



Innovative Environmental Education ECO-COMPASS MODULE 3

Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance

Theoretical background for lecturers and advisors

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Inovatívne budovanie ekologického povedomia a kultúry rozvíjaním environmentálnych zručností a formovaním postojov občanov s mentálnym postihnutím

Innovative building of ecological awareness and culture by developing environmental skills and shaping the attitudes of citizens with mental disabilities



Innovative Environmental Education ECO-COMPASS –Theoretical background for lecturers and advisors

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The main objective of the project is to support social inclusion and lifelong learning of people with mental disabilities by developing their environmental skills and competencies, shaping their environmental attitudes and responsibilities through education based on international experiences. The project specifically focuses on supporting and developing international cooperation of participating organizations, building, and strengthening partnership networks and professionalization of organizations.

Innovative Environmental Education ECO-COMPASS ensures developing the environmental skills and competences of professionals and people with mental disabilities, shaping their environmental attitudes and environmental responsibility through innovative education based on international experience.



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1. Introduction

In connection with the ever-increasing influence of man on the environment, one of the most topical concern today is the issue of environmental education. Its importance is highlighted by the fact that environmental education is a comprehensive topic.

Environmental problems, whether local or global, affect us all, because we influence them to a greater or lesser degree, sometimes consciously or unconsciously.

Environmental protection is one of humanity's most important problems today. One of the key roles in the development of skills and the formation of attitudes is played by conscious and systematic lifelong environmental education, the purpose of which is to guide people's value orientation, encourage and educate them for creative thinking and a reasonable environmentally conscious attitude.

What are the most successful methods and forms of education suitable for adults with intellectual disabilities in the field of environmental education? What are the most important skills that need to be developed in the field of environmental education for the immediate target group?

To answer these questions, the partners of three European countries - Slovakia, Hungary and Romania - developed a mixed curriculum within the framework of the EU-funded ECO-COMPASS project. The content is based on the analysis of good practices examples carried out in the three partner countries and the summary results of the workshops organized with the participation of specialists, which was prepared on the basis of the identified needs of adults with intellectual disabilities in relation to the development of environmental protection skills and competences, the formation of their environmental attitudes, and the applicable methods and forms of education. More information about the partner organizations participating in the project can be found on the project's website: <https://eco-compass-project.eu/>

The curriculum consists of four modules:

Module 1 Ecological skills and competences in individual life

Module 2 The importance of ecological values and attitudes in the family

Module 3 Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance

Module 4 Active participation in the creation of a green society

Our aim is to contribute to the formation of ecological awareness and eco-culture, to the development of ecological skills and competences, problem-solving ability, critical thinking and creativity with the help of the mentioned topics.

The theoretical background material was prepared for lecturers and advisors, for whom it is necessary in their daily activities to be able to properly ensure the development of the environmental protection skills and competences of adults with intellectual disabilities, and the formation of their environmental attitudes and environmental responsibility.

2. Introduction and learning objectives of the Module 3

Environmental education and awareness are present in all areas of our life, so we need to pay attention to environmentally polluting sources not only at school, at home, in nature, but also at work, where we spend most of our adult life. The aim of Module 3 is to promote environmentally responsible behaviour at work, on the farm and in private life, to promote environmentally responsible lifestyle, to educate open-minded and active individuals and to preserve our Earth and its resources for future generations.

In this module, we will cover the following topics:

1. Sustainable development in the workplace

In this chapter, we present sources of pollution at work, while at the same time we also list eco-friendly alternatives. We spend a lot of time at work, and often in today's fast-paced lifestyles, being buried in our workload, we do not pay enough attention for our environment, our unhealthy, destructive consumption habits, our own health.

2. Work at the farm

Although the development, the mechanisation of industrial agriculture, the use of pesticides and fertilisers accelerated the production of food, it shortly caused problems, as it overburdened the environment.

To offer healthy, organically grown baskets of fruit and vegetables to the local community through the CSA model, by creating farm stability, raising awareness for the importance of healthy nutrition, raising awareness for the importance of soil care through organic farming. With the help of this model, the physical distance between farmer and consumer is reduced and - unlike long supply chains - personal contact, trust and often organic, ecological status labelling are built into the system as a guarantee of quality.

3. Work-life balance

Work-life balance, or lack of it, is given increasing emphasis nowadays. This is not surprising, as maintaining a delicate balance between work demands, family commitments and individual needs is very important for a balanced yet active life, for building and maintaining the relationships that matter to us, for enjoying the smaller-bigger pleasures of everyday life, and of course, it is not negligible for our physical and mental well-being, either. Ongoing stress, overwhelm or lack of motivation can lead to physical symptoms or even burnout.

4. Healthy lifestyle

Nowadays, more and more people talk about health, because to meet the wide range of expectations placed on them, people need to be able to interpret challenges properly, respond appropriately,

continuously adapt to their environment, participate in their family and other social relationships in an appropriate way, plan for the future, adjust their plans from time to time, in short, cope with life.

Module 3 includes theoretical background material and descriptions of 8 outdoor/open-air activities on the above-mentioned topics. The theoretical background material and the outdoor activities presented will enable professionals working in the social field with adults with intellectual disabilities, especially trainers and counsellors, to develop their own environmental skills after studying them and supplementing them with the reference materials proposed. By applying additional knowledge material, videos, questionnaires, worksheets and outdoor activities made for mentally disabled adults in simple, understandable language, they will contribute to the development of their competences, to the shaping of their environmental attitudes and environmental responsibility in their daily practice.

After having mastered the curriculum, professionals will be able to:

- develop and master a green workplace approach, the criteria for a sustainable job.
- identify sources of pollution and actively participate in reducing them.
- shape and get to know environmentally friendly individual values, emotions, habits, mental frameworks and skills.
- demonstrate the components and pedagogical basic principles of sustainability at work through practical examples.
- facilitate the promotion of a positive, healthy lifestyle.
- understand and present the process of working at the farm through practical examples.
- acquire and put gardening and farming customs, tools and working phases into practice.
- get to know and understand the importance, the opportunities of work-life balance.
- understand and apply value system of healthy lifestyle.

The indirect task of the curriculum is to contribute to the personality development of people with intellectual disabilities, to make them understand the relationships between people and their environment, and furthermore to analyse and evaluate the laws that govern life on earth, to understand the relationship between the development of the human population and its relationship with the environment in different parts of the world, and to understand the interrelationship between local and global problems and their own responsibility towards the environment.

3. Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance

3.1. Sustainable development in the workplace

We also need to protect our environment at work, as this is where we spend most of our time in our everyday life as adults. Also here, the basic task is to eliminate sources that pollute the environment, so we aim to prevent soil, water and air pollution. With the active method of environmental protection, we reduce the emission of pollutants, and with the passive method, we pay attention for not overusing the available energies. Employers and employees may rightfully ask what can we do to protect our environment? How and what makes the workplace more sustainable? How can we reduce the ecological footprint of our office? At first, it is not necessary to spend millions on it, but we cannot get carried away by it, either: just get the office filled with motivation posters will not be enough – sustainability needs to be a joint effort by the whole working community.

1. From the tablet to the pen – let's make everything green!

We don't need to spend millions to make our workspaces greener. Today, there's a wide range of products from biodegradable coffee cups to office furniture made from re-used materials. Printing paper? Post-it? Paper towel? Coffee cup? Choose the recycled one! They represent at most a minimal increase in expenditure, but in the long term, they can significantly reduce the ecological footprint of our workspace.

2. Energy saving? Let's start with air conditioning and heating!

Offices are often over-air conditioned in the summer, or even overheated in the winter months. We can make our workspace more sustainable just by making restrictions concerning the winding of the thermostat. You don't have to cool your office to 18 degrees or heat it to 26 degrees because it's neither healthy nor environmentally friendly!

3. Energy efficient lighting and natural light are important!

With the right amount of natural light, workers' moods and thereby also their productivity can be improved - besides this, we can also reduce our electricity bills, as the more light we get into our offices, the fewer lamps we need to turn on. And if already speaking about lamp: use energy-saving (LED) bulbs throughout the office. Besides that, let's try to get our colleagues to stick to the habit that has been ingrained in us, but which has a little worn off by adulthood: turn off the lights after us, just like at home!

4. The paper-free workplace – is this possible?

How is it possible to go paper-free in 2023? In the digital age? In the heyday of cloud-based storage services? Yes, let's have a look at the facts! Instead of document holders, let's have an office server or cloud. Instead of invoices, let's have e-invoices! Instead of a paper-based quote, let's have a PDF. The paper-free office is no longer the future. If the transition is not possible, or if it would take too much work, we can also do a lot for the environment in the long run by choosing the printer as little as possible. Furthermore, we can also ask colleagues to print on both sides of the paper! Also, when taking notes, don't take the untouched paper out of the printer, but use the backsides of documents that are no longer needed!

5. Eco-awareness starts by going to work!

You can do a lot to protect our environment by taking the bus, tram or underground instead of getting into a car. But even installing a bike storage facility at work can do wonders to encourage colleagues to get to work by bicycle or scooter. But at the dawn of modern public transport (such as electric scooters for hire, bicycles that can be picked up at any time via an app), we don't even need to have a fleet of vehicles to make our commute to work more sustainable – although these are only available in the capital for the time being.

6. Selective waste collection at work

Perhaps needless to say, but it is worth mentioning the importance of waste selection. A workplace generates a lot of waste every day, but fortunately most of it can be recycled - as long as we collect it in the right place! Buying a selective waste bin is not a big expense. Get the most out of it!

7. Green energy use

Nowadays, energy from renewable sources is more available than ever! For the time being, solar energy is the most feasible solution in the form of roof-mounted solar power systems. Although it means a higher expense and the payback can be measured in a decade or two, it has its advantages. It provides a certain degree of independence from the electricity grid, for example, which can be an advantage in the event of an unexpected power cut. In addition, the solar panel system, which is visible from a distance on the office building, shows a very firm commitment to sustainability.

Whatever the size of the building, one thing is certain: it will contain many "energy vampires". These devices use electricity even when they are not in use. Computers and huge multifunction printers consume power 24/7, so it is worth nipping the phenomenon in the bud, starting with the distribution boards. The cheapest way to do this is to disconnect the power distributors, or unplug these devices,

at the end of each day. A slightly more expensive, but smarter option is to buy special, so-called programmable distributors, which use a timer to switch off at a set time. The more advanced smart power strips and sockets can even be controlled remotely using an app!

9. Let's hold a green challenge at work!

Sustainability challenges spiced up with a bit of healthy competition, held even on a monthly basis, are a fun way to make our workspace greener. For example, we can ask the colleagues not to use plastic cutlery, disposable coffee cups or plastic bottles. By offering a small reward (gift card, free pizza, etc.), it is easy to encourage colleagues to participate and at the same time to adopt environmentally friendly habits in the long term.

Convention 169 of International Labor Organisation already highlights the importance of environmental harmony at work and obliges states to require employers to take special measures to this end. Hence, the European Union has been working for years to protect occupational health and prevent pollution deriving from sources in the air, water and food chains. This is supported by the EU Health Strategy (2008-2013), one of the main principles of which is indeed to protect citizens from health threats.

According to the researchers, overconsumption is the most significant problem. After all, most products are designed to break down within a few years, or in worse case, a few months, so that we have to buy a new one. On the whole, the business model is wrong, therefore we only have the opportunity to act to protect the environment in our way of thinking, in our conscious choice.

3.2. Work at the farm

„Agriculture is the healthiest, the most useful, and the most noble employment of man” –
George Washington

Consumer habits transformed in the second half of the 20th century as the structure of the food trade changed, and this process - while having some advantageous tendencies - brought about a number of problems. For example, small-scale farming and consumption supporting local products are now being marginalised worldwide. Small producers are being squeezed out of the highest-turnover areas of trade, and production is shifting towards the larger market actors. Locally, this means a reduction in the volume and labour force need of production and in the variety of products produced, resulting in the gradual loss of local characteristics and the (traditional) knowledge needed to produce them. Provision of a fruit and vegetable basket scheme/community supported agriculture (CSA) through the products grown on the farm. The development, the mechanisation of industrial agriculture, the use of pesticides and fertilisers, although speeded up food production, however, soon caused problems as it overburdened the environment.

Offering healthy, organically grown baskets of fruit and vegetables to the local community through the CSA model, establishing farm stability, raising awareness for the importance of healthy nutrition, raising awareness for the importance of soil care through organic farming. With the help of this model, the physical distance between producer and consumer is reduced and, – unlike long supply chains – personal contact, trust and often organic, ecological certification are built into the system as a guarantee of quality.

They enable small producers to produce and sell local, quality food directly and guarantee consumers convenient access to tasty local products, mostly produced using organic methods (Réthy and Dezsény, 2013).

Biodynamic farming method – caring for the environment

Biodynamic farming method is the best method to get disabled people, as small-scale agricultural and horticultural communities can improve their standards of living, and to live in a close relationship with nature.

As it is stated by the Treaty of Lisbon, the improvement of the quality of environment is very important, not just preserving it. Besides that, the protection of human health, the careful and reasonable use of natural resources, and also the treatment of regional environmental problems are also important objectives in the fight against climate change.

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/about-parliament/hu/powers-and-procedures/the-lisbon-treaty>

Biodynamic agriculture has already had a way to address these problems for decades. It is a human service to the Earth and its beings, not just a method for increasing production or providing healthy nutrition. Biodynamics is both a radical concept of regenerative agriculture and a powerful movement for new attitudes and practices in all aspects of life that relate to food and the land. It is a holistic, ecological and ethical approach in the fields of agriculture, gardening, food and nutrition.

Biodynamic farms and gardens work to bring plants, animals and soil together through living, conscious relationships so that each support and balance the whole.

It has its roots in the work of philosopher and scientist Dr. Rudolf Steiner, whose lectures given to farmers in 1924 opened up a new way of integrating scientific understanding with the recognition of the spirit in nature.

The Biodynamic (BD) method sees the farm as an individual, a living organism made up of many interdependent elements: fields, forests, ponds, hedgerows, plants, animals, soil, compost, people and the spirit of place. The goal of the BD practitioner is to nurture and harmonize these elements, treating them in a holistic and dynamic way to support the health and vitality of the whole, paying attention for the earth and what wants to unfold from it.

It focuses on creating optimal soil, vegetal and veterinary health conditions, providing balanced nutrition and supporting healthy immunity. BD farms strive to create fertility themselves through

composting, animal integration, cultivation of cover crops and crop rotation. These practices reduce or eliminate the need for imported fertilizers and enable the economy to move towards balance and resilience. Healthy and fertile soil (living soil) is a key factor in cultivation, achieved through the use of sprays and compost preparations. The former ones are used as potent liquid sprays to bring healing, vitality and sensitivity to the farm and garden.

Each individual and self-sustaining farming organisation makes a significant contribution to the ecological, economic, social and spiritual vitality of the surrounding community and the whole Earth. Through biodynamics, we can access new capacities of human creativity to detect and respond to the Earth's needs and to develop new solutions in a living and dynamic way.

According to our conception, a biodynamic economy is the best supportive environment for people with disabilities, which improves their self-sustaining skills and can improve their access to the labour market.

The development of the person can be observed on several levels: providing valuable employment, increasing movement and activity through farm activities, providing companionship and reducing loneliness, increasing social interactions, improving mood and general well-being, balance, sense of rhythm, movement coordination, attention and stamina. Participants will experience the importance of their competence and responsibility towards animals as well as towards planting and caring for plants. It also strengthens their social interaction skills, not least with animals, and leads to an appreciation and respect for their environment for both disabled and non-disabled people.

3.3. Work-life balance

Work-life balance primarily refers to finding one's individual and healthy balance. So it is a matter of one's own judgement as to what one considers „self-sacrifice“, „duty“, stress or quality time. Not only are our working, family and social situations different, but so are we ourselves and our perceptions.

Work-life balance, i.e., the balance of work and private life describes a state of equilibrium between our own needs and the time we spend on other areas of our lives.

Work-life balance, or lack of it, is given more and more emphasis these days. This is not surprising, as maintaining a delicate balance between work demands, family commitments and individual needs is essential for a balanced yet active life, for building and maintaining the relationships that matter to us, for enjoying the minor and major pleasures of everyday life, and of course, it is not negligible from the point of view of our physical and mental well-being, either. Ongoing stress, overload or lack of motivation can even trigger physical symptoms or lead to burnout.

1. Work-life balance

Change is continuously present in all areas of our life, and it also involves upsetting the established balance. Sometimes minor, (the arrival of a new colleague, taking on a different role, etc.), other times major changes (changing jobs, having a child) take place in our life, some events we cannot influence, others we can, or changes in our lives come about as a result of our own efforts, but we must always take action to maintain a delicate balance. We should not underestimate the programmes that connect us with our families, relatives or friends outside the world of work. Neglecting these compromises a healthy work-life balance and limits our quality of life. Those who make too many sacrifices for their profession or vocation and make compromises in their personal life (for example, because work is supposed to be at stake) will sooner or later reach their limits, i.e., physical and/or emotional exhaustion. Many people are unaware that personal happiness and overall balance can also be the basis for professional success.

Everyone has their own tolerance threshold for coping with work-life imbalances in the short or long term. In particular, maximalist career starters tend to focus all their attention and energy on their new jobs, as they feel they are under enormous pressure, and they strive to keep up with experienced employees. But what many people forget is that a healthy work-life balance is not only in the interest of the employee. Of course, companies also benefit from a balanced, motivated and creative employee who does not constantly struggle with the risk of failure due to excessive demands. We need to take time to assess and review priorities in our own life, so that we can re-establish the optimal balance for us, that shifted as a result of the changes.

2. Work, family, privacy

Researchers of the field of work-life balance define work-life balance as the result of meeting the needs arising in the three basic areas of life: work, family and private life. However, balance does not necessarily imply an equal distribution of time between these three areas, as balance is a subjective phenomenon, and each individual will have a different amount of each type of activity needed to achieve subjective well-being. For some people, work is also a vocation and a very important part of their daily lives, so they need a bigger slice of this area to achieve the right state of balance. Others follow a 'work for a living' philosophy and see work as a means to achieve their goals, and career is not of central importance in their life. Each person has to know for himself whether there are gaps in his life, what gives him pleasure and what does not. Satisfaction is not some objective thing. It is always judged by the given person. There is always a healthy work-life balance if there is enough time to do things that give you new energy and a sense of fulfilment. For some people, it may be family and friends, for others it may be sport or some hobby. But for some people, this is their job. The instantaneous pleasures of a consumer lifestyle are not enough for a happy life, and in fact, work-life balance cannot be conceived without mental and physical health. And why should we pay attention to this? Because nowadays work has become the most dominant factor in the lives of millions of

people, resulting in several serious consequences. Among others, it includes burnout as well, which was recently added to the list of diseases by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Among other things, burnout syndrome is the result of a distorted work-life balance, and it destroys the personal lives, careers and businesses of hundreds of millions of people.

3. When it is already too much/shock!

Whichever type we belong to, within the three basic areas of life, we have our individual limits, which, when reached, can give us a sense of „enough is enough“. In today's fast-paced world, we can increasingly feel that we are not given enough time or support to meet our work and personal commitments. At work, we are often expected to spend as much time as possible on our work, but at the same time, also family demands that we fulfil our responsibilities at home, which also affect the delicate balance. Driven by the daily grind, we try to do as much as we can, as fast as we can, to meet the demands of the modern age. And there is no time to relax. In the long run, however, our body senses the lack of quiet moments, the lack of free time, the lack of sleep – when we reach that certain limit mentioned earlier – and signals.

4. The lack of balance

The constant race against time, against our tasks, against ourselves, the growing stress and frustration at work and in our personal lives, is making being felt in all areas. A long-term disruption of the optimal balance leads to lower productivity for everyone and can lead to the development of diseases (e.g., sleep disorders, cardiovascular problems, digestive disorders, anxiety, depression, etc.). In addition to problems at work, imbalance can also have an impact on family life: it can take the form of dissatisfaction with family life, it can harm our role in the family, and we can become much less enthusiastic and less engaged in the daily life of our family. Therefore, work-life balance has a major impact on our well-being, life satisfaction, relationships and health.

5. When the scale tips

But how do we get to the point of disruption of balance? The previously well-established, well-functioning balance is often disrupted almost imperceptibly, step by step. Other times it may be linked to a more significant change, a major turning point. And what solutions does all this lead to? Because we have nowhere else to turn, we steal precious free time to meet the obligations that arise. In many cases, for example, we are forced to take time off for activities that we can no longer fit into our working hours. Another common solution is to do our extra work at the expense of sleep. We do not allow time for our mind and body to rest.

6. Key: awareness

Alongside our daily tasks and the demands placed on us, the need for leisure activities, for me-time, for achieving our own goals, for quality time with our families, comes naturally. However, the delicate scales can tip quickly if we are not paying attention consciously.

Finding and maintaining a work-life balance can also be helped by an expert outsider. Finding and maintaining balance can be hard work, but it's worth the time and effort because it can make a difference in terms of quality in our life.

3.4. Healthy lifestyle

The air you breathe, the food you eat, the radiations, sound effects and vibrations around them all affect the foetus in some way. Once a child is born, all these impacts are magnified and accompany us all for the rest of our life.

Health is an integral part of our daily lives, we take it for granted, we often ignore it, we don't take care of it, we have it; it becomes a value when we feel its absence. In our overworked world, we don't think about the fact that we also have to do something to preserve our health, we don't know how to look after it, what to do to keep it on the long run. Based on a holistic, so-called bio-psycho-social approach, there is a need to constantly draw attention to the extent to which the life of an adult is influenced by positive and negative influences, aptitudes and environment in childhood. It is important that they have sufficient knowledge of factors that are detrimental to health, that they can say no to the habits that are damaging to their health, based on their attitudes, and that they are able to make healthy choices. Beyond this, they can enhance the existence of social relationships (supportive community), self-knowledge, self-assessment, ability to cope with problems and individual stress management, which are also of paramount importance for lifestyle, in addition to biological, organ particularities and age factors. Health is increasingly discussed these days, as one can only meet a wide range of expectations if they are able to understand and respond to challenges, adapt to their environment, participate in their family and other social relationships, plan for the future, adjust their plans from time to time, and in short, cope with life. The aim for all of us is to increase the number of years we live in good health and to protect our adherents and immediate family.

In order to develop health-aware behaviour of citizens and for the early detection of diseases and health risks, it is also important to make public health and preventive services an integral part of primary care.

It is important for the teacher to know how to convey the diversity of health components in an illustrative way. One illustrative way of doing this is to present the health flower model (Figure 1).

The concept of health includes joy of life, well-being, balance, satisfaction, motivation for work, creativity, fitness, physical, psychic and social adaptability.

The problems of human relationships, misunderstanding each other, intolerance can cause tension in people's lives. The disorder of social relationships, the forced and persistent need to adapt, do not in themselves constitute a disease, but if they become persistent, they can cause illness. Health is therefore also the ability to solve problems and manage emotions, which is a source of maintaining a positive self-image and physical-mental satisfaction. Health is an ever-changing, dynamic, non-static concept for the individual, requiring ever-changing behaviour.

As we always do in our work, we move outwards from the effects in the immediate vicinity of the individual towards getting to know the impacts of the broader environment, from the human being as a biological being to the family, the immediate environment, the broader environment, the municipality, the country, the global impacts.

The environment that supports health

The general guiding principle for the world, nations, regions and communities is to support mutual care, to look after each other, our communities and our natural environment. The preservation of our natural treasures has to be emphasised as a global responsibility throughout the world. Work and rest have to become a source of health. The estimation of what impact the rapidly changing environment - in particular technology, work, energy production and urbanisation - has on health is essential, and this needs to be followed up with an intervention ensuring that these impacts are clearly to the benefit of people's health. No health promotion strategy can ignore the protection of the natural and artificial environment and the preservation of natural treasures.

Health and physical activity

Mental health, reinforced by a stable environment, also includes physical health as well. To stay healthy, many people (also) need enough exercise and a healthy diet. Especially if they work in an office, sit all day and just quickly heat up something to eat during their short break. Exercise releases endorphins and can also relieve a lot of stress and tension that is no longer in our family home. Friends and family can also be involved in such a programme. For example, if you cannot make it on a weekday, cook something fresh at the weekend, preferably with other people. This way we can make sure that our personal relationships, work and physical health are in balance.

Establishing the right balance might prove to be a very demanding task. Our ingrained patterns, habits and fears make it hard to change our daily practices. Those who tend to be maximalists, or find it difficult to say no to extra requests from their boss, colleagues or family members, also do not have an easy task. It is worth stopping and taking at least a moment to step out of this overwhelmed state - when we feel we have no time for anything - it is important to prioritise tasks and put our own interests first, taking our options into account.

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5. Outdoor activities

5.1. Sustainable development in the workplace

Activity No. 5.1.1.

MODULE 3	Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance
TOPIC 1	Sustainable development in the workplace
Title of the activity	Minefield
Pedagogical objective	It is a game that is suitable to improve information flow, and it helps participants to understand the causes of eventual miscommunication and how to avoid it.
Target group	Adults with mild and moderate mental disabilities
Duration (minutes)	2 hours
Settings	Courtyard, open air
Size of the group	20 people
Method	Group activity
Tools	different objects, blindfold

Description of the activity

Finding and avoiding all the mines on the field. The animator places various obstacles (e.g., bottle caps, post-its, plastic cups, etc.), called mines, in the designated area of the playing field. One person in the pair walks blindfolded and the other must use verbal commands to navigate them through the minefield without entering the course or touching their partner.

Text of the instructions for participants

In the next game, they work in pairs. One of them, must navigate through the minefield blindfolded, with the help of verbal instructions from their partner.

Summary – Self-reflection for education participants

1. What did I learn during the training? / What insights have I gained in the field of eco-workspace/green office?
2. What do I take with me to my own life?
3. What is the influence on my current and future ecological way of life?
4. What step can I take tomorrow, based on what I learned in the activity?

Activity No. 5.1.2.

MODULE 3	Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance
TOPIC 1	Sustainable development in the workplace
Title of the activity	Tell your story! Liars and detectives
Pedagogical objective	Getting to know each other in a different way, paying attention to the other person, development of communication.
Target group	Adults with mild and moderate mental disabilities
Duration (minutes)	2 hours
Settings	Courtyard
Size of the group	15 people
Method	Group activity
Tools	wheel of fortune/dice

Description of the activity

Participants stand in a circle, one person spins a wheel with an arrow in the middle (wheel of fortune, dice), and whoever the arrow points to, as soon as the wheel stops, that person has to tell 2 true and 1 false short story about themselves to the others. Everyone votes on which one they consider to be false. The storyteller reveals which story was false. The round continues until everyone has had a turn. At the end, the winner is the one who got the most votes for guessing the fake story.

Text of the instructions for participants

Please stand in a circle and let one of you spin the wheel! Whoever the arrow of the wheel points to, tell 2 true and one false short story about yourselves! The others have to find out which stories are true and which are false. The winner is the person who told the most believable fake story about themselves.

Summary – Self-reflection for education participants

1. What did I learn during the exercise? / What insights have I gained about myself and my partner?
2. What do I take with me to my own life?
3. What is the influence on my current and future ecological way of life?
4. What step can I take tomorrow, based on what I learned in the activity?

5.2. Work at the farm

Activity No. 5.2.1.

MODULE 3	Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance
TOPIC 2	Work at the farm
Title of the activity	Preparing an insect shelter
Pedagogical objective	People with disabilities will be able to learn about different insects, it will develop their fine motor skills and their creativity.
Target group	Adults with mild and moderate mental disabilities
Duration (minutes)	180
Settings	Irisz Farm/Courtyard
Size of the group	15 fő
Method	Group activity, interactive, frontal
Tools	Tree bark, pieces of twigs, cones, straw, nutshell, paper egg cartoon, perforated bricks, pieces of flower pots, wooden box/strips and nails, thin wire mesh.

Description of the activity

If we cannot find a wooden chest, the instructor nails the slats together to form a chest. The front of the insect hotel is open and the rest is closed. We then create "chambers" inside, which the young people upload with different materials, making nests from them. The different materials are needed so that different insects can move in. At the end of the operation, the trainer attaches a thin wire mesh to the open part of the box to prevent smaller materials from falling out.

Text of the instructions for participants

Now we collect the slats and we make a chest with nails. At the open parts, we make form nests by making chambers. At the end, a thin wire mesh is attached to the open part of the box to make it secure.

Summary – Self-reflection for education participants

1. What did I learn during the training? / What insights have I gained about insects?
2. What do I take with me to my own life?
3. What is the influence on my current and future ecological way of life?
4. What step can I take tomorrow, based on what I learned in the activity?

Activity No. 5.2.2.

MODULE 3	Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance
TOPIC 2	Work at the farm
Title of the activity	Let's plant vegetables!
Pedagogical objective	Young people will be able to find out what is in season for different vegetables, learn what tools are needed for planting and what to pay attention for when carrying out the operations.
Target group	Adults with mild and moderate mental disabilities
Duration (minutes)	120 minutes
Settings	Irisz kertészet
Size of the group	15 people
Method	Frontal, groupwork
Tools	little hoes, with which you can make furrows, compost, sprinkling can filled with water, rubber gloves
Description of the activity	

Young people mix the compost with the soil in gloves. Then they make furrows into the soil with to a distance of 30 cm, then they dig a hole of 3-4 cm into the soil. They press it down carefully and sprinkle it.

Text of the instructions for participants

Take the gloves and mix the compost with the soil, then make furrows into the soil with a hoe to a distance of 30 cm! Then dig deeper, about 3-4 cm holes, carefully press the seeds into it and sprinkle it!

Summary – Self-reflection for education participants

1. What did I learn during the training? / What insights have I gained in the field of planting?
2. What do I take with me to my own life?
3. What is the influence on my current and future ecological way of life?
4. What step can I take tomorrow, based on what I learned in the activity?

5.3. Work-life balance

Activity No. 5.3.1.

MODULE 3	Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance
TOPIC 3	Work-life balance
Title of the activity	Solution cycle
Pedagogical objective	SolutionCircle is an eight-step model that can well be used to create a vision or a mid-term strategy, manage conflicts, develop cooperation or cohesion, and set up longer-term projects.
Target group	Adults with mild and moderate mental disabilities
Duration (minutes)	120 minutes
Settings	Outdoor/courtyard
Size of the group	15 people
Method	Individual/teamwork
Tools	2 packs of thread
Description of the activity	

1. Clarifying the framework: this aims to build trust and empowerment. This is the place to clarify the timeframe and the rules that everyone agrees on (formality/informality, what is allowed and what is not, etc.).

2. Expectations and aims: Team members define their expectations and the success criteria that team members perceive as a return on their commitment.

3. Focal points: Team members name those areas, i.e., problems, where they feel that they have to develop.

4. Exceptional occasions: This phase involves identifying the periods when the problems are not present or not so intense. It is a search for areas that are already working well, for memorable success stories and strengths that can be built on and that will also give you the confidence for implementation. It is important to focus should be on what works well and on strengths rather than on analysing problems.

5. Targeted future: This is the place of describing the desired future. As precisely and in as much detail as possible, the teams define the ideal state they wish to achieve. This is a phase of creativity and imagination, but it is worth setting a goal that is realistic and attractive enough to get team members to commit to it.

6. Scaling: Its purpose is to enable the team to "measure" its own status and position in relation to the future it is aiming for. Visualisation can take place in many different ways (on a whiteboard, on a sheet

of paper, etc.), but if we are in a place with more room to move, we can even use the tool of spatial scaling. We mark an end point in the room or on the square, indicating the fullest realisation of the desired future. In contrast to this is the opposite of this state. We ask members to stand there between the two endpoints, where they are now (as they assess the situation of the organisation) or how they feel now. Next, the people closest to each other should discuss what the point, where they are standing means? By how much is it more than if they stood at a place one step below? If we have given time to discuss, we ask everyone to take one step forward. Here we ask, what is different here from the previous place? In this way, participants can become aware of the achievements of their psychological growth so far and also what steps are needed for further development.

Text of the instructions for participants

The following exercise will provide an opportunity for strategic planning steps to map the implementation of the vision. Please place everyone between the two endpoints, depending on where they are now, how they feel now. Next, the people closest to each other should discuss what the point where they are standing means. How much is it more than if they stood one step lower? Once they have discussed their current situation, we ask everyone to take a step forward. What is different here from the previous place?

Summary – Self-reflection for education participants

1. What did I learn during the training? / What insights have I gained about maintaining psychological balance?
2. What do I take with me to my own life?
3. What is the influence on my current and future ecological way of life?
4. What step can I take tomorrow, based on what I learned in the activity?

Activity No. 5.3.2.

MODULE 3	Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance
TOPIC 3	Work-life balance
Title of the activity	Digital Detox
Pedagogical objective	Replacing useless and pointless activities with useful activities at work. The experience of active interconnection, learning and doing together increases the sense of responsibility for the community/team and makes them more motivated, committed and deepens the relationships.
Target group	Adults with mild and moderate mental disabilities
Duration (minutes)	45 minutes
Settings	Outdoor café/small garden
Size of the group	10 people
Method	Pairwork /groupwork
Tools	Paper, stationery items, lemon-mint smoothie, basket

Description of the activity

Together, the couples choose and decide on the place and the topic of their meeting. If there is an opportunity for a more informal, homely, outdoor meeting at work, you can make a mint lemonade refresher together. Once the framework has been set up, specific tasks can be discussed, the tasks on the agenda can be discussed, broken down into steps, and planning can take place. The purpose of such meetings is to pay attention for each other, to listen to each other's opinions, to brainstorm, and especially without digital tools.

Text of the instructions for participants

Today it will be a different day. Please put your telephones into this basket and you will get them back after the working time was over. Today we will hold a digital detox day! The emphasis will be on personal connection, paying attention for each other and effective verbal communication. Please choose a comfortable location, prepare some refreshments together and let's start the discussion and implementation of daily tasks! Have a useful stay together!

Summary – Self-reflection for education participants

1. What did I learn during the training? / What insights have I gained during the digital detox ?
2. What do I take with me to my own life?
3. What is the influence on my current and future ecological way of life?
4. What step can I take tomorrow, based on what I learned in the activity?

5.4. Healthy lifestyle

Activity No. 5.4.1.

MODULE 3	Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance
TOPIC 4	Healthy lifestyle
Title of the activity	Vitamin bomb
Pedagogical objective	Clarifying the concept of health and its importance in individual life. Developing health aware behaviour and early detection of diseases and health risks.
Target group	Adults with mild and moderate mental disabilities
Duration (minutes)	120 minutes
Settings	Outdoor courtyard /Big hall
Size of the group	15 people
Method	groupwork, individual work
Tools	Dixit cards, flipchart, stationery
Description of the activity	

We organise participants in the shape of a circle and present the topic. After the presentation of the topic, they are asked to choose from the deck of cards the one that has a metaphorical meaning for the keyword "health". Once everyone has found their "own" card, they frontally report why they had chosen that card. How important is health in your life? What do you do about it? After the individual reports, they collectively sort the cards and sketch them on a flipchart.

Text of the instructions for participants

Please stand in a circle and select the first metaphorical card from the deck of cards you see here that has a metaphorical meaning related to the word "health". Please explain us why you have chosen this card. Write the concepts and words that come to their minds the first time on pieces of paper and organise them together on a platform (magnet board, flipchart, tablet, etc.)!

Summary – Self-reflection for education participants

1. What did I learn during the training? / What insights have I gained in the field of health?
2. What do I take with me to my own life?
3. What is the influence on my current and future ecological way of life?
4. What step can I take tomorrow, based on what I learned in the activity?

Activity No. 5.4.2.

MODULE 3	Sustainable development in the workplace and work-life balance
TOPIC 4	Healthy lifestyle
Title of the activity	Health-flower
Pedagogical objective	Practising of healthy behaviour, physical representation of the components of well-being.
Target group	Adults with mild and moderate mental disabilities
Duration (minutes)	45 minutes
Settings	Open-air
Size of the group	15 people
Method	groupwork, frontal
Tools	-
Description of the activity	

Applying the health flower model in a different way!

Some of the participants are asked to form a circle, and the others are asked to form smaller circles around them. (forming a flower shape)

As a starting point for a health promotion activity/programme, first ask the individual/group to tell you the health components that are important to them, and only then complete it with the components you know and with the ones that are important to you (e.g., based on the health flower model). Then group the health components together under the headings body, soul, mind. In this way, you will be able to identify the dimensions that are important for the individual/group, focusing on which, you can plan a more effective intervention.

Text of the instructions for participants

I ask 5 participants to form a circle, then ask the others to form smaller circles around the positioned in the middle! Let's make a big flower shape, this will be the health flower model! Once you have the flower shape, everyone please tell what health components are important to them, and then group them along the dimensions of body, soul and mind.

Finally, everyone please feel free to dance, make sure you move your limbs well!

Cheers!

Summary – Self-reflection for education participants

1. What did I learn during the training? / What insights have I gained by the presentation of the health flower model?
2. What do I take with me to my own life?
3. What is the influence on my current and future ecological way of life?
4. What step can I take tomorrow, based on what I learned in the activity?

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