taking/Cognitive empathy
2. **Emotion-Management Skills:** Understanding emotions, Emotional self-awareness and emotional self-control
3. **Diversity Management Skills:** Social concern, Tolerance, Diversity and intercultural competence
4. **Active Listening Skills:** Attentiveness & Active listening
5. **Cooperation Skills:** Collaboration, Conflict Resolution

IO2 survey results revealed that all clusters were prioritized quite frequently in terms of training needs, indicating that career practitioners value all five domains of social-emotional competence. As a result, the STRENGTH project will develop and disseminate innovative training modules for all five clusters of social-emotional competences.

Therefore, the program consists of 5 training modules/sections as mentioned above.

Each section has four parts: a theoretical one that is covered through the review of the relevant modern literature, a practical-experiential one, which is implemented through case studies from the counselling practice and experiential exercises, an evaluation part and a part



for further study. Specifically, its structure includes the following parts:

- A. Theoretical background, where important definitions, principles and useful information on methods for improvement are presented
- B. Activities to improve socio-emotional skills: Taking into account that socio-emotional intelligence is best learned by actually engaging in activities and “learning by doing” (Cockburn-Wootten & Cockburn, 2011¹) and through rehearsing, shadowing, and role models, the program activities focus mainly in using participatory activities and exercises. Additionally, the program’s activities are based on methods that proved to be effective on Socio-emotional competence improvement, as they came out from IO1. More specifically, from the analyses of existing methods, the training activities will have as basis the following principles and learning concept:
 - Cognitive training
 - Cognitive and Behavioural training
 - Role-play, experimenting
 - Awareness / Mindfulness
 - Feedback and Supervision/Reflection
 - Critical incidents
- C. Self- evaluation exercises, including 5 questions for testing whether trainees have learned basic concepts of the training unit, and
- D. Resources for further study and references.

The program is addressed to:

Practitioners specializing in career guidance

Practitioners with more than 3 years’ work experience in career guidance

Graduates and students of career counselling departments

Implementation of the program

The STRENGTH training program will be in form of a synchronous and asynchronous webinar, but could also be done in classroom in real time.

In distance education, the training is conducted through the internet, offering the trainee "autonomy", i.e. the possibility of studying independently of limiting factors, such as the obligation of his physical presence in a specific area. The educational material of the program will be available per teaching unit on the electronic platform of STRENGTH.

An expert in career guidance, who will be the trainer, will be responsible for the teaching

¹ Cockburn – Wootten, C. & Cockburn, T. (2011). Unsettling assumptions and boundaries: Strategies for developing a critical perspective about business and management communication. *Business Communication Quarterly* 74 (1), 45-59



of the content of the modules. S/he will guide the trainees how to go through the different parts of the modules.

The trainees will be able to study the theoretical part of each module asynchronously in ppt, notes or videos format, before the beginning of the practical part.

For the practical part of the training, participants will be guided by the trainer to implement the experiential exercises and discuss their experience. The activities will be implemented under the supervision of the trainer, either in groups or individually. The trainer will explain the scope and the instruction of each activity and facilitate the reflection process.

Trainer and trainees will meet in the training platform to go through the training activities. Most of the activities will be interactive and of different forms, such as drag and drop, matching game, online filling of form, meeting rooms for group activities, multiple choice answers, “post-it” forms, etc., in order to make the training more interesting. The material will be also available in downloadable forms (that can be used if training is implemented in real classroom).

At the end of each module, the trainee is required to complete electronically the corresponding assessment test, which may include multiple choice questions, true / false statement.

In addition, before and after the program, participants will complete an evaluation form to demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of the program on the development of career practitioner’s socio-emotional skills.

The duration of the project is: 33.5 hours (Theoretical part: 5.5 hours, Exercises: 25.5 hours, Evaluation: 2.5 hours)

Unit 1 Empathy Skills: 6 hours (Theoretical part: 1 hour, Exercises: 4.5 hours, Evaluation: 0.5 hours)

Unit 2 Emotion-Management Skills: 6 hours (Theoretical part: 1 hour, Exercises: 5 hours, Evaluation: 0.5 hours)

Unit 3 Diversity Management Skills: 6.5 hours (Theoretical part: 1 hour, Exercises: 4.5 hours, Evaluation: 0.5 hours)

Active Listening Skills: 8.5 hours (Theoretical part: 1.5 hour, Exercises: 6.5 hours, Evaluation: 0.5 hours)

Cooperation Skills: 6.5 hours (Theoretical part: 1 hour, Exercises: 5 hours, Evaluation: 0.5 hours)



Section 1: Empathy

Short Description

The purpose of this section is to familiarize you with the basic theoretical knowledge and methodology on how to improve your empathy skills (**affective empathy** and perspective-taking skills). At the same time, it highlights the need to apply empathy skills in your everyday counselling practice in order to provide quality career guidance services to your clients.

Learning Objectives

The training aims at assisting counsellors in:

- being able to facilitate mutual contact and discussion taking into consideration emotions and feelings of the other;
- being able to show understanding of the opinion and feelings of other people and accept others' as they are;
- knowing how to understand relevant unspoken information, feelings and needs of other people;
- being able to create a good conversational climate through attention, openness and respect;
- being able to focus on understanding how a person feels and why they feel that way;
- applying empathy skills in every day counselling practice to support the beneficiaries of their services.



1.1 Theoretical background

Definitions

Empathy

The notion of empathy has been central to Carl Rogers's work, a re-known humanist psychologist. He was the first to articulate the importance of empathy in the therapeutic relationship. According to him, empathy *"is the listener's effort to hear the other person deeply, accurately, and non-judgmentally. Empathy involves skilful reflective listening that clarifies and amplifies the person's own experiencing and meaning, without imposing the listener's own material"* (1951). According to his client-centred approach, one of the three basic principles that reflect the attitude of the counsellor to the client, is empathetic understanding towards them. This means that the counsellor senses accurately the feelings and personal meanings that the client is experiencing and communicates this understanding to the client. Since then, both Rogers (1975) and other psychologists (e.g. Wexler, 1974) have pointed out the process element of empathy, meaning that empathy is rather a "style of behaviors" than a state or an attitude.

The concept of empathy has since then been developed and expanded (e.g. Hartley, 1995; Duan & Hill, 1996; Bohart & Greenberg, 1997; Beck, et.al, 1979; Pearson, 1999). Research supports that the construct of empathy within the counsellor-client relationship applies to some extent across counselling theories whereas almost every approach to psychotherapy claims the therapist's empathy as central to its effectiveness (Feller & Cottone, 2003).

In counselling research, counsellor empathy can be conceptualized as interpersonal efforts to take the clients' perspectives by trying to accurately understand their cognitive and emotional experiences (Moyers & Miller, 2013). A more practical conception of empathy is Barrett-Lennard's (1981) operational definition of empathy in terms of three different perspectives: that of the therapist (empathic resonance), the observer (expressed empathy), and the client (received empathy).

It is important to highlight that the development of empathy depends on two complementary functions: the sensitivity based on emotion (affective empathy) and the assumption of the perspective of the other or otherwise cognitive empathy (perspective taking). In other words, empathetic persons are able to put themselves in someone else's position both intellectually and emotionally.



Affective empathy

Affective empathy is the capacity to share or become affectively aroused by others' emotional states at least in valence and intensity. It involves experiencing the feelings of another person. It is a person's ability to perceive and correctly express other people's emotions, drawing on verbal and non-verbal cues and an ability to understand and imagine the feelings and intentions of others (including in the past and future).

The main feature of emotional empathy is the importance given to the emotional response to a person experiencing an event. These reactions are not easily discernible, though, as the source of emotions can often not be attributed to empathy but to selfish motives (Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004).

Cognitive empathy

Perspective taking or **cognitive empathy** is the ability to consciously put oneself into the mind of another person to understand what she is thinking or feeling (Hogan, 1969). It is a person's ability to take the perspective of others and see the world through their eyes e.g., by imagining what their roles and circumstances may require from them, being able to imagine how others will be affected (Decety & Jackson, 2006).

Hoyat (2007) claims that cognitive empathy (or emotional theory of the mind) does not require one to really share one's feelings, but only to understand another person's emotional states. In other words, cognitive empathy refers to the mental understanding of the other's experience.

Furthermore, according to Dymont (1949), cognitive empathy is an individual's imaginary transposition into the thoughts and actions of another and in this way he/she manages to view the world through others' thoughts and recognize the other's role.

Characteristics of a counsellor masterful in empathy

Being empathetic goes beyond feeling or understanding how someone else feels or thinks. It incorporates a variety of socio-emotional skills and attributes, the effectiveness and combination of which can either amplify or diminish someone's empathy.

The most important characteristics of a counsellor mastering empathy are:

- *Imagination*: When practicing empathy, an individual is taking the perspective of another person. In essence, he/she is imagining what it would be like to actually be the other person.



- *Open-Mindedness*: Allowing oneself to be influenced by others' thoughts and feelings.
- *Vulnerability*: Respectfully sharing reactions and feelings about what the other person is saying, with the intent to confirm that he/she fully understands them.
- *Self-Awareness*: Understanding how other's emotions or feelings may be affecting his/her thoughts and reactions.
- *Sensitivity to Others' Emotions*: Developing his/her "emotional radar" to pick up on what people are feeling by watching their body language and facial expressions, and listening not only to their words, but to any "between the lines" meaning in the event they are not being direct and transparent.
- *Compassion*: Understanding of others' pain and developed desire to mitigate that pain.
- *Active listening*: Effectively turning down the volume on his/her own voice and turning up the volume on the other person's voice and showing curiosity by asking questions on peoples' experiences and feelings.
- *Communicative attunement*: An active, on-going effort to stay attuned on a moment-to-moment basis with the client's communications and unfolding experience.

Importance of empathy skills for career counsellors

Whereas psychotherapy research contributed substantially to a better understanding of how counsellor skills affect patient outcomes, research in career counselling has less to offer concerning these issues (Whiston & Oliver, 2005). Even though therapists and career counsellors are not the same, the similarity in counsellor-client relationships allows for career counsellors to equally assume that practicing empathy in career interventions is an equally important ingredient for helping clients to deal with career-related problems (Klonek, et.al, 2019). In fact, relationship quality criteria of the counsellor–client interaction, such as empathy (Moyers & Miller, 2013) and working alliance (i.e. De Haan, et.al, 2013) are essential criteria for counselling success across a variety of settings such as psychotherapy, coaching, and career guidance (McKenna & Davis, 2009).

Empathy is considered a core method and success measure in counselling (Moyers & Miller, 2013) because for any counselling tactic to work, the counsellor has to make the person in treatment feel understood. To do this, the counsellor must not only understand what a person says in a session but also understand what the person is not saying and communicate this understanding (Martin, 2010). Empathy helps connect people, moving them toward each other in a helping capacity and allows people to build social connections with others. Thus, being empathetic ensures counsellors are listening and dealing with the clients' concerns as they present them. Moreover, certain behaviours, such as demonstrating empathy, encouragement and appreciation are generally considered beneficial to the development of an affective bond (e.g., Gregory & Levy, 2011; O'Broin & Palmer, 2010).



Retrospectively, lack of empathy undermines the process of developing and maintaining interpersonal connections. It presents difficulties in repairing conflicts, collaborative working and solving problems, all of which are bits of the career counselling process. Moreover, poor cognitive empathy was correlated with deficiencies in self-awareness of emotional states which make career counselling less effective (William, et. al, 2016).

Another important gain in counsellors exercising empathy is effective emotional regulation. Emotional regulation is important in that it allows us to manage what we are feeling, even in times of great stress, without becoming overwhelmed. By using empathy while interacting with clients, counsellors are able to build the relationship, check their own understanding, provide adequate support and focus their attention on the client (Hanna, 2001).

Lastly, it is important to mention that client contribution is equally important in the counselling process, as he/she influences the level of therapist's empathy (Elliott, et. al, 2011). In fact, empathy appears to be a mutual process of shared communicative attunement (Orlinsky et al., 1994). It is worth noting, however, that when counsellors are truly empathic, they attune to their clients' needs and accordingly adjust how and how much they express empathy (Duan & Hill, 1996; Martin, 2000). Therefore, even though effective empathy requires a two-way honest interaction, counsellor's high empathetic attitude ensures more likely successful counselling sessions.

Empathy skills in practice

Empathy is a major element of counselling process. Part of being a truly empathetic counsellor, is to be able to detect clients' reactions and adjust how and how much he/she express empathy. In line with several authors (e.g., De Haan, 2008; De Haan, Culpin & Curd, 2009; Rogers, 1973, Klonek, et. al, 2019) functional socio-emotional skills predict counsellor empathy.

Among the most common ways counsellors can use in order to get into their client's shoes are:

- ✓ *Put aside their viewpoints*: People often don't realize the extent to which their own experiences and beliefs are influencing how they perceive other people and situations. Muting themselves down a bit in order to put those things aside can help them focus on the person in front of them and help them tune in better to what is happening for him or her.
- ✓ *Listen intently*: Sometimes people listen to others while already developing their response or defence to what they are saying. Not only are they not able to hear what others are saying, but they often miss key pieces of information that can help them better understand what the other person is trying to convey. Counsellors should give themselves permission to turn down the volume on their own voice and turn up the volume on the other person's voice.



- ✓ Use their imagination: As people share experiences, emotions with counsellors, the latter have to try to imagine what it is like to be them. They have to use the images their clients are sharing, their emotions, or their circumstances and try to place themselves there, just to see what it might feel like to be them in these moments.
- ✓ Try not to fix or downsize others' experiences: When people are around someone in need, especially when they are experiencing challenging emotions, it can be easy for them to want to jump in and fix it. Even though in that way, people are trying to be helpful, this can leave others feeling unseen and unheard, thus undermining the counselling process.
- ✓ Be curious and make sure they understand what the client is saying, using active listening techniques: Asking questions about experiences, using active listening techniques, helps people feel seen and heard and it's a nice way to practice empathy. Counsellors who show an active interest in making sure they understand what the client is saying acquire higher levels of empathy, whereas low empathy ratings were given when there was "little interest in the point of view and in the experiences of the client" (Brueck et al., 2006, Klonek, et. al, 2019). Paraphrasing the clients' statements or using summaries positively predict counsellor empathy, as typical behaviours associated with empathy are paraphrasing or addressing the client's feelings (e.g., Rogers, 1973, Korman, Bavelas, & De Jong, 2013). When counsellors paraphrase their client's statements, show appreciation, and use humorous expressions (Sultanoff, 2003) build on empathy and retain a positive working alliance (Klonek, et. al, 2019).
- ✓ Non-verbal signals can also help counsellors understand how the client responds in their empathetic approach. When their empathic responses have been successful, it can be evident from the client's response, a nod of the head or a positive verbal response. If their empathic responses have not been accurate, the client will probably indicate this non-verbally by stopping, fumbling or becoming frustrated. Being aware of these signs will assist counsellors in relating to the challenging client. They may need to adjust their approach if the client is not responding to them.

Methods of empathy skills improvement

Self-awareness and **reflection** can serve in identifying our own emotions and emotions of others. Moreover, **self-monitoring** can be used to reflect on how we express emotions. Self-awareness and self-monitoring serve in understanding our own experiences and emotions which is a first and important step in developing empathy. On the other hand, **mindfulness** techniques enhance personal attunement and provide attentional and emotional self-regulation. Therefore, self-awareness and mindfulness techniques can prove beneficial in cultivating empathy.



As an example, a type of mindfulness meditation called loving-kindness meditation (LKM) has been shown to increase cognitive empathy levels in masters-level counselling students (Leppma & Young, 2016). In fact, empirical research showed that six weeks (six-hour-long, weekly sessions) of practicing this loving-kindness meditation was enough to increase empathy levels, indicating it is an accessible way for all therapists to increase their own levels of empathy.

Cognitive processes, such as **role-taking** and communication skills training can also supplement counsellors' self-improvement since cognitive empathy is based in switching attention to take another's perspective (Mead, 1934). In fact, a study's results suggested that taking client's perspective in viewing their life situations as well as managing one's own reactions to the client's distress, contribute to the development of counselling self-efficacy among counsellors-in-training (Khattar & Gawali, 2014).

Furthermore, empathy can be developed and improved by regular practicing among counsellors. Over time, the ability to understand and relate to the emotions of others becomes stronger and among useful techniques to practice empathy are:

- *Talking to other people.* Practitioners have to make it a point to begin conversations with people they meet and see across their day-to-day interactions. While engaging in the conversation, paying particular attention to what that person is feeling is of high importance.
- *Noticing body language cues.* This can include the tone of voice, subtle shifts in energy and other types of nonverbal communication.
- *Focusing on listening without interrupting.* Managing both the distractions and their own feelings and working on staying emotionally attuned throughout the conversation are good techniques for improving empathy. Focusing on understanding the how's and why's in each conversation and active listening can help strengthen counsellors' emotional understanding and empathy.
- *Trying to understand people, even when they don't agree with them.*
- *Asking people questions to learn more about them and their lives.*
- *Imagining themselves in another person's shoes.*
- *Taking action.* Counsellors should first recognize that they can do things to make a difference in someone else's life.
- Lastly, in the context of self-improvement and reflecting upon someone's own career counselling approaches, practitioners can benefit from using **video-based analyses**. By coding their own sessions, counsellors have a tool to "systematically understand their micro-behavioural repertoire within a session", allowing inspection of specific behaviours and interactions (Klonek., et. al,2019) even if these assessments are still relatively uncommon in career research (Hirschi, 2017).



1.2 Suggested activities to improve Empathy Skills

Activity 1 – Recognize Responds

(source: Sherri Sorro- AVP/ The transformer - <http://thetransformer.us/08-3.pdf>)

Information for IT programmer: Combination of two types of activities.

- A. Exercise type drag and drop. The trainee will be shown the 12 dialogues and then among the list with responses, he/she will choose the one that matches with each dialogue. After finishing all the matches, he/she will be given the answer – red the wrong ones and green the right.
- B. Rooms to reflect on their answers

Activity type: Cognitive method

Learning goals: This exercise can help participants to learn about the different ways they can respond to a person in need of support, and why empathy is usually a good way to assist other people in overcoming their difficulties.

Specificities: Individual or group activity, but shall be implemented in groups for the reflection part. The learners can go through the activity alone or in groups of 2 persons and then come back in one group to reflect upon their experience over the activity.

Duration: 45 minutes

Material needed: “The list with responses” & Dialogues (available online –drag and drop activity or in printed form)

Useful information for the trainer: *At first you shall explain the aim of this activity mentioning that there are several responses that we usually use during interactions. This activity’s scope is to assist participants to recognize each time what kind or response they use and most important which of the responses is most effective, especially in a counseling process.*

In this activity they will have to read 12 dialogues and to match them with the provided responses. The categories of the responses are:

- Advising: giving advice on what to do as a solution to the problem
- one-upping: minimize the importance of the situation
- educating: try to make the other to see the situation as something to learn from



- consoling: saying things to make the other person to feel better when s/he is sad or disappointed
- story-telling: start telling similar stories from own experience
- shutting-down: trying to distract the attention, focusing on something totally different
- sympathizing: feeling or expressing compassion, as for the other's suffering
- interrogating: making questions to find out what was the individual's actions that led to this situation
- explaining: trying to give explanations on what the other person said
- correcting: saying that what was mentioned is not correct
- fixing it: give the solution to the problem
- empathizing: trying to get in the other person's shoes

Get trainees in groups of 2 (otherwise they can go through the dialogues alone) and guide them how to categorize each dialogue in the given categories. When all groups (persons) have finished with the categorization, get them in one group for discussion over their experience.

Instructions: There is a list of different types of responses that are common during interactions. Read each dialogue between A and B and decide what type of response B uses. Connect each type of response to each of the following "short dialogues" between user A and B.

List of Responses

- advising
- one-upping
- educating
- consoling
- story-telling
- shutting-down
- sympathizing
- interrogating
- explaining
- correcting
- fixing it
- emphasizing



Dialogues

1. A: I've been trying to get this weight off and just feel frustrated.
B: What actions have you taken so far for that? (**Interrogating**)
2. A: I'm worried about having enough money to pay my debts this month.
B I can lend you some money. (**Fix it**)
3. A: I lost my job.
B: Cheer up, let's go have a drink and forget about it. (**Shutting down**)
4. A: Look at my scar from my accident.
B: That's tiny, look at what I got when I was hit by a bike. (**One-upping**)
5. A: I was standing in the cue to get into the bank for 1 hour and it was too hot and people around be starting shouting and pushing each other.
B: That reminds me of the time..... (**Story telling**)
6. A: I have so much to do today.
B: Are you feeling overwhelmed and wanting help? (**Empathy**)
7. A: It's scary for me to get up and speak in front of people.
B: I think you should join a theatre team (**Advising**)
8. A: I'm really sad over your saying that I'm not a good mother.
B: That's not what I said. (**Correcting**)
9. A: My husband found a new job and had to move in a town 300Km away from our home.
B: See it as a chance to learn how is to leave alone. (**Educating**)
10. B: A: I feel so sad that my son was expelled from school due to his bad behaviour towards his professor.
B: It's not your fault, you are a good parent. You did the best you could. (**Consoling**)
11. A: I'm really upset. You promised to be here at 23.00 and it is now after midnight.
B: It's only because the traffic was terrible (**Explaining**)
12. A: I just got the results from the medical exams and it was what I most feared.
B: Oh, that's terrible. I'm so sorry. (**Sympathizing**)

Questions for reflection: (After having finished the matching exercise participants get in groups for further reflections upon their choses).

Which of the response style is most appropriate in a counselling session?

Which is/are not appropriate and a counsellor should avoid?

What role might empathy play in your workplace, classroom and community?

How has this activity impacted you?



Activity 2 – Role play on Real life scenario

[Information for IT programmer: Activity type B: Rooms to meet. The description of tasks and the scenario will be provided on the page of the activity \(we could also give them the option to download them –pdf file\).](#)

Activity type: Role playing - Experiential

Learning goals: The exercise of role playing based on a real life scenario aims at assisting participants into using the appropriate techniques/questions to show empathy towards the other person. The person in the role of the counsellor will be able to understand the emotions of the “client” and respond to him in an empathetic way, while the “client” will feel how it is the other to get into your shoes or not.

Specificities: Group activity

Duration: 45 minutes

Material needed: Scenario (available on the platform and in printed form)

Useful information for the trainer:

This is a role playing activity based on a real life scenario. You shall ask two participants to volunteer to role play. One is the job seeker/client and the other is the counsellor.

The counsellor has to handle the situation showing empathy. Both the counsellor and the client will have 10-minute preparation. Invite the person who gets in the role of the counsellor to work in a 3-5 persons’ group to prepare the best way to respond empathetically to the situation. You could propose them to look for some basic information on labour legislation in the case of migrants, on information offices for migrants, various sites that can help him find a job, so as s/he can offer objective, real information, get easier in the client’s shoes and in that way to make empathy gain ground.

The client should read the given scenario and get into the role of Haldi. Invite him to work also in a 3-5 persons’ group to better define his case and communication strategies.

Then, they have a 10-minute dialogue.

When the role-playing is finished the group shall reflect upon their experience according to the reflection questions.

Instructions:

Client: Read carefully the given scenario and try to perform as Haldi taking into account possible difficulties, barriers he may encounter in the job search. You can work in a small team for getting prepared for the role.



Counsellor: Read the given scenario and get prepared to practice empathy in your role-playing. You can get help and discuss how best you can show empathy to the client from other trainees.

Go on the role playing for 10 minutes.

Scenario: Haldi, a young engineer, needs to find a job. If he cannot find a job soon, the authorities will force him to leave the country. Haldi has been trying to find a job for two months but has failed so far, which is why he is becoming increasingly desperate. In Ruth's counselling session, he expresses anger, disappointment, and lack of trust towards employers who do not want to employ migrants in their businesses. He feels that everyone in the country is hostile and prejudiced against him as a migrant.

Questions for reflection

- *How is the client feeling at the beginning and at the end of the session?*
- *What are the feelings of the counsellor throughout the session?*
- *What are the feelings of the observers while watching them play?*
- *Has the counsellor used the appropriate techniques to show his empathy?*
- *Is there anything else that he could do in a different way?*
- *What is the overall experience of the group upon this activity?*



Activity 3 – Empathy Role playing

Information for IT programmer: Activity type B: Rooms to meet. The description of tasks and the scenario will be provided on the page of the activity (we could also give them the option to download them –pdf file).

Activity type: Role playing

Learning goals: The exercise of role playing based on participants' experiences aims at making participants aware of the emotional status of the speaker and trying to respond in an empathetic way and on the other hand at experiencing the feeling of knowing that the other person is trying to get into their shoes or not.

Specificities: Group activity (work in pairs)

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials needed: none

Useful information for the trainer:

This is a role-play activity. Invite trainees to get in pairs. One will be the practitioner and the other the client. They will practice both roles.

The client will bring into discussion an emotionally intense experience (negative or positive) that s/he wants to share with the “practitioner”. It’s important for the trainees who are in the role of the “client” to feel safe/secured when they go for their self-disclosure. So, they can share any experience they feel comfortable to share and to the extent they want to.

The practitioner makes his best effort to respond in an empathetic way, trying also to notice signs of emotion in the partner’s face or body language (listener).

Once the practitioner knows how his/her partner is feeling, he/she can use an empathetic phrase such as:

“Given what you said about your... , I imagine you might be feeling _ . Is that what you’re feeling?”

“I imagine you might be feeling...,” or “I imagine you might have felt...”

This will last for 5 minutes. After the 1st role play, the roles are reversed and the process starts again.

When both trainees finish with the assigned task they come in one group to reflect upon their experience.



Instructions:

Get into groups. One person will be in the role of the practitioner and the other will be the client. The client shares an experience where s/he came up with strong feelings (negative or positive). The other person makes his/her best effort to respond in an empathetic way, trying also to notice signs of emotion in the partner's face or body language.

Some phrases the practitioner can use are:

“Given what you said about your... , I imagine you might be feeling _ . Is that what you're feeling?”

“I imagine you might be feeling...,” or “I imagine you might have felt...”

Role play for 5 minutes and then change roles.

At the end of the 2 sessions, get back in the team to discuss how well the “practitioners” expressed their empathy and what was your overall experience of this exercise.

Questions for reflection:

- How did the client feel?
- Has the practitioner used empathetic questions?
- How did the practitioner feel? Was it difficult for him/her to get into the client's shoes?
- Did the body language help him/her in recognizing the feelings of the client?
- *What did you learn from this task?*



Activity 4 – Body scan relaxation

Information for IT programmer: Activity type F: Use of Video and then Meet in Room

Activity type: Mindfulness

Learning goals: The purpose of this activity is to pay attention to the inner experiences. This is because according to Rogers (1982) the first step to be able to accept others and care for them, is to be aware of their own inner experiences. This can be practiced by performing some mindfulness exercises. Trainees will practice in regulating the own awareness to the inner mental and physical events in the present moment and to get connected with them.

Specificities: The activity can be implemented either individually or in group. In both cases after the mindfulness technique, trainees will discuss in group their experience.

Duration: 40 minutes

Needed material: Body scan meditation (audio file)

Information for the trainer:

At first you can give some useful information about the technique of “body scanning” to trainees and point out the importance to do this kind of exercise regularly in order to develop empathy and connectedness with inner and outer worlds.

Body scanning involves paying attention to parts of the body and bodily sensations in a gradual sequence from feet to head. By mentally scanning yourself, you bring awareness to every single part of your body, noticing any aches, pains, tension, or general discomfort. The purpose of this technique is to tune in to your body—to reconnect to your physical self—and notice any sensations you’re feeling without judgement. While many people find the body scan relaxing, relaxation is not the primary goal. The goal is to train the mind to be more open and aware of sensory experiences—and ultimately, more accepting. So, paying attention to the body and bodily sensations is the “gateway” to more caring behavior—allowing us to notice that someone is suffering or that our actions are hurting someone and by this this way we can improve our empathy.

When participants are ready to start the meditation exercise, they can have access to the script of it through the platform or in case of group meditation you can read them the script. At the end of the meditation, invite all trainees to share their experience.



Instructions:

Make yourself comfortable and close your eyes gently following the instructions (in the audio file) to practice body-scan.

Script (to be presented in audio format with voice in all partner languages)

1. Lie down on your bed and find a comfortable position laying on your back with your arms put loosely on the sides and your legs put parallel without touching each other. (pause 2 seconds)
2. Gently close your eyes and relax (pause 2 seconds)
3. You have nowhere to go. Leave behind the day that has just passed and don't bring tomorrow in mind. Stay in the "now" (pause) In this moment you offer yourself the gift of relaxation. You deserve it. (pause 2 seconds)
Let's begin with taking a deep breath filling your belly with air as you inhale (pause) and emptying it completely as you exhale.(pause)
As I count from 1 to 4, start inhaling slowly. When I reach 4 you should have filled your belly completely with air. Next, start exhaling, as I count from 1 to 6 and emptying your belly completely by the time I reach 6.
4. Let's begin: Inhale : 1, 2, 3, 4. Exhale: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
5. Again: Inhale 2, 3, 4.... exhale 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
6. One last time. Inhale 2, 3, 4 ... exhale 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
7. Now, give yourself some time to observe the sensations on your body. (pause 4 seconds)
8. Check if you feel some discomfort anywhere. Adjust your posture appropriately ...if it helps. Compare the sensation you feel at the point of the discomfort, with the sensation in another point where there is no disturbance. (pause 4 seconds)
9. Pay attention to the places where your body touches the mattress and see how this sensation differs compared to the sensations in the rest of your body. (pause 4 seconds)
10. Now, turn your attention to your toes and wiggle them a little. (pause 3 seconds)



11. Feel a relaxing energy **moving slowly** through them and towards your soles, covering your feet completely and moving on towards your ankles relaxing completely every part (pause 2 seconds)
12. Feel the energy moving up through your shins and calves relaxing them (pause 2 seconds) Now your shins and calves are completely relaxed. (pause 2 seconds)
13. Turn your attention to your thighs. Feel the energy penetrating them and relaxing them fully. (pause 2 seconds)
14. Now, feel the energy moving up to your waist (pause 2 seconds) and pelvis. Feel them relaxing. (pause 2 seconds)
15. Relax your belly and feel the internal organs inside the stomach area relaxing completely. (pause 5 seconds)
16. Feel the energy moving up towards your chest. Feel your chest relaxing fully (pause 2 seconds) Relax your lungs and feel your heart beating rhythmically. (pause 2 seconds)
17. Relax your shoulders. (pause) Feel your shoulders sinking down (pause 3 seconds)
18. Feel the energy moving gradually from your shoulders to your fingertips penetrating and relaxing completely your arms, forearms and hands. (pause 2 seconds)
19. Focus on your throat. Feel your throat muscles relaxing.. (pause 2 seconds)
20. Relax your jaw and your tongue in your mouth. (pause 2 seconds) Relax the muscles around your mouth, letting your lips half- open. (pause 2 seconds)
21. Relax your nose, (pause) your cheeks (pause) and your ears (pause 2 seconds)
22. Relax the area around your eyes (pause). Feel your eyelids heavy and your eyes completely relaxed.
23. Turn your attention to your forehead. (pause 2 seconds) Feel the subtle relaxing energy penetrating it, smoothing out every wrinkle and allowing a feeling of complete relaxation in the area. (pause 2 seconds)
24. Feel the energy moving up to the top of your head. (pause) Pay attention to a subtle vibration that you can feel there maybe. Feel the top of your head completely relaxed. (pause 2 seconds)



25. Now your whole body is completely relaxed. You are so relaxed that you feel like laying on a cloud or maybe so light ... like not having a body (pause 2 seconds) Enjoy this feeling of absolute relaxation for a while. (pause 5 seconds)
26. Now you can allow yourself enjoy a restful and calm sleep.

Questions for reflection:

How was your experience with body scan meditation?

Did you have any difficulty in practicing?

Do you feel different after practicing it?

Are there any feelings you want to share with us?



Activity 5 -Understand and share the feelings of others

Information for IT programmer: Separate rooms to role play and then get back in a common Room

Activity type: Case studies

Learning goals: The exercise aims at assisting participants through real life scenarios to practice empathy and try to recognize how the clients are feeling. Given different scenarios, the participants have the opportunity to put themselves into the role of a practitioner having to deal with different cases and in each of them to try to use methods/questions to express his/her empathy toward the client.

Specificities: Group activity

Duration: 1 hour

Materials needed: scenarios

Useful notes for the trainer:

The activity will be implemented in small groups The activity will be implemented in small groups of 3 persons. In each group there will be 3 roles: Clients, Practitioners and Observers. Present them the scenarios (available in the STRENGTH platform online and in downloadable form). Every client pairs with one practitioner and one observer. Invite trainees who take the role of the client to express the feeling of each case. Trainees who are in the role of practitioners try to assist their clients in expressing their problem and make them feel accepted by getting in their shoes. The observer keeps notes on the techniques that the practitioner uses and the points that facilitate the counselling process and shows empathy.

All participants shall get in all 3 roles. Each member of the group shall choose one of the scenarios given to role play the client.

Each role-play should last for about 5-10 minutes. At the end of each, the participants summarize how well the practitioner expressed his empathy.

The trainer can supervise the process of role-playing and in case needed, s/he can intervene to help participants. At the end of this process, all participants come together to reflect upon their experience.



Instructions:

Get in groups of 3. Choose one of the 3 scenarios each of you to get in the role of the client and get prepared to express what you are feeling toward the situation “you” experience.

The practitioner shall try to express his empathy toward the client.

The observer writes down the reactions of the client and the practitioner and the best practices the practitioner implemented to express empathy.

You shall get in all 3 roles.

Scenarios

1. *Filipe the Agitator*

Christina is facilitating a collective session on job search practices for a group of more than 100 people from different educational and professional backgrounds. Throughout the session, Christina is frequently interrupted by Filipe who appears to have an opinion on every topic and always ends up blaming the government, the political system, or the big capitalist companies. Filipe’s seemingly innocent remarks provoke approving and disapproving responses from the rest of the group, leading to chatter among people and additional public remarks. For Christina, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the focus of the session and cover all contents in time.

2. *Bill the Angry Teenager*

Bill, a 16-year-old boy, is an excellent student. Despite his hard efforts, he never receives any approval from his parents, especially not from his mother. He feels that they are never satisfied with his work and achievements, while they show great admiration for his little brother. Now, in Olivia’s career counselling session, Bill is not interested in discussing his personal career-related needs and interests. His primary interest is to make a choice that will hurt and upset his parents and make them feel powerless.

3. *Laura and Sports – Passion or Career?*

Monica, a school counsellor, welcomes Laura (14, 8th grade) and her parents. Laura would like to become a professional volleyball player. She wants to continue her studies at the Sports High School and passed an aptitude test. Her parents, who initially supported the idea, now think that Laura should visit one of the best high schools in the city to take foreign language classes, instead. Laura is good at foreign languages, and her parents fear that the Sports High



School will not promote Laura's academic learning. The decision what school Laura will attend needs to be made immediately. Laura and her parents vehemently oppose each other.

Notes for reflection:

Did the practitioner recognize the feeling of the client?

Was it easy or difficult to recognize the feeling of the client?

Did the practitioner manage to show empathy?

How did the client feel in the counselling process?

What techniques/practices were helpful towards expressing empathy?

What techniques/practices were not helpful towards expressing empathy?

Have you experienced a similar situation like the one in the study case? How did you feel, how did you manage, how was the situation solved/ended?

What can you do, generally, when confronting with various situations/feelings?



Activity 6 – It’s not about the Nail

Information for IT programmer: Combination of two types of activities F & B

First, they will be presented with the description of the activity and then play the video (Type F: Video presentation) and after that they will be meet in room (type B) to discuss

Activity type: Experiential

Learning goals: Through this exercise/video, participants will see that often the biggest mistake we make is we try to “fix” or “solve the problem,” rather than empathize with our partner.

Specificities: Individual or group activity

Duration: 20 minutes

Material needed: The video “It’s not about the nail”

Useful notes for the trainer:

Explain to trainees that they will watch a video first and then come back in group to discuss upon their experience.

Instructions:

Watch this short video “It’s Not About the Nail” and then discuss in group on your experience.

Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4EDhdAHRog>

Questions for reflection:

What is the moral of this video?

What are your feelings and thoughts emerged?

Can you bring in mind a case where you acted like the man in the video?



1.3 Self-evaluation Exercises

The following multiple choice questions will help you to reflect on the educational material of the section and evaluate your understanding on the basic relevant concepts and theoretical background. (5 questions for each section)

Question 1

Fill in the following sentence with the right phrase.

The main feature of emotional empathy is the importance given to...

1. the diverse background of a person.
2. the understanding towards someone's thoughts.
3. the emotional response to a person experiencing an event.
4. the body language of others.

Question 2

Please choose right or wrong for the following text.

Cognitive empathy refers to the mental understanding of the other's experience.

1. Right
2. Wrong

Question 3

Please choose the right answer to the following question.

Which of the following practices develop empathy?

1. Trying to fix others' problems.
2. Listening without engaging.
3. Interrupting someone to correct their statements.
4. Asking people questions to learn more about them and their lives.

Question 4

Please choose right or wrong for the following text.

Empathy appears to be a mutual process of shared communicative attunement.

1. Right
2. Wrong

Question 5

Fill in the following sentence with the right phrase.

When a client is unresponsive to the counsellor's empathic expression, ...

1. inevitably the counselling process fails.
2. it does not affect the counselling process.
3. counsellors cannot do anything to change the situation.



4. counsellors need to attune to their clients' needs and accordingly adjust how and how much they express empathy.



1.4 Resources for further study - References

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=94&v=4EDhdAHRog&feature=emb_logo

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Section 2: Emotion Management

Short Description

The goal is to increase participants' **understanding** and awareness of their **emotions** and other people's emotions, and to help them manage their own emotions better. On the one hand, participants will be trained in understanding emotions, their value and nature and on the other hand, they will improve their **emotional self-awareness**. Finally, the training aims at promoting **emotional self-control**, how to regulate and influence one's own emotions to motivate oneself, achieve goals, and deal with stress, control or redirect one's emotions and impulses, and how to persevere in the face of obstacles and setbacks

Learning Objectives

The training aims at assisting career practitioners in:

- realising the importance of emotion management and the concepts that revolve around it in effective career guidance and counselling services;
- learning the theoretical approaches that can contribute to the counsellor's emotion management;
- being able to facilitate mutual contact and discussion taking into consideration emotions and feelings of others;
- being able to focus on understanding how a person feels and why he/she feels that way, being also able to cope with negative emotions in a constructive way;
- being able to exercise emotional self-control and self-awareness.



2.1 Theoretical background

Emotions are **psychophysiological processes** that are triggered by the cognitive evaluation of an object and are accompanied by physiological changes, specific cognitions, subjective feelings, and a change in the willingness to behave (Forgas, 1995; Zeelenberg, Nelissen, & Pieters, 2007).

Emotions are not only an important part of persons' daily lives, but they also contribute to their identities, helping them to understand who they are and to share who they are with others. Even though emotions are not the only important factor in individuals' lives, they play a variety of important roles in their lives, including:

- Informing people that an important goal or need can be pursued or inhibited in the current situation;
- Contributing to goal setting;
- Contributing to the appraisal of the self and the environment;
- Communicating intentions to others and regulating interactions;
- Informing of decision making;
- Alerting people to threats (Greenberg, 2004).

Emotions evolved to promote human survival by initiating certain behaviours, e.g., fear, generating a physiological response to avoid danger in the form of fight or flight. Humans experience their emotional responses through an unconscious route or via a conscious route, which enables a more considerate response to a situation. Moreover, emotions are short-lived, serving to adapt to changing environmental conditions (Stangl, 2020). However, emotions that one has experienced in one situation can affect the experience of other, unrelated experiences that take place shortly afterwards.

As emotions are important in all social processes, both internal (e.g., decision-making) and interactional, the ability to understand, be aware and actively manage emotions is considered a skill/competence on its own.

Definitions

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence was classified among the 7 types of "intelligence" people have and practice while learning (Gardner, 1993). Moreover, according to Mayer's and Salovey (1993) emotional intelligence is considered a mental ability. Specifically, «emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth» (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).



The model of Mayer & Salovey (1997) comprises four abilities: perception, assimilation (use emotion to facilitate thought), understanding, and regulation of emotions. Concisely, emotional perception consists of the ability to identify emotions in the facial and postural expressions of others. It reflects non-verbal perception and emotional expression to communicate via the face and voice. The assimilation of emotions is the ability to generate, use, and feel emotions as necessary to communicate feelings, or to use them in other cognitive processes. Emotional understanding is related to the ability to understand emotional information, how emotions combine and shift across time, and the ability to appreciate emotional meanings. It also includes the capacity to label and discriminate between feelings. Finally, emotional regulation refers to the ability to stay open to feelings, and to monitor and regulate one's and other's emotions to promote understanding and personal growth.

These four branches are hierarchically organized, thus, perceiving emotions is at the most basic level, and managing emotions is at the highest and most complex level in the hierarchy, therefore, the ability to regulate one's and other's emotions is built on the basis of the competences of the three other branches (Mayer et al., 2004).

In this module, we will consider three dimensions of emotion management: **a. the emotional self-awareness**, **b. understanding emotions** and **c. the emotional (self) control or (self-) management**. Aspects related to the understanding and recognition of others' emotions are dealt with in the previous module on empathy.

a. Emotional (self-) awareness

Daniel Goleman (1995) defines emotional self-awareness as the ability to recognize our internal states, preferences, emotions, and their effects. In other words, it is the ability to **perceive** and correctly **express** one's own emotions while also understanding the impacts of those emotions to others.

Perceiving emotions refers to the ability to identify emotions accurately through the attendance, detection, and deciphering of emotional signals in faces, pictures, or voices (Papadogiannis, Logan, & Sitarenios, 2009). This ability involves identifying emotions in one's own physical and psychological states, as well as an awareness of, and sensitivity to, the emotions of others (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999)

According to Mayer & Salovey (1997) perceiving emotions includes the ability to:

1. Identify emotions in one's physical states, feelings and thoughts
2. Perceive emotions in other people through facial expression, language and behaviour
3. Express emotions accurately when desired
4. Understand how emotions are displayed depending on the context and culture



5. Discriminate accurate versus inaccurate emotional expressions

b. Understanding emotions

Emotional understanding involves the ability to accurately perceive and analyse emotions as well as to employ emotional knowledge when needed. It comprises the ability to comprehend the connections between different emotions and how emotions change over time and situations (Rivers, Brackett, Salovey, & Mayer, 2007). According to Mayer and Salovey (1997), emotional understanding includes the following abilities.

1. The ability to **label emotions** and recognize relations among the words and the emotions;
2. The ability to **interpret** the meanings that emotions convey and to understand their **causes and consequences**;
3. The ability to **understand complex feelings**, like simultaneous feelings of love and hate;
4. The ability to **comprehend** and recognize possible **transitions among emotions**.

In their revised model, Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2016), added several abilities/skills to each branch. As far as emotional understanding is concerned, the added abilities are:

1. The **sensitivity to cultural context** and the ability to recognize cultural differences when evaluating emotions;
2. The ability to understand how a person might feel in the future or under certain conditions, namely **affective forecasting**;
3. The ability to **distinguish between moods and emotions** and
4. The ability to appraise the situations likely to elicit emotions

c. Emotional self-control

Emotional self-control is the ability of **regulating and influencing** one's own emotions to motivate oneself, achieve goals, deal with stress and persevere in the face of obstacles and setbacks. It refers to the ability to regulate one's own and others' emotions successfully. Such ability would entail the capacity to maintain, shift, and cater emotional responses, either positive or negative, to a given situation (Rivers et al., 2007). This could be reflected in the maintenance of a positive mood in a challenging situation or curbing elation at a time in which an important decision must be made. It occurs every time one (consciously or unconsciously) activates the goal to influence the emotion-generative process (Gross et al., 2011).

Emotion regulation may be **intrinsic/intrapersonal** (regulating one's own emotions) or **extrinsic/interpersonal** (enhancing interpersonal relations) (Gross and Jazaieri, 2014). It



is important to note that emotional self-regulation can be exercised both in decreasing the experiential and/or behavioural aspects of negative emotions (Gross et al., 2006) and in increasing positive ones. Moreover, emotion regulation does not just involve down-regulation. It can also involve maintaining or increasing emotion, as when we maintain enthusiasm in order to achieve a long and difficult task or increase our amusement at a colleague's supposedly funny joke (Pena- Sarrionandia et al., 2015).

Importance of emotion management skills for career practitioners

Becoming aware of emotions and correctly defining them allow the individual to better understand themselves and others. Emotions are an important component affecting and directing thoughts and behaviour (Beck, 2011). Practitioners who can detect and define their own emotions, may be able to see their effect on thoughts and the underlying motivation for their behaviour and in consequence for their clients' behaviour. In this way, they can manage their emotions, express them, display adaptive behaviour in stressful situations and be more effective in working with their clients.

Career practitioners with high emotional intelligence levels do not only notice emotions in the tone of other people's voices, gestures, mimics, verbal statements but also use an empathic approach. Those who can manage their own emotions and understand those of others produce more constructive and positive reactions in dealing with emotional problems and social relationships (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008). Therefore, emotional intelligence is viewed as an important factor in counselling skills of practitioners. Additionally, Carkhuff (2009) revealed that counsellors' professional and personal development influences their counselling services' efficacy and success. As a result, they have to develop themselves physically, mentally, and social-emotionally to become a model for their clients (Daniels, 1994).

Moreover, as CGC is based **on interaction**, professional knowledge and social-emotional skills can be considered of equal importance. Regardless of different counselling approaches, career practitioners need to develop emotional skills in order to **empathise** and **understand** the emotional state (whether through verbal or non-verbal signals) of their clients, as well as to **regulate** their own emotions when working with them. Diverse studies have found that people's ability to sympathize with others (e.g., clients) is based on their ability to regulate their own emotional response to others' distress (e.g., Eisenberg, 2000; Song, Colasante, & Malti, 2018): If counsellors cannot cope with the emotional distress of their clients (empathic over-arousal), their most likely response will be a state of "personal distress" that motivates them to reduce their *own* distress (not the client's; Hoffman, 2000; Batson, 2011). Empathetic counsellors therefore draw on emotional self-management skills: Their ability to manage their own emotions constructively allows them to continue empathizing with their clients, even when their clients are suffering a lot. As Frans de Waal (2009, p. 124) points out: "In order to show



genuine interest in someone else, offering help when required, one needs to be able to keep one's own boat steady." Admittedly, career practitioners are facing major challenges in their everyday practice, dealing with changes even more demanding than for other professionals because they need to precede social and labour market developments which are evolving faster than they can adjust (Zins et al., 2004).

In Corey's (2013) view, effective practitioners know who they are, what they want from life and what they find important. The emotional intelligence levels of counsellors will be high if they respect themselves, are aware of their values and aims, and recognize their emotions, strengths and weaknesses (Egan, 1986). Effective practitioners know themselves, understand others, and form effective relationships with clients. To do this, they need to be able to manage their own emotions and those of others and display adaptive behaviour to direct their clients in this manner (Clark, 2010).

Methods for emotion management skills improvement

As defined in IO1 (Toolkit of methods for developing & enhancing Social-Emotional Skills of Career Guidance Practitioners) there are several methods for improving emotion management, categorised in Primary cognitive oriented methods, Combination of cognitive and behavioural methods, Mindfulness, Supervision.

➤ *Primary cognitive oriented methods*

Within primary cognitive oriented methods there is the use of questionnaires and the ABC model.

Questionnaires can be used in training with professionals and focus on the thoughts derived from emotions while stimulating reflections (see Emotional Competence Questionnaire, EKF, Rindemann, 2009).

Albert Ellis' ABC Model (Ellis, 1991) is also another tool based on cognitive training and reflection. Its name refers to the components of the model. Here is what each letter stands for:

- **A.** Adversity or activating event.
- **B.** Your beliefs about the event. It involves both obvious and underlying thoughts about situations, yourself, and others.
- **C.** Consequences, which includes your behavioural or emotional response.

The basic idea is that "our emotions and behaviours (C: Consequences) are not directly determined by life events (A: Activating Events), but rather by the way these events are cognitively processed and evaluated (B: Beliefs). Here, cognitive reflection is based on biographical events and the main focus is on the connection between B and C and the behavioural or emotional responses and the automatic beliefs that might be behind them.



➤ *Combination of cognitive and behavioural methods*

Cognitive-behavioural approaches to emotion management/regulation are based on the idea that emotions are a universal human experience that guide behaviour and guide change (Greenberg and Johnson 1988). Instead of focusing solely on cognition through the process of counselling, cognitive-behavioural (CB) approaches evoke and work with the emotion that is tied to a cognitive thought process. According to Greenberg (2004), three principles guide effective work with emotions:

1. Increasing awareness of emotion: this is the first goal and must be achieved, at least to some degree, before moving on to the next goals;
2. Enhancing emotion regulation: Learning to regulate and **cope with difficult or intense emotions** is a valuable skill to have;
3. Transforming emotion: The ability to transform a maladaptive emotion into an adaptive one is clearly a valuable skill, and research suggests that this is a purely emotion-based skill. Reasoning that an emotion should be transformed and deciding to change it is not sufficient for the emotion to actually change. In other words, fire (emotion) must be fought with fire (emotion) (Greenberg, 2004)

Furthermore, cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) typically includes the following steps:

- Identify troubling situations or conditions in life,
- Become aware of thoughts, emotions, and beliefs about these problems/situations (self-talk, interpretation of the meaning of a situation, and beliefs about self, other people, and events),
- Identify negative or inaccurate thinking, and
- Reshape negative or inaccurate thinking.

According to Endicott, Bock & Mitchell (2001), to improve emotion management, people should learn to recognize basic patterns, be attentive to their own emotions, differentiate emotions, identify emotions from different sources, identify emotions and others' social needs. Important techniques include **role-taking**, **role-play** and **experimenting** with hypothetical dilemmas.

Additionally, Nelis et al. (2009) proposed a training focused on a defined concept of emotional intelligence. The design of the training was based on Mayer and Salovey's four-branch model of Elias et al. (1997): (1) perception, appraisal, and expression of emotion; (2) emotional facilitation of thinking; (3) understanding and analysing emotions; (4)



reflective regulation of emotion" "The content of each session was based on short lectures, **role plays, group discussions, two-person works, and readings**. The participants were also provided with a personal **diary** in which they had to report daily one emotional experience" (Nelis et al 2009, p 38).

Hayes et al. (2004) claim that Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is a cognitive-behavioural intervention aimed at helping people to accept the feelings and experiences they go through. Oftentimes people must deal with unpleasant feelings, thoughts, or experiences and in response they avoid those emotions as a way of coping. Regarding the way people react, ACT helps with acceptance, deciding to make changes, and going through with that commitment. It does not mean resigning oneself to his/her circumstances or giving in to where pain usually leads him/hem. It simply means instead of struggling to get rid of or reduce thoughts and feelings, it's better to accept them. The goal of ACT is to create psychological flexibility, which includes 1) the ability to be psychologically present (i.e., aware and engaged in the experience), and 2) the ability to direct the behaviour to serve meaningful life values. This is accomplished through six core processes:

a. *Contact with the present moment*: a mindfulness skill about being fully engaged and present in your here and now experience vs. getting lost in thoughts or trying to control feelings, b. *Acceptance*: a mindfulness skill of making room for unpleasant feelings, sensations, urges and other private experiences without defence, c. *Cognitive Defusion*: a mindfulness skill of stepping back from thoughts (that we are 'fused' with) and observing them for what they are, bits of language, without being caught up in them, d. *Perspective taking/observing self*: a mindfulness skill involving contact with self as an observer to facilitate a healthy distance from fused thinking and a sense of space to experience what is, e. *Values*: clarifying what is most important, the sort of person you want to be and the things you want to do in your time on this planet. Values provide motivation, guidance, meaning and abundance, and f. *Committed action*: overt behaviour in the service of values.

Furthermore, **experiential exercises** play an important part in cognitive behavioural methods because it allows individuals to become actively involved in the learning process. Experiencing what is being taught can have a positive impact on emotional and behavioural difficulties. These exercises help individuals and counsellors to know how to react or cope in certain situations (Pasco et al., 2012).

Role taking and role-play

Role-taking and role-playing can also prove useful in understanding emotions, advancing awareness, and thus, building emotion management skills. They can be used to identify



emotions, learn to recognize basic patterns and become more attentive to one's own emotions. Moreover, they can prove beneficial in perspective-taking to understand others' emotions and to express oneself. Such an example can be seen in Endicott, Bock & Mitchell (2001) where self-awareness is also indirectly used through self-monitoring in identifying and expressing emotions.

➤ *Mindfulness*

Mindfulness techniques can be used either alone or combined with the aforementioned techniques, depending on the situation at hand. A self-awareness (mindfulness) technique is described in Endicott, Bock & Mitchell (2001), where self-monitoring is used as a tool to reflect on how someone identifies their own emotions, the emotions of others and the expression of those emotions. Self-awareness is also combined with cognitive-behavioural training in Pfingsten (1991) as a part of social-competence training aiming at more emotional self-control through emotional and somatic relaxation.

Mindfulness training aiming to enhance attentional and emotional self-regulation can also be found in Meiklejohn et al. (2012). This specific training also embraced all techniques and tools described previously in working with children, youth, and their teachers.

➤ *Supervision*

When clients' problems resemble counsellors' own experiences (e.g., from childhood), they may feel a "block" in session (Timm and Blow, 1999), or perceive information from the client in a biased way (Lum, 2002). Counsellors should have an awareness of how their own issues can come up in counselling, maintain an ethical practice and avoiding inadvertent consequences, including ineffective interventions (Timm and Blow 1999).

Supervision is an appropriate method for addressing the emotionality of the counsellor in response to the client. Supervision aims to identify how the counsellor can manage or use those emotions going forward with the client. Supervisors act as a secure base for the counsellors working to understand and acknowledge their emotionality. It is important for the supervisor to be able to effectively manage and address emotionality in the supervisor-supervisee relationship (Hill, 1992).

Guided by underlying Emotional Focus Therapy (EFT) theory, Wetchler (1998) depicted several techniques for accessing the counsellor's primary emotions. These included accessing the supervisee's primary emotions directly, hypothesizing about the client's primary emotions, and relating primary emotions to the counsellor's family of origin experiences.

By focusing on primary emotions that the counsellor is experiencing, interface issues with a client can be ameliorated. The supervisor works with the counsellor to examine what system the counsellor's emotions are related to, how they are a part of a cycle, how they are influencing counselling, and how the counsellor can use that experience to identify individual needs to combat compassion fatigue and professional burnout.



In a nutshell, among the processes that have been implemented towards emotion regulation there are:

- **Attentional deployment**, which refers to “how individuals direct their attention within a given situation so as to influence their emotions (Gross & Tompson, 2007). The two key strategies are distraction, where attention is focused on different aspects of the situation or attention is moved away from the situation” and concentration, where attention is drawn to the emotional features of a situation (Gross & Tompson, 2007).
- **Cognitive change**, that refers to “changing how we appraise the situation we are in to alter its emotional significance by changing how we think about the situation”. There are four types of these strategies: a. reappraisal of the emotional stimulus, b. reappraisal via perspective taking, c. reappraisal of the emotional response and d. reappraisal using a mixture of the 3 types.
- **Response modulation**, referring to “influencing physiological, experiential, or behavioural responding...after response tendencies have been initiated”. There is also distinction between four strategies for response modulation: a. suppression of the expression of emotion, b. suppression of the experience of the emotion, c. suppression of thoughts of the emotion-eliciting event and d. suppression of both expression and experience (Gross & Tompson, 2007).

According to a meta-analysis of emotion regulation strategies (Webb et al. 2012), although the three ER processes proved differentially effective (e.g., cognitive change had a larger effect than response modulation, which in turn had a larger effect than attentional deployment), these differences were illuminated by considering distinct strategies within each process (e.g., the overall effect size for attentional deployment was negligible because whereas distraction was an effective strategy, strategies based on concentration were counterproductive strategy). In conclusion the best ways to deal with emotions, proved to be the reappraisal of the emotional stimulus (reinterpret the context of the cause of the emotion, i.e. imagine that a negative event had a positive outcome), reappraisal via perspective taking (alter the impact of the emotional stimulus by adopting a more or less objective perspective, i.e. imagine being in the situation depicted or asked to view the stimulus as detached observers), and active distraction (directed to think about something positive or neutral that is unrelated to the focal emotion or emotional stimulus) (Webb et al. 2012).



2.2 Suggested activities to improve Emotion-Management Skills

In order to assist career practitioners to improve their emotion management skill, there are included activities that have proven effective towards emotion regulation. Specifically, there are activities focusing on:

- the understanding of emotions which is the first step in emotion regulation,
- the reappraisal of emotional stimulus and
- the reappraisal via perspective taking and

Activity 1 – Measuring our mood

Instructions for IT programmer:

Activity Type G: online form to fill it with text(responses) and then print it + Post –it and Activity type B: Rooms to meet

Activity type/method: Self-awareness- A technique to improve emotional awareness and understanding emotions (the first steps towards emotion regulation)

Learning Goal:

This activity, inspired by the technique of Mood Meter (*Brackett M. & Stern R.*), aims to help trainees learn to recognize and evaluate emotions, in themselves and others, focusing on their two dimensions: pleasantness and energy. With this as a basis, they can lay a foundation for wisely dealing with their emotions and developing strategies for regulating them.

Specificities: The activity can be done either individually, or in groups for reflection. The learners can fill in the tables alone or in pairs and then come back in one group to reflect upon their experience over the activity.

Duration: 1 hour

Material needed: Table of emotions

Useful information for the trainer:

1. *Explain to participants that the first step towards productively managing any feeling is to recognize that we're having it. A good way to recognize their feelings is to define and categorize them based on their level of pleasantness and energy. The pleasantness represents how pleasant or unpleasant we feel, while the energy depicts how much physical energy is running through our bodies while feeling the emotion. Emotions can be high in both, low in both, high in energy and low in pleasantness, or low in*



energy and high in pleasantness. So, the first step for trainees is to try to answer two simple questions regarding the emotions they feel at the moment:

- How pleasant is this emotion?
 - How much energy does this emotion have?
2. In order to put feelings into groups, they can think about whether an emotion is pleasant or unpleasant and whether they have a lot of energy or little energy. Clarify that even if an emotion is unpleasant, that doesn't mean the emotion itself is bad. All emotions are needed and it's important to learn to recognize them and manage them. Give them examples of emotions in each category, such as:
 - unpleasant with high energy: anger or fear
 - unpleasant, low energy: sadness
 - pleasant, high energy: happiness
 - pleasant, low energy: (calmness)
 3. After having explained the way they can group their emotions, you can start with Part A' and then go to Part B'.
 4. At the end of each activity, you discuss in groups the experience of the learners, how they felt etc. according to the Reflection questions.

Instructions:

Part A: Identify 5 emotions you have had in your day. Name them as accurately as possible. Then try answering the following questions within the given table.

1. How much energy does this emotion have?
2. How pleasant is this emotion?

Table of emotions

Emotion (x)	Pleasantness		
Energy		High	Low
	High		
	Low		
Emotion (x)	Pleasantness		
Energy		High	Low
	High		
	Low		
Emotion (x)	Pleasantness		



Energy		High	Low
	High		
	Low		
Emotion (x)	Pleasantness		
Energy		High	Low
	High		
	Low		
Emotion (x)	Pleasantness		
Energy		High	Low
	High		
	Low		

Part B: After having filling in the table in part A', the trainees are going to share the emotions they have listed in their tables. The emotions are written down in a common list that can be enriched with additional emotions. Try to make a list with more than 30 emotions. Then the trainees have to group them taking into account the level of energy and pleasantness. Trainees can work individually or preferable in groups for grouping the emotions.

Reflection questions:

Choose several emotions and discuss in group:

- Was it easy to group each of the emotions?
- what do our bodies feel like when we have this feeling?
- what do our faces look like when we have this feeling?
- What kind of thoughts do we have when we have this feeling?
- What does it make us feel that emotion? What have happened to make us feeling that way?
- Is this feeling helpful? If yes, what can we do to continue feeling that way or to intensify it? If not, what could we do to feel less of this feeling or to shift the feeling to something different?



Exercise 2 – Understanding emotions

Information for IT programmer: Combination of two types of activities.

Exercise type E: Click on the right answer. There will be presented the scenarios and after each scenario there will be given the 7 answers(emotions). In this answer 2 are right answers. If both right they will turn both green. If both wrong, they will get both red. If one right and one wrong, we will have one green and one red. + Activity type B: Rooms to meet

Activity type/method: case study, awareness

Learning Goal: The exercise aims at assisting participants through real life scenarios to recognize how the clients are feeling. In several cases, what a client describes may hide more than one emotion. Apart from the obvious emotion, there are also some underlying emotions. So, given different scenarios, the participants have the opportunity to put themselves into the role of a counsellor having to deal with different cases and in each of them to try to find out which are the underlying emotions.

Specificities: The activity can be done individually, but works better in groups when it comes to the reflection part.

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials needed: Scenarios & List of emotions

Useful information for the trainer:

In case of individual activity: Inform trainees that they will be provided with 7 scenarios and a list of emotions. The aim of the activity is to read the scenarios and match them with 2 emotions that are described or are about to be triggered in each case. They can choose their answer from the given list. When they have finished the matching they come back into a group to reflect on their experience.

Group activity: Get trainees into small groups (2-4 persons) and provide them with the scenarios given and the list of emotions. Invite them to add additional emotions in the list while discussing in their groups the scenarios. When they have finished the matching of emotions with scenarios they come altogether in a group for discussion.

Instructions:

Read the following vignettes and match them with 2 emotions that are described or are about to be triggered each time.

The list of emotions among which you have to select are:



Anger, Fear, Disgust, Sadness, Jealousy, Surprise, Contempt, Grief

Scenarios

1. Alberto is an unemployed job seeker attending a personal meeting showing signs of alcoholism. Alberto and José, the career practitioner, know each other from various contexts and occasions. When José asks Alberto for his identity card, Alberto starts yelling at José and suggests that it is José's fault that he does not have a job yet.
2. In a career counselling session with Augusta (a teenage girl) and her mother, the latter suddenly realizes that her high standards concerning the learning and behaviour of her daughter were emotionally abusive and she had no idea of this. Her daughter claimed that her mother had ruined her life.
3. In a career counselling session, Augusta (a teenage girl) said that her mother's high standards concerning the learning and perfect behaviour of her daughter were emotionally abusive. Her mother was always unhappy with the results of the girl and with her behaviours, relationships, spare time activities, and hobbies. Everything she has done was wrong for her. Augusta also complains that her mother's boyfriend behaved inappropriately by groping Augusta and making jokes with sexual content and she doesn't want even to see his face.
4. Julia works as a Human Resources Manager for a large international organization. She is becoming more and more stressed at work as the company is constantly changing and needs to keep up with changes otherwise she'll lose her job. She is working twelve-hour days, six days a week and has no personal time. She has started yelling at staff members when they ask her questions and when making small mistakes in their work.
5. Marc is 58 years old and inherited the family home five years ago on the death of his mother. It is a substantial property in a desirable waterfront location and the will stated that it would be split equally between Marc and his brother Frank. When Frank faced financial difficulties, Marc understood that the property would need to be sold to meet Frank's financial needs. Though, whenever the issue of selling "mother's home" arose, Marc used to abruptly leave the room or avoid the topic, but did not understand why, as he was a practical and logical person and the brothers had always been very close.
6. Thomas was married 4 years ago to Helen. They are experiencing recurring problems in their partnership and he feels that the main problem is the interference of Helen's family. Helen has had a close relationship with her mother and father, but neither of them approve of her relationship with Thomas, since their first meeting. Eventually, they got married and had a child. Helen's parents are expecting to be visited on a weekly basis. Thomas feels this is draining because they openly ignore him or they keep saying that their daughter deserved a better husband.
7. Bill, a 16-year-old boy, is an excellent student. Despite his hard efforts, he never receives any approval from his parents, especially not from his mother. He feels that



they are never satisfied with his work and achievements, while they show great admiration for his little brother. He claims that they don't pay attention to his needs and they don't even spend some time doing things together. Now, in Olivia's career counselling session, Bill is not interested in discussing his personal career-related needs and interests. His primary interest is to make a choice that will upset his parents and make them pay attention to him instead of his little brother.

Proposed solutions:

1. Alberto's emotions are: Anger
2. Mother's emotions: Surprise, Sadness
3. Augusta's emotions: Anger, Disgust
4. Julia's emotions: Fear, Anger
5. Marc's emotions: anger, grief
6. Thomas' emotions: Sadness, contempt
7. Bill's emotions: Contempt, Jealousy

Questions for reflection:

1. *Was it easy to recognise the emotions in the given scenarios?*
2. *How did you feel about this activity?*
3. *Any other information you need to share with the group?*



Exercise 3 – Face control: Recognizing emotions through photos

Information for IT programmer: Exercise type D game (a combination of game and multiple choice responses). We will show 1 photo for 10'' and the 7 emotions to click on the one that is depicted in the photo. After having finished the 7 images, they will be shown how much out of 7 are right. If they have wrong or unanswered items, they will do again the activity but next time they will be given 20'' per photo. In the end of the 2nd round (if there is a 2nd round) they will be shown their results and the right answers. + Activity type B: Rooms to meet

Activity type/method: awareness

Learning Goal: According to Paul Ekman (2003), a person can learn how to recognize expressions, such as expressions that are very brief or with not much muscular contraction and only registered in one area. In this exercise the participants are going to practice how to recognize expressions just looking some photos. This will be a first step to get to know more about the different expressions.

Specificities: Individual activity or group activity.

Duration: 15-30 minutes

Material needed: Peoples' photos

Useful information for the trainer:

In case the first part of the activity is done individually, explain to the trainees that they are going to see some pictures expressing emotions and they have to match them with the appropriate emotions. When they finish with this activity they can get back in groups to reflect upon their experience and go through part b.

In case the activity is implemented in groups, get participants in groups of 2-3 persons, so as to work in pairs. Explain to them that they have to recognise the emotions in the given pictures and discuss whether the given answers are different or if there are mixed impressions.

In a second round (part b), each participant can be assigned with an emotion and try to express it. The other members in the group will try to recognise the emotion.

Instructions:

There is a list of 7 emotions: anger, contempt, fear, disgust, surprise, sadness and enjoyment and fourteen photographs. Each emotion is a possible choice for the expressions in each of the photographs. You will have 5 seconds to observe each photograph and match its



expression with a specific emotion. You have to be as quick as you can, so as not to leave a photo without a matching emotion.

In case of wrong or missed answers, a second round will take place where each photograph will be shown for 1 minute.

(Photos with expressions)

Reflection questions:

Was it easy to recognise the emotions in the given pictures?

What did I learn from this activity?



Exercise 4 -Thought records

Information for IT programmer: Combination of two types of activities (Type G + Type B).

Type G: online form to fill it with text(responses). The trainees will be shown the Thought Log in an online form to fill in. They will be given some time (20') to fill it and then they will go into rooms to discuss. We could also give the "Thought log" in pdf version in case they do the exercise in class.

Type: Experiential – Cognitive behavioural Method (Reappraisal of emotional stimulus & reappraisal via perspective taking)

Learning goal: The idea behind this activity is that people can reduce and regulate unwanted feelings and behaviours by challenging irrational thoughts, and the thought log is often the first step in this process. Thought logs are used so as individuals to become more aware of the irrational thoughts, to recognize how the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours interact and influence one another. After identifying harmful irrational thoughts, the user will be able to intervene, and begin changing them.

Specificities: The activity is implemented both individually and in group.

Duration: 1 hour (20min for filling in the Thoughts Log & 40 min for group discussion)

Material needed: Thoughts log

Useful information for the trainer:

Explain to learners the way thoughts are influencing the way we behave. By providing examples try to help them understand how an irrational thought can bring up a negative emotion and influence the way a person behaves. Then, emphasize that the aim of this activity is not to reject our emotions, but to accept them and then try to approach them using a more positive way of thinking. Then provide them with the "Thoughts log" and ask them to write down at least 3 experiences that evoked negative emotions and thoughts and then to try to think of positive thoughts and outcomes.

When the learners finish with this task, you can come back in group to work further on this activity. Collect at least one event from each participant in order to discuss in groups the thoughts, emotions arisen and possible positive thoughts and outcomes. Ask the participants to imagine themselves in the situation depicted and view the stimulus as detached observers, in order to come up with positive outcomes.

Then discuss on the reflection questions.



Instructions: Think of experiences/events from your past that evoked negative emotions and thoughts. Write them down and then try to change your thought into a rational one and try to imagine a positive outcome of this event. Fill –in the attached thoughts log. Write down at least 3 events.

Thought Log

Event	Thought	Emotion/Behaviour	Rational Counterstatement – Positive outcome
Ex: My boss at work is angry	I must have made a mistake. They will fire me for sure	Feeling of sadness and anxiety Spend time thinking over possible mistakes	My boss may be mad for any other reason or person. He is usually happy with my work, so even if I've made a mistake it's not a disaster. It's a good opportunity to have a fruitful conversation with my boss to express him my concern



Questions for reflection:

How easy was it for you to change your thoughts and find a rational one?

Was it easier to find positive outcomes when the event under discussion wasn't the one you have experienced?

What did you learn over this activity?

Present to your team an event that was difficult for you to deal with and you had also difficulty in finding a new rational statement and let others give you their opinions. (all participants should have the chance to share an event).



Exercise 5 – Mindful Breathing

Information for IT programmer: Type F: Video/audio presentation + Meet in groups

Type: Mindfulness

Learning goal: It's natural to take long, deep breaths, when relaxed. However, when a person is confronted with negative emotions, especially anger and anxiety, their body undergoes several changes and enters a special state called the *fight-or-flight response*. The body prepares to either fight or flee the perceived danger. During the fight-or-flight response it's common to experience a "blank" mind, increased heart rate, sweating, tense muscles, and breathing becomes rapid and shallow. Mindful/deep breathing reverses that, and sends messages to the brain to begin calming the body. Practice will make the body respond more efficiently to deep breathing in the future and will help trainees calm down in cases they face strong emotions.

Specificities: The activity can be implemented either individually or in a group. In both cases after the mindfulness technique, trainees will discuss in group their experience.

Duration: 30 minutes

Materials: Mindful breathing audio file

Useful Information for the trainer:

First it's needed to explain to learners the benefits from mindfulness. You can use the following information:

"Mindfulness means being aware of what is happening in the moment, without judging it in our thoughts. Being mindful helps us stay relaxed and focused. Mindfulness helps us with uncomfortable feelings and situations, and helps us make thoughtful decisions before we act. Our brains are programmed to react in stressful situations. This is called "fight or flight." Back when humans lived in nature, we had to act quickly when there was a threat from, say, a bear nearby. When we practice mindfulness, we get to take a little step back from our thoughts and feelings. We still have the thoughts and feelings, but we can become aware of them without instantly acting on them. Mindfulness needs practice. It works best if you spend a few minutes at home each day practicing.

The most basic way to do mindful breathing is to focus your attention on your breath, the inhale and exhale. You can do this while standing, but ideally you'll be sitting or even lying in a comfortable position. Your eyes may be open or closed, or you can maintain a soft gaze, with your eyes partially closed but not focusing on anything in particular. It can help to set aside a designated time for this exercise, but it can also help to practice it when you're feeling particularly stressed or anxious.



Sometimes, especially when trying to calm yourself in a stressful moment, it might help to start by taking an exaggerated breath: a deep inhale through your nostrils (3 seconds), hold your breath (2 seconds), and a long exhale through your mouth (4 seconds). Otherwise, observe each breath without trying to adjust it; it may help to focus on the rise and fall of your chest or the sensation through your nostrils. As you do so, you may find that your mind wanders, distracted by thoughts or bodily sensations. That's OK. You can notice that this is happening and try to gently bring your attention back to your breath".

After having explained how mindfulness works, you can either read them the script of the activity or let them do it individually by listening to the audio file in the platform.

At the end of the "Mindful breathing activity" get learners back in a group to reflect on the experience.

Instructions: Find a relaxed, comfortable position. Listen to the audio file and try to follow the given instructions and take deep breaths.

Script:

Sit comfortably in a relaxed manner with your legs parallel and the soles of your feet firmly on the floor. (pause 2 seconds)

Keep your back straight but not stiff and put your hands gently in front of you, on your lap. (pause 2 seconds)

Gently close your eyes and focus on your breath (pause 3 seconds)

Notice how you inhale and exhale without trying to change anything. Just watch how the air enters and goes out of your body. (pause 4 seconds)

Bring your full attention to noticing each in-breath as it enters your nostrils, travels down to your lungs and causes your belly to expand. And notice each out-breath as your belly contracts and air moves up through the lungs back up through the mouth.

Follow with your attention the course of your breathing. Feel the subtle cool sensation in your nostrils as you inhale. (pause 3 seconds) and observe the warmer sensation of the air in your mouth as you exhale. (pause 3 seconds)

Allow your breath to find its own natural rhythm. Don't think. Don't judge. For a few seconds keep breathing just like you did anyway... and observe. (pause 15 seconds)

Now, exhale making a whoosh sound. (pause 4 seconds) Close your mouth and inhale quietly on a mental count of four (4). ...1, 2, 3, 4 Hold your breath for a count of seven (7)



...2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and exhale completely through your mouth making a whoosh sound to a count of eight (8). 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. This is one (1) breath. Let's do three (3) more cycles.

Inhale through your nose 1, 2, 3, 4. Hold 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Exhale making a whoosh noise through your mouth 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Once again, Inhale through your nose 1, 2, 3, 4. Hold 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Exhale making a whoosh noise through your mouth 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

And one last time: Inhale through your nose 1, 2, 3, 4. Hold 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Exhale making a whoosh noise 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

When you are ready, take your time to open your eyes slowly (pause 2 seconds) and carry on with the rest of your day as usual.

Questions for reflection:

What was the experience like?

Was it easy or difficult / why?

Did you notice any thoughts or feelings come up during the exercise? What did you do when they came up?

What did you learn from this activity?

Exercise 6-Accept your emotions

[Information for IT programmer: Type F: audio presentation + Meet in groups](#)

Type: Mindfulness _ Reappraisal of emotional stimulus/ perspective taking

Learning goal:

It sounds strange, but the act of accepting that someone is feeling emotions s/he would rather not feel can be the key to letting go of them. When individuals accept that they are suffering, they stop running from the difficult emotions and turn to face them—and when they do, they might see that it wasn't the big bad monster they thought it was, but a smaller and more manageable beast. This activity is based on reappraisal of emotional stimulus technique, aiming at assisting trainees into accepting their emotions, so as to be able to deal with them more effectively.

Specificities: The activity can be implemented either individually or in a group. In both cases after the mindfulness technique, trainees will discuss in group their experience.



Duration: 30 minutes

Needed material: Accept your emotions meditation (audio file)

Useful Information for the trainer:

It is important to assist learners understand that rejecting our emotions is not a good idea. You can explain to them that often when a person has an uncomfortable feeling, such as sadness, fear or shame, the first reaction is to reject that feeling. S/he may tell himself/herself that feeling is a bad feeling that s/he does not want to have. Then s/he may do something to try to get rid of the feeling, such as trying to push it away. Certainly no one wants to walk around feeling emotional pain all the time, but when an individual rejects his/her emotions, s/he may actually make things worse for himself/herself. Often emotions arise because they give helpful information about the world, so sometimes getting rid of or pushing away emotions is not the best idea. An alternative to pushing away or stifling emotions is learning to accept the emotional experiences. Acceptance means letting go of attempts to control the emotions and learning that emotions themselves cannot harm people, although the things a person does to try to get rid of emotions, can harm him/her. It is important to make the distinction between acceptance and resignation. Accepting emotions does not mean that resigning oneself to always feeling terrible or wallowing in pain. It also doesn't mean holding on to painful emotions or trying to push oneself to experience emotional pain. Acceptance simply means being aware of the emotions and accepting them for what they are right now, knowing that they won't last.

After having explained to trainees the importance of emotions acceptance you can guide them to practice the activity. First you ask them to bring in mind an experience where they came up with an uncomfortable emotion. Emphasize that in for start, it is best that they choose an emotion that is not too intense. Then they are ready to start the meditation. They can practice it individually or in groups. In case you choose to do it in groups, you can either read them the script of the activity or let them do it individually by listening to the audio file in the platform. At the end of the activity get learners back in a group to reflect on the experience.

Instruction:

Listen to the script and try to follow the given instructions (**the script will be a recorded audio file**)

Script:

Accepting emotions



Bring in mind a case where you experienced an unpleasant emotion...but not so tense that you are feeling overwhelmed by it. Now keep in mind that whenever you have an unpleasant emotion, the first thing you can do is to take a few slow deep breaths and quickly scan your body from head to toe. (pause 5 seconds)

You will probably notice several uncomfortable sensations... (pause 2 seconds) ... look for the strongest one, the sensation that bothers you the most. Now that you have identified it, close your eyes and try to imagine it from a distance. (pause 3 seconds)

Focus your attention on that sensation and observe it as carefully and deeply you can. (pause 2 seconds)

Observe the sensation carefully... notice where it starts and where it ends. (pause 2 seconds) If you could draw a line around the sensation, what would the lamp eye look like? (pause 3 seconds)

Is it on the surface of the body or inside you or both? (pause 2 seconds)

Notice where the sensation has the greater tense...(pause 3 seconds) where it is weakest(pause 2 seconds).

Are there any sensations of vibrations within it? (pause 2 seconds) Does it have a temperature? (pause 2 seconds)

Take a few more slow deep breaths in and out and let go of the struggle with that sensation. (pause 2 seconds)

Just breathe in, and as you breathe out, try and visualize yourself just letting go of the struggle with the sensation. (pause 4 seconds)

Make room for the sensation... (pause 2 seconds) breathe in and around the sensation. (pause 2 seconds)

Give it room...allow it to be there. (pause 2 seconds)

Remember you don't have to like it or want it. Just let it simply just be there. (pause 2 seconds)

Remember that the idea is just to observe the sensation. Try not to think too much about it. So when your mind starts thinking about what's going on, just bring your attention back to simply observing the sensation. (pause 2 seconds)

You may find it difficult... you may feel a strong urge to deal with it or get rid of it.

If this happens, just acknowledge this urge without giving into it. (pause 2 seconds)

Once you've acknowledged that urge, bring your attention back to the sensation itself. (pause 2 seconds)

Remember we're not trying to get rid of the sensation or alter it. If it changes by itself, it's okay. But it's ok too, if it doesn't change. Just have in mind that the goal of this exercise is not altering or getting rid of the sensation. (pause 2 seconds)

You may need to focus on the sensation for as long as you need...from a few seconds to a few minutes...(pause 2 seconds)until you completely give up the struggle with it. (pause 2 seconds)

Be patient with yourself. Take as much time as you need. You're learning a valuable skill which you can apply in your daily life. (pause 4 seconds)

Some people find it helpful to silently say to themselves "I don't like this sensation, but I have room for it. It's unpleasant but I can accept it". (pause 2 seconds)

Once you've done this with the primary sensation, scan your body again and see if there's another strong sensation that's bothering you. (pause 2 seconds) If so, repeat the procedure with that one. (pause 4 seconds)



As you do this exercise one of two things will happen... either your feelings will change or they won't. (pause 2 seconds) It doesn't matter either way. The goal of this exercise is not to change your feelings... it's to accept them.

Summing up, have in mind the following four quick steps to emotional acceptance: (pause 2 seconds)

First observe. Bring awareness to the feelings in your body in a neutral way. (pause 2 seconds)

Secondly breathe...take a few deep slow breaths. Breathe into and around your feelings. (pause 2 seconds)

Thirdly expand... make room for these feelings ... let go of the tension around them! (pause 2 seconds)

Four... allow... (pause 2 seconds) allow them to be there. Make peace with them! (pause 2 seconds)

This is the end of the accepting emotions exercise

Questions for reflection:

How was your experience?

Did you notice any change in the emotion when you observed it carefully and without judging it? What about changes in your reactions to the emotion?

Did the emotion feel different in some way once the exercise was finished?



2.3 Self-evaluation Exercises

The following multiple choice questions will help you to reflect on the educational material of the section and evaluate your understanding on the basic relevant concepts and theoretical background. (5 questions for each section)

Question 1

Please choose the right answer to the following question.

Emotional intelligence refers to:

1. the ability to accurately perceive emotions.
2. the ability to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought
3. the ability to understand emotions and to effectively regulate them
4. All the above

Question 2

Please choose right or wrong for the following text.

Emotional intelligence cannot be trained.

Right

Wrong

Question 3

Emotional awareness is:

1. the ability to get in others' shoes.
2. the ability to change emotional state
3. the ability to perceive and correctly express one's own emotions while also understanding the impacts of those emotions to others.
4. a state which is difficult to attain.

Question 4

Please choose right or wrong for the following text.

Emotional understanding includes the sensitivity to cultural context and the ability to recognize cultural differences when evaluating emotions



Right

Wrong

Question 5

Which of the following are appropriate for emotion management improvement?

1. cognitive and behavioural methods
2. role playing
3. mindfulness
4. All of the above



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Section 3: Diversity

Short Description

The goal is to increase participants' concern for all kinds of people, their openness to different values, and their ability to cooperate with diverse people. One goal will be to increase participants' tolerance, i.e., their ability to understand and accept the diverse perspectives, values, and lifestyles of others. Another goal will be to increase participants' **diversity and intercultural competence** so that they can understand the influence of culture, age, gender, religion, and social class on identity, needs, and emotions, and work together with diverse people better. Overall, the course shall enable professionals to feel a **commitment and concern** towards all kinds of citizens.

Learning Objectives

Training aims at assisting practitioners in being able to:

- understand how people can differ in their way of thinking, acting, or in their beliefs, emotions and values;
- demonstrate openness to new perspectives and diversity of their clients;
- interact respectfully and appropriately with clients of diverse backgrounds;
- recognize and critically reflect upon their own biases (conscious and unconscious) towards age, gender, disabilities, cultural background etc.;
- reflect upon and understand the influence of diversity in their personal and professional surroundings;
- accept similarities and dissimilarities between individuals;
- be diversity knowledgeable and tolerant in every day counselling practice to support the beneficiaries of their services.



3.1 Theoretical background

The social environment where people grow up or live affects not only their psychological processes and structures but also their behaviour and choices. Moreover, the social and historical circumstances are connected to the way people see and understand the world, unconsciously defining their perspectives and self-identification. As globalization goes hand in hand with individualism, diverse groups of people interact more frequently than even before which underlines the imperative need for increased tolerance and intercultural competence.

Definitions

Culture

Culture can be defined as “the sum of total way of life, including expected behaviour, beliefs, values, language and living practices shared by members of a society; it is the pattern of values, traits or behaviours shared by the people within a region. It consists of both explicit and implicit rules through which experience is interpreted” (Herbig, 1998). The term culture, therefore, represents the values, beliefs, attitude, way of living and the particular characteristics of a society embodied within a person. People of the same culture have the same perceptions both on the way they are connected with the social and natural environment and of relations establishment, expressing of thoughts and emotions, prioritization and allocation of activities and the depiction of values, prices and sense of power (Chrysochoou, 2005).

Intercultural competence

Intercultural competence is culture-general and there are core competencies that individuals can develop that are not specific to any culture. Intercultural competence could be defined as a set of abilities, knowledge, attitudes and skills that allow one to appropriately and effectively manage relations with persons of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Portera, 2014).

Diversity

Diversity is defined as the existence of many different groups of people within a society. Differences can be attributed to (sub-) cultural characteristics, like ethnicity, skin colour, religion, politics or social class but more frequently to individualistic ones, such as gender, age, weight, identity, needs and emotions. Arredondo et al. (1996) use the term diversity referring to “other individual, personal differences including age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability or disability, and other characteristics by which someone may prefer



to self-define, whereas the term “multicultural” is a little more specific, focusing on ethnicity, race, and culture.

Tolerance

Tolerance refers to the willingness to accept behaviour and beliefs that are different from your own, although you might not agree with or approve of them. As tolerance is based in acceptance, basic knowledge, skills and attitudes revolving around the ability to understand the diverse perspectives, values, and lifestyles of others are prerequisites. Therefore, effective tolerance can be achieved through increased culture awareness, intercultural competence and openness to diversity.

Values, attitudes and stereotypes

- Values are an integral part of the belief system of each person. It refers to how a person should act or not according to the ideal and socially acceptable behaviour.
- Attitudes are the total preferences and emotions of a person, the prejudices, concepts, fears and beliefs about any objective.
- Stereotypes are a form of categorization and generalization between people. They are simplified, stylized and general perceptions about a group of people (e.g. minority, nation etc.) or an individual.

According to Sue and Sue (2013) the importance of attitudes/beliefs/values cannot be underestimated and is particularly relevant in considering the dynamics of counselor client relationships when working across cultures. Assisting counselors to become self-aware and to examine their cultural attitudes/beliefs is an important attribute in developing cultural competence and increasing counselor effectiveness with culturally diverse clients.

Characteristics of the diversity/culturally sensitive career practitioner

Three are the main elements that characterize a culturally sensitive career practitioner. These are:

- The cultural awareness of his/her values and prejudices in relation to his/her attitude and professional choices.
- The understanding of beliefs of persons with different cultural background
- The development of the appropriate intervention methods (skills) at the perspective of his/her role as practitioner.

The effectiveness of a culturally sensitive practitioner is based on three pillars:

1. Knowledge



The career professional must begin with the understanding of and appreciation for his/her own cultural heritage, background and practices. S/he has to reflect about and realise his/her own prejudices, attitudes and stereotypes. Other areas for self-examination according to Evans (2008) include examining one's biases, recognizing unearned privilege, and beginning the process of understanding and informing oneself about the worldview of the client. Sue and Sue (2013) define cultural knowledge as understanding and sharing the world view of clients through cognitive empathy rather than affective empathy.

Apart from self-examination, knowledge on the clients' background is of equal importance. Culturally and diversity sensitive career practitioners should be politically aware and understand that clients are impacted by societal and institutional policies. They should be knowledgeable about the oppression and racism elements that may or may not exist in the client's culture and society. They should be able to understand the social role of the culturally diverse groups or minorities that live in their country, know many things about the culture of these groups, understand the difficulties and obstacles that these people face when they interact with the host country's social or other services and employers etc.

Most importantly, they should be able to understand that culture and diversity-related issues speak themselves through attitudes and lifestyle, consciously or unconsciously, and that this same principle applies for career practitioners and clients, too.

2. Awareness

The practitioner has to understand his/her cultural background, understand and realize that his/her values, attitudes are interconnected with his/her cultural background, feel comfortable with the cultural differences of his/her client etc.

Building on from knowledge and examining clients' background, effective career practitioners should understand that personality and personal characteristics are influenced by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and ability status, and that these characteristics must be assessed accurately. They need to identify and understand clients' biases toward work and workers based on gender, race, and cultural stereotypes. Moreover, they need to be aware of and understand how poverty, discrimination, racism, and so forth limit client access to information, inhibit client's ability to take action, and limit the scope of possibilities clients may see for themselves (Evans, 2008). According to Sue and Sue (2013) the importance of attitudes/beliefs/values cannot be underestimated and is particularly relevant in considering the dynamics of counselor client relationships when working across cultures. Assisting counselors to become self-aware and to examine their cultural attitudes/beliefs is an important attribute in developing cultural competence and increasing counselor effectiveness with culturally diverse clients. Sue and Sue (2013)



asserted that the journey toward counselor cultural competence is a developmental process. Multicultural training must provide continuing opportunities to use self-reflective skills to confront bias assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Therefore, the ability to develop appropriate interventions, strategies and techniques are dependent on the ability to acquire and utilize cultural awareness, and cultural knowledge (Sue & Sue, 1990).

Lastly, the identification of the client's abilities and competences is essential for effective consultation and support.

3. Skills

It is important for the practitioner to have the ability to respect the word view of his/her client, have a wide repertory of verbal and non-verbal communication methods for clients with different cultural background, receive and transmit verbal and non-verbal messages to people with different cultural backgrounds and be flexible to diverse the frame of his/her work to benefit cultural diverse clients.

Although cultural information and self-exploration are very important elements for a practitioner, they can prove to be useless unless the career practitioner utilizes them in an empathetic way (Lofrisco & Osborn, 2012). Accordingly, acceptance and positivity (which is a form of warm respect) are equal prerequisites. Career practitioners need to be able to feel comfortable working with people of different race, nationality, culture and beliefs and to be willing to constantly redefine their values, attitudes and beliefs according to the client's background. Lastly, honesty and openness are a means of trustful and sincere communication. These are skills that actively enhance (professional) commitment and raise genuine concern, resulting in successful career counselling.

Importance of diversity and intercultural competence for career practitioners

Career guidance practitioners are facing major challenges in their everyday practice because they need to precede the labour market developments, evolving faster than they can adjust. More so, career counselling is deeply interconnected with the society within it takes place. Globalisation and societal changes deeply affect the career landscape. High unemployment, migrating and aging workforce, as well as skills gaps and changing skills' needs are shaping a blurry future in the labour market landscape. The current view of an individuals' career development includes the entire life span, focusing not only on career orientation but also changing career pathways throughout someone's life. With this in mind, career counselling approaches should incorporate the varying life roles, cultural reference points and contexts,



ethnic implications, gender constraints, sexual orientation status, and disability status (Rush, 2010). Successful career counselling, therefore, should pay attention to and be aware of the various personal constructs.

There are other reasons for advancing intercultural competencies of career practitioners, too. According to learning and cognitive theory, a person's life experiences and social position will affect their career choice (Zunker, 2006). Living in such a culturally diverse world, it can be expected that individuals will vary widely on life experiences affecting career choices, as well. Therefore, it is essential that career practitioners gain knowledge about diversity and understand how various cultures can affect career choice. Ignoring the cultural and diverse context of clients, career services and counselling may risk being irrelevant.

Career practitioners are also part of the society they live in. Anderson et al. (2012) makes the claim that the tenets that guide or may guide career advising consist of dominant cultural values, privileges, and ways of thinking and viewing the world. Such biases neglect clients' needs and experiences and "...that in itself is unethical. Practitioners [need to] recognize the sociocultural, historical, and political factors that shape clients' career development and experiences". They should continuously educate themselves with empirical research and literature regarding career development of diverse clients and apply their knowledge and skills to practice (Flores, Lin, & Huang, 2005).

Lastly, tolerance and openness to diversity are also essential components of effective career counselling. Practitioners' clientele is (and can be) as diverse as the society itself. Diversity is not often plain to see and diversity-related issues are not easily recognizable. Therefore, career practitioners need to be equipped with open-mindedness, overcome conscious or unconscious biases and recognize their unearned privileges.

In conceptualizing the new perspective in terms of culturally competent career counselling, Parmer and Rush (2003) provided a simple yet comprehensive definition "Career counselling is a discipline of trained professionals dedicated to providing holistic, contextual, life-span counselling to a diverse clientele".

Diversity and intercultural competence in practice

Apart from other counselling skills and techniques that can be used in all counselling sessions, career practitioners could engage in their practice with diverse groups the *Multicultural Career Counselling Checklist* (Ward & Bingham, 1993) and the *metacognitive process* of Winston and Fouad (2006). Those two techniques can be a practical guide for practitioners in order to be able to deal with culturally different groups.



A. Multicultural Career Counselling Checklist - Ward and Bingham (1993)

Ward and Bingham (1993) proposed a Multicultural Career Counselling Checklist as an aid/guide for career professionals to enhance their culturally appropriate initiatives and services, while investigating career assessment with ethnic minority women. This checklist is divided into three areas: (a) practitioner preparation, (b) exploration and assessment, and (c) negotiation and working consensus. Even though the checklist is based upon women of colour, it can be applicable in career counselling with other marginalized or diverse groups, as well.

Selected portions of the checklist include:

1. Practitioner preparation

- a. I am familiar with minimum cross-cultural counselling competencies.
- b. I am aware of my client's cultural identification.
- c. I understand and respect my client's culture.
- d. I am aware of my own world view and how it was shaped.
- e. I am aware of how my SES (socio-economic status) influences my ability to empathize with this client.
- f. I have information about this client's ethnic group's history, local socio-political issues, and her/his attitudes towards seeking help.
- g. I know many of the stereotypes held about my client's ethnic group.

2. Exploration and assessment

- a. I understand how the client's career questions may be complicated with issues of finance, family, and academics.
- b. The client is presenting racial and or cultural information with the career questions.
- c. I know the client's perception of her /his family's ethnocultural identification.
- d. I am aware of the career limitations or obstacles the client associates with her/his race or culture [gender, sexual orientation, disability status].
- e. I am aware of the client's perception of her /his competence, ability, and self-efficacy.
- f. I know my stage of racial identity development as well as my client's.
- g. I believe that the client avoids certain work environments because of fears of sexism or racism.

3. Negotiation and working consensus

- a. I understand the type of career counselling help the client is seeking (career choice, supplement of family income, professional career etc.).
- b. The client and I have agreed on the goals for career counselling.



- c. I am aware of the client's perceptions of the woman's work role in her family and culture (and the role of children in her career plans).
- d. I understand the culturally based career conflicts generated by exposure to more careers and role models.
- e. I am aware of the negative and/or self-defeating thoughts that are obstacles to the client's aspirations and expectations.
- f. I am aware of the client's expectations about the career counselling process.
- g. I know when it is appropriate to use a traditional career assessment instrument with a client and which one to use at any given time.
- h. I am aware of the research support for using the selected instrument with clients of this ethnicity [gender, SES, sexual orientation, disability status].
- i. I am aware of non-traditional instruments and approaches that might be more appropriate for use.

B. Metacognition and Multicultural Competence - Winston & Fouad (2006)

Expanding the application of the Culturally Appropriate Career Counselling Model (CACCM; Fouad & Bingham, 1995) model, Winston and Fouad (2006), proposed an expanded one, incorporating metacognitive processes to guide practitioners' culturally centered career interventions. Metacognitive skill is developed via three processes: developing a plan of action, implementing the plan and self-monitoring, and evaluating the plan.

1. Plan

Developing a plan of action, career practitioners need to consider their own cultural identity, their knowledge of the client's racial/ethnic background and identity, and identify what they do not know about their client's background. While in planning, career practitioners need to answer questions, such as: "what is my plan for working with this client?", "are there any gaps in my knowledge about the client's context?" and "what are my strengths and areas of challenge?".

2. Monitor

The second process is implementing the plan and developing mechanisms to self-monitor. Self-monitoring includes being open to information that is not consistent with the cultural assumptions made about the client and that may call for modification to the counselling plan. Monitoring involves identity career issues and the cultural impact upon them. Practitioners, should, therefore reflect on questions, such as: "what is the client's cultural context and what are my reactions to that?", "how might the client's information be conflicting?", "are there some cultural variables that I am emphasizing more than the client?" and "are there some issues that I am avoiding?".



3. Evaluate

The final process is evaluating or bringing into conscious thought the questions of how effective the practitioner has been with interventions and decision-making processes. Practitioner's flexibility and critical thinking are enhanced by metacognitive skills, including the ability to learn from mistakes, to adjust behaviour, as well as the facility to switch between strategies as needed, leaving space for improvement. Within this process, the career practitioner should reflect on issues, such as: "how helpful are my interventions and on what basis am I determining this?" and "how culturally congruent are the counselling outcomes with the client's desired goals?".

Methods for Diversity Skills Improvement

Self-exploration and **self-awareness** are the first steps in developing and achieving cultural and diversity sensitivity. This requires personal commitment and willingness. Tools such as self-monitoring and mindfulness techniques, like journaling, can also prove useful. As far as knowledge is concerned, career practitioners need also to be up to date, and continuously educate themselves both with empirical research and literature and on a broader spectrum of cultural, political and diversity issues.

Building on knowledge, cultural and diverse awareness can be developed through **behavioural activities** as well, like the individual's exploration with arts, experiential or perspective taking activities. Whether visual arts (e.g. architecture and painting), literary or performing arts (e.g. dance, music, cinema and theatre), they all convey (sub-) cultural elements that can be exploited.

Moreover, career practitioners can largely benefit from *experiential activities*. An experiential activity is one that compels the "student" to utilize the material, and experience it rather than just learn it. Examples of such activities are to be found in Laszloffy and Habekost (2010) and described below:

- Participating in an event (social, political or religious) where the subject is in the minority;
- Exposing themselves to a religion that they had some negative reactions to by attending a service and talking with one of the members;
- Walking around with a rainbow pin and holding hands with someone of the same gender;
- Fulfilling the role of the opposite gender for one day, including: how they walk, dress and talk;
- Participating in one class while blindfolded, and confining themselves to a wheelchair for four hours;

Finally, *perspective-taking* challenges individuals to put themselves in the shoes of an individual in a marginalized group. Studies show that perspective-taking can spark empathy and improve participants' behavior not just toward the target group but also toward all



marginalized groups. Just by writing a few sentences imagining the distinct challenges a marginalized minority might face can improve pro-diversity attitudes and behavioral intentions toward these groups (Lindsey et al., 2015). Research shows that when people actively engage in perspective taking, they are more likely to feel empathy with the targets of the perspective taking, including feeling concerned about their misfortunes (Betancourt, 1990), understanding or identifying with their experiences (Egan, 1990), feeling positive about their achievements (Aron, Aron, Tudor, & Nelson, 1991), and wanting to help or engage in other prosocial behaviors (Batson et al., 2002). Accordingly, empathic feelings lead to increased concern for the well-being of others; as such, a person is more likely to have positive attitudes toward others than people who do not feel empathy (Madera et al., 2011).

In a nutshell, diversity training types include awareness only, behavior only, or a combination of both components (Bezrukova et al., 2012). Awareness training focuses on getting participants to be more aware of their own and other cultural assumptions, values, and biases (Robinson & Bradley, 1997; Baba & Hebert, 2004). Skill-building (behavioral) training educates participants on monitoring one's own actions and appropriate responses to specific differences, such as identifying and overcoming interracial communication barriers and perspective-taking activities. Learning theories suggest that participants can better understand their behavior (being aware of why they are doing what they are doing), when diversity training combines both awareness and behavioral components rather than when it focuses on only one (Raelin, 1997).



3.2 Suggested activities to improve Diversity

Activity 1 – Identifying tolerance / How comfortable am I?

Instructions for IT programmer: Activity like Type E: Click on the right answer. They will be presented with the situation and next the 4 choices. At the end of the exercise the situations that have as an answer Not comfortable at all or Uneasy, they have to get orange, as a notice of their prejudices). We can also have the Questionnaire –table in pdf version in case the activity is done in a class.

Activity type/method: Self-awareness

Learning Goal: As it is known self-exploration and self-awareness are the first steps in developing and achieving cultural and diversity sensitivity. Through this activity, the participant will be able to recognize his/her own mindset and deep structures towards diverse people, perspectives and lifestyles as a starting point for improving Diversity skills. Recognising his/her own bias, s/he can work with him/herself to become more sensitive and open to diverse persons.

Specificities: Individual activity, but can also be implemented in groups for the reflection part. The learners can fill in the questionnaire alone and then come back in one group to reflect upon their experience over the activity.

Duration: 1 hour

Material needed: “How comfortable am I” questionnaire

Useful information for the trainer:

At first explain to participants that the first step to become open to diversity is to recognize their bias, that will enable them to be open and accept diversity. Making people aware of an issue or need for changing behavior would increase the likelihood of behavioral changes in response (Bezrukova et al., 2016). Put emphasis on the fact that by being willing to accept different persons, behaviors, beliefs, value and lifestyles that are different from their own, it doesn't mean that they approve or agree with it. It just makes them more efficient when working with diverse people.

The next step is to go through the questionnaire (that they will find in the STRENGTH platform). After filling in the questionnaire, ask them to write down the cases where they responded with «not comfortable at all» and «uneasy» (cases for improvement), in order to reflect on them. They could also write in a learning diary their reflections and write down their aims on how to improve in future or in practice. In that way, the activity can



combine both awareness raising and goal setting, which are both effective practices towards diversity enhancement (Madera et al., 2012).

When participants have filled in the questionnaire and write down their «cases for improvement», you can discuss in group about their experience using the reflection questions.

Instructions:

Please take some time to rate the following statements on a scale of 1-4, where 1= being not comfortable at all to 4= being completely comfortable.

By the end of the exercise you will become aware of your own prejudices and how people are likely to react in similar circumstances. In cases where you feel uncomfortable or uneasy (1 or 2), you are highly encouraged to do extra self-work and educate yourself.

Situation	Not comfortable at all	Uneasy	Fairly Comfortable	Completely Comfortable
The young man sitting next to you on the airplane is Arab.	1	2	3	4
Your two next door neighbours in your hall are lesbian/gay.	1	2	3	4
You discover that the cute young man/woman that you are attracted to is actually a woman/man	1	2	3	4
You visit your grandparent at an assisted-living Community.	1	2	3	4
A homeless man approaches you and asks for change.	1	2	3	4
Your dentist is HIV positive.	1	2	3	4
The woman sitting next to you on a plane weighs 110 kg.	1	2	3	4
One of your group presentation members	1	2	3	4



has a speech impediment.				
Your family buys a home in a predominantly immigrant neighbourhood.	1	2	3	4
Your friend becomes a Muslim.	1	2	3	4
Your new neighbour has been in prison.	1	2	3	4
A friend invites you to go to a gay bar.	1	2	3	4
Your assigned colleague is a Fundamentalist Christian.	1	2	3	4
Your friend becomes a Buddhist.	1	2	3	4
Your asylum-seeker neighbour gets a full-tuition minority scholarship.	1	2	3	4
A former drug addict comes to your coffee shop to ask you for a job.	1	2	3	4
You arrive at an important company meeting and discover that the CEO is female.	1	2	3	4
Your new neighbour is transgender.	1	2	3	4
Your assigned colleague has alcohol problems	1	2	3	4
Your project supervisor is sitting on a wheelchair.	1	2	3	4
Your Muslim neighbour practices their Friday prayer.	1	2	3	4



Your group project leader is a 62 year old female.	1	2	3	4
You are asked to prepare a presentation on Diversity for your community.	1	2	3	4

Questions for reflection:

What did you learn from this activity?

Did you notice any stereotypical thinking in yourself?

Let's have a brainstorming: What actions could a person who is feeling not comfortable with each of the mentioned cases make? What thoughts- phrases could be helpful?



Activity 2 – Understanding privilege A

Information for IT programmer: Combination of two types of activities. Type E click on answers and Type B: rooms

The trainee will be shown the 28 statements and below each they will have to respond among “Identify” “Don’t identify”. If it’s possible to have statistics for each statement among the participants could be helpful (not obligatory). After having answered to all statements they will get into room for group discussion.

Activity type/method: Cognitive method -(Self-) awareness

Learning Goal: The participant will be able to identify and understand the influence of culture, age, gender, religion, and social class on identity, needs, and emotions in someone’s life and how these can be of advantage or disadvantage in a given time or place.

Privilege is a key element in perpetuating oppressive systems; “a right, favour, or immunity, granted to one individual or group and withheld from another.”

Specificities: Individual activity, but can also be implemented in groups for the reflection part. The learners can go through the privilege list alone and then come back in one group to reflect upon their experience over the activity.

Duration: 1 hour

Material needed: “The privilege list”

Useful information for the trainer:

Firstly, explain to participants what a privilege is. Then, guide them how to go through the privileges list. When having finished with the list, invite them to write down reflections on a learning diary.

Then get them in a group to discuss their experience using the Questions for reflection.

Instructions:

You will be presented with a list of privilege statements. If you don’t identify with the statement or feel like it is not true based on your experience, you will click on it signifying that you don’t identify with that particular privilege.

It is proposed you could work in a group after having marked all your answers. (2 or more persons to see the differences among your answers).



PRIVILEGE STATEMENTS:

1. *The leader of my country is also a person of my racial group.*
2. *When I am angry or emotional, people do not dismiss my opinions as symptoms of “that time of the month.”*
3. *When going shopping, I can easily find clothes that fit my size and shape.*
4. *In public, I can kiss and hold hands with the person I am dating without fear of name-calling or violence.*
5. *When I go shopping, I can be fairly certain that sales or security people will not follow me.*
6. *When expressing my opinion, I am not automatically assumed to be a spokesperson of my race.*
7. *Most of the religious and cultural holidays celebrated by my family are recognized with days off from work or school.*
8. *I can easily find hair products and people who know how to style my hair.*
9. *I can easily buy greeting cards that represent my relationship with my significant other.*
10. *When someone is trying to describe me, they do not mention my race.*
11. *In my family, it is seen as normal to obtain a college degree.*
12. *If I am going out to dinner with friends, I do not worry if the building will be accessible to me.*
13. *I can be certain that when I attend an event there will be people of my race there.*
14. *When I strongly state my opinion, people see it as assertive rather than aggressive.*
15. *People do not make assumptions about my work ethic or intelligence based upon the size of my body.*
16. *I can usually afford (without much hardship) to do the things that my friends want to do for entertainment.*
17. *When I am with others of my race, people do not think that we are segregating ourselves.*
18. *I can choose the style of dress that I feel comfortable in and most reflects my identity and I know that I will not be stared at in public.*
19. *I do not worry about walking alone at night.*
20. *People do not make assumptions about my intelligence based upon my style of speech.*
21. *When attending class or other events, I do not have to worry about having an interpreter present to understand or to participate.*
22. *If pulled over by a police officer, I can be sure that I have not been singled out because of my race.*



23. *I can book an airline flight, go to a movie, ride in a car and not worry about whether there will be a seat that can accommodate me.*

24. *People assume I was admitted to school or hired based upon my credentials, rather than my race or gender.*

25. *As a child, I could use the “flesh-coloured” crayons to colour my family and have it match our skin colour.*

26. *My professionalism is never questioned because of my age.*

27. *I can feel comfortable speaking about my culture without feeling that I’ll be judged.*

Reflection questions:

- *How did you feel doing this activity?*
- *How was it to consider the number of non-privileges (don’t identify answers)?*
- *How was it to notice the non-privileges of others in your group while for you the same statements exist as privileges? (in case you worked in a group)*
- *What does it feel like to have or not to have certain privileges?*
- *What does privilege mean to you? How does it affect you?*



Activity 3 – Understanding privilege B

Information for IT programmer: Exercise type drag and drop. The trainee will be shown the 28 statements and then he/she will have to move each in the appropriate box with the given categories. After finishing all the matches, he/she will be given the answer – red the wrong ones and green the right. Then meet in rooms

RACE/ETHNICITY	APPEARANCE	CLASS	ABILITY
RELIGION	GENDER	CULTURE	AGE
SEXUALITY	LANGUAGE	SIZE	

Activity type/method: Cognitive method - awareness

Learning Goal: The participant will be able to identify and understand the influence of culture, age, gender, religion, and social class on identity, needs, and emotions in someone’s life and how these can be of advantage or disadvantage in a given time or place.

Privilege is a key element in perpetuating oppressive systems; “a right, favour, or immunity, granted to one individual or group and withheld from another.”

Specificities: Individual or group activity, but shall be implemented in groups for the reflection part. The learners can go through the privilege list and add them in the given categories alone or in groups of 2 persons and then come back in one group to reflect upon their experience over the activity.

Duration: 30 minutes

Material needed: “The privilege list” & Categories

Useful information for the trainer: This activity is a logical transmission from previous activity, as it leads trainees from their own emotions to rational thinking. Get trainees in groups of 2 (otherwise they can go through the list alone) and guide them how to categorise each statement in the given categories. When all groups (persons) have



finished with the categorization, get them in one group for discussion over their experience.

Instructions:

You will be presented with the list with privileges statements again. This time, you have to categorise them based on the following categories:

Race/Ethnicity, Appearance, Class, Ability, Religion, Gender, Culture, Sexuality, Language, Size, Age

PRIVILEGE STATEMENTS:

- 1. The leader of my country is also a person of my racial group.*
- 2. When I am angry or emotional, people do not dismiss my opinions as symptoms of “that time of the month.”*
- 3. When going shopping, I can easily find clothes that fit my size and shape.*
- 4. In public, I can kiss and hold hands with the person I am dating without fear of name-calling or violence.*
- 5. When I go shopping, I can be fairly certain that sales or security people will not follow me.*
- 6. When expressing my opinion, I am not automatically assumed to be a spokesperson of my race.*
- 7. Most of the religious and cultural holidays celebrated by my family are recognized with days off from work or school.*
- 8. I can easily find hair products and people who know how to style my hair.*
- 9. I can easily buy greeting cards that represent my relationship with my significant other.*
- 10. When someone is trying to describe me, they do not mention my race.*
- 11. In my family, it is seen as normal to obtain a college degree.*
- 12. If I am going out to dinner with friends, I do not worry if the building will be accessible to me.*
- 13. I can be certain that when I attend an event there will be people of my race there.*
- 14. When I strongly state my opinion, people see it as assertive rather than aggressive.*
- 15. People do not make assumptions about my work ethic or intelligence based upon the size of my body.*
- 16. I can usually afford (without much hardship) to do the things that my friends want to do for entertainment.*
- 17. When I am with others of my race, people do not think that we are segregating ourselves.*



18. *I can choose the style of dress that I feel comfortable in and most reflects my identity and I know that I will not be stared at in public.*
19. *I do not worry about walking alone at night.*
20. *People do not make assumptions about my intelligence based upon my style of speech.*
21. *When attending class or other events, I do not have to worry about having an interpreter present to understand or to participate.*
22. *If pulled over by a police officer, I can be sure that I have not been singled out because of my race.*
23. *I can book an airline flight, go to a movie, ride in a car and not worry about whether there will be a seat that can accommodate me.*
24. *People assume I was admitted to school or hired based upon my credentials, rather than my race or gender.*
25. *As a child, I could use the “flesh-coloured” crayons to colour my family and have it match our skin colour.*
26. *My professionalism is never questioned because of my age.*
27. *I can feel comfortable speaking about my culture without feeling that I’ll be judged.*

Answers:

Privilege statements and categories:

1. *The leader of my country is also a person of my racial group. (RACE)*
2. *When I am angry or emotional, people do not dismiss my opinions as symptoms of “that time of the month.” (GENDER)*
3. *When going shopping, I can easily find clothes that fit my size and shape. (SIZE)*
4. *In public, I can kiss and hold hands with the person I am dating without fear of name-calling or violence. (SEXUALITY)*
5. *When I go shopping, I can be fairly certain that sales or security people will not follow me. (RACE/APPEARANCE)*
6. *When expressing my opinion, I am not automatically assumed to be a spokesperson of my race. (RACE)*
7. *Most of the religious and cultural holidays celebrated by my family are recognized with days off from work or school. (RELIGION/CULTURE)*
8. *I can easily find hair products and people who know how to style my hair. (RACE)*



9. *I can easily buy greeting cards that represent my relationship with my significant other. (SEXUALITY)*
10. *When someone is trying to describe me, they do not mention my race. (RACE)*
11. *In my family, it is seen as normal to obtain a college degree. (CLASS)*
12. *If I am going out to dinner with friends, I do not worry if the building will be accessible to me. (ABILITY)*
13. *I can be certain that when I attend an event there will be people of my race there. (RACE)*
14. *When I strongly state my opinion, people see it as assertive rather than aggressive. (RACE/GENDER)*
15. *People do not make assumptions about my work ethic or intelligence based upon the size of my body. (SIZE)*
16. *I can usually afford (without much hardship) to do the things that my friends want to do for entertainment. (CLASS)*
17. *When I am with others of my race, people do not think that we are segregating ourselves. (RACE)*
18. *I can choose the style of dress that I feel comfortable in and most reflects my identity and I know that I will not be stared at in public. (GENDER/APPEARANCE)*
19. *I do not worry about walking alone at night. (GENDER)*
20. *People do not make assumptions about my intelligence based upon my style of speech. (LANGUAGE/ ABILITY)*
21. *When attending class or other events, I do not have to worry about having an interpreter present to understand or to participate. (LANGUAGE)*
22. *If pulled over by a police officer, I can be sure that I have not been singled out because of my race. (RACE)*
23. *I can book an airline flight, go to a movie, ride in a car and not worry about whether there will be a seat that can accommodate me. (SIZE/ABILITY)*
24. *People assume I was admitted to school or hired based upon my credentials, rather than my race or gender. (RACE/GENDER)*
25. *As a child, I could use the “flesh-coloured” crayons to colour my family and have it match our skin colour. (RACE)*
26. *My professionalism is never questioned because of my age. (AGE)*
27. *I can feel comfortable speaking about my culture without feeling that I’ll be judged. (RACE)*



Questions for reflection:

1. *Did you notice anything you consider self-evident, that actually is not?*
2. *What did you learn from this activity?*



Activity 4: case study

Information for IT programmer: activity type B (given scenario) and meet in Rooms (rooms with 2-3 persons in the beginning and then back in one Room).

Activity type: Behavioural activity – case study

Learning goals: Case – narrative- examples are useful for understanding the challenges in real life. Through this activity, participants will understand that in each case/client they have to search for their background before arriving at false conclusions and be aware of their cultural or other differences and try to see from their clients' perspective.

Specificities: The activity can be done individually, but it works better in groups.

Duration: 1 hour

Materials needed: Scenarios & List of questions

Useful notes for the trainer:

In case of individual activity: Inform trainees that they will be provided with 2 scenarios and a list of questions. They can choose any of the scenarios they like or it's more possible to come across in their practice. The aim of the activity is to read the scenarios and try to respond to the provided questions. When they have finished the activity they come back into a group to reflect on their experience.

Group activity: Get trainees into small groups (2-4 persons) and provide them with the scenarios given and questions. Invite them to try to find together the answers to the questions, to share their ideas and experience towards similar cases. When they have finished with the questions they come altogether in a group for discussion.

Instructions:

Please study any of the given case studies and try to analyze it and answer the following questions. It will be more effective if you could do this activity with a partner.

Scenario 1: Haldi from Syria the Asylum Seeker

Haldi needs to find a job in the host country to convince local authorities to grant him asylum. He had tried to get a job repeatedly but has failed so far, which is why he is becoming increasingly desperate. In Despina's counselling session, he expresses anger, disappointment, and lack of trust towards employers who do not want to employ migrants in their businesses. He feels that everyone in the country is hostile and prejudiced against him as a migrant.



1. Do you know which are the social and cultural characteristics of Syrians?
2. How do you feel about people that are seeking asylum in your country?
3. Which theories and techniques will you use in order to gain the trust of Haldi?
4. Can you recognize the barriers that an asylum seeker faces in order to find a profession?
5. Do you know the legal framework for asylum seekers?
6. How do you deal with Haldi's disappointment?
7. Do you have any connection with companies or enterprises that could hire a migrant?

Scenario 2: Tina a student with mobility impairments

Tina is a 16years old student who suffers from arthritis and is moving using a wheelchair. She comes to the counsellor with her mother in order to assist her in making a career choice. Tina has a lot of ideas regarding her future career, but she believes that she can't do any of them due to her disability and she's afraid that she will always be under the protection of her parents.

1. Which are the characteristics (social, emotional, etc) of a person with mobile disabilities?
2. Do you know the legal framework for the education and employment of people with disabilities in your country?
3. Do you know any education and employment agencies for people with mobility disabilities in your country?
4. Do you know of any program (national, European) for the promotion of employment for the disabled?
5. What professional development theories could you apply in Tina's case?

Questions for reflection:

What did you learn from this activity?

Was it easy to find the answers to the provided questions?

What sources can be useful in acquiring the responses you need?



Activity 5 The Single Story

Information for IT programmer: Activity type B: meet in room (but first they will be presented the video)

Activity type: Experiential – self awareness

Learning goals: participants will realise how we form perceptions and how these perceptions lead to stereotypes. They will be shown the impact of having single stories about people and how these stories distort truth.

Specificities: Group activity

Duration: 30 minutes

Material needed: YouTube video

Useful notes for the trainer: *Explain to trainees that they will watch a video first and then come back in group to discuss their experience.*

Instructions:

First you shall watch the movie clip by Chimamanda Adichie (Nigerian Novelist) ‘The danger of the single story.’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9lhs241zeg>

After having watched the video, discuss in pairs or groups over it.

Questions for reflection:

- *How has your story been misunderstood by others?*
- *How have you misunderstood others’ stories?*
- *How can you go about avoiding single stories about others?*



Activity 6 – Walk in their shoes...

Information for IT programmer: Combination of three types of activities. Type G: online form to fill in & Type C: post –it & Type B: room to meet.

The trainees will be given the list with the given words and they will have to write online their answers next to the given words. Then, the answers of all participants are taking the form of “post-it”. Then participants are getting into a room to discuss over their answers and thoughts.

Activity type/method: Experiential – Cognitive method (Perspective taking)

Learning Goal:

Through this activity the trainees are going to learn to see situations from other perspectives, in order to understand how diverse people may feel, show concern about their misfortunes, identify with their experiences and as a consequence increase their diversity skill.

Specificities: The activity can be done individually, but it works better in groups. The trainees write down the challenges those groups face alone or in small groups and then come back in one group to reflect upon their experience over the activity.

Duration: 1 hour

Material needed: “The list with the target groups”

Useful information for the trainer: *The proposed activity is a perspective-taking activity, based on the finding that the simple act of ‘writing a few sentences imagining the distinct challenges a marginalized minority might face’ resulted in improved attitudes and behaviors toward the marginalised group (Lindsey et al., 2015). Perspective-taking challenges individuals to put themselves in the shoes of an individual in a marginalized group.*

In case of individual activity: *Inform trainees that they will be provided with a list mentioning different target groups (available on the STRENGTH platform). Invite them to write one paragraph or sentences from the perspective of the target group presented, detailing the challenges that this group faces when looking for a job, considering social, economic, and cultural factors that might affect the target group’s behaviors and opportunities. When they have finished the assigned task they come back into a group to reflect on their experience.*

Group activity: *Get trainees into small groups (2-3 persons) and provide them with the list with the different target groups. Ask them to present in a paragraph (several sentences) mentioning the challenges that this group faces when looking for a job from the perspective of the target group presented. Invite them to work together and share their ideas and experience with the target groups. When they have finished with the questions they come altogether in a group for discussion.*



Instructions: Look at each of the target groups below and write a paragraph or several sentences from the perspective of the target group presented, detailing the challenges that this group faces when looking for a job, considering social, economic, and cultural factors that might affect the target group's behaviors and opportunities.

Disabled:

Roma:

Elderly:

Women:

Muslims:

LGBTQI:

Asylum seekers:

Questions for reflection:

Share with the other members of the group the challenges that each of these groups face.

Was it easy for you to imagine the difficulties, obstacles that those groups may face? Have you imagined all possible challenges?

What was your overall experience over this activity? What did you learn?



3.3 Self-evaluation Exercises

The following multiple choice questions will help you to reflect on the educational material of the section and evaluate your understanding on the basic relevant concepts and theoretical background. (5 questions for each section)

Question 1

Choose the right answer to the following question:

Which are the three pillars on which the effectiveness of a culturally sensitive practitioner is based?

1. knowledge, beliefs and skills
2. knowledge, memory and awareness
3. skills, emotional management and awareness
4. knowledge, skills and awareness

Question 2

Fill in with the right word

Intercultural competence is and there are core competencies that individuals can develop that are not specific to any culture

1. culture-specific
2. extended
3. unavoidable
4. culture-general

Question 3

Fill in the sentence with the right word/phrase

Diversity and cultural sensitivity can be developed better through activities focusing on:

1. awareness only
2. behaviour only
3. emotional management
4. a combination of awareness and behaviour



Question 4

Awareness in intercultural competence refers to practitioner's:

1. understanding of his/her cultural background and feeling comfortable with the cultural differences of his/her client etc.
2. knowledge on the clients' background
3. willingness to constantly redefine his/her values, attitudes and beliefs according to the client's background
4. development of intervention methods focusing on diversity

Question 5

Please choose right or wrong for the following text.

Even though cultural information and self-exploration are very important elements for a practitioner, they can prove to be useless unless he/she utilizes them in an empathetic way.

Right

Wrong



3.4 Resources for further study & References

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Section 4: Active Listening

Short Description

The goal is to increase participants' abilities to attend to other people. On the one hand, it shall increase participants' **attentiveness**, i.e., their capacity to direct their attention to the needs, feelings, and cognitions of others and to remain attentive even when they feel distressed personally. On the other hand, the training will equip participants with skills to **listen and focus on people in a non-judgmental** manner that allows others to reflect openly.

Learning Objectives

This course is aiming at assisting practitioners improving their active listening skills and implementing them in their daily practice. More specifically, practitioners will learn to:

- Direct their attention to the needs, feelings and thoughts of their clients and to respond to them appropriately;
- Probe the client if things are not clear during a conversation and react to nonverbal signals;
- Focus on the client in a non-judgmental manner, allowing the client to reflect openly;
- Show their clients they are focused and engaged so that clients feel comfortable to share information;
- Learn to decode the client's non-verbal signals and body language while expressing himself/herself, like the posture, the tone, speed and pitch of voice, his/her gestures and facial expressions;
- Summarize regularly during session, check whether they have understood the other person;
- Show an interest in the other person during session and encourage him/her to carry on talking through eye contact and manner;
- Give others space and use silence at the right time;
- Show respect to clients;
- Focus on what the speaker is telling.



4.1 Theoretical background

Definition

Active listening is the ability to focus completely on a speaker, understand their message, comprehend the information and respond thoughtfully. Unlike passive listening, which is the act of hearing a speaker without retaining their message, this highly valued interpersonal communication skill ensures you're able to engage and later recall specific details without needing repeated information. Active listening is all about building rapport, understanding, and trust.

Listening skills do not just refer to aural attention; they also include observation of the client's appearance and behaviour.

Active listening has been described as a multistep process, including making empathetic comments, asking appropriate questions, and paraphrasing and summarizing for the purposes of verification (Cramer, 1998; Gordon, 2003; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1990).

Active listening refers on the one hand to the skill of **listening and focusing** on people in a sympathetic, **non-judgmental manner** that allows others to reflect ideas and feelings openly, while on the other hand, it concerns **attentiveness**.

Listening

Listening is an audible demonstration that we are listening and encourages the client's continued exploration. Additionally, it is about listening with all our senses, providing full attention and listening for a meaning beyond what is said, which can involve the practitioner speaking to ensure they've properly understood their client.

Attentiveness

Attentiveness is the capacity to listen and focus on other people, to direct one's attention to the needs, feelings and cognitions of others and to remain attentive even when distressed. Attentiveness is conceptually related to, but not synonymous with, empathy or listening. The empathic communicator must be attentive but the attentive communicator need not be empathic. In a like manner, listening behaviour is characterized by attentiveness but attentive behaviour need not be marked by listening activity (Norton & Pettegrew, 1979).

Carl Rogers (1951) was perhaps the first researcher to explicate some of the stylistic components of attentiveness. This was primarily a function of the important role listening and attentiveness played in his approach to therapeutic communication. He flatly claims that "without attention there can be no communication." For Rogers, the attentive communicator "conveys to the speaker that his contribution is worth listening to, that as a person he is respected enough to receive the undivided attention of another". In a deeper analysis, Egan



(1998) suggests that active listening involves four components: listening and responding to verbal messages, observing nonverbal behaviour, listening to the context of clients' concerns, and listening to content that may eventually need to be challenged. Meier and Davis (1997) outline the process of active listening as the foundation for counselling. They suggest that practitioners exhibit trust by inviting clients to participate, explaining the practitioner's role, guiding and pacing (versus lead) the process, and emphasizing on clients' needs to be heard and understood (Meier & Davis, 1997). Because listening in these ways is essential to performing basic counselling skills (reflecting feelings and content, immediacy, confrontation), practitioners who do not listen actively are not likely to feel effective in other areas.

According to Gearhart & Bodie (2011) active listening consists of (a) cognitive processes, such as attending, understanding, or interpreting messages; (b) affective processes, such as being motivated and energized to attend to another person; and (c) behavioural processes, such as verbally and nonverbally signalling that a message has been received and understood.

Bodie (2011) developed the Active-Empathic Listening Scale (AELS), which captures these listening characteristics over the course of three stages: (a) sensing, which means to actively attending to and capturing verbal and nonverbal information; (b) processing, which means to make sense of verbal and nonverbal information, and ultimately synthesize that information into a "narrative whole"; and (c) responding, which includes back channelling (e.g., head nods) and verbal cues (e.g., asking questions, paraphrasing) to signal that information has been understood (Gearhart & Bodie, 2011, p. 87). Several studies by Bodie and colleagues show that the provision of Person Centered approach and nonverbally warm and caring support is tightly linked with the extent to which supporters engage in active listening (Bodie & Jones, 2012; Bodie, Jones, Vickery, Hatcher, & Cannava, 2014; Bodie, Vickery, & Gearhart, 2013).

Importance of active listening skills

Some of the basic competencies expected from psychological practitioners are understanding, awareness, effective listening, empathic approach, target determination, forming relationships, observation, giving feedback, emotion and content reflection, interpretation, easing adaptation and process monitoring (McLeod & McLeod, 2011).

Effective practitioners are expected to have the ability to adapt and improvise multiple skills such as attending, responding, probing, challenging, interpreting, and reflecting feelings continuously in order to manage the fluctuating and changing circumstances within the counselling session (Larson & Daniels, 1998).

Smaby and Maddux (2011) suggest that active listening is a form of social proofing, allowing the client to assess if the person in front of them is ready and able to help them. Good listening skills in counselling establishes trust, helps the client open up and disclose their thoughts, and



encourages them to share their emotions, thereby facilitating the gathering of valuable information about the client that would in turn aid the counselling process.

Most importantly, the client often finds solutions to his/her own concerns through free talking, and also allows the practitioner to get a deeper insight into the factors that might be leading to the problem.

Additionally, according to Rogers and Farson (1987) *“active listening is an important way to bring about changes in people. Despite the popular notion that listening is a passive approach, clinical and research evidence clearly shows that sensitive listening is a most effective agent for individual personality change and group development. Listening brings about changes in peoples’ attitudes toward themselves and others; it also brings about changes in their basic values and personal philosophy. People who have been listened to in this new and special way become more emotionally mature, more open to their experiences, less defensive, more democratic, and less authoritarian”*.

Nelson Jones (2013) suggests that active listening helps in establishing a rapport which makes clients feel their concerns are understood, creates a perception of honesty, integrity and reliability in the relationship, minimises the client’s defensiveness and as a result, practitioners can gather all the valuable information about a client and the client can experience feelings and acknowledge the inner-flow of his/her emotions. Additionally, active listening helps in bridging differences and in better understanding of a client with a different set of life circumstances and by showing understanding to clients from different cultural groups, practitioners are perceived as having status and credibility.

There are numerous situations in which practitioners can utilise active listening to build rapport with clients and improve overall communication. Among them, the most frequent are the following:

- **Information – getting a clear picture.** This means asking questions to find out about needs, instructions and context of a client. Practitioners should check back to ensure they’ve heard and understood the relevant details, and that the client agrees on the facts.
- **Affirmation – affirming, acknowledging, exploring the problem.** Listening actively to a person who would benefit from having their problem acknowledged by the practitioner. The problem may or may not involve the practitioner directly. Practitioners may reflect back the client’s feelings and perhaps the content of the problem with a single statement of acknowledgment or during a dialogue over a period of time, exploring the difficulty in more depth.
- **Inflammation – responding to a complaint.** When clients tell the practitioner they are unhappy with them, criticising them, complaining about them, or getting it off their chest, the best thing the practitioner can do (although challenging) is to effectively listen (Nelson Jones, 2012).



Summing up, active listening is an effective tool to reduce the emotion of a situation. Every time the practitioner correctly labels an emotion, the intensity of it dissipates like bursting a bubble. The speaker feels heard and understood. Once the emotional level has been reduced, reasoning abilities can function more effectively. If the emotions are high, practitioners should deal with the emotions first by using active listening skills. Effective use of active listening skills can turn a challenging situation into a co-operative situation.

Prerequisites for being a good listener

There are certain conditions that the practitioner should follow, in order to be a good listener and make the client feel more comfortable to talk. According to Rogers the most important part of interpersonal communication is the consistently positive humanistic view of human nature which stresses that the tendency of every person to self-actualization should be respected and supported. The principle most relevant for the general meaning of active listening is the creation of a suitable atmosphere that fosters communication. This atmosphere is subject to several distinctive conditions according to Rogers.

First, communication should be **genuine, congruent and honest**. This principle is fairly obvious because correct listening behaviour is accompanied by the formation of a basis of mutual trust. Congruence is a “close matching between what is experienced at a gut level, what is present in awareness, and what is expressed to the client” (Rogers, 1980/1995b, p.116). The congruence of the practitioner is of central importance for empathic understanding. Besides, by its external aspect, called genuineness or transparency, it directly influences the therapeutic communication. This means that the practitioner does not hide himself behind a false front, but faces the client as the person she/he really is in the immediate situation. A lack of genuineness, if perceived by the client, is a major threat for the therapeutic relationship: “Clients are very perceptive and pick up on incongruences like a magnet will pick up a pin. When they do so, the trust level will fall, the intimacy will dissolve, and the relationship will begin to atrophy” (Natiello, 2001, p. 34).

The acronym **REDOL** can help the practitioner portray his/her inner attitudes and values of genuineness & respect towards a client.

R: The practitioner is **Relaxed**, patient & natural with the client.

E: Practitioner makes good **Eye Contact** with a client which conveys the message that he/she is interested in what the client has to say. It also helps send across his/her point more effectively and helps build trust with the client.

D: The practitioner **Duly** faces the client by eliminating any obstacle like desk which creates a psychological barrier for the client.



O: Open posture. The practitioner ensures that his/her posture communicates **openness** and availability to the client. Crossed legs and crossed arms may be interpreted as devalued involvement with the client or even unavailability or remoteness.

L: The practitioner **leans** toward the client, in a slight manner, to show interest and involvement. Leaning back from the client may convey the opposite.

The second principle for successful and facilitative listening is **acceptance, unconditional positive regard or compassion or even appreciation**. This attitude aims to demonstrate that the client is valued as a person and that the subject matter they communicate is meaningful. The practitioner should communicate verbally and nonverbally that he regards the subject matter with interest and understanding, non-judgmentally, and is always attentive during the conversation. This facilitates the client's willingness to open up and feel secure during the talk. By expressing warmth and respect for the client, regardless of their words and actions, practitioners can promote their own sense of self-worth and set them on the path to personal growth. The principle of unconditional positive regard implies that "the therapist prizes the client in a total rather than a conditional way" (Rogers, 1980/1995b). It means that the totality of the client's experiences is unconditionally accepted by the therapist. Unconditional positive regard is marked by "feelings of compassion, warmth, respect or admiration, interest or liking and other positive feelings" (Barrett-Lennard, 1998) of the practitioner towards the client, which pervade the practitioner's communication. It is not a new insight that positive social contact generally decreases stress and anxiety. Today, this is called the "social buffering effect" (Kikusi, Winslow, & Mori, 2006). This effect is closely related to the principle of unconditional positive regard. If the client is gripped by negative emotions or feelings, but observes that the practitioner understands him/her and stays calm – facing all of the client's experiences with a stance of unconditional acceptance – the client will shift in a direction towards more calmness, due to the resonance evoked within him.

The third and last precondition for facilitative active listening according to Carl Rogers is **empathy**. Experiencing the emotions of the client transforms the relationship between two persons completely to one of absolute trust and, together with the other principles mentioned, it forms the basis for communication that brings advantages for both parties and is productive and meaningful. The practitioner should exercise **empathy**, which refers to viewing the world through the perspective of the client, and accepting clients' perceptions and feelings as if they are they were his own without losing boundaries and separate sense of self. The practitioner carefully listens to the client, understanding what they mean to the best extent, and communicates this understanding to the client in such a way that they feel the practitioner understands them to a great extent. This might help the clients understand themselves more fully and act on their understanding. In the process of empathizing, the practitioner temporarily forgets about his or her own frame of reference. The practitioner then shares this understanding with the client in either a verbal or non-verbal manner.



Generally speaking, active listening is the most important skill required in the process of counselling. Once mastered, it creates a perception of honesty, integrity, and reliability in the client-practitioner relationship, all of which contributes towards a strong working relationship.

Active listening skills in practice – Techniques to use

Active listening aims to bring about changes in people. To achieve this end, it relies upon definite techniques- things to do and things to avoid.

Below are presented different techniques that help us be better active listeners. They are either verbal or non-verbal.

A. Verbal active listening techniques include:

1. **Restating/ Paraphrasing:** To show we are listening, we have to repeat every so often what we think the person said — not by parroting, but by paraphrasing what we heard in our own words. For example, *“Let’s see if I’m clear about this. . .”*, or *“So, you’re saying that the uncertainty about who will be your new supervisor is creating stress for you.”* A recent study found that while paraphrasing does not necessarily make people feel understood, it does create a greater sense of closeness and intimacy in a conversation. This is a key part of building trust and possible friendships (Weger et al., 2010).
2. **Reflecting:** Instead of just repeating, we should reflect the speaker’s words in terms of feelings — for example, *“This seems really important to you”*. Reflecting feelings, allows clients to hear the feelings they have just expressed and can help them better understand their emotional responses to various stimuli
3. **Summarizing:** That means bringing together the facts and pieces of the problem to check understanding. This will also give the client an opportunity to clarify vague information or expand their message. For example, *“So it sounds to me as if . . .”* or *“Is that it?”* or *“So what you’re saying is, your current content management system no longer meets your teams’ technical needs because it doesn’t support large files.”*

Summarizing is similar to reflecting, except that when you summarize you’re making it clear that you’re about to move on from your current topic. When you summarize, you only explain the main points of the speaker’s overall topic, the minute details you may have had to clarify before are no longer important in this part of the conversation.

4. **Probing:** Asking questions to draw the person out and get deeper and more meaningful information. There are different types of questions to use:



- **Open-ended Questions**

We ask questions that show we've gathered the essence of what clients have shared, and guide them into sharing additional information. Open ended questions are used to expand the discussion. For example: *"When she said that to you, how did that make you feel?"*
 - **Reflective Questions**

Can help people understand more about what they said — for example, someone telling, *"I'm worried I won't remember."* A good reflective question might be something like, *"It sounds like you would like some help remembering, or you're concerned about your memory in the future?"*
 - **Closed-ended Questions**

Close-ended questions usually can be answered with a single word. They don't lead to more information, but can make a person feel more defensive (as though the conversation is more of an interrogation than a give-and-take). Therefore, such type of questions should be avoided.
 - **Hypothetical Questions**

Hypothetical questions are useful for visualising positive or negative consequences of some actions and for considering different alternatives of actions. The client may feel more comfortable by approaching the problem hypothetically. For example: *"If you had to make a decision regarding your career, how would you do it?"* or *"If you were in that position, what would you want to do?"*
5. **Brief verbal affirmation:** Short, positive statements will help the client feel more comfortable and show we're engaged and able to process the information they're providing. Small verbal affirmations help us continue the conversation without interrupting the client or disrupting their flow. **Example:** *"I understand."* *"I see."* *"Yes, that makes sense."* *"I agree."* These affirmations function to demonstrate an understanding of what has been said (Jefferson, 2002), or claim understanding, interest, agreement and attention (Schegloff, 1982).
 6. **Emotion labelling:** Putting feelings into words will often help a person to see things more objectively. To help the person begin, we use "door openers". For example, *"I'm sensing that you're feeling frustrated/worried/anxious..."*.
 7. **Amplification:** emphasizing an important or a positive aspect of the situation



8. **Focusing communication on the present moment -here and now-** A past situation is brought into the present by asking questions such as: *“What are you feeling right now?” “What do you think about this?”*, *“What are you aware of now?”*.
9. **Demonstrating concern/display empathy:** We should make sure that the client understands we’re able to recognize their emotions and share their feelings. By showing compassion, rather than just feeling it, we’re able to connect with the client and begin establishing a sense of mutual trust. For example: *“I’m eager to help; I know you’re going through some tough challenges.”*
10. **Validation:** Acknowledging the individual’s problems, issues, and feelings. Listen openly and with empathy, and respond in an interesting way. For example, *“I appreciate your willingness to talk about such a difficult issue. . .”*
11. **Effective pause:** Deliberately pause at key points for emphasis. This will tell the person that what is communicated is very important to the listener.
12. **Silence:** We should allow for comfortable silences, so as to slow down the exchange. We give a person time to think as well as talk. Silence can also be very helpful in diffusing an unproductive interaction.
13. **“I” messages:** By using “I” in our statements, we focus on the problem, not the person. An I-message lets the person know what we feel and why. For example, *“I know you have a lot to say, but I need to. . .”*
14. **Recall previously shared information:** Trying to remember key concepts, ideas or other critical points the speaker has shared with us in the past is a good technique. This demonstrates we’re not only listening to what they’re saying currently, but we’re able to retain information and recall specific details. For example: *“Last week you mentioned new ideas on how to deal with your boss. Did you implement any of these?”*
15. **Disclosing similar experiences to show understanding:** Discussing comparable situations will not only show the speaker we have successfully interpreted their message, but it can also assist in building relationships. If the speaker has shared a problem, providing input from how we solved similar challenges is valuable to others. Example: *“I was also conflicted about returning to work after the birth of my son.”* But, we have to point out that practitioners may disclose personal information about themselves to a client only under limited circumstances. It should only be used if it benefits the counselling process and if it appears essential to help practitioners relate to the client more effectively
16. **Redirecting:** If someone is showing signs of being overly aggressive, agitated, or angry, this is the time to shift the discussion to another topic.



B. Nonverbal techniques

Nonverbal techniques also play an important role in active listening, and should be practiced by practitioners. Though, we should be careful, as some of these techniques may not be appropriate in certain situations or cultures. Among the most frequent nonverbal cues that show understanding are:

1. Smiles and Nods

Offering the speaker a few simple nods shows you understand what they're saying. A nod is a helpful, supportive cue, and doesn't necessarily communicate that you agree with the speaker—only that you're able to process the meaning of their message.

Like a nod, a small smile encourages a speaker to continue. However, unlike a nod, it communicates you agree with their message or you're happy about what they have to say. A smile can take the place of a short verbal affirmation in helping to diffuse any tension and ensure the speaker feels comfortable.

If we combine smiling with nods and the occasional *"uh-huh,"* the person talking to us will feel that we're paying attention to their message.

Smiling and nodding isn't always appropriate, of course. We're not supposed to smile if we're hearing bad news or are being reprimanded. We shouldn't nod when we don't agree with what we're hearing, as well. In both cases, a simple *"I understand"* or *"I get it"* would suffice.

2. Avoid distracted movements

Being still can communicate focus. To do this, we should try and avoid movements like glancing at the watch or phone, audibly sighing, doodling or tapping a pen. We should also avoid exchanging verbal or non-verbal communications with others listening to the client. This can make the client feel frustrated and uncomfortable.

3. Maintain eye contact

Looking directly at someone demonstrates they have our full attention and we are listening to them. We have to make sure that we keep our gaze natural, using nods and smiles to ensure we're encouraging them rather than making the client feel intimidated or uneasy. We have to be mindful that in some cultures eye contact can be seen as disrespectful.

4. Body language

Being relaxed is a great way to invite someone to talk about themselves! Leaning slightly forward in the chair demonstrates that we are giving our full attention, actively listening to what our client is saying. We communicate so much in our body movements. For example, sitting with our arms and legs crossed, hunched up, can give the impression that we have put a barrier up and are not listening or interested. Waving our arms about can also be very



distracting. Additionally, frowning or raising eyebrows can transmit revulsion or judgment which may shut the client down, while smiling at appropriate times demonstrates human warmth which helps build trust and develops rapport (Griffin, 2006).



Active listening blockers

Good listening is not without its challenges, however. There are a number of habits many of us engage in that will make active listening difficult to accomplish in a conversation. The following roadblocks to communication can stop communication and should be avoided:

- “Why” questions. They tend to make people defensive.
- Quick reassurance, saying things like, “*Don’t worry about that.*”
- Giving specific advice, because it changes the dynamic of the conversation. E.g., “*I think the best thing for you is to move to assisted living.*”
- Digging for information and forcing someone to talk about something they would rather not talk about.
- Patronizing, because it makes the other person feel pitied. E.g., “*You poor thing, I know just how you feel.*”
- Preaching, because it makes you the expert in the situation. E.g., “*You should. . .*” Or, “*You shouldn’t. . .*”
- Interrupting, because it shows that you aren’t really interested in what the other person is saying (Grohol, 2020)

Consequences of active listening failure

The presence of active listening blockers or of active listening failure may be experienced by the client as rejection, indifference, unappreciation, disappointment and eventually he/she may disengage from the counselling process.

Active listening: DOs and DON'Ts

Summing up, practitioners should (Johnson, 2008):

1. Give the person speaking their full attention.
2. Listen without making judgments or taking a position on an issue.
3. Gain an understanding of the situation from the other’s point of view.
4. Repeat the conversation back to them, in their own words, providing their interpretation or understanding of the client’s meaning (paraphrasing). - Repeat what you have heard to check for accuracy. Use the speaker’s exact words when in doubt that you have heard accurately; more often, it is better to paraphrase what was said.

By reflecting the content of what is being said back to the client, check their understanding of the message. Feed back to the client their feelings as well as the content (e.g. *how did you feel when...? How did that affect you...? It looks like that made you really angry*).

5. Be as accurate in summarizing the client’s meaning as much as they can.
6. Try again if their paraphrasing is not accurate or well received.



7. Allow the client to finish thoughts without interruption. This usually includes brief periods of silence, such as a few seconds. It may take some practice before being able to know how long to wait before making some type of response. If unsure, it is always better to wait too long rather than speak too soon and interrupt the client's thoughts.
8. Show that their attention is focused. Make eye contact, lean in towards the client when their interest peaks, and share any humour with a smile or other natural response.
9. Challenge in a non-threatening and subtle manner. For example, a statement like *"This is hopeless."*, should be paraphrased as: *"It seems hopeless to you right now"*, or a statement: *"There is nothing I can do"*, can be paraphrased as *"You can't find anything that would fix it"*.
10. Not try to force conversation, allow silences – and be aware of body language, notice changes and respond accordingly.
11. As the final step, but not sooner, they may choose to share similar situations that they've experienced or their own views about the issue. They may even share a completely different opinion than that expressed, as long as that sharing is done after they have understood what was communicated to them.

On the other hand, practitioners should refrain from:

1. Talking about themselves and introducing their own reactions or well-intended comments.
2. Changing topics and thinking about what they will say next.
3. Advising, diagnosing, reassuring, encouraging, criticising or baiting a client.
4. Failing to make eye contact. Breaks from eye contact are normal and expected, but a total lack of eye contact communicates a lack of attention.
5. Using "mm" or "ah" exclusively or inappropriately or parrot their words.
6. Pretending to have understood the person or their meaning if they haven't.
7. Getting distracted by other thoughts, or events nearby, and losing focus. Daydreaming while pretending to listen is probably only going to frustrate the speaker.
8. Allowing the client to drift to a less significant topic, because they feel the practitioner doesn't understand.
9. Fixing, changing or improving what they have said – or finishing their sentences for them. /Rushing the speaker. This can be a challenge, particularly when the speaker goes into excessive or unrelated details to tell their story. Do their best to politely encourage them to move along with the point.
10. Filling every space with talk.
11. Ignoring their feelings in the situation.
12. Interrupting a sentence. Even if there is a long pause, one should first encourage the completion of the thought by the speaker.



Methods for Active Listening skills improvement

Role playing

Role-play is a cognitive training method that is used in a wide variety of contexts and content areas (Rao & Stupans, 2012). Essentially, it is the practice of having trainees take on specific roles - usually ones in which they are not familiar - and act them out in a case-based scenario for the purpose of learning course content or understanding “complex or ambiguous concepts” (Sogunro, 2004). Playing the role is a method of acting out specific ways to interact with others in an imaginary situation (Byrne, 1986) and to promote interaction between trainees and increase motivation (Ladousse, 1995). In addition, Budden (2006) says that role playing is an activity of speaking when you put yourself into someone else or put yourself in an imaginary situation.

When trainees take the skills they have learned in theory and put them in practice, this creates a deeper cognitive link to the material, making it easier for them to learn (Johnson & Johnson, 1997). Finally, using role-play as a training tool helps trainees change behaviours and use best practices in real-world settings (Beard, et. al., 1995).

Through role playing, trainees can improve their active listening skills, as they can practice on the learned techniques. Being engaged in role playing, trainees apply their knowledge to a given problem, reflect on issues and the views of others, illustrate the relevance of theoretical ideas by placing them in a real-world context, and illustrate the complexity of decision-making (Pavey and Donoghue, 2003)

Aspegren’s literature review (1999) on how medical student best learn communication and active listening skills revealed that experiential training, part of which is role playing, produced much better results than simple one-way instruction.

Active listening and Mindfulness

Both active listening and mindfulness focus on the importance of attention and present orientation (as opposed to rehearsing a response). Because they conceptually overlap, Shapiro and Mariels (2013) suggested that mindful attending, which is captured with the observing, aware acting, should predict active listening because mindful attention encourages the listener to orient himself or herself to the other person and to stay present. As a metacognitive capacity that distally affects behaviour, mindful attention encourages people to recognize not only their own affective state in the present moment, but also orients them to momentary contextual stimuli in a curious, open, and accepting way (Bishop et al., 2004). These mindfulness features should influence active listening, which requires that the person attend to contextual stimuli to understand information and effectively respond to the other person.



4.2 Suggested activities to improve Active Listening Skills

Activity 1 – Case study: Haldi the asylum seeker

[Information for IT programmer: Type B activity: rooms to meet](#)

Activity type: Case Study -Role taking-Experimenting

Learning goals: This exercise aims to help practitioners paraphrase what is being said to detail so that their client has a chance to hear himself/herself state his/her problems and the feelings associated with these. It also helps practitioners summarize effectively. Having the chance to play both roles and compare, practitioners can see for themselves how active listening can forward their guidance session productively.

Specificities: Group activity (3 or more persons)

Duration: 1 hour

Materials needed: Scenario & Notes for reflection

Useful information for the trainer:

The activity will be implemented in small groups of 3 persons. In each group there will be 3 roles: Clients, Practitioners and Observers. They will be all presented with the scenario (available in the STRENGTH platform online and in downloadable form). Every client pairs with one practitioner and one observer. Invite trainees who take the role of the client (Haldi) to describe their attempts to find a job and express their anger, disappointment and lack of trust towards the host country's employers who are unwilling to employ migrants. Trainees who are in the role of practitioners try to assist their clients in expressing their problem and encourage them talking, implementing as many active listening techniques as they can, such as summarizing, probing, paraphrasing, etc. The observer keeps notes on the techniques that the practitioner uses and the points that facilitate the counselling process.

All participants shall get in all 3 roles.

Each role-play should last for about 5-10 minutes. At the end of each, the participants summarize how well the practitioner implemented active listening strategies.

The trainer can supervise the process of role-playing and in case needed, s/he can intervene to help participants. At the end of this process, all participants come together to reflect upon their experience.



Instructions: Read carefully the scenario given and practice active listening techniques according to your trainer's instructions.

Scenario: Haldi the asylum seeker

"Haldi needs to find a job in the host country to convince local authorities to grant him asylum. He has tried to get a job repeatedly but has failed so far, which is why he's becoming increasingly desperate. In Despina's counselling session, he expresses anger, disappointment and lack of trust towards employers who do not want to employ migrants in their businesses. He feels that everyone in the country is hostile and prejudiced against him as a migrant".

Notes for reflection: After the active listening part has been completed every pair spends one minute to review how close the practitioner was to what the client said and needed and check which of the following active listening responses they tried and how well they demonstrated them. Then the participants swap roles and repeat. When all participants finish their role-play exercise, they can share what they have achieved through this exercise.

Active listening responses:

Building trust and establishing rapport

Demonstrating concern

Brief verbal affirmation

Asking open-ended questions

Asking specific questions

Paraphrasing

Withholding judgment

Restating

Summarizing

Reflecting

Giving feedback

Supporting

Checking perceptions

Disclosing similar situations



Activity 2 – Clarifying questions versus probing questions

Information for IT programmer: Activity type E: click the right answer. The trainee will be given the phrases and next to each of them they will have to choose among Probing (P) and Clarifying (C) answers.

Activity type: Experiential exercise

Learning goals: This exercise aims to make practitioners tell the difference between probing and clarifying questions and see in practice how these questions act as motivators for the client to talk about events and feelings that a person wouldn't feel at ease expressing. With these the client becomes capable of defining the causes of a problem and finding solutions to it or solving a life dilemma because he is made to think deeply over difficult issues with more precision and clarity.

Specificities: The activity can be done individually, but it works better in groups. The trainees can categorize the type of questions alone or in small groups and then come back in one group to reflect upon their experience over the activity.

Duration: 30 minutes

Material needed: The list of question (online form)

Useful information for the trainer:

At first remind trainees of the difference between clarifying and probing questions and then inform them that they will be given a list of questions (available on the STRENGTH platform), which they have to categorize them into 2 groups: probing and clarifying questions. They can do it alone or in small groups (2-3 persons). When they have finished the assigned task they come back into a group to reflect upon their experience.

Instructions:

In the following exercise choose if the question is clarifying* or if it is probing**.

*Clarifying questions are simple questions of fact. They clarify the problem or dilemma. They have brief factual answers and do not provide food for thought to the user. One can tell the difference between a clarifying and a probing question because to answer a clarifying question the client does not have to think beforehand.

**Probing questions are open-ended questions which intend to make the client think more deeply about the issue at hand. If a probing question does not have that effect, it can be considered an inferred piece of advice by the practitioner or a recommendation: for example:



Don't you think you should... A good probing question should allow for multiple responses, empower the client to solve the problem or dilemma and stimulate reflective thinking.

Questions

Is there something you particularly enjoy in your studies? P

Do you have a roommate? C

How did you choose this particular field of study? P

Are you happy with what you study? Why? P

At which subject did you perform better this year? C

Are you anxious about something at this period of time? P

How do you feel when you sit for a test? C

How long have you been studying in that college? C

In which year are you on? C

Do you have any brothers or sisters? C

How much time do you study per week? C

Would you share a problem with your parents? Why? P

What are your hobbies? C

Could you, please, describe to me a routine college day of yours? P

What would you like to become when you finish college? What are your plans after graduation? P

Could you please tell me more about the relationship with your parents? P

How would you describe your relationship with your family? P

Imagine there was a box at college where every student could put a piece of paper with one of their complaints concerning college described in writing. What would be yours? P



Can you think of any possible solutions to eradicate the issue in the complaint you mentioned? P

What is your mother's profession? C

What is your father's profession? C

Which school did you attend? C

Where did you live with your family before going to college? C

Have you ever had a talk with a tutor about something that preoccupies you? C

Have you got any pocket money? C

Is there something that happened to you that you would change if you had the power? P

Are you satisfied with your performance as a student? Is there something you would like to change? P

Have you got any friends at college? C

What kind of information would you share with them? P

Who is your best friend? C

Do you keep in contact with any of your friends from school? C

What are you most afraid will happen if the situation remains as it is? P

Have you ever worked? C

Would you like to have a part-time job at college? C

Tell me more about your childhood. Narrate an incident that you remember with nostalgia as well as an embarrassing moment? P

Is there something that annoys you in the college environment? Why? P

Do you have a girlfriend? C

Reflection questions:



- *How easy was this activity?*
- *Did you have any difficulties in distinguishing between probing and clarifying questions?*
- *What did you learn?*



Activity 3 – Role playing using questions, reflection and paraphrase

Information for IT programmer: Type B activity – meet to room.

Activity type: Role playing

Learning goals: This exercise aims to help practitioners use clarifying and open-ended questions in career counselling with the help of real case studies. Participants experience first-hand what impact the above have in the counselling process and spot the difficulties. They also learn to reflect and paraphrase effectively because they get feedback by fellow consultants on the spot.

Specificities: Group activity (work in pairs)

Duration: 45 minutes

Material needed: 4 statements (available on the platform)

Useful information for the trainer:

Get trainees into groups of 2 persons and provide them with the 4 statements, explaining to them that these statements have been made in real-life incidents by several clients. Then, invite them to get in roles of practitioner and client. Each of them will get 2 statements to work as the practitioner and 2 to work as a client. In the case of the practitioner, you shall inform them that they have to implement specific active listening techniques as follows:

- 1. a clarification question for each statement*
- 2. 2 open-ended questions that would encourage the client open-up and give information (they have to role –play the dialogue)*
- 3. use reflection and paraphrase taking into consideration the content as well as the feelings expressed in the client words.*

When both trainees have finished role –playing they get back in one group to share with other trainees their experience.

Instructions: You will be given 4 statements that clients have made in real –life incidents. Read them and then work in pairs. One person will be the practitioner and the other one the client in 2 statements and then change roles for the other 2 statements.

In each case, as a practitioner you should:

- make a successful clarification question for each statement
- make two open-ended questions that would encourage your client open-up and give information. Role –play the dialogue.
- Activate your reflective listening: use reflection and paraphrase taking into consideration the content as well as the feelings expressed in your client words.



Statements:

1: I am stuck with my studies. I am going out with my friends every day. I also miss classes on purpose.

2: I am angry with my mum. She does not accept me. She never comments on my progress, my grades not even when I won a medal. But she always praises my little brother!

3: I have a passion for volleyball and I am good at foreign languages but I don't want languages as a career path unlike my parents.

4: I don't want to do anything. I don't care about the future. There's nothing that I like

Questions for reflection: *After the end of the role playing share your experience referring to the following:*

- 1. Have you encountered any difficulties in the role-play situations and what these were (as a practitioner and client as well)?*
- 2. Is there anything you could have done better if you had the chance or any other techniques/responses you could use?*
- 3. What are your feelings over the process?*



Activity 4 – Reflecting emotional needs and paraphrasing

Information for IT programmer: Type B activity – meet to room.

Activity type: Role playing

Learning goals: This exercise goal is to assist you in exercising paraphrasing, and reflecting not only to the actual wording of the client but also to his/her emotions, facial expressions, body language, posture and tone of voice. Paraphrasing is key to the building of mutual trust and to the revelation of the issues to be discussed during counselling. The client is made to hear what he/she has expressed via the practitioner and this helps him/her better understand his/her case as well as his needs in a more realistic base

Specificities: Group activity (2 persons and more – work in pairs)

Duration: 45 minutes

Material needed: 14 statements (available on platform)

Useful information for the trainer:

Get trainees into groups of 2 persons and provide them with the 14 statements, which are real-life statements. Explain that each of them has to get in both roles, the one of the client (expressing the statements one by one) and the one of the practitioner, exercising paraphrasing focusing on the expressed emotion in each case. Each of the trainees shall choose 7 statements (different from the other trainer's statements) to role-play.

When finishing the role play, get all trainees in one group to share their experience.

Instructions: You take the role of the client and express the statements given one by one. The person next to you takes the role of the practitioner and tries to paraphrase the client's wording by showing he/she is reflecting on the expressed emotion. Change roles (choose 7 statements each person to practice as practitioner)

For example:

Client: He told me he was going to help me out but he didn't. He lied to me.

Practitioner: You feel betrayed that your friend broke his promise to help you.

Statements to use:

- 1) My father constantly belittles me. I hate him.
- 2) I heard my mum saying she wished I was never born.



- 3) My friend spread the rumour I stole her boyfriend. I can't stand it.
- 4) My colleague blames me for things I have never done.
- 5) I was presenting my essay to my colleagues. The boss came in and I froze.
- 6) My wife told me I was a disappointment in her life. I wanted to disappear from the scene.
- 7) I had a bad review and my mum said she was expecting more of me. I just left.
- 8) My boss said I would get the promotion in front of everyone. Now he ignores me. Plus the promotion was given to a younger guy with much less experience.
- 9) I don't know which field of study to pursue. I like physics but I would also like to become a doctor.
- 10) I have lived in the country for 7 years, but I am still a foreigner. The boss constantly gives a promotion to local people of inferior ranks than me? Should I resign or politely ask for more at my present job?
- 11) I got fired. I am 48 years old. I won't find a job again.
- 12) I don't know anyone in this town where my husband found a job a month ago.
- 13) I don't like my job. It's all routine.
- 14) No one talks to me in class and I heard someone whispering they don't like me

Questions for reflection:

After the end of the role playing trainees are sharing their experience referring to the following:

1. *Have you managed to make the right reflections on what your client expressed?*
2. *As a client, do you think that the practitioner expressed your feelings and words in an accurate way?*
3. *What are your feelings over the process?*



Activity 5: Word-for-word listening

Information for IT programmer: Type B activity – meet to room.

Activity type: Experiential exercise

Learning goals: Participants are expected to learn to listen to every word of another's speech. They have to listen in such a way that all information provided by the speaker is available to the listener exactly as it is, free of assumptions. This exercise helps the trainee to be precise when listening to the others.

Specifications: Group activity (work in pairs)

Duration: 45 minutes

Useful notes for the trainer:

Get the trainees to work in pairs explaining to them the instructions of the activity. Both participants should take both roles (listener and speaker).

When both participants have finished with the assigned task, they get back in a group to reflect upon their experience.

Instructions:

Get in pairs. One will be the speaker and one the listener. You can start a conversation over a meaningful theme for you (a bad experience, an incident including emotional tension etc.). The listener should concentrate on what the speaker says, without criticizing or judging. The speaker speaks two short sentences that make a whole. The listener repeats the sentences verbatim, without adding or taking away anything from the speech. The speaker then forms a speech of 5 sentences and the listener repeats them verbatim.

After that, the roles are reversed and the process starts again. In the end of the role-play, you weave a synthesis of what you learned from receiving another person's speech verbatim.

Questions for reflection:

What did you become aware of through this task?

What did you learn from this task?

How did this task go?

Have you succeeded in repeating all the questions verbatim?

As a speaker, what was your feeling experienced while hearing your own thoughts from the listener?



Activity 6 – Reformulating the dilemma

Information for IT programmer: Type B activity – meet to room.

Activity type: Role playing

Learning goals: This exercise aims to equip the practitioner with the skill to effectively reflect his/her client dilemma as clearly and as openly as possible. This technique permits the client to weigh the pros and cons of each option before making his/her decision by thinking of the possible outcomes in a logical and informed way. In this way the client feels much more in control of the situation.

Specificities: Group activity (2 persons– work in pairs)

Duration: 30 minutes

Material needed: 6 statements (available on platform)

Useful information for the trainer:

Get trainees into groups of 2 persons and provide them with the 6 statements. Explain that each of them has to get in both roles, the one of the client (expressing the statements one by one) and the one of the practitioner, exercising reflection and trying to reformulate the client's dilemma. Each of the trainees shall choose 3 statements (different from the other trainer's statements) to play the role of the practitioner.

When finishing the role play, get all trainees in one group to share their experience.

Instructions: You take the role of the client and express the statements given one by one. The person next to you takes the role of the practitioner and tries to take you away from a dilemma by reformulating your dilemma to make you think of the options openly. Role-play the dialogue. Change roles (choose 3 statements each person to practice as practitioner)

Example:

Client: "I am not sure whether I should take a postgraduate degree or opt for finding a job related to my undergraduate studies.

Practitioner: If I have understood correctly, your dilemma is whether a master's degree or a job related to your studies is what you prefer to do.

Statements

1) I have been living in the country for the last 7 years, but I am still a foreigner. The boss constantly gives a promotion to local people of inferior ranks than me? Should I resign or politely ask for more at my present job?



- 2) Studying abroad will open my horizons and my future career prospects but it is rather costly.
- 3) Moving in with my boyfriend will save me money but I will not concentrate as much on my studies
- 4) Resigning from the job will save me from the routine but I don't know if I will find something more motivating and challenging soon.
- 5) I have a steady job with a reasonable salary. Working on my own is not a risk because I know the job but there won't be a steady income.
- 6) I do not feel good enough to pursue a career in that field. I don't know whether to look for a related job or register for a new related training seminar?

Questions for reflection:

1. *Have you managed to reformulate the dilemma of your client?*
2. *What are your feelings over the process?*



Activity 7 – Motivate interviewing questions

Information for IT programmer: Type B activity: Rooms to meet

Activity type: Role playing

Learning goals: This paraphrasing exercise not only aims to successfully rephrase what is being said but also motivate the client further his/her revelations about what preoccupies him/her and his/her emotions concerning this issue. By encouraging the client to talk, the client is helped to make an informed decision about what action or plan of actions suit him/her best and solve any dilemmas or indecision matters he/she may have.

Specificities: The activity can be done individually, but it works better in groups.

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials needed: List of 10 statements (available on the platform)

Useful information for the trainer:

In case of individual activity: Inform trainees that they will be provided with 10 statements for which they have to paraphrase the content of it by using a motivating interviewing question. When they have finished the activity they come back into a group to reflect on their experience.

Group activity: Get trainees into pairs and provide them with the 10 statements, on which they have to role play (practitioner and client). Inform them that each of them has to get in both roles, exercising paraphrase of the content of the statement by using a motivating interviewing question. Each of the trainees shall choose 5 statements (different from the other trainer's statements) to play the role of the practitioner. When finishing the role play, get all trainees in one group to share their experience.

Instructions:

Read carefully each of the statements and try to paraphrase its content writing down a motivating interviewing question.

In case you work in pairs, take the role of the client and express the statements given one by one. The person next to you takes the role of the practitioner and tries to paraphrase what is being communicated by you (as a client) by using a motivating interviewing question. Change roles (choose 5 statements each person to practice as practitioner)

EXAMPLE: Client: I would like to get a higher position in my organisation.

Practitioner: Are you saying that you would like more responsibilities?



Statements

- 1) I feel insecure by working on my own because my income is not steady
- 2) I don't know if I will make it by taking this job offer that entails that I reach a more demanding-almost double- sales goal
- 3) Neither choice satisfies me. I have to look for something new.
- 4) Studying finance will lock me up working in an office and I like travelling
- 5) Working after graduation is a very good option but I have a thirst for learning.
- 6) People say that working as a secretary does not have that much demand anymore. But this is what I am skillful at.
- 7) I want to make my own family but I do not make enough to do the step.
- 8) Divorcing will create too many financial difficulties for me.
- 9) I am not in the mood to go to work. I am bored.
- 10) I don't like anything. I don't know what to study.

Questions for reflection:

1. *Have you managed to make the right Motivate interviewing questions?*
2. *Was it easy for everyone to use the right questions?*
3. *As a client, do you think that the practitioner used the right questions?*
4. *What are your feelings over the process?*



Activity 8_ Misleading practitioner

Information for IT programmer: Type B activity: Rooms to meet

Activity type: Role playing

Learning goals: This exercise aims to bring to the surface common mistakes a practitioner can make while listening to the life story of his/her client in a session. It also shows how these mistakes affect the attitude of the client, his/her feelings and the relationship between practitioner and client on the whole

Specificities: Group activity (at least 3 persons- one will be the practitioner and the other the client and 1 facilitator)

Duration: 40 minutes

Useful notes for the trainer: *This is a role play activity, where you have to guide the participants to perform according to the script. You should guide the conversation between the client and the practitioner as the following script:*

- *The client thinks of a career related problem. He/she should try to be as concrete as he/she can in what he/she will narrate. He/she starts narrating her/his story, also describing the feelings.*
- The practitioner interrupts and asks a question.*
- The client continues narrating.*
- The practitioner suddenly changes the topic of the discussion*
- The client tries to redirect the conversation to what preoccupies him*
- The practitioner seems distracted by something else: his watch, his papers, something that is going on*
- The client continues talking and expresses his feeling about his/her problem*
- The practitioner interrupts him and finishes off his/her sentence.*
- The client, puzzled, tries to go on with his story.*

Questions for reflection:

For those in the role of practitioners: How should the client feel?

For those in the role of client: Express how you felt about the attitude of the practitioner and whether you were able to express yourself



Activity 9: Body language

Information for IT programmer: Type B activity: Rooms to meet

Activity type: Role -playing

Learning goals: The aim of this exercise is to point out the significance of non-verbal actions in the counselling process. The participants are going to focus on body language and how those non-verbal may interfere in the counselling process.

Specificities: Group activity (at least 2 persons are required for the role playing and a 3rd one as an observer)

Duration: 40 minutes

Useful notes for the trainer:

*The activity will be implemented in small groups (3 persons-3 roles). Participants are divided into three groups: Clients, Practitioners and Observers. Present them with the instructions of the activity, as follows: The “client” narrates an experience he/she wants to share. The “practitioner” makes his/her best effort to encourage the client with voices, body language, facial expressions and gestures but without pronouncing actual words. *The observer keeps notes on the reactions of both participants.* This will last for about 5 minutes. Then they change roles. All participants shall get in all 3 roles. After having finished role-playing they come in one group to discuss with other trainees.*

Instructions: Get into groups of three (client, practitioner and observer). As a client, bring to mind an experience you want to share. As a practitioner, make your best effort to encourage the client with voices, body language, facial expressions and gestures but without pronouncing actual words. As observer, write down any useful observation that can help the counselling process. Each role play will last for 5 minutes. Then change roles.

Notes for reflection:

- *What did you notice after this activity?*
- *How helpful were the non-verbal actions in the counselling process?*
- *Which of them were the most effective?*



4.3 Self-evaluation Exercises

The following multiple choice questions will help you to reflect on the educational material of the section and evaluate your understanding on the basic relevant concepts and theoretical background. (5 questions for each section)

Question 1

What does active listening skills refer to?

1. the assistance to someone to speak in front of others
2. hearing a speaker without retaining their message
3. being able to listen to more than one person at the same time
4. to focus completely on a speaker, understand their message, comprehend the information and respond thoughtfully

Question 2

What is common both in active listening and mindfulness?

- 1.They are techniques for relaxation
- 2.They focus on the importance of attention and present orientation
- 3.They need more than 2 persons to be effective
- 4.They are oriented to the future of the involved persons

Question 3

Which of the following is a nonverbal active listening technique?

1. paraphrasing
2. probing
3. reflecting
4. eye contact

Question 4

Pretending to have understood the person or their meaning even if you haven't is sometimes necessary in order to be effective in listening.

Right

Wrong

Question 5

Active listening consists of:

1. attending, understanding, and interpreting messages
2. being motivated and energized to attend to another person
3. verbal and nonverbal signalling that a message has been received and understood
4. All of the above



4.4 Resources for further study & References

The power of listening: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saXfavo1OQo>

5 ways to listen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSohjIYQI2A>

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Section 5: Cooperation

Short Description

The goal is to increase participants' abilities for managing relationships effectively. Collaboration training shall promote learners' ability to build and manage relationships, to give and accept help, and to form agreements for cooperation. **Conflict resolution** and **negotiation** training shall support participants in addressing misunderstandings, value, and resource conflicts constructively. Influence training shall promote learners' understanding of their own strengths and values and support them in persuading other people.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the section practitioners will be able to:

- holistically understand what cooperation means and what other concepts revolve around it;
- realize the importance of cooperation skills in the field of career guidance and counselling;
- learn which theoretical approaches can contribute to the development of cooperation skills;
- strengthen their ability to effectively manage their relationships with their clients;
- “cultivate” the feeling that the goal is common among all the team members that they are part of a unity receiving increased satisfaction from the relationships among them, with common moral, rules and values;
- enhance and develop conflict resolution and negotiation skills, which will help to properly manage interpersonal relationships and to identify the source of conflicts and misunderstandings so that they can be addressed holistically in order to help the clients overcome the difficult situation in which they find themselves in, to manage their emotions and to achieve their goals;



5.1 Theoretical background

Definitions

A counselling environment and relationship is a place to explore problems, have candid conversations, brainstorm potential solutions, and reflect on alternatives. Therefore, cooperation skills are essential to every practitioner, as they enable them to manage relationships effectively.

Important skills that enable a practitioner to act cooperatively are:

Cooperation

It's the practitioner's ability to build and manage relationships, to give and accept help, and to form agreements for cooperation. The word 'cooperation' has increasingly featured in writing about counselling, most commonly about relations between practitioners and clients (Anderson, 1997; Hoffman, 1995; O'Hanlon & Weiner-Davis, 2003). Collaboration has had various meanings, including those derived from approaches to counselling where client collaboration is seen as cooperation with the practitioner's directives (e.g. Colson et al., 1988).

The therapeutic alliance has been most commonly defined as reflecting the quality and strength of the collaborative relationship between practitioner and client (Bordin, 1994; Pinsof & Catherall, 1986). The conceptual centre of the alliance is collaboration, defined as, 'the client and therapist forming a partnership against the common foe of the client's deliberating pain' (Horvath & Greenberg, 1994, p. 1). The concept of collaboration conveys a sense of teamwork, partnership, cooperation and working together toward shared goals (Diamond & Scheifler, 2007).

Cooperation is also about negotiating the goals for counselling and deciding on a pathway to reach them. This also means voicing different opinions, concerns, curiosity, questions, and ideas about the direction of counselling, what has been helpful, and what is missing in counselling and/or not working. In other words, collaboration is not intended to be a perfect alignment, rather, it signifies a partnership that is experienced as open, respectful, energized, and purposeful (Bohart & Tallman, 1999; Duncan & Miller, 2000).

Cooperation is enhanced when clients and practitioners recognize that they can shape the manner and accomplishments of their dialogues. In other words, how they negotiate 'going on' (Wittgenstein, 1953) with each other can constrain or facilitate their potential for going on together.

Conflict resolution & Negotiation

It refers to the ability to address misunderstandings, value and resource conflicts constructively (respectfully, with the goal of resolving a conflict peacefully).



Conflict resolution is inextricably linked with cooperation and negotiation skills, as they also entail managing conflict effectively. Effective conflict resolution refers to competences such as adapting to psychological motivations, saving face, and balancing power difference (Roloff, Putman & Anastasiou, 2003). Research findings (De Dreu & Van De Vliert, 1997; Johnson & Johnson, 1998) indicated that contrary to our culture's tendency to avoid conflict, conflict, when managed in constructive and healthy ways, is positive for relationships, and the workforce. Seeing conflict as an opportunity for creativity, growth, and learning instead of pain and humiliation is a reframe of conflict that helps to avoid ineffective ways of dealing with conflict (Brown & Fisher, 1988; Borisoff & Victor, 1998; Coulson, 1996; De Dreu & Van De Vliert, 1997; Kottler, 1994).

Negotiation skills refer to a subset of knowledge and behaviours that influence “bargaining” performance (Lewicki, 1997). Negotiation as a set of skills is essential in cooperation as it allows for creating something new that neither party could achieve independently and, thus, resolve complex problems through “bargaining” (Lewicki, 1986).

Negotiation is deemed effective when someone achieves his/her ultimate goal (whether that is the ultimate result or a sub-goal in a broader collaboration) or when it is grown out of an understanding of the process that surpasses minimal performance. Effective negotiation also means that practitioners collaborate in decisions and build healthy relationships through working with their clients.

Influence

Influence is inherent in cooperation and negotiation. It refers to the understanding of one's own strengths and values and being able to express them to induce desired responses from others (e.g., inspiration). It is the power to affect or change how someone behaves, or thinks in indirect or intangible ways. It is interrelated with a set of emotional management skills in a sense that effective influence requires emotional understanding and knowing and projecting my own strengths and values in order to persuade a person or a group of people. From a practitioner's perspective, he/she should understand their own strengths and values (enduring behavioural, emotional and cognitive qualities that are habitual characteristics of the individual) and provide support while persuading other people. They have to act as an exemplary role model, engage and motivate others and facilitate creative thinking (Bass & Avolio, 2000).

Characteristics of a practitioner mastering the cooperation skills

Career practitioners should build a solid alliance with the client in order to be effective. Henneman, Lee & Cohen (1995) conducted an analysis of the concept structure of collaboration and proposed the following essential, defining attributes without all of which collaboration cannot exist: a. commitment to a shared venture; b. willing participation; c.



team approach; d. shared planning and decision-making; e. shared contribution of expertise; f. a non-hierarchical relationship in which power is shared and based on knowledge rather than role or title. Even though the client's willingness and positive stance are contributing factors in the overall outcome, the professional's collaborative practice, such as professional listening, professional confidence, sharing and supportive relationship, is the only dimension to contribute uniquely to the professional's perception of collaboration.

Therefore, collaborative practitioners are flexibly and actively engaged in the change process with their clients (Bachelor, Laverdière, Gamache, & Bordeleau, 2007).

By forming a cooperative relationship, the practitioner works together with the client to create a new understanding of the individual's experience, allowing for transformation. A crucial part is the practitioner's recognition that a person in therapy is the expert on their own experience. The therapist does not act as an authority figure or as if they have greater knowledge or understanding. They may offer their own suggestions or perspective, but they avoid imposing their own ideas on the individual in therapy (Anderson, 2001).

In a nutshell a practitioner effective enough in cooperation can be attributed with the following characteristics:

- self-awareness;
- developed personal mental resilience;
- holistic knowledge about his attitudes, belief system, strengths, positive characteristics and skills;
- confidence;
- honesty;
- acceptance towards clients;
- adaptability;
- creativity;
- confidentiality;
- respect for individuality;
- honesty and clarity in relation to their limits;
- holistic approach to the client's issues;
- respect for the differentiation and different needs of everyone depending on their age and period of life;
- understanding the subjective experience of each member and the way they perceive the counselling process;



Importance of cooperation skills in career counselling

The relationship between practitioner and client is of paramount importance. This kind of relationship concerns the emotion, the attitudes and the beliefs of those involved in the counselling process (Thwaites, 2007). The quality of this evolving relationship determines the outcome of the counselling process more than the actual career prospects and results.

Practitioner's behaviour should reflect empowerment and acceptance in the eyes of the client. The practitioner should be perceived as a capable, serious, sensitive, honest, confidential and responsible person, who accepts the client unconditionally and has the necessary training and skills to provide guidance (Malkiosi-Loizou, 2012). In order for those qualities to be projected and applied in the counselling process, cooperation is essential. Cooperation, in the context of career counselling, includes offering help to the client or the team, when the need arises, always according to the rhythms of the client or the team and regulating the behaviour in such a way that his actions are not misinterpreted (Salas, Sims & Klein, 2004). Similarly, the process by which a climate of unity is achieved between a practitioner and a client or between a practitioner and a team is called a partnership (Salas, Sims & Klein, 2004).

Furthermore, counselling, like other forms of social interaction, is not without disagreements and that's the reason cooperation skills are essential. Suppose the client considers the practitioner's responses to him or her to be inconsistent with what he or she seeks from the practitioner. The practitioner, in turn, may interpret such 'inconsistency' as the client resisting working collaboratively. Such problems can arise over differences in perspectives and judgments. Disagreements like this are often associated with misunderstandings over how the professional relationship and its emergent proceedings are regarded by clients and practitioners (e.g. Vera & Speight, 2003). Collaboration can involve an upfront discussion of such expectations en route to an implicit contract of what collaboration entails. This is a common view of the working alliance in which professionals and clients outline relational arrangements, goals and tasks at the out-set of counselling and adhere to them thereafter (e.g. Horvath & Greenberg, 1994). Additionally, counselling is a process where client and practitioner judgment is called upon at each conversational turn (Strong & Sutherland, 2007).

Cooperation serves throughout each step of the counselling process. During the practitioner's preparation, he/she should be able to plan and organize a course of action, specifically structured and thought through upon the client's abilities, aspirations and goals. This can only be achieved through honest conversation and cooperation among the practitioner and the client when setting the goals of the process. Similarly, while practitioners and clients are exploring and assessing different educational and career pathways, cooperation is still essential. Practitioners should be able to understand the complexities behind the client's career questions and the reasons behind possible limitations, perceptions and hesitations. At this point, it is important for the practitioner to use his/her own strengths to help him find



solutions and set goals (Green, Lee, Trask & Reinsheld, 2005). Additionally, client's resistance and hesitations may cause frustration and conflict within the process that may call for modification to the counselling plan. Practitioners need to be adaptable, able to negotiate and manage conflict in order to lower the tension and sustain the relationship. As experts, they are to be able to provide feasible alternative paths and influence their clients.

Based on the above, developing and enhancing practitioners' skill of cooperation is essential as it is a crucial element in the counselling process and it contributes effectively to the solution or better management of the client's problems and concerns, especially in crisis periods.

Methods for cooperation skills improvement

Cognitive Behavioural Approaches

Cognitive behavioural techniques could help learners "review" some of their thoughts, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours in order to resolve problems and prevent or negotiate a conflict (Ellis, 1973). Based on this perspective, the practitioner tries to help the client get rid of irrational ideas and replace them with other, logical ones (Malikiosi-Loizou, 1989).

In order to achieve the aforementioned, he/she follows a specific procedure:

- Develop a climate of trust;
- Reveal irrational beliefs and help clients become fully aware of them;
- Show them how these irrational ideas create problems;
- Help clients change these irrational beliefs and speak to themselves;
- Encourage them to apply these new concepts.

This procedure can be well applied in the career counselling process, too. Clients' attitudes, beliefs and hesitations may affect the counselling result and even produce a conflict environment. Early on, practitioners need to be able to detect such issues and moderate their behaviour accordingly. Building on with trust and honesty, active listening and communication, practitioners can persuade clients to follow the above mentioned procedure and reach a consensus.

Coaching is also a method that combines cognitive and behavioural techniques (Grant, Curtayne & Burton, 2006).

- Having a supportive relationship, in which individuals can feel safe to trust and analyse their personal and professional issues, can relieve them of tension and stress, helping them to manage conflicts more effectively (Myers, 1999).



- The process of setting specific goals and then striving to achieve them, can enhance self-efficacy (Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001) resulting in successful negotiations and a climate of cooperation.

Systematic participation in the above procedures and support in dealing with failure, can create resilience and strengthen self-regulation (Baumeister, Gailliot, DeWall & Oaten, 2006) which are important elements for resolving any conflicts between the consultant and his/her clients.

Mindfulness

Based on interdependence theory, scholars have recently developed a concept to describe individual's caring and satisfying others' autonomous needs in interpersonal interaction, namely social mindfulness, demonstrating that socially mindful behaviours are noticed and appreciated by others and that higher levels of perceived mindfulness from others lead to more favourable social judgments (Van Doesum, Van Lange, & Van Lange, 2013; Van Lange & Van Doesum, 2015). Moreover, it has been proved that social mindfulness plays a vital role in interpersonal interaction and team relationships (Van Doesum, Van Prooijen, Verburch, & Van Lange, 2016). Thus, social mindfulness represents a new perspective on cooperative behaviours. Cooperative behaviours refer to individuals' resistance of self-interest to maximize collective interest (Van Vugt, Snyder, Tyler, & Biel, 2000).

In socially mindful behaviour, the conductor respects and protects the receiver's option in interpersonal interaction, which helps build trust between two strangers (Declerck et al., 2013). Studies have indicated that trust is a crucial mechanism promoting cooperative behaviours (Irwin, Edwards, & Tamburello, 2015; Parks et al., 2013), especially when people meet conflict of interests (Balliet & Van Lange, 2013). As Van Lange and Van Doesum (2015) illustrated, high social mindfulness promotes a close relationship and facilitates interpersonal interaction. Socially mindful behaviours are of vital significance for improving and building interpersonal and intimate relationships.

In career counselling, social mindfulness can take the form of the practitioner acknowledging the immediate or expected inclusion of the client in the counselling process, assessing the effects of their own actions on the remaining behavioural options of clients and maintaining a positive regard throughout the counselling process. Perspective taking and empathetic concern are also important. Even though career practitioners may have already developed an action plan, this may be translated by clients as limiting. While presenting limited options can prove beneficial sometimes, not taking away outcome options for someone can help in building and maintaining interpersonal relationships. Career practitioners should be able to "sacrifice" or modify their choice options if this results in client's increased appreciation and satisfaction.



Self-reflection and lifelong supervision

Lifelong supervision of practitioners and psychotherapists has been internationally recognized as a key instrument to enhance, support and ensure the quality of services provided. Nowadays, supervision of practitioners has become a new, flourishing and discrete profession, based on theoretical models, practiced according to specific standards and leading to positive outcomes for all parties involved. Many studies present the state of play concerning the supervision of practitioners. Moreover, they focus on the positive impact of lifelong supervision on enhancing the quality of counselling services (Vassara, 2016).

According to Loganbill, Hardy and Delworth (1982), supervision is defined as the close interpersonal relationship where a person has undertaken to facilitate the development of the other's skills. At the heart of the definitions of supervision is the strengthening of the skills of the supervised and the evaluation of their consulting work. As mentioned from Hawkins and Shohet (2006), in 1987 the British Counselling and Psychotherapy Association considered it necessary to clarify that supervision does not come for the benefit of the supervised but mainly for the benefit of the final recipients of the services.

Self-reflection and lifelong supervision can benefit practitioners to focus on developing and exercising a positive attitude towards clients, to enhance skills such as cooperation and to walk through stressful work situations.



5.2 Suggested activities to improve Cooperation Skills

Activity 1: Help me out

Information for IT programmer: Combination of two types of activities. Type G: online form to fill in & Type B: room to meet.

The trainees will be given the form of “conflict sheet” to fill it in (both parts A& B). After 20 minutes they will get in a room to discuss with other trainees.

We could also have the conflict sheet in pdf version in case the activity is done in class.

Activity: Experiential

Learning goals: The goal of this activity is to make participants recall 3 conflicts they have experienced in the past 3 days, reflect on the words that triggered them, and receive some solutions from others.

The aim is to draw attention to the number of conflicts and similar stressful situations experienced by delegates in one week and use partners to come up with reasonable solutions for each conflict.

Specificities: Group activity

Material Needed: A copy of “Conflict sheet”

Duration: 1 hour

Useful information for the trainer:

Inform trainees that they will be provided with a “Conflict sheet” (online in the platform, and in downloadable form) where they have to write down 3 conflicts they have experienced, the persons involved, the words that triggered the conflict etc. After they have completed part A, they have to go through part B, where they shall recall the emotion they felt in each case and try to think how they could have handled the situation differently.

When all trainees have finished the assigned tasks, get them all in a group to discuss their experience. In the group, ask each trainee to share one of their conflict cases and invite the other trainees to make suggestions on how s/he could have handled the situation in a different way.



Instructions:

- You should fill in the “Conflict sheet – Part A” recording 3 conflicts that you were involved in, in the last week. You have to record the ‘toxic words’ that triggered the conflicts and made you feel that you had to protest and defend yourself.
- After having filled the “Conflict sheet part A” you should try to answer to the following questions filling in part B:
 - How did recalling a conflict make you feel?
 - Could you have handled that particular situation differently?

Questions for reflection:

Each participant presents one subject of conflict and the facilitator asks from other members to provide some suggestions on how s/he should have responded differently.

-Were partners’ suggestions helpful?

- Could you use the new suggestions to resolve your conflict or prevent them from happening in the first place?



Conflict Sheet

Part A

Please fill in the table with 3 conflicts that you were involved in, in the last three days.

Subject of the Conflict	People Involved	What happened?	Trigger Word
Example: Washing dishes	My husband and me	My husband accused me of being untidy by saying: "You always leave a pile of dirty dishes in the sink for days"	Always
1:			
2:			

Part B

Now, after having reflecting upon the previous mentioned conflicts and talk with a partner fill in the following table:

Subject of the Conflict	Feeling emerged	How could I have handled the situation differently?	Others' (partner's) suggestion
Example: Washing dishes	Anger and unfair criticism	I could say that in the next days I would make up for it by making more house cleaning.	I could have explained to my husband that "always" is not true, as I am used to helping with house cleaning and due to last week's duties I overlooked it. I could get him to agree that "always" is not true, which will make me feel better, and I would agree on helping more the in the next days.
1:			
2:			
3			



Activity 2: Debate vs Dialogue Conflict Management Activity

Information for IT programmer: Activity type B – rooms to meet.

Activity type: Experiential

Learning goals: This activity is a great way for participants to engage in a mini-conflict with another team member in a nonthreatening manner.

The purpose of this exercise is for participants to understand that debate is an attempt to prove that your position is better than the other person's position. The aim of it is to 'win' over the other person by finding faults in the other person's position. On the other hand, a dialogue instead is about understanding and cooperation. The aim of dialogue is to reach mutual understanding while valuing the strengths of the other person's position and this is the best solution over conflict management.

Specificities: Group activity -2 trainees for role playing and all trainees in group discussion
Duration: 45 minutes.

Useful information for the trainer:

At first you have to inform trainees that the aim of this activity is to experience the difference between debate and dialogue. Then, get them in groups of 2 persons and explain to them the instructions of the activity. During the activity, you can supervise how participants are handling the situation of "debate" and of "dialogue" and assist them whenever appropriate. When all groups have finished the role playing, get them back into a group to reflect on their experience.

Instructions:

1. You will work in pairs.
2. Each person will have to say the name of one object you can think of (for example, car, table, an animal, food etc.). Then, you will debate with each other to argue that your item is better than the other person's item for 3 minutes.
4. After three minutes, you will have to be engaged in a dialogue. This means asking each other questions about their items, listening to the answers and coming to an agreement between them. This process will last about 5 minutes.



Questions for reflection: *At the end of the exercise, you will have to reflect on the process of the debate and the dialogue.*

- *How did you feel about each situation (debate vs dialogue)?*
- *How did you react to each situation?*
- *How would you behave in real conflict situations?*
- *How did things change when you switched from debate to dialogue?*
- *Is it difficult to listen when somebody disagrees with you? Why? How did you come to an agreement?*
- *In what ways could you use these skills the next time you're in conflict with another person?*



Activity 3: Conflict in different perspectives

Information for IT programmer: Combination of three types of activities. Type G: online form to fill in & Type C: post –it & Type B: room to meet.

The trainees will be given the form of “conflict perspectives sheet” to fill it in. The answers of all participants are taking the form of “post-it” and be visible to all. After 20 minutes they will get in a room to discuss with other trainees.

We could also have the conflict perspectives sheet in pfd version in case the activity is done in class.

Activity type: Experiential

Learning goals: The aim of this activity is to assist you in understanding your perception of conflict and at the same time come in contact with different perspectives on conflict and techniques to better handle conflict. Furthermore, with this activity you will have the chance to consider the positive aspects of conflict and become more comfortable with it.

Specificities: Group activity

Materials: One copy of the Conflict Perspectives Sheet

Duration: 45 min

Useful information for the trainer:

Inform trainees that they will be provided with a “Conflict perspective sheet” (online in the platform, and in downloadable form) where they have to answer several questions regarding conflict in their own perspective. This will be done on an individual basis. They can have 15-20 minutes to write their answers.

Then, when all trainees have finished the assigned task, get them all in a group to discuss their experience.

Instructions:

First work at an individual level and fill in the “conflict perspectives sheet” for 15-20 minutes.

After having answered all the questions, get in a group and talk over your answers with other members.



Conflict Perspectives Sheet

1. What are the characteristics of a conflict?
.....
2. How are you usually responding to conflict?
.....
3. What is the most important outcome of conflict?
.....
4. What is your greatest strength when dealing with conflict?
.....
5. If you could change one thing about the way you deal with conflict, what would it be and why?
.....
6. Are there any benefits from conflict situations within a team?
.....
7. How can conflict be harmful to a team?
.....
8. What are some reasons for choosing to avoid conflict?
.....
9. What's a good attitude towards dealing with conflict within your team?
.....

Questions for reflection:

1. *Were your partner's perspectives different from your perspective?*
2. *What were some things you learned by considering another's perspective?*
3. *Does discussing conflict like this make it "less dangerous"? In what ways?*
4. *Is conflict good or bad?*
5. *What are some ways in which conflict is harmful to the team?*
6. *What are some ways in which conflict may benefit the team?*



Activity 4: In the other's Shoes

Information for IT programmer: Combination of two types of activities. Type G: online form to fill in & Type B: room to meet.

The trainees will be given the form (other's shoes handout) and they will have to write online their answers. Then participants are getting into a room to discuss over their answers and thoughts.

Activity type: Cognitive method – perspective taking

Learning goals: This activity aims at assisting practitioners to learn how to consider another perspective and understand and empathize with someone who disagrees with them

Specificities: Group activity

Materials: In the other's Shoes handout

Duration: 45 min

Useful information for the trainer:

Explain to trainees that we can improve our conflict management and cooperation skills by becoming more aware of other people's emotions and how they play a factor in our interactions. Under this perspective, going through this activity, the trainees will try to approach a situation through the perspective of the other person.

Invite trainees to think back to a situation where they were in conflict with another person and by having in mind only the other person's perspective to try to fill in the "In the other's Shoes Handout" (online in the STRENGTH platform or in downloadable form). This will be done on an individual basis. They can have 15-20 minutes to write their answers.

Then, when all trainees have finished the assigned task, get them all in a group to discuss their experience.

You can also invite 2 or 3 participants to share their conflict situation, in order for the others to provide additional answers and assist them with more and different perspectives of the other person.

Instructions:

Each participant has to fill in the handout on an individual basis and then get in a group to reflect on the process according to the reflection questions.



In the other's Shoes Handout

Think back to a situation where you were in conflict with another person. Carefully consider the other person's perspective while answering these questions. Remember to look at the situation only from the other person's viewpoint.

1. In your opinion, what is/was the issue?

.....

2. What caused it?

.....

3. What are you feeling?

.....

4. How would you describe the event?

.....

5. What would you like to have happen to resolve the conflict?

.....

Questions for reflection:

1. *How did it feel to be in another person's shoes?*

2. *In what ways did your understanding of the other person's perspective change?*

3. *What are some ways we can make sure we are interpreting someone else's emotions accurately in a non-confrontational manner?*

4. *In what ways might this influence the likelihood of transforming conflict into something productive?*

5. *How does this activity benefit the team?*

6. *What will you do differently the next time you're involved in a conflict?*



Activity 5: Role Playing of real life situations

Information for IT programmer: Activity type B: room to meet

Activity type: Role playing

Learning goals: The activity will help the trainees to understand and empathize with someone who disagrees with them and generalize conflict resolution instruction to real life, through sufficient practice in a safe environment.

Specificities: Group activity

Materials needed: 2 scenarios

Duration: 1-1,5 hour

Useful information for the trainer:

Inform participants that they are going to role- play 2 different scenarios, in order to practice conflict resolution in a safe environment. Get participants in small groups of 3 persons (3 roles: client – practitioner – observer). Assign to each participant one of the two scenarios (they can find them in the STRENGTH platform online or in downloadable form). Invite them to study carefully their scenario and role-play according to the following instructions:

-Participants who role-play “client” describe their opinion and their anger, where this anger comes from;

-Participants who role-play practitioner focus on what is being said with genuine interest and encourage “client” talking to calm down.

-the observer keeps notes on the reactions of practitioner and client

All participants shall get in all 3 roles.

Each role-play should last for about 5-10 minutes. At the end of each, the participants summarize how well the practitioner managed the incident and how well he/she demonstrated active cooperative behaviours or if there was something else he/she could do. There should be noted the strategies, methods, words that proved effective towards conflict resolution and those that may be proved ineffective. Participants who role-play “client” express how they felt and what could be different, what helped them calm down and what not. Observers focus on the reactions of both participants and on what seemed working well and what not.

The trainer can supervise the process of role-playing and in case needed s/he can intervene to help participants. At the end of this process, all participants come together to reflect upon their experience.



Instructions:

Work in pairs (2-3 persons)

Study your given role and act accordingly.

Client: describe your opinion and express your anger (where this anger comes from)

Practitioner: focus on what is being said with genuine interest and encourage “client” talking to calm down

Observer: keep notes on the reactions of both practitioner and client

2 Scenarios

Scenario A: Louis Is Attacked Personally

Louis, a career practitioner, regularly organizes forums where employers present their professional field. Louis first interviews the employers. Later, participants can ask questions. At the start of a forum with 20 participants, Louis has just started interviewing the managing director of a large company from the region. The guest likes to talk and starts to digress from the topic, so that Louis interrupts him after a minute with a question that leads back to employment opportunities. At this moment, one of the participants of the forum suddenly shouts at Louis, telling him to “shut up” and let the guest speak.

Scenario B: Maria the Quarrelsome Mother

Helen, a student, attends a career counselling program together with her mother, Maria. Maria is a financial analyst who owns her own company. She wants Helen to study economics so that Helen will be able to take over the company in the future. When Robert, the practitioner, announces that Helen expressed her interest in becoming a teacher in a career interest questionnaire, Maria gets upset and starts yelling at Robert. She claims that the career questionnaire is invalid because she knows her daughter better than anyone else and she knows best what suits her daughter.

Reflection questions:

- *What was your overall experience on this activity?*
- *How easy/difficult was it to try to avoid conflict and calm down the client?*
- *What techniques proved to be more effective/ineffective?*
- *How does this activity help you move forward in the counselling process in terms of cooperation and conflict management?*



5.3 Self-evaluation Exercises

The following questions will help you to reflect on the educational material of the section and evaluate your understanding on the basic relevant concepts and theoretical background. (5 questions for each section)

Question 1:

Influence refers to:

the understanding of one's own strengths and values and being able to express them to induce desired responses from others

the ability to address misunderstandings and resource conflicts constructively

the ability to build and manage relationships, to give and accept help, and to form agreements for cooperation

the understanding of the hidden emotions

Question 2:

Conflict resolution is inextricably linked with

diversity and active listening skills

cooperation and negotiation skills

cooperation and diversity skills

diversity and empathy skills

Question 3:

Effective negotiation means that practitioners collaborate in decisions and build healthy relationships through working with their clients.

Right

Wrong

Question 4:

Which of the following statements is wrong?

Even though the client's willingness and positive stance are contributing factors in the overall outcome, the professional's collaborative practice is the only dimension to contribute uniquely to the professional's perception of collaboration.

Collaborative practitioners are flexibly and actively engaged in the change process with their clients.

By forming a cooperative relationship, the practitioner works together with the client to create a new understanding of the individual's experience, allowing for transformation.



The practitioners should act as an authority figure as they have greater knowledge and understanding.

Question 5

Perspective-taking is important in order for effective cooperation to be achieved.

Right

Wrong



5.4 Resources for further study – References

The lunch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eputZigxUY8>

David Eagleman: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6kGUdQSa_k&t=1s

Social inequalities <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4K5fbQ1-zps>

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