

# CHAKRAS



# Well-being and Stuff

a collection of non-formal education activities supporting both mental and physical health, and well-being in general



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**Each of the following activities was tested by 20+ youngsters in Czech Republic, Greece, Romania, or Italy.**

**The activities can be used individually or they can build up on each other. While our target group are young people from 16 to 30 years old, people above 30 can benefit from them as well. For younger target groups, you might need to adapt the activities slightly.**

**This booklet is a part of a project called Chakras (see Chapter 7). Even though it is inspired by the spiritual concept of chakras that stems from hinduism, it does not promote any specific religion nor belief. Chakras serve as metaphors and the content of the activities is based on science, not religion.**



## Muladhara

Root Chakra



# 1. Inner Child

In this chapter, we will list activities related to reconnecting with your “inner child”.

All activities were taken from a book “Obejměte své vnitřní dítě” by Ladislav Dvořák. The title translates to “Embrace Your Inner Child”. The book was published by Portál in 2015, ISBN 978-80-262-0896-9.



# 1.1.

## The First Meeting with the Inner Child

A guided meditation followed by a drawing session.

**Group size:** 1-20  
**Time:** 1 hour  
**Place:** indoor  
**Materials:** sheets of paper  
drawing/painting supplies

Participants are invited to sit comfortably, or lie down and relax.

Lead short breathing exercises to calm them down, invite them to close their eyes, and then continue with the guided visualisation below (adapt it according to your preferences). The description of the visualisation contains the symbol of ellipsis (...) in multiple places. It marks areas where you can give participants more time for self reflection, or add something from your own rich imagination.

### Guided Visualisation

*Remember a place you know well, where you felt really good as a child. Don't rush... think about all its details... Imagine yourself as an adult who is coming to that place, inspecting it closely. What does it look like now?*

*Suddenly, you hear a child's voice behind you. How big are they? ... How do they look? ... What is their mood? ... What are they saying?*

*Tell it: "I came to see you." What do they answer? ...*

*Ask them: "How are you?" ...*

*Stay with them for a while, and play with them if they want to play with you. ...*

*Tell them you like them and that you want to be meeting them more often. What are they answering? ...  
Tell them you are here for them and that you are going to help them, if they need anything. ...*

*Stay with them for a while, doing what you both will want to do. ...*

*And then give the child a goodbye, but tell them you will be back and that you are already looking forward to it. (If you don't want to say goodbye, you can "take them with you".)*

*Slowly, return back to the room. ... Pay attention to your breathing. Move your hands and legs. Stretch. Rub your face.*

### Task (approx. 30')

1. Take a blank piece of paper and crayons.
2. Using a **non-dominant hand**, draw a picture of your meeting with your inner child.
3. Turn the paper around and, there, write down what the child told you (still with a **non-dominant hand**).
4. If you wish, you can answer them with your **dominant hand**. You can hold a "dialogue" for a while.
5. Don't overthink it, just follow your feelings using automatic writing. Be curious and let both hands do the writing. Maybe you succeed, maybe you fail, both outcomes are ok.

### Reflection (approx. 30')

1. How do you feel at the moment?
2. What did you experience during the guided visualisation? How was meeting your inner child?
3. Would you share with us what you drew and/or what you wrote?
4. What are your takeaways from this experience?



## 1.2. Emotional Tank

A drawing activity that allows people to reflect on the sources of their energy.

**Group size:** 1-20  
**Time:** 1 hour  
**Place:** indoor  
**Materials:** sheets of paper  
drawing/painting supplies

**Task** (approx. 30')

### Part 1. Emotional Tank

1. Take a blank piece of paper and crayons.
2. Draw your emotional tank (things that give you energy).
3. Inside of it, draw/write everything that brings you happiness, comfort, encouragement.
4. Follow your intuition, don't overthink or over-analyse.
5. If you feel like it, play with details.

### Part 2. Sources of happiness

1. See if you can cluster your energy-bringers according to their sources (i.e. laughter, hug, and sex can be coming from your partner).
2. It is ok if something is coming from more sources, and vice-versa.
3. If none of the sources you already identified matches any of the energy-bringers, try to figure out its own source.

### Part 3. Givers and drainers of energy

1. Take a new sheet of paper and make a list of people who give you energy.
2. Take another sheet of paper and make a list of people who drain you out of energy.
3. If you feel like it, draw little humans around your emotional tank, and use arrows to symbolise if they give energy to you or drain it.

**Reflection** (approx. 30')

1. How satisfied are you with your emotional tank?
2. Has anything surprised you? If so, what?
3. Are you missing happy experiences from any source? What do you need?



## 1.3. Fulfilling Wishes

A drawing activity that allows people to plan how to bring happiness to their lives actively.

**Group size:** 1-20  
**Time:** 1 hour  
**Place:** indoor  
**Materials:** sheets of paper  
drawing/painting supplies

**Task** (approx. 30')

1. Write down a list of activities that usually bring you joy.
2. Make a drawing of it (a map).
3. Answer the following question: "How often do you experience them?" Write an answer on the other side of the paper.
4. Find a comfortable place, close your eyes, and connect with your inner child.
5. Ask them a question: "How often do we experience those joys?" You can lead a dialog or simply listen.
6. Ask them: "What would bring you joy? What would you like to do or experience?"
7. If possible, do it straight away.
8. Make a plan of "meeting with joy" when you will fulfil the wish of your inner child. See if you can turn it into weekly practice.

9. Think about what you liked to do as a kid (or ask them). What did you wish to do but couldn't? Can you find any unfulfilled wishes?
10. Find a way to fulfil these wishes.

**Sharing** (approx. 30')

If somebody doesn't know how to meet the unfulfilled wish, it is a chance for the community to offer each other support.

1. What did you plan for your "meeting with joy"?
2. What unfulfilled wishes did you recognize, and how are you going to answer them?



# 1.4. Dance of Joy and Rage

A dancing activity allowing people to express and experience blocked emotions.

**Group size:** 4-20  
**Time:** 2 hour  
**Place:** training room, dancing floor  
**Materials:** speaker  
 list of music from participants

### Preparation (at least a day ahead)

1. Every participant will name 2 songs to the organisers:
  - a) an aggressive, dynamic song,
  - b) a kind song that brings them joy and happiness.
2. The organisers will make 2 randomised lists:
  - a) a list of aggressive songs,
  - b) a list of kind songs + begin this list with a calm, melancholic, empowering song, ie.: *India.Arie - I Am Light*.
3. Participants should:
  - a) come in clothes they can move in,
  - b) bring a water bottle.

### Task 1: Forbidden emotions (approx. 15')

- Some emotions are forbidden in some families (or somebody holds a monopoly in them, i.e. the father holds a monopoly on anger). Reflect individually (possibly with paper & pen):
- 1) What emotions were forbidden to you in your family?
  - 2) What substitute expression of them have you been using (i.e. obedience or sadness instead of anger)? What was it bringing to you, and what did it cost you?
  - 3) Do you still have a problem expressing those emotions? What would happen if you would allow yourself to express those emotions?
  - 4) How would you do it? What would you get, and what would you lose?

### Sharing (approx. 15')

This activity offers the possibility for group sharing, or sharing in pairs. A simple invitation is: "Share anything that is there to share."

### Task 2: Dance of Anger (approx. 30')

1. Stretch yourself, make yourself ready to move.
2. Make a circle.
3. When you hear your song, you enter the circle and move as much as you can.
4. When the DJ changes the song, you go back to the circle and someone else will go to the centre.
5. People in the circle can still dance, but mostly in their spot, and they should cheer and bring energy to the person in the middle.
6. Is there somebody who doesn't want to be watched during their song? when this person goes to the centre, others turn around until the song is changed.

### Sharing (approx. 15')

1. How do you feel?
2. How was the experience for you?

### Task 3: Dance of Joy (approx. 30')

*The DJ plays the songs. The first song is chosen by the DJ so participants have time to warm up and tune in.*

1. Find a comfortable place.
2. When the music plays, it is solely up to you how you will react.
3. If you want, you can slightly close your eyes. However, be aware of your surrounding so you won't hurt yourself or others.
4. When your song is on, move. Others, it is up to you if you dance, or rest.
5. You can move alone, as well as join the dance of others.
6. Be aware of consent – is your connection welcome or not? When to join, and when to leave?

### Sharing (approx. 15')

1. How was it for you?
2. Do you feel joy from "meeting" with others, or do you feel restrictions?
3. Can you "meet" others and complement each other?



**Svadhishthana**

Sacral Chakra



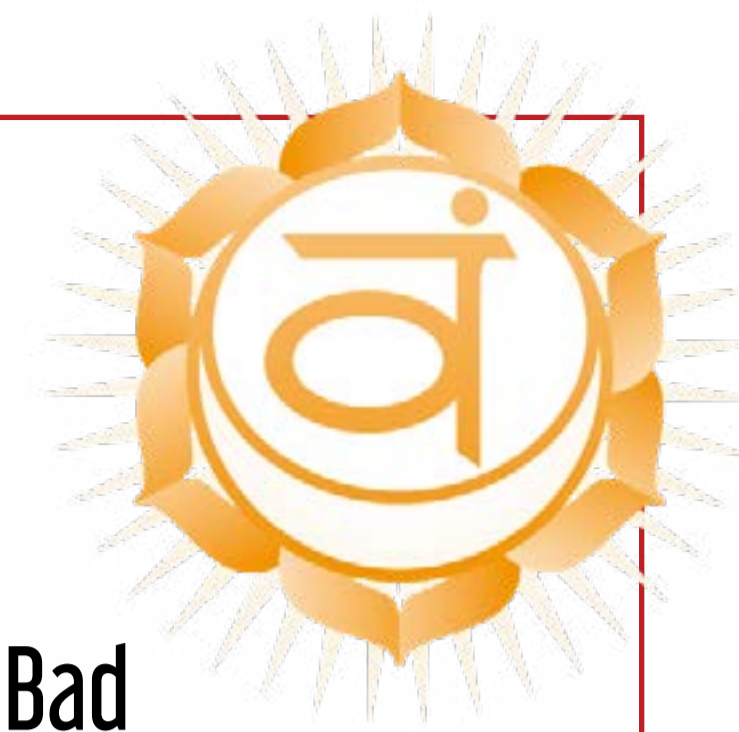
## 2. Stress Management

The following activities are about understanding stress, its positive and negative effects, how to manage and cope with it, and how to become resilient.



# What Is Stress

Stress is a natural physiological and psychological response to a perceived threat, challenge, or demand. Stress can be triggered by a wide range of situations and events, both positive and negative, and it can affect people differently based on their individual perceptions and coping mechanisms.



# 2.1. Understanding Stress: Good vs. Bad

In this session, participants will explore the concepts of good stress and bad stress. They will engage in brainstorming activities and role-playing scenarios to identify how stress can be both beneficial and harmful. The facilitator will guide the discussion, emphasizing the importance of moderate stress levels and helping participants understand how to distinguish between good and bad stress.

**Group size:** 3-20  
**Time:** 20 - 30 minutes  
**Place:** indoor  
**Materials:** flipchart  
two different color markers  
stress scenarios handouts (below)

## 1. Introduction (approx. 2')

- Explain the purpose of the session as explained in the Session Overview.
- Mention that stress is a natural part of life and can have both positive and negative effects.

## 2. Brainstorming (approx. 5')

- Divide the flipchart into two sections: one for "Good Stress" and one for "Bad Stress."
- Start by briefly sharing two real-life examples:
  - Good stress: "Starting a new job or project."
  - Bad stress: "Being overwhelmed by work or personal issues."
- Ask participants to brainstorm and share their thoughts on each section:
  - Bad stress: "Why is stress bad?"
  - Good stress: "How does stress help you?"
- Encourage participants to contribute their ideas freely. Write down their responses on the flipchart.





### 3. Stressful Scenarios Role-play (approx. 10')

- Provide participants with a handout containing several stressful scenarios (e.g., deadlines, unexpected events).
- Ask participants to work in pairs or small groups and choose one scenario.
- Instruct them to role-play the scenario, with one participant acting as the one experiencing stress and the other providing support and being curious about the situation.
- After each role-play, have the groups discuss whether the stress in the scenario was good or bad and why.
- Rotate the scenarios and roles to allow everyone to participate.

### 4. Facilitator Guidance (approx. 3')

- After the role-play activity, discuss some of the common ideas and insights that emerged from each scenario.
- Emphasize that good stress can be beneficial in moderate quantities, helping individuals stay motivated and alert.
- Highlight that bad stress, when excessive or chronic, can have adverse effects on physical and mental health.

### 5. Reflection and Discussion (approx. 5')

- Engage the participants in a brief reflection exercise.
- Ask them to think about how they can identify whether the stress they experience is good or bad.
- Encourage them to consider signs or indicators that help them distinguish between the two.
- Open the floor for a brief discussion, inviting participants to share their reflections and strategies for identifying the type of stress they experience.

### 6. Conclusion (approx. 2')

- Summarize the key takeaways from the session.
- Encourage participants to be mindful of their stress levels and to seek ways to manage stress effectively.
- Thank participants for their active participation.

*Do not mention the types of stress. This is the challenge for the participants.  
Feel free to create your own scenarios.*

## Bad Stress Scenarios

### Work Deadlines

Imagine you have a tight deadline at work and you're struggling to complete a critical project. Your supervisor is putting pressure on you to finish it as soon as possible.

### Unexpected Health Issue

You receive a call from a family member informing you that they've been hospitalized due to a sudden health issue. You need to coordinate their care and support them during this challenging time.

### Relationship Conflict

You've been experiencing ongoing conflicts with a close friend or family member, and the tension has reached a breaking point. You need to address the issue and find a resolution.

### Financial Emergency

You unexpectedly discover a significant financial crisis, such as a major home repair or medical bill, and you're unsure how you'll manage to cover the costs.

## Good Stress Scenarios

### Preparing for a Competition

You're an athlete or performer preparing for a big competition or performance. The stress of competition is driving you to train and practice diligently, aiming for peak performance.

### Starting a New Job

You've just landed a job that offers new challenges and opportunities for growth. The excitement and anticipation are motivating you to excel in your new role.

### Planning a Wedding

You're in the process of planning your dream wedding. While there's a lot to organize and coordinate, the stress is driving you to create a memorable and special event.



## 2.2. Managing Stress

This training session serves as a continuation of the previous “Understanding Stress: Good vs. Bad” session. Participants will explore the importance of managing stress and be introduced to various stress management techniques that can be beneficial in their daily lives.

**Group size:** 3-20  
**Time:** 20 - 30 minutes  
**Place:** indoor  
**Materials:** flipchart  
markers

### 1. Recap (approx. 2')

- Briefly recap the key points from the previous session 2.1. *Understanding Stress: Good vs. Bad.*
- Mention that managing stress effectively is essential for maintaining overall well-being.

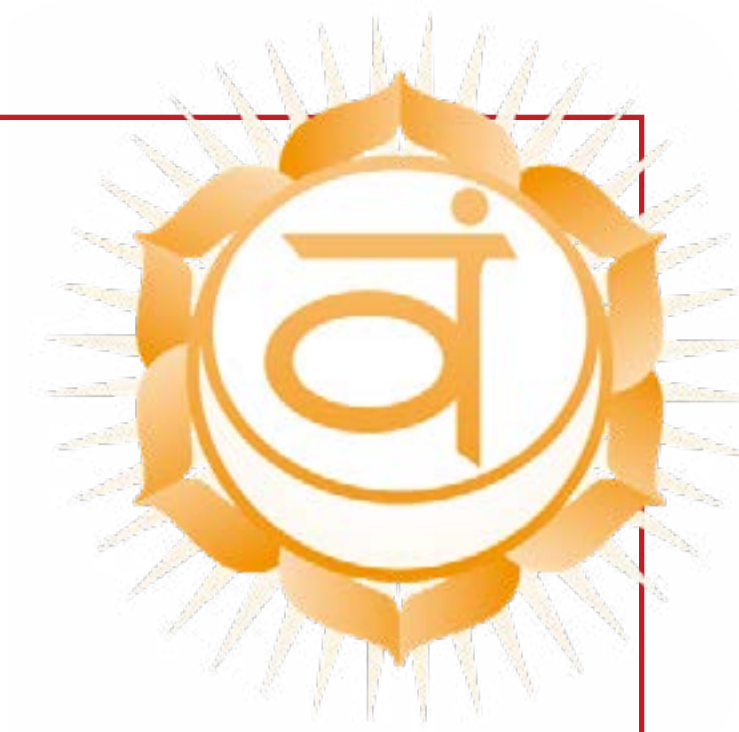
### 2. Introduction to Stress Management (approx. 3')

- Use the flipchart to explain the concept of stress management.
- Emphasize that managing stress involves using strategies to reduce or cope with the negative effects of stress.

### 3. Benefits of Stress Management (approx. 5')

- Discuss the benefits of stress management with the group.
- Explain how it can lead to improved physical and mental health, better decision-making, and increased overall productivity.

Choose some of the techniques you want to use depending on the time and the need of the group. There are 6 techniques in this chapter that you can choose from, each with different lengths and materials needed.



## 2.2.1. Deep Breathing (4-7-8 technique)

Teach a calming breathing technique for stress relief.

**Group size:** small to large  
**Time:** 15 - 20 minutes  
**Place:** quiet indoor  
**Materials:** digital metronome on a phone or a laptop

### Session Flow

- Start by telling people how the exercise will look so they know the steps.
- Show them how you will measure seconds either using the metronome or just small claps.
- Start facilitating the session using the steps in the column on the right.
- **Short reflection:**  
Ask participants how they feel now after the session.
- **Projection:**  
Ask participants when they could use a small exercise like this. Help them with examples: before a meeting, before an important discussion, when feeling agitated after a stressful event.

**Benefits:**  
Effective for immediate relaxation and reducing anxiety.

**Disadvantages:**  
May not address the root causes of stress.

### Steps

- 1) Find a Comfortable Position:**  
Sit or lie down in a comfortable spot. Ensure your back is straight and relax your shoulders.
- 2) Empty Your Lungs:**  
Start by exhaling completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
- 3) Inhale for 4 Seconds:**  
Close your mouth and quietly inhale through your nose to a mental count of four.
- 4) Hold Your Breath for 7 Seconds:**  
Hold your breath and count to seven.
- 5) Exhale for 8 Seconds:**  
Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound, to the count of eight.
- 6) Repeat the Cycle:**  
Repeat this cycle at least four times, or until you feel calmer and more relaxed.



## 2.2.2. Sport as Stress Relief for Group Dynamics

The activity focuses on utilizing physical activity as a medium for stress relief, fostering teamwork and camaraderie within the group.

<b>Group size:</b>	small to large
<b>Time:</b>	1 - 2 hours
<b>Place</b>	outdoor or indoor sports facility
<b>Materials:</b>	variety of sports equipment suitable for all fitness levels

### Facilitator's Preparation:

- Familiarize yourself with basic rules and safety guidelines of the chosen sport.
- Prepare a list of light, inclusive sports or activities suitable for a range of physical abilities.
- Organize equipment and ensure it is in good condition.

### Session Flow

#### Introduction and Stress Level Check-In

- Begin with a brief introduction about the session's aim.
- Invite participants to share their current stress level on a scale of 1-10 or bring a recent stressful event to mind (optional and as per comfort level).
- Explain how physical activity can positively impact stress.

### Team Formation and Warm-Up

- Organize participants into teams or pairs, considering a mix of abilities and ensuring inclusivity.
- Lead a group warm-up, focusing on gentle stretches and light cardio to prepare for the activity.

### Engaging in the Sport

- Guide the participants to start the chosen sport or activity, providing basic instructions and rules.
- Encourage participants to engage enthusiastically, focusing on the enjoyment of the activity rather than competition.
- Emphasize teamwork, cooperation, and positive interaction among participants.

### Cool-Down and Reflection

- After the sports session, bring everyone together for a cool-down period, including gentle stretches and relaxation techniques.
- Facilitate a group discussion, encouraging participants to share their experiences, feelings, and any reduction in stress levels.
- Highlight the importance of physical activity as a stress management tool and encourage regular practice.

### Benefits

- Helps in releasing physical tension and reducing stress.
- Improves mood and mental well-being.
- Strengthens social bonds and teamwork skills.

### Considerations

- Ensure activities are accessible and inclusive for all participants, regardless of their physical abilities.
- Be mindful of participants who may be uncomfortable with certain activities and offer alternatives.
- Requires access to appropriate sports facilities and equipment.

### Closing Remarks

- Thank the participants for their involvement and encourage them to incorporate physical activity into their regular routine for stress management.
- Provide information on local sports clubs or groups they can join for regular activity.



## 2.2.3. Artistic Stress Relief & Understanding

This activity enables participants to cope with stress related to a specific situation in their lives through artistic expression. It's followed by a paired activity where another participant interprets their artwork, facilitating mutual understanding and empathy.

**Group size:** small to medium  
**Time:** 1.5 - 2 hours  
**Place:** comfortable and quiet indoor space, conducive to creativity  
**Materials:** a variety of art supplies (paints, markers, colored pencils, sketch paper, canvases) cleaning materials (paper towels, water, etc.)

### Facilitator's Preparation:

- Set up art stations with easy access to all materials.
- Familiarize yourself with basic principles of art as a therapeutic tool.
- Prepare guiding questions to help participants explore their feelings through art.

### Session Flow

#### 1. Introduction and Stress Identification

- Start with a warm welcome and an overview of the session's purpose.
- Encourage participants to reflect on a current life situation causing them stress or concern.

#### 2. Artistic Expression Phase

- Guide participants to express their stress or emotions about the identified situation through art. Clarify that the focus is on emotional expression, not artistic talent.
- Allocate around 45-60 minutes for this creative process, ensuring a calm and non-judgmental atmosphere.

### 3. Pairing and Art Interpretation

- After the art-making phase, pair up participants. These pairings can be random or based on participants' choice.
- In pairs, participants will take turns explaining their artwork and their associated stressors.
- The listening partner then shares their interpretation of the artwork and discusses how it might reflect the artist's emotions and situation. This is not about 'getting it right' but rather about seeing the situation from a different perspective.

### 4. Group Reflection and Discussion

- Bring the group together for a closing discussion.
- Encourage volunteers to share their artwork and the insights gained from their partner's interpretation.
- Discuss the role of art in stress relief and understanding one's own emotions.

### Benefits

- Provides a creative outlet for stress and emotional expression.
- Facilitates understanding and empathy among participants.
- Enhances self-awareness and perspective-taking abilities.

### Considerations

- Be sensitive to the emotional state of participants, especially when discussing stressful situations.
- Ensure a safe and supportive environment where confidentiality is respected.
- If anything comes to the surface that needs further attention, recommend the participant to explore this with a trained therapist.

### Closing Remarks

- Thank participants for their openness and engagement.
- Encourage them to continue using art as a tool for stress management and emotional exploration.
- Provide information on further resources or groups focused on art therapy or stress management.



## 2.2.4. Reflective Writing and Thoughtful Contemplation

The purpose of the activity is to facilitate personal growth and stress management through the practice of journaling and philosophical meditation.

**Size of group:** small to medium groups  
**Time:** 30 - 45 min  
**Place:** a serene and quiet indoor environment  
**Materials:** journals/notebooks and pens for each participant

### Session Flow

#### 1. Introduction to Reflective Practices

- Begin the session by discussing the benefits of journaling and philosophical meditation in understanding and managing stress.
- Explain how these practices promote self-awareness and deeper insight into one's thoughts and emotions.

#### 2. Setting the Scene for Writing and Contemplation

- Distribute journals and pens to each participant.
- Make it clear to the participants that what they write will be private and they will only be asked to share what they feel comfortable with. Encourage them to feel free to express themselves.
- Choose a series of questions for the intended session and audience from the list below.

#### 3. Silent Journaling and Meditation Phase

- Allow participants ample time to either write in their journals or engage in silent philosophical meditation, reflecting on the provided prompts.
- Ensure the environment remains quiet and conducive to introspection during this period.

#### 4. Sharing and Discussion

- After the writing or contemplation time, invite participants to share any insights, experiences, or reflections they feel comfortable discussing.
- Facilitate a group conversation, encouraging a supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere.

### Series of Questions

#### 1. Identifying Stress Triggers

What are the top three stressors in your life currently, and how do they impact your daily routine?

#### 2. Personal Reactions to Stress

Reflect on a recent stressful situation. How did you react, and what did your reaction reveal about your coping strategies?

#### 3. Stress and Physical Health

How does stress manifest in your body? Are there any physical symptoms you experience when stressed?

#### 4. Coping Mechanisms

What are your current methods for managing stress? Are they effective, and is there anything you want to change or improve?

#### 5. Mindfulness and Stress

Describe a time when being mindful or present helped reduce your stress. What did you learn from this experience?

#### 6. Social Support and Stress

How does your social network (friends, family, colleagues) influence your stress levels? Do they contribute to or alleviate your stress?

#### 7. Work-Life Balance

Reflect on your work-life balance. How does this balance, or lack thereof, contribute to your stress levels?

#### 8. Long-term Stress Management Goals

What are some long-term changes you want to make to better manage stress in your life?

### Benefits

- Enhances self-awareness and understanding.
- Aids in processing emotions and thoughts, leading to deeper insights.
- Can be a valuable tool for personal development and stress relief.

### Considerations

- Acknowledge that introspection through journaling or meditation requires openness and may not be immediately comfortable for everyone.
- Be prepared to guide participants who are new to these practices or who might feel stuck.

### Concluding Remarks

- Thank the participants for their willingness to explore and share.
- Encourage them to continue these practices regularly as a means of self-reflection and stress management.
- Offer suggestions for journal prompts or philosophical meditation techniques they can use in the future.



## 2.2.5. Expressive Release with Gibberish Acting

The activity offers a unique and uninhibited way of releasing pent-up emotions and stress through gibberish acting in a non-judgmental setting.

<b>Group size:</b>	small to medium groups that have already worked with each other and are comfortable
<b>Time:</b>	20 - 30 min
<b>Place</b>	a private and secure indoor space
<b>Materials:</b>	none

### Session Flow

#### 1. Introduction to Gibberish Acting

- Begin by explaining the session's objective: to use gibberish acting as a tool for emotional expression and stress relief.
- Emphasize the importance of creating a safe, respectful, and judgment-free environment for all participants.

#### 2. Guidelines for Gibberish Expression

- Instruct participants that they will be using made-up, nonsensical words, sounds, and physical gestures to express their feelings, particularly stress and frustration.
- Clarify that there is no correct or incorrect way to engage in this activity. Encourage creativity and spontaneity.

#### 3. Encouragement for Full Participation

- Motivate participants to immerse themselves fully in the activity. Encourage them to let go of inhibitions and not to worry about how they might be perceived.
- Remind them that the goal is personal emotional release, not performance or coherence.

#### Gibberish Acting Session

- Facilitate the gibberish acting. You can either let participants do it individually in front of the group or all together.
- Ensure that each participant gets an opportunity to express themselves without interruptions or feedback from others.

#### 4. Reflection and Sharing

- After the acting session, create a space for participants to share their experiences or any emotions that emerged during the activity.
- Encourage open discussion about how the activity felt, what was challenging, and any surprising insights gained.

### Benefits

- Provides a novel and effective way for emotional release.
- Can lead to significant stress relief and a sense of liberation.
- Encourages creativity and can enhance group dynamics through shared vulnerability.

### Considerations

- Acknowledge that this activity might be outside the comfort zone for some and offer reassurance and support.
- Be attentive to the emotional state of the participants, especially those who might find this form of expression more challenging.

### Concluding Remarks

- Thank the group for their willingness to participate and be vulnerable.
- Encourage them to explore other creative forms of stress relief and self-expression.
- Discuss how such uninhibited expressions can be integrated into their stress management practices.



## 2.2.6. Stress Relief Through Nature Connection

The activity encourages the use of the serene and healing environment of nature for stress reduction and to foster a deeper connection with the natural world.

**Group size:** small to medium groups  
**Time:** 45 - 60 min  
**Place:** an outdoor natural setting such as a park, forest, or nature trail  
**Materials:** hiking equipment if the trail is challenging, water

### Session Flow

#### 1. Group Assembly and Introduction

- Gather the participants at the selected natural location.
- Start with a brief talk on how nature can significantly reduce stress and enhance overall well-being.

#### 2. Guidelines for Mindful Walking

- Instruct participants on the concept of mindful walking – being fully present and observant of the natural environment, noticing the sights, sounds, and smells.
- Encourage them to focus on their breathing, taking deep and measured breaths, and to be aware of their footsteps and the sensations they experience.

#### 3. Commencing the Nature Walk

- Lead the group on a gentle walk through the natural setting. Ensure the pace is slow to moderate, allowing everyone to comfortably engage in mindfulness.
- Remind participants to be fully immersed in the experience, observing the beauty and tranquility of nature.

#### 4. Silent Connection with Nature

- Allocate a period during the walk for participants to silently connect with their surroundings. This can be a time for personal reflection and absorption of the natural beauty.
- Encourage them to touch the leaves, feel the texture of the bark, listen to the birds, or simply breathe in the fresh air.

#### 5. Post-Walk Reflection and Sharing

- After the walk, gather the group for a sharing session.
- Facilitate a discussion where participants can share their experiences, feelings, and any insights they gained during the walk.

### Benefits

- Promotes relaxation and a sense of peace by connecting with nature.
- Enhances awareness and appreciation of the natural world.
- Offers a new perspective and a break from the hustle of daily life.

### Considerations

- Be mindful of weather conditions and prepare accordingly.
- Consider the accessibility of the trail or path, especially for participants with mobility issues.
- Ensure that all participants are comfortable with the outdoor setting and walking distance.

### Concluding Remarks

- Thank the group for their participation and openness to connect with nature.
- Encourage them to incorporate nature walks into their routine for regular stress management.
- Discuss other nature-based activities that can aid in stress relief and emotional well-being.



## Manipura

Solar Plexus Chakra



# 3. Healthy Relationships

The following chapter describes a big activity focused on development of healthy attitude to relationships.





# 3.0. Healthy Relationship

In this session, participants will explore the concepts of good stress and bad stress. They will engage in brainstorming activities and role-playing scenarios to identify how stress can be both beneficial and harmful. The facilitator will guide the discussion, emphasizing the importance of moderate stress levels and helping participants understand how to distinguish between good and bad stress.

**Group size:** 12-20  
**Time:** 2 hours  
**Place:** indoor or outdoor  
**Materials:** flipchart papers  
drawing/painting supplies

## 1. Introduction and Hello (approx. 20')

- Participants are invited to walk in the room, moving the attention inward first. Notice their walk, their breathing, if there are any tensions or if they are not in the body, and how their feet make contact with the ground.
- Then, they are invited to meet with other eyes around the room. See what is different inside when they are meeting someone else.
- First, they greet each other, but like they are in a hurry, just say their name and run.
- Second, they greet each other like an old friend.
- Thirdly, they greet each other like they are lovers or like they really admire the other person.

### Reflection (approx. 10')

- How did it feel different?
- How was it different in your body?

## 2. What do you know about healthy relationships? (approx. 20')

The big group will split into 4 smaller groups. Each will have a different task:

- One group will write down on a flipchart what a healthy relationship should look like and feel like and what you can do in one.
- One group will act out what an unhealthy relationship looks like.
- One group will draw or paint what a healthy relationship should feel like.
- One group will present, in any way they want (drawing, act or write), about healthy boundaries and their role in relationships.

### Presentation (approx. 40')

Participants will make a 5' presentation and will have 5 minutes for talk on the subject.

Possible questions:

- What would they add to the presentation?
- How did they feel while they presented (or acted in certain events)?
- Do you want to share a relationship where this is happening (or not happening?)

### Note:

The first 3 groups will present now, the fourth after the break (in the 4th part, when we start talking about boundaries).

**3. Where the focus should be in a relationship (I, you, they), and how it feels**  
(approx. 20')

People will stand in two rows, facing each other. After each stage, one row will move to the left so that everyone has a new partner at every stage.

**Stage 1**

- Name generalizations or generally accepted opinions for 1 minute. Only general things, nothing personal.

*For example: People who are late are disrespectful. Climate change is something serious. People with a lot of money are smarter.*

- Switch the roles: the talker now listens, the listener now talks.

- **Introspection:**

- 1) How did it feel in your body to talk state the generalizations?
- 2) What thoughts arose?
- 3) How did you feel about the relationship?
- 4) What level of connection arose from this?

**Stage 2**

- Change partners and only say statements starting with “you...”

*For example: You are wearing a red sweater. You are always late. You are making me mad.*

Try to assume a little bit, but also find some truth in it.

Listeners, don't take it personally, but be aware of how you feel.

- Switch the roles: the talker now listens, the listener now talks. Use only “you” statements.

- **Introspection:**

- 1) How did it feel in your body to use “you” statements?
- 2) What thoughts arose?
- 3) Compare what it felt like to listen and to talk.
- 4) How did you feel about the relationship?
- 5) What level of connection arose from this?
- 6) How was it different from the other stages?

**Stage 3**

- Change partners and now only say statements that start with “I”. Make them true and as personal as possible. Don't share what you don't want to share.

- Switch the roles.

- **Introspection:**

- 1) How did it feel in your body to use “I” statements?
- 2) What thoughts arose?
- 3) Compare what it felt like to listen and to talk.
- 4) How did you feel about the relationship?
- 5) What level of connection arose from this?
- 6) How was it different from the other stages?

**Stage 4: Reflection**

- How was it?
- What differences were there between the stages?
- What was more comfortable for you?
- When did you feel more connection, and when more disconnection?
- Was it different from person to person?
- Where are you more comfortable?
- In which relationships do you want more “I” statements, and in which more general talk?

#### 4. Boundaries in Healthy Relationships (approx. 20')

- Now, the fourth group from the 2nd exercise will present. What is the role of healthy boundaries in relationships?
- Then, participants will receive a handout (attached), and will talk about how to handle it when someone crosses your boundary. How does it feel, how to react, and other myths and social conditionings.
- Split the participants in groups of 2, and give them some situations where they will need to set a boundary.

*For example: Their mother calls too often, and they would like to have some space and trust. Or, someone invites them to a romantic date, but they only want to be friends.*

They are invited to play with it, to take as much time as they need to formulate what to say so that they are satisfied with the result. They can also ask for feedback from the receiver of the boundaries, so they can get insight into how it was for the receiver.

#### Reflection

- How did it feel to set a boundary and how to receive one?
- What was comfortable, and what was not?
- What was difficult, and what was easy?

#### Closure of the Workshop

Let our bodies say goodbye: Make a move that expresses your mood right now. Everyone else will copy it and make it. Pay attention to how and if it changes your mood.

You've invited some friends over, but it's getting late and you want to sleep in. Your friends don't seem to want to leave. How can you let them know you'd like to go to bed?

Your roommate keeps eating the food in your fridge. You've had this conversation before but he still seems to do it. Re-communicate your boundary to him, more clearly and with emphasis on consequences.

Parents call you much more often than you'd like and they always want to know where you are and what you're doing. It has become annoying and complex for you. Have a discussion with them about your limitations and try to find a middle ground together. Be firm, but with a focus on you and how you feel about it.

You've been working at this job for 2 years and although you've been promised a raise, it still hasn't been given. Your performance is good and you have not received any complaints. Decide how much longer you are willing to wait and let your boss know how you are doing and what may happen if the promise is not kept. (Not a threat, a consequence).

A good friend invites you on a date, but you're not interested in being anything but friends. How can you make that clear, yet gentle?

Your brother asks for your car on the weekend, he needs to get to work. You already have weekend plans with the car, but he also helped you by taking care of the dog last weekend (brother can use this in role-play). Set the limit so you don't have to cancel your plans.

The guy/girl you've been dating for a few months shows no signs of wanting anything more serious, but it has become a priority for you to have a relationship and you want something more out of these dates. Communicate your needs from this relationship and how you want the relationship to evolve.

Personal boundaries are the limits and rules we set **for ourselves** in relationships. A person with healthy boundaries can say “no” to others when they want, but they are also comfortable with opening up **to intimacy and close relationships**.

### 1. Know Your Boundaries

Limits are set based on your own values or things that are important to you. For example, if spending time with family is important to you, set clear boundaries about working overtime.

The limits are yours and yours alone. Many of your own boundaries may be aligned with those of your loved ones, but others will have different boundaries.

Know your limits before you get into a situation. This will make you much less likely to do things you’re not comfortable with.

### 2. What To Say

You always have the right to say “no.” When you do, it’s important to state the boundary clearly and unambiguously so there’s no doubt about what you want.

*“I’m not comfortable with this.”*  
*“Please don’t do that.”*  
*“Not now.”*  
*“I can’t do this for you.”*  
*“That doesn’t work for me.”*  
*“I decided not to...”*  
*“I don’t want to do that.”*

### 3. What To Do

**Use confident body language**

Look the person in the eye, use a stable tone neither too loud nor too quiet.

**Be respectful**

Avoid yelling, using passive-aggressive behavior, or ignoring the person. It’s okay to be firm, but your message will be better received if you’re respectful.

**Plan ahead**

Think about what you want to say and how to say it, talk to someone close to you about it, you can even do a role play in which you try different ways of saying it. It will make you surer of yourself.

**Negotiate**

When it comes to an important relationship, you need to be willing to listen to the other person’s version and maybe consider his/her needs. You don’t “have to” compromise, but negotiation is part of any healthy relationship.

## Be Aware

- Be aware of your boundaries and the places and relationships where they may be violated. -
- Become aware of your reaction when a boundary is violated, emotionally and in your body. -
- Take as much time as you need to understand how you feel and where your boundary has been violated. -



## Decide

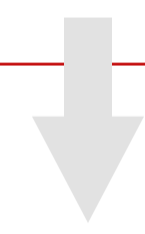
Decide whether there is a limit you want to communicate or not. Maybe there are other priorities right now, or maybe the relationship isn’t important enough, and you can just back out from it.



## Communicate

- Get ready. Decide what, when and how you say it. Be Firm. Gentle, but firm. -
- Set boundaries because you want to build trust and to feel safe. -
- Use as many sentences as possible that start with “I”, so you avoid the other person getting defensive. Make sure they get your message. -
- Communicate a consequence if the boundary is not respected. Be prepared to respect it. A NO without consequences is not a NO. -

*“When you do ..., I feel ... (disrespected, angry, small, ignored,...), I understand you’re doing this because..., but I need ... otherwise ...”*



## Listen and Negotiate

- Find time and energy to listen to the other person’s response. -
- Keep the discussion on the topic you brought up. Some people use the opportunity to bring up other things from the past “but you did too...”. Be clear and get back to your boundary. “If this is important to you, we can come back to this issue in the future, but right now it’s about this.” -
- It’s ok to change your mind once you hear the other person’s side of the story. -
- You may feel guilty, ashamed or anxious when you start setting boundaries. With time, it will get easier. Think of it as choosing guilt over resentment. Resentment leads over time to anger, and anger leads to distancing. -
- Be prepared to bring up the boundary again whenever it’s broken. -

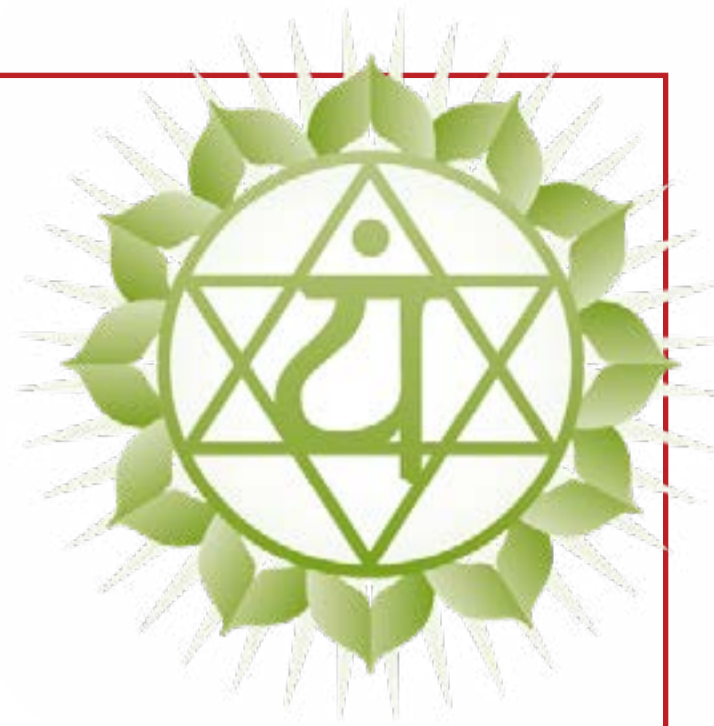


**Anahata**  
Heart Chakra



## 4. A Mindful Taste

In this chapter, we will propose activities related to mindfulness mainly inspired by the MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Method) method created by John Kabat-Zinn.



## 4.0. A Mindful Taste

A mindfulness-based stress reduction method.

<b>Group size:</b>	1-20
<b>Time:</b>	1.5 - 2 hour
<b>Place</b>	indoor/outdoor
<b>Materials:</b>	sheets of paper markers/pens post-its tape pillows or yoga mats

### Brainstorming & Sharing (approx. 10')

Ask participants to answer the following: "Mindfulness for me is..." with a max of 3 words (post-its on the wall).

All participants and facilitators share their ideas of mindfulness and say a few words about their experience with it.

### Task 1: Breath Work (approx. 5')

Guided process to support participants to embody awareness through focusing on the breath flow.

Invite participants to close their eyes or lower their gaze, assume a comfortable sitting position and place hands on their knees. Invite them to pay attention to following points:

- *Keep the back straight but not tense.*
- *Let your shoulders drop.*
- *Bring your attention to your breathing. Don't try to control it, just let it happen, feeling how it flows in and out through your nose.*

To support the process suggest that:

- *If at some point thoughts arrive just note them as thoughts without judgement and then simply gently bring your attention back to your breathing.*
- *Focus on the feeling of the breath as it flows through your chest, noticing how the chest and the belly contract and expand accordingly.*

### Task 2: Attitudinal Foundation of Mindfulness (10 - 15')

*The activity offers an introduction to the attitudinal foundation of mindfulness practice from the perspective of John Kabat-Zinn – a biologist and buddhist practitioner who developed the clinical method known as MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Method) in the 90s.*

See the 6 main attitudinal elements below. Write them down on a flip chart paper and briefly present them. Ask the participants to share among each other what is more relevant to them and where they are struggling the most.

1. Non-judging
2. Welcoming
3. Letting go/non-attachment
4. Non-striving
5. Trust your body
6. Patience

These elements will become the core part of the attitude applied in the next following exercises. They are to be remembered by the participants.

It is needed for the facilitator to remember, remind and apply the attitudinal elements during the practice to support participants in their process of embodying awareness. To deepen your knowledge on the attitudinal foundation of mindfulness and its elements, see the bibliography section at the end of this chapter.

### Task 3: Walking Meditation (approx. 10')

#### 1. Non-judging

Invite the participants to close their eyes or lower their gaze and to refocus their attention on their breath (approx. 2').

Invite them to feel the contact of their feet with the ground, to play with shifting their weight from their right foot to the left foot.

Then, invite them to start moving around the room very slowly back and forth or in small circles, keeping their eyes closed or gaze lowered, focusing on each feeling and sensation.

To support the process, remind them: *just be with each step. Walking meditation requires attention to the walking itself. We are not trying to go anywhere.*

#### 2. Awareness of the space around me:

While the participants maintain focus on the sensations of the walking, invite them to explore how it feels to change the speed and perceive the presence of the bodies of the other people in the room.

Invite them to open their eyes and start bringing awareness to the space around them.

Suggestions: you may ask them to perceive the temperature of the room; to observe the colours around them and the space and its shapes (i.e. furniture or natural environment).

#### **Task 4: Basic Yoga Practices** (approx. 10')

*The activity is a guided process towards basic yoga practices to embody awareness.*

Remind the participants that the following activity is not an exercise and the important thing is just to be in the present moment. To switch from the exercise attitude to the meditation attitude, keep inviting the participants to pay attention to what they feel (i.e. breath, body sensations, emotions) during each moment.

Invite them to find a place in the room with enough space around to move. Ask them to stand tall, close their eyes or lower their gaze.

*Begin with your feet parallel to each other and hip-width apart; let your knees be soft and lift your chest and let your arms be relaxed alongside your body.*

*Take a deep breath in and slowly raise your arms up over your head, and as you breathe out, bring your arms down by your sides. Repeat 3 times. The third time, leave your arms above your head, your fingertips reaching toward the ceiling. Invite your breath to be deep and feel the stretch with your entire body.*

*Breathe in, raise your arms above your head again in a parallel position. Breathing out, bend over to the right while you send your left hip to the left, getting a nice side stretch along the left side of the body. Go as far as you comfortably can. Repeat on the other side and then repeat the whole process twice.*

*Start lowering your chin to the chest, feeling the muscles on the back of your neck. Take a few breaths here and let your head be heavy. Stretch the back of your neck rolling your right ear over your right shoulder, feeling the stretch along the left side of the neck. You can reach down your left fingertips toward the floor to increase the stretch. Repeat in the opposite direction and then repeat the whole process twice.*

*Let your right foot be deeply rooted into the ground and shift your body weight to it. Relax your right knee. Raise your arms in a T position and then lift your left foot, finding some balance. Breath in and out focusing on the sole of your right foot. Repeat on the left side and then repeat the whole exercise twice.. (x2)*

#### **Task 5: Body Scan** (approx. 5')

Invite participants to lay down on the floor or to sit in a comfortable position with the back straight but not tense and the hands on their knees.

*Breath work as above (approx. 1')*

Bring the participants' attention on the different parts of their bodies beginning with the feet and ending up with the head. Switch slowly between every small part of the body (i.e. sole of the foot, heel, ankle, etc), and remain a few seconds on each part.

*Like in the breath work, if some thoughts arrive, just notice them and then bring back your attention to the body parts.*

*Try to feel the body as a whole, breathing as if the air would enter from the toes and exit from the top of the head.*

*If you feel any tension in some parts of the body, try to breathe into that tension to relax it.*

*Send some love to you and to your body. Evoke comprehension and compassion towards yourself, ask your heart how you feel and send a big hug to yourself for the effort of staying present that you put into this practice.*

#### **Final Sharing Reflection** (approx. 30')

Invite participants to gather in a circle and to look at the words they wrote at the beginning of the session. You can use the following questions:

1. *How was it for you?*
2. *Does your idea of mindfulness change after the practice?*
3. *Is there something that would you like to say about your experience?*
4. *What are your takeaways from this experience?*

#### **References**

- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013) Full catastrophe living: using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness, New York, Bantam Books.
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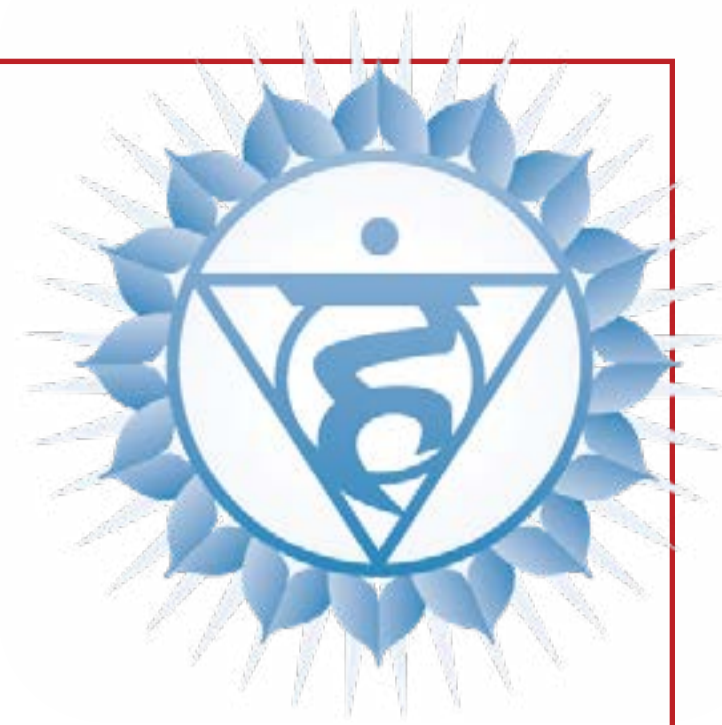
**Vishuddha**  
Throat Chakra



## 5. Empathetic Communication

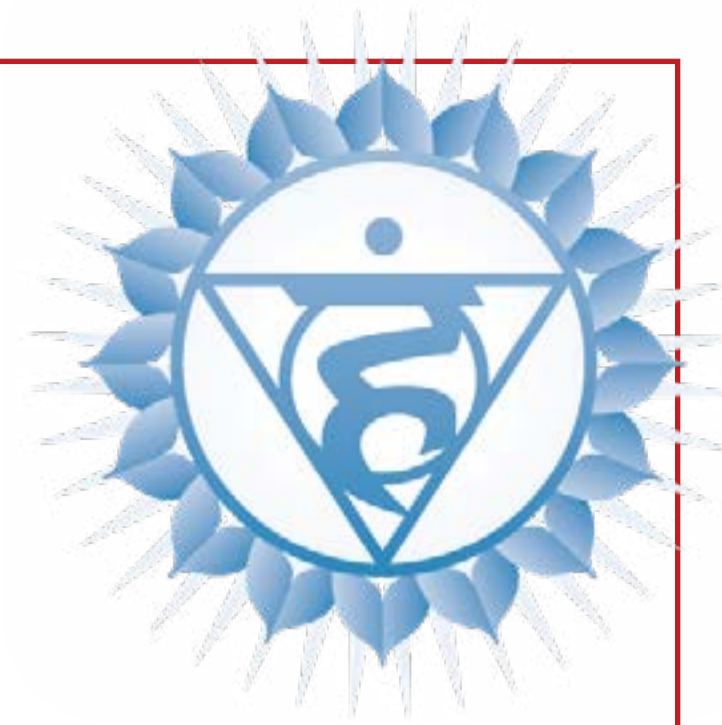
In this chapter, we will see non-formal education activities supporting mental health, healthy relationships with others, and well-being in general.





# 5.1. Empathy and Feeling

In this chapter, we will describe activities on understanding the real meaning of empathy, reconnecting with your feelings, and communicating them.



## 5.1.1. Brainstorming on Empathy

This activity focuses on the participants' understanding of the concept of empathy and establishing a common definition of it.

**Group size:** 4-20  
**Time:** 20 min  
**Place:** indoor  
**Materials:** flipchart  
markers  
sheets of paper  
pens

### Brainstorming & Sharing (approx. 15')

#### 1) Empathy

Participants are invited to say whatever word comes to mind when hearing the word "empathy".

- All words are written down together.
- The facilitator leads reflection on the different words to figure out a definition.

#### 2) Not empathy

The facilitator invites the group to reflect on what is **not** empathy but can often be confused with it (therapy, coaching, giving suggestions, sharing a personal story, pity,...) and whether some words that were written down support this confusion.

#### 3) Definition

The group reads the following definition together and works out how the words that emerged in the brainstorming are related.

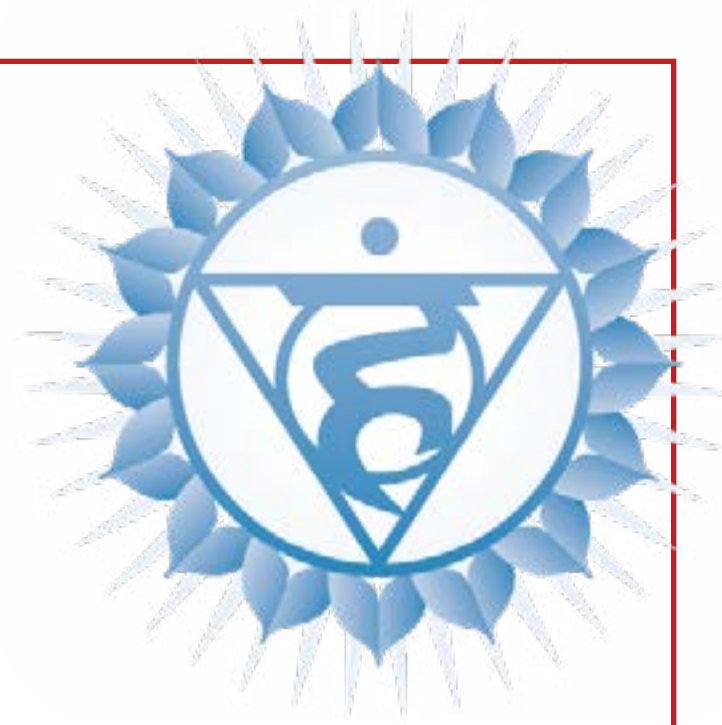
*"Empathy is a respectful understanding of what others are feeling. It asks us to empty our minds and listen to others with our whole being. (...)"*

*I see you and understand what you are feeling and try to find a connection with everything alive in you (emotions, physical sensations, passions, ambitions,..)".*

- Marshall B. Rosenberg,  
Nonviolent Communication

### Reflection (approx. 5')

- How do you feel about what you have discovered empathy is?
- Do you think it will change your attitude toward your emotions and those of others?



## 5.1.2. A Speed-date with Feelings

The activity is aimed at exploring the meaning of different feelings through sharing and conversation.

**Group size:** 4-20  
**Time:** 30 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** Feelings Cards  
(1 deck per pair)

### How to create Feelings Cards

To create one deck of Feelings Cards, prepare at least 30 pieces of paper, and write the name of one different feeling on each one.

If you need multiple decks, it's more practical to create the cards in a digital format and print them.

You can use this pre-made document:

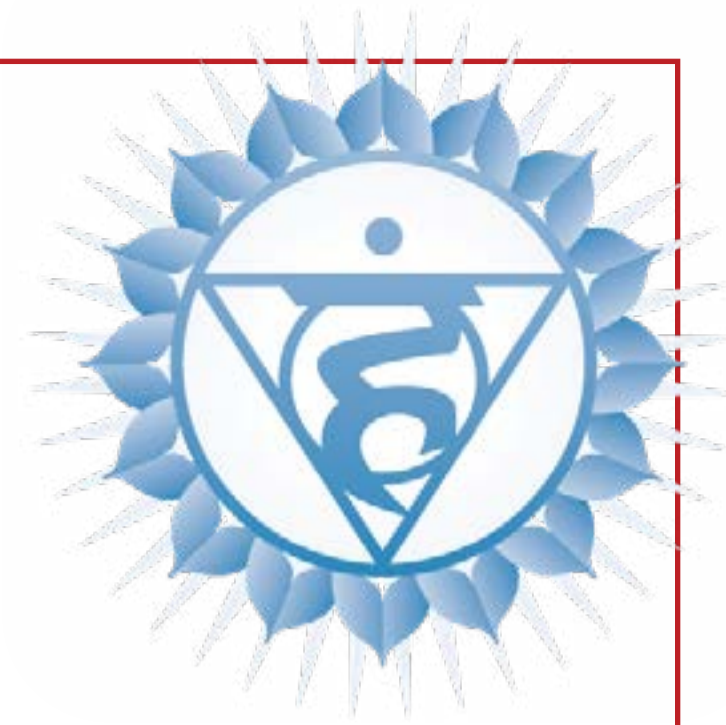
[https://www.malindaelizabethberry.net/uploads/8/4/7/8/84786408/feelings\\_cards\\_10\\_22.pdf](https://www.malindaelizabethberry.net/uploads/8/4/7/8/84786408/feelings_cards_10_22.pdf)

### Task (approx. 20')

- The participants are divided into pairs.
- Each pair receives a deck of Feelings Cards.
- The decks are face down so that the names of the feelings are hidden.
- The task of each pair is to uncover each feeling contained in the deck, one feeling after the other. Each time a feeling is revealed, both people in the couple share their knowledge about the feeling and the experience they have connected to it.

### Reflection (approx. 10')

- How was the experience?
- Did you recognise all the feelings, or is there any feeling that is unclear to you?
- Did you discover something new?



## 5.1.3. Dyad without Mirroring

This is a pair activity in which the participants are invited to answer the question "What is alive in you right now?". The activity requires the participants to connect with themselves and be able to express their emotions, as well as practice active and empathetic listening.

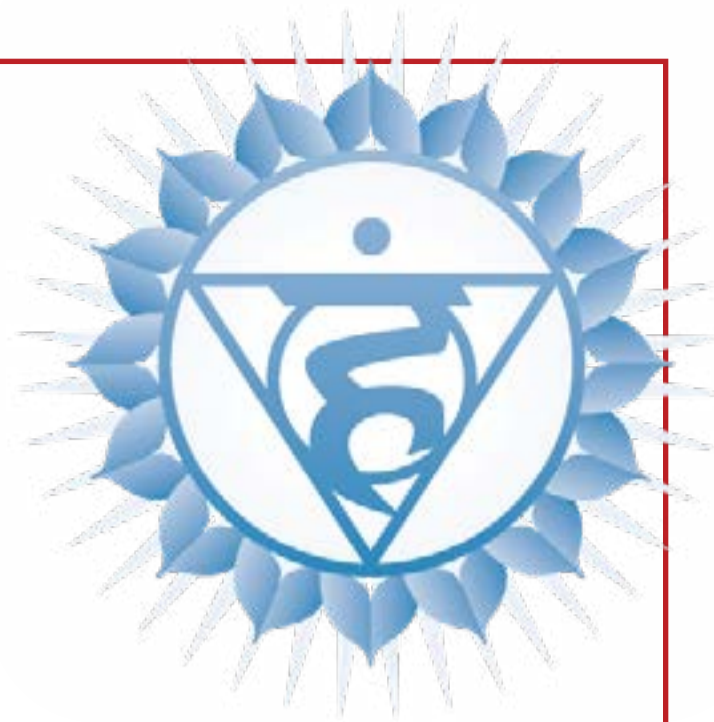
**Group size:** 4-20  
**Time:** 15 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** -

### Task (approx. 10')

- The participants are split into pairs and sit facing each other in a position comfortable for them, and are encouraged to maintain eye contact at all times.
- They choose who will be Person A and Person B.
- Person A has 3 minutes to answer the question "What is alive in you now?".
- Person B listens to the answer while maintaining a neutral expression and remaining silent.
- Person B has 3 minutes to answer the same question.
- Person A listens to the answer while maintaining a neutral expression and remaining silent.

### Sharing (approx. 5')

- How was it for you to share your emotions while maintaining eye contact with the other person?
- How was it for you to listen to the other person without being able to interrupt them and without being able to express what you were thinking or feeling, not even with your facial expression?
- Was it difficult for you?



## 5.1.4. Dyad with Mirroring

This is a pair activity in which participants are invited to answer the question “What is alive in you now?” and then to report what they heard of the other person’s answer. The activity requires participants to connect with themselves and to be able to express their emotions, practice active and empathetic listening, and to be able to report what they have heard without making judgments or evaluations.

**Group size:** 4-20  
**Time:** 25 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** -

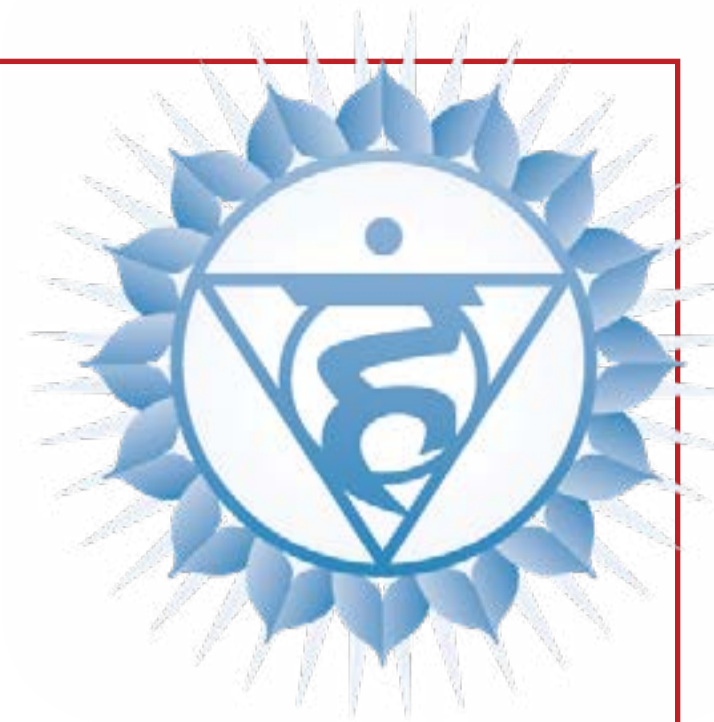
### Task (approx. 15')

- The participants are split into pairs and sit facing each other in a position comfortable for them, and are encouraged to maintain eye contact and a neutral expression at all times.
- They choose who will be Person A and Person B.
- Person A has 3 minutes to answer the question “What is alive in you now?”.
- Person B listens to the answer while maintaining a neutral expression and remaining silent.
- Person B has one and a half minutes to report what they heard of Person A’s answer to the question.
- Person A listens to the report while maintaining a neutral expression and remaining silent.
- Person B has 3 minutes to answer the same question.
- Person A listens to the answer while maintaining a neutral expression and remaining silent.

- Person A has one and a half minutes to report what they heard of Person B’s answer to the question.
- Person B listens to the report while maintaining a neutral expression and remaining silent.

### Sharing (approx. 10')

- How was it for you to share your emotions while maintaining eye contact with the other person?
- How was it for you to listen to the other person without being able to interrupt them and without being able to express what you were thinking or feeling, not even with your facial expression?
- Did you notice a difference in your listening when you knew you were supposed to report?
- How was it for you to listen to another person’s report of your feelings? Was it difficult not to interrupt?



## 5.1.5. Communicating Feelings in Groups

An activity to train the ability to recognise and communicate feelings felt in the past without making judgments or evaluations.

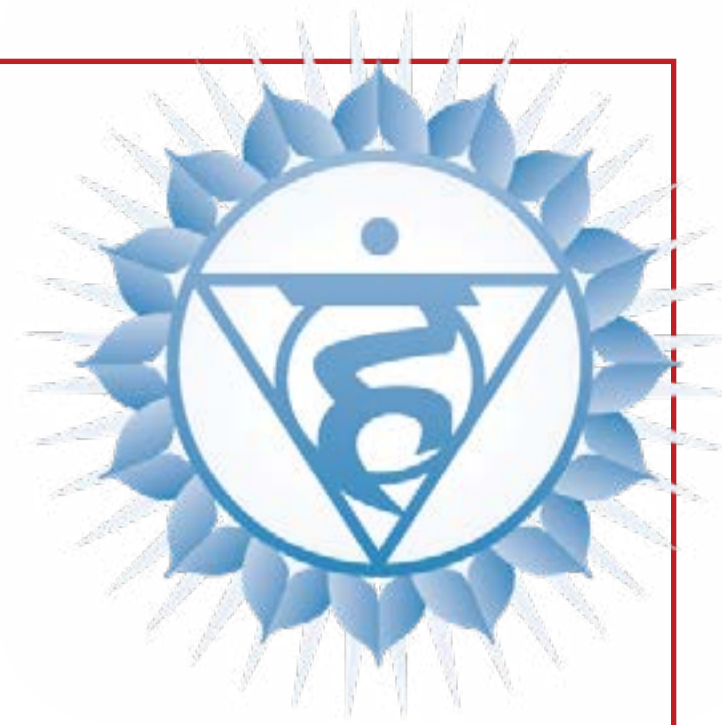
**Group size:** 4-20  
**Time:** 25 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** Feelings Cards  
(see instructions in the section 5.1.2)  
(at least 1 deck/10 people)

### Task (approx. 20')

- Each participant gets a feeling card.
- The participants are divided into four groups.
- Each participant shares a situation in which they experienced the feeling that is written on their card, taking care not to make any judgments or evaluations.

### Reflection (approx. 5')

- How does it feel to recall a feeling experienced in the past?
- Did you feel any physical sensations when recounting the situation where you experienced that feeling?
- How was it to talk about your feelings in front of a group?



## 5.1.6. Music and Self-connection

An activity in which we focus on the influence that external inputs can bring to our emotions and the recognition of them.

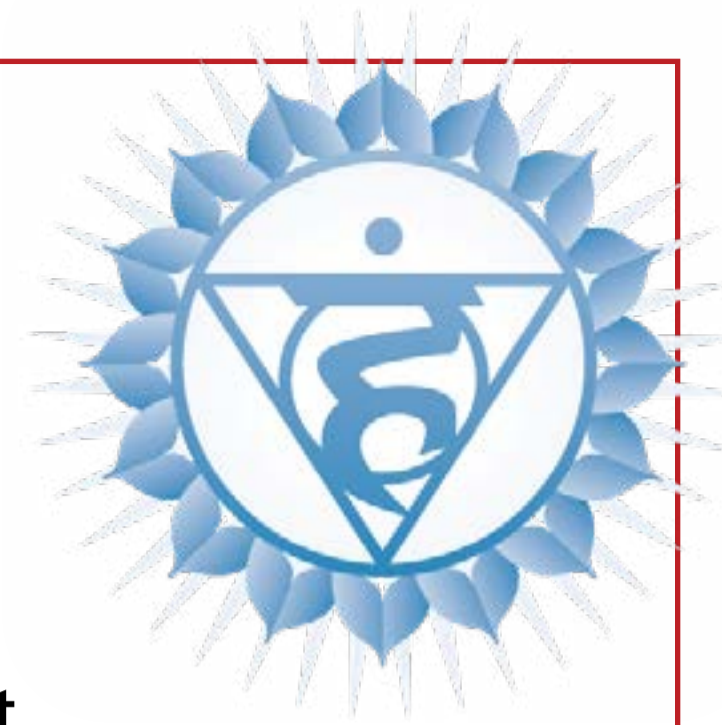
**Group size:** 1-20  
**Time:** 30 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** music speaker  
mats  
sheets of paper  
pens, drawing supplies

### Task (approx. 20')

- The participants lie down in a comfortable position on mats and close their eyes.
- They are invited to focus on the different emotions that music awakens in them.
- The facilitator plays the music of different rhythms, intensities, and genres.
- Between one piece of music and the next, the participants sit down and make a note on the sheet of paper of the emotion they felt and can draw a representation of the feelings they experienced.

### Sharing (approx. 10')

- How does it feel to recall a feeling experienced in the past?
- Did you feel any physical sensations when recounting the situation where you experienced that feeling?
- How was it to write down and draw your feelings?



## 5.1.7. Music, Emotions and Body Movement

In this activity, the focus is on the connection between emotions and the body, allowing freedom for the body to move in space and express what it's feeling.

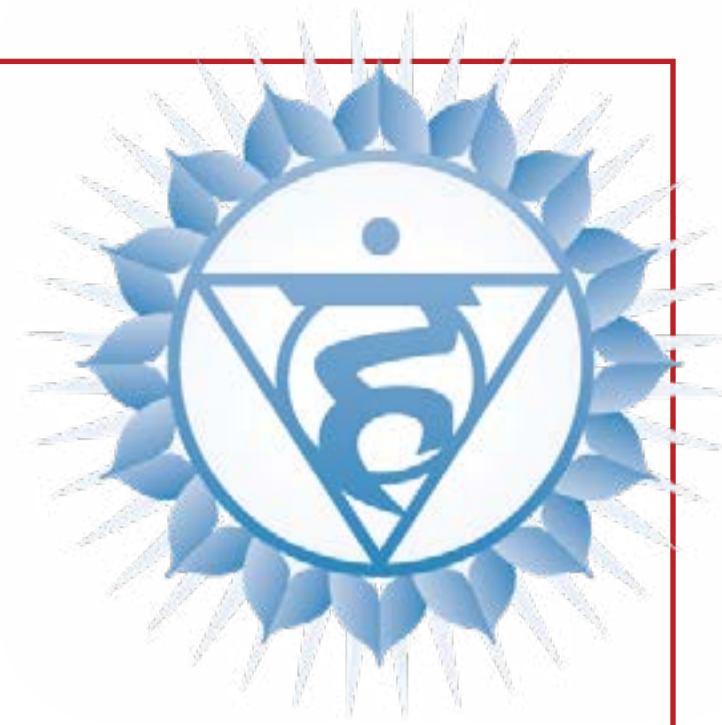
**Group size:** 1-20  
**Time:** 20 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** music speaker

### Task (approx. 15')

- The participants spread out in the room, keeping a distance from each other.
- The facilitator loudly announces an emotion and plays music that corresponds to it.
- The participants are encouraged to let their bodies move freely, following the impulses suggested by their own bodies based on the mentioned emotion and the music.

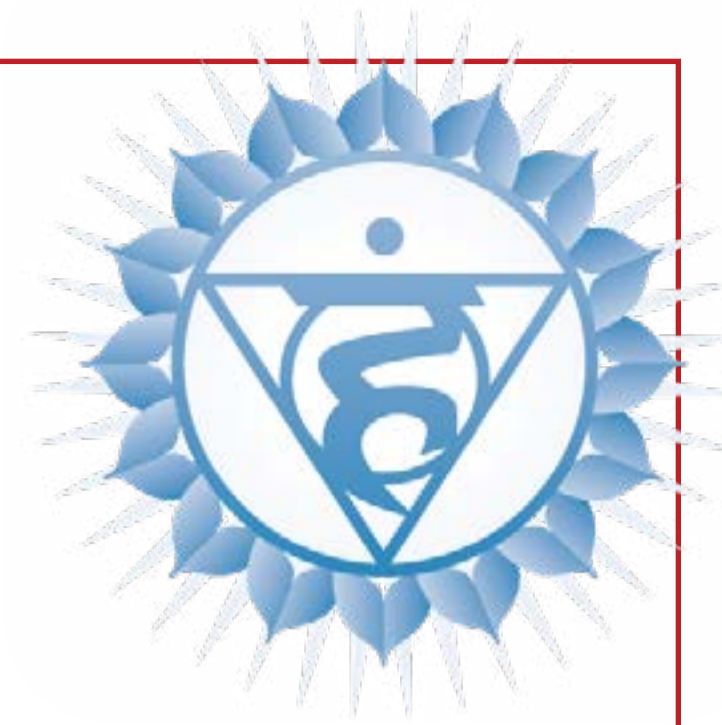
### Sharing (approx. 10')

- How does it feel to let your body move freely?
- Was it difficult to follow your body and not control it?
- Have the body impulses varied depending on the mentioned emotion?



## 5.2. Observations vs. Evaluations

In this section, we offer an activity that supports understanding of the difference between observation and evaluation, crucial for communicating without judgment and thereby promoting the mental well-being of the people we interact with, as well as our own. This also supports noticing and preventing self-criticisms that hinder the full development of self-esteem.



### 5.2.1. Observe the Space around You

In this chapter, we will describe activities on understanding the real meaning of empathy, reconnecting with your feelings, and communicating them.

**Group size:** 1-20  
**Time:** 25 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** flipchart  
sheets of paper  
pens

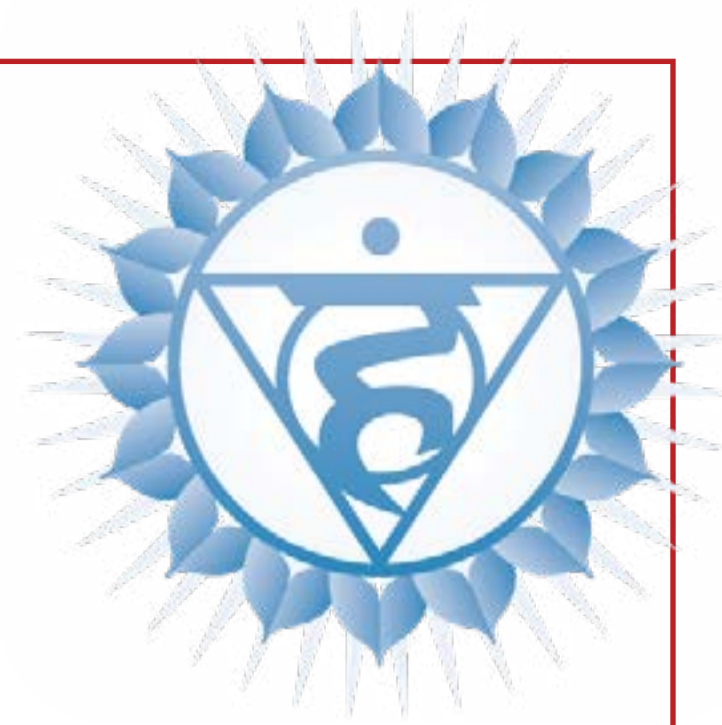
#### **Task** (approx. 15')

- The participants write down everything they observe in the environment around them.
- Each participant reads the list of what they have observed.
- On the flipchart, there are two columns: the facilitator places what is read either in one column or another: one column represents observations, the other represents evaluations. The participants are not aware of the meaning of each column while the facilitator places the concepts in each column.
- The facilitator guides the group to identify why the shared concepts are placed in different columns.

#### **Sharing** (approx. 10')

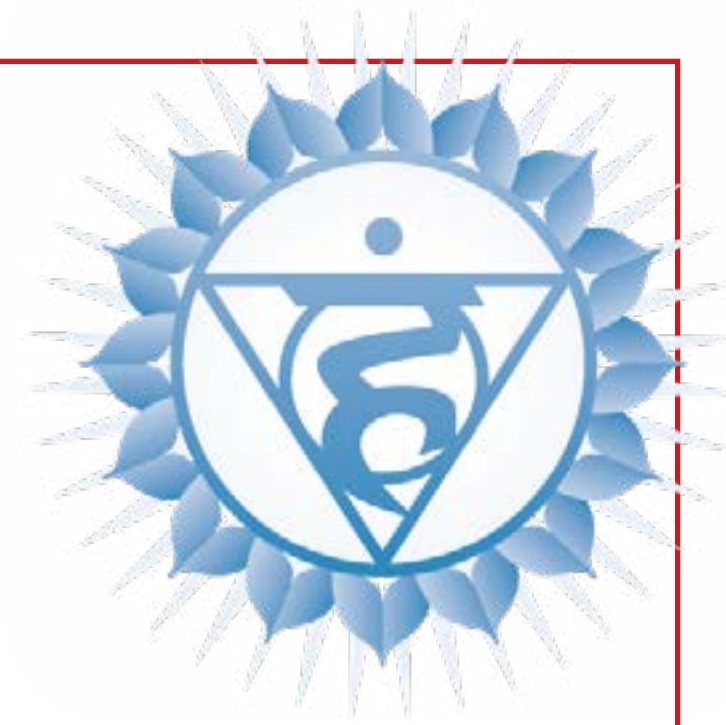
Even in what may seem very simple and objective, we often interject our own judgments and evaluations. Learning to communicate without judging is an ongoing practice.

Do you think this activity could help you in your daily life to recognize your own judgments and evaluations?



## 5.3. Needs

Here, we describe activities aimed at recognizing and communicating the needs hidden behind our feelings. By acknowledging and expressing them, the first step toward meeting these needs is taken, leading to an improvement in physical and mental well-being.



### 5.3.1. Meeting the Needs

This activity aims to improve comprehension of what the human needs are.

**Group size:** 1-20  
**Time:** 10 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** Needs Cards

#### **How to create Needs Cards**

To create one deck of Needs Cards, prepare at least 30 pieces of paper and write the name of one different need on each.

If you need more decks, it's more practical to create the cards in a digital format and print them.

You can use this pre-made document:

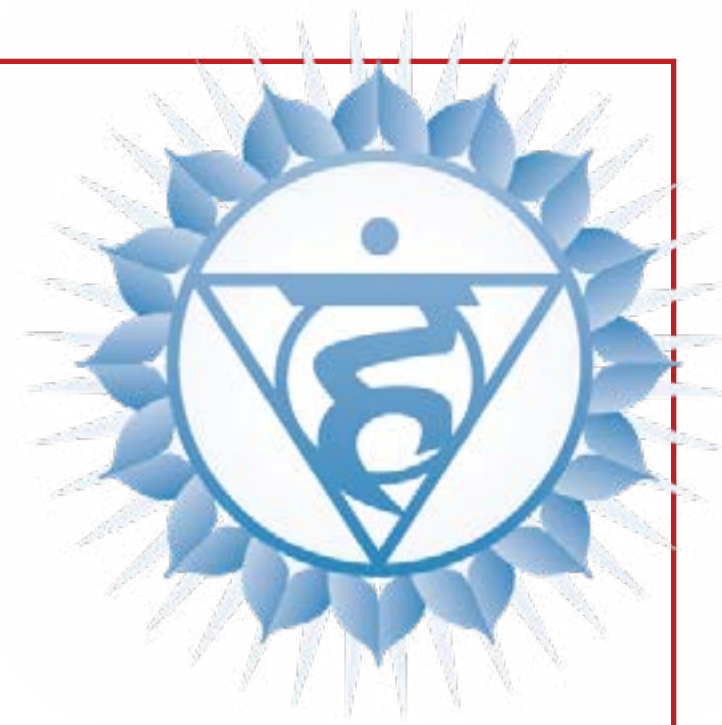
[https://www.malindaelizabethberry.net/uploads/8/4/7/8/84786408/needs\\_cards.pdf](https://www.malindaelizabethberry.net/uploads/8/4/7/8/84786408/needs_cards.pdf)

#### **Task** (approx. 2')

The participants read the various needs written on the cards scattered on the floor.

#### **Sharing** (approx. 8')

Which needs among these do you often feel, which ones intrigue you, which ones did you not consider as needs, which ones do you think you can often fulfill, and which ones not?



## 5.3.2. Navigate Your Conflict

This activity aims to develop connections with one's own feelings and needs, as well as those of the person involved in a conflict, helping to cultivate empathetic abilities.

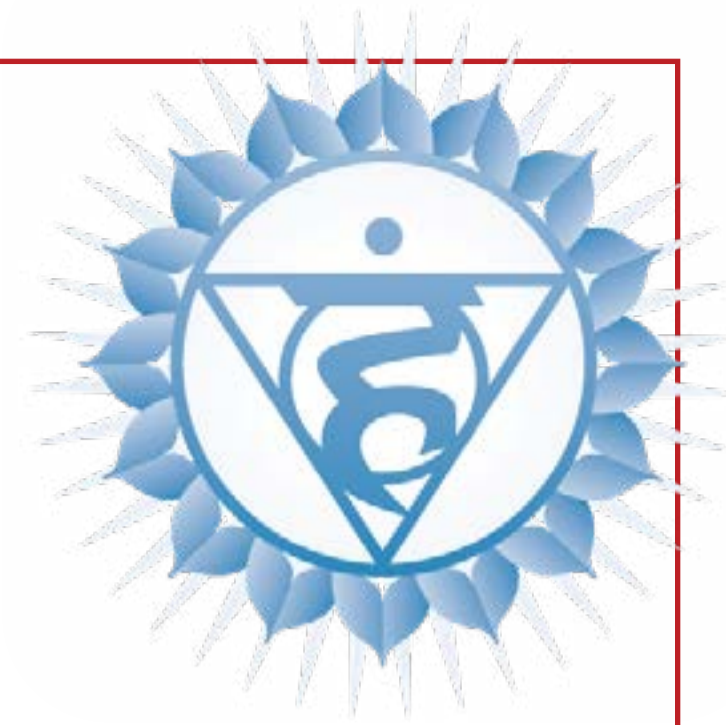
**Group size:** 2-20  
**Time:** 20 min  
**Place:** indoor  
**Materials:** sheets of paper  
pens

### Task (approx. 15')

- The participants are invited to write down a triggering sentence that sparked a conflict they have experienced.
- Subsequently, they are encouraged to create two columns on the paper: one representing themselves, and the other representing the person they had a conflict with.
- The participants are asked to use the first column for the feelings felt right after hearing the triggering sentence and for the needs that they needed to fulfill.
- The participants are asked to use the second column for the feelings they assume that the other person felt when the triggering sentence was said and for the needs that the person might have needed to fulfill.

### Sharing (approx. 5')

In pairs, individuals discuss different situations and the identified feelings and needs, allowing the partner the opportunity to add any additional feelings and needs they believe might belong to the person with whom the conflict occurred.



## 5.3.3. Dancefloor

This activity aims to learn how to resolve conflicts through methods of empathetic communication and roleplay.

**Group size:** 3-20  
**Time:** 30 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** "4 Steps of Empathetic Communication" papers (1 set for each team of 3 people)

### How to create "4 Steps of Empathetic Communication" papers

To create one set of "4 Steps of Empathetic Communication" papers, take four A4 sheets of paper. Write down the following words, 1 word per paper:

- observation
- feelings
- needs
- request

### Task (approx. 25')

- The participants are divided into groups of three.

One participant (P1) analyzes their own conflict using the 'dancefloor'.

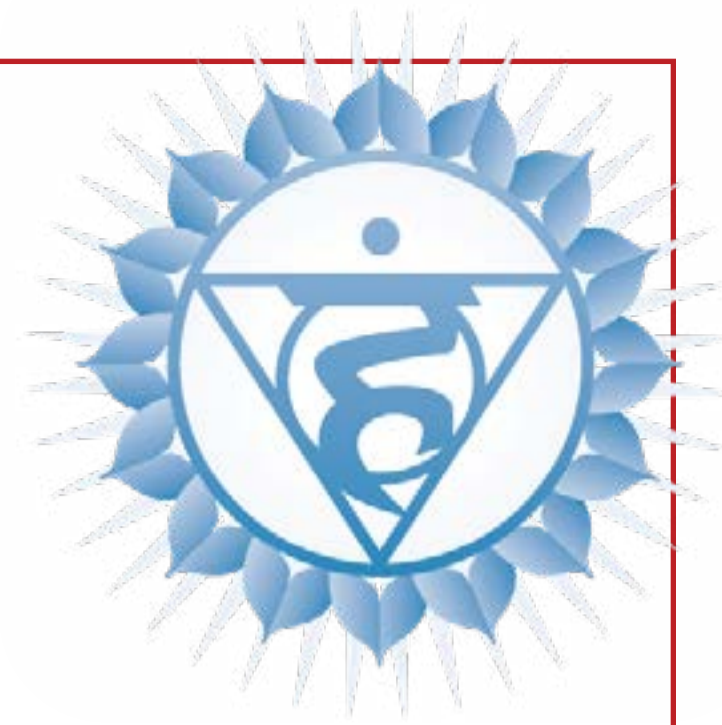
Another participant (P2) assumes the role of the person with whom the conflict occurred and is encouraged to remain silent while making eye contact with the speaking participant.

The third participant (P3) acts as a mediator, intervening to support the acknowledgment of any judgment expressed, the clarity of the request made, as well as reveal the presence of any uncommunicated need or feeling.

- P1 takes the first step and recalls the trigger sentence by observing the situation in which it was said.
- In the second step, the feelings experienced are reported.
- In the third step, the unmet needs are mentioned.
- The last step is about formulating a positive, specific request, and being willing to accept a 'no' to the proposed request.
- The participants switch their roles so that everyone has the opportunity to experience the complete process as P1, P2, and P3.

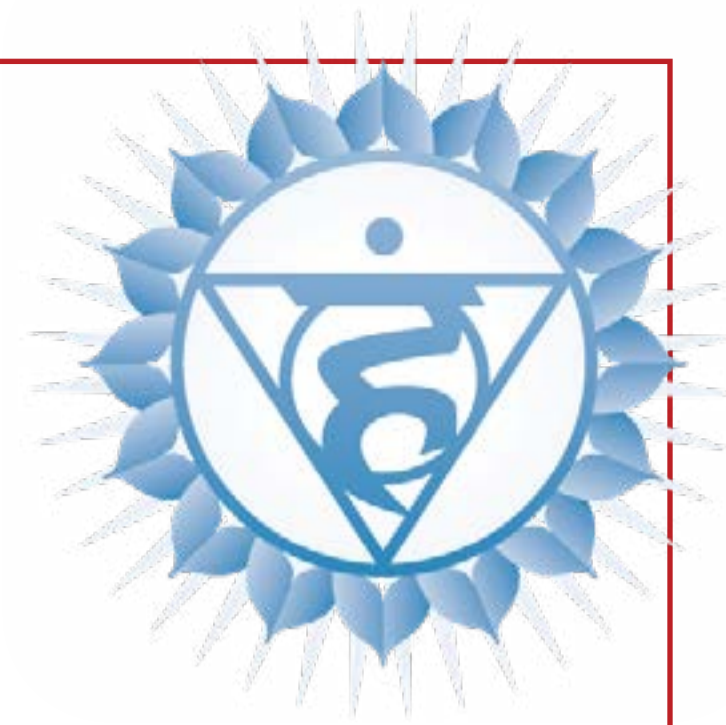
### Reflection (approx. 5')

- Do I think this communication method could support me in my daily life to resolve conflicts?
- Which step did I find most difficult?



## 5.4. Gratitude

In this section, an activity is described that aims to focus on expressing gratitude towards others and its communication. Practicing gratitude is scientifically proven to promote both physical and mental well-being in individuals.



### 5.4.1. Gratitude Shower

This activity helps to express and experience gratitude.

**Group size:** 3-20  
**Time:** 20 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** -

#### **Task** (approx. 15')

- The participants are divided into groups of three.
- They will express gratitude, one person at a time, for what has been shared and experienced during the workshop.
- The person not speaking will lightly tap the head of the person being thanked, simulating a 'gratitude shower' as if under a showerhead.
- Each person in the group will experience the gratitude shower.

#### **Sharing** (approx. 5')

- How did it feel to be thanked?
- How did it feel to express gratitude?
- What sensations did the tapping on the head produce?





**Ajna**

Third Eye Chakra



## 6. Personal Accountability

In this chapter, we will describe activities on understanding the concept of personal accountability.



## 6.1. Liberating Structures: Personal Accountability

This activity aims to establish a common definition of the expression “personal accountability”. The technique is inspired from the book “The Surprising Power of Liberating Structures: Simple Rules to Unleash a Culture of Innovation”.

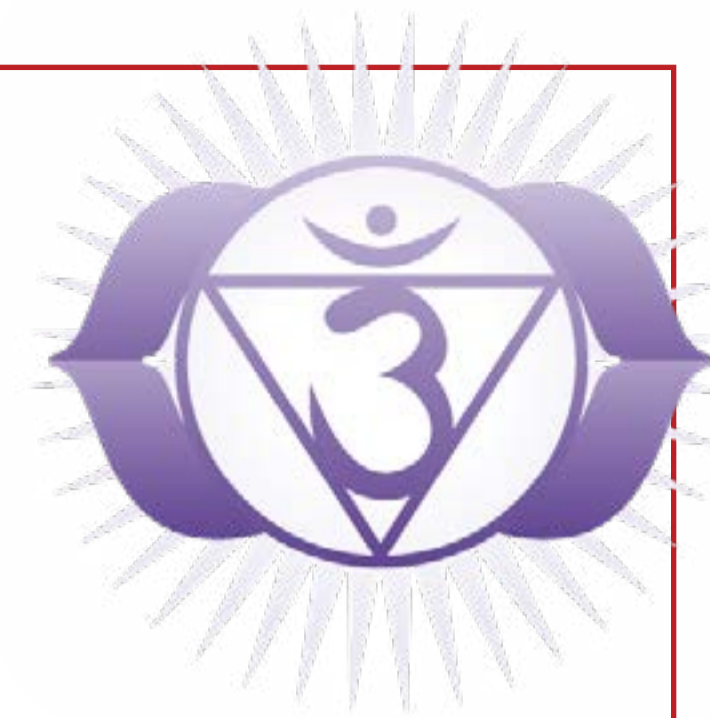
**Group size:** 8-20  
**Time:** 1 hour  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** flipchart  
markers  
sheets of paper  
pens

### Task (approx. 45')

- The participants are divided into pairs.
- Each pair has 8 minutes to discuss and define a shared definition of the expression “personal accountability”.
- Two pairs merge, creating a team of 4 people. Each team has 8 minutes to share their definition and discuss further to find a definition that is agreed upon by all the members of the group.
- The entire group gathers and each team of 4 people is invited to share their definition.
- The entire group has 16 minutes to find a definition to which all members agree.

### Reflection (approx. 10')

- What did you discover about the concept of “personal accountability”?
- Do you agree with the definition created by the whole group?
- If not, what would you have done differently?



## 6.1.2. Victim/Accountable

This activity focuses on the difference between having a victim behavior and embracing an accountable behavior.

**Group size:** 8-20  
**Time:** 40 min  
**Place:** indoor  
**Materials:** markers  
coloured markers  
sheets of paper  
pens

### Task (approx. 30')

- The participants receive 1 sheet of paper per person.
- They are asked to think about all the situations in which they adopted a “victim” mindset, and to list 5 of them.
- Later, they are asked to think about all the situations in which they adopted an “accountable” mindset, and to list 5 of them.
- The activity continues with circle sharing. In the first round, every member of the circle shares a “victim situation”. In the second round, every member of the circle shares a situation in which they were accountable.
- The activity concludes with a group creation of a drawing representing the concept of “accountability”.

### Reflection (approx. 10')

- Did the activity grant you any new insight?
- What did you discover about yourself?
- How did you experience the creation of the picture?



## 6.2. Lego Tower

This activity provides an opportunity to experience different roles in a team and reflecting on the role-patterns in daily life.

**Group size:** 8-20  
**Time:** 30 min  
**Place:** indoor  
**Materials:** flipchart  
markers  
lego  
blindfolds

### Task (approx. 20')

- The group is divided into groups of three.
- The facilitator gives the assignment to the group: "Decide who is A, who is B, who is C. A will build any tower they want with the materials in front of them. B will coach and support A in building the tower, but B is not allowed to touch the pieces. C will observe and comment using the following 3 statements: "I like it", "I don't like it", "I would do it differently".
- The process starts and members of the groups take turns and exchange their roles. Each participant eventually plays all the roles.
- At the end of the process, the participants gather in a circle and the facilitator asks the participants: "What would you call each role, and what percentage of impact does each role in the process have?"
- The activity concludes with a presentation of the different roles:

**A) PLAYER** has 100% impact on the results, has a vision, control, responsibility and agency, is committed to act, decide and do, produces the results. The player is acting in the PRESENT.

**B) COACH** is the support system, can be a mentor, an info-point, a reference, a guide, a supervisor who supports, coordinates, provokes and gives instructions. Has *influence* on the player and on the results. COACH's focus is on the future and the present but can be on the past too.

**C) COMMENTATOR** judges, observes, comments and expresses their point of view. COMMENTATOR *reacts* to the past.

### Reflection (approx. 10')

- How did you experience the three different roles?
- Did you identify any pattern of your actions related to your daily life?
- What would you have done differently?



## 6.3. Popping Bubbles

This activity is aimed at reflecting and sharing on future actions.

**Group size:** 8-20  
**Time:** 40 min  
**Place:** indoor/outdoor  
**Materials:** sheets of paper  
markers

### Task (approx. 30')

- Each participant receives a sheet of paper and a pen.
- The participants are asked to reflect and write down something they want to implement in their lives.

They are asked to write it with the techniques of "**free writing**", which means writing without stopping, without separating the pen from the paper, with the intention of supporting the flow of ideas.

The writing session lasts 5 minutes.

The facilitators support the focus of participants with the following:

*"What do you want to do in your life? You are now powerful and accountable enough to implement what you learnt in this workshop. What is your personal plan? Ask yourself. Think about something you really want to achieve and from now on you take the necessary steps to make it happen."*

- After, the participants are given another 5 minutes to read what they wrote, reflect and summarize what they want to implement in their lives in one sentence.
- The group comes gathers in a circle and each participant is invited to share their personal plan in the manner of “popping up”. That means standing up and loudly exclaiming it to the group.

The participants are invited to imagine that they are bubbles, popping up when they feel ready to share what comes from the inside.

- After the sharing, the facilitator invites the participants to describe on the paper the first concrete steps that they will take to start implementing their personal plan.
- The activity concludes with a sharing in pairs: the participants are invited to share their personal plan together with the first step, and to create a support system to guarantee the accomplishment of the step.

A support system might be: a mutual reminder, weekly chats, a Whatsapp message, or anything supporting each individual.

**Reflection** (approx. 10')

- Did you the activity grant you any new insight?
- Did the technique of free writing work for you?
- How did you experience the creation of the support system?



**Sahasrara**  
Crown Chakra



# 7. Partners

In this chapter, you will learn more about the Chakras project and the partners involved in it.



## 7.1. About the Booklet

Booklet **Wellbeing & Stuff** is a compilation of different activities supporting the well-being of individuals.

It was compiled by 4 different organisations:

- INspire, z. s. (Czech Republic) – Chapter 1
- Innovation Education Lab (Romania) – Chapter 2 & 3
- Hopeland (Greece) – Chapter 4
- YOUth Connect (Italy) – Chapter 5 & 6

All organisations ran a local workshop for 20+ people. During 4 sessions, they tested all presented activities, and in the 5th session, they evaluated the impact of the activities with the participants.

Based on the collected feedback, they adapted the activities and presented them in this booklet.

Both local workshops and this booklet are a part of the KA2 project “Chakras” (no. 2022-3-CZ01-KA210-YOU-000097244) that is focused on the development of a free-to-use app supporting individual well-being through non-formal education.

The project is co-funded by European Union.

For more info on the project and its development, visit [www.czechinspire.eu/chakras](http://www.czechinspire.eu/chakras).



**iNspire**  
Czech Republic



**Hopeland**  
Greece



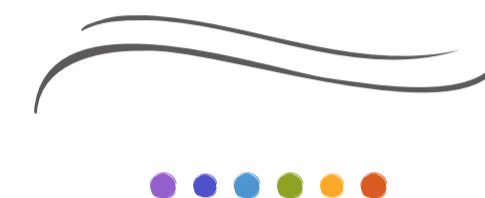
**Innovation Education Lab Romania**  
Romania



**YOUth Connect**  
Italy



# CHAKRAS



## Chakras

### Well-being and Stuff

non-formal education activities supporting mental and physical health, as well as well-being in general

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