

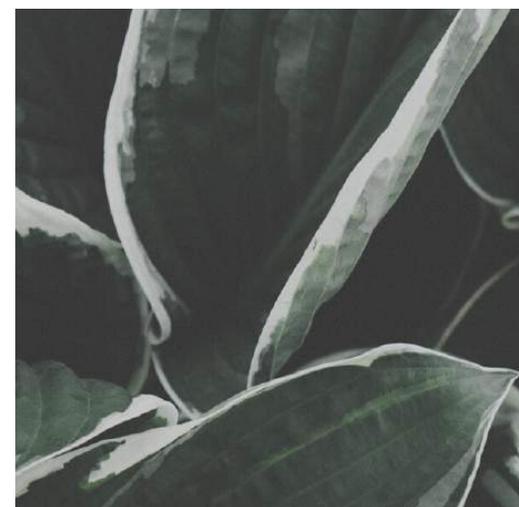
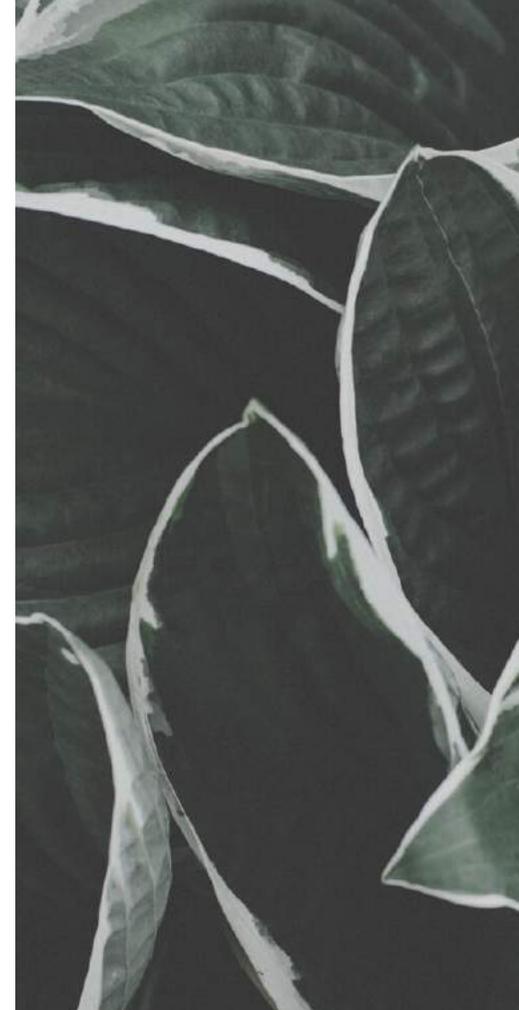
2020

In Search of Authenticity
Toolbox

- Easy practices to search for the authenticity in myself -

Index

About _____	3
Toolbox _____	4
01. Journal _____	4
02. Vocabulary of feelings&needs _____	8
03. My definition of authenticity _____	10
04. Observing your judgements _____	12
05. Questioning _____	15
06. "I don't know" _____	17
07. My balance in relations with others _____	20
08. Dealing with tensions _____	22
09. My world installation _____	24
10. Conversation with a wise teacher _____	27
Credits _____	30



About

This toolbox has been created in the frames of "**In Search of Authenticity**" Erasmus + project, which aimed to equip a group of 24 youth workers with:

- critical thinking as a competence of searching for own independent perspective,
- the attitude of questioning their realities and being curious,
- the ability to be in touch with their core values, needs, emotions, to prevent overwhelming influence by the outside factors by keeping their inner-center present and awake.

To reach those goals we introduce **applied drama** and **philosophy** as methodologies bringing people closer to their inner-core and authentic presence in the world, at the same time reinforcing their curiosity about the world and people, which are important factors in preventing professional burnout.

The "In Search of Authenticity" training course took place in Poland, from 12 to 18 November 2019, and has brought together 24 leaders and youth workers from Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and Poland.

The toolbox is a resource, drawing from the experience of the training course program and with some added activities/ instructions, with **easy to practice activities** which may help to develop an **authentic connection** with oneself and the world outside.

01

Journal

Journal

This activity can help to keep the **connection** with yourself from the beginning until the end of the day, and keep the track of the evolution of your thoughts, observations, learning moments. Below we describe some ideas how to focus your writing. Enjoy!

Check in with your journal

When you wake up in the morning, pay attention and observe the first thing you do or think when you open your eyes. Take a deep breath and have a quick check all over your body putting your attention on your senses, on the information you receive from your body.

Are you tense or relaxed? Do you feel fresh or tired? How is your breath? Are you comfortable in your skin? How do you feel the balance of your body and its organs? And your posture? Do you need to do some movement? How are your thoughts? How do you perceive your inner balance? Can you notice any need or feeling? (If it helps, you could take your list of needs and feelings and check them out). Is there anything you would like to change? Is there anything you would like to do for yourself?

If you come to any observation you can write it down in your journal. If you feel like focusing on something, some practice, strategy or reflection you would like to add to your day, you can write it down too.

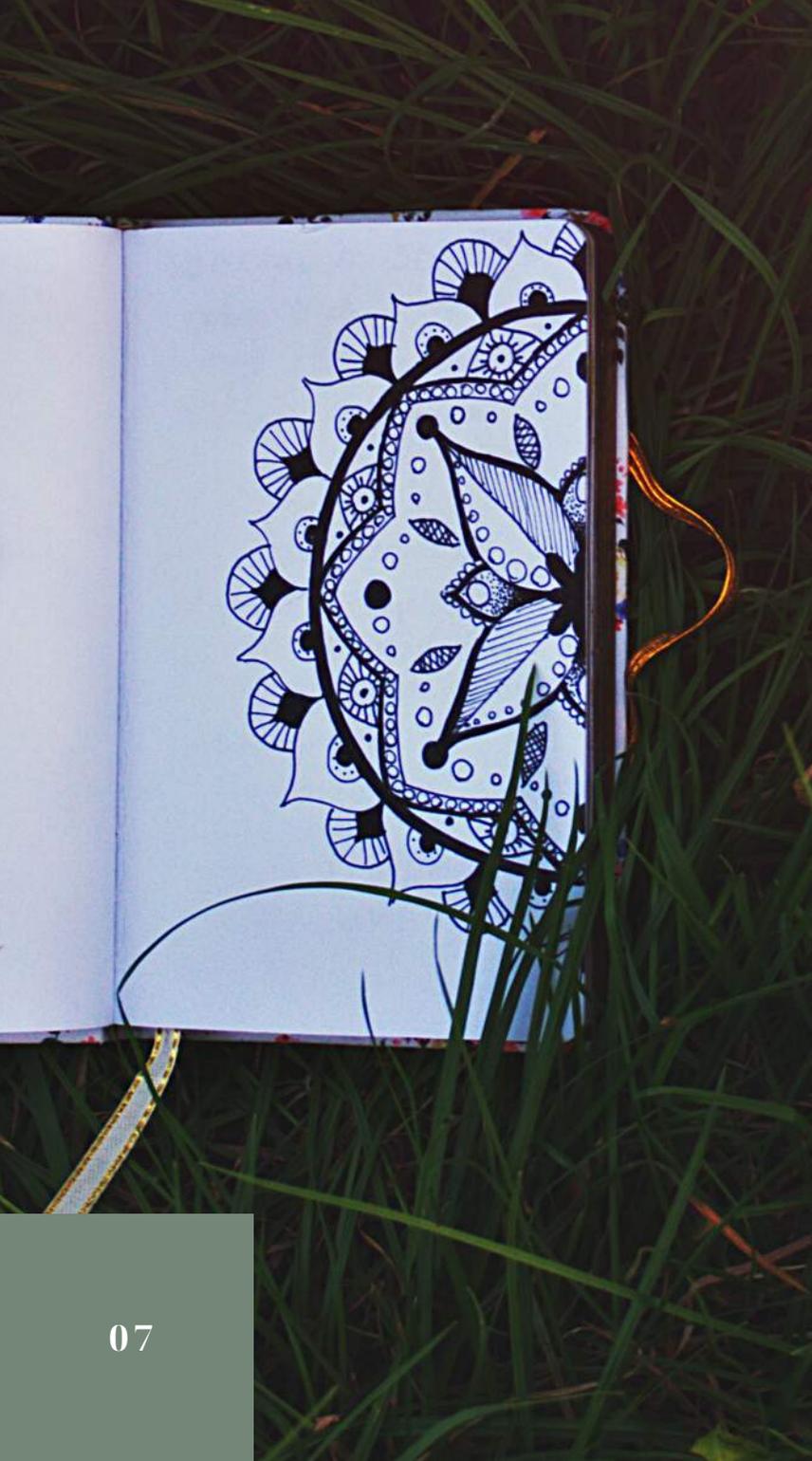
Additional questions we have used during the training course

When was a moment when I took care of my needs?
How did I do it?

Which question am I'm asking myself today?

What would I ask to the wisest person I know?





Check out with your journal

By the end of the day (it could be while watching the sunset or just before going to sleep) take some minutes and think about the things you did during the day as if it was in a movie.

What have you perceived? What have you enjoyed? What has triggered you? Have you achieved any of your intentions from the morning? Could you satisfy your needs? Have you been good for yourself? Do you remember moments when you felt you are in contact with your inner authenticity?

Now I invite you to sum up your movie in one short sentence as if it was the title.

Feel free to write down the facts that especially took your attention, your reflections on what you would like to change or develop further. You may want to write down or draw what you are grateful for and take a moment to enjoy the feeling of gratitude.

02

Vocabulary of feelings & needs

Vocabulary of feelings & needs

Feelings and needs are considered to be the **core elements** we experience each day, which motivate and direct our actions. We encourage you to learn and practice the specific vocabulary of feelings and needs, to expand the possibilities to understand yourself and express in communication with the others. You can find different lists, in your mother tongues, which gather the variety of words to describe the feelings and needs which we might be experiencing as humans.

We recommend the ones published by the Centre for Nonviolent Communication (cnvc.org) or by a local NVC centre in your region.

Lists in English can be found here:

Feelings



Needs



03

My definition of authenticity

My definition of authenticity

Go for a walk in nature and find a plant which **represents authenticity** for you.

Remember it or take a photo.

Write down the words that come to your mind when you are looking at this plant and think about it in the perspective of authenticity.

Can you recognise those key words in yourself?

Your attitudes and your behaviour?



04

Observing your judgements

Observing your judgements

Let's start with **free writing**. Put on an alarm to measure 3 minutes and in that time focus fully on registering on paper all your thoughts exactly in the moment when they appear. Take a pen and write down whatever is now in your mind. Write down all the thoughts, not structuring them, not censoring, not making sense out of them, not judging.

When you have finished, put the journal aside for a moment, and focus on your breathing. Breathe in... breathe out... how do you feel in your body after that? How was this experience for you? Take a moment to **reflect** about it.

Take a deep breathe again, and come back to your journal. Read what you have written and write down **3 characteristics** which according to you could describe your text.

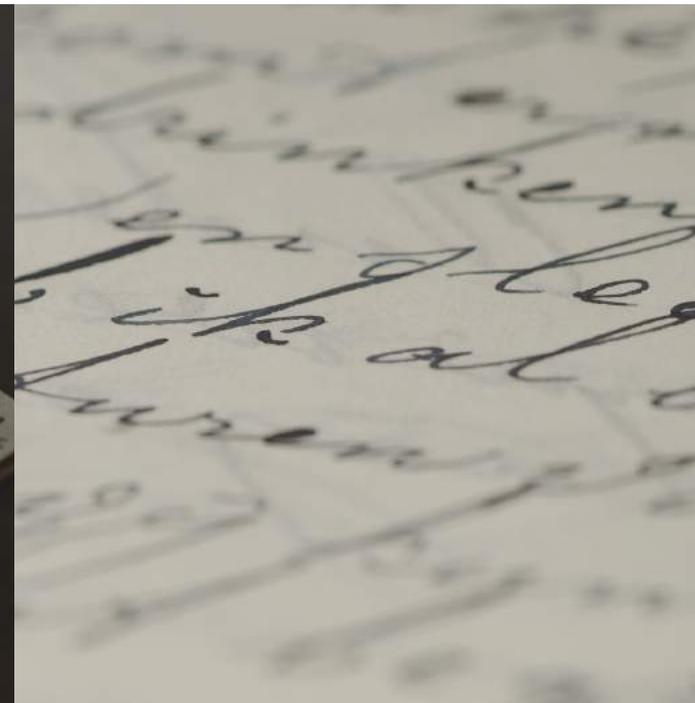
Now, read your text again. And **judge it from the moral perspective** (whatever this may mean to you). Highlight/ underline what could be considered as moral, and what could be considered as immoral.

If you have difficulties to do that, why is it so? How did you know what is moral and what immoral? Or why you didn't know?

Take a moment to **reflect** on your inner narration in more general way.

- How often do you judge yourself?
- From which perspective do you judge your thoughts and actions?
- How does it influence on you and your relationship with yourself?
- Is it possible to observe your inner narration in more neutral way?

Write down your reflections.



05

Questioning

Questioning

Write a question in the middle of the paper, the first one that comes to your mind. Circle it.

Now, draw lines from the circle to the outside, as if drawing sun rays. For each of the lines, write another question, which is a "response" to the main one in the middle. Now, choose 3 questions from the lines which are the most interesting for you at the moment.

When you decide, circle them. Continue drawing lines from the new circles and "responding" to them with more questions. Don't limit yourself. Any question that comes to you is a good one! Catch it on paper before you forget it.

When you finally feel empty of questions, or simply stuck, circle the final 3 questions which catch your attention.

You may ask yourself an additional question: why have I decided to circle those questions?

06

"I don't know"

The "I don't know" practice

With other people

We invite you to a challenge for a one day.

Whenever somebody asks you a question, answer: "I don't know". Whenever you ask yourself a question, answer: "I don't know". When the question seems obvious, and you answered it 1000 times before, this time answer: "I don't know". When the question is of a philosophical matter, and you don't know the answer, say: "I don't know".

This might be a funny experience, accompanied with laughter, which is also a reaction to stress and discomfort. Even when the situation requires a serious answer, at your job for instance, try first to say: "I don't know" and stop for a moment to notice what is happening inside of you, and with the person who asked the question, and between the two of you.

Choose one day for that experiment, and by the end of the day, write down in your journal, how did it feel? Was it easy or difficult? What was different than your usual behaviour? How did the people react? How often in your life do you let go of knowing the answer and let yourself be in the position of not knowing? How different does it make you feel from your usual way you experience your days? How has it influenced the way you think about yourself? When you give the answer, what is your need behind that? Is it one need or more? How would you like to keep the balance between knowing and not knowing in your life?

By myself

Another version of this exercise you can practice by yourself with a mirror.

Stand in front of the mirror for 5 minutes and whenever a new question appears in your mind, say it loud and answer yourself: "I don't know".

Repeat that with at least few questions.

When you finish, notice, how did it feel. What new have you observed about yourself?



07

My balance in relations with others

My balance in relations with others

Take a pen/ pencil/ marker/ crayon and a piece of paper.

Close your eyes and start **drawing** a line without detaching the pen from the paper.

When you draw it, think of a recent situation you have experienced in a relation with someone which was very emotional for you and you might think about it as a “failure”.

Don't censor yourself when you think about it and continue drawing.

The movement of your hand might change directions and tempo of drawing. Let your hand and arm **react to the feelings** which appear when you think about the situation.

If your feelings are too strong just stop and open your eyes. Breathe deeply. When you are ready, continue to draw, with your eyes opened or closed.

When you feel you are ready with the drawing (probably you will feel more calm), stop and open your eyes.

Using the same color or a different one, complete the drawing to make it look balanced.

When your drawing is finished, and you can look at it with satisfaction, write down **10 strategies** you use to get back to **balance** after an emotionally overwhelming interaction with another person.

08

Dealing with tensions

Dealing with tensions

Think of the moments when you have experienced situations that were difficult, tiring, challenging, tense. How do you deal with them?

Write down 10 different behaviours you can recognise that you do when you are tensed. Don't judge or censor yourself, be honest.

Now, evaluate each of them on a scale from 1-10, from the perspective of 5 aspects:

How risky it is? How much do I need other people to be involved in it? How much money does it engage usually? How accessible is this behaviour to me? How easy to it is to implement?

Which one of them would you recommend to your best friend?

You may check, is the one that you would recommend the same as the one that you repeat the most often?



09

My world installation

My world installation

We invite you to do this activity with **another person** – your housemate, a friend you invite over, your partner, etc.

Each of you should find **20 different random objects**, from different categories of items, around the house, or in the space where you are right now, can be also outdoors. The objects you have found are for your partner in this activity. Give them to him/her, exposing them in one place, ideally on a piece of cloth, where each of them lays separately, can be touched and picked up.

Now you and your partner have one set of objects in front of you, the one gathered for you by the other person. From this set, now you personally, **choose 5-7 objects** which represent your world. Take some time, but not too long.

When you have your chosen 5-7 items, take a big sheet of paper or a piece of cloth, and make an installation that you will call “My World” using those items, the paper or cloth being the background and frame for it. Take your time, but not longer than 15 minutes.

When you are done, take the next 15 minutes to write down your observations, feelings and reflections about the picture you have created. We encourage you to photograph it, so that you can remind yourself the picture in the future.

When both you and your partner feel that the maps and your notes are complete, comes the time to **introduce your partner to your world**. We suggest that each of you takes 15 minutes to tell about your world to the other person.

The last step, when you have listened to each other's stories, is the possibility to **change** something in your own installation. What could you change to introduce more **authenticity** into your world? Do it, and write down your feelings, observations and reflections afterwards.



10

Conversations with a wise teacher

Conversations with a wise teacher

Have you ever wanted to meet a person who knows the answer to every question? This activity will offer you a chance to do that.

First, prepare for the meeting, and **write down the questions** you would like to ask. You don't need to write down every question you have been asking yourself since you were born. Focus on the ones, which are the most important in your life right now. You may choose up to 3 questions to make sure that the person you are going to meet will have the time and energy to answer them.

Ready?

Now, take a chair for your guest, and **sit in front of it**, waiting for the guest to arrive. Read the questions out loud (or at least read them silently and carefully to yourself). When you finish, **take the seat of the guest**.

Now, being the person who knows all the answers, respond out loud to your questions. When you finish, go back for one more second to be in front of the chair, and say "**Thank you**" to the person who answered the questions. If you want, you can write down the answers and keep them as your treasure.



I'm authentic because I exist

Credits

- This Toolbox has been created by:

Marta Skorczynska

Sonia Ruszkowska

- Designed by:

Ellie Cabanes



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

"In search of authenticity" is a project funded by Erasmus+ and coordinated by Kobiety Łódź.

