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# PROPOSAL OF EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES



**Teachers and Students improving  
school Climate together  
by strengthening  
social and emotional skills**



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# THE "CLASS" FRAMEWORK

HELPING TEACHERS AND  
STUDENTS IMPROVE SCHOOL  
CLIMATE TOGETHER



[www.schoolclimatetasc.eu](http://www.schoolclimatetasc.eu)

**C** Construct

Focus on Proactivity, Personal and Group Agency, Relationship as a co-construction of meaning, Relationship as a mutual influence process.

**L** Lead

Focus on Collaborative Leadership, Power dynamics in the relationship, Leading being one step behind.

**A** Aim

Focus on Goal-oriented approach, Future-oriented approach, Working on hypotheses.

**S** Support

Focus on Avoiding blame, Suspending Judgment, Empathy, Curiosity Attitude.

**S** Solution

Focus on Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving VS Solution Building Mindset.



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# THE TASC "EPR" TEACHING METHODOLOGY

HELPING TEACHERS AND STUDENTS  
IMPROVE SCHOOL CLIMATE  
TOGETHER



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## APPLYING THE "EPR" METHODOLOGY

In **TASC** we are developing a teaching methodology to guide teachers and ambassadors students with TASC school practices, based on the **CLASS** framework. The methodology is called "**EPR**", which stands for **E**xplore, **P**ractice and **R**eflection. With this methodology, teachers and ambassadors students will help other teachers and students in (1) doing **inquiry**, thanks to exploration, on classroom climate situation, in (2) **practising** daily life school climate activities, and finally in (3) finding **insights** coming from the practices.

### **E** Explore

Use the CLASS framework based tools to explore the classroom climate situation with teachers and students. Explore at least three times in a school year the climate.

### **P** Practice

After the Exploration, and based on the results, choose, with your colleagues and students, the practices that are more suitable for the situation. Enjoy the practices within your teaching.

### **R** Reflection

Use the CLASS framework based tools to discuss with your colleagues and students the results coming from the application of the practices. Set the ground for a new EPR cycle.



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# ANTI-PESSIMISM SHEET

## DESCRIPTION

Useful exercise to stimulate an optimistic attitude. Students are asked to indicate a future event, similar to something they have faced pessimistically in the past. After making predictions about the possible scenarios of evolution of the event (best case, worst case and expected result), students report the result actually occurred. By repeating the process for subsequent events, students can concretely verify how correct or distorted their predictions are, analyze the actual results, and become aware of how their negative attitude may not be justified by the facts.

## FEATURES

- For whom: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: individual, group
- N. of participants: at least 1
- Average duration: 2 hours
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: Yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, personal/group agency, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

Students have the opportunity to work on the development of their personal actions, defining strategies to build ways of dealing with complex situations.

### AIMS

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

The goal-oriented approach, the future-oriented approach and the work on hypotheses ("Suppose ...") can be considered as the fundamental processes for developing a comprehensive strategy in the search for solutions to complex problems by students.

## BENEFITS

- The activity facilitates the identification of important and ambitious goals that are worth achieving in a project during the school year, both in terms of learning and developing communications and interactions in the classroom.
- The important aspect is the common definition of the obstacles that can facilitate the achievement of the objective.

## STEPS

1. **Recall of events** and situations managed in a "pessimistic" way: students are asked to remember, choosing them among the experiences of the current school year or from the previous one, situations (homework, tests,...) that they have managed in class in a "pessimistic" way;
2. **Initial compilation of the "anti-pessimism sheet"**: each student briefly describes the future event in which he will be engaged and his predictions on possible scenarios;
3. **Completion of the "anti-pessimism sheet"**: after the conclusion of the event, the student reports the scenario that occurred, the result actually obtained;
4. **Final reflection**: with the support of the teacher, when multiple recordings of real events are available, students can verify in practice how their predictions are correct or distorted, analyze the actual results, become aware of their way of anticipating events, etc.



# BRAINWRITING

## DESCRIPTION

Brainwriting is a creativity technique similar to Brainstorming. It can be used as an alternative or to complement brainstorming, and often yields more ideas in less time than traditional group brainstorming.

The idea of brainwriting is based on the belief that the success of an idea generation process is determined by the degree of contribution and integration to participants' suggestions. It may help to overcome the possible creativity barriers caused by interpersonal conflicts or different cultural backgrounds of the participants.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: low
- Setting: group
- Participants: from 6 to many
- Average duration: 30 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, personal/group agency, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

In brainwriting, individual participants work in parallel and in silence, writing their own ideas or observations on pieces of paper which are put to one side or passed on to the next writer. This method produces more ideas and far more diversity than brainstorming but develops less energy as it is quieter and more thoughtful. Use it when ideas are more complex, when diversity is key, to empower less extroverted participants, or where the group is too large for brainstorming to be practical. In brainwriting, however, everyone's on an equal footing.

### BENEFITS

One of the main advantages of using brainwriting is that it is a very simple method and therefore is easy and quick to learn. No particular training for the supervisor is required. Brainwriting can be used instead of brainstorming in the following situations:

- when some participants are shy, and you don't want the loud or more powerful ones to intimidate others;
- when you want to give more time for the participants to formulate their thoughts;
- ...

### STEPS

1. **Preparation:** prepare your group with information and arrange them comfortably; everyone will need identical ticklish pens and several sheets of identical paper or identical sticky notes; show the theme or key question on a poster or projector.
2. **Warm up:** the facilitator asks the participants to write down their ideas about a particular question or problem on sheets of paper in a set period of time.
3. **Application:** the facilitator can write one idea (which can be read by one of the participants) on the board and invite the participants to add similar ideas from their sheets.
4. **Evaluation:** display all the ideas on the wall and reflect.
5. **Debrief:** 15 minutes (approx.), the instructor asks the participants to share their experience in plenary.



## CLASSROOM SCULPTURE

### DESCRIPTION

Classroom sculpture is a practice aimed at giving a spatial representation of the inner image that individuals (teachers and students) have about themselves and their relationships within the classroom environment. This practice, guided by a facilitator, helps an individual (the sculptor) to express how he/she experiences classroom relationships and tensions or a given conflictual situation; it allows to make an internal process (experience, feeling, perception) visible and to show options for new awareness and solutions.

### MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: intermediate
- Setting: group
- Participants: 6 or more
- Average duration: 60 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: no

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving vs Solution Building Mindset

With this practice entailing feedback exchanges and reflections in the group, each participant has the opportunity to highlight and reinforce solution-focused principles and practices.

### BENEFITS

This practice uses body postures and spatiality as a narrative of the relational models of communication, power, closeness and distance. The person, who makes a personal interpretation of an event that happened in the classroom (or of the perceived classroom climate), becomes the artist (sculptor), and asks other members of the group to assume a specific body position and expression that reflects the perception of the sculptor about the classroom or the situation. This allows the individual to remove himself from the scene generated by sculpture to get a more objective view and opens the possibility to new awareness and solutions.

### STEPS

1. **Prepare:** the facilitator (F) identifies the person taking the role of "sculptor" (e.g., a teacher/student willing to face a conflictual situation) and divides the group in two: one is composed of group members that are spatially arranged by the sculptor (S); the other observes what happens and gives feedback to the sculptor;
2. **Explain:** F explains what a classroom sculpture is and asks the participants to not move or place themselves differently from how they will be arranged by S;
3. **Warm up:** before starting the real exercise, F shows the participants some examples by spatially arranging and asking them to perform an action or emotion;
4. **Sculpt and interpret:** S composes his/her own sculpture and eventually place him/herself in the scene to represent how he/she relates with the classroom. The observer group and S exchange interpretations, elaborate and discuss what was observed;
5. **Focus on solution:** F asks S to repeat the sculpture action again, this time representing the desired situation. This draws the attention to the construction of solutions and away from defence and blame;
6. **Debrief:** allows for a final discussion and exchange focusing on the last step of the practice.



# CONCENTRIC CIRCLES

## DESCRIPTION

Concentric circles is a speaking and listening activity that provides every participant an equal opportunity to speak. Participants stand in an inner and an outer circle facing each other. They ask and answer questions or discuss a topic. When the facilitator calls time, they move over and repeat the process with a new partner. This strategy invites every participant to participate as an active listener and speaker. Participants stand in two concentric circles facing one another and respond to a question in a paired discussion. The technique creates the physiological and psychological conditions for productive learning.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: middle
- Setting: group
- Participants: from 16 to 76
- Average duration: 40 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: no

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving vs Solution Building Mindset

The exercise helps to highlight a bit more the change of paradigm from problem-solving to solution-building because this activity is solution-focused and specific in structure which allows participants with different approaches to discuss the same topics.

## BENEFITS

- The purpose of this activity is to provide a structure for participants to discuss issues concerning identity, personal bias, prejudice and discrimination.
- Responses are brief, and partners keep changing, so at the end of the activity, each participant will have made a personal connection with several people.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** the facilitator (F) instructs participants to count off in order (e.g., one, two, one, two, etc.) and form two circles of even numbers with the inner circle facing out, and the outer circle facing in;
2. **Warm up:** tell the group that they will be having a series of short conversations with a series of partners;
3. **Application:** F tells participants in the inner/outer circle that they are the talkers/listeners and gives a topic; participants talk to their partners for 30 seconds about the topic until F says "Stop!". The speakers move one space clockwise. F gives both circles a chance to be talkers. Learners can report back what they heard;
4. **Evaluation:** F asks participants to reflect on the results obtained. Participants share feelings about what it was like to participate in this activity;
5. **Debrief:** F asks the participants to share their experience in plenary within a timeframe of about 15 minutes.



# DIAMOND RANKING

## DESCRIPTION

This practice allows for the equal and inclusive participation of a diverse group of participants and is intended to explore and clarify positions of value, feelings, and thoughts related to a particular theme, problem, or idea. The exercise is usually carried out through the writing and sorting (or classification) of nine statements expressed in the form of short texts or drawings, photographs or objects in the case of activities with younger students.

## FEATURES

- For whom: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: low
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 2
- Average duration: 60-90 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

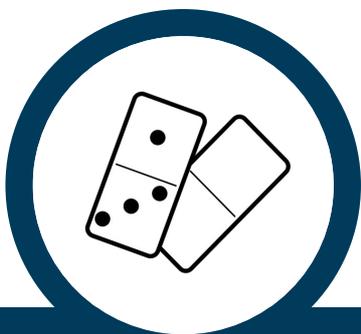
The practice allows to improve understanding or to obtain insights into values, thoughts and feelings of a student with respect to a theme, according to an approach in which the relationship is understood as a co-construction of meaning and as a process of mutual influence.

### BENEFITS

- It helps to extract constructs and facilitate conversation, around a specific topic, challenge or problem. It can also help explore (and "classify") potential solutions;
- By classifying elements, statements, objects or images, students discuss the ranking and express the reasons why they consider them more or less important or priority;
- By discussing their choices with others, students are forced to make explicit and obvious to the members of the group the general relationships with which they organize knowledge, thus expressing their understanding of the topic or problem so that it can be analyzed and compared with others.

### STEPS

1. **Preparation:** The facilitator (F) introduces the theme on which the exercise will focus and explains the purpose of the activity. The topic can be a question or a statement and can be presented with additional context material, such as newspaper clippings;
2. **Statement definition:** expressed in the form of short texts or drawings, photographs or small objects - can be defined by F or by the participants themselves;
3. **Sorting statements.** F separates participants into pairs or groups of three and asks them to place and classify the statements in a "diamond" structure composed of nine panels. Participants must agree on the ranking and the motivations behind the ranking;
4. **Presentation:** at the end of the exercise, F can ask the working groups to present and share what has been produced in plenary or to analyze the result within their group;
5. **Final reflection:** F can analyze the annotations and ask participants to add their own reflections; This can be done both at the level of individual pairs/trios and at the level of the whole group.



# DOMINOES OF STRENGTH

## DESCRIPTION

The activity is inspired by previous methodologies on the development of the forces of one's own character in students.

In groups of 4, participants play dominoes while answering questions about their achievements within the school and in the context of the classroom. The activity can be proposed to both teachers and students.

## FEATURES

- For whom: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 4
- Average duration: 90 minutes
- Special equipment: yes
- Online version: yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### LEADERSHIP

Collaborative leadership, power dynamics, driving by staying one STEPS behind

In this case it refers to the idea that both, noting their strengths, both teachers and students can have insights on how to effectively impact others with their actions in the future.

### AIMS

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

In this case it refers to the idea of developing a vision of how a person's attitude can have a positive impact on the life of the class. By noting their strengths, teachers and students can have insights into how to define practical goals that can be achieved thanks to these strengths and reflect on how to apply them more consistently and frequently in the future.

## BENEFITS

The activity aims to help participants notice their strengths and reflect on how to use them consciously to contribute to the improvement of the classroom climate and future decisions.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** divide participants into subgroups of 4 people; Each group has a set of dominoes (28 pieces). Each number on the domino piece refers to a specific question;
2. **Play dominoes:** all subgroups start playing dominoes according to a set of rules.
3. **Connect the dots:** at the end of the domino game, each person is invited to answer a series of questions;
4. **Final sharing:** in plenary, participants should be asked to share ideas and reflections that emerged during the game;
5. **Debriefing:** this stage is a group discussion about the activity. The goal is to help participants reflect on the usefulness of this activity.



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD THE  
FULL DESCRIPTION



# EMPATHIC LISTENING

## DESCRIPTION

This exercise for pairs and groups helps to understand the importance of empathic listening and learn how to become an empathic listener.

Hearing (like taste, touch, vision) is one of our natural senses. We always hear something, it does not necessarily require special attention. Listening, however, requires focus and attention. Listening is intentional (indeed, like telling) and to a single 'message' (e.g. a story, music). People are born with hearing but listening is developed by learning in (social) contexts.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers
- Difficulty level: middle
- Setting: group
- Participants: 2 or more
- Average duration: 1,5 hours
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes, but limited

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### SUPPORTING

Avoiding blame, Suspending judgement, Empathy, Curiosity

The focus of the exercise is on Empathic Listening as a skill for both teachers as well as students. The skill relates to the capacity to listen in an empathic manner to your students.

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving vs Solution Building Mindset

it also relevant for Focussing on SOLUTIONS, as it requires good empathic listening skills on the side of the teachers and also for their students when working in groups.

### LEADING

Collaborative Leadership, power dynamics, leading from behind

For LEADING it is relevant for group reflective practises, as without the capacity of a group to listen actively and empathically to others members, the reflection might not be so effective

## BENEFITS

- Empathic listening offers meaningful and/or therapeutic value for someone struggling with a problem
- it allows participants to solve their difficulties in the company of a caring, mindful listener.
- Empathic listening creates a safe space for conflict resolution and problem-solving.
- It builds respect, trust, and mutual understanding, relieves tensions and discord and encourages deeper sharing of feelings and information.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** before starting the exercise, briefly explain what empathetic listening means.
2. **Intro on paraphrasing:** in this part of the exercise, the participants are introduced to the topic of paraphrasing.
3. **Intro on non-verbal aspects:** another aspect of the exercise is introduced, which is related to non-verbal paraphrasing and non-verbal communication.
4. **Full-fledged practice:** after these steps, a full-fledged Empathic Listening exercise is launched.
5. **Conclusion:** the participants are asked to relate their experience in the activity.
6. **Debrief:** the teacher then finalises by summarising the main conclusions and "takeaways" based on his/her own observations.



# EMPATHY MAPPING

## DESCRIPTION

This exercise can be used by individual teachers or small groups of teachers, or the whole classroom council to find solutions to situations which negatively impact the class climate and require broadening one's knowledge of a specific student (or a category of students). The exercise helps build a more global and holistic view in an empathetic and non-judgmental way about a person or their behaviour.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: middle
- Setting: individual, group
- Participants: 1 or more
- Average duration: during the school year
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes, but limited

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### SUPPORT

Avoiding blame, Suspending judgement, Empathy, Curiosity

By applying this practice, the teacher strengthens and develops skills such as Empathy, Avoiding blame, Suspending judgement and Curiosity attitude.

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving vs Solution Building Mindset

by applying this practice, the teacher strengthens and develops a solution-focused approach by first understanding students(s) social and personal values, resources and perspectives and then getting insights and solutions; the ultimate goal of the exercise is, in fact, to move from a problem-solving attitude to a solution building mindset.

## BENEFITS

- A better understanding of students and their life/academic circumstances and needs.
- Develop a holistic view of a potential or ongoing conflict situation.
- Develop empathetic skills with students.
- Share the same visual reference about students' information with colleagues.
- Share a common understanding among adults in a school.
- Adopt a positive attitude towards conflict resolution.
- Get insights to make informed decisions.
- Unlock previously hidden solutions.

## STEPS

1. **Pre-work:** before doing the exercise, it is advised to study some literature and articles about empathy mapping.
2. **Define the problem focus area:** a single teacher or a small group of teachers, or the whole classroom council identifies the problem focus area.
3. **Define the students:** think about a specific student or a group of students who are involved in a challenging situation.
4. **Select the techniques to understand students' experiences:** select the approaches you will adopt to gather pertinent information about your student.
5. **Select the empathy map template:** choose with your team the empathy map template you want to use.
6. **Apply the techniques on the field.**
7. **Fill in the map.**
8. **Debriefing:** once the empathy map has been completed, the real work starts. Take a moment to reflect first individually and then discuss within your team what has been shared.



# EXTERNALISING PROBLEMS

## DESCRIPTION

Often conducted as an interview, this practice is rooted in the tradition of narrative practices according to which when we talk about problems in terms of adjectives, we see them as reflections of ourselves; when, instead, we express them in terms of nouns we externalise them, that is, we perceive them within a social context. Through externalisation, a person is then described as being “in relation with a problem” rather than “the problem” itself and this facilitates in handling difficult situations.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: low
- Setting: group, individual
- Participants: 1 or more
- Average duration: 60 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### AIMING

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

Students' and teachers' expectations mutually influence each other, clarifying their goals. This practice is future-oriented and can help in finding solutions for future classroom events.

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving vs Solution Building Mindset

This practice can help to “focus on what works” and highlights a bit more the shift from problem-solving to solution building. It offers a different way of thinking and talking about classroom difficulties.

## BENEFITS

The use of externalised language takes into account that all the persons involved in that specific context explicitly or implicitly contribute to the creation of a problem, so every problem is not an aspect of a single person, but a social issue.

Consequently, the use of externalised conversations in the classroom can be really helpful in managing its climate, because it avoids processes of blaming a single student or teacher and encourages all the people involved in taking actions to face challenges (e.g., professional collaborations between teachers, inclusion of students in a classroom environment, etc.).

## STEPS

1. **Prepare:** find two pairs of teachers/students or a mix of them and assign roles (interviewer, interviewee). For individual practices, participants take self-interviews and write down the answers on paper;
2. **Questioning with adjectives:** interviewees are asked to write down adjectives (e.g., lazy, disorganized, etc.) describing unwanted personal characteristics, that may cause troubles or that they would like to change;
3. **Questioning with nouns:** interviewees are asked to express the same characteristics in terms of nouns (e.g., laziness, disorganisation, etc.) and answer other questions;
4. **Switch roles and re-start!** Participants switch the roles and re-start the exercise from the beginning;
5. **Debrief:** participants reflect on what they have just learned.



# FACILITATED DRUM CIRCLE

## DESCRIPTION

A facilitated drum circle is a rhythmic event in which a group arranged in a circle and seated together play drums and percussion, improvising rhythms and experiencing and expanding the sense of musicality, with the support of a facilitator. In a facilitated drum circle everyone is part of the musical experience, there are no rehearsals; music is improvisation, no one makes mistakes; no prior musical skills are needed, everything is welcome as long as there is freedom of expression.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: intermediate
- Setting: group
- Participants: 10 or more
- Average duration: 90 minutes
- Special equipment: yes
- Online version: no

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCT

Proactivity, personal/group agency, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

In a circle, relationships of trust and mutual listening are built to lead the group to co-create meanings through the act of playing together.

### LEAD

Collaborative Leadership, power dynamics, leading from behind

Collaborative leadership of the facilitator that allows him/her to empower the group by intervening only when necessary.

### SUPPORT

Avoiding blame, Suspending judgement, Empathy, Curiosity

The facilitator interprets the actions of the participants (or himself) only as learning opportunities and not as if they were errors, suspending his judgment on himself and on others.

## BENEFITS

The facilitated drum circle favors group cohesion and the development of self-awareness (understood as the ability to come into contact with oneself, as knowledge of one's resources, potential and preferences), curiosity, creativity, communication and interpersonal relationship skills, listening and expressing one's emotions through a percussion instrument.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** The facilitator (F) arranges the chairs in a circle and distributes the music instruments in a balanced way.
2. **Starting the drum circle:** F welcomes, starts the first rhythm and makes eye contact with the participants.
3. **Protocol "Dictator":** F gives the main signals of facilitation with body language, always working with the whole group.
4. **Protocol "Director":** F directs the participants' attention towards mutual listening by highlighting various subgroups (types of instruments, sections of the circle, etc.)
5. **Protocol "Facilitator":** F stimulates the co-creation of rhythmic dialogues by "sculpting" a song.
6. **Protocol "Conductor":** F plays and orchestrates the music of the group by refining the facilitation sequences.
7. **Closing and debriefing:** F concludes the d.c., collects feedback from participants and reflects a posteriori on what worked and what needs to be improved.



# FIVE MINUTES WRITING

## DESCRIPTION

It is one of the best ways to reflect on one's own experience or work on hypotheses as well as to improve writing -- and reading -- skills. Setting aside 5 minutes for a daily writing exercise is an excellent way to ensure that participants will get writing practice each and every day. This is a quick, simple and fun 5-minute writing activity.

It can be about ANY topic or it can be related to a SPECIFIC situation regarding the classroom climate. It's also a great exercise to stimulate empathy, imagination and creativity.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: low
- Setting: individual, group
- Participants: 1 or more
- Average duration: 15 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### AIMING

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

The exercise is perfect to reflect on participants' experience or work on hypotheses ("Suppose that..."). It helps to clarify participants goals and expectations which can consequently help them identify what action can be taken, at classroom climate and/or at teaching/learning level, to reach such goals.

### BENEFITS

The participants will:

- respond to a daily writing prompt in less than 5 minutes;
- reflect on their own experience;
- learn to gather and form thoughts, clarify their goals and expectations under time pressure;
- develop time management skills;
- improve writing skills (over time).

### STEPS

1. **Preparation:** participants are asked to focus on a general topic and write about it by expressing their thoughts and feelings for around 5 minutes.
2. **Application:** the facilitator gives 5 minutes time for the participants to respond to the question/writing prompt of the day.
3. **Evaluation:** the facilitator lets the participants present their thoughts and feelings. Writing is an exploration and freedom. It delves deep into a person's thoughts and feelings.
4. **Debrief:** in a 5-10 minutes timespan, the facilitator asks the participants to share their experience in plenary. Through writing, participants observe their thoughts, sit with their emotions, and offer themselves and each other compassion by sharing their struggles.



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD THE  
FULL DESCRIPTION



# FUTURES WHEEL

## DESCRIPTION

In this practice participants first write on a piece of paper a word that represents a concept and/or an action, and then identify in a graphic form the future consequences related to this word. The futures wheel is a method for graphical visualisation of direct and indirect future consequences of a particular change or development.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: middle
- Setting: group, individual
- Participants: 1 or more
- Average duration: 60 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### AIMING

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

Students' and teachers' expectations mutually influence each other, clarifying their goals. The practice is future-oriented and can help in finding solutions for future classroom events.

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, personal/group agency, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

Everyone has an active role in keeping the classroom climate which is a complex system, as well as the teachers' and students' life and relationships, which are regarded as reciprocal learning relationships.

## BENEFITS

This practice can assist in developing multi-concepts about possible future development by offering a futures-conscious perspective and aiding in group brainstorming; can stress the concept of a systemic (and non-causal) approach to daily conflicts-related events occurring among students and teachers. Teachers and students can work on their mindset in imaging and representing the complexity of the web of interactions among events, and this can be useful to build competencies in anticipating and planning their goals for the future.

## STEPS

1. **Prepare:** choose the change or a the problem/issue to face and evaluate in terms of consequences;
2. **Imagine** that this change/problem/issue occurs and identify possible direct consequences;
3. **Identify indirect consequences** generated by the direct consequences;
4. **Conclusion:** consider how to improve or manage the negative impacts, enhance and leverage the positive ones, and remove or energise the neutral;
5. **Debrief:** reflect on what they have produced in drawing a future wheel. Have a conversation after this practice.



## GOSSIP OF RESOURCES

### DESCRIPTION

This practice is a five-minute small group activity that can be used to create an atmosphere of mutual appreciation and acknowledgement within a group, while at the same time reinforcing the individual in doing more of what works. In a group of three, in rotation, one will be in silence listening, for an established time, to the other two, who will talk about the resources, talents and beautiful things they imagine, see or suppose of the person who is listening.

### MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: low
- Setting: group
- Participants: 3 or more
- Average duration: 30 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### AIMING

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach  
Invite participants to suppose positive features about a person, thus training the skill of Work on Hypotheses.

### SUPPORTING

Avoiding blame, Suspending judgement, Empathy, Curiosity

Trains participants to assume having a supportive stance towards other people.

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving vs Solution Building Mindset

Invite participants to focus on what is already working in a person's attitude, the activity facilitates a training on the Solution-Focused Approach.

## BENEFITS

This practice: (1) helps to experience the change of perspective from the problem-focused logic to the solution-enhancing logic; (2) helps people be more aware of their resources and how visible these can be to the outside world; (3) shifts the gaze from criticism to appreciation, from lack to resources, all in a conversational and transparent form; (4) facilitates the exchange of resources in the group, enhances individuals and creates belonging, energizing the group; (5) helps understand how focusing on positive or negative aspects depends on the approach adopted by each individual.

## STEPS

1. **Prepare:** create small groups of three people and explain that, for each round, one person listens silently and the other two talk for 3 or 5 minutes about the resources/skills/talents of the listener. After three rounds all the group members assume the role of the listener;
2. **Rounds:** start the first round and after 3 or 5 minutes max invite the groups to change roles and start a new round. Complete three rounds;
3. **Exchange:** invite members within each group to exchange emotions, thoughts and ideas about the experience;
4. **Conclusions:** once each small group has discussed the experience, invite people to stay seated where they are, to stand in a circle or find a seat in the courtroom as they wish;
5. **Debrief:** in plenary, discuss the experience and keep the focus on the resources and on what worked.



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD THE  
FULL DESCRIPTION



# GUARDIAN ANGEL

## DESCRIPTION

It is a group activity in which each participant begins to take care of another member of the group (the protégé) for a certain period of time, without being noticed. At the end of the activity each participant can try to guess who his "Guardian Angel" was.

This exercise is actually an activity that usually takes place in the "background", i.e. simultaneously with one or more work sessions related to other activities or exercises proposed by the facilitator.

## FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: medium
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: 6 or more
- Average duration: 60 minutes per session
- Special materials: no
- Online version: no

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

The stimulated ability is proactivity, because the person in the role of "Guardian Angel" intervenes promptly to take care of his protégé, trying to anticipate his needs.

### LEADERSHIP

Collaborative leadership, power dynamics, driving by staying one STEPS behind

The ability to "drive one STEPS back" is stimulated, since those who act as "Guardian Angel" take care of and positively influence the protected trying not to be noticed.

### SUPPORT

Avoid guilt, suspend judgment, empathy, curiosity

Empathy is stimulated, as those who act as "Guardian Angels" put themselves in the shoes of the protégé to anticipate their needs and support them.

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-based approach, problem solving vs solution-oriented mindset

To take care of his project, the "Guardian Angel" adopts a solution-based approach as he must quickly think of concrete and decisive actions.

## BENEFITS

The exercise trains participants (e.g., teachers) to care for another person without the protégé noticing. This type of practice also facilitates the development of a solution-oriented approach as each "Guardian Angel" must intervene promptly to take care of their protégé, thus exercising their proactivity.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** each participant writes his name on a piece of paper that will be folded and placed in an envelope, then extracts a piece of paper from the same envelope and becomes "Guardian Angel" of the extracted person;
2. **Take care of your protégé:** during the established time, each "Guardian Angel" tries to help his protégé paying great attention not to be noticed and support him in different ways;
3. **Conclusion:** each member, in turn, tells the aspects of the experience that he found most interesting or that struck him the most and thinks about what could be influenced by his "Guardian Angel"; then, the roles of the participants are guessed and finally revealed;
4. **Debriefing:** participants reflect on what has changed in their attitude towards other members of the group, after assuming the role of "Guardian Angels".



# HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

## DESCRIPTION

The activity is inspired by similar techniques developed in the field of positive psychology for the enhancement of hope in the future of people.

The Facilitator asks participants a series of questions, inviting them to write down the answers and reflect on them.

The activity can be proposed to both teachers and students.

## FEATURES

- For whom: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 3
- Average duration: 75 minutes
- Special equipment: yes
- Online version: yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### AIMS

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

AIMS in this case refers to the idea of identifying one or more goals (the best hopes) and defining strategies to achieve them. For this reason, the activity trains all the skills within itself, such as working on hypotheses, having a goal-oriented approach and having a future-oriented approach.

### BENEFITS

L'attività ha lo scopo di aiutare i partecipanti a dare voce alle loro migliori speranze sulla vita a scuola e in classe.

Inoltre, l'attività li aiuta a considerare quali azioni possono intraprendere - come singoli individui e come gruppo - per raggiungere le migliori speranze che hanno descritto.

### STEPS

1. **Preparation:** explain to participants that they will be asked a series of questions about their experience with the class;
2. **Ask questions:** from the list of questions choose the most congruent ones;
3. **The board of best hopes:** invite all participants to write their best hopes in a large sheet of paper entitled "Hopes for the future of the class";
4. **Actions to achieve hopes:** Divide participants into groups of 3 or 4. Ask each subgroup to share their ideas about one of the best hopes written on the blackboard hanging on the wall;
5. **The common thread:** In plenary, ask participants to share the ideas and reflections that emerged during phase 4;
6. **Debriefing:** This stage is a group discussion about the activity. The goal is to help participants reflect on the usefulness of this activity.



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD THE  
FULL DESCRIPTION



# HUMAN KNOT

## DESCRIPTION

The Human Knot Game (also known as Human Knot Game or Human Knot Activity) is a popular game where people learn to work together. This game is a great icebreaker for a team of new people or as a mutual knowledge activity. The Human Knot is a team activity that requires group members to form a circle, grab two opposing hands of participants, and then untangle the resulting jumble without ever loosening their grip. The Human Node focuses on specific group dynamics and helps teammates analyze the problem-solving approaches and communication styles of others.

## FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 8
- Average duration: 15-20 minutes
- Special Material: Yes
- Online version: No

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### LEADERSHIP

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

This activity is a great way to improve team cooperation and communication. It gives a better idea of how the team's combined efforts work and is an efficient method of building relationships. And, as a bonus, all this is done in a fun and exciting atmosphere that will surely increase the mood of the participants!

## BENEFITS

Some benefits of playing the Human Node are better communication skills, greater problem-solving skills, and greater group familiarity. The game puts teammates in close proximity and starts the conversation. Group decisions become shared. If teams don't act in unison during this activity, the game will result in an unresolved tangle and a bunch of aching arms!

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** space required: indoor or outdoor. Smaller groups are more manageable and format nodes less complicated. The ideal number of players for this game is 8-12. If the group is really large, divide them into smaller groups. If there are too many people in a human node it becomes extremely difficult;
2. **Warm-up:** participants in this activity will stand up and join their hands together to form a human knot from their arms;
3. **Application:** make the group form a circle. Tell them to raise their right hand in the air, and then grab someone's hand on the other side of the circle from them. Then repeat this with your left hand, making sure they grab a hand of different people;
4. **Final reflection:** the instructor asks participants to share their experience in plenary.



# LISTEN TO YOUR ANGER

## DESCRIPTION

This activity is based on the “absent but implicit” idea from the Narrative Approach (Carey et al., 2009). Simply put, in the context of this exercise it means that if something makes us angry it is because it hurts some personal values, principles and/or beliefs that are important to us. That means that when we talk about our anger we implicitly talk about our important values, principles and beliefs.

The activity is divided into two parts: participants are first asked to answer some questions with the aim to explore their personal values; then, in pairs, they run simulated conversations by taking and exchanging the roles of Facilitator and Student/Teacher.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: middle
- Setting: group
- Participants: from 2 to many
- Average duration: 90 minutes
- Special materials: yes
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### SUPPORT

Avoiding blame, Suspending judgement, Empathy, Curiosity

in this case, refers to the idea that exploring the values implied in the manifestation of anger helps teachers and students feel supported and less judged and/or blamed for their reactions. Also, it helps them to lower the levels of self-judgement and self-blaming.

On the level of their relationships with the classroom, the cluster of SUPPORT is elicited in the sense that teachers/students have the occasion to enrich the narratives they have of the students/teachers, deconstructing the oversimplifying personal judgement they can have on them.

## BENEFITS

- allows teachers and students to reflect upon the episodes of anger they experience in the classroom and go beyond the practices of personal judgement and personal blaming towards students or teachers (and towards themselves);
- helps teachers think about how to deal with anger episodes within the classroom (e.g., in case of a fight between two students), supporting students in exploring the hurt and frustrated values underneath the anger manifestation.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** explain to the participants that the activity aims to help them see in a new way the anger behaviours they can experience in their school life.
2. **A story of personal anger:** each participant is asked to answer a set of questions about its personal anger;
3. **Reflection on the experience:** ask participants just to share, if they want, their ideas and reflections on this part of the activity;
4. **Simulated conversations:** divide the group in pairs. Each pairs starts a simulated conversation taking and exchanging the roles of Facilitator and Student (or Teacher). By taking the role of Student/Teacher, teachers/students impersonate one of their students/teachers that had a manifestation of anger, towards them or towards other classmates. On the other side, the Facilitator asks questions similar to the ones proposed in part 1 of this activity.
5. **Reflecting on the conversations:** each pair takes 10 minutes to discuss the exercise.
6. **Debrief:** final group discussion on the activity.



# MAPPING THE PERSONAL

## DESCRIPTION

It is an exercise for individuals and groups of students that helps to acquire self-awareness and self-development. Making a map of oneself creates enthusiasm as it almost immediately provides a powerful view of the systems in which students find themselves. They can map their own values, groups, formal institutions and associations to which they belong or feel connected. The map can be linked to the community through another exercise ("Map your community!").

## FEATURES

- For whom: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: individual and group
- N. of participants: at least 1
- Average duration: at least 30-60 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: no

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

The personal map is about self-awareness and thus contributes to individual discovery. If it is used in a group, it can support the creation of a common understanding and sense of belonging, and thus support group identity. It can also help create mutual respect and understanding. It can be used for a better common understanding among students or to obtain information about students' values, thoughts, and feelings, regarding a particular set of solutions to life's problems.

### BENEFITS

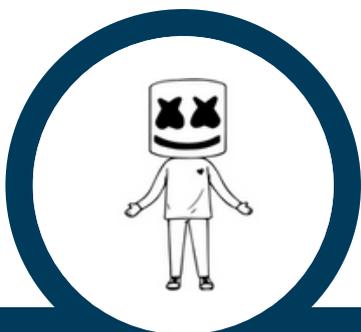
Personal maps help to discover one's inner self and generate an in-depth understanding of our problems and help to find a solution to achieve life's goals. It is ideal for students who like graphic representations and who also learn through them. Many of us prefer visual learning, and in this sense a map is a good way to get to know ourselves. Maps are also a suitable way to discover the connection between thoughts and ideas that may not have been explored before.

### STEPS

1. **Preparation:** The teacher introduces the exercise, if implemented at the individual level, explains to the student the purpose of the personal map (which could range from simply getting to know the student better to supporting him in (future) career or study choices or acquiring information about specific problems he may face).
2. The exercise begins by putting the student's name in the center and then **writing categories of interest** around it.
3. The **student fills in each of the categories**. Categories are not fixed, you can edit them along with what is of interest while writing. You place the elements that are most important more, the less important ones further away.
4. **Conclusion:** At the end of the exercise the teacher can ask students to present their personal map.
5. **Debriefing:** You hang the map of each person on the wall and share all the models, to see the similarities and differences. After the session, the results can be analyzed at the individual and group level.



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD THE  
FULL DESCRIPTION



# MARSHMALLOW CHALLENGE

## DESCRIPTION

The Marshmallow Challenge is a team challenge activity in which teams must compete to build the tallest self-supporting structure using different materials: 20 sticks or spaghetti, one meter of tape, one meter of twine and one marshmallow. The marshmallow must be placed above the structure. It is quite a challenging activity, because it brings people into a condition where they need to collaborate together and cope with the problems arising from the construction of the tower.

## FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 3
- Average duration: 60 minutes
- Special Material: Yes
- Online version: no

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### LEADERSHIP

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

The challenge does not assume that there is a leader who takes the lead, but it is a collaborative process of all team members, leadership is shared by the different members, with them taking leadership at different points, as such it is related to LEADERSHIP.

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

The challenge is based on the team combining various aspects from different clusters of expertise. It is related to CONSTRUCTION, since the teamwork that occurs during the challenge is a process of mutual influence.

### AIMS

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

The fact that the challenge is based on a goal to be achieved in the future "build the highest self-supporting structure" and that different hypotheses are explored during the process is related to all areas of GOAL SETTING.

## BENEFITS

The exercise helps to explore the dynamics of cooperation and to reflect on the processes of mutual influence. It also emphasizes group communication, leadership dynamics, helps to explore the dynamics of cooperation and innovation processes within the group. The exercise helps show students that success depends on close collaboration between team members.

## STEPS

- 1.Preparation: First of all, you need to create a marshmallow challenge kit for each team. Each kit contains 20 wooden or spaghetti sticks, 1 meter of adhesive tape, 1 meter of twine and 1 marshmallow. Organize the group into teams of 3 to 6 people. Each team should sit around a table or on the floor. The whole group should work in the same space. Explain how the activity works and its goals.
- 2.Realization: Deliver materials to each team and, when they're ready to get started, start countdown. Because they need to feel a sense of urgency, remind them of the time that passes periodically.
- 3.Conclusion: Measure each structure and call the heights as you measure. Once all the measurements have been collected, proclaim the winner of the competition.



# MIRRORING COMMUNICATION

## DESCRIPTION

The practice consists of a dialogue between two or more people (teachers and students) with different roles: at least one listening and at least one sharing their negative feelings about the events of the last week in class.

Through the use of a series of "mirroring" techniques, the goal of the exercise is to stimulate an empathic relationship between the participants, to support the emergence of a solution-focused process.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: low
- Setting: group
- Participants: 2 or more
- Average duration: 60 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### LEAD

Collaborative Leadership, power dynamics, leading from behind

The dynamic of listening makes us understand the importance of the various roles that leadership can take. Active listening refers to a situation in which the listener is present in the relationship.

### SUPPORT

Avoiding blame, Suspending judgement, Empathy, Curiosity

Empathic listening can be an element facilitating effective classroom communication and, therefore, a strengthening of shared and widespread leadership between teachers and students.

## BENEFITS

The practice aims to train empathy skills, stressing the importance of adopting an empathic perspective, preferably only when participants believe they are in a condition of sufficient serenity to keep in contact with other people (a condition that allows the participants to shift from themselves to the others). The exercise can be useful in empowering teachers' and students' empathic communication, working on a series of linguistic strategies to connect with the point of view, ideas, and thoughts of people involved, and finally finding a common understanding.

## STEPS

1. **Prepare:** find a quiet place, assign roles (help seeker, listener), identify and share events/topics;
2. **Apply paraphrase (first strategy):** the listener repeats in part, but in its own words, what the help seeker said;
3. **Apply summary (second strategy):** the listener picks up the key points of the conversation and submits them to the speaker, thus demonstrating that he understands what was said;
4. **Conclusion:** test the two strategies with five sentences, and let the mirror practice with the strategies;
5. **Debrief:** reflect on the process of testing the strategies. Have a conversation after this practice.



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD THE  
FULL DESCRIPTION



# PHOTO STORY

## DESCRIPTION

This practice uses photography to tell the concerns and stories of a group or community; It can also be used as an "icebreaker" or to get to know your peers better. The activity requires you to take photos of your choice and in the open air, and then show them to the group. Photo stories support knowledge, initiate conversations, build trust, relieve tension, encourage participation, and help create a sense of connection and a common, shared understanding.

## FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 5
- Average duration: 60 minutes
- Special equipment: yes
- Online version: Yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

The exercise identifies common patterns and motifs through the photos and stories behind them, generating the skills of this cluster.

### SUPPORT

Avoid guilt, suspend judgment, empathy, curiosity

The exercise stimulates students' empathy and curiosity about their peers.

### AIMS

Lavorare su ipotesi, approccio orientato all'obiettivo e orientato al futuro

When working on a problem/concern, the exercise is goal-oriented.

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-based approach, problem solving vs solution-oriented mindset

When working on a problem/concern, the exercise is future-oriented and elicits new ideas for potential solutions.

## BENEFITS

- Sharing the story with others generates understanding and empathy and allows you to detect common interests among the members of the group;
- It helps to create a sense of competence, of belonging to a group with similar concerns and motivates students to become active agents of change and help find and implement a solution;
- The urge to go outside to take a photo of your choice can be a useful recreational moment to rework information.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** explanation of the activity by the facilitator, choice of focus (group, school, community), taking photographs and uploading to shared folder;
2. **Explanation of the stories:** participants tell the story that accompanies their photo, explaining the reason for the choice, why the story is important or constitutes a concern for them and why the photo taken represents this problem / concern;
3. **Group discussion:** the facilitator and participants reflect on the stories together. Participants are asked to tell photo stories to elicit other stories and stimulate sharing;
4. **Debriefing:** the facilitator reserves about an hour to discuss with the participants new thoughts and ideas that have evolved based on the photographic stories and the stories aroused in the final passage of the activity.



# PROBLEM TREE

## DESCRIPTION

The problem tree is a three-**STEPS** methodology for identifying major challenges and problems, along with their causes and effects. It is a type of diagram that allows members of a group to analyze the causes and effects of a particular challenge and how they relate to each other. Built around a focal problem, the causes of that problem are traced as well as the effects. A problem tree has three parts: a trunk, roots and branches. The trunk is the main problem, challenge or problem. The roots represent the causes of the main problem, challenge or problem while the branches represent its effects.

## FEATURES

- For whom: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 3
- Average duration: at least 60 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: no

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### AIMS

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

Problem trees are designed to identify the root causes of a problem or challenge and to define the consequences and as such are related to clusters that focus on identifying and defining problems and challenges.

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-based approach, problem solving vs solution-oriented mindset

Problem trees are designed to identify potential solutions to a problem or challenge and as such are directly related to the competencies of the solution focus. They are also useful as a starting point, to analyze the current state of a situation or specific circumstances,

## BENEFITS

The main benefit is that it allows participants to analyze the causes and effects of a particular problem or challenge. In the problem tree, the problem or challenge is divided into manageable and definable parts. This allows you to prioritize factors and helps you focus goals and define them better. It allows you to generate an ever deeper understanding of the problem.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** A problem tree analysis can be performed in 2 ways: the teacher defines the problem, the participants define the problem.
2. Participants are provided with a **"problem tree" template**. The problem, challenge or problem is written in the center of the model and becomes the "trunk" of the tree.
3. The group first **identifies the causes of the focal problem**, i.e. the "roots" of the tree, and then secondly the consequences that become the branches.
4. **Conclusion:** Participants examine the flow of thought and the logic and reasons behind the relationships they have established between roots and branches. They also check the tree as a whole and make sure that in their opinion it is valid and complete.
5. **Closing and debriefing:** Each group explains its own diagram and highlights how the discussion took place, explaining the main points and ideas that lead to the content of the diagram.



# PRODIGIOUS SNACK

## DESCRIPTION

The activity was designed to enhance the psychological capital of the participants, whether they were students or teachers. It is a role-playing game whose purpose is to activate the psychological resources of the children through an experiential approach. The prodigious snack exercise is conceptually superimposable to the following principle: "The whole is superior to the part", and it is inspired by the video "One Human Family, Food for All" by Caritas International. The video is part of an educational campaign and recalls an ancient story on the themes of hunger and sharing.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: high
- Setting: group
- Participants: 12 or more
- Average duration: 60 minutes
- Special equipment: yes
- Online version: no

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCT

Proactivity, personal/group agency, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

From this point of view, this is a complex exercise, and it actively stimulates students and teachers to find a collaborative approach to developing individual and group agency.

### LEAD

Collaborative Leadership, power dynamics, leading from behind

Inside this cluster, the exercise promotes a collaborative approach to leadership, in which there is not only "the leader" but also "the follower", with ultimate responsibility for group functioning.

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving vs Solution Building Mindset

The exercise is essential in helping students shift from a mindset based on problem comprehension to an attitude based entirely on finding solutions to common problems.

## BENEFITS

- In this activity, attention is focused on the enabling conditions of psychological capital, identifying the social and attributional processes that can promote collaborative functioning within a group, the development of personal potentials, the well-being of students, the sense of satisfaction and appreciation towards the school, the construction of a positive identity.
- Rather than repairing or removing disabling conditions, the aim is to activate personal psychological resources (Seligman, 2011), through this activity.

## STEPS

1. **Intro and first test:** the facilitator divides participants into four groups called "peoples". The group will choose a player whose goal is to collect the most significant number of pieces of bread for its people with the help of a long spoon;
2. **Watch the video:** watch all together the video of Caritas International's "One Human Family, Food for all";
3. **Second test:** with the same organization as step 1, repeat the attempts for each group to collect pieces of bread;
4. **Counting results:** each group counts the pieces of bread it managed to take in the first step and then in the second step that was taken after watching the video;
5. **Debrief:** participants reflect on the experience with the support of the facilitator.





## AIMS

In this case it refers to the idea that students, starting dialogues based on the strength of individuals and the class and starting to identify possible resources, skills and competences on which the class, as a group, can rely, reflect on the possibilities of achieving objectives or on how to enhance the objectives already achieved in terms of climate in the classroom and future choices.

## FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-based approach, problem solving vs solution-oriented mindset

By facilitating the shift of attention to students' resources, classroom skills and abilities that could help – or have already helped – in terms of classroom climate and decision-making, it stimulates reflections and insights on possible solutions to be developed and concrete actions to be taken to achieve these solutions.

## BENEFITS

The activity helps participants (teachers and/or students) to broaden their personal and class vision, to identify potential resources, skills and abilities that the individual student and the class, as a group, has already applied and/or could apply to improve the classroom climate and the choices to be made in the future.

This, in turn, can facilitate reflections on possible solutions to be adopted in the future.

## STEPS

- 1. Preparation:** the teacher explains to the participants that they will start a discussion about the class and how the students have addressed the topic of climate and future decisions;
- 2. Starts the conversation:** T asks the following question: How are things going for the class for future choices?
- 3. Exception Survey:** T asks a series of questions, which lead the conversation toward reflections on the strengths, resources, and abilities of the class;
- 4. Conclusions:** T asks a final series of questions, with the aim of resuming what has been said so far and fixing it in the minds of the participants.
- 5. Debriefing:** this stage is a group discussion about the activity.



# REFLECTION ON STRENGTHS

## DESCRIPTION

The goal of the activity is to discuss students and the class by focusing on its strengths and resources. Discussion can be opened with teachers and students.

The activity provides a series of questions that help improve and maintain the discussion and that can support in making subsequent decisions.

## FEATURES

- For whom: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: individual, group
- N. of participants: at least 1
- Average duration: 45 minutes
- Special equipment: yes
- Online version: yes

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# REFRAME YOUR FAILURES

## DESCRIPTION

In this activity, participants learn to view personal failures as a way to explore their own values. For example, teachers could support their students in reworking experiences that have failed them. The participants are divided into pairs and assume, alternating, the role of "facilitator" and "client". The "client" is invited to talk about an episode of failure in the past, while the "facilitator" asks specific questions according to a practice map called "TASC Failure Conversation Map".

## FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: medium
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 2
- Average duration: 60 - 75 minutes
- Special Material: Yes
- Online version: Yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

The ability stimulated in this dimension is personal action, because the participant (e.g. teacher) in the role of "client" becomes aware of his power to act in a way more aligned with his values.

### SUPPORT

Avoid guilt, suspend judgment, empathy, curiosity

The skills associated with this dimension and stimulated in this practice are: (1) Avoid blame as the use of the "TASC Conversation Map on Failure" helps teachers avoid pointing the finger at themselves (and/or students); (2) Suspending judgment as reframing the concept of personal failure helps teachers avoid negative judgments about themselves (and/or students) as people.

## BENEFITS

The exercise trains participants to deconstruct the concept of "failure", understood as a sense of inadequacy, incompetence, insufficiency, deficit, backwardness that looms in people's lives. This activity aims to help participants (e.g., teachers) find an alternative way of thinking about failure, to reconsider experiences of failure as opportunities to explore their personal values and those of the people with whom they relate (e.g., students).

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** those who facilitate the practice divide the group of participants (e.g., teachers) into pairs and explain to them that this activity works on how to deal with the topic of personal failure, whether it is related to their profession or the students' lives;
2. **Conversation about failure:** each couple starts the conversation; One person assumes the role of "facilitator" by asking specific questions, the other poses as a "client" and answers questions by talking about an experience lived as a failure. After 20 minutes the roles are swapped;
3. **Conclusion:** at the end of the established period, each couple takes 10 minutes to discuss the exercise;
4. **Debriefing:** the practitioner stimulates a group discussion on the activity just experienced by asking questions. Participants can also write answers and reflect for themselves, after the end of the group session.





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# REMEMBERING CONVERSATIONS

## DESCRIPTION

The practice invites us to think of our identity as "multi-voice" and not as "encapsulated self". In this exercise, it is emphasized that identity can be understood as a group of relationships, a kind of "club" of our life to which several members belong: significant people from our past, present and imagined future. In this exercise, participants place people, organizations, or events with a significant role in their lives on a timeline; In this way they perceive their identity in terms of the people who have helped shape them.

## FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: medium
- Setting: individual, group
- N. of participants: at least 1
- Average duration: 2 hours
- Special equipment: yes
- Online version: Yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

Possibility to reformulate the role of others in one's own life and to understand that identity is also formed through relationships with others according to processes of mutual influence and co-construction of meanings.

### LEADERSHIP

Collaborative leadership, power dynamics, driving by staying one STEPS behind

Understanding of the importance of the role of power understood as a "guide" in influencing the process of identity formation.

### SUPPORT

Avoid guilt, suspend judgment, empathy, curiosity

Effective exploration of participants' identities (e.g., students) and focus on the positive characteristics and roles of the people involved in their lives.

## BENEFITS

This practice opens up the possibility of reviewing the membership in the "club" of the participants' lives. We can give more voice to those we think make a valuable contribution to our identity based on our experiences and relationships with them. For example, as a group activity in the classroom, this exercise can help students better understand their identities in terms of the people who helped shape them.

## STEPS

1. "Certify" membership in the personal "club": the participant fills out the "certificates" of membership in his personal club for each person he considers important in his life (past, present and future) and provides an explanation of this membership;
2. Temporal location of the certificates: the participant places the "certificates" possibly accompanied by observations / notes within a time axis that starts from birth or early childhood and extends to the near future;
3. Linking certificates: the participant connects the points of the timeline (timeline) where there are "certificates" of belonging to his "club", to highlight not only the possible connections but above all the networks of relationships that have contributed to forming his identity;
4. Debriefing: a first moment of reflection focuses on each certificate of participation in the "personal club" through a series of questions. In a second moment, the set of relationships that emerged in the timeline is intercepted.





# ROLE PLAY SIMULATION

## DESCRIPTION

With this practice social conflicts and decision-making are simulated according to the interests of the group. This exercise helps participants to have some new responsibilities in a role playing/simulation that they might not be accustomed to. By applying this exercise, the instructor of a game keeps a relatively low profile and participants are free to interact with each other spontaneously.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: low
- Setting: group
- Participants: 3 to 30
- Average duration: 30 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### LEADING

Collaborative Leadership, power dynamics, leading from behind  
Awareness of the dynamics of power in the relationships because this exercise is very useful to gather an understanding of the power dynamics with a focus on the idea that building solutions to improve the classroom climate is a co-constructive process, actively involving every actor.

Collaborative leadership because this method focuses on decentralising team power from a single leader and involving everyone in the decision-making process.

The purposes of these techniques are to prepare learners to take on the role of others in a role-play.

### BENEFITS

- The role-playing/simulation is a valuable exercise to develop and practice behavioural skills and can encourage creative thinking, collaborative leadership, an awareness of the dynamics of power in the relationship, motivation and involvement necessary for learning languages or other teaching/learning subjects.
- The applied strategy is beneficial for social learning, creating real-life simulation situations.
- This exercise helps to think about decision-making possibilities,

### STEPS

1. **Preparation:** during this stage, the instructor of the game will need to focus on a theme, present a simulated situation, and choose and assign roles.
2. **Warm-up:** starting the game by rehearsing assigned roles in a warm-up activity, used to prepare a group for role-plays.
3. **Application:** the group starts roleplaying according to the descriptions of roles.
4. **Evaluation:** the instructor of the game should ask the participants to reflect on the results obtained. Participants share feelings about what it was like to be in one or more roles.
5. **Debrief:** 15 minutes (approx.), the instructor asks the participants to share their experience in plenary.



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## RULE OF SUMMARY

### DESCRIPTION

The practice was developed by De Jong & Berg (2012) and aims to develop non-evaluative listening skills. The activity, to be done in pairs, consists of choosing a controversial topic (strongly felt by the member of the couple who begins to speak) and conducting a discussion using the rule of synthesis.

The discussion lasts about 10 minutes and strictly follows the rule of synthesis.

### FEATURES

- Who: teachers
- Level of difficulty: medium
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 2
- Average duration: 40 minutes
- Special Material: Yes
- Online version: Yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### LEADERSHIP

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

It refers to the idea that participants show openness to let others express their ideas, feelings, and opinions (including in relation to controversial topics) simply by listening, even if they disagree with those opinions.

### SUPPORT

Avoid guilt, suspend judgment, empathy, curiosity

It refers to the idea of adopting a "non-knowing posture" in which the participant (e.g., the teacher) knows nothing about the other's opinions (e.g., the student) and wants to gather as much information about them as possible.

## BENEFITS

The activity aims to help participants (e.g., teachers) to experience a "non-knowing posture", i.e. an attitude to conversation that aims to communicate a fluid (non-fixed) relational posture and manifest respect and openness towards the other person (Andersen, 1995).

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** the activity facilitator invites participants (e.g., teachers) to find a partner and discuss a controversial topic, i.e. something strongly felt;
2. **Enforcement of the summary rule:** each pair starts the discussion. The facilitator pays attention to the fact that each partner in the role of "listener" strictly follows the rule of synthesis;
3. **Conclusion:** after the established time (about 20 minutes), each couple takes about 10 minutes to reflect on the experience just lived. Some questions the facilitator may ask at this stage to help participants reflect on the experience could be:
  - a. How was it for you just to listen without making any comment and saying nothing?
  - b. What was it like for you to have the opportunity to talk about a controversial topic without being interrupted?



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# SIX THINKING HATS

## DESCRIPTION

This method enables individuals and teams to be more receptive to new ideas and to develop them constructively. It is a useful tool teaching how to think, both creatively and inclusively.

The practice exposes learners to six different styles of thinking and helps them look at a problem from six different perspectives. Each of the Six Thinking Hats has a different colour to represent a unique way to look at an issue, to identify a given mode of thinking.

In a group setting, each member thinks by using the same thinking hat, at the same time, on the same thinking challenge.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: middle
- Setting: individual, group
- Participants: 1 or more
- Average duration: 20 minutes
- Special material: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving vs Solution Building Mindset

By using the six thinking hats method, it is possible to consider a problem from multiple perspectives and come up with more creative and innovative solutions.

## BENEFITS

The Six Thinking Hats strategy helps improve decision making processes in 8 different ways:

- Express thinking without any risk factors
- Look at the issue through different perspectives
- Switch thinking styles to broaden decision making
- Following rules for making the right decisions
- Boost focus
- Enhance creative thinking
- Improve communication among team members
- Enhance decision-making skills.

## STEPS

1. **Introduce the challenge:** the facilitator (e.g., teacher) presents a problem/issue to the group. Participants are invited to think about it from different perspectives. There will be six types of thinkers who will address the issue only from that particular perspective.
2. **Wearing the six thinking hats:** the team starts approaching the challenge assuming a particular mode of thinking (e.g., "white hat", "blue hat", "green hat") and evolve the discussion by switching to another "hat" till all the six perspectives are considered;
3. **Select a solution:** after developing a set of solutions, the participants examine it critically and choose one solution;
4. **Debrief:** the facilitator takes approximately 15 minutes to ask participants to share their experience in plenary.



# SPARKLING MOMENTS

## DESCRIPTION

The activity is inspired by the works of Freedman & Combs (1996) and George (2012).

In pairs, participants (e.g., teachers) are asked to tell the story of a “sparkling moment in the classroom life that gave them hope about the classroom itself and the classroom climate”.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: middle
- Setting: group
- Participants: 2 or more
- Average duration: 60 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCT

Proactivity, personal/group agency, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

in this case, refers to the idea that teachers recall episodes in which their and the student’s behaviours and attitudes led to a temporary or permanent improvement of the classroom’s climate.

### FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

Solution-Focused Approach, Problem Solving vs Solution Building Mindset

in this case, refers to the idea of focusing on “unique outcomes” (White & Epston, 1990) that is episodes where the classroom managed to find effective solutions that operate as exceptions to the rule (whereas the rule is the set of problems affecting the classroom context, e.g.: a perceived low level of classroom climate; miscommunication; misunderstandings; etc.).

## BENEFITS

The activity helps participants focus on and identify what works in the context of their experience with the classroom.

## STEPS

1. **Step 1 Preparation:** the teacher explains to participants that they are invited to find a partner; In turn, each teacher is invited to tell his/her partner the story of a sparkling moment in classroom life that gave him/her hope.
2. **Step 2 Sharing stories of sparkling moments:** each participant has 10-15 minutes to tell the story of a sparkling moment; the teacher invites participants to tell as much of a detailed story as possible.
3. **Step 3 Sharing feedback with the group:** in the plenary, the teacher invites the teachers to share their feedback and their mood with the rest of the group.
4. **Debrief:** this stage is a group discussion on the activity; the aim is to help the teachers in the group reflect on how they could apply the idea of sparkling moments while working with single students or a classroom.



# STORIES OF APPRECIATION

## DESCRIPTION

Practice focuses on a person's strengths based on their previous experiences and learnings. It's about the best in people, how they live, behave, work and engage with their community. Through sharing one's own story, attention is brought to what worked rather than what didn't work in the previous stages of the person's life.

## FEATURES

- For whom: teachers
- Level of difficulty: medium-high
- Setting: individual, group
- N. of participants: at least 1
- Average duration: 30-40 minutes
- Special equipment: no
- Online version: yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

The nature of exercise is very much linked to the sense of action, belonging to a group, building and maintaining relationships.

### LEADERSHIP

Collaborative leadership, power dynamics, driving by staying one STEPS behind

The group dynamics that take place within the exercise strengthen leadership skills.

### SUPPORT

Avoiding guilt, suspending judgment, empathy, curiosity

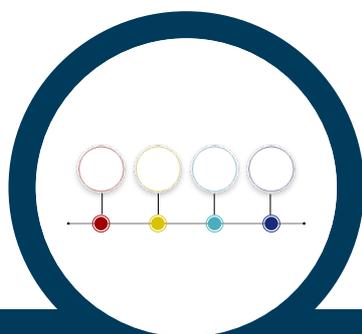
The practice helps generate empathy among group members and helps avoid guilt and suspend judgment. It can also help generate an attitude of curiosity towards other members of the group.

## BENEFITS

- Shift perspective from students' weaknesses to their student strengths;
- It helps to build stronger and more trusting relationships between the teacher and students, as well as between students;
- It helps to generate more empathy and better understanding among peer students.
- As a teacher, you will be able to focus on successful experiences, observe strengths and identify potential areas for improvement.

## STEPS

1. **"Discovery" phase:** the facilitator (F) invites participants to think about something they want to change, a direction they want to take in their future life.
2. **"Dream" phase:** F asks participants to imagine the desired future, how they would like to achieve the desired changes and what personal resources they could use to achieve the goal.
3. **"Design" phase:** F invites each participant to share a reflection on how their skills / knowledge can contribute to the realization of the desired "dream" or future.
4. **Debriefing:** F can ask participants to share their thoughts on the stories told by the different members of the group, perhaps highlighting strengths/skills that they consider very important for the change you want to achieve.



# TIMELINE

## DESCRIPTION

The Time Line method is a reflective exercise that allows the client or student, as an expert on their own life, to carefully observe the most relevant events in their past, from birth to the present moment - or in a particular period of their life (e.g. the last year). The aim of the TimeLine representation is to bring awareness of the most relevant facts and periods in someone's life, to observe how they shaped his/her personality and to learn from their own previous experiences.

## MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Difficulty level: low
- Setting: individual, group
- Participants: 1 or more
- Average duration: 60 minutes
- Specific materials: yes
- Online version: yes

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### AIMING

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

The exercise is part of a conversation you have with your student about their feelings, resources, hopes, desired futures.

In this sense is related to AIMING and in particular the Goal-oriented and Future-oriented approaches.

### SUPPORTING

Avoiding blame, Suspending judgement, Empathy, Curiosity

A TimeLine can also be used for SUPPORTING an attitude of curiosity among students, for instance you can take a specific event or situation in time which you feel students are interested in and ask them to create the timeline on how this event or situation emerged from the past.

## BENEFITS

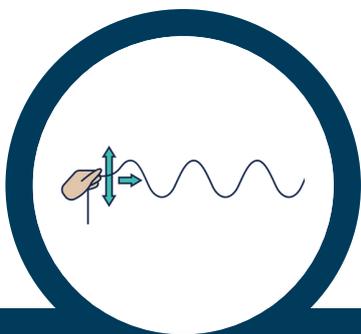
- The fundamental objective of the TimeLine exercise is to encourage the reflection of the client/student about their previous personal experiences, those who have determined their identities over the years and who have a direct or indirect impact on the situation or problem they face today.
- This exercise can be used as a starting point for the student to observe that changes occur and that their ideal future does not necessarily have to be conditioned by negative experiences from their past.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** The facilitator (e.g., teacher) introduces the TimeLine exercise explaining how to draw (or narrate) the timeline of the participant's life. In a group setting, the facilitator will form pairs whose members will play and exchange in turn the roles of "client" and "mentor";
2. **Representation:** the "client" (e.g., the student) will work in the representation of his/her line of life while the "mentor" will have to guarantee that the person feels free to express him/herself;
3. **Self-reflection:** the "mentor" should guide the "client" self-reflection, paying attention at all times to the expressions used and the emotions expressed;
4. **Conclusion:** the practitioners will reflect together on the participant's personal journey;
5. **Debrief:** the facilitator finalises the activity by asking some relevant questions.



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FULL DESCRIPTION



# TRANSECT WALKS

## DESCRIPTION

Crosswalks are a type of mapping activity, but they actually involve walking through an area or zone with a group, to observe, ask questions, and listen as you go.

It is a group exercise that involves walking between two points to intentionally cross a community. The group explores environmental and social resources, conditions, and systems by observing, asking, listening, and watching. This information is then represented visually in a cross-sectional sketch/diagram, which describes and shows a location, resource distribution, and problems observed.

## FEATURES

- Who: teachers
- Level of difficulty: low
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 4
- Average duration: 2-3 hours
- Special Material: Yes
- Online version: Yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### LEADERSHIP

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

Interaction between participants in a more relaxed and less formal environment can increase understanding and relationships. In this sense it refers to LEADING and in particular to power dynamics in the relationship.

### AIMS

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

It can then help identify and contextualize the problems and problems they face and be used as a starting point for goal setting.

## BENEFITS

Transversal walks are highly participatory and relaxing experiences, in walking (physical activity) and observing spaces, places and / or situations, different opinions are collected from the members of the group. While everyone takes notes and observes (and emphasizes their points of attention) they allow many different points of view and perspectives to be present and discussed.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** the facilitator introduces the problem that will be the topic or topic of the cross walk. He/she may use additional context material to explain this, e.g. newspaper clippings. The facilitator explains the exercise to the participants.
2. **Realization of the walk:** the duration of the exercise depends on the distance to be traveled, and although it can take from 1 to 3 hours, the average duration for most walks is about 2 hours. The facilitator should find a balance between the distance to be covered and the characteristics of the group (e.g. taking into account physical problems, attention span, etc.).
3. **Reflection during the walk:** while walking along the path, the facilitator stops the group from time to time (as characteristics change and a space, object or situation relevant to the problem, problem or challenges faced emerges).
4. **Conclusion:** After the walk, the group sits down and the facilitator facilitates the group to compile a diagram or table of the main observed characteristics (see example images below).



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## TREE OF LIFE

### DESCRIPTION

The Tree of Life methodology initially developed to work with children affected by HIV/AIDS in southern Africa. This approach has proved so successful and popular that it is now being used with children, young people, and adults in a wide range of countries and in different contexts. The concept is pretty simple and straightforward: it is a visual metaphor in which a tree represents the life of a person and the various elements that make it up—past, present, and future.

This practice can enable people (e.g., students) to speak about their lives in ways that make them stronger.

### MAIN FEATURES

- Who: teachers
- Difficulty level: low
- Setting: individual, group
- Participants: 2 or more
- Average duration: 1-2 hours
- Special equipment: yes
- Online version: yes, but limited

### CONTACTS

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## NON COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCT

Proactivity, personal/group agency, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

This method is designed to reflect upon oneself and to understand others and their own roles and importance within a community. This increases personal awareness, understanding of others and helps to construct a sense of agency and belonging to the community.

### AIM

Working on hypotheses, goal-oriented and future-oriented approach

This practice is conducted with the aim of analysing and reflecting upon the present, but understanding the past and identifying the resources that one has for the future.

### SUPPORT

Avoiding blame, Suspending judgement, Empathy, Curiosity

By analysing the tree of life of others, this method naturally helps to generate empathy and a curiosity into the other person.

## BENEFITS

- The main benefit is that it allows students to reflect on themselves and how they have developed so far.
- The Tree of Life can have a positive effect on the mental health and well-being of students and can be used in different contexts and settings.
- It can be used in moments of transition, such as changing school, moving house, etc., as at these points, one often looks both backwards and forwards and think about ourselves, our hopes and experiences – our 'story' so far.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** the facilitator prepares the material (paper, pencils, walls, pins, tape) and distributes one paper sheet and coloured pencils to each participant;
2. **Drawing the "Tree of Life":** each participant draws a tree representing its own life. This is done step by step, starting from the roots. Each part of the tree will represent an element of the person's life he/she considers important;
3. **Presentation and discussion:** once the "Trees of life" are drawn, each picture is presented and discussed;
4. **Building a "Forest of Life":** only foreseen in a group setting, participants are asked to imagine each tree as part of a bigger forest and to explore how each tree can contribute to the forest;
5. **Debrief:** the facilitator summarises the findings and ask participants to reflect on the known and unknown resources and treasures discovered during the activity.



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FULL DESCRIPTION



# WHAT DOES LEARNING MEAN?

## DESCRIPTION

This activity is inspired by the work of Wagner & Watkins (2005).

Teachers are presented with a concept map that provides three different definitions of "learning" and asked to reflect on their ideas of learning, as opposed to those definitions.

## FEATURES

- Who: teachers
- Level of difficulty: medium
- Setting: individual, group
- N. of participants: at least 1
- Average duration: 90 minutes
- Special Material: Yes
- Online version: Yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### LEADERSHIP

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

Refers to the idea that the teacher can have a leadership role in the process of caring for the classroom climate

### BENEFITS

The activity aims to help teachers reflect on their idea about the learning process and practice, in terms of how it affects the way they relate to the classroom. Because at TASC we believe that the quality of the classroom climate is closely and mutually connected with teaching and learning processes, teachers could benefit from reflecting on their role in improving the classroom climate by exploring their own idea of what "learning" is.

### STEPS

1. **Preparation:** explain to teachers that the purpose of the activity is to explore what "learning" means to them. To facilitate this exploration, the "three main narratives of learning" suggested by Wagner & Watkins will be provided;
2. **Explore personal narratives about learning:** The facilitator asks some questions to help teachers reflect on their ideas of "learning." ;
3. **Sharing reflections:** Each teacher has 5-10 minutes to share their vision of the concept of learning, considering the three main learning narratives provided in step 1 and the answers to the questions asked in step 2;
4. **Conclusion:** once each member of the couples has shared their insights with their partner, the Facilitator invites participants to share their reflections in plenary;
5. **Debriefing:** This stage is a group discussion about the activity. The aim is to help teachers in the group reflect on the usefulness of this activity and how it could be used to raise awareness about how a teacher's definition of learning can influence their approach to working within a group of colleagues.



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD THE  
FULL DESCRIPTION



# YOU LEAD THE CONVERSATION!

## DESCRIPTION

It is an activity inspired by Co.Le.C. (Conversation Lead by the Client), methodology developed by Mikhalsky, Panayotov & McDonald (2019). The participants are divided into pairs, where in turn one assumes the role of the Facilitator and the other the role of the Client. The Client recounts a problem he is facing in his experience of working with classes, while the Facilitator applies a specific series of questions aimed at eliciting the Client's self-questioning process. The Facilitator only needs to ask the type of questions described in this table. You must avoid giving answers, ideas, suggestions and/or interpretations.

## FEATURES

- Who: teachers, students
- Level of difficulty: medium
- Setting: group
- N. of participants: at least 2
- Average duration: 60 - 75 minutes
- Special Material: Yes
- Online version: Yes

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## NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS

### CONSTRUCTING

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

In this case it refers to the idea that teachers can consider having the power to influence the course of the climate in the classroom with their actions.

### LEADERSHIP

Proactivity, individual/collective action, co-construction of meaning, mutual influence

Refers to the idea that the teacher can have a leadership role in the process of caring for the classroom climate

### SUPPORT

Avoid guilt, suspend judgment, empathy, curiosity

in this case it refers to the idea that teachers, when taking on the role of Facilitators, are invited to let Clients tell their story and use their own language to describe their experiences, treating them as if they were the experts in their lives.

## BENEFITS

The exercise trains teachers who take on the role of Facilitators to reflect on the attitude of leading "from one STEPS back" (Cantwell & Holmes, 1994), while learning how even the choice to ask questions can actually influence the direction of conversation.

## STEPS

1. **Preparation:** divide the group into pairs. Explain to teachers that this activity makes them practice how to support the individual student and/or class by developing questions to help them reflect on their problems or problematic situations;
2. **Client-led conversation:** everyone starts the conversation, in which one assumes the role of Facilitator and the other assumes the role of Client. They swap roles at half the set time. The trainer pays attention that each Facilitator merely asks the type of questions described in the table, and nothing else;
3. **Final phase, conclusion:** at the end of the established period, each pair takes 10 minutes to discuss the exercise. Some questions you could provide at this stage to help participants reflect on the experience could be:
  - a. How was it for you, in the role of the Client, to try to develop your questions?
  - b. How did it help you create your own questions as you talked about the topic you wanted to discuss?