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STRONGER YOU(TH)



STRONGER YOU(TH)

“BETTER2GETHER”

MANUAL FOR YOUTH WORKERS



STOWARZYSZENIE
MŁODYCH
ARTYSTÓW

C:E:T
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PROJECT INFORMATION

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE MANUAL

The Youth Workers' Manual for the Organization of the BETTER2GETHER Meetings is a practical guide designed to support youth workers in planning, organizing, and facilitating BETTER2GETHER Meetings using the peer-to-peer support method. The manual aims to strengthen the professional profiles of youth workers by equipping them with structured guidance, tools, and non-formal education activities that foster inclusive, non-judgmental, and supportive environments for young people.

The manual introduces youth workers to peer-to-peer support as an effective approach based on shared experiences, mutual understanding, and equality among participants. It provides clear guidance on how to apply this method to create safe spaces where young people from diverse backgrounds, particularly those experiencing mental health difficulties, can come together, share personal experiences, offer emotional and social support, and exchange practical advice. All experiences are treated as equally valuable, promoting acceptance, empathy, and resilience.

Accompanied by a set of non-formal education activities to be implemented, the manual supports youth workers in engaging young people through participatory, reflective, and experiential learning processes. It outlines how to organize the BETTER2GETHER Meetings in each partner country (Lithuania, Poland, Italy, Bulgaria and Cyprus), ensuring consistency, quality, and impact across partner organizations.

Developed under Work Package 3, with P5 (Association WalkTogether) as WP Leader, the manual's content and structure are collaboratively designed by all partners to ensure relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with project objectives.



1.LEARNING MATERIAL

The learning material consists of 6 structured modules developed based on the Competence Framework and tailored to the real needs of young people identified through an initial online survey assessing young people's mental health situation in the partner countries. The modules aim to enhance young people's understanding of mental health and mental health difficulties, support them in recognizing emotions and behaviours, and empower them to make healthy life choices. The topics include:

- **Creativity & Music – Using Sound and Imagination to Support Mental Wellbeing (Partner: SMART eco power, Poland)**
- **Mindful Use of Social Media and Digital Detox (Partner: University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy)**
- **Promoting Self-Acceptance and Self-Esteem (Partner: CET Platform Lietuva, Lithuania)**
- **Yoga and Meditation (Partner: Association WalkTogether, Bulgaria)**
- **Creativity & Upcycling – Using Green Methods to Support Mental Health (Partner: ARCHE, Poland)**
- **Emotional Life Skills for Taking Care and Maintaining Our Mental Health (Partner: Connecting Dots, Cyprus)**

The learning material is solely in a digital formats as a form of a sustainable green practice and supports both self-learning and facilitated educational activities.



1.1. Creativity & Music – Using Sound and Imagination to Support Mental Wellbeing

(Partner: SMART eco power, Poland)

Did you know that listening to music can lower cortisol levels and trigger an immediate release of dopamine in your brain? In a world that often feels overwhelming, music and creativity are not just hobbies - they are scientifically-backed tools that empower young people to express emotions that are often too difficult to put into words. By exploring sound, rhythm, and imagination, you can move from a state of stress to one of "flow," building a natural defense against anxiety and mental fatigue. This module isn't just about being "artistic"; it's about discovering your own internal rhythm to regulate your mood, boost your self-awareness, and reclaim your mental space. Learning to use music intentionally is a life skill that fosters resilience and helps you build deeper, more authentic connections with the community around you.

Why it is useful to learn about this:

- **Emotional Regulation:** Music directly impacts the nervous system, helping you shift from tension to relaxation.
- **Self-Expression:** Creativity provides a safe, non-verbal outlet to process internal states and reduce psychological pressure.
- **Social Connection:** Engaging in collective rhythmic activities strengthens empathy and builds a sense of belonging.
- **Stress Management:** Regular creative practices act as a protective factor, improving focus and overall mental resilience.





1.2. Mindful Use of Social Media and Digital Detox

(Partner: University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy)

The average young person spends over 7 hours a day in front of a screen — yet very few stop to ask: is this time working for me, or against me? Social media can be a powerful space for connection, creativity, and self-expression, but when used unconsciously it has been linked to increased anxiety, poor sleep, low self-esteem, and a constant feeling of "not being enough." Mindful use of social media means developing an intentional relationship with technology — choosing when, why, and how you engage, rather than scrolling on autopilot. Digital detox practices, even small ones, have been shown to reduce stress, improve focus, and boost mood within just a few days. For young people navigating identity, relationships, and pressure all at once, learning to set healthy digital boundaries is not about rejecting technology — it's about reclaiming your time, attention, and mental space. Because in a world designed to keep you hooked, choosing to log off is an act of self-care.





1.3. Promoting Self-Acceptance and Self-Esteem

(Partner: CET Platform Lietuva, Lithuania)

Self-esteem and self-acceptance are the foundational pillars of a person's self-worth. While self-esteem is an evaluative judgment of your value, often functioning as a "sociometer" to monitor social acceptance and self-acceptance is the global, non-judgmental recognition of your entire self, including all strengths and weaknesses. This module explores how understanding your inherent worth and practicing "**Self-Fidelity**" or the act of staying true to your own perspective and owning your truth, supports both peak performance and emotional resilience.

Conversely, a lack of self-acceptance can trap individuals in a "vicious cycle" where avoiding challenging situations reinforces deep-seated fears and negative self-talk. Studies link low self-esteem directly to higher risks of anxiety and depression, particularly for adolescents whose identities are still forming. Researchers have even found that chronic self-negativity can physically reduce the "gray matter" in brain regions responsible for emotional control, making common wellness interventions like mindfulness less effective.

The goal of this module is to move beyond "faking" confidence and instead build it as a predictable output of keeping promises to yourself and taking consistent action. You will explore a structured path toward authentic self-worth through six core pillars: living with awareness, self-acceptance, taking responsibility, self-assertion, living intentionally, and acting with integrity.



Practical frameworks within this module include:

- Emotional Processing: Learning to treat emotions as vital sources of information and motivation rather than feelings to be “numbed” through unhealthy distractions.
- Values Clarification: Identifying what is truly meaningful to you so you can engage in committed action, using your values as a compass even when you feel scared.
- Dismantling Perfectionism: Recognizing that perfection is a myth—often developed as a childhood survival mechanism—and replacing it with radical self-acceptance.

By choosing curiosity over judgment, you can transform your internal dialogue from a “critic” into a “best friend,” allowing you to live a life that is unburdened and free.

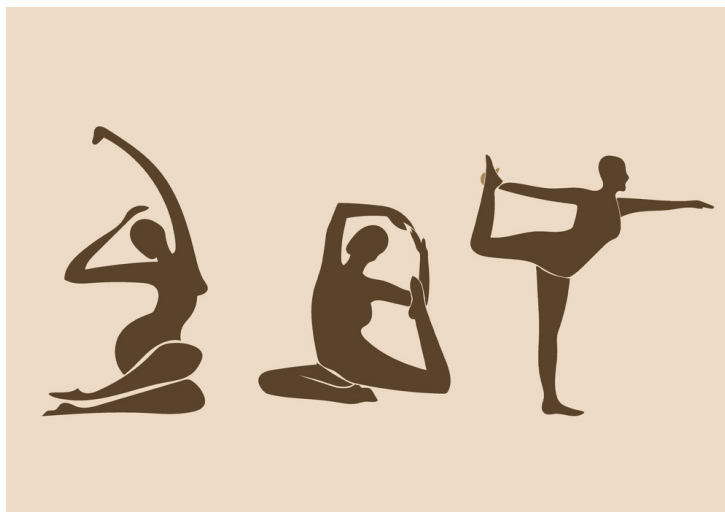




1.4. Yoga and Meditation

(Partner: Association WalkTogether, Bulgaria)

This topic explores the mental health benefits of yoga and meditation for young people and how these practices can be applied effectively. Yoga and meditation complement each other, with yoga calming the body and building resilience, while meditation trains the mind to stay centered and reduce negative thought patterns. Together, they strengthen emotional regulation, stress management, and self-esteem, which are essential foundations for youth well-being. Learners explore different styles and techniques, understanding how each supports mental and emotional health. The module emphasizes scientific evidence, clearly linking yoga and meditation to real, positive mental health outcomes. Practical application is central, as learners practice basic yoga, mindfulness, and breathing techniques. Young people gain tools to manage stress, anxiety, and negative thinking, and build confidence in using these practices daily. Youth workers develop a clear understanding of the benefits and gain resources for integrating yoga and meditation into youth programs as accessible and effective mental health tools.





1.5. Creativity & Upcycling – Using Green Methods to Support Mental Health

(Partner: ARCHE, Poland)

What if the objects we throw away every day held the key to understanding our inner world? Upcycling is more than just a sustainable trend; it is a creative transformation that bridges environmental responsibility with emotional healing. For young people, the act of taking something "broken" or "useless" and giving it a new, valuable life serves as a powerful metaphor for personal growth and resilience. Engaging in hands-on crafting reduces stress, improves concentration, and builds a sense of agency that is often lost in a digital world. By turning discarded materials into art, you are not just saving the planet - you are practicing mindfulness, cultivating empathy, and discovering a unique, non-verbal language for your emotions.



Why it is useful to learn about this:

- **Emotional Expression:** Upcycling offers a non-verbal medium to communicate complex feelings and internal states through physical materials.
- **Social Awareness:** It connects personal choices to the broader wellbeing of the environment and the local community.
- **Stress Reduction:** The process of "making" (handicraft) naturally lowers anxiety and promotes a state of calm focus.
- **Collective Impact:** Collaborative upcycling projects foster teamwork, communication, and a shared sense of social responsibility.





1.6. Emotional Life Skills for Taking Care and Maintaining Our Mental Health

(Partner: Connecting Dots, Cyprus)

In a world where young people face constant pressure from social media, academic expectations, and uncertainty about the future, emotional life skills have become essential for maintaining mental health. Learning how to recognize emotions, manage stress, and build healthy coping strategies helps young people navigate challenges with resilience and confidence. Emotional life skills empower individuals to understand themselves better, communicate their needs, and develop supportive relationships. By strengthening self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation, young people can protect their mental wellbeing and make more balanced decisions in their daily lives. Developing these skills is not only beneficial for personal wellbeing, but also for building healthier communities and more supportive social environments.





2. Handbook: Social and Emotional Learning Activities for Youth Wellbeing

The handbook is a practical educational resource designed to equip young people with social and emotional competencies that are not typically taught within formal education systems. Its focus is on personal, social, and emotional development, helping young people build resilience and learn how to manage their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours in healthy ways. For each defined competence, the handbook provides a clear definition and a couple of practical activities, making it an accessible and actionable tool for everyday use. The handbook supports long-term personal growth and coping strategies for dealing with life challenges and mental health difficulties. The topics that are included are:

- **CET Platform: Self-acceptance & Self-awareness**
- **ARCHE: Social awareness through upcycling**
- **Eco Power: Relationship skills through music**
- **Tor Vergata: Responsible decision making**
- **WalkTogether: Mindfulness through yoga & meditation**
- **Connecting DOTS: Recognizing and controlling of emotions and behaviours**



2.1. Self-acceptance & Self-awareness

(Partner: CET Platform Lietuva, Lithuania)

Self-acceptance and self-awareness are foundational to emotional stability, especially during adolescence, when identity is still developing.

Developing these competencies can help break a cycle of self-criticism and social media-driven comparison, replacing it with a steady sense of self-worth that is less dependent on external validation. Research suggests that unconditional self-acceptance is associated with lower anxiety and has been linked to a 19% reduction in mortality risk, potentially extending lifespan. With consistent practice, self-acceptance can shift confidence from something that is pursued to something that emerges reliably from one's actions. Ultimately, an important perspective remains: life is too short to spend it in ongoing conflict with oneself.

The Building Blocks of Inner Strength

Self-Esteem (The "Sociometer")	Self-Acceptance (The "Foundation")
Source: "Earned value" based on achievements and social status.	Source: Intrinsic value rooted in unconditional self-love.
Stability: Highly volatile; reacts to success and failure.	Stability: Stable and enduring regardless of circumstances.
Mechanism: Comparative; judging yourself against others.	Mechanism: Non-judgmental; objective recognition of your total self.
Result: A motivational driver for growth.	Result: Baseline for mental wellness and reduced anxiety



2.2. Social awareness through upcycling

(Partner: ARCHE, Poland)

Did you know that the average person generates over 400kg of waste per year, much of which could be transformed into something purposeful? Upcycling is not just an artistic hobby; it is a gateway to social awareness, teaching us to look at our surroundings with empathy and responsibility. By choosing to breathe new life into discarded materials, young people shift from being passive consumers to active change-makers who understand the impact of their choices on the community and the planet. This practice fosters a "resourceful mindset"- a mental shift that values what we already have, reduces the pressure of "perfection," and builds a profound sense of collective belonging. In a world of disposability, learning to upcycle is an act of mindfulness that connects your personal creativity to the well-being of the entire society.

Why it is useful to learn about this:

- **Empathy and Responsibility:** It encourages you to think beyond yourself and consider the social and environmental consequences of production and waste.
- **Problem-Solving Skills:** Upcycling challenges you to find creative, functional solutions for "useless" items, boosting cognitive flexibility.
- **Empowerment and Agency:** Seeing a physical transformation from trash to treasure builds confidence and a sense of "I can make a difference."
- **Community Connection:** Collaborative projects create a space for shared stories and collective action, reducing feelings of isolation among youth





2.3. Relationship skills through music

(Partner: SMART Eco Power, Poland)

Did you know that when people play music or clap in rhythm together, their heart rates actually begin to synchronize? This phenomenon, known as "collective effervescence," is the secret behind why music is one of the most powerful tools for building human relationships. This module explores how rhythm and sound can bridge the gap between individuals, teaching us to listen actively and respond to one another without a single word. For young people, practicing music in a group isn't just about the melody; it's about developing trust, empathy, and the ability to adapt to others. By mastering the art of "tuning in" to your peers, you gain essential social skills that translate directly into healthier friendships, better teamwork, and a stronger sense of belonging in your daily life.

Why it is useful to learn about this:

- **Non-Verbal Communication:** Music teaches you to read subtle cues and "hear" what others are expressing through their energy and rhythm.
- **Building Trust:** Synchronizing with a group requires vulnerability and cooperation, creating a safe foundation for lasting social bonds.
- **Active Listening:** Engaging in sound-based activities sharpens your ability to pay deep attention, a skill that is vital for resolving conflicts and supporting friends.
- **Conflict Resolution and Adaptability:** Collaborative improvisation teaches you how to negotiate space and ideas, helping you adapt to different social dynamics with ease.





2.4. Responsible decision making

(Partner: University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy)

Every day, young people face hundreds of choices — from small daily habits to decisions that can shape their future. Responsible decision making is the ability to make thoughtful, ethical choices that consider personal wellbeing, relationships, and the wider community. Research shows that young people who develop this skill report higher self-confidence, stronger relationships, and better mental health outcomes. Learning to pause, reflect, and weigh consequences — rather than acting on impulse — is one of the most powerful tools a young person can carry into adulthood.

It builds resilience when things go wrong, reduces anxiety around uncertainty, and fosters a sense of agency: the feeling that you are in control of your own life. In a world full of pressure, peer influence, and digital noise, knowing how to decide is just as important as what you decide.





2.5. Mindfulness through yoga & meditation

(Partner: Association WalkTogether, Bulgaria)

This module explores how yoga and meditation work together to cultivate mindfulness and inner awareness. Participants develop tools to manage stress and strengthen present-moment awareness through guided practice and reflection. Learners gain an understanding of mindfulness and its connection to yoga, meditation, posture, and focused attention. They practice basic yoga and meditation techniques that promote self-awareness, relaxation, and emotional balance. The methodology emphasizes experiential learning through guided exercises, reflection, and group discussion. Mindfulness is presented as intentional, non-judgmental attention to thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations. The module integrates theoretical insights and research showing benefits such as improved focus, emotional regulation, and reduced stress. By encouraging consistent self-care practices, the module supports resilience, mental clarity, and overall well-being.





2.6. Recognizing and controlling of emotions and behaviours

(Partner: Connecting DOTS, Cyprus)

Recognizing and controlling emotions and behaviours is a fundamental life skill that helps young people navigate everyday challenges in a healthy and constructive way. Adolescence and early adulthood are periods filled with intense emotions, social pressures, and important life decisions. Learning how to identify feelings such as anger, anxiety, or frustration—and respond to them thoughtfully—can prevent impulsive reactions and unnecessary conflicts. Emotional awareness and self-regulation help young people communicate better, make balanced decisions, and maintain positive relationships. By developing these skills, they can strengthen their mental resilience, reduce stress, and build a stronger sense of self-control and wellbeing in their daily lives.





3. Mental Health Lexicon

Depressive Disorder (Depression): A common mental health condition, characterized by a low mood or loss of pleasure or interest in activities for long periods of time, disturbed sleep and changes to appetite, feelings of low self-worth, thoughts about dying and hopelessness about the future, tiredness and poor concentration. World Health Organization

Anxiety: A common mental health condition, characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes like increased blood pressure. American Psychological Association

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD): A chronic disorder where a person has uncontrollable, recurring thoughts (obsessions) and behaviors (compulsions) that they feel the urge to repeat. National Institute of Mental Health

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): A psychiatric disorder that can occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event such as a natural disaster, serious accident, or violence. American Psychiatric Association

Bipolar Disorder: A mental health condition characterized by extreme mood swings that include emotional highs (mania or hypomania) and lows (depression). Manic episodes may include increased energy, euphoria, or irritability, while depressive episodes may involve feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest or pleasure in most activities. World Health Organization

Autism: A mental disorder which blocks speech ability, emotional intelligence or abstract thinking. Autism symptoms in adults may include difficulty making conversation, social anxiety, and limited interest in only a few activities. Autism Speaks



3. Mental Health Lexicon

Functional Amnesia: The loss of memory for events one has personally experienced that occurs in the absence of any identifiable neurological pathology. Functional amnesia is thought to arise as a defense against anxiety and distress or as a way of escaping from specific situations. American Psychological Association

Eating Disorders: Eating disorders are serious illnesses marked by severe disturbances to one's eating behaviors. Although many people may be concerned about their health, weight, or appearance from time to time, some people become fixated or obsessed with weight loss, body weight or shape, and controlling their food intake. National Institute of Mental Health

Schizophrenia: Schizophrenia is a chronic and severe mental disorder that affects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. People with schizophrenia may appear to lose touch with reality, which can be distressing for both them and those around them. Mayo Clinic

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD): BPD is a mental health condition characterized by persistent instability in mood, self-image, behavior, and relationships. People with BPD often experience intense emotional episodes and have difficulty regulating emotions. Mayo Clinic



4. Mental Health Stories

The mental health videos are storytelling-based video interviews featuring young people who have experienced mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression, or bipolar disorder and have faced social stigma. Two young people per country share their personal experiences openly, describing how mental health difficulties affected their daily lives, how they coped with stigma, and how they worked towards recovery or improved well-being. Each video is complemented by input from a mental health professional who explains the specific mental health difficulty discussed. These videos aim to normalize mental health difficulties, challenge stereotypes, and foster empathy by giving real voices and faces to lived experiences.





4.1. Mental Health Stories: Poland

Voice of Youth: Real Stories of Mental Health Resilience

The average wait time for state-funded therapy can feel like an eternity when you are in a crisis - for many young people, private help is the only thing standing between them and a total breakdown. These videos feature two courageous individuals who have decided to break the silence and share their lived experiences with the world, as well as an expert, who shared ones opinion about the youth. One participant opens up about the complex reality of living with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), depression, and anxiety disorders, while the other shares his personal journey through the heavy fog of depression. Their stories highlight a critical truth: mental health struggles are not a choice, but the decision to seek help and build resilience is a life-saving one. By watching these testimonials, you will gain a raw, honest perspective on why mental health support is not just a luxury, but a fundamental necessity for youth navigating today's world.

Watch the Testimonials:

[Link to Video 1](#)

[Link to Video 2](#)





4.2. Mental Health Stories: Lithuania

Imagine waking up in the middle of an ocean, unable to swim while everyone else glides by - this is how some young people describe the heavy isolation of depression and undiagnosed neurodivergence.

These videos share the raw, lived experiences of Lithuanian youth navigating their mental health struggles and experiences. By listening, you'll discover how professional help and finding a supportive community can act as a life raft, turning a sense of "feeling like an alien" into a journey toward self-acceptance. Understanding these stories is important because they show that a single turning point - whether it's the right medication, help or a youth support - can provide the tools to finally overcome faced issues and start fresh. These experiences offer more than just empathy; they provide an example for reclaiming daily life from the physical and emotional hurdles of mental health struggles.



Watch video 1



Watch video 2

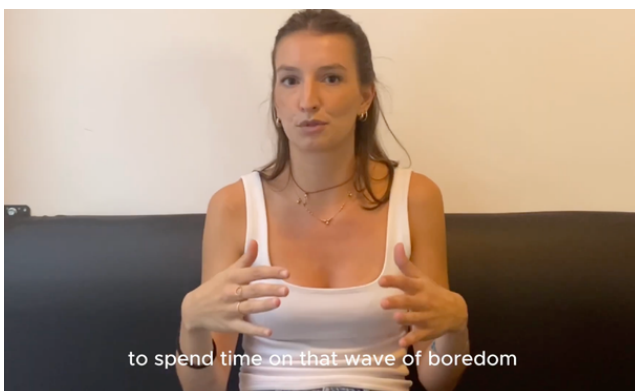


4.3. Mental Health Stories: Italy

"I have always been a fatalist in life, I have always had faith that whatever happened, I would find my way. But lately, I've lost my bearings." This is how one of the two Italian girls begins her account of the journey she has undertaken towards psychological well-being. The search for oneself is a compass that we all have within us, but many factors can influence and demagnetise it.

We often feel wrong, dull, immobile, unable to recognise ourselves and far from the success we would like, because we constantly expose ourselves to forced and fake comparisons with an image of others that is often only their best public version.

The two young Italian women tell us how feeling good about ourselves, our bodies and our choices is a daily imperfect synthesis that is possible through direct, not just digital, contact with the commitments, relationships and hobbies we have and choose to live.



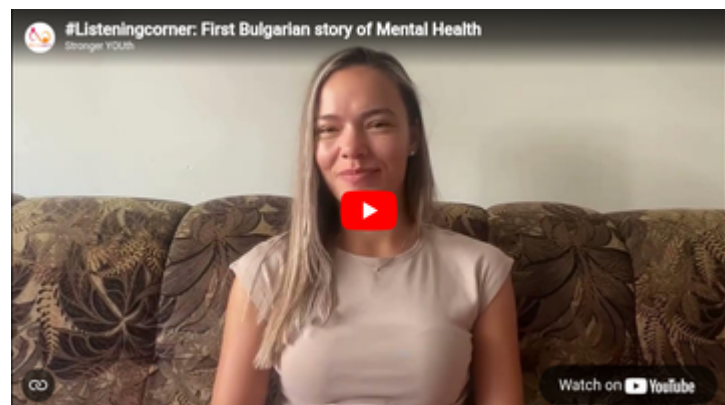


4.4. Mental Health Stories: Bulgaria

In these two videos, you will hear the personal experiences of two Bulgarian girls who share how yoga, meditation, and their Erasmus experiences supported their mental health. They talk openly about the challenges they faced, such as stress, emotional pressure, and the need for balance during important stages of their lives. Their stories show how mindfulness practices and international learning opportunities can foster self-awareness, confidence, and emotional resilience. Following their testimonies, a mental health professional with expertise in these areas guides reflection on the themes.

[Link to Video 1](#)

[Link to Video 2](#)

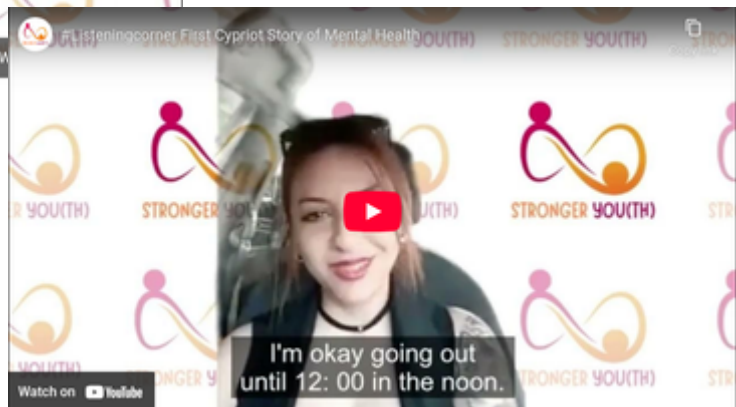




4.5. Mental Health Stories: Cyprus

The following videos present real stories of young people in Cyprus who openly share their experiences with mental health challenges, emotions, and personal struggles. Through their voices, viewers can better understand how feelings such as anxiety, pressure, loneliness, or uncertainty can affect young people's daily lives. Listening to authentic experiences helps break the stigma around mental health and reminds us that many young people face similar emotional difficulties. These stories encourage empathy, self-reflection, and open conversations about emotions and wellbeing. By watching and reflecting on these experiences, young people can learn the importance of recognizing their own feelings, seeking support when needed, and developing healthier ways to manage their emotions and mental health.

[Link to Video 1](#) [Link to Video 2](#)





5. ORGANIZATION OF THE BETTER2GETHER MEETINGS

STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Providing general information about the STRONGER YOUTH project

Youth workers will provide young people with general information about the project. The [project's website](#) will be presented, the various completed project results will be shown in the website's dedicated page and the project's social media accounts on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

2. Learning Material

Youth workers will open the online version of the [Learning Material](#) and will introduce young people to the topics using the Learning Material related information provided in this manual. Then they will implement the activities from the Learning Material as follows:

- **Creativity & Music – Using Sound and Imagination to Support Mental Wellbeing:** MyEmotionalPlaylist, Drawing Sound, Sound Circle, Collective Songwriting, My Creative Action Plan
- **Mindful Use of Social Media and Digital Detox:** Digital Habits Awareness, Mindful Check-in Challenge, Digital Detox Hour, Design Your Digital Sanctuary, Digital Kindness Challenge
- **Promoting Self-Acceptance and Self-Esteem:** Defining Myself, Reframing My Inner Voice, The Comparison Lens, Strengths & Gratitude Practice, My Self-Esteem Action Plan



- **Yoga and Meditation:** Yoga and Meditation for Beginners, Yoga for Better Mental Health, Meditate for Stress and Anxiety Relief, How Yoga And Meditation Changed My Life, Small Steps Lead to Big Journeys
- **Creativity & Upcycling - Using Green Methods to Support Mental Health:** Inspiration Walk, Emotional Object, DIY Upcycle Challenge, Group Upcycling Project, My Upcycling Action Plan
- **Emotional Life Skills for Taking Care and Maintaining our Mental Health:** Emotion Wheel Exploration, Emotional Triggers, Resilience Reflection Exercise, Role-Play: Active Listening, Stress Mapping, Self-Care Planning Workshop

3. Handbook

Youth workers will open the online version of the [Hanbook](#) and will introduce young people to the topics using the Hanbook related information provided in this manual. Then they will implement the activities from the Learning Material as follows:

- **Self-acceptance & Self-Awareness:** See Yourself Clearly: Exploring Self-Awareness Through Creative Reflection, Nurturing Yourself: Exploring Self-Compassion Through Journaling, What I Need Right Now: Practicing Self-Compassion Through Awareness of Needs, Stories of Kindness: Exploring Self-Compassion Through Group Dialogue
- **Social Awareness Through Upcycling:** Inspiration Walk, Emotional Object, Group Upcycling Project
- **Relationship Skills Through Music:** Musical Mood Walk, Emotion-to-Sound Expression, Group Rhythm Circle
- **Responsible Decision Making:** The Value Compass, The Influence Map, Cost-Benefit-Impact Matrix, The Accountability Commitment



- **Mindfulness Through Yoga & Meditation:** Mindful Moments: Discovering Awareness Through Breath and Movement, Flow and Focus: Connecting Body and Mind Through Yoga, Silent Minds: Exploring Meditation for Focus and Calm
- **Recognizing and Controlling of Emotions and Behaviours:** Emotion Charades, Breathing and Grounding Exercises, The Feelings Thermometer

4. Mental Health Lexicon

Youth workers will introduce young people to the various mental health terms provided in the online version of the [Mental Health Lexicon](#). Then they will start a discussion asking the following questions:

Depressive Disorder: How might depression affect a young person's motivation, schoolwork, or friendships?

Anxiety: When does normal worry become anxiety that makes everyday activities harder?

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD): Why is OCD more than just liking things clean or organized?

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: How can a traumatic experience affect someone long after it has ended?

Bipolar Disorder: How might extreme mood changes make school life and relationships challenging?

Autism: Why is it important to understand that people with autism may communicate or socialize differently?

Functional Amnesia: Why might someone's mind block out certain memories as a way to protect them?

Eating Disorders: How can pressure about body image affect the way young people think about food?



Schizophrenia: Why is it important not to judge or fear someone who experiences reality differently?

Borderline Personality Disorder: How can strong emotions make relationships harder, especially during teenage years?

5. Mental Health Stories

Youth workers will do a screening of the educational mental health videos country per country, information for which and the links to them are provided in the dedicated chapter of this manual. After each video the youth workers will ask specific questions related to the particular storyline in the video:

- **Lithuanian videos:** Can receiving a formal diagnosis actually make it easier to accept yourself? How does "masking" (pretending to be like everyone else) affect your long-term self-esteem? What happens to your self-image when you realize that your struggles are "physiological" or a medical condition rather than a personal failure?
- **Bulgarian videos:** What mental health challenges did the two girls describe, and which of them felt most relatable to you? How did yoga and meditation help them cope with stress, emotions, or difficult life transitions? In what ways did the Erasmus experience contribute to their personal growth and mental well-being?
- **Italian videos:** Which vulnerabilities of the present or past did you feel were most similar to your own in the two videos? Did you recognise the same confusion induced by social media in your own daily experience? What other negative effects have you begun to recognise in yourself or your circle of friends? What remedies have you come up with?



- **Polish videos:** Aniela felt that medication was "prescribed too easily" and didn't help her, while Adam found it life-saving. Why do you think reactions to treatment are so different? How can we respect each person's individual path to healing? The psychologist in the video mentions the "vicious cycle" of isolation. Aniela speaks about not wanting to get out of bed. What small, creative steps can help someone "break the cycle" when they feel completely unmotivated? Aniela is still looking for the "right" therapist after several attempts. How important is it to feel a connection with a professional? What advice would you give to someone who feels discouraged after an unsuccessful first therapy session? Given the statistics mentioned (up to 54% of teens struggling with depression), why do you think there is still so much stigma and such difficult access to public help? Adam mentions DBT techniques and grounding. How can learning these specific "emotional tools" empower a young person who feels overwhelmed by their feelings?
- **Cypriot videos:** What mental health challenges did the two girls describe, and which of them felt most relatable to you? How did psychologist and medication help them cope with stress, emotions, or difficult life transitions? How is their life now?



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Youth Workers' Manual for the Organization of the BETTER2GETHER Meetings represents a key resource for empowering youth workers to effectively support young people's mental health through a structured, inclusive, and peer-led approach. By providing practical guidance on applying the peer-to-peer support method, the manual enables youth workers to create safe, non-judgmental environments where young people feel accepted, understood, and encouraged to share their experiences. The manual strengthens the capacity and professional profile of youth workers by equipping them with concrete tools, methodologies, and non-formal education activities that promote resilience, empathy, and mutual support among peers. Through its focus on equality of experiences and shared learning, it contributes to the normalization of mental health difficulties and the reduction of social stigma. Ultimately, the manual supports the sustainable implementation of the BETTER2GETHER Meetings across partner countries, ensuring a consistent, high-quality impact on young people's well-being and social inclusion.



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