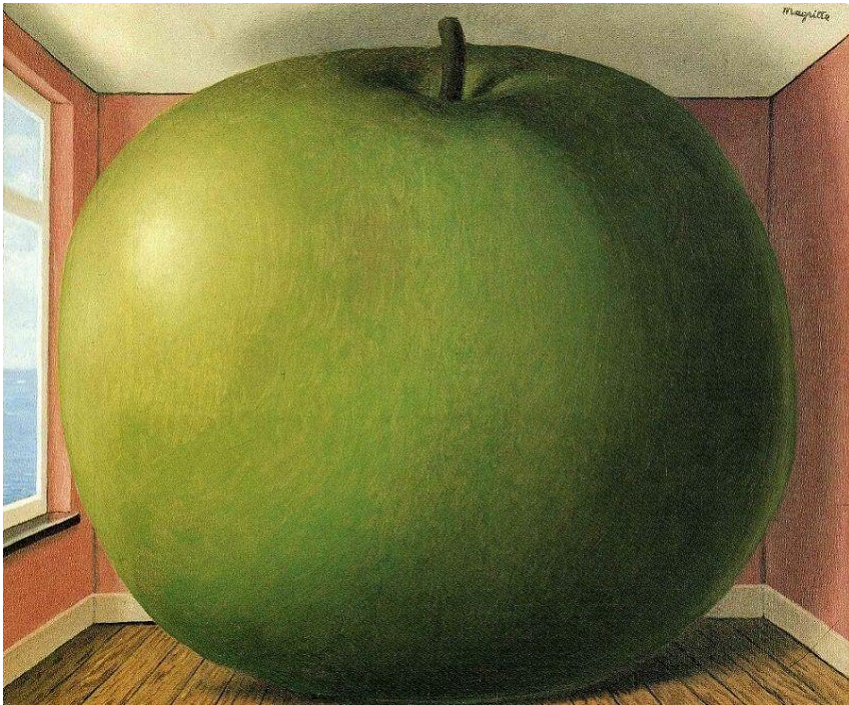# How am I… 'thinking'?

The quality of my Attention
&
my 'Thinking – Feeling – Doing'

The Listening Room, Rene Magritte

**Practices for Thinking Development, Attention Enhancement
in the Present Experience and the Emerging Act**

**Innovative Program
For the 5th – 6th grade, Junior High school and High School**

Chrissanna Diamanti

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Title: "How am I… 'thinking'? The quality of my Attention and my 'Thinking – Feeling – Doing'"

Author: Chrissanna Diamanti

Editing in English: Evangelia Pappa

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The False Mirror, *(Courtesy of www.ReneMagritte.org)*

The Listening Room, *(Courtesy of www.ReneMagritte.org)*

The Beautiful Relations
The Blank Signature
The Human Condition
The Large Family

Email: chrissanna14@yahoo.gr

Website: https://4dim-ermoup.kyk.sch.gr

January 2024

"Energy is only present in the present moment; the change is only happening in the present moment.
Big change is a number of mini changes in the present moment."

To my mother

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The False Mirror, Rene Magritte

The innovative program "How am I thinking?" is a mind-awareness journey using tools, methods and reflection practices. It focuses on cultivating the quality of ones' thinking, attention and ability of coherent action in relation to the conscious and unconscious constant data flow.

It is part of a broader approach to the way we live, relate, create culture and focus our attention.

For a deeper understanding of the importance of the "quality of attention we develop" and its significance in how we act and co-create collectively through groups, systems, organizations, institutions, etc., as well as how individuals and structures evolve and solve problems, a brief reference to the "Theory U" –a process theory for activating awareness-based collective action for Systemic Social Transformation by Otto Scharmer, Senior Lecturer in MIT University– is provided at the end of the chapter.

Main Objectives of the Program

Students will be able to:

– Cultivate metacognition[1] and attention management skills, "Pay attention to my attention" as Otto Scharmer[2] says.

– Cultivate skills of observing and having a total awareness of self: their thoughts, feelings and physical strength/disposition for action in everyday life.

– Acquire routines of observing their thoughts, feelings and actions, of "opening" conscious conversation with their inner self, "inner space", and of giving solutions to issues of concern.

– Understand the impact that long and mindless exposure to media (television, internet, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, videogames, Netflix, TikTok, etc.) has on habits, beliefs, ideas, perspectives and the way they choose to think, feel and live.

– Examining supportive and non-supportive influence, "peer pressure" and practices of self-empowerment and self-regulation.

– Recognize the importance of the cultivation of all their potential (Multiple Intelligence Theory, Howard Gardner) –with activities such as sport, music, literature, contact with nature, physical movement, singing, dancing, etc.– in the developing quality of thinking, attention and personal growth.

– Be able to put it into practice after the completion of the program: continuity process, creation of a new habit.

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[1]Flavell, J.H. Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive-developmental inquiry. American Psychologist, 34(10), 906-911 (1979).

[2]Otto Scharmer Senior Lecturer in MIT University (more about his work at "The broader picture: "Theory U" by Otto Scharmer)

Content & Structure

In this program participants approach:

- Their way of thinking through Three (3) basic activities concerning thoughts, emotions, actions and attention management.

- Activity 1: "Exploring my Thinking Process: What & How I am thinking"[3]

- Activity 2: "Observing the relationship between Thinking and Feeling"

- Activity 3: "Focusing my attention in the present moment – Thinking – Feeling – Doing"[4]

- Their relation with the digital environment and reference to the impact of the digital environment, on thinking, on attention, on the mood for action and on the overall development of the individual.

- The different types of intelligence of Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory and the relation to personal growth and empowerment.

- Case studies and indicative steps[5] for the implementation of the activities in everyday life.

Also, there are:

- Session Commentaries (useful comments) for the educator on the activities and the tasks that are introduced. The commentaries are used in different ways: as an introductory material, as a stimulus for reflection and feedback discussions and as a comprehension enhancement of the activities. They are mainly given in the form of

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[3]Part of "Thinking map assessment":
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e7977706f259a3ea1d94af0/t/5e84f79ecb070e7b885e8a69/1585772452149/Thinking+map+assess+06_V4.pdf

[4]The 5 senses awareness was presented in Symposium B' Educational Training Stage of I.E.P., 16.10.2020, in Greece, by Dr. Liz Dawes Duraisingh, Principal Investigator at Harvard Graduate School of Education and Co-Director in Out of Eden Learn Program: "Slow down to observe the world carefully".

[5]Adaptation of the Thinking Routine "Chalk talk", Project Zero, Harvard University.

Questions & Answers. They are open to research, rather than a strict theoretical framework. It is recommended that they are studied before each class session.

− Suggested Worksheets and Reflection Sheets in each Session (the use of this material is open to adaptation from the educator according to the needs, the age and the maturity of the participants and the dynamics of the team).

− Indicative Self-Evaluation Sheet for the student and Indicative Student's Evaluation Sheet for the educator.

The tasks are a synthesis of approaches and activities derived from the educational process. The program has been applied and assessed in various schools, around Greece, with excellent results and response from the students and the educators. They are introductory tools of mind skills and attention management for all ages.

Adults –individuals or systems– by applying the activities in practice can meet with their own ways of thinking, deepen and manage personal and collective issues that they might encounter. They can observe the quality of their attention, of their listening skills[6] and the derived actions that they apply to their everyday activities.

The program –which is aimed at pre-adolescents and adolescents who are at a blooming and self-discovering stage– proposes to act, utilize their talents and abilities in a playful, methodical and creative way, thus cultivating their potential, based on Howard Gardner's *"Theory of Multiple Intelligences"*[7]**.**

 A brief report follows.

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[6] 4 Levels of Listening, Otto Scharmer

[7] Gardner H., Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences Basic Books, New York, NY, 2011.Gardner H., Multiple intelligences: New horizons. New York: Basic Books. 2006.

Multiple Intelligence, Example Activities & Thinking Routines[8]

Bodily-kinesthetic Intelligence: Refers to the ability of the individual to control their bodily movements, to use their kinesthetic capacities with great skill, to handle their body –as well as objects– skillfully and accurately, in order to create products for functional and other purposes, for problem solving or for the expression of feelings, ideas, etc. It is developed in engineers, craftsmen, athletes, dancers, pilots, actors, doctors, surgeons, soldiers, etc. **Activities:** sports, dance, constructions, modeling, knitting, jewelry making, movement and expression of all kinds.

Every kind of movement activates the body and the mind, focuses on the action and changes the negative thinking in a fun way. Also, digital media could be used for movement, dance, physical training e.g. via YouTube (active screen time).

Linguistic intelligence: Refers to an individual's ability to think in words, to analyze linguistic information and create spoken and written language. The ability to speak and use language skillfully. Lawyers, writers, great leaders, journalists, etc. show a high level of linguistic intelligence. **Activities**: study of literature and exchange of views on the subject (discovering the world and the author's perspective and narrative), writing a diary, describing thoughts, learning foreign languages, getting to know the linguistic ways of expressing oneself in another culture (e.g. translations of proverbs and songs in a foreign language), rhetoric games, debating between groups, etc.
e.g. Thinking Routines:
"Tug of war" http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Tug%20of%20War_0.pdf

"How Else and Why?"
http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/How%20Else%20and%20Why_3.pdf

Logical-Mathematical intelligence: Refers to an individual's ability to solve problems and engage in deductive thinking as well as productive reasoning. When this intelligence is highly evolved one can understand abstract mathematical logic relationships, develop equations and its proof, calculate and solve. It is developed in mathematicians, geometers, architects, chess players, scientists, researchers, philosophers, etc. **Activities**: solving math/geometry problems, math games, logic games that are fun, e.g. Thinking Routines:

"Hotspots" http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Hotspots_0.pdf
"True for Who?"
http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/True%20for%20Who_0.pdf
"Facts or Fiction"
http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Facts%20or%20Fiction.pdf

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[8]Thinking Routines, Visible Thinking, Project Zero, Harvard University

Musical-Rhythmical intelligence: Refers to an individual's ability and dexterity regarding sounds, melodies, tones, rhythms and the rhythm of music. The ability to produce, reproduce, synthesize and create meaning by composing different patterns of sound. Some related activities are: singing, moving to rhythm, processing musical sound information, quality listening, ability to distinguish, to recognize voices and sounds, etc. It is developed in musicians, singers, composers, conductors, dancers, actors, performers, etc. Activities: learning to play a musical instrument, vocal training, singing, listening to quality music, dancing, rhythm, games to broaden perception based on sounds/songs.

e.g. Thinking Routine:
"Listening: Ten Times Two" http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Listening - Ten Times Two_0.pdf

Naturalistic-intelligence: Refers to the individual's ability to relate to, recognize and classify large numbers of living organisms, animals and plants. It also refers to the ability to care for and function comfortably in nature and in the world of the different living beings and organisms in the ecosystem, of which humanity is only a small part. It is developed in physics and chemistry scientists, agriculturalists, botanists, explorers, environmentalists, entomologists, farmers, fishermen, hunters, etc. Activities: Contact with nature, the land, the sea, the environment, participation in environmental activities, observation of nature, tending to gardens, plants, trees, etc.

e.g. Thinking Routine:

"Looking: Ten Times Two" http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Looking%20-%20Ten%20Times%20Two_0.pdf

Spatial intelligence: Refers to the ability of the individual to perceive space with great accuracy, to manage large-scale and detailed spatial images, volumes, forms. These individuals have a very developed perception of space, orientation and the ability to adapt to different environments. Architects, explorers, sailors, speleologists, sculptors, space explorers are indicative of people with developed spatial intelligence. **Activities:** Games such as hide and seek for young children, exploration in nature or the urban environment, modeling, sculpture, rendering structured form from the amorphous, etc.
e.g. Thinking Routine:
"Slow Complexity Capture – Find, Capture, Explain, Wonder"
http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Slow%20Complexity%20Capture%20-%20Exploring%20Complexity.pdf

Intrapersonal intelligence: Refers to an individual's ability to "know oneself". It is the ability to understand ones' moods, desires, motivations and intentions in the different expressions of ones' life. Developed intrapersonal intelligence is present in philosophers, psychotherapists, sociologists, actors, etc. Activities: Exercises & games that enhance

observing, cultivating and controlling personal thought and action. Tasks to be performed are the 3 activities of the program.

e.g. Thinking Routine:

"**Who am I? Explore, Connect, Identify, Belong**"

http://pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Who%20Am%20I%20-%20Exploring%20Complexity.pdf

Interpersonal intelligence: Refers to the individual's ability to understand and interact effectively with other individuals. To observe and distinguish between the moods, temperament, motivations and intentions of other people. Mediators, diplomats, sociologists, public relations managers, advertisers, leaders, educators, etc., have a high level of interpersonal intelligence. Activities: Observation exercises of interpersonal relations, the art of negotiation, mediation through drama techniques and building group coherence related exercises.

e.g. Thinking Routines:

"**Step Inside: Perceive, Know About, Care About**"

http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Step%20Inside_2.pdf

"**Think Feel Care**"

http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Think%20Feel%20Care_1.pdf

"**Step In - Step Out - Step Back**"

http://www.pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Step%20In%20-%20Step%20Out%20-%20Step%20Back_1.pdf

Existential intelligence: Refers to the human proclivity to ponder the most fundamental questions of existence, the mystery of life, the origin of the world, what happens after death, why do we live? Why do we die? Where do we come from? What is love? Why do we make war? (Harvard Graduate School, 1993). Refers to peoples' ability to see and sense the world from a broader philosophical perspective, to recognize inspiration, to explore the unknown. Philosophers, scientists, theologians, psychologists, therapists, doctors, teachers, meditation instructors, motivational speakers, spiritual leaders, artists, scholars may develop high levels of existential Intelligence. Activities: Contemplation practices, observation exercises of the systemic structures and the interconnected relations in the world, debates about different existential topics referencing viewpoints of different philosophers, etc. [Yet to be explored].

The categories of human intelligence form a unified whole in all people, they are intertwined, of equal importance and reinforce one another. Their distinction is useful because it helps us explore the abilities and processes of the mind (Gardner, 2011).

The broader picture: "Theory U" by Otto Scharmer

"Theory U" presents the broader systemic picture, the need for the development of specific skills by individuals as well as by organizations and systems, the need for action both individually and collectively, and the importance of implementing such programs.

We live in an era where we are co-creating collective outcomes that no one wants: Climate change, Hunger, Poverty, Violence, Terrorism, Destruction of communities, nature, life. The foundations of our social, economic, ecological and spiritual prosperity are under crisis.

The times we live in require new awareness and new collective leadership skills –in every kind of activity of our culture– in order to face the challenges in a more conscious, targeted and strategic way. Developing such skills will enable us to collectively create a future of better opportunities.

<u>Excerpts from the relevant literature[9] in the form of questions and answers are given for better understanding</u>:

How can we transform Collective Systems and Organizations?

To be able to transform the behavior of systems, we need to change the quality of attention that people apply to their actions within those systems, both individually and collectively[10].

How do we achieve this change in the quality of attention?

The quality of the results produced by any system depends on the quality of the awareness from which the people in the system operate. The success of our actions depends not only on what we do or how we do it, but also on the inner part from which we operate. We can

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[9]– Scharmer, Otto, Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges, Berret-Koehler Publishers, Oakland CA, 2016
– Scharmer Otto, Kaeufer Katrin, Leading from the Emerging Future: From Ego-system to Eco-system Economies, San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2013
– Hayashi Arawana, Social Presencing Theater - The Art of Making a True Move, 2021

[10] "Addressing the blind spot of our times" Otto Scharmer - Presence, Otto Scharmer, Senge, Jaworski, Betty Sue Flowers, 2005.

observe what we do and how we do it, but the quality of the inner part from which we operate in the "present" tends to be out of the range of "ordinary" observation, attention and awareness[11].

This insight into the deeper source of reality creation has led Otto Scharmer and his project research team at MIT to an exciting journey of exploring and integrating recent findings in neuroscience, leadership, management, economics, contemplative practices, and complexity research. The essence of their view concerns the power of attention management and the inner space from which we operate.

At its core, any systems' leadership –in our case educational leadership– is concerned with shaping, evolving, and improving the way individuals and groups observe and then respond to a situation, a cognitive object or a relationship.

In practice, to make any change, it is necessary to be able to recognize the structural restrictive patterns of attention and action used by individuals, systems, and organizations.

Why is it important to recognize the attention and action patterns we use? Why does attention to the present matter? What is its relationship to present experience/action?

Experiencing the everyday moments of our lives enriches and nourishes us: watching the moon in the sky, tasting a delicious spring fruit, observing the moment when dusk turns into darkness. These moments fill us with appreciation for life and for the world.

Connected to the present, we feel continuity between ourselves and our environment; we feel coherence and a sense of "peace" even in the midst of the intense confusion, disagreement, stress and difficulty in the world.

We can connect in a simple and direct way to the present moment of our experience, but often the speed of "obligations" and the constant bombardment with events, demands, entertainment and consumption choices distract our attention and keep us stuck in a world of thoughts, views, concerns and habits.

The computer has a default mechanism that automatically reverts to a default option. In a similar way, we revert to all the mental patterns,

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[11]This quality of attention can be reached by Activity 3 "Focusing my Attention in the Present Moment" in combination with Activity 2 and the indicative application steps suggested.

thought patterns and feelings of the past as an automatic response. This seemingly continuous flow of conceptual frameworks and our habitual responses separate us from a direct experience of the world – hence action (Hayashi Arawana, 2021).

Why is not having "direct experience of the world" dysfunctional for individuals and systems?

We believe what we think of our experience as "true". Whether we agree or disagree, whether we like it or not, whether we think it is bad or good, we believe it to be true. The default mechanisms are perceived by the individual as real, setting aside their real experience in the present. Thus, it is usually through the default mechanism that we engage in predicted thought (hence predictable action) rather than thought that arises as a result of present experience (hence emergent action in the present), i.e. we repeat ourselves predictably (as individuals and as systems).

This is a problem when people and systems experience pathology.

What does focus and attention to the experience of the present, "in the now" offer us?

Focusing and paying attention to the details of our experience describe the mind's unlimited capacity to observe, know, manage challenges and solve problems. From this attention, depending on the type of listening, a sense of openness and spaciousness of the mind, what is called panoramic awareness, is highlighted. Concentration is no longer about a limited proprietary or egocentric view (default mechanism), but an open –without criticism and egocentrism– awareness, a way of openly approaching evolving knowledge.

When we connect in a simple and direct way with our experience, we connect with our personal and collective power, as well as with a rich range of possibilities and choices.

In a world of ever-increasing Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) amplified by the various apps and electronic devices –we initially love and then are overwhelmed by them, when we fail to use them with focus, purpose and moderation– attention management is becoming increasingly important.

How is this done in the educational process?

There are two different sources of learning: learning from past experiences and learning from the emerging experiences.

The first source of learning –learning from the past– is well known and well developed.

The second source of learning –learning from the emerging experience of the present moment, the future as it emerges– although it is active in the first stages of human development, often, as we grow old, we lose it. We tend to find security in the structured patterns and not in the explorative process. Thus, this source of learning is considered to be in its infancy and still an innovative process as far as adults and institutions are concerned.

When faced with a moment of crisis, a change, any kind of interaction or action, there are two ways to respond. One is to "shut down", maintain and repeat what we already know (default mechanism). The other is to "open up" and embrace the unknown, the new, with curiosity and interest, connecting with the present that identifies with the future as it emerges.

We call the interaction between these two modes, the interaction between "presence" and "absence". This is something that is "played out" individually, within each and every one of us, but also collectively. Thus, the first action for our growth is to pay attention to our attention.

Experience is not what happens to us. Experience is what we do with what happens to us:

- Do we operate intentionally with direct experience of our world or do we operate unintentionally from the space of our default mechanism?
- When we begin to pay attention to us, when we focus on ourselves, what do we observe?
- And what do we choose to do or not to do with what we observe happening to us?

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Summarizing the short presentation of "Theory U"

True creativity, profound innovation, meaningful cultural renewal and the solving of the collective problems of our culture (environmental disaster, climate crisis, hunger, poverty, violence, terrorism, destruction of communities, nature, life) are based on the same source: the ability to maintain and manage attention, the ability to unify with the object of attention, to stay with it and finally to catch the momentum of inspiration and move with it to bring "the new into reality". When we operate from "absence" it is difficult to provide solutions to the collective problems that concern all of us.

"We cannot solve problems using the same way of thinking we used when we created them."

Albert Einstein
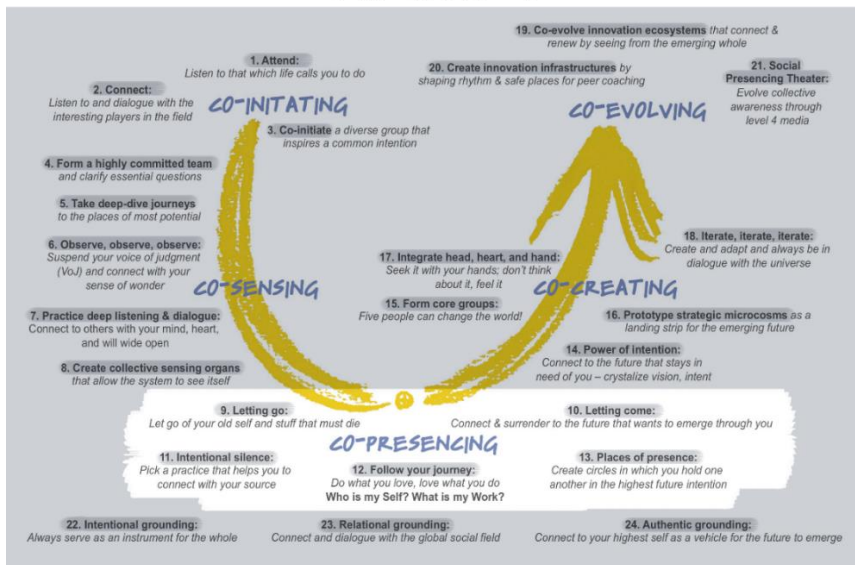
The following program is a path for explorations, a journey of discovery of oneself as well as a group exchange and development.

Each educator can change the number of sessions according to their team's pace, dynamics, the way they implement it, the things that are discovered, exchanged and take place along the way, the time that is spent on different points of interest.

After the first familiarization and its autonomous implementation, parts of the program can be used independently and combined in various programs and activities.

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For individuals and groups or organizations that want to delve deeper into an integrated, structured and applied socio-economic procedure for the management of innovation, the study and implementation of "Theory U - Leading from the future as it emerges" by Otto Scharmer[12] is recommended.

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[12]Otto Scharmer is Professor at the MIT Sloan School of Management and co-founder of the Presencing Institute. He chairs the MIT IDEAS program on innovation and introduced the concept of "Presencing - Learning from the Emerging Future". His book, "The Essentials of Theory U, summarizes the basic principles and applications of attention-based systems change. He has won the Jamieson Award for Teaching Excellence at MIT and the European Leonardo Corporate Learning Award. In 2021 he received the Elevating Humanity Award from Organizational Development Network. He is a member of the UN Learning Advisory Council for the 2030 Agenda, the World Future Council, and the Club of Rome's High-Level 21st Century Transformational Economics Commission.

THE PROGRAM

The Blank Signature, Rene Magritte

Objectives of the Sessions

1st Session – Introductory

- Information on the value and importance of the sessions and the objectives. Giving meaning to all the tasks it includes.
- First encounter with the meaning of "change" in life.
- Expressing their point of view in public and interact as a team.

2nd Session

- Inquiring the concept of change and transition stages in our lives.
- Understanding the different aspects of transition.
- Recognizing the variety of emotions and thoughts that arise from transitions.
- Exploring the supportive networks/relationships in our lives that we derive empowerment from.
- Discussing the variety of approaches and ways of thinking.

3rd Session

- Observing their thoughts. Exploring thinking and perceiving.
- Observing the way they think. Activity 1: "Exploring my Thinking Process: What & How I am thinking".
- Identifying the different qualities of the thoughts they have.

4th Session

- Observing the relationship between thinking and feeling: Activity 2.
- Getting in touch with the power of hypothetical thinking and how it affects emotions.
- And vice versa understanding how the observation of emotions provides information about the quality of thinking and action.

5th Session

- Cultivating the skill to focus in the present moment and observe the connection between 'Thinking–Feeling–Doing': Activity 3.
- Focusing on perceptions of the environment through the 5 senses and developing attention to experience and awareness of the present.

– Understanding that focusing on the present is a tool for cultivating quality thinking leading to original emerging action rather than the action by default which is predictable and repetitive.

6th Session

– Understanding their way of thinking when they choose others or are chosen. The opinion they have for themselves and the others. The peer impact on their decisions.
– Noticing issues of confidence, self-esteem, expression of oneself in relation to "people talking – badmouthing".
– Observation on competence of self-evaluation, ability to take initiatives, communication, social skills and deepening self-observation, self-expression and discerning of "opinions of the different environments". Clarity in the ways of thinking. Overcoming thinking that blocks ones' growth.
– Examining supportive and non-supportive influence – "peer pressure" and practices of self-empowerment and self-regulation.
– Understanding the importance of knowing and promoting their positive characteristics.
– Beginning to discern ways of thinking: "How am I thinking about myself?", "How is this thinking affecting my actions?".

7th Session

– Keep examining supportive and non-supportive influences and ways of thinking.
– Steps of implementation of how observation and presence are used as tools for stress management.
– Example of implementation: The 'challenge of Self-advertising' in the plenary.
– Understanding that choosing and acting in the present moment as a result of clear thinking helps activate all their potential and power, so as to fully express themselves.

8th Session

– "The opinions of others": reference to the impact of digital environments.

- Delving into our relationship with the digital environment (TV, Internet, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Videogames, Netflix, Tiktok, etc.).
- Understanding the role of the digital environment on thinking, attention, mood for action and overall development of the individual.
- Highlighting the importance of the balanced use of the digital environment. Understanding the difference between "Active and Passive Screen time".
- Attention as a tool for cultivating thinking and personal growth.

9th Session

- Recognizing the importance of the cultivation of all the individual's abilities (Multiple Intelligence Theory, Howard Gardner) in the development of thinking. This can be done through activities such as sport, music, literature, contact with nature, movement, singing, dancing, etc.
- Observe their favorite activities and notice, as the attention to the present moment's action increases, how they improve their skills, find solutions, enjoy the challenges, feel enthusiasm, joy, vitality.
- Cultivate their training by encompassing activities they like.

10th Session

- Being aware of the 'Thinking–Feeling–Doing' in the present moment through active listening.
- Highlighting the connection between self-empowerment and active listening through the cultivation of musical intelligence and the joy of music.
- Understanding that action in the present evolves us, helps us to deepen in what we do, broadens our perspective, enables us to find solutions.
- Example of implementation: The challenge 'dancing the song' in the plenary in threesomes (or 'alone' if they dare…).

11th Session

- Time for students' questions and answers and elaborating in previous plenary comments.

- Observing and exchanging students' thoughts about how they deal with their everyday issues and their relationship with the various digital media.
- Implementing attention management strategies upon completing the program, the importance of continuity and creating a new habit.

12th Session–Completing the program

- Concluding each student's experience in this program.
- Reviewing the implemented workshops and evaluating the student's participation.

Useful Tips

It is suggested that educators should try the activities before implementing them in the classroom, as they lead the team to a journey of self-knowledge; a degree of familiarity is needed.

1. **The program starts** with a short briefing on the value of the sessions. It brings together and structures the students' thinking, conveys the importance of the program and gives meaning to all the sessions that will follow. It is recommended that parents are also informed about the program and the pedagogical practices used, which contribute to the cultivation of the diverse and demanding skills of the 21st century.
   This facilitates communication and support for parents and guardians in innovative teaching processes and creates better conditions for the implementation of the program.

2. **During the program** there are many plenary sessions that are recorded on paper and posted on the classroom wall. It is suggested that we have them posted from one session to the next, and for longer if possible. At the last session they should all be posted so that the students can browse and do the "visual review". The "crossword puzzle of names" from the 1st Session can stay posted throughout the school year reinforcing the unity of the group.

3. **Playful enhancement**: Choose –according to the age and team's needs– and implement simple activities or more challenging games for rhythm and coordination. Thus, we engage students into being attentive and fully present in the present moment and the data that the present provides in a playful, challenging and divertive for their age way.

4. **Make their thinking visible–the thinking routine "Tug of War"**: It is suggested that the gist of what students say during each "Tug-of-War" is written down on A3 paper, so they can track their ways of thinking while exploring a subject. Write down the students' answers to be visible for all, so they are able to connect their

thinking and deepen the quality of observation in the following sessions. "The collaborative thinking process of the team as a whole is represented through the 'action' of the tug of war. This important task shows everyone the dynamic interaction of peoples' thoughts in a context of a shared inquiry"[13].

5. **Educator's Challenge**: **Forming and Using the "Tug of War" Thinking Routine**
   "Tug of War" is a very powerful and effective thinking routine for all ages. The initial difficulty is to form the question and the 2 answers from opposite ends (check with the routine description). In this program several examples are proposed, that have been used effectively, but each group has its own demands, so it is suggested that educators:
   – Improvise and initiate questions and ends of the rope accordingly to the group's needs and the educator's personal interest to guide the sharing.
   – Avoid imposing what is "the correct respond" or the educator's perspective upon students.
   – Allow space to listen to the different points of views. Most events are complex, interconnected, multi-faceted and are dealt with on occasion. The point is to broaden their thinking to different perspectives, to state their opinion, to justify, to reason, to debate, to reflect.
   – After everyone has expressed their opinion, encompass the process by bringing more clarity to their opinions, by illuminating certain points of their statements, by asking further questions and/or providing a synthesis with the different perspectives.
   – Awareness is a process not a product. Conclude the session saying: "Nice work, we will keep these reflections of yours and we will explore them further in the next session".

6. **Folder – Portfolio – Notebook**: The worksheets, as well as any other individual material produced, are placed in each student's

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[13]Visible Thinking" - Thinking Routine: "Tug of War"
http://www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/tug-of-war

personal portfolio. The systematic updating of the portfolio has many advantages:

− Focuses the student's thinking.
− Is an important material for self-observation and self-knowledge. Enables feedback and a descriptive account of the degree of understanding and immersion in the subject.
− Is an important material for parents to understand and communicate with their children.

Another option can be the use of a notebook where they write down all the questions and answers that the worksheets ask for, as well as any other reflection, thought, point of view that can arise.

7. **Each student gets** their personal folder or notebook at the end of the program. This is a personal imprint of the implementation period of the program. Everything written in it (descriptions of thoughts and feelings, observations of attention and time management, etc.) changes, as everything does, over time. Something that is "one way" now may be "another way" tomorrow. People grow, change, mature, are educated, deepen their thinking, become aware of things, etc.

Suggestions for an effective time management of the group

8. **Describe** the task and clearly define the start and the end of it. For example, say: "We start… you have 2 minutes… end of exercise".

9. **Time:** Attention to the time management of each session. Discussions are interesting and can get out of hand at times. As uncomfortable as it may be, it is important to adapt accordingly.

10. **Topics of interest**: All the discussions and the use of the thinking routine "Tug of War" open a variety of important issues for discussion. Upon concluding each session, it is suggested that we take notes of the closing responses, discern the qualities of skills that are being cultivated among the students and write down any other observations made during the session. This captures the picture of the current session, and gives an outline of dilemmas,

reflections and considerations which can be used for the following session, depending on the group dynamic.

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Educator's Challenge: **Presence and Active Listening**

1. Being present in the present moment is an "ongoing" process that one needs to practice within oneself first and then within the group.
2. Being an unbiased and attentive "Listener" to the different points of views of the students can lead an educator to broaden ones' own perspective to include the "unexpected" and be able to think of and raise the valid questions that provoke students' thinking and broaden their perspective in turn.
3. Be able to bridge, discern, connect, guide, mediate, reveal and provide a "safe space" for everybody to express, to share and explore.

Thus, be able to utilize the group responses and dynamics to experience the switch into the power of being in the present moment.

Suggestions for descriptive Assessment

Regarding the descriptive assessment[14], although it is not the subject of this manual, an indicative approach is given nonetheless. Thus, in this program, we assess students as follows:

A. <u>INDIVIDUAL WORK</u>

−   The completion of the tasks.
−   The methodical collection and organization of information.
−   Keeping the personal folder.
−   The organization, ability to understand, analyze, critically process and synthesize in a task.

B. <u>COOPERATIVE WORK</u>

−   How to behave, participate and cooperate in the team.

C. <u>ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES FOR EACH SESSION</u>

−   The effectiveness in achieving the objectives, which is reflected in each session by the Worksheets. We have an overall picture from the Portfolio.

D. <u>CULTIVATION OF MIND SKILLS (FROM INDIVIDUAL ACTION, DISCUSSIONS, PLENARY SESSIONS, APPLICATION IN PRACTICE)</u>

−   Information management, argumentation, argument reconstruction, combinational thinking, problem solving.
−   The ability to make ones' thinking visible through justification, explanation, deductive reasoning, inductive thinking.

E. <u>IMPLEMENTATION</u>

−   The ability to implement what has been learned to solve problems or to create something new, original, innovative and how to do so.

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[14]Based to:
– "Assessing Thinking: 5 Continua", Artful Thinking, Harvard Project Zero
– "8 Continua for Thinking", Cultures of Thinking, Harvard Project Zero 2008. Cultures of Thinking Initiative, Ron Ritchhart

At the end of the program the following are given:

− Indicative Student Self-Assessment Sheet.
− Indicative Descriptive Assessment Sheet of the educator for each student.

The questions on the assessment sheets are indicative. It is suggested that they be adapted according to the age group and the objectives set by the educator and the school unit.

Familiarize the students from the onset of the program with the assessment questionnaire we have decided to use, so that they have an idea from the beginning of what they need to pay attention to.

SESSION OUTLINES, COMMENTARIES & WORKSHEETS
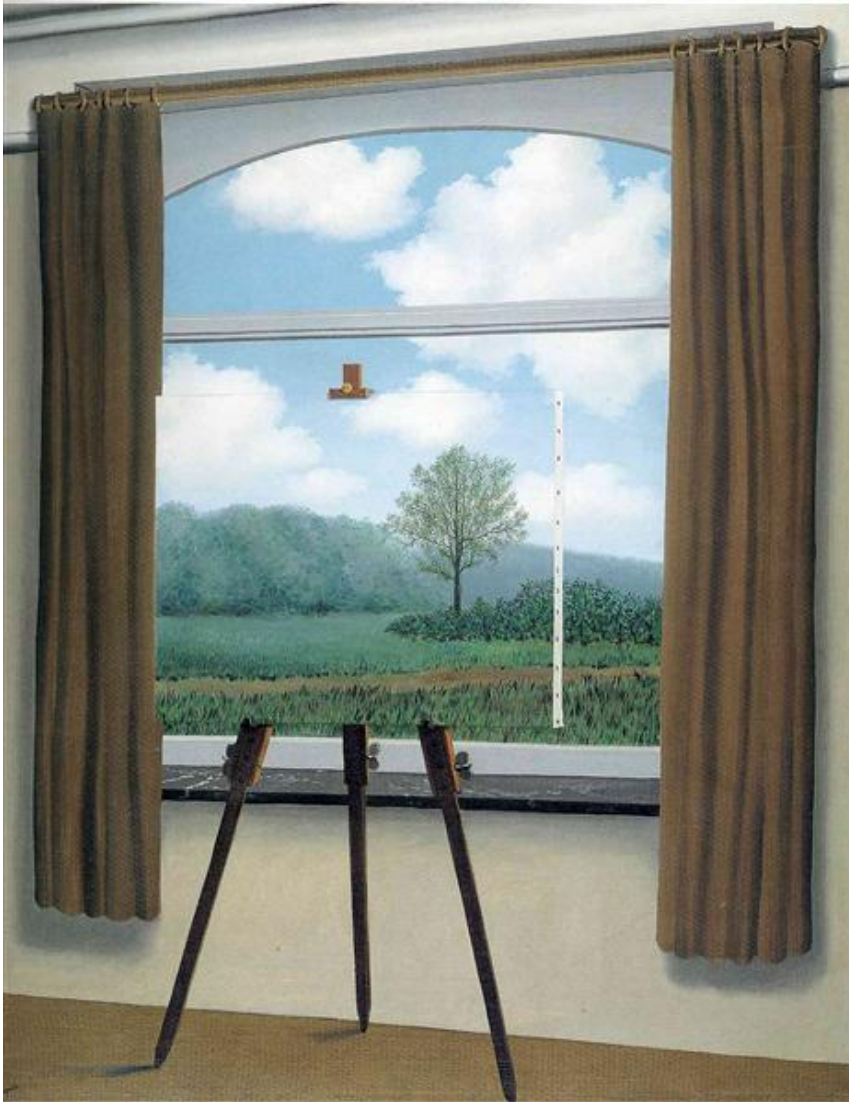
The Human Condition, Rene Magritte

1st SESSION
Introduction – The Program

Description for the educator

OBJECTIVES:

− Information on the value and importance of the sessions and the objectives. Giving meaning to all the tasks it includes.
− Come into contact with the meaning of "change" in life.
− Expressing their point of view in public and interact as a team.

DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction – Briefing on the program and the objectives

Welcome the students and talk about the program[15].

Mention that the experiential tasks that will be implemented in the next sessions not only are they very similar to games, but they are also an opportunity to interact, to get to know themselves and others better, to process thoughts and feelings, to develop skills and to discover new things in an ever-changing life.

2. Tasks

Plenary

Invite students to think about the "ever changing life". What is "change" for them?

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[15]Further analysis can be found in the Commentaries of the 1st Session.

Ask them to give examples of change in their lives and try to focus on positive examples.

NOTE: As a warm up activity in a preliminary stage, do not spent too much time on it, as it is going to be further explored in the following sessions.

Then play the team bonding game: **"The crossword puzzle of names"**[16].

Put an A3 paper on the wall and invite students to make a mosaic of names and form a crossword puzzle. The first one to get up (that may be the educator) writes their name in the center of the paper, whichever way they choose.

At the same time, optionally, they can comment on changes they like and they consider positive or an impression they want to share about the program.

3. Reflection and Closing

We invite students to reflect briefly on the process

A crossword puzzle with all the names of the team is formed. Place it in a central spot in the classroom.

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[16]The game "The crossword of names" of the introductory session is part of the program "We and the others" of the Addiction Prevention and Psychosocial Promotion Center of Eastern Thessaloniki "ELPIDA".

1ˢᵗ Session
About the program and the skills

What is this program we are doing?

It is a program where students actively cultivate 21st century skills in an experiential way.

Why is the program of value? Why do these skills matter?

− These skills are the basis of personal and professional success in the 21st century.
− They enable the individual to cope effectively with the constantly changing and augmenting demands for a thriving personal and professional life.

What are these skills?

An indicative categorization is presented. The skills that are cultivated in the program are **the ones in bold lettering**.

1. Skills of the Mind
− **Strategic thinking**
− **Thinking Routines and Reflection**
− **Problem solving**
− **Case studies**
− Constructions
− Lateral thinking

2. MIT: Technology and Science Skills
− Modeling and simulation skills
− Information literacy (ICT literacy)
− Digital literacy
− Technological literacy
− Media Literacy
− Fluency in e-Government

- Digital Humanities
- Safe navigation on the Internet (dealing with phishing, cyberbullying, etc.)
- **Protection from addictive behaviors with technologies**
- Skills of creating and sharing digital creations
- **Combined digital technology, communication and collaboration skills**
- Skills for analyzing and producing content in print and electronic media
- Skills of interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary use of new technologies

3. Life Skills
- **Self-care**
- **Social Skills**
- **Citizenship**
- **Empathy and sensitivity**
- **Adaptability**
- **Resilience**
- **Responsibility**
- **Initiative**
- **Organizational capacity**
- Programming, Productivity

4. Learning Skills
- **Critical thinking**
- **Communication**
- **Collaboration**
- **Creativity**

1st and 2nd Session
about "Habit, Change, Transitions, Beliefs and Behavior"

Revise the questions of section "The broader picture: Theory U", chapter Introduction:

− *Why is it important to recognize the attention and action patterns we use? Why does attention to the present matter and what is its relationship to present experience/action?*

− *What does focus and attention to the experience of the present, "in the now" offer us?*

− *How is this done in the educational process?*

For the purpose of the program and the age group between 10-18 years old, the understanding of "Habit, Change, Transitions, Beliefs and Behavior" –through conversation in the plenary and presentation of simple examples– focuses on:

− The perpetual change of everything in ones' life – from birth till death.

− The creation of structures, patterns, habits in order to understand and facilitate our reality-as individuals as well as societies.

− The constant breaking of structures, patterns and changing of habits as a developmental stage.

− The continual reception of data and the need for advanced coding, de-coding and new re-coding.

− One major mechanism of life is creating and breaking structures and habits. The construction, deconstruction of patterns, structures, habits and reconstruction of the new happens in every form of life, with different rhythms depending on a variety of factors.

− In people, however, habitual ways of thinking along with hidden emotions of fear of change, often limit the ability to act, to live fully.

− Among the challenges are: the ability to notice the pattern, to discern and cultivate the useful patterns, to discern and transform the distractive ones, to live in a way so that habitual patterns –

thoughts, emotions, actions– do not stop one from fulfilling their potential.

- The steps are: realize it, observe the data input and data flow, discern it and update.

<p style="text-align:center">ᏩᏒᎄᎦ</p>

About the use of Tug of War[17] and the diversity of opinions see INTRODUCTION – "Useful Tips".

Famous quotes by Henry Ford[18] that support creative ways of thinking and emphasize the importance of personal beliefs and behaviors towards something:

- *Don't find fault, find a remedy: anyone can complain.*
- *If you think you "can do it" you are right, if you think you "cannot do it" you are right also. In other words, the quality of action depends on the individual and their way of thinking, feeling, doing and being.*

In some groups the issue of death and loss may also come up. We are prepared to listen, to "hold" the student's feelings and allow space for this. After this sharing we address the student and the plenary and explain that the issue of death and loss is a very important topic and a profound experience in our lives, but this program deals with everyday changes, challenges and ways we can deal with them.

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[17]See INTRODUCTION -"Useful Tips": Make visible their thinking – the thinking routine "Tug of War". http://www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/tug-of-war

[18]Engineer, founder of Ford Motor Company, responsible for transforming the automobile into an innovation for that profoundly shaped the 20th century.

OBJECTIVES:

- Inquiring the concept of change and transition stages in our lives.
- Understanding the different aspects of transition.
- Recognizing the variety of emotions and thoughts that arise from transitions.
- Exploring the supportive networks in our lives that we derive empowerment from.
- Discussing the variety of approaches and ways of thinking.

DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction

Discuss further about change, transition, emotions, sources of strength, advantages, disadvantages, likes, dislikes, solving problems, quality of thinking.

See Commentaries 1st & 2nd Session about "Habits, Change, Transitions, Beliefs and Behavior".

2. Tasks

- **Plenary**
  A. Invite students to explore further

  What does change mean for them? Where do they notice changes in their lives? When and how do we change? How do we feel?

  Give examples of change. They can be big or small changes.

B. Students fill in the worksheet

Describe shortly one or two changes/transitions in their lives.

– When? What changed?
– What feelings did they have? Did they share it with others?

<u>In the Plenary - Next step:</u>

Reflect on the supportive networks in their life and the gifts of change.

– Where do I get strength from? Who supports us on our endless journey of change? <u>Note:</u> Among the usual answers (friends, family, teachers, coaches, my self-changing and empowering self), we emphasize that the focus of this program is on our personal empowerment.
– What do I gain from handling the challenges that changes present to me? What have I learned from these experiences?

Useful tips for the plenary session:

It is suggested that the gist of what students say is written down on A3 paper, by the educator, so they can track their ways of thinking while exploring a subject.
While students share their answers the educator writes them down –in a "headline" mode to A3 paper– and posts it so they are visible[19].

Initially write down the "Changes and Emotions"
  1.   Heading "CHANGES"
  2.   Heading "EMOTIONS"
Then
  3.   Heading "SUPPORTIVE NETWORKS"
  4.   Heading "Change and WIN/GAIN"[20]

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[19]Posting their answers in order to be visible is part of the process of the development of their quality of thinking.

[20] See photo 1: example of the way the thinking process is becoming visible on A3 papers in the classroom.

C. **Bridge habits, changes, transitions, experiences and self-empowerment with the different ways of thinking**.

1. Indicative question to initiate the subject: "Have you noticed that one person facing a change or a challenge complains, finds obstacles, procrastinates, while another person finds it interesting and tries to find ways to deal with it?"

2. Use the thinking Routine "Tug of war"[21] and "open" a visible discussion to the different points of view:

   "When dealing with changes and transitions which way of thinking and behaving is beneficial and effective and why?"

   – One end of the tug of war: the way that one **always** finds obstacles, complains about the changes and gets discouraged.
   – The other end: the way that one tries to resolve obstacles **no matter what**.

   The words "always" and "no matter what" are extremes and activate students' thinking and stimulate them to present opinions and examples. Discernment is needed.

3. Reflection and Closing

Each student says a word or a brief comment (1-2 sentences) about how they feel.

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[21]Visible Thinking" - Thinking Routine: "Tug of War"
http://www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/tug-of-war
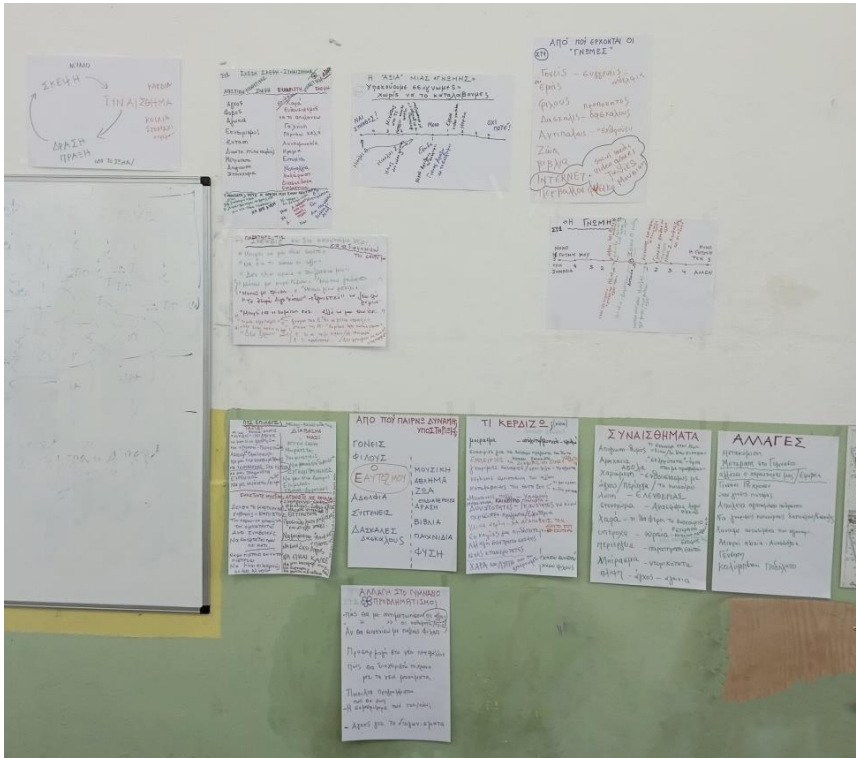
Worksheet 2ⁿᵈ Session
Changes, Thoughts, Emotions,
Personal Empowerment

1. Describe shortly one or two changes – transitions in your lives:

    −   When? What changed?

    −   Notice the thoughts you had

    −   Notice the Emotions you had

    −   Did you share it with others?

2. Where do you get strength from?

3. What have you learned from these experiences?

Name _____

Date _____

3rd SESSION
Exploring my thinking process

Description for the educator

OBJECTIVES:

- Observing their thoughts. Exploring thinking and perceiving.
- Observing the way they think. Activity 1: "Exploring my Thinking Process: What & How I am thinking".
- Identifying the different qualities of the thoughts they have.

Description

1. Introduction

We explore what we are thinking. What thinking is, what thoughts we have, the way we think about different issues.

What does it mean to explore?

- I am being curious.
- I ask questions without being critical of them.
- I don't criticize my answers because they are part of an exploration in progress and can lead to very important new ways of thinking.
- I listen carefully to both questions and answers that are presented.

2. Tasks

- **Exploring thinking and perceiving**

Initiate the exploration and self-observation game with Worksheet A by asking them to think in general about thinking and the way they perceive reality. E.g. do you have any idea what is going on with your thinking? Do you have a sense of what is going on in your mind?

Students fill in Worksheet A:

− What is "thinking" for you?
− What does it mean "to think"? What exactly do we "perceive"?
− In what way do we perceive?
− How and where do we learn?

Instructions for student: "The questions are considered 'open', meaning there is no single correct answer. There is no particular order, answer them in any way you like, spontaneously, without criticism – there is no right or wrong. We explore and play with our answers."

- **Plenary**

Share the answers and write them down on A3 paper.
Utilize student's answers and elaborate with appropriate comments (*see the commentaries of the Session*).

- **Activity 1: "Exploring my Thinking Process: What & How I am thinking"**

− <u>Invite students to</u> observe/track their minds, to notice the thoughts and assumptions they make.

Give a brief example of your own process in the present moment: e.g. "*I am now thinking about the noise I hear, wondering if I have activated the silent mode on my mobile phone, listening to Peter's talking to the person next to him, remembering yesterday's conversation with someone, etc.*" and we mention 5-6 thoughts we noticed we were having at that moment.

− <u>They fill in Worksheet B:</u>
(a) As many thoughts as they can distinguish, without criticizing them, for 2 minutes, and

(b) answer the questions: What kind of thoughts do I have? Are they different? Are they the same? Are they strange? Are they coherent?

− <u>Plenary sharing</u>

The results of their exploration are discussed and particular interest is placed on question (b) of the Worksheet: What do they notice?

Embellish the discussion with appropriate comments, for example: "We notice that what we usually call 'thinking' is a jumble of various qualities, ideas and stimuli, etc." *(see Sessions' Commentaries–Activity 1: "Exploring my Thinking Process: What & How I am ").*

3. Reflection and Closing

Each student reflects on the session:

–   What new ideas did they develop about "thinking"?
–   How did they think before? Have they thought about it?
–   Did they change their mind or form another opinion?

They write them down on the Reflection Sheet[22] (ages 13+).

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[22]The Reflection Sheets are inspired from the thinking Routine: "I used to think…now I think…" https://pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/I Used to Think - Now I Think_1.pdf).

Commentaries after the task

"Exploring: thinking and perceiving"

What do we perceive?

From the moment we are born we are constantly getting information from:

− Our self that is constantly growing and changing,
− the people close to us,
− the world around us,
− nature,
− our environment: external environment − urban landscape − natural landscape − digital environment (TV, internet, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, videogames, Tik-Tok, posters, billboards, commercials, etc.), and
− the way in which we relate to it all.

How do we get the information?

We integrate the information from all the aforementioned sources through the process of perception of our nervous system. It is our perception that feeds us with a vast amount of data and information.

What is the nervous system?

− The human nervous system is an amazing communication system: brain, spinal cord and peripheral communication systems that make up the information system of the human body.
− It is a super-computer, a super-sophisticated structure of networking and communication, data and information flow.
− Access to a part of this information, which the nervous system perceives and manages, is through the 5 senses: sight - hearing - smell - taste - touch.

What is thinking?

− Thinking is the management of different information, ideas, data.

- Thinking is the personal narrative, the personal perspective.
- I am present in my life when I have a good and stable connection with my environment (myself, others, external environment, urban landscape, nature, digital environment, etc.).
- To have a good and stable connection with all of the aforementioned, primarily, I need to have this connection with myself and the way I am thinking.

Commentaries after

Activity 1: "Exploring my Thinking Process: What & How I am thinking"

What do we notice when we observe our thinking?

Notice that what we usually call "thinking" is a jumble of various ideas, descriptions of stimuli and reactions to them. Observing our thoughts is an important tool for our entire life.

It helps us:

- To "sort out" our ideas and reactions.
- To be able to give solutions to issues that concerns us.
- To be able to make choices.
- To have self-awareness: to understand ourselves, what we feel and why.
- To find ways to act and realize our plans or dreams.

Is thinking always a jumble? When is this not true?[23]

When we need to achieve a goal, our thoughts and actions are focused on that action: solving a problem, enjoying a challenging task that may be mathematical, linguistic, musical, motor, communicative, etc.

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[23] See Introduction: "Types of Intelligence, Example Activities &Thinking Routines and Theory U" (why is it important to recognize the attention strategies and action routines we use?')

Indicative examples of challenges:

- − Athletic: the ultimate focus to score a goal, break a record.
- − Music: to play a musical piece on the guitar.
- − Kinesthetic: to carefully and accurately cut out a craft or make a construction.
- − Exploratory: walking and discovering where the unknown road or path leads.
- − Linguistic: arguing for an idea.
- − Mathematical: solving a problem, a riddle, a game.

Moreover, our thoughts are not jumbled together in moments when we think nothing because we live these moments fully in the present. For example, when we enjoy something without thinking: a dive in the sea, a run in the yard, laughing with a friend, enjoying the beauty of a landscape, a sunrise, a sunset...

It is important that our thoughts are not a tangle; to have a clear understanding of where our attention is and the quality of the information and thoughts that accompany it.

Worksheet 3rd Session
Exploring thinking and perceiving

For the Educator: Choose from the following indicative questions for your group.

1. Do you have any idea of what is going on in your thinking? In your mind?

2. What is "thinking" for you?

3. What is "thinking" in general?

4. What does it mean to perceive? What exactly do we perceive?

5. In which ways do we perceive, conceive, sense, experience, learn?

6. How and from where do you think people get information?

Name _____

Date _____

Worksheet 3rd Session
Activity 1
"Exploring my Thinking Process:
What & How I am thinking"

1. I keep track of the thoughts and assumptions I make and write down as many thoughts as I can distinguish: important or unimportant (2').

2. I observe what I have recorded: What kind of thoughts am I having? Are they different? Are they the same? Are they strange? Do they have connotations?

3. I write down my observations.

Name _____

Date _____

Reflecting on Activity 1: Exploring my thinking process

1. What have I notice so far about my thinking process?

2. Do I continue to have the same way of thinking as before; have I inquired about what I am thinking about?

3. What new ideas have I formed?

Name _____

Date _____

4th SESSION
Observing the relationship between thinking and feeling

Description for the educator

OBJECTIVES:

− Observing the relationship between thinking and feeling.
− Get in touch with the power of hypothetical thinking and how it affects emotions.
− And vice versa understanding how the observation of the emotion provides information about the quality of thinking and action.

DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction

Initiate the session with the question: Is there a connection between the way we think and how we feel and vice versa? What do we think? Allow time for students to think about it, maybe give a couple of answers, before doing Activity 2 that provides the experimental process.

2. Tasks

- **Activity 2**: "Observing the relationship between thinking and feeling"

Describe two hypothetical thoughts and ask the students to observe the relationship between thinking and feeling. They observe hypothetical thought 1 and hypothetical thought 2, as well as the feelings that are generated: emotion 1 and emotion 2.
Facilitate the task and invite the students to fill in the Worksheet.

Activity 2: Guidelines

Breathing Instruction: Breathe attentively 2-3 times –give time and respect the breathing process– close your eyes and focus on the two different hypothetical thoughts that you will hear.
Allow some time before starting, describing each hypothetical thought.

Hypothetical Thought 1: "Stressful" content
"Think about being in an environment that is stressful, that you have a lot of homework and you don't have enough time to do it.
Notice how you feel - how your mood is. Describe it by writing it down." (1')

Hypothetical Thought 2: "Pleasant" content
"Think of summertime, you are in a place you like with friends and loved ones, you are carefree, and you have all the time in the world.
Notice how you feel - how your mood is. Describe it by writing it down." (1')

Next step:
See what feelings you recorded for the two hypothetical thoughts and compare:
− Stressful thought - emotion that generated you
− Pleasant thought - emotion that generated you

(This step helps students to recognize the emotion and the quality of thought behind it.)

What is the connection between the thought and the emotion?
Write down your observations.

- **Plenary**

Invite the students to discuss their observations and to comment on what they observe in the relationship between thought and emotion. Do they realize that, usually, thinking creates feeling? Why do they think such an observation might be useful?

Build on the students' responses and elaborate with relative comments, for example:

– I notice that, usually, emotion follows thought:
  Unpleasant thought = unpleasant feeling
  Pleasant thought = pleasant feeling

Important Discussion:

- In this activity are my thoughts real or hypothetical? Are the things I am describing happening now?
- What about my feelings? Are my feelings real, are they happening now?
- My feelings are happening right now and they affect the way I behave and act, either in the case where my thoughts are hypothetical or are real.

– Understanding how I think and react is very important and helps me to solve situations and daily life challenges and tensions.

– If I observe my thinking, I will often find that many of my thoughts are my "personal opinion – idea – hypothesis" about an issue or about myself.

Write down some of the responses on A3 paper.
(See commentaries of the session)

3. Reflection and Closing

Each participant reflects on the activity 2:

- What new insights did they get about the relationship between thinking and feeling?
- How did they use to think before?
- Have they formed a different thought or a different point of view?

They write them down on the Reflection Sheet.

Commentaries 4th Session

Commentaries after Activity 2

"Observing the relationship between thinking and feeling"

What do we observe in the relationship between hypothetical thought and emotion?

We observe that emotion follows thought.

– Unpleasant thought = unpleasant feeling
– Pleasant thought = pleasant feeling

What happens in practice?

Usually, it is the way we think that creates the corresponding feeling.

Example: I think that I won't make it or that I am not good enough at something. This thought affects my mood, my effectiveness, the way I act. It is very likely that if this kind of thinking prevails, I will not act at all.

What is this exercise useful for?

– Understanding how I think in different situations of my life and how I react to them is very important and helps me to solve problems and everyday life issues.
– If I observe my thinking, I will often find out that many of my thoughts are my "subjective idea – opinion" about an issue or myself.
– Once I understand the relationship between this "subjective" way I used to think and the tension I feel now, then I have the option to change it, find a solution and take action.

"Meaning..., if I think I'm not going to make it & I'm not good enough at something, but I think I'm going to make it, will it happen?" *

The objective of the activity 2 is not to change my thinking uncritically, but to observe my thinking so that it is clear, not to be needlessly discouraged or blocked. If there is a cause to this specific way of

thinking, to be able to detect it, to provide solutions to my troubles and difficulties, to change the hypothesis/idea I have and to act creatively (see "Indicative Examples" in the Commentaries of following session).

"Why do I think about myself in this way?"*

In our minds there are different varieties of concepts mixed together:

- Assumptions,
- opinions and beliefs of others,
- patterns of the past,
- images, ideas, emotionally charged messages from the wider environment: digital, electronic, local, etc.

All the above create different impacts on us.

When we start observing our circles of Feeling–Thinking–Doing we are creating better conditions for personal growth and success.

* Students' questions.

1. Listen to Hypothetical Thought 1: observe your feeling and your mood. Use few words to describe it.

2. Listen to Hypothetical Thought 2: observe your feeling and your mood. Use few words to describe it.

3. Observe the connection between the thought and the emotion:

   o   1st thought – emotion that was created in you
   o   2nd thought – emotion that was created in you

What do you notice is happening between thought and emotion? Write down your observations in detail.

Name _____

Date   _____

Reflection Sheet 4th Session

Reflection on Activity 2: "Observing the relationship between thinking and feeling"

1. What have I been thinking so far, i.e.
   – What did I believe was the relationship between thinking and feelings?
   – Have I ever thought about it?

2. What new ideas did I get?

3. Write down other questions, thoughts, reflections that arise.

Name _____

Date _____

5th SESSION
Focusing my Attention in the Present moment: Thinking–Feeling–Doing

Description for the educator

OBJECTIVES:

− Cultivating the skill to focus and observe in the present moment the connection between "Thinking–Feeling–Doing" – Activity 3.
− Focusing on the perceptions of the environment through the 5 senses and developing attention to experience and get information in the present.
− Understanding that focusing on the present is a tool for cultivating quality thinking leading to original emerging action rather than the action by default which is predictable and repetitive.

DESCRIPTION

1. **Introduction – briefing on the tasks and objectives**
   Suggested briefing (13-18 years old):
− In Activity 1 "Exploring my thinking process" we observed that our thoughts are often a jumble of ideas, comments, assumptions about the future or the past.
− In Activity 2 "Observing the relationship between thinking and feelings" we realized that while our thoughts are often only hypotheses and images we make up –about the future or the past, fears, anxiety, stress, beautiful dreams or wishes, etc.– they create feelings in the present moment as if they were real!
− But they are mere presuppositions! In Activity 2 you listened to the hypothetical thought I described. How the thoughts in your mind changed: By focusing, choosing and describing the specific thought and picturing the detail of the image in the mind.
− We highlight that our feelings change depending on the thoughts and assumptions we make.

In this Session:

− We will notice our focus on the present moment: Thinking–Feeling and Doing.
− We will discuss whether our attention to the present moment matters and what it is that really enables us to make our dreams come true. We will highlight the importance of the power of doing. We will illustrate that creative action is a matter of doing in the present moment.

2. Tasks

- **Preparation: Introducing the importance of breathing in any activity:**

Invite students to start observing their breathing with their inner vision and their **intention** –use the word "will" for younger students– and breathe 2-3 times attentively.

Invite them to notice the movement in their belly, chest and head area as they breathe in and out – inhale and exhale.

- **Activity 3: "Focusing my Attention in the Present moment "Thinking – Feeling – Doing".**

Brief description of the process:

– Students reflect on question A (Pre-activity: 2').
– Activity 3 takes place.
– They compare the initial answer A (pre-activity) with the one at the end of Activity 3 – question B (post-activity). Then they compare A and B, and answer the question C.

Each step lasts 1-3' – Total activity time is about 12-15'.
This activity is done in seconds when it is practiced as an everyday awareness routine.

Question A: Pre-activity observation (1΄)

"What do you think? How focused on the present moment are you right now?" Give a number from 1 to 7.

Instructions: Observe yourself and the environment. Breathe, feel, think, observe and give a number from 1-7 for how focused on the present moment you think you are.

Indicative:

1 = I feel absent; my thoughts are "elsewhere".

4 = I am half here/half there, I am thinking about other things as well

7 = I feel totally present; I am totally focused on what is happening right here and now.

Activity 3 (duration: 12'-15')

Instructions

Invite students on a total self-awareness journey:

After the description of each step, fill in your observation on the Worksheet. The time period for each step is short for the answer to be simple and spontaneous.

1. Observing my thinking and my state of mind (1-2')

- Mind: What are you thinking?

(Observe and write down 1-2 thoughts at that moment)

- How is your state of mind?

- Describe in 1-3 words: e.g. clear, sense of space, depth perception, dizzy, numb, heavy, not feeling anything, tightened, tensed, confused, lucid, feels wide open, etc.

- Give a number 1-7, e.g. 1 = my mind is very heavy and tight, 7 = my mind is "clear", I have great lucidity and clear thinking.

2. Observing my feelings (1-2΄)

What are your emotions? How do you feel? Can you observe how your heart or stomach feels?

- Describe it in 1-3 words: joy, excitement, calmness, peace, silence, nothing, tightness, numbness, anxiety, worry, stress etc.

- Give a number from 1-7, e.g. 1 = tightness, numbness, worries, feel nothing, 7 = feel wonderful, euphoria, excitement, enthusiasm.

---

3. Observing my body/doing (1-2')

How do you feel your physical condition? Do you notice how you feel your desire to do things?

- Describe it in 1-3 words: high vitality, active and strong, brisk, liveliness, average, tired, exhausted, bored, etc.
- Write a number from 1-7, e.g. 1 = tired, bored, without desire to do anything 7= brisk, strong, full of power and desire for action.

4. Exploring the 5 senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste (5')

We explore the environment with our 5 senses.

1. Sight: we expand our range of vision to 180° and activate our peripheral vision. We notice details around us that we hadn't noticed before... (30''- 60'').
2. Hearing: we connect with our sense of hearing. We notice even the slightest sound (chair pushing, coughing, motorbike...) (30''- 60'').
3. Smell: we connect with the sense of smell. We notice the different smells and scents (air, wood, flowers, food, beverage, our scent, the scent of the person next to us...) (30''- 60'').
4. Touch: we connect with the sense of touch (we feel the contact with our clothes, with the seat, the desk, our feet touching the floor, the ground...) - we turn our palms - do we feel the air on our skin? (30''- 60'').
5. Taste: we connect with the sense of taste. We observe how our mouth tastes (dry, watery, taste sweet, sour, bitter...) (30''- 60'').

Streamlining Question B: Post-activity (1')

– How do you perceive your presence at this specific time, now? How well informed are you about what is happening in your present now (inside and outside of you)?

Rate the post-activity 3 level of presence from 1-7.

Question C: Comparing the two answers about your presence –A and B– what do you notice? (1')

Write down remarks: compare the level of presence before and after focusing on thinking/mind – feeling/emotions – doing/body and the 5 senses.

- **Plenary**

Ask students to share their observations. Why do they think such an activity might be useful?

Use the students' answers and elaborate on them with relevant commentaries, such as: We notice, then, that we often are absorbed in our thoughts and are not as "present" as we think.

Reflection:
- Why do you think this is happening?
- What do you think about the importance to be fully present and aware of our thinking, feeling, doing?
- Why is it important to pay attention to what we are thinking?

The above are vital questions and will be addressed again in the following sessions. See commentaries of the Session.
Responses to question C and relative comments are posted on A3 paper.

3. Reflection and Closing

- What new ideas did they get about focusing on the present?
- How did they think before?
- Notice other questions, thoughts, reflections that arise.

Commentaries after Activity 3

"Focusing my attention in the present moment:

Thinking – Feeling – Doing"

As well as being in the 'presence mode' with the 5 senses

What do we observe relating to the two qualities of attention (pre and post-activity)?

Students share their experiences.

Activity 3 usually increases attention, gives more information about the present moment and overall awareness about the thought, emotion and body.

Why am I interested in observing what is happening in the mind/thinking – emotion/feeling – body/doing as a whole? (Activities 1-2-3)

If we want to improve a thought/feeling/behavior, first we need to observe it: "to know what is happening to us", not to be "hypnotized", lost in "thoughts" or "screens" and "realities" that we do not see, do not hear, do not communicate with what is going on around us, in our "reality".

See the quoted answers in the Introduction – Theory U to the questions:

–   Why is it important to recognize the patterns of attention and action we use?
–   Why does attention in the present matter and what is its relationship to present experience/action?
–   Why is "not having direct experience of our world" dysfunctional for individuals and systems?
–   What does focusing and paying attention to the experience of the present, "in the now", offer us?

Where does monitoring the quality of our thoughts help?

- It enhances the ability to have critical thinking, to discern in all issues.
- It clears emotion, which affects our ability to have healthy relationships and balanced interactions, negotiation and action in our lives.
- It improves our relationship with our body, our overall health and vitality, which affects our "appetite" for action, our behavior in action, our ability in all kinds of activities, and therefore in realizing our dreams.

Question A: Pre-activity observation (1′)

"What do you think? How focused on the present moment are you right now?". Give a number from 1 to 7.

Activity 3

1. Observing my thinking and my state of mind (1-2′)

−   Mind: What are you thinking?
    (Observe and write down 1-2 thoughts at that moment)

−   How is your state of mind?

−   Describe in 1-3 words

−   Give a number 1-7, e.g. 1 = head is very heavy and tight, 7 = my head feels "clear", I have great clarity and clear thinking.

2. Observing my feelings (1-2′)

What are your emotions? How do you feel? Can you observe how your heart or stomach feels?

−   Describe it in 1-3 words:

−   Give a number from 1-7, e.g. 1 = tightness, numbness, worries, feel nothing, 7 = feel wonderful, euphoria, excitement, enthusiasm.

3. Observing my body/doing (1-2')

How do you feel your physical condition? Do you notice how you feel your desire to do things?

− Describe it in 1-3 words:

− Write a number from 1-7, e.g. 1 = tired, bored, without desire for action 7= brisk, strong, full of power and desire for action.

4. Exploring the 5 senses: sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste (5')
We explore the environment with our 5 senses.

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5. Streamlining Question B: Post-activity (1')

− How do you perceive your presence at this specific time, now? How well informed are you about what is happening in your present now (inside and outside of you)?

Rate the post-activity 3 level of presence from 1-7.

6. Question C: Comparing the two answers about your presence –A and B– what do you notice? (1')

Write down remarks: compare the level of presence before and after focusing on thinking/mind – feeling/emotions – doing/body and the 5 senses.

Name _____

Date _____

Reflection Sheet 5th Session

Reflecting on the session:

− What new ideas did I get about focusing on the present?

− Give a title, a headline, of the session.

− Notice other questions, thoughts, reflections, feelings that arise.

Name _____

Date _____

6th SESSION
Opinions – Other peoples' opinions

Description for the Educator

OBJECTIVES:

- Understanding their way of thinking when they choose others or are chosen. The opinion they have for themselves and the others. The peer impact on their decisions.
- Noticing issues of confidence, self-esteem, expression of oneself in relation to "people talking – badmouthing".
- Observation on competence of self-evaluation, ability to take initiatives, communication, social skills and deepening self-observation, self-expression and discerning "opinions of the different environments". Clarity in the ways of thinking. Overcome thinking that blocks ones' growth.
- Examining supportive and non-supportive influence – "peer pressure", and practices of self-empowerment and **self-regulation**.

DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction

In this session students will explore qualities of their personality and will be asked to present themselves in plenary – see Sessions' Commentaries.
Invite students to discuss in the plenary about characteristics they find attractive to people in general.

2. Tasks

- **Plenary**

The game: "How do I choose my friends, my team members, my circle of people?"

Students continue the search for characteristics they wish for in their friends by playing the game: **"I Choose Friends, Groups, Teams"**[24].

"What are some of the characteristics that you would like someone to have in order to choose him/her":
A. If you want to go on a trip.
B. If you want to study for school.
C. If you want to confide a secret.
D. If you want to be in the same team (in a competition).

NOTE: Their thoughts are written down on A3 paper and posted. See in the photos below examples of students' thinking processes and how they can become more visible.

- **Individual task: "Advertising yourself"**

Students are invited to advertise themselves:

They choose among the characteristics (see Photo 2) that appealed to them –from the previous game– and they think that they have them as well.

They fill in the Worksheet and they make a poster promoting themselves (see Photo 3).

- **Parallel Combined Task: Present myself in the plenary while I monitor my thinking "How am I thinking?"**

The task "Advertising yourself" and present yourself in the plenary, often, triggers reactions in the classrooms.

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[24]Adaptation of a game from the program "Adolescence and School Life" of the Prevention Centre "Pyxida".

Students, often, are not used to talk about themselves in a positive way, or promoting themselves and presenting their positive qualities.

If this is the case in your team, this is an opportunity to monitor their way of "thinking – feeling – doing". We invite them to do so in an attempt to find their positive characteristics and advertise themselves.

Indicative questions:
– What is it like for you to advertise yourself?
– What is it like to find the positive qualities and capture them on the poster?
– What is it like to talk positively about yourself? What do you find most challenging?

Ask them to observe their thinking and welcome any kind of thought. **Provide a safe environment for them to express their doubts for the process and make it visible** (see Photo 5).
Students' questions and thoughts that often come up when they create the "advertisement of oneself" and they are invited to present themselves in front of the plenary are:

"Is it me, myself, who is going to decide if I am 'good' or 'bad'?"
"Is it me that I am going to say about how good I am?"
"To talk about myself is wrong; others have to talk about me!"
"Do I have the right to have an opinion about myself?"
"What is my opinion about myself?"
"Does my opinion about myself matter?"

Investigate further this interesting subject:
– How and where do we get "opinions", "information" about our qualities?
– Who decides if I have positive qualities or not?
– Who decides if I am worthwhile or not?
– Does the image we have of ourselves matter?
– What do you think? Is it important to be able to dwell on our positive points, as people, and to be able to recognize them?
– Where does it help us?

Use the "Tug of War"[25] thinking routine by asking the question: **"Which opinion matters about my personality traits?**

At the one end of the "Tug of War": **"only other peoples' opinions matter"** and at the other: **"other peoples' opinions don't matter at all".**
These extreme positions activate the students to express their opinions and see their way of thinking for the present time (see Photo 4).

The indicative "Tug of War" creates space for thinking, points of views of everybody in the group, for diversity of thinking and further exploration of "opinions". There can be different choices of "Tug of War" depending on the group dynamics.

NOTE: Use this session and the following one in order to make the thinking processes visible and give the opportunity to all the students to complete the challenging task: "Advertise themselves and come in front of the others to present themselves".

3. Reflection and Closing

Stating an impression about the process and/or giving a title for the session.

Indicative questions for 13-18 years old:

−   What new ideas did they get about noticing a difficulty and dealing with it?

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[25]See INTRODUCTION – "Useful Tips": Make visible their thinking – the thinking routine "Tug of War". http://www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/tug-of-war

Photo 2: Characteristics which 11-years-old students want from someone:
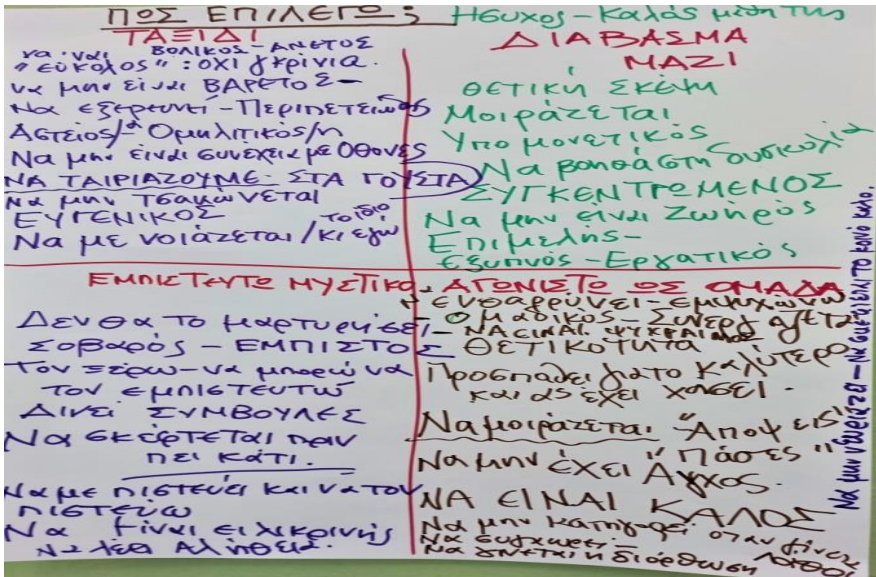*to be in a Trip – to study with – to trust a secret – to be in the same team*

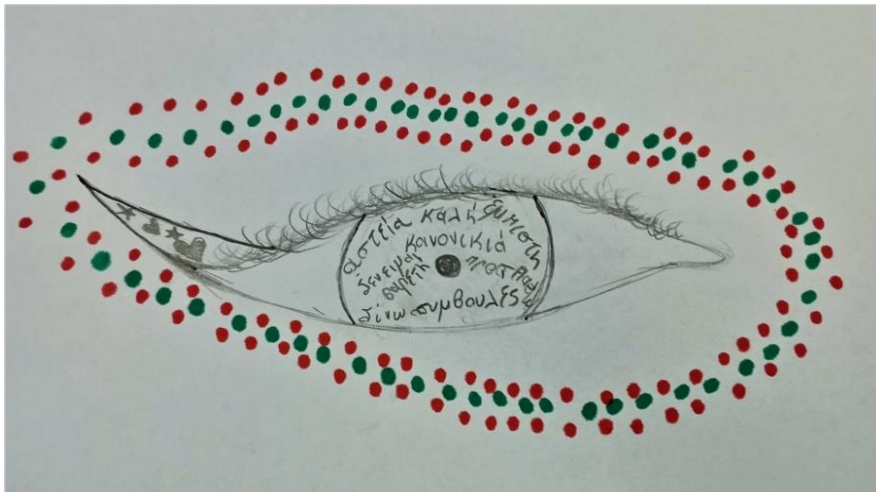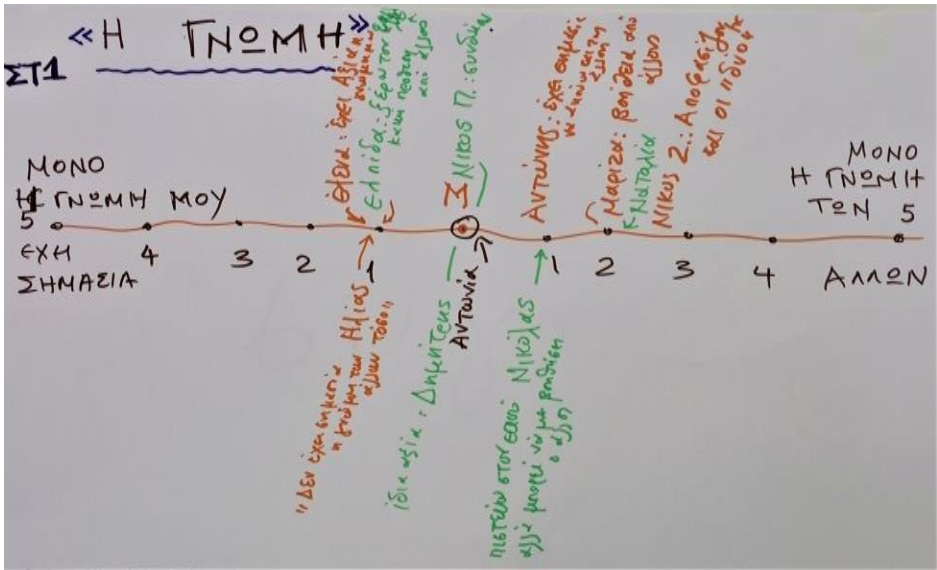*Photo 3: Self-advertisement of an 11-year-old girl*
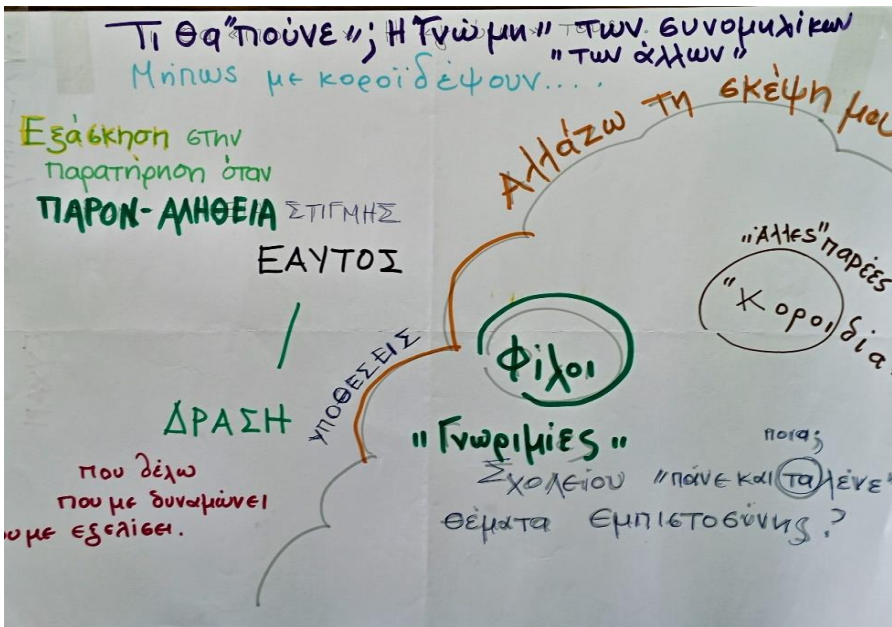
Commentaries 6ᵗʰ Session

In this session participants will be asked to explore qualities they want from others in order to be with them and qualities they have themselves to offer to others through a game.

The challenging task – case study: The students will make an advertisement about themselves and they will present it in front of the group. This is one of many different indicative challenges that will provoke reactions and difficulties in the "doing" of students and will offer the opportunity to implement Activities 1, 2 and 3 in authentic context.

All of us, not only students, often notice difficulty in "doing" tasks in the plenary. In this challenge some may hesitate to talk and be exposed in front of the group. So, we invite them to be present and notice why (Activity 3). We talk about it, listen to them, share our hesitations and we encourage them to "just do it".

After "having done it" invite them to notice the new 'Thinking–Feeling–Doing' quality in themselves.

This is an example how "the doing" helps us overcome patterns of thinking that restrict us. This is how far we go in this program – it is an introduction to a very rich field of education for active citizenship and innovative leadership.

NOTE: If your group of students is confident with this challenge, you have to find another one that will trigger them and expose to them their thinking processes in order to overcome it.
The "dancing challenge" –that can be activated in the "Implementing Attention to Active Listening" Session– is another indicative suggestion to achieve this.

Educator's Challenge: Being present in the present moment is an "ongoing" process that we need to practice within ourselves first and then within the group. Thus, we are able to utilize the group responses and dynamics to experience the switch into the power of being in the present moment *(see more in the chapter THE PROGRAM–Useful tips: "Educator's Challenge: Presence and Active Listening").*

Fill in the characteristics you like from the game: "Choose Friends, Groups, Teams":

_____

_____

_____

From the above characteristics:

1. Which characteristics do I have? (List as many as you want)

2. Which ones would I like to have? Or in other words, what characteristics do I admire in others?

3. Are there any that I have that were not mentioned?

− From 1, 2 & 3 I choose my "strongest" characteristics and create my personal promotional presentation.
− Present it to the others.

Name _____

Date _____

7th SESSION
'Opinions' and my personal growth
Implementation & Case-studies

Description for the Educator

OBJECTIVES:

− Keep examining supportive and non-supportive influences and ways of thinking.
− Steps of implementation of how observation and presence are used as tools for stress management.
− Example of implementation: The 'challenge of Self-advertising' in the plenary.
− Understanding that choosing and acting in the present moment as a result of clear thinking helps them activate all their potential and power, so as to fully express themselves.

DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction
Connect with previous sessions' reflections and discussions.

This session follows the previous' session procedures: it gives the time-space needed to all the students to complete the challenging task: "Advertising themselves and coming in front of the others presenting themselves".

The Sessions' Commentaries briefly illustrate an indicative guide –step by step– of two examples of how we can benefit from these practices in our lives. How we could deal with issues that cause us stress. How we can reclaim our self-esteem, confidence and personal growth in our lives.

[**Educator's Reminder**: Being present in the present moment is an "ongoing" process that we need to practice within ourselves first and then within the group. Thus, we are able to utilize the groups' responses and dynamics to experience the switch into the power of being in the present moment.]

NOTES:

− For younger students (9-12 years old) we improvise along with them. We demonstrate it directly with indicative challenges that arise in the team.
− For elder students (13+ or depending on the group) optionally, we can describe the cognitive steps –see in the commentaries– and invite them to describe those steps in the worksheet after the "triggering challenge".

2. Tasks

• **Continue the task: Present myself in the plenary while I monitor my thinking of "How am I thinking?"**

Usually, in this session the majority of students complete the task to present themselves in front of the plenary. (It is not obligatory; those who do not want to are not obliged. The first step is to observe their way of thinking).

• **Plenary**

− The students present themselves while the observation of their thinking continues.
− Some of them can be very expressive and open to the plenary others not.
− Use the opportunities that the different thinking of the students provides to illuminate the different ways of thinking without personalizing the student who provided the example of thinking.

As a variety of thoughts and questions continue to arise, it is recommended to further explore this area of questioning: How and where do we get "opinions", "information" about our qualities?

Continue this investigation/exploration:
Who decides if I am worthwhile or not? What does "being worthwhile" mean?

This sharing may provoke more discussion among the students and evoke further questions. E.g.:
− What does "being popular" mean for you?
− Do you think "being popular" is enough to make someone happy?
− What makes one popular?

- Who is attractive to your eyes?
- Who is someone you want to be with?
- Bridge this question with the personality traits in the previous session.
- What is popularity?
- Is it a matter of empowered personality or something else?
- What aspects of personality make one popular?
- What empowers ones' personality?
- Is popularity a result of a powerful personality or of an accumulation of wealth/belongings?

If the focus of the answers is about fashion clothes, expensive items and money, provide examples of people that have money and clothes, but are not popular.
- In which way do you think one becomes stronger, better, improves oneself, becomes more popular?

Connect with self-empowerment and cultivation of the multiple aspects of intelligence.

NOTES: Depending on the group dynamics and the time frame of your course –after their self-presentations– you may choose and form your own "Tug of War" deciding towards which way you want to provoke their thinking patterns and expand their views.

Clarify that as long as it involves personal exploration, they only share what they feel comfortable with.

3. Reflection and closing

Stating an impression about the process and/or giving a title for the session.

Indicative questions for 13-18 years old:

- What new ideas did they get about noticing a difficulty and dealing with it?
- How did they resolve issues that were difficult for them until now?
- Have they thought of a strategy?
- Other questions that emerge.

Students (13+) are invited to use the extra Worksheet: identify their difficulties in a clearer way and realize the metacognition steps through the "step by step" process and comment on it.

Commentaries 7ᵗʰ Session

In this session we will observe how we can implement Activities 1, 2 and 3: "Focusing my attention in the present – Thinking–Feeling–Doing" and the indicative metacognitive steps one could use to cultivate intrapersonal intelligence and personal growth.

This knowledge is helpful for simple issues in students' lives. Further exploration and resolution of more complicated issues is beyond the limited time and scope of this program.

**Metacognitive Steps, Implementation & Case-studies
Focusing on "How am I thinking?"
Exploring my thinking process**

Step by step

1. I do Activity 3 and while I am focusing on the present moment, I observe my "feeling, thinking, doing".
2. I discern any discomfort in the "feeling" or the "doing" that is making it difficult for me. E.g. a tension, an unwillingness to do something, any difficulty or blocking feeling that will "ring a bell" for further investigation.
3. I track my thoughts and notice the ones that are causing the discomfort – by examining which thinking triggers the feeling and/or the 'not doing' (Activity 2: relationship thinking – feeling). This is the way to discern the hypothetical thought that creates it and examine the quality of the thinking.
4. I evaluate my thinking: Why do I believe this? Why am I thinking this way? Does this thinking help me or make it difficult? Does it block me? Does it make it difficult for me to act? Is my thought valid or is it a hypothetical idea?
5. Solution: What can I do to deal with my difficulty? Can I change something? What can I change? How? What new experience do I allow myself to have? What would I 'see' as a solution?
6. I decide what action helps me and implement it.

Two Indicative Examples

How the activities can help manage the "pressure" we feel from various situations in life.

1st Indicative Example of a stressful situation

1. <u>Activity 3</u>: **I observe myself in an overall way**, I discern my feeling.

2. <u>I notice any discomfort</u>: **"I feel tightness in my chest"**.
   I recognize it as "stressful reaction".

3. <u>I track my thinking</u>: **Where is this coming from? How am I thinking?**
   I observe my thinking: I am stressed because of the thought that
   "I won't do well on the exam".

How am I sure that this feeling of discomfort comes from this hypothetical thought?

Check it by "Exploring the relation between thought – emotion": I bring up a pleasant image in my mind and observe the emotion, then bring back **my hypothetical thought** and observe the emotion I have now.

4. <u>I evaluate my answers</u> about my thinking: "I won't do well on the exam".
   Why am I thinking this way?
   Does my thinking have a basis or is it a hypothetical idea?
   What are the facts?
   Does this kind of thinking help me or does it make it even more difficult for me to act?

These thoughts have a basis if there is a lack of studying or difficulty in understanding the exam material.

These thoughts have no basis if they are hypothetical thoughts, e.g. fear of failure or low self-esteem or vague pessimism etc.

5. <u>Can I change something?</u> What can I change? How? What new thing will help me? What would I "see" as a solution?

E.g. Organize my study time.
   Focus on the points I have not understood.
   Organize my free time creatively.
   Ask for help for the lesson.
   Try to increase my self-esteem by self-advertising.
   Just get up and do it, etc.

6. <u>I decide what action helps</u> me and put it into practice. In this example I concluded that to get out of stress I need to organize my time better, distribute my activities in a more balanced way and dedicate 1 hour of study per day for this exam. I put it into practice and find that the feeling has changed.

2nd Indicative Example of a stressful situation

1. <u>Activity 3</u>: **I observe myself in an overall way**, I discern my feeling.
2. <u>I notice any discomfort</u>: **"My stomach is upset and/or my heart is shaky"**.
   I recognize it as "stressful reaction".
3. <u>I track my thinking</u>: Where is this coming from? How am I thinking?
   I observe my thinking: I am stressed because of the thought that "**I can't find anything positive about myself**" or "**I am not good enough**".

How am I sure that this feeling of discomfort comes from this hypothetical thought?
Check it by "Exploring the relation between thought – emotion": I bring up the thought that "I am very good, everybody loves me and admires me" in my mind and observe the emotion, then bring back **my hypothetical thought** and observe the <u>emotion</u> I have now.

4. <u>I evaluate my answer</u> about my thinking: "I can't find anything positive about me".
   Why am I thinking this way?
   Does my thinking have a basis or is it a hypothetical idea?
   What are the facts?
   Does this kind of thinking help me or does it make it even more difficult for me to act?

My thoughts have a basis if I really am a person who has no positive qualities.
My thoughts have no basis if they are just hypothetical thoughts of inadequacy or lack of self-esteem or because of a vague pessimism, etc.
5. <u>What can I change?</u> How? What new thing do I allow myself to experience and feel better? What would I "see" as a solution?
E.g. Focus on my positive points.
   Highlight the things I do well.
   Practice favorite activities that make me feel good and help me grow strong, and positive and cultivate my qualities (multiple intelligence).
   Try to increase self-confidence by self-advertising, etc.
   I think about what I can do to solve my difficulty and make reality what I desire.
6. <u>I decide what action</u> or combinations of actions help me and put them into practice.

NOTES: If I cannot take an action, I keep asking, looking for the answer, being open and observe.

In all cases I keep observing myself while doing, self-regulating and self-developing in the present moment. Personal growth and empowerment is a life-long process and the proposed activities are the beginning of an important individual and collective journey.

Additional Information

The connection between the 'thinking and the doing'

In general, when we want to change something that is bothering us, the first step is to take a step back and observe it.

When we don't feel good, it's a signal from the body that something is wrong. So, we observe our thoughts and evaluate their quality: whether they are clear or not, whether they are valid or not, whether they are the result of pure mental processes or assumptions and preconceptions.

– If our thoughts have a basis and we can do something specific to ease our inner turmoil, then we do it.
– If, however, our thoughts have no basis (such as foggy emotional and psychological thoughts from the past, stressful thoughts about the future, unspecified emotional thoughts, displeasure, irritation, etc. that usually overwhelm us and hinder our actions), observing them gives us options. We choose, if we wish, to continue having them or to change them.

The ages of the students that the program is aimed at can be ideal for practicing the activities in order to strengthen their attention, concentration, cultivation of mind skills such as critical and analytical thinking, strategic thinking, problem solving and focusing on action and activities that develop their intelligences and potential. As a consequence, self-image, self-confidence and the ability to act are empowered.

In adults, furthermore, with appropriate support, it can help to resolve deeper individual and systemic issues.

The educator, depending on the challenge the students will monitor, adjusts the worksheet (e.g. anxiety because of self-promotion in front of others, anxiety because of dancing in threesomes/pairs/alone, etc).

– **Activity 3:** I observe myself in an overall way, investigate my feeling.
  I monitor what happens to my emotions when I try to find my positive qualities/express through dancing.

– **Detect any discomfort**. Write down your observations.

– I **track how am I thinking** & identify which thinking goes with the feeling. I write it down.
  Verifying that my thinking creates discomfort by implementing Activity 2: hypothetical thought – real feeling
  I write down my observations.

– **I evaluate** my thinking: why am I thinking this way? Does this kind of thinking help me or does it make it even more difficult for me to act? Does my thinking have a basis or is it a hypothetical idea? What are the facts? I keep notes.

– **Is there anything I can change?** What? How? What new thing can I experience? What would I "see" as a solution?
  I write down the answers.

– **Doing: what I can do to** overcome the difficulty and realize my goals, promoting myself/dancing in front of others.
  I realize the importance of doing in the present moment. I write down any observations.

I keep observing myself, how do I feel after the "new doing"? (Do I feel more freedom, sense of power, satisfaction, fulfillment?). I keep note of this new feeling.

Name _____

Date _____

Reflection Sheet 7th Session (Ages 13+)

Reflection.

1. What was I thinking until now about my positive qualities?

2. What am I thinking now?

3. How did I manage to solve my difficulties?

4. Did I have a structured way?

5. Does this structure help in finding solutions?

6. Did I get any new ideas?

7. Other questions, thoughts, reflections that emerge.

Name _____

Date _____

8th SESSION
- The impact of digital environments
- The 'opinion of others'
- Attention Management

Description for the Educator

OBJECTIVES:

- The 'opinions of others': reference to the impact of digital environments.
- Delving into our relationship with the digital environment.
- Understanding the role of the digital environment on thinking, attention, mood for action and overall development of the individual.
- Highlighting the importance of the balanced use of the digital environment.
- Attention as a tool for cultivating thinking and personal growth.

DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction

In this Session we will explore and discuss:

- The "opinions" in general in our lives and our relationship with the "opinions" of digital environments.
- The "opinions" from the various "screens" we use and how they affect –usually without us realizing it– our thinking, concentration, and willingness to act.
- What our relationship with the digital environment is.
- What is the connection between the quality of our attention in the present moment and the ability to act and create. How it affects our personal growth and well-being.

It is recommended that you read the Commentaries of the Session first.

PPT PRESENTATION: During the session, the educators are invited to present information about how people interact and co-create in society, selecting and adapting material from the commentaries, the introduction or their own research, according to their team's needs (see below photo 6a & 6b: example of the presentation in the classroom).

2. Tasks

- **Plenary**

Exchange of points of views – open to new ideas and perspectives

The educator is invited to choose among several indicative questions in order to initiate the discussion about "the opinions of others" in our lives and civilization – depending on the age of the participants.

How and where do we get "opinions", "information" about who I am, what I want, what I like.
Who are the "others" (digital environments, parents, teachers, coaches, peers, etc.)?
Are there "opinions" that influence us without us realizing it?
Discuss on whether or not we are influenced by various digital media as ads, songs, news, movies, videogames, etc.
Questions for elder students: Do the different media influence us or not? In which way? Are you familiar with the term "Default mechanisms"?

Indicative question of the program to use at the "Tug of War"[26] thinking routine: **'What do you think? Are we being influenced by opinions of others without even realizing it?"**(Do we do things because we are influenced by someones' opinion without realizing it?)
The two ends of the rope of this 'Tug of War' are: **"Yes, always – No, never."** These extremes are provocative and activate the students' opinions.

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[26]See INTRODUCTION -"Useful Tips": Make visible their thinking – the thinking routine "Tug of War". http://www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/tug-of-war

- **Individual Task**

Invite students to observe their everyday life and fill in the Worksheet. They can write down questions, thoughts, concerns as well.

NOTE: This observation is done by the students that have the maturity to do so. For the students that do not have this maturity, keep asking, provoking their thinking and their quality of attention and recognition. Utilize any comment from students –in their age-related behavioral context– that can provide the opportunity to elaborate further and shed light on the patterns of behavior that are affected by the 'opinions of others'.

- **Plenary**

Students comment on their findings.

3. Reflection and Closing

- What new ideas did they acquire about their relationship with the digital environment?
- How did they think pre-activity?
- Did they change their mind, form a different opinion or continue to think as they did before about the topic?
- Other questions that emerge.
- They write them down on the Reflection Sheet.

NOTES
- The exploration of this important topic continues in following sessions, when we address the issue of peer influence, self-esteem and personal empowerment.
- It is suggested that the Tug-of-War[27] is –more or less, even as an abbreviation– written down so they can track their ways of thinking while exploring a subject (see below Photo 7: example of the way the thinking process is becoming visible on A3 papers in the classroom).

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[27]See INTRODUCTION -"Useful Tips": Make visible their thinking – the thinking routine "Tug of War". http://www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/tug-of-war
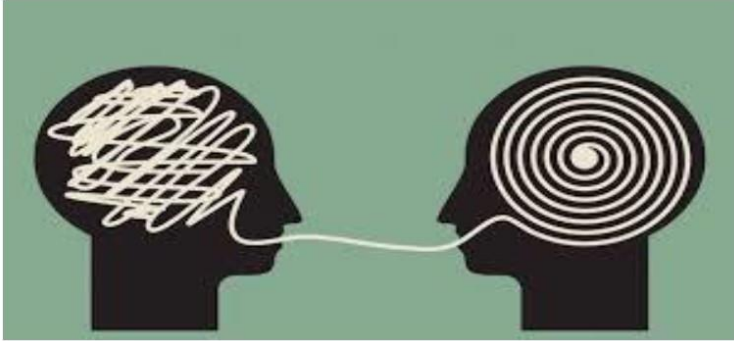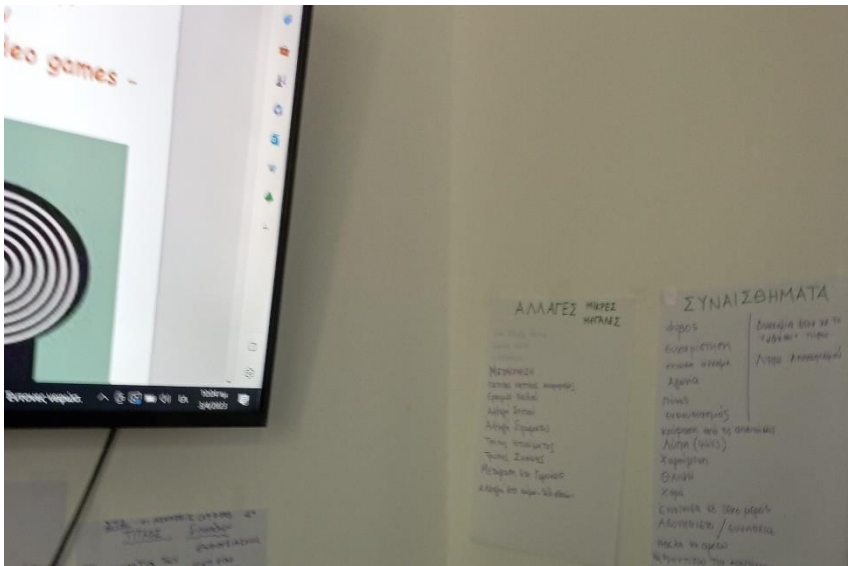
Commentaries 8th Session

"The opinions of others": reference to the impact of the digital environment

In this session, we broaden the perspective about the quality of our life "Thinking–Feeling–Doing" by illustrating what the default mechanisms are, the impact of the digital environment as well as other selected information –depending on the age of the participants– from the Commentaries.

During the session, in the discussion in the plenary we often realize that the majority of the students have difficulty understanding what it means that **'I am influenced by the opinion of others without understanding it'**. We suggest informing them about how people interact, influence each other and co-create. We invite you to select and adapt information –from the commentaries of this session and/or further research of your own– in relation to your group dynamics and share it with them **in the form of a ppt** between the team sharing and discussions.

The Council of Europe[28] considers the thinking skills to be among the most basic quality skills for democratic, harmonious, healthy societies.

Qualities of thinking:

– Independent, creative and critical thinking,
– Autonomous initiative,
– Active listening,
– The ability to pay attention, observe, evaluate, differentiate, have clear thinking and
– **The ability to detect and discern the media-generated data and information**.

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[28] The Council of Europe Reference Frame work of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) (volume 1) (2018)

How do we relate to technology and the digital environment? Do we use it for our growth or are we controlled by it? (Default mechanisms) (Tristan Harris – 'Attention economy')

Tristan Harris[29] talks about the "attention economy" and has brought the importance of attention management in the center of the global discussion. As a former ethics designer at Google, he has worked on the ethical responsibility of technology companies and their business model. He believes that they do not usually aim to enhance our intelligence, but to explore and exploit our weaknesses so as to increase our consumption patterns (products, ideas, beliefs) to serve their own purposes, with serious consequences on our societies.

"Freedom starts with a free mind and we need technology on our side to help us live, feel, think and act freely" T. Harris says. Smartphones, notification screens and web browsers train us in default mechanisms and structures for our minds and our interpersonal relationships. It is important and necessary to prioritize our values rather than our impulses. Peoples' time is valuable and he believes that we must protect it with the same rigor as we protect privacy, confidentiality and other digital rights.

Beyond time management, the abundance of information in today's information society creates a shortage in other important areas: in the quality of attention and the time it takes to process this information.

A company's financial success model is based on attracting the attention of customers to buy the products (in whatever form: political idea, point of view, politician, person, market product). This means that increasingly fragmented attention becomes an aspirational item.

A severe competition is being conducted by the market companies for the peoples' attention as consumers, voters and decision makers. The fragmentation makes the attention more unstable, hence more manageable.

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[29]Tristan Harris TEDx 2017 –
https://www.ted.com/talks/tristan_harris_how_a_handful_of_tech_compani es_control_billions_of_minds_every_day?language=en

Do we realize what we're doing? What are we thinking? Are we paying attention to what we are paying attention to?[30]

An example of this is watching TV, or movies/series on Netflix, or videos on YouTube and the digital environment in general which is a popular pastime of millions of people in the world because we find it "relaxing".

Why do we consider it "relaxing"?

If we observe what happens during those hours, we notice that our inner dialogue around the various issues that "preoccupy us" and the cluttered thinking stop.

Scientists argue that when cluttered thinking stops, it calms the central nervous system. A calm nervous system creates inner space and we have greater perceptiveness, clarity of thought and the ability for quality structured thinking and reasoning.

But does the watching of the various programs on the various digital screens create the aforementioned quality of thinking?

Not when it is done mechanically – passively.

Our mind is plugged into the thoughts of the show/movie/videogame/ TV/internet/social media/any digital story telling we are watching.

Our mind does not create our own thoughts (the often cluttered, distracting, tedious, stressful ones) but instead absorbs the thoughts, images, ideas and concepts that overtake us through the screen of the digital environment we watch or play with (video games).

Such thoughts and emotions include: fear, anxiety, suspense, violence, devastation, disasters, murders, as well as happiness, freedom, love, joy. Depending on our interests we can also find images of "happiness" in social networks mainly through the acquisition of goods or relationships with certain types of people, life styles, likes, no-likes, that often lead us to subconscious comparisons "others have... and not me...", "but where is happiness?" etc.

While the images, stories and concepts that fill our heads are not our thoughts and they are not real, as we experienced in Activity 2, we do have feelings as if they were happening to us right now.

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[30]See Introduction: "Theory U" by Otto Scharmer.

Our mind, in these circumstances, is considered to be potentially vulnerable and affected, to the point of being compared to the mind of a person in hypnosis.

In the U.S.A, advertisers, news or film creators and producers, and all those who preoccupy mainly in the areas of managing public opinion, are nicknamed "Hypnotists and media wizards" (Tristan Harris).

Therefore, the mechanical consuming of the various media channels and broadcasts and digital environment info, while giving us some relief from our mechanical/repetitive minds, complicates even more the already challenging task of clear thinking and doing.

So, should we avoid Technology?

Digital technology is an amazing achievement of the collective human intelligence with great benefits when we use it consciously.

It is important to be in touch with the richness and potential of our innovative thinking, our authentic emotion, our will of doing and the ability to use it for individual and collective growth.

To observe "what and how are we thinking?" is fundamental in order to have free thinking and as free-thinking citizens of this world, freedom of choice, and the ability to act and co-create our culture.

It is important that we remain "smarter" than our "smart phones", smarter than the "smart devices" we created, as T. Harris says.

"We envision a world where technology supports our shared well-being, sense-making, democracy, and ability to tackle complex global challenges." — T. Harris, Center for Human Technology.

"Can our thoughts influence the thoughts of others? "*

Yes, under certain circumstances!

Exchanging ideas and thoughts and influencing each other is part of our human civilization and culture in its many manifestations:

- On a personal level: arguing for a point of view and persuading others.
- On the interpersonal level: family and relatives, friends, acquaintances, they all express ideas, thoughts, beliefs and they influence us.

- On a professional level: the art of rhetoric, politics, law, marketing, advertising are all professions whose aim is to influence, affect and shape the thoughts of others.
- On an artistic level: works of art, literature, music, films influence and shape our thoughts, opinions, feelings.
- On a philosophical level: the ideas and the concepts of philosophers open up new pathways of thinking for us.
- On a scientific level: new discoveries everyday change the way we think, we live and understand the world etc.

Being able to reflect on and monitor the thoughts we have is important. For example, there is a significant difference between reading a book or watching a movie and sharing my thoughts about the book I read or the movie I watched. That is, taking the time to pay attention to where I am paying attention to and giving the time needed to process the information I received.

"What are the conditions that are used by the media in order to influence our thoughts?"

- One condition is repetition. For example, advertisements are thoughts –mostly hypothetical– that massively influence people to buy the given product which can be e.g. a material commodity, a concept, a trend or/and a person (actor, influencer, celebrity etc.) through repetition.
- Another condition is to trigger the emotion of the viewer: fear, anger, joy, happiness, etc. Advertisements and commercials are usually appealing and 'sell' the feeling of happiness: they claim that if you have this or that product you will be healthy, with nice relationships and loved by all, therefore happy which is what most people want; so, we are attracted to the product –consuming its advertised story– believing that this is how we will also find happiness and fulfillment.
- A variation of the above condition is to provide some kind of reward and/or frustration. As Sean Parker, the first president of

Facebook[31], says "The thought process is this: We want to capture as much of your time and your attention as possible. That means that every now and then we should give you a little dose of dopamine: if someone has liked or commented on a photo or a post or something like that, that will motivate you to post more content which will get you more likes and comments". Excerpt from an interview with Sean Parker.

− Another condition is the distracted mind of the viewer, which is considered to be more vulnerable therefore more manageable.

"What am I thinking?"*

"Why don't I think in a positive way about myself? What affects my thoughts?"*

There are many reasons to take into consideration when answering these questions.

In the specific program we are examining the input and the influence of the digital environment and the potential effects of the uncritical and constant exposure to media.

Observe your interaction with the screens (the task to fill in the worksheet provides a detailed observation of this interaction).

For example, is the TV on constantly and indiscriminately in your house? In some households they do that in order to have 'company'.

In that case we are overexposed to the events around the world, as the media 'sees' them. We have the **media's filter** of how we 'see' the world. The news in the world is very diverse, but their selection by newscasts follows certain 'recipes' for a number of reasons. Most of the times "news" are very emotionally charged, mainly with fear, anxiety, anger, despair, etc. When we have the TV on indiscriminately, we are filled with thoughts and emotions that affect us without realizing it.

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[31] Sean Parker - Facebook Exploits Human Vulnerability (We Are Dopamine Addicts): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7jar4KgKxs

Attention management helps us to observe, distinguish and discern, the kind of emotional thoughts we want to 'hang out' with.

In addition, by engaging ourselves in activities that cultivate our multiple intelligences, we develop a powerful self-confident self who knows how to deal with obstacles.

* Student questions.

1. **Observe my relationship with the digital environment**

   I estimate approximately how much time I spend (minutes/hours per day/month/year):

Relationship with the digital environment	Time spent & being attentive	Time spent & being distracted
Watching TV		
Having the TV always on at home		
Playing video games		
Watching you tube videos		
Engagement in social media: Instagram, fb, Tik-Tok etc.		
Surfing the Net		
Using and playing with the mobile phone in general		

2. **Observe the relationship between focusing my attention in the present moment and the ability to do and create**

   I estimate approximately how much time I spend (minutes/hours per day/month/year):

My attention to the present moment in relation to action/expression/creation	In person	Digitally/Virtually
Chatting with friends		
Playing a game using my whole body		
Playing a sport (in person only-not virtually)		
Dancing		
Playing - exercising		
Exploring - enjoying nature: walking, hiking, climbing, swimming, gardening,		

fishing		
Reading books		
Sharing my thoughts about books		
Watching a film		
Sharing thoughts about the film		
Listening to music		
Playing music		
Singing		
Sharing with others my singing/my playing music		
Making creations: crafts, constructions, modeling		
Creating with my hands: artwork, woodcarvings, ceramics, jewellery, painting, knitting, sculpture, etc.		
Other (if I have any)		

Name _____

Date _____

Reflection Sheet 8th Session

Reflect on the discussion and the worksheet.

1. How much time do I spend on digital environment per day?

2. What are the "default mechanisms"?

3. What new ideas have I gained? Have I formed a new opinion?

4. Other questions, thoughts, concerns that arise.

Name _____

Date _____

PREPARATION FOR THE ACTIVE LISTENING SESSION (10th)

Begin the preparation for the listening session: "Implementing Attention to Active Listening" and decide about the musical piece that you are going to use for students' holistic engagement 'Thinking–Feeling–Doing'.

Invite the students to write down 1 – 2 pieces of music that they like to dance with. Preferably, not within the program context but on a different occasion. You are not obliged to spend time listening to all the students' choices or play them during the sessions' time. The goal is to have an idea of the team's musical orientation.

Collect the suggested pieces of music, look them up on YouTube and select the ones that are powerful, rhythmical, and have lyrics with attitude that can activate and inspire (widely accepted by the team)[32].

One of these music pieces **may** be used in the session: "Implementing Attention to Active Listening".

The point of interest of this preparation is getting an insight into the music culture of the team and discussing about the importance of the quality of listening, the impact of music and "the interpretation of others" (neighbors, friends, TV shows, social media comments, acquaintances gossip, etc.) in our lives.

Recall discussions from previous sessions about "other peoples' opinions" –which we may follow without realizing it– and the influence that occurs.

The same thing happens when we don't understand and don't pay attention to the lyrics of the songs or the quality of the beat.

(It is suggested that further exploration of the material in the Session Commentaries from the "Managing Attention" manual or other relevant research is done by the educator.)

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[32] If you cannot find an appropriate one among the students' choices, you can choose a song that fits the requirements.

9th SESSION
Multiple Intelligence Theory and Implementation
"My Interests – My Power"

Description for the Educator

> **OBJECTIVES:**
>
> – Recognizing the importance of the cultivation of all the individual's abilities (Multiple Intelligence Theory, Howard Gardner) in the development of thinking. This can be done through activities such as sport, music, literature, contact with nature, movement, singing, dancing, etc.
> – Observe their favorite activities and examine, as the attention to the present moment's action increases, how they improve their skills, they find solutions, they enjoy the challenges, they feel enthusiasm, joy, vitality.
> – Cultivate their training by encompassing activities they like.

DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction to Multiple Intelligence – PPT presentation

- **Plenary**
A. Introduce students to the types of Intelligence, Indicative Activities & Thinking Routines (see Introduction "Multiple Intelligence, Example Activities & Thinking Routines").

Notes:
To keep the interest about multiple intelligences flowing, we invite you to create a Power Point Presentation (see photos below: examples of the Presentation in the classroom). Elaborate on the intelligences by providing pictures, images, activities and professions. Engage a discussion and connection with life skills, favorite sports, stars, athletes, occupations, school subjects and extra-curricular activities.

Discuss the value and importance of practice for everything we want to do in life and introduce Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory and the variety of skills and abilities in people (giving examples of coherent thought and action and inviting them to practice in order to increase their strength, sense of self-worth and confidence in themselves).

Write down the Intelligences on A3 paper.

It is recommended to read the Commentaries of the 8th Session.

B. Students are invited to name a favorite activity and think about what kinds of intelligence they are practicing.

It is important to understand that any systematic effort in activities they love and try strengthens all of the dimensions of their intelligence.

2. **Tasks**

- **Observing favorite activities in relation to the "Thinking–Feeling–Doing"**
  Students are asked to observe their favorite activities and to examine if, as the attention to the present moment's action increases, they improve their skills, they find solutions, they enjoy the challenges, they feel enthusiasm, joy, vitality. They fill in the Worksheet.

- **Plenary**
  Students share their answers.

3. **Reflection and Closing**
  − Did they notice how their attention helps them overcome the challenge?
  − Any other questions, feelings, observations that emerge.

(Older Students: They fill in the Reflection Sheet)

Κιναισθητική νοημοσύνη/σκέψη

Κινητική νοημοσύνη/σκέψη: Αφορά στην ικανότητα του ατόμου να έχει έλεγχο των σωματικών του κινήσεων, να χρησιμοποιεί με μεγάλη δεξιότητα τις κινητικές δυνατότητές του, **να χειρίζεται το σώμα του –καθώς και αντικείμενα/εργαλεία**– επιδέξια και με ακρίβεια, ώστε να δημιουργεί προϊόντα πολιτισμού για λειτουργικούς και άλλους σκοπούς, για την επίλυση προβλημάτων ή για την έκφραση συναισθημάτων, ιδεών κ.ά. Είναι αναπτυγμένη **σε μηχανικούς, μάστορες, αθλητές, χορευτές, πιλότους, ηθοποιούς, γιατρούς, χειρουργούς, στρατιώτες κ.ά. Δραστηριότητες**: αθλητισμός, χορός, ελεύθερη άσκηση, κατασκευές, μοντελισμός, πλέξιμο, κατασκευή κοσμημάτων, κίνηση και έκφραση κάθε είδους.

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Διαπροσωπική νοημοσύνη/σκέψη

Διαπροσωπική νοημοσύνη/σκέψη: Αφορά στην ικανότητα του ατόμου να καταλαβαίνει και να αλληλεπιδρά αποτελεσματικά με τα άλλα άτομα. Να παρατηρεί και να διακρίνει μεταξύ των διαθέσεων, της ιδιοσυγκρασίας, των κινήτρων και των προθέσεων των άλλων ατόμων. Αναπτυγμένη διαπροσωπική νοημοσύνη παρουσιάζουν οι διαμεσολαβητές, διπλωμάτες, κοινωνιολόγοι, υπεύθυνοι δημόσιων σχέσεων, διαφημιστές, ηγέτες, παιδαγωγοί κ.ά.
Δραστηριότητες: Ασκήσεις παρατήρησης των διαπροσωπικών σχέσεων, της τέχνης της διαπραγμάτευσης και της διαμεσολάβησης με θεατρικό παιχνίδι και σχετικές ασκήσεις ομάδων.

Photo 8f: Relating Spatial intelligence with life skills and professions

Commentaries 9th Session

Student's questions and answers

Commentaries on students' questions

"Am I my Thoughts? Am I my mind? Am I my feelings? Who am I after all? "*

We are all of these (mind/thought – emotion – body) and more, because we can observe all of them.

We are more than our thoughts. We are the ones who observe, we are the observers. We have the capacity for metacognition[33], that is, the ability to observe the way we evolve, learn and create.

Hands-on – Examples of structured thinking and action (connection with the Multi-Intelligence Self)[34].

"What can I do to refine my way of thinking?"*

Training the skill

1. The first step is to become familiar with the 3 activities of mind awareness and to be able to observe oneself.
2. The second step is practice and repetition. In life, it is important to continue being an observer of the 3 qualities of self: thinking, feeling and doing. Examine further the results of your observation: Is the way you think helpful or not? Are the thoughts you are having evolving you or are they "blocking" you? (See the session with the Indicative Examples).
3. The third step is to engage in quality action, i.e. cultivating and practicing our multiple intelligence skills **with a balance of discipline and joy**.

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[33] Flavell, J.H. Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive-developmental inquiry. American Psychologist, 34(10), 906-911 (1979).

[34] See **Introduction**: "Multiple Intelligence, Example Activities & Thinking Routines"

"How much practice and training does it take? "*

The change depends on the frequency of training.

E.g. to score shots in basketball, I practice lots of shots, in order for the baby to walk it takes a lot of time to play and practice, etc. The motivation comes because they want to, they connect in the present moment and find pleasure in the challenge.

"How can I have focused and effective thought and action?"*

Suggestions to the students:

– Reduce "passive screen time" on digital environment: TV, YouTube, Instagram, social media, videogames, etc.
– Develop the "active screen time" instead. Make sure you are attentive and "not being used" by the digital environment.
– You are at the age when you develop yourself. You want to enjoy life and realize your dreams. To make that happen, this is the best time to enhance all of your qualities, talents, potential and skills. Pursue your creativity and manage your thinking.

What kind of activities help?*

As humans we desire lifelong personal growth and self-empowerment through joy, discipline, problem solving and overcoming difficulties.

We introduce students to the Multiple Intelligence theory, as well as Indicative Activities & Thinking Routines.

"What should I do when I'm "hooked in" a repetitive mechanical action? For example, playing video games? "*

I observe it and I try to engage my "whole-body" expression: move, run, relieve pressure, exercise, sing and change your attachment in a creative way. This way you balance the repetitive mechanical action.

* Varvakeio Model Junior High School Students' questions.

Worksheet 9th Session
My Interests – My Power
Practicing Attention and discovering my Power
in my favorite activities

Reflect and comment (some and/or all):

1. List your favorite activities e.g. playing (playing in the playground, video games, kinesthetic play etc.), playing sports, biking, skateboarding, running, talking to friends, writing a diary, singing, dancing, painting, reading books, doing puzzles, other:

2. Which ones do you consider as most important?

3. What makes them special?

4. Have you noticed if and how your attention and thinking changes when you want to achieve your goal? Can you give an example or examples?

5. Have you noticed if and how **you change and improve your skills** at the exact moment you want to achieve a goal? Can you give an example or examples?

Name _____

Date _____

Reflection Sheet 9th Session

1. Do you notice how the thinking, feeling, doing changes when you are focused on something you like and you try to achieve your goal? Do you have any comments?

2. Questions, thoughts, reflections that emerge.

Name _____

Date _____

10th SESSION
The Listening Session
Implementing Attention to Active Listening

Description for the Educator

OBJECTIVES:

- Being aware of the 'Thinking–Feeling–Doing' in the present moment through active listening.
- Highlighting the connection between self-empowerment and active listening through the cultivation of musical intelligence and the joy of music.
- Understanding that action in the present evolves us, helps us to deepen in what we do, broadens our perspective, enables us to find solutions.
- Example of implementation: The challenge 'dancing the song' in the plenary in threesomes (or 'alone' if they dare…).

DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction

The musical pieces that the students like have been collected from a previous session (see description of task in "**Preparing in advance for the Listening Session: "Implementing Attention to Active Listening**" and <u>deciding about a musical piece for group holistic engagement 'Thinking–Feeling–Doing'</u>).

Come to a conclusion about what musical experience is inspiring the team and chose one musical piece that is powerful, vivid with a dancing quality in order to energize the team in this session.

2. Task

- **Paying Attention and realizing the power of actively being in the present moment (listening–feeling–doing) by enjoying a musical song.**

Give the instructions of the "Listening: Ten Times Two" visible thinking routine, adding that they have to listen with their whole attention applying Activity 3: "Focusing My Attention in the Present moment". We briefly remind them of the steps.
Play the musical piece (only sound). Students enjoy the music.
They fill in the Worksheet.

- **Plenary**

They comment on their experience.

Notes:

– Depending on the dynamics of the team this activity can provide a space for students' kinesthetic expression and communication.
– It is an interesting opportunity for the whole team to realize what is going on in terms of the 'Thinking–Feeling–Doing' ability and to 'express in public'.
– The exposure to others can be used as an indicative 'challenge' for the students to implement presencing and to realize the unrealized "power of other peoples' opinions in their lives".

3. Reflection and Closing
– Did they notice when they listened to music what happens in the 'listening – feeling – doing' relationship?
– What do they think about the new way they listened to music?
– Any other questions that emerge? They fill in the Reflection Sheet.

Points of interest that affect empowerment:

– To feel with the body, observe and comment on it (music and any motion, movement or reaction that captures our attention has power and affects us as a whole – positively or negatively).
– To think about the meaning of the lyrics: do they have social, political, emotional, intellectual messages; do they activate us to strive for something better or do they insult us, make us angry, "drug" us, "shrink" us? What is the quality of the music? Have we noticed the difference? (Examples between different qualities of music work e.g. remarkable rap and "shallow" trap music). How much the messages affect us without us realizing it when we don't pay attention.

Worksheet 10th Session
Practicing Attention
Active listening through sounds and songs

Practice attention while noticing the power of sound, the lyrics and cultivating listening qualities and musical intelligence. The activity is based on the Thinking Routine "Listening: ten times two"

1. Listen to the musical piece in silence: let your sense of hearing and all senses wander and enjoy it. Practice activity 3: "Focus my attention in the present moment".
2. Observe, feel the sound with your 5 senses. What images, shapes, colors, smells or tastes come to mind?

Write down 3-4 words or phrases about any aspect of what you are listening.

3. Continue Activity 3 and explore what happens to the mind, emotion and body.
    What thoughts, memories, images come to mind?
    What do you feel in your heart, in your stomach?
    What emotions arise and what does the body feel?
    How does it want to move?
    How do you imagine the body moving in this piece?
    Can you "see" the rhythm?
    Listen to your body and move/play with the sound, allow the body to express itself.

Try to write down 4-5 more words or phrases on your list.

Name _____

Date _____

11th SESSION
Implementations – Student's Thoughts

Description for the Educator

OBJECTIVES:

- Time for Q & A and more in-depth discussions.
- Exchanging ideas and thoughts about how students deal with everyday issues.
- Implementation of the 'Focusing my Attention in the Present Moment' activity after completing the program.
- Highlighting the importance of continuity and establishment of a new routine.

DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction

This one and the next/final session are preparations for concluding the program.

NOTE: Depending on the dynamics and the maturity of the group this one can be combined with the next in one session and be the final or it can be an opportunity for even an extra session and further discussions.

This provides an open time for Q & A, analyzing case-studies, open discussion:
- Anything they want to share about how they deal with their everyday issues. Their interaction with different digital environments.
- How they imagine implementing it after the completion of the program.

2. Task

- **Plenary**

Exchange of views: Invite students to reflect and comment on the previous session.
In this session the educator can use the questions in the worksheet give ideas, support and structure (if needed) the group discussion.

3. Reflection and Closing

−   How was their thinking before?
−   What new ideas did they get?
    o   About how they deal with their issues.
    o   About how they manage their time and quality of attention.
    o   About the quality of interaction with different digital environments.

They can fill in the Reflection worksheet and conclude their thoughts (ages 13-18).

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Reflection Sheet 11ᵗʰ Session

Reflect and comment:

–   How do you, usually deal with your everyday issues? What do you usually do? (Give an example)

–   Have you tried out the activities? If yes, have they helped you? Where would you like more clarification? (Give an example)

–   If you haven't tried them out, what makes it difficult? Can you tell? Which part do you find difficult to apply?

–   What new ideas have you got for dealing with the issues that concern you?

–   What do you think about the issue of personal time, the interaction with the digital environment and the quality of attention?

–   Other questions/thoughts you have.

Name _____

Date _____

12ᵗʰ SESSION
The Journey – My team and I

Description for the Educator

OBJECTIVES:
- Summarizing each student's experience along the way of the program.
- Review of the various activities and tasks and evaluation of the student 's participation.

DESCRIPTION

1.   Introduction (2-3')

- Invite students to the closing session of the program.
  Conclude the program by summarizing all the Sessions and sharing thoughts and emotions about it.

- On A3 paper we draw a line with 11 dots which symbolizes the sessions and represents the "journey of my team and I"[35].
  Students are invited to post their impressions on this paper.

2.   Tasks
•   Plenary: visual review of the program

- All the A3 papers are posted in easy-to-see spots on the classroom walls to guide students' thinking and process throughout the program.

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[35]*The game "Journey: My team and I" is from the program "The others and I" of the Centre for the prevention of addictions and promotion of psychosocial health of Eastern Thessaloniki "ELPIDA".*

- **Guided Summary – Free-flow writing**

– Worksheet "My Journey".
  During the guided summary invite the students to reflect and write down their thoughts, for themselves and the team.

Sample Guided Summary

[1] Introduction: We discussed the importance of 21st century skills and the fact that they form the basis of personal and professional success in the world today. We got to know each other better by playing the Crossword of Names and come into contact with the meaning of change.

[2] Further discussion about change, transition, emotions, sources of strength, advantages, disadvantages, likes, dislikes, solving problems, quality of thinking.

[3] We engaged in the way we think and observed our thoughts with Activity 1 "Exploring my thinking process".

[4] We explore the relationship between our thinking and our feeling. We found out how the way we think triggers real emotions with Activity 2 "Observing the relationship between thinking and feeling".

[5] We examined our quality of attention on the present moment. We did Activity 3 "Focusing my Attention in the Present moment – Thinking–Feeling–Doing" that enhances our skill to concentrate.

[6] We tried to understand different ways of thinking when we choose others or are chosen. We talked about peer pressure and the opinions of others in general. We noticed issues of confidence and self-expression in relation to "people talking – badmouthing" and we implemented Activities 1-2-3 in order to overcome challenges. We checked the way we are 'thinking, feeling, doing' and the way we can change it (Self Advertising or Dancing in front of others).

[7] In this session we took more time and the space needed to illustrate and make visible the thinking processes, to demonstrate the steps in action and give the opportunity to all the students to complete the challenge-task: "Advertising themselves and being in front of others and promoting themselves".

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[8] We delved into the relationship with digital environments in general such as TV, internet, social media, cinemas, videogames, online gaming, etc. We practice Attention Time Management.

[9] We became aware of the need to cultivate our attention, to develop our talents and skills on a daily basis, inspired by Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory. This way we are growing into enriched and multi-talented personalities and becoming more skilled, empowered and qualified to realize our dreams. We observed how quality of attention changes the quality of doing our favorite activities.

[10] We used active listening to understand further what being aware of the 'thinking–feeling–doing' in the present moment means and how it affects self-expression (e.g. dancing challenge).

[11] We had more in-depth discussions about how to deal with every day issues and the implementation of the 'Focusing my Attention in the Present Moment' activity after completing the program.

Invite them:
- To write down what made an impression on them and what they think they contributed to the team.
- To choose from the Impressions and write them down on a small piece of paper (post-it type).

3. Reflection and Closing

- They share it by reading it aloud and place it on the "journey line".
- They comment on how they feel about seeing the team's "journey".
- A photo can be taken.

Worksheet 12th Session
The Journey – My team and I

Listen to the Summary and write down any words, thoughts and images that come to your mind. Write down what made an impression on you, in each session, and what you think you contributed to the team.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Choose from the above Impressions and write them down on a small piece of paper what your major contribution to the "teams' journey" are:

Name _____

Date _____

INDICATIVE SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

by the student

ASSESMENT SCALE: 1-4 (1= poor – 4 =excellent)

QUESTIONS

A. How do I get involved in the activity.

− Do I have the ability to complete the tasks within the given time?
− Do I have the organizational skill to maintain my portfolio?
− Do I have the skills in carefully observing, describing, discerning details and discovering patterns of repetition in the activities?
− Do I have the efficiency in achieving the objectives of the sessions?

B. How I collaborate with my team.
− Is the way I interact polite?
− How I support my opinions:
    o Do I stand my ground non-negotiable to the end?
    o Do I negotiate and find combinatorial solutions?
    o Do I constantly retreat?
    o Do I stand aside and follow what others decide?

C. To what extent I fulfilled the individual objectives of the sessions.

− I review my file and assess my overall progress.

D. To what extent I cultivate Mind skills in discussions, in plenary, in everyday life.

METACOGNITION

− Am I tracking my thinking?
− Am I recognizing the steps my thinking takes?
− Can I follow my thinking and the connections I make?
− Does my reasoning have an inductive and deductive thinking?

COMPREHENSION – ANALYSIS – COMBINATORIAL THINKING

- Do I ask questions that indicate that I understand the viewpoints of others?
- Can I recognize patterns of repetition, am I able to relate them to the topic and make a point?
- Can I compare, connect and relate a topic to everyday life and world issues?
- Can I go deeper into a topic by uncovering complexities, challenges, blind spots?

SCIENTIFIC THINKING – DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVES & VIEWS

- Do I listen to the views of my team members? Or do I become emotional (feeling angry, irritated, rejected) because I identify solely with my idea, try to support it and don't listen to anything else? Can I observe my thinking and feeling?
- Can I see common ground in the different perspectives and views of others?
- Can I discern what other points are "illuminated" in the issue we are considering by the different perspectives of others?
- Can I discern what points are "missing" in my personal view?
- Can I examine the different ideas and possibly include them?
- Can I observe my own thinking and feeling in relation to my own views? Do I underestimate them and set them aside easily?

INNOVATIVE THINKING – INNOVATION

- Are my ideas original?
- Do I think "out of the box"?
- Do I raise new issues and show interest in the objectives of the mind journey?

SKILLS OF EXPRESSION OF THOUGHT AND COMMUNICATION

- Can I adequately express my thoughts on a topic?
- Can I express in an argumentative way and support my views with facts and reasoning?
- Can I make up my own explanations, theories, hypotheses or interpretations?

- Can I present the work of the team intelligibly to the plenary?
- Can I pick out the "gist", the central idea, the core, form conclusions and get to the heart of things?

E. To what extent I implement this knowledge to solve problems and face challenges in everyday life.

- Do I activate what I have learned to resolve issues or to create something new, original, innovative?
- Do I practice the skills and processes I have learned in class?
- Do I observe and discern the steps needed to accomplish a desired goal?
- Can I set realistic goals? Can I achieve them?
- Can I plan, act, evaluate my action, see areas for improvement, redesign and re-act?

INDICATIVE STUDENT'S ASSESMENT WORKSHEET

by the Educator

ASSESMENT SCALE: 1-4 (1= poor – 4=excellent)

Descriptive Assessment[36] for Student_____

QUESTIONS

A. How do they get involved in the activity.

- Do they have the ability to complete the tasks within the given time?
- Do they have the organizational skill to maintain their portfolio?
- Do they have the skills in carefully observing, describing, discerning details and discovering patterns of repetition in the activities?
- Do they have the efficiency in achieving the objectives of the sessions?

B. How they collaborate with the team.

- Is the way they interact polite?
- How they support their opinions:
  o Do they stand their ground non-negotiable to the end?
  o Do they negotiate and find combinatorial solutions?
  o Do they constantly retreat?
  o Do they stand aside and follow what others decide?

C. To what extent they fulfilled the individual objectives of the sessions.

- The educator reviews their files and assesses their overall progress.

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[36]Based on:
- "Assessing Thinking: 5 Continua", Artful Thinking, Harvard Project Zero
- "8 Continua for Thinking", Cultures of Thinking, Harvard Project Zero 2008
- Cultures of Thinking Initiative, Ron Ritchhart 2011

D. To what extent they cultivate Mind skills in discussions, in plenary, in everyday life.

<u>METACOGNITION</u>

−   Are they tracking their thinking?
−   Are they recognizing the steps their thinking takes?
−   Can they follow their thinking and the connections they make?
−   Does their reasoning have an inductive and deductive thinking?

<u>COMPREHENSION – ANALYSIS – COMBINATORIAL THINKING</u>

−   Do they ask questions that indicate that they understand the viewpoints of others?
−   Can they recognize patterns of repetition, are they able to relate them to the topic and make a point?
−   Can they compare, connect and relate a topic to everyday life and world issues?
−   Can they go deeper into a topic by uncovering complexities, challenges, blind spots?

<u>SCIENTIFIC THINKING – DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVES & VIEWS</u>

−   Do they listen to the views of their team members? Or do they become emotional (feeling angry, irritated, rejected) because they identify solely with their idea, try to support it and don't listen to anything else? Can they observe their thinking and feeling?
−   Can they see common ground in the different perspectives and views of others?
−   Can they discern what other points are "illuminated" in the issue we are considering by the different perspectives of others?
−   Can they discern what points are "missing" in their personal view?
−   Can they examine the different ideas and possibly include them?
−   Can they observe their own thinking and feeling in relation to their own views? Do they underestimate them and set them aside easily?

INNOVATIVE THINKING – INNOVATION

- Are their ideas original?
- Do they think "out of the box"?
- Do they raise new issues and show interest in the objectives of the mind journey?

SKILLS OF EXPRESSION OF THOUGHT AND COMMUNICATION

- Can they adequately express their thoughts on a topic?
- Can they express in an argumentative way and support their views with facts and reasoning?
- Can they make up their own explanations, theories, hypotheses or interpretations?
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E. To what extent they implement this knowledge to solve problems and face challenges in everyday life.

- Do they activate what they have learned to resolve issues or to create something new, original, innovative?
- Do they practice the skills and processes they have learned in class?
- Do they observe and discern the steps needed to accomplish a desired goal?
- Can they set realistic goals? Can they achieve them?
- Can they plan, act, evaluate their action, see areas for improvement, redesign and re-act?

The large family, Rene Magritte

Acknowledgments

This book is written to be used as a helpful tool from those of us that are interested to guide the students to a personal and collective journey in order to grow and discover their inner compass and strength in these demanding times.

The outline of each session and the sequence of the sessions are indicative and not fixed. They are more like main pieces of an artwork, a "collage" of "walking questions" that search for "walking answers". Depending on the educator and the group the sequence of the session can change, and can create different collective pieces of artwork.

This book describes a process not a product. So, it is an open-ended edition, it is in the process of prototyping. It keeps evolving in the present moment and it depends on the reader and the user.

It is an outcome of years of practice with oneself, in classrooms with students, in workshops for educators as an educator, in workshops with different groups –adults and young people– either as an instructor or a participant.

It took its first written form as an educational guide to 'Thinking–Feeling–Doing' cognitive processes, between the years 2020 and 2021 in Greek and was rewritten and reframed in English in 2023.

During these years a number of interactions happened and I would like to thank all those who worked together and in their own way contributed to this outcome.

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Having the opportunity to participate in "Ulab: Leading from the Emerging future" courses and projects since 2020, I feel part of a bigger community of change-makers that keeps searching, co-initiating, co-sensing, co-presencing, co-creating, co-evolving, prototyping, crystalizing and by "keep showing up", developing systemic profound improvement in our lives.

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Chrissanna Diamanti

December 2023

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Biography

Chrissanna Diamanti was born in Athens, Greece. She is an educator, with a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and serves as Coordinator of Innovative Educational Activities at the Directorate for Primary Education of Cyclades.

Attention management, mind awareness, observation of ways of thinking and behaving, the importance of self-narrative, the different role-playing of individuals and teams and how these can be researched, developed and improved are points of interest and subjects of years of research and practice.

She has been systematically involved with mind awareness skills in education in its various expressions and the dynamics that develop in teams of students and adults, both in theory and in practice.

She has studied and applied various innovative approaches to pedagogical practice. Among them: Thinking and Reflection Routines, "Visible Thinking" Project Zero – Harvard University, "Social Presencing Theatre" practices and activities emphasizing the experience in the present moment "Theory U: Leading from the Emerging Future", MIT University – Presencing Institute.

Having a theatrical background, she has been exploring different approaches through movement, body, mind, sound, voice and nervous system awareness, since 1990. Among those practices and methods are: Grotowski's method, Stanislavski's method, Boal's approach, Brecht's techniques, Tomatis method, Feldenkrais method, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, etc.

She has organized, facilitated and instructed many workshops and seminars for educators dealing with the impact of awareness in:

– Mental, Emotional, Physical Health and Self-care.
– Climate Change, Sustainability and Ecological awareness.
– Human rights and Inclusion, Volunteering, Respect and Diversity.
– Innovation, Entrepreneurship and New Technologies.

She developed the educational training material on "Visible Thinking - Cultivating Mind Skills through Thinking Routines and Reflection", for Primary and Secondary Education in the context of the implementation of the Skills Workshops of the Greek Institute of Educational Policy (I.E.P.): "Ergastiria Dexiotiton: 21st Century Skills Lab", category Mind Skills, Axis Sustainable Living.

She keeps exploring the impact of awareness in transforming personal and collective issues for providing a sustainable way of living and well-being.

https://www.linkedin.com/in/chrissanna-diamanti-9881b7118/

The Beautiful Relations, Rene Magritte