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Stage your Confidence

Experiential activities for supporting young people with anxiety

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developed by the participants of the Erasmus+ training course „Stage your Confidence”, project no. 2025-1-RO01-KA153-YOU-000300316

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Stage your Confidence

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INTRODUCTION

Working with young people involves creating contexts in which they feel safe enough to explore what they think and feel, experiment with new ways of relating to others, and discover resources that may sometimes be difficult to recognise in everyday life. Experiential methods can transform learning into an active process in which participants do not simply talk about their experiences but have the opportunity to explore them through action, roles, movement, and interaction.

This booklet brings together a series of techniques and exercises inspired by psychodrama, adapted for use in educational, non-formal learning, and youth work contexts. It presents techniques such as Doubling, Mirroring, Role Reversal, Role Play, the Empty Chair, Future Projection, and Concretization, accompanied by practical examples that support their understanding and application.

The proposed exercises create opportunities for exploring emotions, developing self-awareness and empathy, expressing different perspectives, identifying personal resources, and practising alternative ways of responding to challenging situations. Some activities specifically address experiences such as anxiety, insecurity, communication difficulties, relationships with others, and challenges that young people may encounter in social contexts.

The booklet has a practical focus and can serve as a source of inspiration for youth workers, facilitators, educators, and other professionals who use experiential methods in their work. The exercises can be adapted according to the participants' age, the characteristics of the group, the objectives of the activity, and the context in which they are implemented.

The activities presented here are not intended to replace psychotherapeutic intervention and should be used with respect for professional boundaries and the facilitator's level of training and competence. Particularly when working with emotionally sensitive personal experiences, participation should be voluntary, participants' boundaries should be respected, and the process should include appropriate opportunities for stepping out of roles and reflecting on the experience.

Through this collection of techniques and exercises, we aim to encourage the creative and responsible use of action, spontaneity, and interpersonal encounters, offering young people opportunities not only to talk about change, but also to experience it.

The activities presented in this booklet were created by participants in the **"Stage Your Confidence"** training course, which aimed to develop youth workers' competences in addressing anxiety among young people.

The first part of the booklet includes six complete 60-minute activities, designed and developed by the participants during the training course. Each activity is structured into three stages: warm-up, main activity, and reflection, providing a coherent framework for their implementation in youth work.

The second part provides explanations on the use of several psychodrama techniques, together with examples of practical activities based on these techniques. The exercises were created by the participants during the training course and developed under the methodological guidance of the trainers.

We hope that this booklet will be more than a collection of activities, becoming a practical resource and a source of inspiration for youth workers and other professionals working with young people. The activities presented can be adapted according to the needs, age, and characteristics of each group, while maintaining a framework based on safety, voluntary participation, and mutual respect. We encourage facilitators to explore, adapt, and further develop these ideas, creating contexts in which young people can express their emotions, discover their personal resources, build supportive relationships, and develop greater confidence in their own abilities.

PART I – EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH WORK

PARADOXES OF LIFE

Duration: 60 minutes

Participants: 8–12

Materials needed: Post-it notes, pens, one large sheet of paper

Objectives

- Explore group connections through sociometric choices.
- Explore contrasting symbolic roles.
- Represent symbols through movement and sculpture.
- Create a collective poem based on shared reflections.
- Share emotions and personal insights.
- Create a collective group sculpture.

Activity Description

Warm-up

The facilitator welcomes the participants. After making sure that everyone feels comfortable and is ready to begin, the facilitator invites them to stand up and walk around the room. Participants who feel comfortable and are physically able are encouraged to walk with their eyes closed.

After approximately two minutes, the facilitator asks everyone to stop and imagine that they are standing in front of a tunnel: *"You are standing at the entrance of a tunnel. What do you see?"*

The group's answers are written on a large sheet displayed on the wall (examples: tunnel, darkness, bricks, shadow, sun, light, bats, grass, water).

The facilitator then invites the participants to make a series of sociometric choices, gradually moving from simple to more complex ones: *"Walk around the room and choose your 'light'.*

Simply choose, without thinking too much about whom you will select. What does light mean to you?"

The person chosen as the "light" explains what light represents to them. The participant who selected that person receives their response. After everyone has listened to the person they chose, another element from those identified in the tunnel is selected, and the process continues. Once all the choices have been completed, the facilitator invites participants to reflect: *"Where do the things you heard from your 'light' resonate in your own life?"*

Main Activity

Part A

The facilitator asks the participants: *"Looking at the words collected during the warm-up, which one would you like to experience? Which one feels closest to you or represents you? Choose it and express it."*

The facilitator then gives the following instruction: *"When you hear the bell ring, stand up and create a statue (moving or frozen) with your body. Take a moment to connect with your role and with the emotions you experience in that role. Look around you."*

At the end of the exercise, the facilitator says: *"Now step out of the role. Take a seat and reflect: What message does this role have for you? Write your answer in one sentence on a Post-it note."*

Part B

The facilitator continues: *"Now choose another word from those identified during the warm-up, but this time select one that feels very distant from you or very different from who you are. When you hear the bell ring, stand up and embody that word by creating a moving or frozen statue."*

(The same steps as in Part A are repeated.)

At the end of the exercise, participants are invited to reflect: *"Take a seat and think about the message this role gives you. Write it in one sentence on a Post-it note."*

Part C

For the final part, the facilitator asks: *"Think about a bridge that could connect these two roles—the one that feels close to you and the one that feels distant. What connects them?"*

Participants are invited to describe this bridge to the group.

After writing their reflections on the Post-it notes, participants are invited to stick them onto a display board marked with numbered spaces corresponding to the number of participants. They are asked to place their Post-it notes on any available number. The notes are placed randomly on the board.

The facilitator explains that the purpose of the activity is to discover that poetry can emerge even without consciously intending to write it. After briefly contextualizing the collected ideas, the facilitator reads aloud the collective poem created from all the Post-it notes.

Once the group agrees on a title for the poem, participants are invited to represent that title by creating a static group sculpture.

The facilitator then invites the sculpture to "come alive": *"Now your sculpture comes to life. You may move, make sounds, and speak words."*

Reflection

The facilitator concludes the activity by asking the following questions:

- *How did you feel during this activity?*
- *What was this experience like for you?*
- *What was awakened or activated within you?*
- *Imagine today's experience as a book. If you could take it with you, what would its title be?*

THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES: EXPLORING COMMUNICATION, EMPATHY, AND PERSPECTIVE

Duration: 60 minutes

Participants: 8

Materials needed: toy microphone or pen, clipboard/folder, scarf or badge for the reporter, optional signs with the messages "LIVE" and "BREAKING NEWS"

Objectives:

- Develop empathy by exploring the same situation from different perspectives and roles.
- Develop positive communication and active listening skills.
- Increase self-awareness through reflection and feedback from others.
- Build trust and connections among group members.
- Practice creative expression through role-play, movement, and group work.
- Increase awareness of the impact that words, messages, and social interactions can have on others.

Activity Description:

Warm-up

The facilitator invites participants to stand up and move freely around the activity space without speaking to one another. After the participants become familiar with the space and with the movement of the group, the facilitator introduces a movement speed scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents the speed of a snail and 5 represents the speed of a trotting horse.

The facilitator explains: *"I will call out a number from 1 to 5, and you will adjust your walking speed accordingly. 1 means very slowly, like a snail, while 5 means very fast, like a trotting horse. Let's try: 3... now 1... 5... 2..."*

After several changes of pace, the facilitator introduces a new instruction: participants continue moving around the space while avoiding eye contact with others. They are encouraged to pay attention to their own bodies, their direction of movement, and the presence of the other participants, without looking directly at them.

In the next stage, the instruction is reversed. Participants are invited to seek out other people's gaze and establish eye contact for a few seconds with the people they encounter. The facilitator gradually slows down the pace to allow enough time for observation and connection.
When the group reaches speed 1, the facilitator asks participants to stop next to the person who is closest to them and maintain eye contact. Without speaking, each participant tries to communicate a message, emotion, or intention to their partner using only facial expressions and body language. Afterwards, if they wish, participants may put into words the message they were trying to communicate.

At the end of the warm-up, participants briefly share how they felt when they were avoiding other people's gaze, what changed when they began seeking eye contact, and what it was like to send or receive a message without words.

Main Activity

The facilitator introduces the activity by explaining that participants will become members of news teams with a special feature: their television channel broadcasts only "positive gossip."
The aim is to explore how messages are created, communicated, and amplified, as well as how a person feels when they hear others talking about them. The activity allows participants to explore several perspectives on the same situation and focuses on positive communication, empathy, and cooperation.

The facilitator explains the main rule: *"You are members of a news channel where only positive news about people is broadcast. Your mission is to create and present a news story about someone's strengths, kind gestures, actions, or positive behaviours, as if it were breaking news. Everything you say should be something you would also feel comfortable hearing about yourself."*

1. Forming the Teams and Assigning Roles

Participants are divided into two groups of four, with each group representing a news team.
Within each team, four roles are assigned:

- **News Anchor** – stays in the "studio" and introduces the news story.
- **Field Reporter** – is "on the scene" and presents the situation.
- **Witness** – is interviewed by the reporter and describes what they observed.

- **Person the News Story Is About** – listens to what the others say about them and does not respond at first.

Different props may be used to distinguish the roles: a toy microphone or pen for the interview, a clipboard for the anchor, and a scarf or badge for the reporter. If time allows, roles can be rotated so that participants can experience different perspectives.

2. Preparing the News Story

Each team has a few minutes to decide what "positive news story" they would like to present. It may be based on a real or imaginary situation, for example:

"A young person noticed that a new classmate was alone and invited them to join the group."

"Someone stood up for a classmate when others were making fun of them."

"A person noticed that a friend was having a difficult day and stayed by their side."

The team also decides where the action takes place: at school, within a group of friends, in an online environment, at a camp, or even in an imaginary world.

3. Live News

Each team takes a turn presenting its news story in front of the group.

The **News Anchor** opens the broadcast: *"Breaking news! We are receiving reports about something extraordinary that has just happened..."*

Then the **Field Reporter** goes live: *"Yes, I'm right here at the scene, where everyone is talking about..."* The reporter interviews the **Witness**, who describes what they saw: *"I saw how they noticed that someone was alone and invited them to join the group..."* Throughout the news story, the **Person the News Story Is About** listens without intervening, paying attention to what they feel and think while hearing the messages shared by the others.

4. Changing Perspective

After each scene, the facilitator invites the person the news story was about to step forward and asks: *What was it like for you to hear the others talk about you in this way? What did you feel while you were listening? Was there a particular message that had a stronger impact on you?"*

The facilitator then addresses the Witness: *"Imagine that the same situation had been turned into negative gossip. What would have changed? How do you think the person being talked*

about would have felt? What responsibility do we have when we share information about other people?"

If time allows, the roles are changed and the activity is repeated so that participants can experience different positions: the person delivering the message, the person amplifying it, the person speaking about someone else, and the person being spoken about.

Reflection

At the end of the activity, participants are invited to sit in a circle. The facilitator creates a safe space in which everyone can share as much or as little as they wish about their experience. Possible reflection questions include:

- How did you feel throughout the activity?
- What was it like to experience the role you had?
- What was it like to talk about another person?
- What was it like to hear other people talking about you?
- What made a message feel more powerful?
- What changed when the message was presented as "news"?
- Which role do you think had the greatest influence on the message?
- What is the difference between the intention of the person sending a message and the way the message is received?
- What did you discover about the way you communicate with others?
- What could you do differently when you hear or share information about another person?
- What emotion or idea are you taking with you from this activity?

The facilitator concludes by emphasising that the same message can be experienced differently depending on the position from which we perceive it. Words do not simply transmit information; they can also influence emotions, relationships, and the way a person sees themselves. Exploring situations "through different eyes" can help us become more aware of the impact of our communication and choose ways of relating to others that are based on respect, empathy, and care.

VOICES OF THE CITY

Duration: 60 minutes

Participants: 8

Materials needed: balloons, post-its, markers, a large white sheet of paper, bell, coloured chalk or adhesive tape, stopwatch, elements from nature or other available objects for creating an obstacle course (stones, branches, chairs, etc.)

Objectives:

- Develop connection among participants and strengthen the sense of belonging to the group.
- Increase awareness of one's own body, thoughts, and emotions.
- Develop attention to the surrounding environment by noticing sensory stimuli such as smells, colours, wind, sunlight, or contact with the ground.
- Explore personal ways of self-regulation, calming down, and managing anxiety.
- Develop trust, cooperation, and mutual support in situations involving challenges or unpredictable elements.
- Express emotions symbolically and creatively through movement, body posture, role-play, and collective creation.
- Identify personal and relational resources that can be used in situations of uneasiness, tension, or stress.

Activity Description:

Warm-up

Participants and facilitators stand in a circle, facing the centre.

The facilitator invites participants to express, in just one word, how they are feeling at that moment. The bell marks the beginning of the exercise, and the sharing continues clockwise around the circle until everyone has said one word.

Afterwards, the facilitator invites participants to close their eyes and focus on the facilitator's voice, allowing their imagination to gradually create the space being described.

The facilitator guides the following imagery exercise: *"Imagine that you are walking through a city. Allow yourself, for a few moments, to become part of this city. Notice the smells, the*

wind, the sun on your skin, the people around you, the stones beneath your feet, the buildings, the statues, and the animals you can hear or see. Imagine also those elements you cannot see but know are somewhere in the city: perhaps animals resting, feeding, or even watching you. Stay with this image for a few moments. Now open your eyes and follow our movements."

Participants open their eyes and follow the movements proposed by the facilitators. They perform gentle stretching and activation exercises for different parts of the body, paying attention to their breathing, bodily sensations, and movement.

Gradually, the facilitator invites them to transform their movements into representations of elements from the city: a tree, a bird, a stone, the wind, a building, or any other element they remember from the guided imagery experience.

Through movement, participants activate their bodies, bring their attention to the present moment, and explore the connection between their own body and the space around them.

Main Activity

1. Crossing the City

The facilitators create a pathway in the activity space using coloured chalk or adhesive tape, together with various available objects such as stones, branches, chairs, or other elements that can become obstacles.

To form the groups, two volunteers are invited to each choose an animal they imagined during the previous exercise. The other participants choose one of the two animals, thus forming two groups.

Participants stand in two parallel lines and form pairs with the person standing opposite them, resulting in four pairs.

The facilitator introduces the symbolic situation: *"Imagine that you have met a very anxious friend in the city. You want to help them cross the city without leaving them alone, staying by their side and protecting them from possible dangers and unpredictable situations they might encounter."*

To represent this situation, each pair receives a balloon. Participants must keep the balloon between their bodies without using their hands. They can decide together where to place it: between their foreheads, shoulders, abdomens, or in any other position that allows them to move.

Before starting the pathway, each pair has approximately two minutes to choose the position of the balloon, find a way to keep it from falling, observe the pathway and the obstacles, and develop a strategy for moving together.

At the facilitator's signal, the pairs begin moving through the pathway. Their aim is to overcome the obstacles together without letting the balloon fall and without touching it with their hands.

The facilitator encourages participants to observe what happens in the relationship throughout the pathway: who sets the pace, how they communicate with few or no words, when they feel the need to slow down, how they react when an obstacle appears, and what helps them remain connected.

At the end of the pathway, the facilitator may ask a few short questions:

"What helped you stay connected?"

"What did you do when an obstacle appeared?"

"What was it like to depend on another person's pace and movements?"

The facilitator may highlight the symbolic dimension of the exercise: the pathway can represent difficulties and unpredictable situations encountered in life, while the balloon can represent connection, trust, and emotional support between two people.

2. Statues of Emotion

The facilitator brings the participants' attention back to the image of the city:

"While you were walking through the city, you noticed several statues. Now imagine that you yourself become one of these statues."

Each participant chooses an emotion they are feeling at that moment and creates a statue through their body posture that represents that emotion. Participants take a few moments to settle into the position and notice how that emotion feels in their body.

The partner from the previous exercise observes the statue, paying attention to posture, expression, and body position, and then tries to reproduce it as accurately as possible.
After both participants have experienced the roles of statue and observer, there is a short sharing moment.

The facilitator may ask:
"What was it like to give your emotion a bodily form?"
"What was it like to see another person reproduce your posture?"
"Did you discover anything new about the emotion you chose?"

3. The Voice of the City and Collective Creation
Participants are divided into two groups.
The facilitator invites them to reflect individually on the question: *"If this city could speak, what would it say about you?"*

Each participant receives a post-it and writes one word that intuitively answers this question.
The members of each group place all the post-its together and read the collected words. Using these words, the group creates a short collective poem written from the perspective of "the voice of the city." The poem must include all the words written by the participants on their post-its.

Once the poem is completed, participants write it on a large white sheet of paper and place the post-its around it, creating a collective piece of work. Each group reads its poem aloud to the others.

The facilitator may invite participants to notice what emerges when individual words are brought together into a shared story and how different experiences can become part of the same "voice" of the group.

Reflection

At the end of the activity, participants are invited to sit in a circle.

The facilitator rings the bell and invites each participant, one by one, to express in a single word how they are feeling at that moment, returning to the same exercise used at the beginning of the activity.

Possible reflection questions include:

- How do you feel now compared to the beginning of the activity?
- What did you discover about yourself?
- Which moment of the activity had the strongest impact on you?
- What helped you feel calmer or more connected?
- What was it like for you to offer support to another person?
- What was it like to receive support?
- What did you notice about the way your body reacts when an obstacle or an unpredictable situation appears?
- What helped you remain connected with your partner during the pathway?
- What resource you discovered today could you use in a situation where you feel anxious or tense?
- If you could take one thing with you from this experience, what would it be?

The facilitator concludes by emphasising that each person can discover their own ways of returning to a state of calm and connection. Paying attention to the body and the surrounding environment, movement, relationships with others, and the possibility of asking for or receiving support can become important resources in moments of uneasiness or anxiety. Just like the pathway explored during the activity, difficulties can become easier to navigate when we remain attentive to our own needs, adjust our pace, and allow ourselves to be supported by others.

FROM PERCEPTION TO CONNECTION

Duration: 60 minutes

Participants: 6–20

Materials needed: visual cards (Dixit or other suggestive images), a ball of yarn/string, speaker for music

Objectives:

- Build trust among participants and create a safe environment in which they feel comfortable expressing themselves authentically and relying on one another.
- Encourage introspection and self-reflection by exploring one's own thoughts, perceptions, reactions, and emotions.
- Develop empathy and the ability to view situations from other people's perspectives.
- Increase emotional awareness and the ability to express and regulate emotions.
- Explore the differences between how we perceive ourselves and how we are perceived by others.
- Develop connection, mutual appreciation, and a sense of belonging to the group.

Activity Description:

Warm-up

Participants are invited to sit in a circle. The facilitator asks them to think about the colours of the buildings, streets, or other elements they have noticed today or during the week and to choose, in their mind, a colour that best represents how they feel at that moment. For now, the chosen colour remains private and is not shared with the others.

Participants are then invited to stand up and move freely around the activity space. While moving, the facilitator encourages them to observe the others and intuitively associate each person with a colour that reflects how they perceive them at that moment.

The facilitator may introduce the exercise as follows: *"Look at the people around you without trying to analyse too much. If each of them were a colour, what colour would you associate with each person? Allow your first impression to emerge and notice what that colour communicates to you."*

After a few minutes of movement, participants form pairs. In turn, each person tells their partner what colour they associated with them and briefly explains what led them to choose that colour. The facilitator encourages participants to express their observations in a respectful and nonjudgmental way.

Participants are invited to explore not only what they notice externally, but also what the colour might symbolise in relation to their partner's inner state.
For example, the facilitator may say: *"Do not try to guess what the other person is feeling. Simply say what this colour communicates to you and let the other person decide what meaning it has for them."*

After each participant has received feedback from their partner, the facilitator invites them to return mentally to the colour they chose for themselves at the beginning.
Participants reflect individually: *"Does the colour you chose at the beginning still represent you? Has anything changed after hearing how another person perceived you? Is there any connection between your own colour and the colour your partner associated with you?"*

At the end of the warm-up, there is a short group sharing. Participants may talk about what it was like to be "seen" by another person, what surprised them, and whether the exercise changed the way they perceive themselves in any way.

Main Activity

1. The Story of Emotions

The facilitator places several visual cards face up on the floor. Participants are invited to walk among the images and choose the card they feel most connected to at that moment.
The facilitator may introduce the choice as follows: *"Look at the images without necessarily searching for one that is beautiful or easy to explain. Choose the image that attracts you the most or that seems to say something about you at this moment."*

After each participant has chosen an image, small groups are formed according to the total number of participants. Within each group, each person observes the card they selected and chooses one symbol, character, object, or detail from the image that catches their attention.

Participants take turns presenting the symbol they chose, without needing to explain in detail why they selected it.

The group is then given the task of creating a story together that includes all the symbols selected by its members. The story may be realistic, imaginary, symbolic, or fantastic. What matters is that every symbol has a place in the story and that each participant contributes to creating it.
Once the story is completed, each group presents it to the other participants.

Afterwards, members return to their groups and reflect on the experience.
The facilitator may suggest questions such as: *"What was it like to see your symbol become part of a shared story? What emotions appeared while you were creating the story? Was there anything in the story that surprised you? Did you feel that the group's story also said something about you?"*

2. Musical Statues and Mirroring

Participants are invited to stand up and move freely around the space while listening to the music being played. The facilitator encourages them to allow their bodies to respond spontaneously to the music, without trying to dance in any particular way.

As they move, participants are invited to notice what postures, movements, or gestures arise naturally.
The facilitator explains: *"Let your body feel the music. You do not need to create a beautiful or correct movement. Simply notice what your body wants to do."*
When the music stops, each participant freezes in a posture or gesture.

At the facilitator's signal, each person looks around, chooses another participant, and reproduces that person's posture or gesture as accurately as possible, in a nonverbal mirroring exercise.
Participants are encouraged not only to copy the external position, but also to notice what sensations and emotions appear when they step into the other person's posture.

The facilitator may say: *"As you reproduce the other person's posture, notice what changes in your body. What do you feel? What emotion might exist in this position? Do not try to find the correct answer; simply observe the experience."*

The music starts again, and the exercise is repeated several times so that participants have the opportunity to mirror different people.
At the end, the facilitator may ask a few short questions: *"What was it like to step into another person's posture? Did you feel anything different when you reproduced someone else's gesture? What was it like to see another person mirroring you?"*

Reflection
Participants are invited to sit or stand in a circle so that everyone can see one another.
The facilitator introduces a ball of yarn and explains that it will symbolically represent the invisible connections that are created between people: trust, empathy, support, appreciation, and shared experiences.

The facilitator begins the exercise by holding the end of the yarn and addressing a positive or meaningful message to one participant. The message may express appreciation, something noticed during the activity, or a sense of connection, for example: *"I am giving you the yarn because I appreciated the way you listened to the group."* or *"I felt connected to you when we worked together."*

The facilitator keeps hold of the end of the yarn and passes the ball to that person.
The participant who receives the yarn keeps hold of one part of the thread, chooses another person in the group, and shares a feeling, a message of appreciation, or a connection they noticed. They then pass the ball of yarn to that person while continuing to hold onto their section of the thread. The exercise continues until every participant has received the ball of yarn at least once.
Gradually, a visible web of threads is formed in the centre of the circle.
The facilitator invites the group to observe the web for a few moments and notice the symbol it creates.

They may ask: *"What do you see when you look at this web? What do you think it represents for the group? What happens to the web if one person moves the thread? What does this tell us about the way we influence relationships within a group?"*

At the end, the yarn is gently placed down or gradually released, and participants return to the circle. Each person is invited to express, in one word or a short sentence, what they are taking with them from the experience.

The facilitator concludes by emphasising that the way we see ourselves and the way others see us do not always coincide, and that bringing these different perspectives together can create new meanings. When we listen without judging, try to see from another person's perspective, and express appreciation in an authentic way, we can build relationships based on trust, empathy, and connection.

JOURNEY THROUGH STRESS: WITNESSING, MIRRORING, AND RESOURCES

Duration: 60 minutes

Participants: 12–20

Materials needed: speaker, music, bell or timer, flipchart or board, markers, backpack/bag, enough open space for movement, sheets with questions for pair work

Objectives:

- Explore stress through movement, role-play, improvisation, and reflection.
- Increase awareness of stressful situations, bodily manifestations of stress, and associated emotions.
- Develop empathy and the ability to view an experience from another person's perspective through listening, mirroring, and role reversal.
- Develop the ability to listen to another person's experience without interrupting, judging, or offering solutions.
- Strengthen connection among group members and foster a sense of mutual support.
- Identify personal and relational resources that can contribute to coping with stress.

Activity Description:

Warm-up

Participants are invited to sit in a circle. The facilitator introduces the theme of the activity: *"Today, we are going on a journey through stress and will explore different ways in which we experience and cope with it. But before any journey, we need some preparation."*

The facilitator plays music and invites participants to stand up. One at a time, each person makes a movement or gesture that expresses how they feel as they prepare for this journey.

After each gesture, the whole group reproduces it as if they were a mirror. The participant does not need to explain the meaning of their movement. The group observes and reproduces it as accurately as possible, giving each person the experience of being seen and mirrored by the others.

The exercise continues until all participants have proposed a movement and the group has mirrored it.

At the end, the facilitator stops the music and conducts a short check-in: *"How do you feel now? Are you ready to begin the journey?"*

Main Activity

1. The Journey in Pairs

The facilitator invites participants to look around and choose someone who will become their partner for this stage of the journey. In each pair, participants decide who will be **A** and who will be **B**.

The pairs are invited to walk outdoors or around the available space. Sheets containing questions about the experience of stress are placed at different points along the route. The pairs discover them as they walk and use them as starting points for their dialogue.

The facilitator explains the rules: *"In the first part, person A asks the questions and person B answers. A listens without interrupting, asking additional questions, or offering advice or solutions. Their role is simply to be present and listen."*

The suggested questions are: *"In what situations do you feel stressed or anxious? Can you describe the most recent situation like this? What happened? How did your body react? What did you feel?"*

After approximately six minutes, the facilitator rings the bell. The roles are reversed: B asks the same questions and A answers. B listens without interrupting, offering advice, or asking additional questions.

After another six minutes, the bell marks the end of the dialogue, and participants return to the common space.

2. Mirroring the Experience of Stress

At this stage, the experiences shared in pairs are explored through role reversal, bodily expression, and improvisation. The facilitator reminds participants that the aim is not to interpret or analyse their partner's experience, but to try to view the situation from their partner's perspective, based on what they heard during the dialogue.

Stressful Situations

Participants A are invited into the action space, while participants B remain as observers.
The facilitator gives the following instruction: *"You have listened to your partner's story. Now I invite you, for a few moments, to step into their role. You are no longer yourself; you are your partner. Without speaking, use movement, posture, and gestures to represent the situations they told you about."*

Participants begin improvising simultaneously without words. After a few moments, the facilitator says *"Stop!"* or *"Freeze!"*, and participants remain still.
The observers are asked: *"What kinds of stressful situations did you notice?"*
The facilitator writes the key words identified by the group on the flipchart.

The Body and Stress

Participants A continue in their partners' roles.
The facilitator gives them a new instruction: *"Continue in the role. This time, let your body show how stress manifests itself. What does stress look like in the body?"*
Participants silently explore different postures, gestures, and movements.
After a few moments, the facilitator stops the action again and asks the observers: *"What bodily manifestations of stress did you notice?"*
The responses are written on the flipchart.

After completing this sequence, participants A step out of their roles. The facilitator can support the de-roling process through a simple gesture: shaking the body, saying their own name, and taking a deep breath.

Emotions and Voice

The roles are switched. Participants B enter the action space, while participants A become observers.

The facilitator explains: *"Now it is your turn to step into your partner's role. This time, you may also use words. Give voice to the emotions and thoughts of the person experiencing the stressful situation."*

Participants improvise simultaneously, using both their bodies and their voices to express the emotions and thoughts associated with the situation.

After a few moments, the facilitator says: *"Freeze!"*

The observers are asked: *"What emotions did you notice or hear? What thoughts emerged in these situations?"*

The facilitator writes the relevant responses on the flipchart.

The Shared Journey

Participants B are invited to continue the scene one final time.

The facilitator introduces a new perspective: *"Now you are no longer alone. You are together with other people who are also carrying their own stress. Allow the scene to transform into a shared journey."*

Participants allow the action to develop freely, noticing how posture, movement, and relationships between the characters change when the experience of stress is no longer lived individually.

After a few moments, the facilitator stops the scene and invites the observers to look at the image that has been created: *"If what you are seeing now were a journey, what kind of journey would it be? How would you complete the sentence: 'It is a journey of...'?"*

The facilitator writes the key words on the flipchart.

At the end, participants B step out of their roles, symbolically returning to their own identities by saying their names, moving their bodies, and taking a conscious breath.

Short Reflection on Role Reversal

Participants come together in a circle to reflect on the experience.

The facilitator may ask: *"What was it like to step into another person's role? What was it like to see your own story represented by someone else? What did you notice or understand differently when you viewed the experience from another perspective?"*

3. The Backpack of Resources

The facilitator places a backpack or bag in the centre of the circle and introduces the final stage of the journey: *"When we go through periods of stress, we do not only need to understand what is happening to us. We also need resources that can help us continue our journey."*

Participants are invited to imagine that they are holding in their hands a resource they would need in a stressful situation. This could be, for example, calm, courage, strength, hope, support, patience, trust, healthy boundaries, or any other resource that is important to them.

One by one, each participant names the resource they are symbolically holding and offers it to the person next to them.

For example: *"I am holding calm in my hands, and I offer it to you."*

The person receiving the resource symbolically accepts it and then offers their own resource to the next participant.

Once the circle is complete, the facilitator emphasises: *"The resource you were able to offer to another person also exists, in some form, within you. What you offer to someone else can also become a gift to yourself."*

To close this part of the activity, participants form a circle and bring their fingertips or hands towards the centre. One by one, each person says their name, while the group imagines that all the resources, experiences, and energy created together are symbolically placed inside the backpack in the centre of the circle.

The backpack thus becomes a symbol of the personal and collective resources that participants can take with them on their own "journeys" through difficult situations.

Reflection

At the end, participants remain in the circle and are invited to look at the entire experience as a journey that began with identifying stress, continued through the body, emotions, and the perspective of another person, and ended with the discovery of personal and relational resources.

The facilitator may ask:

- What surprised you during this activity?
- What did you discover about the way you experience stress?
- What did you notice about the connection between stressful situations, your body, thoughts, and emotions?
- What was it like to see your own experience represented by another person?
- What did you discover when you stepped into your partner's role?
- What changed when the individual experience became a "shared journey"?
- What personal resources did you identify?
- What resources can you receive through your relationships with others?
- What could you use from this experience in a future moment of stress?
- What are you taking with you from today's journey?

The facilitator concludes by emphasising that stress can be experienced differently by each person and can manifest itself through different situations, thoughts, emotions, and bodily reactions. As we become more aware of these manifestations, we can more easily identify what we need in order to regulate ourselves and cope with difficult situations. At the same time, the journey through stress does not always have to be a solitary one: empathy, listening, connection, and support from others can become important resources alongside our own inner resources.

THE CLOAK OF INVISIBILITY

Duration: 60 minutes

Participants: 8 participants, divided into 2 groups of 4

Materials needed: puzzle letters, a scarf representing the "Cloak of Invisibility", blankets, speaker, and background music

Objectives:

- Increase self-awareness by exploring how participants perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others.
- Identify and value personal strengths and resources through positive feedback received from the group.
- Develop empathy and the ability to notice and appreciate the strengths of others.
- Strengthen group cohesion and the sense of belonging through experiences based on cooperation, trust, and mutual appreciation.
- Develop nonverbal communication and the ability to express oneself beyond language barriers.
- Create a safe space in which participants can give and receive positive and authentic feedback.

Activity Description:

Warm-up

The facilitator spreads several puzzle letters on the floor and invites participants to move around and observe them. Each participant is invited to choose a letter that has a personal meaning for them. It may be the first letter of their name or the first letter of a word that expresses how they are feeling at that moment.

The facilitator may say: *"Look at the letters and choose one that represents you at this moment. It may be the first letter of your name or the beginning of a word that says something about how you are feeling right now."*

Once everyone has chosen a letter, the facilitator starts the music and invites participants to move freely around the space while carrying their letter with them. When the music stops, each

participant thinks of a word beginning with their chosen letter and expresses it through a posture, gesture, or movement, without speaking.

The others observe the nonverbal expression. The participant who created the posture then chooses someone from the group and invites them to say what they think the posture expresses or how they imagine that person is feeling at that moment.

The exercise can be repeated several times, giving participants the opportunity to explore different forms of nonverbal expression and to notice the difference between the intention of the person communicating a message and the perception of the person receiving it.

Next, the facilitator gives the group a cooperation challenge. The eight participants must use the letters they have chosen to create a word or a combination of letters that has meaning for the group.

The challenge is that they are not allowed to speak. Participants must find a way to communicate and make decisions using only eye contact, gestures, positioning in the space, and movement.

After completing the task, the facilitator leads a short reflection: *"What was it like to work together without speaking? How did you manage to understand one another? What helped you cooperate? What was more difficult when you could not use words?"*

The facilitator may emphasise that communication and connection do not depend exclusively on verbal language. Eye contact, posture, gestures, attention to others, and the willingness to adapt can all become important forms of communication.

Main Activity

1. The Legend of the Cloak of Invisibility

Participants are invited to sit in a circle. The facilitator introduces the scarf that will be used during the exercise and symbolically presents the "Cloak of Invisibility".

The facilitator may say: *"This is the Cloak of Invisibility. The legend says that when you wear it, you become invisible to the world around you for a few moments, while what is valuable within you becomes more visible to others."*

The facilitator explains that the exercise will give participants the opportunity to listen to how others see them, without needing to respond, explain, or comment.

The focus is exclusively on identifying and expressing strengths, resources, positive behaviours, or contributions that have been observed within the group.

2. Forming the Groups

Participants are divided into two groups of four. To form the groups, they may be assigned numbers from 1 to 8, with the even numbers forming one group and the odd numbers forming the other.

Each group takes turns completing the exercise so that every participant has the opportunity to experience the role of the protagonist.

The facilitator reminds participants of several rules: *"We will only talk about positive things that we have noticed or experienced in relation to this person. We will speak about them in the third person, as if, for a few moments, they could not hear us. We do not interpret, analyse, or give advice. We simply express what we appreciate or what strengths and resources we have noticed."*

3. The Invisibility Ritual

One participant from each group becomes the "protagonist". The participant sits comfortably, and the facilitator places the scarf over their shoulders like a cloak. If the participant feels comfortable, a blanket may also be used to symbolically enhance the experience of withdrawing from the interaction and simply listening.

The facilitator says: *"You are now invisible for a few moments. You do not need to speak, and you do not need to respond to what you hear. Just listen. Allow yourself to hear what others have noticed and valued in you."*

The protagonist remains silent and listens.

4. Speaking Positively About the Other Person

The other three members of the group begin talking about the protagonist in the third person, as if the person were not present. Participants are encouraged to refer to specific things they have noticed during their shared activities.

For example: *"I like the way Maria listens to others. I have noticed that she brings a sense of calm to the group. I like the way she encourages others to participate. I think one of her strengths is having the courage to try new things."*

The facilitator allows enough time for each group member to share at least one positive message.

During this time, the protagonist does not respond or comment. Their role is simply to listen and notice what thoughts, emotions, or reactions arise as they hear how they are perceived by others.

5. The Return

Once the group members have finished, the facilitator symbolically removes the cloak from the protagonist's shoulders and says: *"Welcome back! You are visible again."*

The participant may take a few moments to reflect before speaking.

The facilitator may ask: *"What is it like to return to the group after listening to these messages?"*

The protagonist does not need to respond immediately or comment on every statement they heard.

The exercise continues until every group member has experienced the role of the protagonist and has received the "Cloak of Invisibility".

Reflection

After the exercise is completed, all participants return to the circle.

The facilitator creates a brief moment of silence and invites participants to remember the experience, the messages they received, and the strengths they heard others identify in them.

The reflection may be guided by questions such as:

- What was it like to be "invisible" and hear others talking about you?
- What was it like not to be able to respond or explain, but simply to listen?
- How did you feel when you heard positive things about yourself?

- Was there a strength mentioned by others that you had not easily recognised in yourself before?
- What surprised you the most?
- What was it like to identify and express the strengths of others?
- What did you discover about the way you see other people?
- What did you discover about the way others see you?
- Which strength you heard today would you like to remember more often?

Each participant points to or turns towards someone nearby and tries to recall one of the strengths that was mentioned about that person during the exercise.
The person confirms or adds to it if necessary. The exercise continues until every participant has heard at least one of their strengths repeated.
The facilitator then invites each person to choose, from the messages they heard, one strength they would like to symbolically take with them.

Closing Ritual

The facilitator invites participants to imagine that they are holding the strength they have chosen in their hand.
The facilitator then says: *"Choose one of the strengths you heard today that you would like to take with you. Imagine placing it in your pocket, somewhere you can keep it and return to whenever you need it."*
Participants symbolically make the gesture of placing the strength in their pocket.

The facilitator concludes: *"The cloak now returns to its story, but the strengths that others have seen in you remain. Sometimes, we need the eyes of others to help us see more clearly the resources that already exist within us."*
The activity ends with one final round in the circle, in which each participant may say, in a single word, the strength they have chosen to take with them.

PART II – PSYCHODRAMA TECHNIQUES IN YOUTH WORK

1. DOUBLING

The doubling technique is used to **help a person express their emotions, thoughts, or inner conflicts more clearly**. The "double" is another person from the group (or the facilitator) who stands close to the protagonist and tries to express aloud what the protagonist may be feeling or thinking but is unable to put into words. In other words, the double becomes an "inner voice" of the protagonist.

How does it work?

- The double positions themselves close to the protagonist (sometimes mirroring their posture or tone of voice).
- The double speaks in the first person ("I feel…", "I'm afraid that…").
- The double formulates hypotheses about the protagonist's inner experiences.

Examples of exercises:

The Silent Witness

Participants work in pairs. One participant takes the role of the **Protagonist** and chooses a situation with a moderate emotional intensity that they experienced during that day. They recreate the situation in the working space through gestures, posture, movement and, if necessary, words, as if the situation were happening in the present moment.

The other participant takes the role of the **Mirror**. They carefully observe the scene, paying attention to gestures, posture, movements and tone of voice, without intervening, judging or interpreting.
After the enactment, the Mirror takes the Protagonist's place and reproduces as accurately as possible what they observed: the Protagonist's posture, gestures, movements and energy. The

Protagonist watches the scene from the outside, thus having the opportunity to observe their own experience from a different perspective.

The Mirror then expresses how they perceived the Protagonist's emotional state in the situation that was enacted. The Protagonist identifies the emotions they actually experienced and compares their own experience with the Mirror's perception.

The exercise ends with a brief reflection on the similarities and differences between how we experience our own emotions and how they are perceived by others.

The Mirroring Challenge

Participants work in pairs. One participant begins in the role of the **Leader**, while the other takes the role of the **Mirror**.

The Leader performs a movement, gesture or body expression, or says a word or phrase in another language. The Mirror reproduces as accurately as possible what they observe or hear and expresses what they feel and think while taking on the Leader's movements. After listening to the Mirror's reflection, the Leader can add to, confirm or correct what the Mirror has expressed. The roles are then reversed, and the Mirror becomes the Leader.

The Map of Inner Voices

One participant, in the role of the **Protagonist**, shares a current dilemma or situation in their life that causes difficulty, uncertainty or ambivalence. They then identify the different emotions, states or inner parts that emerge when thinking about the situation, such as fear, anger, anxiety, hope or confidence.
For each of these, the Protagonist creates a posture, gesture or movement that represents it and chooses a participant to become the **Double** of that inner part. The participant reproduces the body expression and, from that role, expresses the thoughts, emotions or messages they believe might belong to that part.

After each intervention, the Protagonist responds to the Double's message by confirming, modifying, completing or rejecting it and expressing what more accurately reflects their own experience.

The process continues until the main inner parts or voices that have been identified are represented and have had the opportunity to express themselves. At the end, the Protagonist observes the ensemble of represented inner voices and reflects on how they feel in that moment and on any new perspectives they have discovered in relation to the initial dilemma.

2. MIRRORING

The Mirroring Technique is a technique that allows a person to see themselves "from the outside", through others, in order to become more aware of their own behaviour, the way they express themselves, and how they are perceived. In its classical form used in psychodrama, the protagonist steps out of the scene and observes another person who represents them and reproduces certain aspects of their behaviour.

This technique can also be used as a form of interpersonal feedback: the person chooses one or more group members who "mirror" how they have perceived them in general or during an activity, a day, or a shared experience. They can reflect observed behaviours, attitudes, strengths, or other aspects without interpreting or labelling the person.

Types of Mirrors:

1) Idealizing Mirror: reflects the best and most positive image of the person. It highlights their strengths, potential, and qualities in an encouraging way.

2) Validating Mirror: focuses on recognizing and accepting the person's emotions and experiences. It conveys understanding, acceptance, and empathy.

3) Evaluative Mirror: provides constructive feedback, highlighting both strengths and aspects that can be improved or further developed.

Examples of exercises:

The Mirror of Strengths

Participants work in pairs. One participant becomes the **Protagonist**, while the other takes the role of the **Mirror**. The Protagonist shares a situation in which they felt insecure, anxious, or faced a difficulty.

The Mirror listens carefully and then shares what they observed, focusing on the Protagonist's resources, strengths, and positive qualities that can be identified in the situation described.
The Protagonist listens to the Mirror's perspective and can then confirm, add to, or rephrase what they have heard, identifying the resources they recognize in themselves as well as any other qualities they believe they used in that situation.

The participants then switch roles and repeat the exercise.
The exercise ends with a brief reflection on how another person's perspective can help us identify and appreciate personal resources that may sometimes be difficult to recognize on our own.

I See You

The activity takes place at the end of a working day or after a series of group activities. One participant, in the role of the **Protagonist**, chooses two other group members whom they trust. The two participants take turns describing how they perceived the Protagonist during that day, what emotional states they noticed, and what positive aspects, resources, or qualities they observed throughout the activities.
The Protagonist watches and listens to how they are reflected by the others and, at the end, has the opportunity to reflect on what they feel and think after hearing their feedback.

The exercise is repeated so that each participant has the opportunity to be the Protagonist and to see themselves reflected through the perspectives of others.

The Mirror Through Images

Different images are placed on the floor. Participants work in pairs, and each person chooses an image that they feel represents their partner, based on how they perceived them during the activity, throughout the day, or within the group.

Taking turns, each participant gives the chosen image to their partner and explains why they selected it, offering direct feedback: **"I chose this image for you because today I saw you as…"**. The person receiving the feedback listens and, at the end, can express how they felt and what this "reflection" meant to them.

3. ROLE REVERSAL

Role reversal allows young people to explore different situations without the pressure they may experience in real life. By acting out different scenarios (for example, introducing themselves, expressing an opinion, or dealing with a conflict), participants can practise different ways of responding in a controlled environment, where mistakes are accepted and even encouraged as part of the learning process.

It contributes to **emotional expression and awareness**. Young people experiencing anxiety often find it difficult to express what they feel or think. By taking on different roles, they can externalize these emotions more easily, sometimes speaking "from the role" rather than as themselves, which can provide a greater sense of safety.
It also **develops empathy and understanding within the group**. When participants take on different roles, they begin to understand different perspectives. This process can help reduce judgement and increase mutual understanding and support within the group.

Examples of exercises:

Get to Know Me

Participants form a group of approximately 10 people who are meeting for the first time. They move freely around the space and are encouraged to make eye contact with one another. At the facilitator's signal, each participant chooses someone nearby, thus forming pairs.

Participants then walk together, paying attention to their partner's body language, expressions, style, attitude, and way of interacting. After a period of observation, each participant takes on their partner's role, one at a time, and introduces themselves in the first person, based on the first impression they have formed of their partner.

The partner listens without intervening and can afterwards confirm, correct, or add to what has been presented. At the end, participants step out of the role through body movement and symbolically return to their own identity.

Mirror Me

Participants are divided into two groups of four, working simultaneously in different areas of the space. Each group receives an imaginary scenario to enact, for example, meeting an alien who is unfamiliar with human behaviour.

Within each group, participants take on the role of another group member, trying to represent them as they perceive them: their personality, attitude, posture, gestures, movements, way of speaking, and way of interacting. Thus, participant A takes on the role of B, B takes on the role of C, C takes on the role of D, and D takes on the role of A.

From their assumed roles, participants develop the proposed scene together, interacting spontaneously while maintaining, as much as possible, the characteristics of the person they are representing.

At the end, participants step out of their roles and reflect on the experience: what it was like to see themselves represented by another person, which aspects they recognized in the other person's representation, what surprised them, and what it was like to take on the role of another group member.

Dialogue with Anxiety

An empty chair is placed in the centre of the space, and participants are invited to imagine that their own anxiety is sitting there. They can give it a form, a presence, or certain characteristics. One at a time, participants who wish to take part sit in front of the chair and enter into a dialogue with their anxiety, expressing thoughts, emotions, fears, frustrations, or anything they would like to communicate to it.

The participant then changes places and sits in the anxiety's chair, taking on its role. From this role, they respond to the messages expressed earlier and explore what anxiety might say, what it is trying to communicate, what it wants, or what it might need.

The participant then returns to their own chair and may continue the dialogue based on what they discovered through the role reversal. At the end, the participant steps out of the role, and the experience is followed by a brief reflection on how they perceive their anxiety after the dialogue and any new perspectives they may have discovered.

4. ROLE PLAY

Role play is a technique used in psychodrama through which participants explore situations, relationships, or experiences by taking on and enacting different roles. They may take on their own role, the role of another person, or a symbolic role, recreating real or imaginary situations in a safe environment. Unlike simply discussing an experience, role play brings the situation "into action", allowing participants to directly experience thoughts, emotions, behaviours, and ways of relating to others.

In educational and personal development contexts, role play can be used to practise behaviours and skills in a protected environment before applying them in real-life situations. Participants can experiment with different ways of communicating, expressing emotions, setting boundaries, managing conflicts, or dealing with challenging situations.

Role play differs from role reversal mainly in its purpose and in the way the role change takes place. In role play, participants take on a role in order to explore or practise a particular situation, without necessarily assuming the role of a specific person with whom they have a relationship. For example, a young person might play the role of a student who has to express their opinion in front of a group. In role reversal, the protagonist specifically exchanges places and roles with another person or with a significant element from their scene and attempts to perceive and respond to the situation from that position.

Examples of exercises:

The Two Sides of Me

Each participant receives a card containing two opposite characteristics, one on each side. Participants look at the two characteristics and intuitively choose the side they feel represents them best at that moment.

Participants then form groups of four. In the first stage, each participant takes on the role of the side representing their chosen characteristic. From these roles, the group members spontaneously create a short scene and interact with one another. There is no predetermined scenario; participants are encouraged to use their voice, movement, gestures, and interaction to express that particular side as authentically as possible.

In the second stage, participants turn their cards over and take on the role representing the opposite characteristic. The group creates a new scene, this time without using words. Participants express this side exclusively through posture, facial expressions, gestures, movement, and non-verbal interaction.

At the end, participants step out of their roles and reflect on the experience: Which of the two sides was easier to access and express? Which was more difficult? How did they feel in each

role? What did they discover about themselves? How did their interaction with others change depending on the side they brought into the scene?

Understanding Anxiety: Roles and Counter-Roles

Participants are divided into two groups, A and B, and form pairs consisting of one member from each group. Each pair receives a card describing a situation that may generate anxiety: speaking in front of a large group, meeting someone for the first time, completing a task under pressure, or ordering something in a restaurant.

In the first stage, participants from Group A take on the role of a person experiencing anxiety in the given situation, while participants from Group B take on the corresponding **counter-role**: members of the audience, the person being met for the first time, the person requesting the task, or the waiter.

Participants spontaneously develop the situation, expressing through words, gestures, posture, movement, and interaction whatever emerges in the role, while paying attention to their own reactions, emotions, and behaviours.

The roles are then switched so that each participant has the opportunity to experience both the role of the person experiencing anxiety and the counter-role within that situation.

At the end, participants step out of their roles and reflect on the experience: How did they feel in each of the two roles? What did they notice in their body, emotions, and behaviour? Which role was easier or more difficult to experience? Each participant then describes their experience using one word for each of the two roles.

From the Familiar Role to the Unfamiliar Role

Cards featuring different roles/archetypes are placed on the floor. Participants form groups of six.

Stage 1 – The Familiar Role: Each participant chooses a role they know, have experienced before, or identify with. Based on the chosen roles, the group creates and presents an improvised/spontaneous story.

Stage 2 – The Unfamiliar Role: Participants then choose a role that is opposite to their usual way of being or a role they have never experienced before. The group creates a new improvised story in which participants explore new behaviours, attitudes, and ways of responding.

At the end, participants reflect on the two experiences: How did I feel in each role? What was different? What strengths did I discover in the new role? What would I like to take from this role and integrate into my own behaviour?

5. THE EMPTY CHAIR

The technique involves placing an empty chair in front of the participant and inviting them to imagine that a significant person or element is sitting there. This could be:

- **their anxiety**;
- **a person with whom they have a difficult relationship** (for example, a peer, teacher, or parent);
- **a part of themselves** (for example, the "confident self" as opposed to the "anxious self").

The participant is then invited to address the empty chair, expressing their thoughts and emotions.

Examples of exercises:

The Friendship Chair

Two chairs are placed facing each other. Participants imagine that Andrei is sitting on the empty chair. Andrei is a boy who has recently joined the school and would like to make friends, but he is shy and does not know how to approach others.

One at a time, participants sit on the chair facing Andrei and share a message that they believe could help, encourage, or make him feel better and more accepted in the new group.
After delivering the message, each participant is invited to reflect on how they think Andrei might feel after hearing it, as well as on their own feelings after having the opportunity to offer him support.

The Cups of Emotions and the Empty Chair

Several cups are placed around the working space, each associated with a different emotion. Participants move among them and think about memories, thoughts, people, or situations they associate with each emotion. Each idea is written on a small piece of paper and placed in the corresponding cup.

Participants then choose a note from any of the cups and read it. Those who wish can explore the situation described using the Empty Chair Technique.

Two chairs are placed facing each other. One represents the participant, while the other may represent the emotion associated with the situation, a person involved, or a significant inner voice. The participant delivers a message to the emotion, person, or inner voice.
After delivering the message, the participant expresses what they are thinking and describes how they feel at that moment.

If the participant changes chairs and takes on the role of the emotion, person, or inner voice, responding from that perspective, the Role Reversal Technique is being used. In this case, the

participant may switch roles and chairs several times, gradually developing a dialogue between the two perspectives. At the end, the participant returns to their own role and reflects on the emotions they experienced, how they perceived the situation from different perspectives, and any new insights they may have discovered.

The Words I Never Said

The participant is invited to think of a person with whom they experience fear, insecurity, or difficulty expressing their thoughts and emotions. They imagine that this person is sitting on the empty chair in front of them and express what they were unable to say in a real-life situation.

The facilitator can support the participant's expression with questions such as: "What would you have liked to say to them?", "What do you need them to know about you?", "What would you have liked to do differently?" or "What would you need to ask them for?" At the end, the participant reflects on how it felt to express these thoughts and feelings and on what they might take from this experience and use in a future situation.

6. FUTURE PROJECTION

Future Projection is an experiential technique used in psychodrama in which participants are invited to imagine and enact a situation that could take place in the future. Rather than simply talking about what they hope for, fear, or anticipate, they create and experience the scene "as if" it were happening in the present. The situation may involve achieving a goal, overcoming a difficulty, making a decision, having an important conversation, or imagining what their life might be like after a certain period of time. Through roles, space, and action, the imagined future becomes more concrete and can be explored from different perspectives.

The technique provides a safe space for exploring expectations, fears, resources, and possible ways of responding before the situation occurs in real life. Participants can experiment with different scenarios, practise responses, and identify the personal resources or support they may need to cope with a future situation. Future Projection can therefore help clarify goals, increase

self-efficacy, foster hope, and identify concrete steps that can be taken in the present to move towards the desired future.

Examples of exercises:

Meeting an Important Future Decision

The Protagonist is invited to choose an important decision they are currently facing and identify two possible options. Two directions are marked out in the working space, each representing one of the two possible paths.

The Protagonist steps, in turn, into each of the two possible futures and explores what their life might be like if they followed that path. The other participants may become **auxiliary egos**, taking on the roles of significant people, possible consequences, emotions, or inner voices associated with each choice.

While exploring each path, the Protagonist pays attention to changes in posture, movement, tone of voice, emotions, and bodily sensations, noticing the differences between the two experiences.
After exploring both possibilities, the Protagonist symbolically returns to the present and reflects on what they have discovered: what emotions and bodily reactions emerged along each path, what values or needs became more visible, and what inner conflicts came to the surface.

My Future Self

Participants are invited to close their eyes and imagine themselves at a point in the future, for example five years from now, when they feel confident, fulfilled, and balanced.
They imagine this moment as concretely as possible: where they are, what their life looks like, what they are doing, how they feel, what they have achieved, and what is important to them in that future.

After the individual exploration, participants return to the present and share, in pairs or small groups, the image of the future they have created. They then identify concrete steps, resources, or actions that could help them move towards that future.

At the end, participants reflect on the aspects of the experience that gave them hope, confidence, or motivation, and identify one first step they can take in the present.

The Future That Chose You

Participants are invited to imagine a familiar and peaceful place where they are sitting with a cup of tea or coffee in front of them. They notice the surroundings, the atmosphere, and their own body, remaining in this image for a few moments.

At some point, a character from the future appears in this space. This character does not represent a future they have consciously chosen, but rather a future that has "chosen" them. The character may represent their future self, a relationship, a role, or a possible direction in life that has become a reality.

Participants observe the arrival of this character and enter into an imaginary encounter with them, allowing gestures, posture, emotions, and any dialogue to emerge spontaneously. They can explore what the character communicates to them, what the character recognises in them, and what connection exists between the present and the future being represented.

Participants then return to the initial image of the cup and reflect on the experience: what that future wanted from them, what it recognised in them, and what message, emotion, or image remained significant after the encounter.

At the end, participants step out of the imagined scene and briefly share with the group whatever they would like to take with them from the experience.

7. CONCRETIZATION

Concretization is a technique used in psychodrama that makes **inner experiences** (thoughts, emotions, and fears) **visible and tangible** by expressing them through objects, movement, space, or roles.

Participants are invited to "give form" to an abstract element, such as anxiety, by:

- creating a scene or a sculpture using their bodies;
- using objects or props to represent thoughts and emotions;
- positioning people in the space to illustrate relationships or inner conflicts.

Examples of exercises:

The Magic Machine

In the first stage, participants are invited to imagine a useful but funny or absurd object, for example, an umbrella that only works when it is not raining. This stage aims to stimulate spontaneity and creativity.

Participants are then presented with different situations that may cause difficulty or discomfort, such as someone who overthinks before speaking or someone who loses their train of thought when they have to speak in public.

Participants form groups and work together to build an imaginary machine that can "solve" one of the proposed situations in a creative, exaggerated, or humorous way. Each participant becomes a component of the machine—for example, a button, an engine, a sensor, or another part—and gives it a posture, gesture, movement, and, optionally, a sound.

The machine is then activated through the simultaneous actions of all its components and may include imaginary functions such as an "unlimited confidence button" or a "fear-to-confidence transformer". Each group presents its machine to the others, explaining the problem it "solves" and demonstrating how it works.

At the end, participants reflect on which symbolic elements of the machine might have a real-life equivalent: what resources, strategies, or behaviours could serve a similar function in everyday life, and what they could adapt or apply in real situations.

Frozen Realities

Participants are divided into groups of 4–5. Each group chooses or is given a situation relevant to teenagers' lives, such as peer pressure, exclusion, conflict between friends, support from someone close to them, or difficulties arising from social media interactions.
Each group creates a collective sculpture—a frozen image representing the chosen situation. All group members must be part of the sculpture, using posture, body position, facial expressions, distance from others, and different levels in the space. The sculpture is created without verbal communication.

The groups present their sculptures one at a time, holding the image still. The other participants observe and describe what they see, trying to identify the situation being represented, the relationships between the characters, and the emotions that may be present.

The sculpture can then be activated, and the characters may express what they are experiencing in their respective roles through a word, a short sentence, a gesture, or a movement. The group may also explore how the image could be transformed to represent a more positive situation in which support, communication, safety, or other resources are present.

At the end, participants step out of their roles and reflect on the experience, the different perspectives they identified, and the elements that can contribute to transforming a difficult situation.

Collective Collage

Participants are provided with magazines, images, photographs, sheets of paper, scissors, and glue and are invited to create an individual collage using images they feel best represent them at that moment.

After completing the collage, each participant gives it a title that expresses a personal need they are experiencing at that time. One at a time, participants present their collages to the group and share, as much as they feel comfortable, the meaning of the images and the title they have chosen.

All the collages are then brought together on a wall or another shared surface, creating a collective collage that reflects the diversity of experiences and needs within the group.

At the end, participants look at the collective work together, while the titles of the individual collages are read aloud. The group can observe similarities, differences, and any shared needs that become visible through the collective work.