

Learn to train



Cyprus, Paphos, 05-14.10.2019

About the project

“Learn to train” was a youth workers’ mobility, financed by European Commission through the programme Erasmus +. The project duration was of 8 months and it was implemented by 6 partner organizations: IEEN - Cyprus, ASK Yourself - Romania, Come Pensiamo - Italy, Proactive Association - Poland, Aktive Kosmos- Spain.

The main activity of the project was a 8 days Training Course, implemented in Paphos, Cyprus, from 6th to 13 October. The training aim of was to develop Youth Workers’ competences in preparation, implementation and evaluation of a training session.

Our project objectives were:

1. Help participants to gain more knowledge about the competences that good trainers have, to understand the complexity of preparing a training session, to be more aware of the role of a trainer and to understand the power of a well prepared non-formal method.
2. Improve participants’ communication skills, animation skills, how to conduct a debriefing (based on the Kolb cycle) and evaluate a training session.
3. Help participants to understand the power of a well prepared trainer and their abilities to improve other people’s competences, to gain more trust in their ability to be trainers, to understand their own strengths and how to use that in training and to boost their willingness to produce change in young people’s lives.

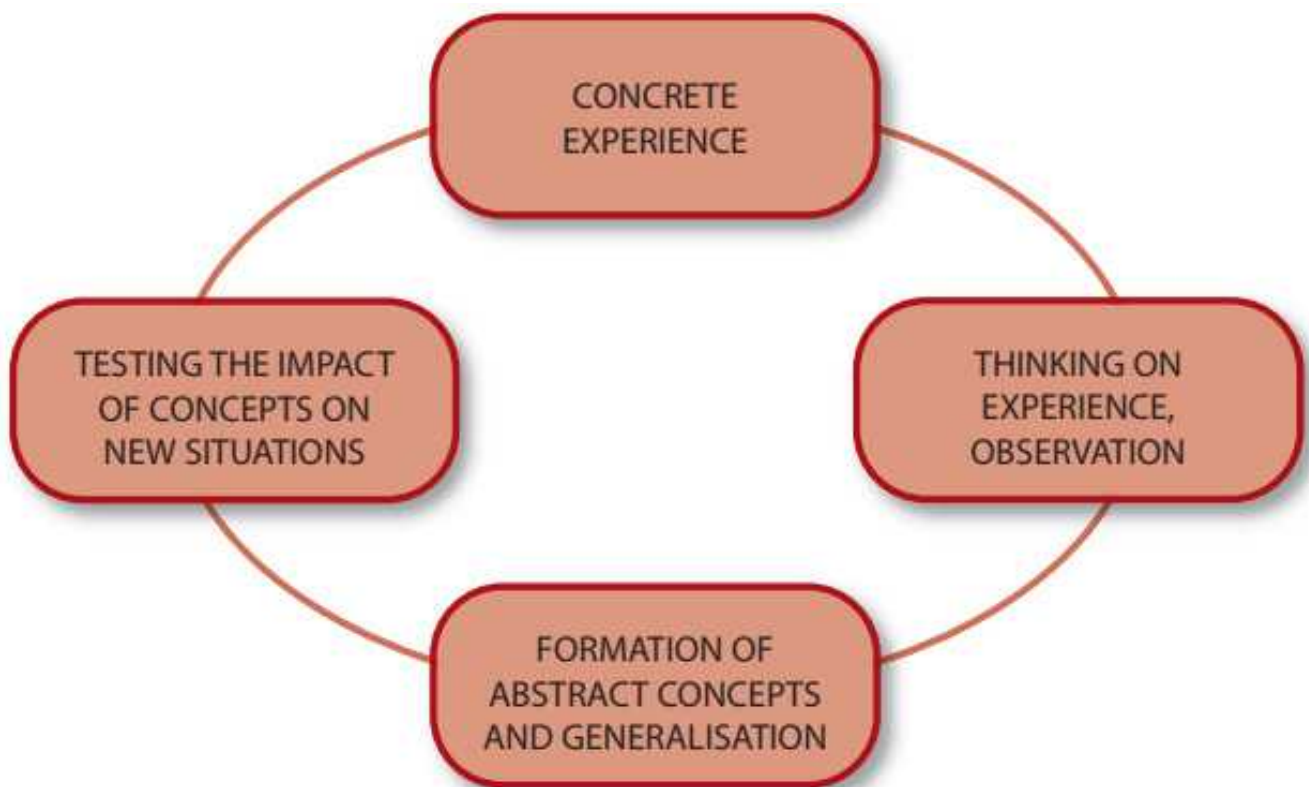
Participants in this training course learned how to:

- Prepare a training session
- Set objectives
- Find and select methods
- Implement non-formal education methods
- Adapt to a specific target group
- Coordinate a group of young people
- How to create a training career
- Connections between E+ and being a trainer
- Implement debriefing
- Become self-organized
- Learn how to learn
- Time management
- Become more self-confident

Preparing for a session

Kolb Learning Cycle

Kolb and associates in 1974 defined the learning cycle which contains four phases and it is outlined in the following scheme:



Kolb defined the following thesis:

- » Concrete experience – it may be planned or accidental;
- » Reflexive observation – includes active thinking on experiences and their meaning;
- » Abstract conceptualisation (theory) – generalisation of experiences with the aim of creating different concepts and ideas which may be applied in similar situations;
- » Active experimenting – testing of concepts and ideas in new situations. This will provoke new concrete experience and the cycle starts again.

The key to Kolb's model is that entails a simple description of transferring the experience into concepts which are used as guidelines for the selection of the new experience. In order to learn efficiently, people must advance from observers to participants; from directly included to objective analysts. Subsequently, we will speak more on how the learning cycle phases are used in training design. Thus, what is the role of trainer in each learning phase?

Learning Styles

Do you remember how you learned to swim? Some of you learned to swim or someone threw you in the water and you started to swim. Some went to a swimming course, listened to a trainer's instruction and received a certificate; some wanted to read first about swimming, looked from the side while others swam and then tried to apply what they saw. These examples speak about different modes which Kolb defined in the following manner:

- » “Accommodators” learn through attempts and mistakes, combining concrete experience and experimental phases of cycles;
- » “Divergers” prefer concrete situation more than abstract cases and thinking from active inclusion. These persons have the capacity for imagination and are able to survey a complete situation from different angles;
- » “Convergers” prefer to experiment with ideas which are observed from their practical sides. Their main worry is whether the theory is applicable in practice, combining abstract and experimental dimensions.
- » “Assimilators” – create individual theoretical models and assimilate numerous, different observations in the entire joint explanation. In that manner they aspire to reflexive and abstract dimensions.

However, the description of styles outlined by Honey and Mumford (1986) are mostly used in practice. As analysts of learning styles they identified four styles (which to a great extent overlap with Kolb's learning phases).

- » Activists fully commit to new experiences and enjoy new challenges;
- » Thinkers observe new experiences from different angles. They collect data, think about them and reach conclusions.
- » Theorists adjust and apply their observations in the form of logical theory. They tend to be perfectionists.
- » Pragmatists want to experiment with new ideas, approaches and concepts and to make sure that they function.

Nevertheless, none of these styles is exclusive. It is possible for a person to be at the same time a thinker or theoretician and someone else activist or pragmatist, thinker or pragmatist or even theoretician or pragmatist. The learning style is a category which changes depending on the topic, experience, context in which it is learned, level of interest and other criteria.

Every person has his or her own personal learning style and one of the most important skills a trainer should develop is the adjustment of the personal approach to learning styles of those who learn. Trainers must know those learning styles

and subject their own approaches, bearing in mind that a trainer never knows who is in the group and which styles are predominant. It is expected that all preferable learning styles shall be equally present. Thus, training design should be equally adjusted to all learning styles (to all participants).

Hence, each individual finds his or her learning styles which are more efficient than other styles. However, by developing we may discover that we tend to aspire to learn from one of the phases within the cycle to a greater extent than other phases – this is what we called a **preferable learning style** (tendency towards learning style).

What is a team?

Team: A small group of people with complementary skills, who work together to achieve a shared purpose and hold themselves mutually accountable for performance results

What about teamwork?

Teamwork: The process of people actively working together to accomplish common goals



In order to learn the process of team development and become a team, you have to go through all the stages of team development.

This is how you do it:



1. Forming the team

The first stage in team development is characterized by:

- » The members get acquainted with each other and understand the goals of the project.
- » Establish ground rules through acceptable behaviors with respect to both the project and interpersonal relations.
- » Little work is actually accomplished
- » Structure and direction must be provided by the manager
- » This stage is completed once members begin to think of themselves as part of a group

2. Storming

This stage is marked by a high degree of internal conflict.

Members accept that they are part of a project group but resist the constraints imposed by the project and group. They express their individuality but motivation and morale might get low.

There is conflict over who will control the group and how decisions will be made. The project manager should provide a supportive environment and not become defensive while the members test his limits.

As these conflicts are resolved, the project manager's leadership becomes accepted, and the group moves to the next stage.

During this stage we managed to create and experiment with our own non formal methods designed according to specific needs.

3. Norming

Close relationships develop and team members agree on purpose, structure, and leadership and are prepared to start performing.

Feelings of shared responsibility for the project are heightened.

The norming phase is complete when the group structure solidifies and the group establishes a common set of expectations about how members should work together.

The project manager provides more freedom.

During this stage we managed to have a very interesting experience in the high schools of Bucharest. We focused on teamwork and non formal methods to identify the needs of the young people.

4. Performing

The team operating structure at this point is fully functional and accepted.

Group energy has moved from getting to know each other and how the group will work together to accomplishing the project goals.

A period of productivity, achievement, and pride as the team members work together to get the job done.

The project manager fully delegates responsibility and authority and acts as a mentor concentrating on project performance.

5. Adjourning

For conventional work groups, performing is the last stage of their development, however, for project teams, there is a completion phase. During this stage, the team prepares for its own disbandment.

High performance is no longer a top priority. Instead attention is devoted to wrapping up the project.

We designed action plans for our return home.

We received our Youthpass and had our final sessions together.

We focused on building partnerships and agreed on ways that will help us keep in touch.

Methods used

1. Forming The Team

Methods:

- Getting to know each other
- Teambuilding
- Mission impossible
- SWOT (me/my team)
- 20-5-1 (me/my team)
- NGO Fair



2. Storming

Methods:

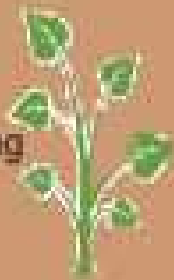
- Brain storming
- Working in teams to develop non-formal methods
- Bomb shelter
- The story of Abigail



3. Norming

Methods:

- Learning by doing
- Debriefing
- Methods fair
- Mind map
- Forum theatre



4. Performing

Methods:

- Debriefing
- Feedback
- Learning by doing
- Feedback sandwich
- Communication methods
- Conflict management exercise



5. Adjourning

Methods:

- Secret Friend
- Youthpass
- Networking and partnership building
- Sugar envelope

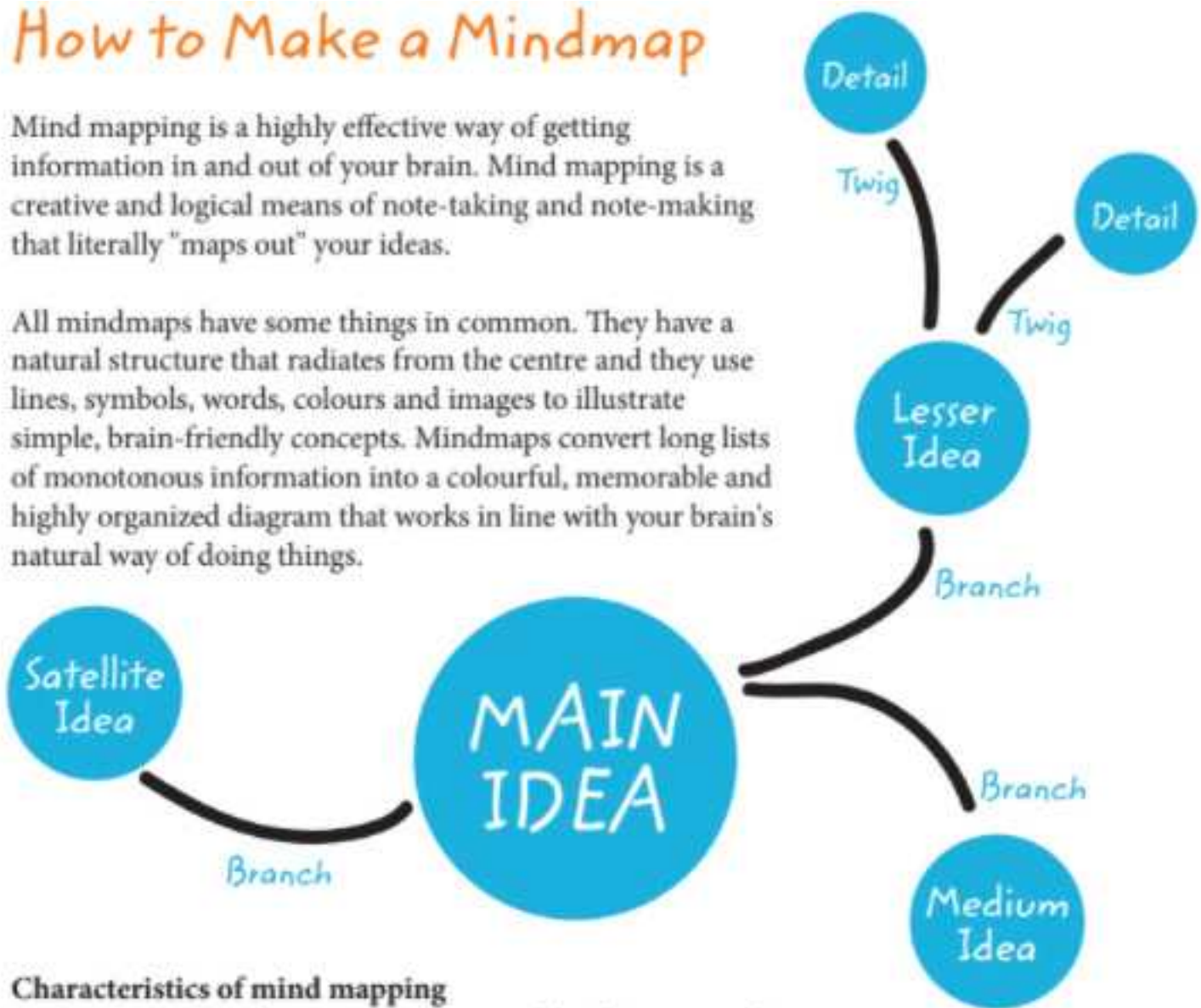


For a detailed description of this methods
you can visit the website <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/>

How to Make a Mindmap

Mind mapping is a highly effective way of getting information in and out of your brain. Mind mapping is a creative and logical means of note-taking and note-making that literally "maps out" your ideas.

All mindmaps have some things in common. They have a natural structure that radiates from the centre and they use lines, symbols, words, colours and images to illustrate simple, brain-friendly concepts. Mindmaps convert long lists of monotonous information into a colourful, memorable and highly organized diagram that works in line with your brain's natural way of doing things.



Characteristics of mind mapping

- The main idea, subject or focus is crystallized in a central image.
- The main themes radiate from the central image as 'branches'.
- The branches comprise a key image or key word drawn or printed on its associated line.
- Topics of lesser importance are represented as 'twigs' of the relevant branch.
- The branches form a connected nodal structure.

Basic rules:

- Use colors consistently
- Think about organization of space
- Use pictures, symbols and arrows
- Be clear and consistent
- Link ideas in bubbles with lines and arrows
- Be creative

Testimonials

It has all been about everlasting learning, unique experiences, amazing people, unforgettable moments, nights spent watching the starts or listening to the distant waves, special stories, deep conversations, laughter, wave hugs, opening up, just building a safe space where everyone was him/herself without being judged. This project helped me to be closer to my true self and also to my goals. Every day was a new challenge but discovering that I am not alone in this journey kept me going. I feel blessed to have met, connected and become friends with soooo many beautiful and special souls.

I want to thank all of you (from writers, organizers, volunteers, team leaders, until the last participant) for making these projects so memorable.

Kinga, Romania

One of the strongest groups full of love and acceptance which gives me hope for the people in youthwork and the quality of their projects. Most importantly, Paphos will always remind me of the never ending “wave hug” that only some of us got to experience.

Chris, Cyprus



I learned about my own skills that I did not know I had, for me it was really revealing. I think we worked a lot in the confidence part, selfsteem, coming in touch with our true selves. Then I leanerd even more to work in teams and how important it is for real life in all aspects. Sharing, caring and co create with others. Then the trainner skills which are very useful for me in this moment of my life.

Margarita, Spain

First of all, what comes to my mind is my project writing team with whom we keep working and keep the motivation high as well as very interesting people I met and keep in touch with and also the 'speeches' (presentations) I held and which I have recorded and see it in my gallery, time to time wathcing it and assessing.

Beata - Poland

I really appreciate the moment you select me and I accept to go. There are just good and beauty emotions, I feel happy, motivated, honor to learn and to meet the people I met. I think I needed it and you open me a window of possibilities and incredible way to share, to learn and to grow. I learn how beautiful is Erasmus plus. I learn everything from your project, how to train yes, but also how to be real trainers. So, first I learnt about non-formal education, I recognize and want to use many methods and finally, I learnt to that photography can save me from depression.

Juliana, Italy

Thank you

Special thanks for all those who made this project possible:

- Erasmus Plus: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en
- Cyprus National Agency: <https://erasmusplus.cy/tcallp>

Partner organizations:

IDRYMA ERGODOTISIS EKPEDEFSIS NEOLEAS (IEEN)

ASK Yourself - Romania

Proactive Association - Poland

Aktive Kosmos- Spain

Come pensiamo. Etnografia e formazione - Italy

International School of Paphos



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