

workshop booklet



Participative Somatic Soft Skills Training

PSSST was an Erasmus+ project that combined embodiment practices and the experience of silence to dive into ourselves and learn through our bodies, so the new knowledge could be passed on and met in our everyday lives and work.

The project involved 2 training courses which, through the lens of SILENCE, deepened and expanded the capacity of perceiving and communicating through the body, explored internal and external ways of enlarging peacebuilding capacities, raised empathic awareness, and developed a more resilient way of approaching difficulties and offering - receiving support.





intro

Welcome to our workshop series, inspired by the PSSST Erasmus+ project.

PSSST brought together body practices and the experience of silence to help us explore ourselves and learn in new ways. By connecting with our bodies and embracing variety of doors into Silence, we gained insights that we can use in our everyday lives and work.

This booklet shares the essence of our training course and invites you to explore your own. Each workshop is designed to help you grow, become more self-aware, and use these new skills in practical ways.

Collected workshops that will be introduced were designed by our participants on the second edition of the training course, happening in Slovenian forest in March, 2024.

Hope you find them inspiring, to start exploring your own inner doorways into silence inside the body and body inside the silence.



workshops

My safe space

Me in nature - nature in me

The way of silence

Journey of Somatic imagining

Holistic development

Journey through the Underworld





My safe space

1.workshop

Name of the workshop – My safe space

Aim (what is the purpose of this workshop, why you do it) / why:

to become aware of your boundaries or/and limitations; to release stress and other emotions that don't serve you anymore.

Materials needed, time needed, group size recommendations / what –

Time needed: 2,5 hours

Materials: yoga mats, blankets, notes+pen, space big enough to move a little

Group size: appr. 15 pers.

Description of the workshop / how:

- Move in the space and do whatever you need to arrive here and now (in silence)- raising awareness of the present moment (5 min)
 - Keep walking and say your name to others a) whispering b) in a funny way c) say other's name- getting know each other (12 min)
 - "Womb"- in trios; two join hands, the one in the middle is exploring boundaries, eyes closed (5 min). Then change. Sharing in trios (20 min). Circle. Sharing if needed.
 - Introducing to Breathwork, giving some practical instructions, answering questions (if there are any) (10 min)
 - Breathwork session. Guided meditation about boundaries, redefining the limitations, creating safe place inside. (~60 min) Taking notes (5 min).
- Sharing circle. Time limitation (1 min/pers.), if needed. (15 min)

Comments:

People might be resistant to move or speak at first, it's a good idea not to rush them but give enough time for each move and task; some people might become (very) cold at some point so provide extra blankets in the room.



Me in nature - nature in me

2.workshop

Name of the workshop: Me in nature - Nature in me

Aim of the workshop:

- New experience and insights
- Calming down the wandering minds
- Strengthening the awareness of one's body and its senses
- Making deep relationship with the outer natural environment
- Open to artistic expression
- Overcome the limitations of everyday life
- Practicing the Silence
- Sharing one's reality with the others

Time needed: 90 minutes

- Warm up (5 minutes)
- Introduction of the main activity (10 minutes)
- Main activity (45 minutes)
- Closing activity (30 minutes)

Group size recommendation: 5 - 20 participants

Materials:

- Natural environment, which offers enough space for undisturbed 45 minutes solo wander (also depends on the number of participants)
- Appropriate clothing and shoes
- Wristwatch or mobile phone for timekeeping (in case the participant moves further away from the gathering point)
- Gong, drum or any distinctive sound maker (for sound alert at the end of the wandering activity, to invite participants come back to the gathering place)
- Papers and (colour) pencils

Me in nature - nature in me

Optional materials:

- Personal/precious object (to use it anyhow during the wander, maybe as part of personal ritual)
- Diary + pencil (to use it for notes or art work - drawing, writing a poem, ... during the wander)
- Musical instrument (to play on during the wander)

Description of the workshop:

Warm up (eyes closed)

- Invite the participants to make a circle and maintain in standing position.
- Ask the participants to express with one word, sound or body gesture, how they feel.
- Invite the participants to arrive fully (to feel grounded, to listen to/feel the nature within their bodies, to focus on breathing, to scan the body from the head to the feet, to broaden their awareness by switching on all the senses and perceive the surroundings - feel the air/breeze, hear the birds...)

Introduction of the main activity (eyes closed or open)

- Invite participants to go for a solo walk in the nature
- Make them aware, what solo walk means (This is not a hike, but an attentive wander. All the senses should be switched on. The walker should be all the time aware of his/her body in relation to the nature. Try to be in embodied relationship with the things/creatures you encounter. Perceive everything with curiosity and wondering and keep this intention no matter what activity/actions you engage in. How does it provoke or inspire you? What story is nature telling to you? Find an object, which attracts your attention. ...)

Give instructions regarding:

- possible art activities, carries out during the walk, if inspired
- possible materials to take with (check under Materials and Optional materials)
- time keeping and sound alerts for finishing the wandering activity
- how to come back or what to do when coming back (f.e. "come back in silence and maintain it while waiting for the others to join the circle")
- Introduce the participants back up plan in case of emergency
- Invite participants to ask questions to clarify any confusion
- Invitation to start the wander

Me in nature - nature in me

Main activity

- The participants are on their own, wandering
- The facilitator should be present at the gathering point, reachable
- The facilitator is a timekeeper and make sound alerts at the before stated times
- The facilitator prepares the gathering place for the closing activity

Closing activity

- The participants are coming back one by one and find a space nearby (keeping their connection to nature) as they arrive, until most of the group has returned, then ask everyone to return to the circle and commence the real "arrival" in the space. There may be calm music background as part of invitation to join the circle.
- Ask the participants to express with one word, sound or body gesture, how do they feel after the wander.
- Invite the participants to take a few minutes to think of their wander time:
 - to read the poems/notes they wrote
 - to observe the object, they picked and the listen to the story the object is telling
 - to move with the object, they picked
 - to observe the drawing, they made and its message
 - to write down or draw in case of inspirationto do anything they need to connect their nature wondering and discoveries with their here and now presence in a group circle.
- Invite the participants, if they feel like it,:
 - to present their objects (personal or the one they found during the wander) and share story about it (possible to arrange a space in the middle of the circle to place the objects)
 - to share their poems, drawing, ...
 - to share any discovery, observation, experience as a gift to the group, to the others

Considerations, limitations, comments, possible obstacles and other recommendations:

- Consider the abilities of your target group and adjust the workshop correspondingly
- Choose peaceful (remote) natural environment with low possibility of disturbance during the activity
- Take care for safety
- Prepare emergency/intervention plan (case of an injury, ...)
- Quality and mindful preparation and instructions are crucial for the individual wandering experience
- Take care of transition and grounding after solo wandering experience
- Support the participants in reinforcing their awareness and attentiveness regarding the process of sowing the seeds of their wandering activity



The way of Silence

3. workshop

Name of the workshop: The Ways Of Silence

Aim:

- to experience silence through contrasts (active vs. still)
- to connect to the inner world
- to connect to the outer environment

Materials needed:

music speaker; blank pages + colors, markers, pencils; mats/pillows to sit on outside

Time needed: 90-120 min

Group size recommendations: 10-25 participants

Precise description of the workshop:

Announce the meeting place and time i.e. Observe your SILENCE Please join us at 10 o'clock

Outside the studio. While waiting for the participants to arrive - play energizing music (i.e. capoeira music) and dance, enjoy!

Explain basic instructions:

- once all participants are present, give the two key instructions: we will all make a line when the facilitators will show the line sign (i.e. the two forearms one on top of the other) and gather in a circle when the facilitators will show the circle sign (i.e. a circle showed with the hands)
- Also the instructions can be accompanied by the sound (we used Tingsha cymbals). The sound can also start and end the whole workshop to give it a clear beginning and ending.

Line - one of the facilitators starts the line by raising the arm and others start joining by putting one hand on the shoulder of the person in front of them

Once the line is formed the leader is walking around potentially guiding the group to a new spot. Note: You can choose how you want to accompany the group by your voice. It can be a calming voice telling them that they can relax and focus just on their senses, it can be creating a story of this "trip", it can be also in silence when the group is in the line.

The way of Silence

- On the first stop create a circle (making the sound and showing circle sign) and do a warm up activity - we divided participants into couples where they were supposed to "play" with the shadow of the other person. Be ready to improvise in case there's not too much sunlight and shadows (you can be for example searching for the shadow or mirroring the person), or if you want something simpler you can do a tap game...just tell participants "if I have it I want to give it to someone else", then give it to the first person, start running and see what happens. If you do the tap game, end it then at one moment with a sharp STOP.
- Form the line again and go to a new location.
- We improvised on the way and added extra location - rolling down the hill. They rolled a couple of times and after the last time they were supposed to try to roll back uphill to where they started. Note: *Some people did not join but most of the ones who did had a great time and some were able to release a lot of tension and energy.*
- Forming a line again and walking towards the next location. Form a circle and give some time for the experience to sink. Then explain the rules of another activity. Rules: "When you hear the sound, find yourself a place that is calling you for any reason. When you hear the sound again you're invited to find a new place." Then after some time the facilitators start giving some participants separate personal tasks, e.g. change a place being very loud/silent or unnoticed/noticed by everyone, change a place like a monkey/elephant/frog/snail, throw leaves at others. Be creative with these :). Then you start telling participants to start gathering closer and closer with the others, once they do you form a circle (again using sound and sign). Let the experience sink again and then sing together - we sang Belle Mama.
- Form a line and start working towards the spot where you started. On the way tell participants to focus on a word or a feeling that resonates in them at the moment.
- Arrive back to the starting spot (or nearby location), form a circle, sit down (if needed have some mats or blankets ready) and explain the last activity. "You will write haiku using the word or a feeling that is alive in you at the moment. Haiku is a Japanese style of writing poems. It consists of 3 lines, 5 syllables in the first line, 7 syllables in the second line and 5 syllables again in the last line. For example: Take five syllables- Then seven more syllables- You just wrote haiku.
- After giving participants some time to write their haiku, explain to them what follows. We sit in the circle with closed eyes and whoever wants to share their writing they can open their eyes, move to the middle of the circle and share it. It can be by reading, singing, humming or even a movement. If they want to be witnessed they can tell the others to open their eyes and when they finish they tell them to close their eyes again. After you give enough time for people to share what wants to be shared you can thank them for participating and facilitators finish the workshop in the middle of the circle by the sound that carried us all throughout the workshop.

The way of Silence

Considerations and tips:

- this workshop was created to be facilitated in nature - so you should preferably have multiple different natural spaces to lead people through, but this can be adapted to one natural place or it can ultimately be facilitated indoors if this is the case
- always adapt to the energy of the group - don't be afraid to improvise. If possible before the workshop, gather from the participants the information about their needs and see the energy and vibe in the group. It will help with adapting the workshop for the needs of the group
- other options for moving in the line than holding the shoulder of the person in front
- using a physical rope
- using images (e.g. pretending to be sardines or one organism)
- challenge (e.g. try to keep 0,5 metres from closest people around at all time)
- these activities had in mind a target group that already had experience with working together and it was used as part of the closure activity of the training
- very helpful tip: take time to connect to your team before the beginning of the facilitation - sit back to back and feel your breath, your partner's breath and start moving together
- don't be afraid to use the whole body when explaining things, inviting participants for activities and communicating with them
- Enjoy it 😊, participants can feel the positive energy.

Authors: Ioana Boldea, Michal Jiru, Alberto Otrebla





Journey of somatic imagining

4.workshop

Name: Journey of Somatic imagining

Aim:

This workshop provides an opportunity to embody another being/perspective. Participants experience through imaginative embodiment what it means to have different qualities of being.

For who:

This workshop is meant for everyone, in order to widen their perspective and understanding of meeting different kinds of people with more openness and empathy. How do we relate to the world around us without judging?

Materials:

big open space, some material -pillow, color paper to mark 3 corners
group of min 10 to max 40 people

INTRODUCTION: Explaining that the workshop will invite into more than known human exploration of perspectives to spark imagination and embodiment of the unknown.

We encourage to be curious, open.

Giving a time frame and basic structure idea.

Making clear it's all an invitation and encouraging authenticity with oneself and self-responsibility to regulate group invitations by your needs/capabilities to keep it safe.

Journey of somatic imagining

- Landing /arriving into space: we invite people to consciously enter into space, first orienting themselves and then bringing attention to their bodies while walking through the space. Self-connection is supported by questions and suggestions for somatic exploration, like: Observe your breath, your posture, feel the feet on the floor, notice, connect to ...
- The imaginary story frame is shared loud and clear: made up location, weather, atmosphere, to let the participants activate their senses...
- The participants are invited to notice 3 different colours in the corners of the room and pick one that resonates the most. 3 groups are shaped (3 bases/homes)
- Each of them gets descriptions with a few words of one being they are supposed to embody - one being a snail, second a flowering plant, third the child. They are given time with closed eyes to receive the words and start to embody them in their own way, staying curious. Description is repeated, slowly, clearly to support solo embodiment journey. After a few minutes attention is opened also on the outside, opening eyes and witnessing others in the group also. Exploration in the group lasts for 10 minutes.
- Transition into bigger group exploration is initiated by inviting participants in the space, being curious about other beings in the room and their specific shapes, movements, expressions. We encourage relating with surroundings and open up to the chance of different ways of relating with others while staying connected with the self. Recognising the resources I have to stay present, stay in the body,

Allowance to express in different ways and ideas are offered, -for vocalizing, for meeting the eyes of others, to connect with the touch, to use gravity....

The process is supported by questions to bring them to the body...and exploration...

(What is freedom for you right now? How does feel to move in your body?and so on)

Allowing also some silence and non-guiding for organic development happening in the space.

After ca. 20minutes Inviting them to slowly find ways to return back towards their initial group setting- taking in consideration their gravity, noticing the room, bring awareness to a wider perspective again.

Ending the session with giving space for reflection (from smaller groups to the big group again).

Authors: Andreja, Lea, Finn



Holistic development

5.workshop

Name: Holistic development

In search for balance/equilibrium/center/silence through the course of human development

Aim:

experience learning through nature, movement, theater, role play

For who:

TARGET GROUP: 18-55 years

Group size: 5 - 30

Time: 2 hours - 4 days (each stage one day, or more)

Materials:

Nature, environment, papers (A4, A1, A2), 4 drawings of glasses of 4 colors (on simple paper), speaker and music, tibetan bell

GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

- experience the 4 stages of life (childhood, adolescence, adulthood, elderhood) through experiential learning with the mediums of nature, body movement, theater (role play)
- basic understanding/coming to know of the holistic model of human development (Bill Plotkin) through experiential learning
- meet people where they are. Guide them through the experience of centering, balance, grounding, silence across human development, reproduced in the different stages of the experience
- research our strengths and weaknesses in different aspects of childhood, adolescence, adulthood, elder-hood;
- reflection on the different stages of human development and on how to embody them;
- observe/research/reflect. How did I experience silence inside the experiential activities of childhood, adolescence, adulthood, elderhood (ADVANCED OBJECTIVE if the group is already researching silence)

Holistic development

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

Childhood:

Care, comfort, confirmation, the holding of space.

At this stage, allow yourself to experience what you may not have allowed yourself to experience as a child. To release what has been withheld, the awareness and presence of what is being done, what is being seen.

Awakening the inner child and playfulness, wonder, experience in a new way through senses and play in nature.

Adolescence:

Experience the fire of adolescence, emotions, expression, sprouting, bursting.

Adulthood:

Experience leadership, vision, cultural artistry, beauty, consciousness.

Elder-hood:

Giftng, deep listening, holistic tending, wisdom, grace

Practicing deep listening, deep talking, and sharing essential gifts and wisdoms.

Precise description of the workshop / how

The facilitators guide the participants to experience the different qualities of the stages of life. We planned each stage of the experience so it would last 20-30 mins, with a few minutes to switch in between stages. Ideally (we had one less) each facilitator will guide one stage

Tools for switching from one stage/experience/role to other: Participants were asked to use different glasses (with different colours, one can use the colors that resonate with the stage. We chose yellow for childhood, red for adolescence, green for adulthood, blue for elderhood) as a metaphor to switch from one stage to another. We called a circle at every passage, looked for presence, took the previous pair of glasses off, and put the new on.

Childhood

The warm-up game was Stop & Go. Music plays, the facilitator claps their hands, participants have to stop/ freeze. The aim of the exercise was to get the participants already into the task. How to switch (freeze) and how to move on (go).

The facilitators then explained generally what to expect from this workshop, and that this first session will end when they will hear drums. Laura then asked participants to close their eyes, feel their body, feet on the ground, hear the sounds from their surroundings, feel the sensations offered from nature in the body. To let this feeling -here and now- help them to ground in what is now, to go further on the journey- into childhood. The facilitator then invited the participants to imagine and make a movement with their hands, reminiscent of putting on a pair of glasses. Putting on the glasses, let the feeling that the participant is already in childhood into the body. "When you open your eyes, you will see your surroundings with the eyes of a child". When the participants opened their eyes, the task was to find the first thing/object that captured their attention, go to it and explore what 'captured' them. And then when that thing, boredom or something else took their attention away to go further, explore more and more.

Holistic development

It should be noted that it can be difficult for an adult who finds himself in his childhood to be alone with himself. And it may be that they start to interact with each other quite quickly. Then they can be given additional tasks already in pairs or as a group to create or find something together.

This part took 15 min. Participants were also allowed to push their limits and go as far as they could hear the drums. When the next facilitator rattled the drums, the group slowly moved to another place in the courtyard, took off their yellow childhood glasses. They felt their bodies in the here and now again and put on the next pair of glasses.

Adolescence

The adolescence stage starts in another location than the childhood, with loud drumming. The participants follow the drum. When they gather, they exhale. Take a moment of silence, sense the present. Take the childhood glasses down and then they take the red glasses on, the glasses of adolescence.

The facilitator invites them to walk. And try to walk in a way, they would walk as adolescents. How do they want to walk as adolescents? Where do they want to go? How do they sit? Where do they want to look? What do they feel? First they take time to go into their role/character themselves, with the help of simple body gestures. And to take a bit time alone, to start to feel it.

They they start interacting with others from their adolescence character. To express it. How they feel it (loud, silent, outbursting..).

In the middle a song can be played to support the feeling of fire, expression, chaos, outburst. We played Metallica. It's important to tell to the people that they can use the song, if it helps to express themselves. If not, they can ignore it.

Here it's important that the other facilitators hold the space, so people feel safe. Some might go in outer expression (burst out), some in inner (burst in).

At the end of the song when people are ready, we all shake the adolescence off (body shake). Take a deep breath, close our eyes, and observe how we feel. Where is the silence in this expression?



Holistic development

Adulthood

We want adulthood to be that moment when one can mindfully express their leadership virtues, their cultural artistry, and put it to the service of a common goal. Dialoguing more than compromising.

Gathered in a circle, participants are invited to find a new center after the bursting of emotions that just unfolded. They now have their green glasses on.

They are invited to reflect on, find and write on paper to ground, a burning or important issue from their daily life that they desire to bring on the stage of life to confront with and let talk to others'.

This talk will still happen in virtual silence, no words (which we leave wantingly to the wisdom and holistic tending of helderhood), on a theatrical stage. 4 people minimum, 10 people maximum on this stage. We go on the stage to act our issue out and to interact with others. We can decide to replace someone (1 or more people) while getting on the stage, or just add ourselves to the midst (minding the numerical restrictions, 4-10 people). Always remember to go back to your center and your important issue, never lose your connection to that. 15 minutes of theater.

Elder-hood

We gathered inside and invited participants to find their place on the blankets we had placed on the floor. Warm atmosphere, incense colouring the air.

Given time restrictions we only went into deep listening and talking, sharing in pairs. Having more time, other tools can be used to experience grace, wisdom and peace from an elderly within.

With the help of a tibetan bell we facilitated we dived in and out a 3 minutes meditation and deep listening. Wisdom of the elder.

Then, with the essence how an elder would speak grounded within us (slow, deep and only the essentials), the whole group shared how they felt during the whole experience. And where they felt the silence was.

More considerations, limitations, comments, possible obstacles and other recommendations

Follow more closely participants to make sure that if they were going through hardships, they would feel comforted and confident to break through them. Make sure we always look for silence within to have everybody experience that search too. No judgement and as much flowing with the flow as possible.

Authors: Laura, Prija, Simone



Journey through the Underworld

6.workshop

There is light in the end of the tunnel - Journey through the Underworld

Facilitators: Barbora, Veselina and Vladimira

Why?

- To increase the self-awareness, self-confidence,
- To develop empathy
- Values of community (trusting the collective intelligence)
- Stress relief
- Developing tools for dealing with traumas/wounds
- Feeling of Connection (recognizing we all have 'traumas')
- Feeling recognised

What?

It is a variation, our interpretation of shadow work, through meditation, movement, trio work and constellations.

For Who:

- Pre-adults
- Adults
- Elderly
- Victims of violence?

Duration: 90-120 minutes

Materials:

- Bell
- Timer
- Small cushions, blankets or mats can be used for seating/laying on the ground
- Relaxing music can be added for background, for the light tunnel
- The facilitator can have a printed text of the meditation if needed

Place: Big cosy hall/room

Journey through the Underworld

How ?

Step by step:

Introduction - 2 min

Welcoming participants into the space, introducing facilitators, shortly describing the aim of the workshop, creating safe ground for the experience

Arriving - 5 min

Group walking through the space, letting go of all unnecessary.
Looking/opening for the place in the space that is inviting them.
Arriving at the place and finding a comfy position.

Guided meditation - 20 min

Connecting with ourselves. Depending on a facilitator's wishes it can be any method or a path to meet ourselves in which the facilitator feels safe to lead.
Meditation into the movement. Inviting participants to start to move.

Forming Trios - 5 min

Opening, sensing, listening and forming trios. Forming of the shadows, opening senses for other people's shadows. Who is inviting you?

What does my shadow want to tell me? Constellation trios - 25 min

Asking yourself questions: What do my shadows want to tell me? What do my shadows want to hear?
Two people moving, one observing through the lenses of the questions, in the trio constellation, but also in the whole group constellation.
Minute of staying together in silence and changing rolls.
Sharing after.

Harvesting - 5 min

Transition from trio to group work. Walking through the space feeling the connection with the trio, and opening more and more for the whole group and becoming part of the group.

Journey through the Underworld

Light tunnel/Resolution, closing the process - 30 min

Forming the tunnel, two lines of people facing each other, one person passing through and others supporting them through the words, touch, presence ..
Adding music in the background, creating some magical atmosphere

- Group reflection circle - 5min

Comments:

- In the 4th part when forming trios some shame topic can appear. Importance of holding the space if it happens or preparing the space so that it can happen?!
- Encourage participants to trust that all is happening is ok even if they cannot define it
- Being aware of possible emotional struggles of the participants. Prepare for it.
- In the 7th part it is possible to add more magic, with the introduction story, music, smells, light ..





outro

Thank you for reading this booklet and imagining your own possible outputs of the ways that Silence, Somatics, Psychology and Nature could support growth and development.

As you will be making your own interpretation of the workshops, we invite you to craft what resonates with you and adjust it to the way you work, sense and design.

What is most important for us when delivering a workshop is that you stay authentic to what you sense, what you can feel through your body and therefore invite people into the exploration, rather than tell what to do.
Dont forget to enjoy, listen, listen, listen.

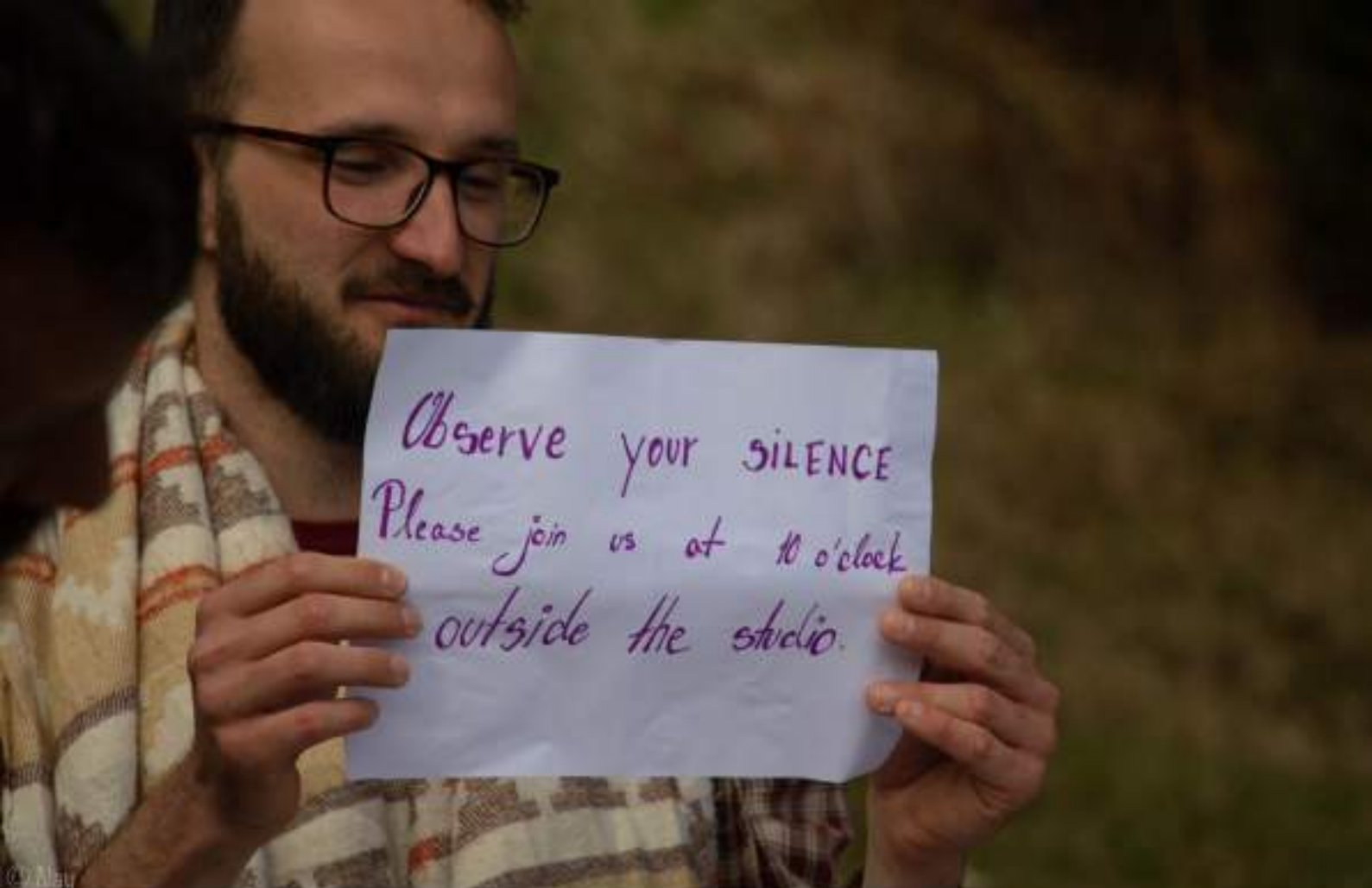
Pause is a great place, to start again.

small reminders

During the evaluation of this workshops, we have gathered some useful reminders regarding the facilitation of this subtle themes such as silence and somatics.

We are sharing them here, so hopefully they will be useful!

- Listen to the flow of the group: What is a need of a group? What do you notice is already happening? How can you support that without losing direction?
- In your explanations, stay clear and simple!
- Considers participants capacity for introspection and contemplation.
- Participants have different ways and time needed to arrive into the body. Make sure you slow down.
- Safe space supports introspection.
- Give participants a chance to connect with why what they are doing makes sense. Why will mainly come from the experience.
- If you are inviting into embodiment, be embodied.
- Focusing on sensations and sensorial supports the grounding on here and now.
- Space, sound, environment elements etc. can support the process.
- Use your voice according to what is happening in the process.
- If you do not know, ask. Don't assume.
- Less is more!



Drustvo MOAVE - Slovenia (HOST)

Open Sense - Latvia

TERRE DE NUAGES - France

YOUUnique z.s. - Czech Republic

Creative YouthLand - Greece

Asociatia Dreams for Life - Romania

Associazione Teatro invisibile - Italy

Asociacion Cultural y Social Trib-Arte - Spain

Entdecke deine eigene Natur - Germany

Partner Organisations