

OUTBOUND

YOUTH WORK

Project Number 2021-2-MT01-KA220-YOU-000050152



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



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PROJECT RESULT 2: TOOLS

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROJECT

According to the United Nations (2020), 56.3% of the global population lives in urban areas. Urbanization affects mental health through the influence of increased stressors and factors such as overcrowded and polluted environments, high levels of violence, and reduced social support. The range of disorders associated with urbanization is enormous and includes psychoses, depression, alcoholism, crime, delinquency, family disintegration, and alienation (Trivedi, Sareen, & Dhyani, 2008) Youth are one of the groups in society that are more prone to suffer from mental health problems due to urbanization and this detachment from nature (Hill, 2007). Statistics by the World Health Organization (2020), state that:

- mental health conditions account for 16% of the global burden of disease and injury in people aged 13–19 years,
- half of all mental health conditions start by 14 years of age but most cases are undetected and untreated,
- globally, depression is one of the leading causes of illness and disability among adolescents,
- suicide is the fourth leading cause of death in 15–19-year-olds.

Seeing this rise in cases of mental health issues and observing how wilderness therapy can help tackle this, we decided to embark on a project that aims to make use of wilderness therapy to provide youth with an alternative strategy to improve their mental health conditions leading to their holistic well-being.

In this publication, we will be presenting outdoor tools that youth workers and people working with youth can make use of when working with youth with mental health issues like:

- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHDO)
- Addiction and Substance use Disorder
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Self-Harm and Suicide in Youth.



PARTNER INFORMATION

PRISMS MALTA

Prisms is a group of experienced youth workers that in 2008 came together with the aim of creating an NGO that caters to the requirements of young people and those working with young people. Prisms aims to empower people with the skills, tools, information, and values necessary for personal growth and to be active participants within society. Prisms provides to the necessities of the people it works with through innovative non-formal methods of education so as to reach their needs in a holistic manner.

Prisms focuses on coaching and mentoring, online tools, mental well-being, inclusion and disability through the following objectives:

Young people

- Context out: Prisms strives to connect with young people in their environment. Our youth workers reach out to the young people to understand their living situation, at which point they are in their lives, and their key relationships with others,
- Needs analysis: At the basis of all of our activities lies a person-centered approach that enables us to connect with a purpose. Prisms listen to young people and their life experiences and together with the young person they identify the needs to be addressed,
- Empower: Prisms believes that every person has potential and a positive relationship with the young person, it challenges them to set achievable goals for their growth

Youth workers

- Prisms focuses on both the personal and professional development of youth workers. We believe that the general well-being of the youth worker is pivotal as they serve as role models for young people. Developing their intra and inter-personal skills enables the youth worker to engage better with the young people they work with. Prisms provide tools to the youth workers to be more self-reflective and identify areas for growth,
- Linked with the above, on a professional level, Prisms offers innovative tools and methods on how the youth workers can reach, connect, engage, and empower young people

Target groups

Prisms has two main target groups;

- Young people aged between 13 and 35 years old
- Youth workers, youth leaders and other professionals that work with young people. There is no particular age range for this target group

Geographical reach and main activities

Our activities are carried out both at a national and European level. We work with both young people and also youth workers both local and foreigner.



We deliver workshops, seminars and training courses. Through the years, Prisms has developed its expertise in online youth work and online tools that provide the opportunity to the youth workers to engage with young people both online and offline. Additionally, we are currently providing training to educators in Malta as part of their Community of Professional Educators' sessions (CoPE). The training is provided on anger management, integration of online characteristics in an online environment and intercultural communication.

The successful implementation of our initiatives is also attributable to the fact that Prisms has always sought to create meaningful collaborations and we have thus created national partnerships with several partners both local and international. This ensures that our initiatives are of good quality and that they offer space for youth workers and young people to build their own and their organization's capacity whilst also offering good quality youth work practices. These partnerships offer the possibility of exchanges of best practices.



Prisms has been implementing projects and organizing training courses on a national and European Level since its setting-up. We invest a lot of time and effort to promote youth work and non-formal education in innovative ways. Indeed, our organisation believes that we should be where the young people are and we should not base our activities on the belief that young people will come to us but rather we should go them. For this reason all our activities and projects are based on an in-depth needs analysis and are built by, with and for the young people. As important is the fact that we believe that youth workers and those working with young people should make use of online youth work practices so as to be closer to the young people and to engage better with them. Indeed, we are engaged in a number of projects that provide more quality youth work through online services.

RICHMOND FOUNDATION MALTA

Richmond Foundation was founded on 13th May 1993 and is a non-governmental, non-profit making organisation working in the field of mental health and the only one of its kind in Malta. Richmond Foundation provides community services for persons with mental health difficulties, is involved in the promotion of mental health and the prevention of mental illness amongst the general public.

Services offered by the Foundation include a rehabilitation facility, a programme for children with challenging behaviour, male and female hostels, a female group home, a Supportive Housing Scheme, a Home Support Service, a Staff and Organisation Support Programme, a Psychological Support Service and a Training and Development Unit. The Foundation has also taken on various initiatives such as Self-Help Groups, research and training. All of the programmes and help that Richmond Foundation gives, is centred around the belief that we would like to see people overcome their mental health issue so that they can continue living their life.

As an organization, we believe that a big percentage that comes with mental health problems come from the fact that there is a lot of stigma surrounding people suffering from mental health issues. In fact, Richmond Foundation strives to combat stigma and increase awareness on the subject through the local media and also through the various activities that it carries out on a regular basis within the community. The Foundation actively participates in regional and international events where it has the opportunity to increase its knowledge, expand its network, shares its views and heighten its profile and reputation.

Richmond Foundation is registered with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (VO/0017) in terms of article 3 of the Voluntary Organisations Act, 2007 and Operates a Quality Management System which complies with the requirements of SM EN ISO 9001 : 2015.

PÄRNU YOUTH RECREATION CENTRE ESTONIA

Pärnu Youth Recreation Centre first opened its doors in the summer of 2008. Since then, we have made it their mission to support young people in their lives and personal growth by creating a safe space for them to be heard without any preconceptions or judgement and providing them with tools to show initiative, be creative and improve their social skills.

In November 2013 Pärnu Youth Recreation Centre joined the Association of Estonian Open Youth Centres which is a guardianship organisation to almost 200 different youth centres in Estonia. Through this collaboration, Pärnu Youth Recreation Centre has hosted several large-scale projects aimed primarily at NEET youngsters or at-risk children. Thank to this collaboration our youth workers have also gained a lot of knowledge through the experience sharing through seminars and trainings that we had with fellow Estonian youth workers.

In 2018 Pärnu Youth Recreation Centres started to operate Audru Youth Centres that are located in Pärnu. These two youth centres were the first ones to start developing mobile street-based (dethatched youth work) in Pärnu City. In three years, this has proved to be a very successful initiative and a very effective method in reaching vulnerable young people and reducing crime in Pärnu City.

The youth work done by our organisation was recognized on a national level in 2019. In fact, in 2019 Pärnu Youth Recreation Centre was named the best youth centre in Estonia by The Ministry of Education and Research. Honoured by this recognition Pärnu Youth Recreation Center became more motivated than ever to keep up with good quality work with young people.

Within our two-youth centre, we have a total of 8 full-time youth workers working with us and also 2 youth workers working on a part time basis. Together they are working with around 200 young people which makes about 70% of the total amount of young people of our city. Our aim is that in the near future we increase that percentage even more so as to reach more young people with our work.

IASIS GREECE

IASIS is a non-governmental, non-profit organization active in the field of Social Inclusion, Mental Health, and De-institutionalization, which actively participates in the psychiatric reform promoted by the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity and the European Union. IASIS has an official registration as Private Non-Profit Organization. The organization's main objective is to provide psychosocial support and education to people who either belong to the range or are at risk of exclusion and to adult professionals in the humanitarian field.

IASIS began its preparatory actions in 2005. The first housing structure, a boarding house for 15 people with mental disabilities, started to operate in 2006 and a 2nd boarding house with another 15 people started to operate in 2018. In 2008, IASIS NGO's activities in the field of de-institutionalization were extended with a Day Centre for people with psychosocial problems (80 people each year), and 2 Sheltered Apartments hosting 4 tenants each with mental health issues. The organizational cycle of de-institutionalization culminated in 2014 with the creation of a Social Cooperative in the 7th Psychiatric Sector, named "Archipelagos".

In the following years, IASIS NGO expanded its activities offering services to other vulnerable groups:

- 1.Homeless people (60 protected houses offered for the accommodation of homeless people, counseling services and on the job training, with the support of the DIKEOMA social enterprise)
- 2.Asylum Seekers/ Refugees (70 families, Host Unit for 350 asylum seekers, Hostel for 20 unaccompanied teenagers, Psychosocial Support Service of 2.500 persons)
- 3.Children at risk (Hostel for 100 children/victims of war)
- 4.Abused Women (Support of 200 women)
- 5.Unemployed people (Support for 90 persons)
- 6.Youngsters at Social Exclusion Risk/Young Offenders (CONNECT YOUR CITY Youth Centres, Anti-bullying Work Group "Ailios").
- 7.Youth suffering from mental health disorders (80 people)

The organization has also developed a strong network across Europe, through which there have been designed and implemented dozens of Research & Educational Programs in the context of European and national frameworks (Erasmus+, Life Long Learning, EAA Grants, EFM etc.).

The last step to establish IASIS NGO as integrated Center for Psychosocial Education & Training is its certification as a VET Centre by the Greek National Accreditation Organization, a process that warrants the organization as an institution for professional development of both beneficiaries and professionals.

Currently, IASIS employs around 20 people most of whom are either youth workers or physiologists working with the various groups of people that we cater for. We also have a strong of volunteers that help us during most of the activities that we run, especially large events that are open to the public as well.

HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF TOOLS

The experience of a young person struggling with mental health is a complex experience. Supporting a young individual requires dedication and critical thinking in order to ensure the safety of these individuals. At the end of the day, it is the adult's responsibility to ensure their safety especially when engaging in different activities.

Prior to applying the tools that are presented in this tools overview, we encourage that all youth leaders address the following guidelines, whilst exploring ways how youth safety is always prioritized.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUTH STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH

Prior to applying health and safety guidelines, it is necessary to understand risk. Risk is defined as a situation that can be potentially harmful. Risk in itself is multi-fold; having different elements to what constitutes risk. Risks in mental health and youth can lead to a diverse range of situations. Given that each individual is different, any individual struggling with mental health may pose different scenarios that can be identified as risks. Some of the possible risk situations presented may include the following:

- Suicide
- Non-Suicidal Self-Injury
- Panic Attacks
- Drug-Induced States
- Psychotic States
- Aggression

For youth leaders to be able to tackle such possible situations it is recommended that the youth leader undergoes Youth Mental Health First Aid Training.

Given the nature of risk, it is important that all youth leaders develop a risk-based thinking approach when working with youth. This requires the youth leader to be reflective on how an activity may pose a risk to a specific youth. It is imperative, that youth leader dedicate time to know the young person and gain an understanding of their background.

Other general health and safety guidelines that would ensure the safety of the young person participating in the proposed activities are:

- All youth leaders need to be trained in Physical First Aid or in possession of an active First Aid License

- Outdoor activities such as gardening, rock climbing, beekeeping, etc are to be carried out by licensed professionals alongside the youth leaders. This is applicable for any other activity that requires specific knowledge or the use of equipment.
- An updated first aid kit needs to be present at all times during the activities. Youth leaders need to know the whereabouts of the first aid kit.
- In activities utilizing open fires such as Camping, BBQ, etc – youth leaders need to have Basic Fire Safety Training and the necessary fire safety equipment.
- Given the nature of the activities and the participant group it is recommended that 3 youth leaders are present for the activity.
- Young people should be fully sober and fully oriented for such activities so as not be a risk for themselves and others.



**TOOL 01: TREKKING TO
RECONNECT**

Tool 1: Trekking to reconnect

Aim: The aim of this tool is to get people out in nature and enjoy nature and what it has to offer while trekking.

Objectives: The objectives are the following:

1. To walk on a pre-planned route with a group of people who are going through similar life experiences.
2. Help young people understand that they are not the only ones facing problems and that there are other people with the same problems as them
3. To help young people to build up social bonds and connections with other peers.
4. To help create a sense of a group/family so that people feel accepted.

Target Group: We are targeting 13–17 years old; however this tool can be used by anyone above 8 years old.

Methodology Used: Outdoor (Trekking)

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

The tool is a very simple one and does not need a lot of material and preparation. The youth worker will be taking the group that is being mentored for a trek. The youth worker should keep in mind the people that will take part in this, before choosing the route. If some people are not physically fit the youth worker would choose a physically less demanding route. Keep in mind that this is not a fitness test. The participants need to be comfortable to open up and talk with others during the walk.

The youth worker should also advise the people to wear comfortable clothes and good trekking shoes so that no one gets injured and can keep walking the whole route.

The youth workers should choose a route and choose a day when the weather is forecasted to be good for trekking and take the group for a trek. During the walk, the youth worker can organize some activities to help the young people get to know each other more and ease the conversation.

At the beginning of the activity, the youth worker should carry out a pre-work session. In this session, the youth worker will set in the tone of the activity and lay down the rules. The youth worker should also advise the participants that if they see someone struggling in any way, they should inform the youth workers immediately.

During the activity, the youth worker can make use of certain activities that can help the group. If the group is new to each other the youth worker should start with getting to know each other activities. For example, the youth worker can tell the participants that they need to find a walking buddy and change the buddy every 1 KM that they cover. When they meet, they must tell each other “I would like to get to know you” and they present themselves to each other. The youth worker can also give out some questions to help the discussion.

Some questions to help the discussion are:

- What’s your favorite music style?
- Favorite place you want to visit?
- How do you spend your free time?

When the group starts to integrate more the youth worker can start to make use of more complex questions, like:

- What are the struggles that you are facing?
- How do you think you can overcome these struggles?
- What are you ready to do to change your life?
- If you had to change one thing from your past, what would it be?

These questions can be answered alone or in pairs.

There are also other activities that can take place in pairs, where the participants can for example be asked to pick up a stone. This will be representing the problems that are like an extra weight on them. They should reflect on how they could get rid of those problems. Once they come up with a plan for how they can tackle this problem, they can leave the stone behind. This will symbolize the fact that now the weight has gone away.

As these tools will be used as part of a one-year journey, the young people would be asked to keep a reflective diary in which they will write their reflections in.

The Why Behind the Tool

The tool looks great! We believe it to be beneficial for most mental health problems in young people. When discussing substance abuse in young people as below, we had some thoughts:

1. As we had mentioned in the previous research, an adolescent might engage in problematic substance use without developing an addiction (which is the more severe end of the spectrum). Adolescents usually have not been using substances regularly enough or for long enough to have developed a disorder (often because they do not have access of the financial resources to use in sufficient quantities). Substance use

disorders are most common in young adults, and those who have substance use problems during adolescence are at the highest risk of developing a disorder later on.

2. Are you aiming to use this tool for prevention or as an adjunct to treatment?

- If as part of a prevention activity, the tool is a way to enhance and diversify their internal coping strategies. Trekking can be an alternative option to fight boredom, cope with stress and build a connection with those around you, and this tool can also help make green spaces more accessible to the young person (More, Jackson, Dimmel, et al., 2017).
- If used as complementary to treatment, the following needs to be considered:
 - How long would the young people have been sober?
 - What other supports is the person receiving?
 - There is an additional risk if the young person turns up for the activity intoxicated (disruption to the group, risk of harm to self, risk of physical harm if the person exerts themselves whilst using substances). This would need a little more structure and some ground rules set from the beginning to provide as positive an experience as possible.

People are in addiction for several reasons and there are a variety of variables that make it hard for young people to actually win against addiction.

1. Addiction works on the reward system of the brain. Most addictions help in the secretion of the “Feel good hormone” dopamine. When released, this hormone will make you feel good. This hormone can be naturally released through outdoor activities. Research by Barnett, Hall, Dilkes-Frayne & Carter (2018), shows that being out in nature helps in the secretion of this hormone and thus helps the person feel good about himself or herself.

2. Research by Byrant (2012), shows that several people go and engage in certain risky activities that lead to addiction in search of companionship. By engaging in certain activities, they will be accepted in certain groups, and they will have social connections that are something that they yearn for. Activities like trekking help to create new connections for these people with other people who have the same mindset and problems as them and thus they can have new friendships and get empowered from those around them to overcome their issues.

3. Outdoor activities like trekking, expose the people to vitamin D. Vitamin D plays a vital role both in the physical health and in the mental health of a person. There is sufficient research to show that not having enough of the vitamin can lead to depression-like symptoms. People who have inadequate vitamin D levels may possibly crave opioids, thus putting them at a higher risk of developing an addiction (Ventura Recovery Centre, nd). These signs and feelings of depression can then make the person try to elevate happiness through addictive activities that usually boost their “feel good hormones” for a short while.

Risk Assessment that Needs to be Carried Out: The main important risk assessment that needs to be carried out is to check the route that will be taken. As the activity will be outside, one must keep in mind that the trek must be re-checked from time to time to see that it is still safe.

Apart from that, the youth worker must also make sure to tell the participant to bring comfortable clothes for the walk and enough food and drinks.

Material Needed: Any material you need for the activities that you will do during the walk.

Debriefing Session: Once the trek is over, it would be ideal to sit down with the participants and close down the experience by seeing how the experience was for the participants. If they had some activities to do during the trekking it would also be good to see what happened during those activities and see if they learned something out of it. One can also focus a bit more on the stone episode and ask the following questions?

- Why did you choose the stone you chose? Did the size of the stone represent the weight of the problem it was symbolizing?
- What did it symbolise?
- What made you decide that you had carried this stone/your problem enough and that you want to remove it from your pocket/your life?
- What are the steps you will take to remove the “real stone” that is weighing you down out of your life?

These are some questions that can be used. The facilitator can then open up on things that the young people say and/or come up with other questions.

TOOL 02: QADFA

Tool 2: Qadfa

Aim: The overall aim of the tool is to lead young people to opt for other recreational activities rather than substance abuse. In this case, the activity that the participants will be encouraged to take part in is kayaking.

Objectives: The objectives of the tool are the following:

- 1.To build strong one-on-one relationships. This will take place both between the youth worker and the participants and between the participants themselves. This will help in creating a familiar environment where people feel comfortable being together.
- 2.Create a space where one better understands why he/she makes use of certain substances or why he/she engages in certain behaviors. This will help them to better understand their addiction and come up with plans and ideas on how to overcome these addictions.
- 3.Create a safe space where reflections on oneself can take place and plans for change can be made.

Target Group: We are targeting 13–17 years old; however, this tool can be used by anyone above 8 years old.

Methodology Used: Outdoor (Kayaking)

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

The tool is an activity that will see the young people together with their youth worker go on a kayaking trip. One must keep in mind that this can be done both in a lake or in the sea. The group will be going for a kayaking experience on a predetermined route.

The kayaking experience will be used as a tool to build relationships with young people on a one-on-one basis. The young people will have the opportunity to integrate themselves. For this activity, we suggest making use of twin kayaks. This will provide the young people with the opportunity to be two on one kayak and they must be in the same kayak and like it or not they will conversations are created.

When kayaking, they will be managing to reach places that aren't reachable by foot, this instills hope in humans. This shows that by leaving our comfort zone we can reach different places that we could not imagine that exist or that we can reach.

Apart from that, the ocean is also a space of serenity. One must keep in mind that most of the young people today live in cities which are creating a lot of stimuli around us which is not healthy for the brain. Here they will find the opportunity to be quiet in a serene place away from all these distractions. This will help them to reconnect with themselves and with others and reflect on themselves and their life and any changes they would wish to make.

During the kayaking experience, several activities can be done by the youth worker:

1. Water get-to-know-each-other games. There are several games that can act as icebreakers and that can be played at sea. These will help the participants have fun and get to know each other more.
2. They can be asked to get to know each other while rowing and then asked to present to each other at one point.
3. The youth worker can also decide to stop the group in one place where they can stay next to each other and carry out a meditation there which will be easier than doing in on land where we are continually surrounded by distractions.
4. The youth worker can ask the participants to take turns for some time where first one person each kayak rows and then it changes and the other person only rows and then they row together. This will be carried out to show how harder it is to paddle alone. This will show that in life when we try to battle our problems alone it will be hard. When we open and share our struggles the struggle will be less.

As these tools will be used as part of a one-year journey, the young people would be asked to keep a reflective diary in which they will write their reflections in.

The Why behind the Tool:

People are in addiction for several reasons and there are a variety of variables that make it hard for young people to win against addiction.

Substance misuse especially substance abuse, is mainly used as sedatives or as stimuli for the person. Substances usually can offer either one or the other. On the other hand, kayaking can offer both at the same time. Day kayaking has the ability to offer adrenaline due to the adventure and the thrill-seeking that it offers especially when battling against waves and exploring new places. Kayaking offers a sense of calmness (Barros et al, 2020). Thus, this gives the opportunity to young people to look into healthier options to gain the same effect, that for example substance misuse gave them.

Kayaking also gives space for the young person and the youth worker to build rapport with each other and for the young person to feel more comfortable to open up with the youth worker and they can both work together to achieve the same goal in this case that of overcoming any mental health issue that the young person might have.

Addiction works on the reward system of the brain. Most addictions help in the secretion of the “Feel good hormone” dopamine. When released, this hormone will make you feel good. This hormone can be naturally released through outdoor activities. Research by Barnett, Hall, Dilkes-Frayne & Carter (2018), shows that being out in nature helps in the secretion of this hormone and thus helps the person feel good about himself or herself.

Research by Byrant (2012), shows that several people go and engage in certain risky activities that lead to addiction in search of companionship. By engaging in certain activities, they will be accepted in certain groups, and they will have social connections that is something that they yearn for. Activities like kayaking help to create new connections for these people with other people who have the same mindset and problems as them and thus they can have new friendships and get empowered by those around them to overcome the issues they are trying to overcome.

Outdoor activities like kayaking, expose people to vitamin D. Vitamin D plays a vital role both in the physical health and in the mental health of a person. There is sufficient research to show that not having enough of the vitamin can lead to depression-like symptoms. People who have inadequate vitamin D levels may possibly crave opioids, thus putting them at a higher risk of developing an addiction (Ventura Recovery Centre, nd). These signs and feelings of depression can then make the person try to elevate happiness through addictive activities that usually boost their “feel-good hormones” for a short while.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out: It is very important to note that this is more of a seasonal tool, and one has to be very careful when choosing the route and the day when to go. The route should be good for the people that the youth worker has in mind. The youth worker must remember that most young people are not physically fit and will get tired quite rapidly if they are not used to rowing. If there is wind against them, they will get tired even faster.

The youth worker should make sure that he/she checks the weather well days before the activity and on the eve of the activity and on the day. If the wind is more than force 3 the event should be cancelled. For that reason, the youth worker should always have a plan B. It is important to tell the participants to bring the needed equipment and the youth workers should have a VHF radio signal in case of emergency. One must keep in mind that mobile signal is not reachable in all places.

Finally, there should always be a minimum of two adults with each group and they should be in a ratio of 1 is to 4 that is 4 youth and 1 adult. Every time a group sets sail, they should inform someone on land with their planned route and what is their time of departure and arrival. This is to have someone knowing where the group will be and raise alert if the group does not return.

All participants must be assessed for their swimming skills and will be provided with a life jacket and a whistle for safety purposes.

Materials Needed:

The material needed for the kayaking is the following:

- Kayaks
- Paddles
- Life Jackets
- VHF
- Watches
- Dry Bags
- Pocket diaries
- Pens
- Food and water

Debriefing Session:

Once the session is over, it would be ideal to sit down with the participants and close the experience by seeing how the experience was for the participants. If they had some activities to do during the kayaking it would also be good to see what happened during those activities and also see if they learned something out of it. Some questions that the youth worker can ask are:

- How did you feel during the experience today?
- What did you achieve from today's experience?
- If you had to compare the experience of today to a movie what will that movie be and why?
- Which part of the experience was the hardest part?
- Where there moments where you thought you want to give up?
- What did you do when those moments came?
- Do you experience similar experiences in life?
- How do you overcome these difficult moments in life?



**TOOL 03: FOOD FOR
THOUGHT**

Tool 3: FOOD for Thought

Aim: The aim of this tool is to get people out in nature while learning how to grow their own crops.

Objectives: The objectives of the tool are the following:

- 1.To get a stronger connection with the group members build a sense of family and a sense of belonging in the group.
- 2.To help participants get new green skills
- 3.To help participants grow something together.
- 4.To show participants that crops need time and patience to grow and reach their maturity. The same goes for when trying to overcome a habit. It takes time and effort to overcome it.
- 5.Create a safe space where reflections on oneself can take place and plans for change can be made.

Target Group: We are targeting 13–17 years old, however, this tool can be used by anyone above 8 years old.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

The tool is an activity that will see the participants gather on a regular basis and together grow some crops. It would be ideal that this activity takes place at the same venue every time. It would mean that the participants would have their own piece of land/space and there they would grow their own crops. It would be ideal that this will not be a one-off activity but rather a prolonged process.

For this activity, it would be ideal that, if possible, the youth worker would have the support of someone who has green fingers and that has experience in this field of farming. The idea is that the participants would grow some crops together and this will help them feel good about themselves as they are managing to grow something and achieve the goal of taking care of the crop from the beginning till the end.

During the activity, several activities can take place:

- 1.Several get to know each other activities can take place
- 2.The participants can be asked to stay in pairs and given topics or subjects to discuss as a pair. This will help to open and talk together about different topics.
- 3.It will also be good to let the participants just play and enjoy playing with soil, feel the different textures and enjoy some time in nature. The playfulness that farming brings with it is something that most people do not have due to the lives we are living.

The methodology used: Outdoor farming.

The Why behind the Tool:

1. Farming brings the people that do it to a continuous connection with nature and this will help them explore their spiritual nature (Baulum, 2018).
2. Farming will lead to the growth of some crops. Farming will also lead to keeping an area aesthetically nice and pleasant to watch. This will make a nicer scene to watch for others in the community. Apart from that, the food that the people grow, can be taken with them at home and they can share it with friends, relatives and other people that they know. This will help them to start rebuilding bonds with their close circles. Usually, people who suffer from substance abuse, usually lose the trust of those around them and they are seen as a burden. Through this, they can show that they are recovering and that they are giving back something to the community as well rather than just taking it.
3. Growing crops will also help in the secretion of dopamine. When a person manages to successfully take care of and grow a product from a seed to the stage where it bears fruit, it gives a lot of satisfaction. This comes from our evolution as humans where thousands of years ago when we were hunters and gatherers. When food was found (gathered or hunted) a flush of dopamine released in the reward center of brain triggered a state of bliss or mild euphoria. The dopamine released can be triggered by sight (seeing a fruit or berry) and smell as well as by the action of plucking the fruit (Francis, nd). Therefore, the thrill-seeking and the dopamine that is usually given by these substances can instead be given by farming.
4. The crops that they grow can be used to make some good recipes. Through this, they can, in the end, enjoy the results of what they worked for and they can also acquire other skills like cooking, which can help them to become more independent in life.
5. Farming and cooking can also end up being their new hobby. Research by Perone, Dayton, and Dukhie (2020), shows that for people who pass from substance abuse disorder, hobbies can help them to have their mind focus on something else rather than the substances that they abused. This can help to slowly get away from their addiction pattern.
6. Research by Francis (nd), shows that getting your hands dirty in the garden can increase your serotonin levels – contact with soil and a specific soil bacterium; *Mycobacterium vaccae*, triggers the release of serotonin in our brain according to research. Serotonin is a happy chemical, a natural anti-depressant, and strengthens the immune system. Lack of serotonin in the brain causes depression.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Activities like farming can carry certain dangers. However, these can easily be avoided if the attention needed is given. The risk in farming comes mainly from the tools and equipment being used. Therefore, the youth worker, should keep in mind what are the tools to be used and what are the skills of the people taking part. Whenever a tool will be used, the youth

worker and the accompanying farmer should give good instructions on how to use it and how to make sure to stay safe. Apart from that the instructors should be very careful of the things that the young people have in their hands.

Materials Needed:

Materials and equipment will vary depending on the type of work that needs to be carried out.

Debriefing Session:

Once the session is over, it would be ideal to sit down with the participants and close the session by seeing how the experience was for the participants. If they had some activities to do during the farming it would also be good to see what happened during those activities and see if they learned something out of it. Some questions that the youth worker can ask are:

- How did you feel today in the experience?
- What did you achieve from today's experience?
- Which areas do you think you want to grow more in life?
- What will you do to achieve that growth?

TOOL 04: LET IT GO!!

Tool 4: Let it Go!!

Aim: The aim of the tool is to make use of abseiling as a tool to help young people experience a new type of sports while they are on their journey of overcoming addiction. This activity will make them curious to try out new adventurous things that will also minimize boredom for them.

Objectives: The objectives of the tool are the following:

- 1.To have an activity that will serve as an opportunity to equip the young people with a wider variety of life experiences, that can help them to connect to others. This will be an opportunity, where instead of bonding over substance abuse, young people have the chance to bond over safer, healthier activities with like-minded people.
- 2.Young people are more interested in risk-taking. This activity will be dealing with this risk-taking part of the character of young people.
- 3.Create a safe space where reflections on oneself can take place and plans for change can be made.

Target Group: We are targeting 13–17 years old; however, this tool can be used by anyone above 10 years old.

Methodology Used: Outdoor Abseiling

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

In this tool, we will be seeing young people going for an abseiling adventure together. It is very important that for such an activity, a licensed person that knows what is abseiling and how to do it safely is part of the team. Licensed personnel in this sector will come with all the equipment and take care of doing all the setup and carrying out the session.

The idea is to have the group go to a high place and do abseiling in different locations. During the activity itself, it is important that one keeps focused, and thus during the actual abseiling while going down few activities can be carried out. However, some tasks that can still be carried out are participants helping each other. So, during the abseiling it is important to have a person up controlling the rope just in case an emergency occurs and a person at the bottom, helping with the rope as well in case an emergency occurs. The person that stays down can be a young person. They can be explained what their role is and what is the responsibility that they are bearing but controlling the rope. This can help them to start building in them a sense of responsibility for others and so that they start being responsible for others in life.

The Why behind the Tool:

1. Research has shown that young people, especially young people that have already from a young age, engaged in some troubled behaviors have a greater appetite for risk-taking (Cummings, 2008). Thus, activities like these are something that they look forward to.
2. Activities like this, give the young people, a group where they can take part in activities including adventurous activities in a safe group with like-minded people who are helping them move away from their addiction.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out: This is an activity that involves risk and thus that is why a good risk assessment should be carried out. It is very important to note that the organization should make sure to select an experienced trainer to carry out this activity. Preferably good research on who is selected as a trainer should be done. The place chosen for this activity should be safe and the weather for the day should be also carefully selected. It should not be windy or else it will be hard to control the rope while going down as you can easily be shifted from one pace to another. Apart from that, it is also important that it's not raining as rocks can get slippery when wet and a person can easily fall.

During the activity itself, a boundary of some meters from the edges of the cliff should be created and the young people cannot go over that boundary unless they are ready to the abseiling. Finally, no running and fooling around should take place by others that are waiting until it's their turn to go down.

Last but not least, when carried out with people who are trying to give up on their substance abuse problems, the activities that are organized, have to match the rehabilitation program that the person is undergoing. Thus, the multidisciplinary team must be involved in this so as to see that all activities that the person is involved in helping each other, rather than working against each other.

It is also very important that the person is fully oriented and alerted and has not been making use of substances before the activity so as not to be intoxicated. Certain substances lead to decreased decision-making abilities and in activities like this the person has to be fully oriented.

Materials Needed: The material needed in this tool will be provided by the person that each organization will be hiring to carry out this activity. Buying all the equipment yourself is too expensive and it needs skills and experience to set it up.

Debriefing Session:

Once the session is over, it would be ideal to sit down with the participants and close the experience by seeing how the experience was for the participants. It will also be ideal to actually carry out a self-check station before the activity and after.

Here the youth worker will ask the participants how they are feeling before the activity and after so as to compare and see if and how the activity made the person feel different. If they had some activities to do during the abseiling it would also be good to see what happened during those activities and also see if they learned something out of it. Some questions that the youth worker can ask are:

- How did you feel during the experience today?
- What did you achieve from today's experience?
- What are the skills that you think you have improved through today's activities?
- Any similarities between the challenges and risks that you faced today and what you face in real life?
- How did you overcome the challenges faced today?
- How do you usually overcome challenges?
- What skills have you learned today?
- How can you use these skills in your daily life?
- How did it feel to be responsible for the safety of others.

TOOL 05: CAMPING IN NATURE

Tool 5: Camping in Nature

Aim: The aim of this tool is to help the young people in the group to spend some time together in nature. This time instead of spending just a few hours they will spend a longer period, preferably 2–3 days.

Objectives: The objectives of the tool are the following:

1. To give a space for the young people to get to know each other and connect as a team. This would ideally be done several times, especially in the beginning as it will help people to build up social bonds among themselves. These bonds are needed for the journey these youth will be making together.
2. To help the young people spend some time in nature and enjoy the benefits that nature has on them.
3. Create a safe space where reflections on oneself can take place and plans for change can be made.

Target Group: We are targeting 13–17 years old; however, this tool can be used by anyone above 10 years old.

Methodology Used: Outdoor Camping

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

The participants in this activity will have the opportunity to spend a few days camping together outdoors in nature. The place for camping can be chosen by the young people together with the youth worker.

When choosing the place, one must keep in mind that the place chosen is first of all safe and could be easily accessed in case of emergency. Apart from that, one must also keep in mind that ideally, the place chosen will have some areas that are accessible and where certain activities can take place.

In such an activity, several outdoor tools can take place. It is actually very important to make activities that fill most of the day for young people. One must keep in mind that most young people are full of energy and are all the time waiting to look for some activities to do and thus these activities should be provided for. Some outdoor tools that have been created and are part of this manual can be easily used in these circumstances. Apart from these, there are other activities that can be carried out such as: board games, discussions, clean ups and cooking can be easily organised in camping activities.

The Why behind the Tool:

1. When you're camping you directly connect with the natural world around you. Natural environments offer a range of benefits for our mental health. We have completely underestimated the way in which the human brain is influenced by the physical environment and by the elements of water, forests, and animals. Having less contact with nature, particularly in your younger years, appears to remove a layer of protection for the mind against psychological stress and the opportunity for mental rejuvenation, so creating time to spend outdoors should be a priority from an early age (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2007).
2. Camping delivers one of our fundamental needs for well-being – that of autonomy. It gives us the freedom during our time off to be able to wake up and find our own adventures, without limits. This sense of freedom is rarely found in our daily lives, whether through work pressure or the chores at home. Even when going to a hotel for your holiday you don't have the complete freedom that camping has to do your own thing. When we sleep outside, under the stars, or camping, it's as though we press the reset button and we are more present to what's around us, pulling our thoughts away from the stresses of modern life (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2007).
3. Nature vs Technology is a battle that is affecting all of us, with children being some of the most impacted by the tech at their fingertips. Nature offers an instant digital detox. Camping is a good way to support a young person's mental health, particularly if they spend a lot of time playing computer games or are suffering from anxiety. Immersion in nature counters the impact of online and urban living and calms the brain. For example, viewing scenes of nature is associated with higher alpha brainwave activity and increased production of serotonin, known as the 'Happy Chemical', which helps to maintain mood balance. Going camping is a form of Wilderness Therapy (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2007).

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out: This is an activity that involves risk and thus that is why a good risk assessment should be carried out. The most important risk assessment to be done is the selection of the place. The place where the camping will be carried out should be selected before and one needs to make sure that there is no dangerous terrain nearby like high cliffs or uncovered wells and any other terrain that can cause someone to get injured.

Ideally the team of youth workers should go a few days before to check the area. Few days before the camping is the weather should be well checked to make sure that it will be good to camp outside and not risk getting sick after.

Materials Needed: The material needed will vary. Below is a list of some of the materials that will be needed for such an activity:

- Tents
- Outdoor cooking stoves
- Ropes
- Pegs
- Battery-powered lamps
- First Aid Kit
- Fire Safety Equipment.

Debriefing Session: As this will be an activity that takes longer than the other activities there can be more than one time when a debriefing session can take place. The debriefing questions that will be asked have to be according to the activity that would have just taken place.

A good methodology and debriefing technique that can be used when camping is meditation. Young people are not frequently surrounded by the “noises” of nature. Thus, this will be a great opportunity to help the young people relax and calm down and make a guided meditation for the. Guided meditation can take different directions and tackle different issues and topics like the challenges faced in life, future plans that they have etc.

The guided meditation can also be used to close the whole camping experience so as to reflect on how it went and what took place, what were the feelings and emotions within.

**TOOL 06: SCAVENGER
HUNT FOR ALL**

Tool 6: Scavenger Hunt for All

Aim: The aim of this tool is to do a scavenger hunt for young people.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following:

1. For the people of the group to continue getting to know each other, while they have fun outdoors
2. To learn more about a particular topic. The scavenger hunt can be done on various topics, even on the topic of mental health. This will help the participants to better understand this subject.
3. To get acquainted with the area where the scavenger hunt takes place.

Target Group: We are targeting 13–17 years old; however, this tool can be used by anyone above 10 years old.

Methodology Used: Outdoor Scavenger Hunt

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

The tool will include a lot of preparation that needs to be done before the actual tool is implemented. In fact, research must be done on the story that will be created, the places that will be used, and the questions that will be asked. Once the tool is created it should be checked out by someone that was not involved in the creation process to make sure that everything works well.

The tool will see the group having some tasks that need to be carried out. The tasks have to be done one after the other and one builds or leads to the other or they can also be done independently of each other, and each task is not related.

The Why behind the Tool:

1. Scavenger hunts allow people to practice problem-solving in a tangible way. It will help the brain of young people to practice some problem-solving skills that will help people keep on having an active brain that has a higher tendency of staying healthy (Jones, Smith and Royster, 2017).
2. Scavenger hunts will also help stimulate the creativity of the people that take part in such activities.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out: The risk assessment that needs to be carried out in this tool is the choice of the place to make sure that it is safe and the choice of the activities that need to be carried out.

It would be ideal to create a space or a channel (maybe a what's App channel), where young people can resort to for help if they feel stuck and/or lost. This is important due to the fact that these young people might already be anxious and thus this could increase their stress and anxiety levels. Having a safe place to return to can be of benefit to them.

Materials Needed: The materials used for this activity will vary according to the type of scavenger hunt that is prepared. Today one can have different scavenger hunts from ones that are based on tablets and smartphones to other more traditional ones that are based on traditional methods.

Debriefing Session: Once the session is over, it would be ideal to sit down with the participants and close the experience by seeing how the experience was for the participants. It is a good idea to see what happened during the activity and see if they learned something from it. Some questions that the youth worker can ask are:

- How did you feel during the experience today?
- What did you achieve from today's experience?
- From the riddles that you had to solve, which one was the hardest?
- How is the scavenger hunt similar to life as your experience in day-to-day activities?
- What helped you during the way?

There can also be questions related to the theme or topic that the scavenger hunt focused on.

TOOL 07: EQUINE THERAPY

Tool 7: Equine Therapy

Aim: The aim of this tool is to make use of horses and horse therapy as means to help young people with mental health issues, especially depression.

Objectives: The objectives are the following:

- 1.To help develop a deep connection between the horses and the young people. This connection can help young people to soothe their depressive symptoms whilst developing healthy coping skills when dealing with depression and other mental health issues.

Target Group: We are targeting 13–17 years old; however, this tool can be used by anyone above 10 years old.

Methodology Used: Equine Therapy / Horse Therapy

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Animals can offer an extraordinary amount of emotional support. Beyond the pet-owner relationship that many of us have lovingly experienced, animals are sometimes used in therapeutic settings to help clients navigate challenging emotional experiences. Equine-assisted psychotherapy incorporates horses into the therapeutic process. People engage in activities such as grooming, feeding, and leading a horse while being supervised by a mental health professional. This will help the young people build a relationship with the horses, while they also bond together as a team.

The Why behind the Tool:

- 1.Most animals, including horses, have the tendency of gauging when something is not right. They have the tendency to then gather around the person who may be passing from hard emotional times and support this person (Hoffman and Lincolan, 2019).
- 2.Horses offer a genuine connection that releases chemicals such as serotonin and oxytocin. When a person suffers from mental health problems like depression, the feeling of sadness and apathy can take over. By caring for these animals, the above-mentioned chemicals are released thus leaving positive symptoms (Dunlop and Tsantefki, 2018).

3. The tool improves self-confidence and gives a sense of ownership and responsibility to the young people given that they are taking care of the horse (Frederick Et al, 2009). This nature of the tool offers the space for young people to use all their senses. As a tool, Equine sessions help improve emotional awareness and develop problem-solving skills and overall trust and empathy.
4. Given that the young person will be focusing their attention on the horse they will be in a better position to let their guard down and engage with the youth worker. This tool is also beneficial for further developing social skills (Burgon, 2011).
5. Horses help the people making use of equine therapy to focus on the moment with the horse. Since horses are vigilant and sensitive to behavior and emotions, they can sense danger and respond with a heightened awareness, which typically leads to a change in their behavior and possible attempts to get away. Thus, people will have to focus on just being with the horses and have a break from the other worries that are affecting their mental health.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out: A horse trainer will be present all the time when the young people will be with the horses. This ensures that the young people do not harm the horses or cause them any strain. It must be kept in mind that horses might respond if teased. Thus, young people will be taught how to interact with the horses what to do and not to do, and how to realize when the horses may be changing their attitude.

Materials Needed: The material needed will vary depending on the job or activity that the young people will be doing with the horses on that day.

Debriefing Session:

The debriefing sessions will start by asking the young people to reflect on they are feeling current and that moment, before the session with the horses. After the session, the young people will be asked the following questions.

- To mention 3 things that they are grateful for that happened during the day.
- To say how was their overall experience today?
- How did they feel being so close to such a strong animal?
- How can this feeling be remembered in their daily lives?

TOOL 08: AIMING HIGH

Tool 8: Aiming High

Aim: The aim of this tool is for the users to take a moment in their life and focus on doing just one thing, that of hitting their target on the archery board.

Objectives: The objectives of archery are the following:

- 1.To build strong one on one relationships. This will take place both between the youth worker and the participants and between the participants themselves. This will help in creating an environment of a family where people feel comfortable being together.
- 2.Help the users understand that they are not the only ones facing problems and that there are other people with the same problems as them
- 3.To help the users to build up social bonds and connections with other peers.
- 4.To help create a sense of a group/family so that people feel accepted.
- 5.Archery also helps people focus on their targets in life and work towards the focus or the aim that they have in life.

Target Group: We are targeting 13–17 years old; however, this tool can be used by anyone above 10 years old.

Methodology Used: Archery

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

The group of young people will be taken to an archery field. They will be shown how to make use of archery safely and they will then be given targets to which they will try to hit. The person who will be facilitating this session will be moving the targets further away as time passes by. Thus, the challenge for them will increase as time passes by and they would have to focus more to be able to reach their target the next time.

The Why behind the Tool:

- 1.For mental health, archery provides active meditation, which can improve your mood, and ease anxiety and depression. Because archery requires focus, archers with post-traumatic stress disorder often find relief by practicing. It quiets the mind and helps them focus on something they can control (Landers et al, 1986).
- 2.Archery also helps improve the confidence of a person in himself and thus creates that feel good factor (Ahmad et al, 2013).

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out: It is important that when young people are given the bows, they are shown how to safely use it and they can only pick the bows when the trainer tells them to. It is also important that when someone is with a bow in their hand, they can only point it forward toward the target boards. When someone finishes the arrows made available and would like to collect other arrows, they have to wait for everyone to shoot theirs and then for everyone to put down their bows and get the go-ahead from the trainer to go and collect the used bows.

Materials Needed: The materials needed will be provided by the professional that will be hired for this activity. The materials usually are bows, arrows, and targets.

Debriefing Session:

Once the session is over, it would be ideal to sit down with the participants and close the experience by seeing how the experience was for the participants. It is a good idea to analyze the activity and see what they learned from it. Some questions that the youth worker can ask are:

- How did you feel during the experience today?
- What did you achieve from today's experience?
- What are the things or dreams that they are aiming for in life?
- How does it feel when you work for something in life, but it seems hard to achieve it

Here the youth worker can open up more on the importance of asking for support when we are stuck in life. In archery, one might find it hard to hit the target and might need to ask for help. In life, it would also be good to ask for help and one should not be shy to do so. Also, if one is doing their utmost but they are not still hitting their target, they should not be demotivated and should keep trying. In the end one will achieve what they work for. One question to open this discussion could be: How was your experience being guided to hit the target?

**TOOL 09: KEEP CALM AND BEE
AWESOME**

Tool 9: Depression

Tool Name: Keep calm and BEE awesome

Aim: The aim is to teach young people inner calmness and consciousness whilst being in nature and learning about one of the most important parts of the ecosystem – the bees.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following.

- 1.To reduce stress, anxiety, and depression.
- 2.Increase inner calmness and clarity.
- 3.Improve coping skills with stressful and difficult situations.
- 4.Knowledge about the importance of bees to our ecosystem.
- 5.Knowledge about the importance of nature and wildlife to humans' mental and physical well-being.
- 6.Tools on how to use beekeeping as a form of improving our mental well-being.
- 7.Boost their self-worth and self-esteem.

Target Group: The target group for this activity is targeting young people between the age of 13–17 years of age.

Methodology Used: Methods used are Modern Beekeeping, Traditional Beekeeping and/or Scientific Beekeeping. The methodology of the type of beekeeping that we will use will be determined according to the beekeeper or beekeeper that we will be collaborating with.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

The tool of the way that the tool will be implemented, will be divided into different parts.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out: The tool of the way that the tool will be implemented, will be divided into different parts.

- 1.Introductory workshops on Beekeeping – how, what, why, the equipment used and safety. This is a very important part as it prepares young people to face the hives of bees and how to work with them. If young people are not properly prepared for the encounter, then they can get seriously harmed which might lead to a negative effect instead. Therefore, it is important to teach them things like how beehives work, what type of equipment they need, how they should approach bees, what not to do around bees etc. The beekeeper will be conducting these workshops with the help of the youth workers.

2. Workshops on the benefits of Beekeeping to our mental and physical well-being. It is very important to teach young people how beneficial beekeeping can be for their mental and physical well-being and it is important to do it prior to the practical part, because then they have the knowledge to notice the mental and physical signs during the activity. Youth workers will be conducting these workshops with the help of the beekeeper.
3. Practical part 1 – Meeting the bees. In this stage, the young people will be introduced to beehives. They are not required to do anything yet, but just to see how they react in that environment and see what emotions this first encounter with bees brings up in them. Some young who are bold can make their first contact with the beehives with the guidance of the beekeeper. This first encounter can show the other young people that there is nothing to be scared of and can have an encouraging effect, but it is not required in the first time meeting with bees. After this activity, it is very important to do a reflective circle where young people can express their emotions during this activity. This is important as it will give an overview to the youth workers and the beekeeper on how ready the group is to go to the next stage of the activity, maybe there is a need to make adjustments.
4. Practical part 2 – Building a beehive. Young people get the chance to start from scratch. Meaning they get to build their own beehive where the bees will start living and producing honey. This is an important part as it will give them the responsibility to take care of living beings and create a good environment for them to thrive. That shows indirectly to the young people that if they take care of something it will blossom.
5. Practical part 3 – Releasing bees to their new home. This would be the most challenging and critical part of the tool as young people are faced with bees who potentially can cause great harm to them if not managed properly. But this is also the most rewarding part of the tool because when succeeded it will create great self-confidence and self-trust in the participants. Showing them that when a great threat appears they can handle it and come out of it on top. Through reflective circles and guided questions, this will be made obvious.
6. Practical part 4 – Producing honey. By creating a great beehive and taking care of the environment the bees will start thriving and producing honey. That is a direct result of a job well done. Through guided questions and reflective circles, we can direct this way of thinking into their own lives and make them realize that if they take charge of their own actions and thoughts they can really improve their wellbeing.
7. Practical part 5 – Donating the honey to charity. In this process, we would like to sell the produced honey for charitable causes at the local Christmas market or at any other seasonal market. Our aim is to give the earned income to charity (the young people will choose the charity) and through that show them that helping others in need is also a great way to find meaning in their lives. It would also be great to give a small bottle of honey to the participants themselves in the end.

The Why behind the Tool:

In 2017, mental health problems affected an estimated 790 million people worldwide. Most of those people were largely struggling due to an anxiety disorder or depression (Dattani et al., 2021). As a result of social distancing, people's mental and physical health worsened even more. In 2019 in the U.S., about 1 in 10 adults reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 2020), which after Covid-19 has now risen up to 4 in 10 adults. (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2021) Therefore finding tools that would help people improve their mental health is crucial.

Over the years beekeeping has turned out to be very beneficial in many ways. Firstly, keeping bees can help the economy and teach young people the value of nature. Also to many people, it can be deeply gratifying to be part of the process of honey bees pollinating crops and flowers which through they create delicious honey. Secondly, beekeeping doesn't only teach us to respect nature, but research has also stated that beekeeping can help people with mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, and depression. It is called "Beekeeping Therapy." (K. Alton, 2021)

Beekeeping has been very beneficial amongst soldiers returning from military service. Many of them suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and have trouble creating a productive life after the military. Many of them end up being homeless, depressed and/or drug or other harmful substance addicts. One such veteran is Vince Ylitalo who served in the military for almost 40 years, including two tours in Iraq and now he suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. To treat his PTSD, Ylitalo is part of a beekeeping program at the Manchester Veteran Affairs (VA) Medical Center in the state of New Hampshire. In a recent report, Ylitalo explained how beekeeping calms his mind. "I'm in this program to help me get out of the thought process of all those problems that I have. It helps me think about something completely different...I'm just thinking about the bees." (VOA Learning English, 2019).

Heroes to Hives is another beekeeping program in the state of Michigan that provides a free nine-month beekeeping course for veterans. The founder Adam Ingrao who is a military veteran and insect expert, explains that beekeeping serves veterans in many ways. "We're focused on empowering veterans to take control...of their own lives...by being able to practice mindfulness and slow down but also by giving them the opportunity to have their own business... This is a place for the community. This is a place for healing. It's also a place for learning how to keep bees." (VOA Learning English, 2019)

Additionally, having responsibility and a role to care for something other than ourselves brings out a sense of pride and joy that can help a person to increase their self-worthiness. For example, if a person is in a mental space where they don't want to do anything and

Taking care of themselves is not a big motivation to get up, but maybe knowing that they are responsible for other beings' well-being too gives them the extra push to get out there. This type of accomplishment builds self-confidence and improves the way we view ourselves and therefore allows us to grow our self-esteem. (Beepods, 2021).

In conclusion, it is clear that creating a tool for young people to engage in the activity of beekeeping could make a difference in their mental health. As research has shown that beekeeping therapy has helped so many others to heal from their severe mental health problems by bringing a sense of calmness to their life.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

1) Definitely the biggest risk assessment that needs to be conducted is the allergy test. Every participant needs to do that in order to find out if it is safe for them to work with bees. In case of an allergy, the bees can be very deadly to them and they might be required to carry EpiPen with them.

2) Also, proper gear needs to be worn when facing the bees in order to reduce the risk of greater harm from a bee sting.

3) Participants need to be well prepared in case of an emergency. Go through different scenarios that might go wrong during beekeeping and what are the optimal ways to handle them.

4) In addition to reducing the risk of getting stung the participants need to have preparatory sessions on how to take care of bees and how bees operate overall. To avoid a situation where the participant unknowingly does something that angers the bees.

Materials Needed:

Materials needed for this tool are the following:

- Protective clothes
- Bee hive and its components
- Bee frames and foundation
- Tools to manage the beehive
- Live bees
- Honey extractor and storage

These are the materials needed to get started with beekeeping. Usually, bee keepers will be providing this material especially the protective equipment themselves. If the beekeeper does not have the material, the beekeeper can easily suggest from where to but the equipment needed.

Debriefing Session:

Depending on the particular workshop being implemented the questions can vary and be more specific, but the most typically asked questions would be:

- What did you learn today?
- What was the scariest part for you?
- What would you have liked to do differently?
- What part did you like the most?
- What would you wish to learn more about?
- What types of feelings did you notice having while doing this activity?
- What did you accomplish today?
- What do you think of the way bees live?
- Do you see any similarities to your own life?
- How do you feel working in this team?

**TOOL 10: TAKE CARE OF YOUR
BFF (BEST FURRY FRIEND)!**

Tool 10: Take care of your BFF (Best FURRY Friend)!

Condition: Depression

Aim: The main aim is to teach young people self-love and self-acceptance through working with animals.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are:

1. Decreasing depression by drawing a young person's attention to the animal rather than to their problems.
2. Encouraging empathy and increasing their nurturing skills, both on the animal and on themselves.
3. Instilling a feeling of acceptance and fulfillment.
4. Causing a calming effect and a sense of presence.
5. Giving them space for self-realization and meaningful accomplishments.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: We will be using two types of methodologies in this tool. First is 'animal-assisted activity' (AAA) and the second one is 'animal-assisted therapy' (AAT). The aim of AAA is to improve the quality of life of certain types of people, may it be terminally ill people, old people, blind people, and so on. AAT on the other hand represents the fundamental part of therapy for some pathologies such as autism and depression. (S. Caprilli & A. Messeri, 2006).

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

The tool of this tool consists of two methodologies

Animal Assisted Activity (AAA) and Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT). The following is more detailed description of the two methodologies used: – Therapy Involving animals in activities (Animal Assisted Activity) – consists of various activities with animals where there is no specific therapeutic goal. The activities are designed to improve a person's quality of life, increase motivation, and create positive emotions. In the course of the activity, the animals are cared for, brushed, walked, and played. These types of activities are conducted by volunteers trained in animal therapy. Voluntarily, no special specialist education is required. The animals you work with must be tested and safe for humans, that is they are tame and friendly (Eesti Loodus- ja Loomateraapiakeskus, 2022)

Involving animals in therapy (Animal Assisted Therapy) is a purposeful intervention where an animal that meets the requirements is included in the client's therapy process. This type of activity can be carried out by specialists trained in animal therapy, who are representatives of professions that help people (psychologists, physiotherapists, special pedagogues, social pedagogues, doctors, etc.). Volunteers who do not have the appropriate education can only carry out therapy together with a specialist. During animal therapy, the specialist sets therapy goals based on the client's needs and develops exercises suitable for cooperation with the animal. The entire therapy process is documented for later analysis. During the therapy, the psychological and physical safety of the client is ensured. (Eesti Loodus- ja Loomateraapiakeskus, 2022).

The workshops will be carried out step by step in the following manner.

Step 1: Introductory workshops into Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT). These workshops will be conducted by a specialist in Animal Therapy. During these introductory workshops, the specialist will teach us the importance and benefits of animal therapy. The aim is for the specialist to prepare the youth workers and young people for the upcoming activities with animals (AAA). The specialist will bring awareness on how to take care of the animals, how to notice inner feelings, and/or to do inner check-ins whilst working with animals, etc.

Step 2: Introductory visits the Animal Shelter and a local Alpaca Farm. An Animal Shelter mission is for every pet to have a responsible and loving home. They help pets who have lost their homes by providing them with care and shelter. Whilst looking for new responsible homes for the pets in their care. Also, offer advice and support to pet owners During these site visits the youth workers and young people will get familiar with the area and the animals they will start taking care of. For safety reasons, they will be given firm instructions on how to behave whilst working with these animals.

3) Practical part 1 – Animal Shelter. In these non-profit organizations, there are a lot of animals who need a new home. Although the animals have their basic needs covered – food and shelter, unfortunately, they do not get enough socializing in the shelter, because there are not enough workers. This will be our aim while doing AAA – to give the animals love and care and help the animals be more social in order for them to be picked easier into their new forever homes. This activity will help the young people to focus more on the animals and not on their daily troubles. It will also bring out their empathetic side and increase their nurturing skills. Additionally, helping animals makes them feel useful and worthy. After each visit, youth workers conduct a debriefing where young people will be asked a series of questions in order to bring awareness of the feelings this activity had on them.

4) Practical part 2 – Alpaka farm. Alpaka farms are usually located in the countryside and free from city noise. It is a great change of scenery and gives the young people a chance to get out of their usual environment. During their visits to Alpakafarm, they are instructed on how to take care of the animals and how to clean up after them. Young people will be able to spend time in the presence of animals and feed them. This activity will give the young people a chance to take a breather from their daily worries and environment, they are solely focused on the care for the animals and not on their to-do list. Being in the presence of animals increases young people's empathetic side and nurturing skills. Additionally, helping animals makes them feel useful and worthy and feel more positive emotions. After each visit, youth workers conduct a debriefing where young people will be asked a series of questions in order to bring awareness of the feelings this activity had on them. Sometimes it is hard for people to be kind to themselves, but to be kind to an animal comes very naturally. Through these activities with animals, we want to bring out the kindness in young people and when they have reached the understanding of being kind and loving towards an animal the youth workers will shift that understanding towards the young person. Meaning the young person will see the correlation between being kind to an animal and being kind to themselves. The main aim is to teach these young people self-love and acceptance through work with animals.

The Why behind the Tool:

In the last three decades, there have been several different studies that focus on the interaction between animals and children. Studies have shown that the company of an animal increases children's communication skills and ability to be in groups and/or with other people, especially children with health problems. Children who are hospitalized and away from family get a lot of hope and comfort from animals. Animals can also help them to cope with chronic diseases, pain, separation from their families, sadness, and even death. (S. Caprilli & A. Messeri, 2006)

A pilot study was conducted at A. Meyer Children's Hospital about Animal-Assisted Activity. The authors found that children meeting with pets was very high (138 children) and that the hospital infection rate did not change and no new infections developed after the introduction of dogs. The study also found that the presence of animals had beneficial effects on children. For example a better perception of the environment and a good interaction with dogs. All parents were in favor of pets in the hospital, and 94% thought that this activity could benefit the child, including the medical staff. The introduction of pets into the pediatric wards in an Italian children's hospital was a positive event because of the participation of hospitalized patients and the satisfaction expressed by both parents and medical staff. (S. Caprilli & A. Messeri, 2006)

In general, petting an animal can cause your brain to release chemicals called endorphins. These chemicals counteract your body's reaction to pain by causing a sense of pleasure or well-being. (Healthline, 2018) Thought through interaction between animals and children, for example Assisted Animal Therapy can be very beneficial and good for children and young people who have:

- difficulties with self-disclosure
 - attention and concentration difficulties
 - experiences of grief and violence
 - anxiety and tension in the body
 - fears (dog phobia, fear of performing, etc.)
 - low self-esteem
 - communication and contact creation problems
 - depression
 - low confidence in oneself and the world
 - behavioral difficulties
- (Eesti Loodus- ja Loomateraapia Keskus, 2022)

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

The following precautions should be kept in mind when planning this activity.

1. The animals that we will be working with must be tested and safe for humans.
2. During our introductory workshops, the specialists who are working closely with these animals will be talking in detail about the animals and how to properly act around them.
3. Every participant will get a chance to say if they have some reservations or fears regarding some of these animals and we will take it into consideration.
4. No participant will be left alone with an animal or without supervision. The youth workers will be there to check on the participants.

Materials Needed:

For this tool, no special materials are needed. Everything regarding animal care is provided by the facilities that are working closely with the animals used in this tool with young people. The only thing that we need to consider is the transport to the Alpaca farm.

Debriefing Session:

Depending on the particular workshop being implemented the questions can vary and be more specific, but the most typically asked questions would be:

- Did you learn anything about yourself today while caring for the animals? Did you act differently than you are normally used to?
- Were you afraid to interact with the animals? If yes, why?
- Did you find it hard to care for the animals? Can you explain your answer?
- What types of inner feelings did you notice having whilst being with animals?
- What did you accomplish today?
- Do you have a special bond with one or some of the animals? If yes, can you please describe the bond?
- How do the animal's needs reflect your needs? Can you see the similarities?

TOOL 11: LET'S COOL DOWN

Tool 11: Let's Cool Down

Condition: Depression

Aim: The main aim of the tool is to teach young people how to regulate their nervous system, how to breathe properly through stressful situations, and be connected with their bodies throughout.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following.

1. To boost your immune system – cold water helps to boost the white blood cell count because the body is forced to react to changing conditions. Over time, the body becomes better at activating its defenses. (IPRSHealth, 2022)
2. To give a natural sense of high–cold water swimming activates endorphins. A chemical that the brain produces to make us feel good during activities. Cold water swimming exercise has been proven to treat depression as it brings us close to the pain barrier. Endorphins are released when we're in pain, to help us cope with it. (IPRSHealth, 2022)
3. To improve your circulation – winter swimming flushes veins, arteries, and capillaries. It forces blood to the surface and helps to warm our extremities. (IPRSHealth, 2022)
4. To make you stronger in body and mind – dipping your body into cold water can lower your body heat and put your body into fight-or-flight mode, triggering and putting the body into stress mode. Understanding how to safely deal with the cold water shock, your body will adapt to it and become better prepared to handle other types of stress the more you repeat the experience. (Vivida Lifestyle, 2021)
5. To reduce stress – winter swimming places stress on the body physically and mentally. Many studies have identified the correlation between cold water and stress reduction. Winter swimmers become calmer and more relaxed by surrendering themselves to the cold environment and relaxing their bodies. (Vivida Lifestyle, 2021)

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used:

Cold Water Swimming (CWS) – These sessions include a dip in an inlet and depending on the individual's preferences maybe even a short swim for a few minutes. The CWS sessions will take place at the local inlet area with sauna and changing facilities available. (P. Hjorth1, A. Løkke et al., 2022)

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Introductory workshop. With this tool, you can collaborate with a Swimming Center. From there you will ask for a winter swimming specialist that can go through all the basics with you. For example, the equipment needed, safety measures, and benefits of winter swimming.

It is important to go through all the theories behind cold water swimming as young people know how to prepare themselves mentally and physically for the activity.

Practical part 1 – Warming up. In this practical part, we will start slowly preparing our bodies for the cold. Hopefully during summertime when we can just get used to swimming in inlet areas. If not possible then also having short room temperature or even colder showers will be a great start.

Practical part 2 – The cool down. In this practical part, we will really be testing our bodies in the cold waters. Young people have previously been prepared to swim in cold waters and stay calm and connected to their bodies the whole process. It is very important to be prepared as in cold water, a person might experience shortness of breath. It's called "cold shock syndrome". In reality, the breathing does not stop. It's just the body's way of expressing its reaction to the cold. In these situations, it is good to be prepared and know you need to stay calm and practice deep breathing. This will alleviate the discomfort.

The main aim of this tool is to really connect with your body and mind to find calmness in stressful/challenging moments. This tool is beneficial mentally and physically. This activity will be done at least once or twice a week as it takes a really short time to do it. The colder it gets the shorter the swims. During winter time it is not recommended to swim for more than 2 minutes.

The Why behind the Tool:

Cold water swimming means immersing yourself in cold water outdoors, may it be a lake, river, or open water. It involves swimming in cold water temperatures that the body is not used to. This will activate the nervous system. (Vivida Lifestyle, 2021)

A number of meta-analyses have demonstrated that exercise is an effective treatment for depression. For example, physical activity is suggested as an alternative treatment for major depressive disorder (MDD), especially for forms of mild and moderate severity. (C.V Tulleken, M. Tipton et al, 2018).

A case study made in 2018, about open-water swimming as a treatment for major depressive disorder states the following: “Medical hypotheses have discussed the potential benefit of immersion in cold water to potentially reduce symptoms of MDD. There are purported to be a range of physiological and social pathways through which open-water swimming may reduce symptoms of MDD. Physiological mechanisms are linked to cross-adaptation, whereby exposure and adaptation to one stressor impact the response to another stressor. For instance, proinflammatory responses may be elevated in some patients with symptoms of MDD. However, reductions in cytokine responses in cold-adapted versus non-adapted swimmers have been found; thus, there may be potential for patients with elevated cytokine levels to reduce symptoms of depression by repeated immersion or swimming in cold water.” (C.V Tulleken, M. Tipton et al, 2018).

A 24-year-old woman who had suffered from major depression since the age of 17 took part in this case study. The study found that cold-water swimming led to an immediate improvement in mood following each swim and a sustained and gradual reduction in symptoms of depression. That also led to a reduction in medication. On follow-up a year later, the 24-year-old participant remains medication-free. (Bryony Porteous-Sebouhian, 2021)

In conclusion, winter swimming is a great alternative to use for major depressive disorders. It gives immediate positive results by giving a boost of endorphins, decreasing feelings of lethargy, more energy, and so on. It has been understood that this exercise can enormously improve mental well-being.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Safety measures for winter swimming are very much needed and go as follows:

- Medical contraindication – Young people need to be examined by a medical specialist when up taking such a form of therapy. Because there might be medical contraindications to being exposed to cold water. For example, patients with cardiovascular disease or conditions triggered by exposure to cold, like Raynaud’s phenomenon and cold water urticaria.
- Acclimatising – In order to allow your body to get used to the new situation step by step, start slowly. Start swimming before the temperature drops, preferably in the summertime and just keep swimming throughout the seasons and your body will get used to the cold. Then it will not be such a shock to go through the year, as the sea temperature starts to fall.

- Being safe – swimming alone is not allowed as the open water can be dangerous. Only swimming where it is safe and can be sure to enter and exit the water quickly and easily.
- Wearing the right kit – Wearing a swimming hat to help preserve body heat. Also, possibility to wear neoprene gloves, booties, a balaclava, or a wetsuit.
- No diving – it is best to avoid diving or jumping. Cold water can cause gasping of breath and cold-water shock, which can be extremely dangerous.
- Knowing your limits – very important is to listen to your body. Generally, when the temperature drops, a person needs to decrease the amount spent in the water. If winter swimming is done for health reasons, it's not advisable to stay in the water longer than 2 minutes.
- Right after coming out of the cold water it is important to dry yourself, get dressed and put on gloves. It is important to warm the body up again to avoid catching a cold.
- It is important to know that experiencing cold shivers after the swim is normal. This is your body's reaction to force muscles to produce more energy.
- Warming your body must take place at a slow pace. Room temperature showers and a hot drink help warm up body temperature. Best to avoid hot showers or saunas.
- Also important to monitor your body after swimming – not to overdo anything and find a relaxfull rhythm.

Materials Needed:

There is no need for a lot of new materials, as most of the things needed are already in most young people's homes, like a swimsuit, flip-flops, and a towel. In colder seasons there are additional gear needed to make this experience a lot more enjoyable. Like a hat, neoprene gloves, and footwear.

There are also special changing robes for winter swimmers to provide better protection against cold, rain, and wind. But it is not required and can be used as other alternatives from home.

Debriefing Session:

Depending on the particular workshop being implemented the questions can vary and be more specific, but the most typically asked questions would be:

- Did you learn anything new about yourself?
- Were you afraid or hesitant to go in the water today?
- How were you feeling and how was your body going into this today?
- How was your mood and body feeling after the dip in the cold water?
- What did you accomplish today?
- What are you thinking before, during, and after the winter swim?
- How did your body react to the cold water?
- What is the hardest part of winter swimming?

TOOL 12: AIM HIGH

Tool 12: Aim High

Condition: ADHD

Aim: The main aim of this tool is to practice sustained focus, whilst developing patience and progression. This can result in an increase in confidence and concentration.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following:

1. Teaching the youth about responsibility while improving focus
2. Increasing the ability to concentrate
3. Improving coordination skills
4. Supporting their muscle growth and upper body strength.
5. Instant rewarding experience builds self-confidence

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: The archery method

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

For this tool, it would be ideal to make use of the services offered by local archery schools or professionals working in this area.

In the first introductory class, participants will be introduced to the area and the equipment needed for archery. In this sport, we are dealing with sharp weapons which means a lecture on safety is very important and will be one of the first conversations the young people have with the supervisor.

Practical part: In the practical part the young people will start closely working with the supervisor of the local archery club to start mastering archery in a proper manner. In addition, they will be supported by the youth workers who will attend every session with them and later after the training will do a debriefing.

Debriefing: After each workout, it is very important for the youth workers to do a debriefing in a fun and efficient way, so that the young people with ADHD would be focused and engaged to express their emotions and thoughts during the activity.

The Why behind the Tool:

Having an environment that provides a space that has clear and concise structures and routines in place is recognized as a helpful educational method for children with ADHD. This type of environment provides them an opportunity to improve self-control, regarding impulsivity and attention. They tend to benefit from being involved in focused activities and having an experienced adult close by that provides them with support and retaining focus. Sport like archery has all the things mentioned above with a clear structure and a predictable setting. This makes it an activity, which is easy to understand and practice for children with ADHD. (A. Gohr Månsson, M. Elmore, et al., 2017) What makes archery appealing is that it gives immediate feedback on the results. Additionally, practicing archery can increase cognitive function by working the same parts of the brain required in academic environments. (Calvert Trust Exmoor, 2021)

People with ADHD often experience anxiety. Archery is a form of meditative sport that helps soothe anxious thoughts and moments of depression, therefore helping to improve the overall mood. This is all thanks to the nature of archery, which centers around something the participant can control and immediately improve on. (ADDitude, 2022)

In conclusion, archery is a great sport that provides structure and clear instructions with immediate feedback on the results. These are needed for a person with ADHD as it helps them with their self-control regarding impulsivity and attention.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

The following steps can be taken so as to make sure that there is no risk for the participants.

1. Young people will be given clear safety instructions and proper manuals on how to use the equipment.
2. The young people will be supervised by an experienced adult.
3. Additionally, youth workers are there to give extra assistance to secure everybody's safety.
4. It is important to be aware that the measures that work for one person with ADHD may not work for another person with ADHD. As people with ADHD are full of energy and it might be hard for them to focus there should be more preparation for them before doing this activity.
5. One has to also keep in mind that youth with ADHD sometimes behave in an impulsive way that at times might result in injuries. The youth worker must make sure to explain the dangers of such equipment to the young people and also stay alert for what might happen.

Materials Needed:

The following are the materials needed for this tool:

Light weighted Bows – as young people are beginners, they will be using lightweight bows, making it much easier for them to handle. Starting them off with a weighted bow can help support their muscle growth and increase strength. As they advance, heavier bows will be introduced to help build additional strength.

Archery Scope – is a device that's mounted on the riser of the bow, and it will help to aim the arrow better. It is a good device to support someone with ADHD practice their aim and building a more positive experience.

Large Targets – are a great way to move forward when there is difficulty in terms of aim and accuracy, especially in the beginning. They can have an easier rewarding experience instead of a frustrating one, which can quickly lead to a lack of interest. Also worth mentioning is that the target's design can also play a big role in the experience. For example, too many colors can be distracting for a person with ADHD.

Bow Sling – It allows archers to have a softer grip, and be more relaxed rather than tensed, as holding a bow can become tiresome or challenging for a person trying archery for the first time.

String Stops – this help avoids loud noises impacting an archery session. This is especially good for people with ADHD as they can often find loud or sudden noises distracting. String stops work by preventing the bow from producing a loud noise when the arrow is released and is one of the most effective ways to reduce noise.

These materials will be materials that will be supplied by the archery places that one books in.

Debriefing Session:

Depending on the particular workshop being implemented the questions can vary and be more specific, but the most typically asked questions would be:

1. Did you learn anything new about yourself?
2. What did you do well today?
3. What would've you wished to do better?
4. What are you proud of today?
5. How did you feel prior to the activity?
6. How did you feel after the activity?
7. What is the hardest part of Archery for you?

TOOL 13: SERENITY IN NATURE

Tool 13: Serenity in Nature: An Outdoor Yoga Retreat for Managing OCD Symptoms

Condition: OCD

Aim: The aim of the activity is to assist young people with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) in relieving their symptoms through the practice of outdoor yoga.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are to:

- 1) To reduce symptoms of anxiety and stress
- 2) To improve overall mood and quality of life
- 3) To provide a sense of grounding and connection to nature
- 4) To teach young people with OCD coping mechanisms for managing their symptoms

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: The activity consists of a series of outdoor yoga classes specifically designed for individuals with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). The classes will be led by a trained instructor who is familiar with working with individuals with mental health conditions. To promote a sense of grounding and connection to the natural world, the lessons will be placed in a setting that is close to nature, like a park or beach. The workshops will also cover breathing exercises, meditation, and relaxation methods that are useful for easing the symptoms of anxiety and stress in addition to yoga postures.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

The first step would be to start by organizing a group hike to a nearby natural area, such as a park or nature reserve. Before setting off on the hike, explain to the group that the purpose of the activity is to use the natural environment to relax and focus the mind and that the hike will be followed by a yoga practice. During the hike, encourage the group to take in their surroundings and pay attention to the sights, sounds, and smells of nature. Encourage them to let go of any racing thoughts or worries, and to focus on the present moment.

After the hike, find a quiet and secluded spot for the yoga practice. Guide the group through a series of yoga poses that are designed to calm the mind and release tension from the body. Encourage the group to focus on their breath and to let go of any thoughts or worries that may arise during the practice. After the yoga practice, lead a brief discussion where the group can share their experiences and feelings from the hike and yoga practice. Encourage the group to continue to incorporate nature and yoga into their daily routines as a way to manage symptoms of OCD.

The Why behind the Tool:

Yoga has been found to be an effective intervention for reducing symptoms of anxiety and stress, and research has shown that practicing yoga can provide additional benefits such as increased feelings of grounding and connection to the natural environment (Archer, 2006). Additionally, yoga promotes mindfulness and self-awareness, which can be helpful for individuals with OCD in learning to manage their symptoms. Studies have also shown that practicing yoga can improve overall mood and quality of life in those with OCD (Bhat et al., 2021).

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Conducting outdoor yoga practice to relieve OCD symptoms in young people carries some risks.

Weather: Outdoor yoga practice is dependent on the weather and can be disrupted by inclement conditions such as rain, high winds, and extreme heat.

Safety: Practicing yoga in an outdoor setting may expose individuals to potential hazards such as uneven terrain, slippery surfaces, and exposure to insects and other wildlife.

Physical Injuries: Yoga practice, especially for people with OCD, may have physical limitations and may be at risk of injuries if proper precautions are not taken. Professional guidance: Some individuals with OCD may benefit from professional guidance when practicing yoga, which may not be available in an outdoor setting. Yoga can be effective in easing anxiety and stress symptoms, but it should not be used as a stand-alone treatment for OCD and instead should be combined with other therapeutic methods. It is also important to have the participants discuss with their healthcare provider before starting the activity.

Overall, conducting outdoor yoga practice to relieve OCD symptoms in young people is a low-risk activity, but it is important to consider the potential risks and take appropriate precautions to minimize them.

Materials Needed:

To implement an outdoor yoga activity you will need:

- A spacious and safe outdoor area, such as a park or open field, where the yoga activity can take place
- Yoga mats or towels for each participant
- Participants should wear comfortable clothing and footwear

- A plan or curriculum for the yoga activity that includes a variety of yoga poses and breathing exercises that are specifically designed to help reduce symptoms of OCD. It may also be beneficial to have a mental health professional or therapist on hand to provide support and guidance throughout the activity. Additionally, it is important to obtain informed consent from participants and their guardians before starting the activity.

Debriefing Session:

The following can be taken into consideration when doing the debriefing:

1. Begin by asking participants how they felt during the yoga practice. Encourage them to share any thoughts or feelings that came up during the session.

You can ask questions like:

- a) How do you feel now?
- b) Do you think that this activity relieved you?
- c) What did you like the most about this activity?
- d) Are you going to practice outdoor or indoor yoga in your daily activities?
- e) What would you change in this activity?

2. Discuss the physical benefits of yoga, such as increased flexibility, strength, and balance, and how these can help to alleviate symptoms of OCD.

3. Talk about the mental and emotional benefits of yoga, such as reduced stress and anxiety, improved mood, and increased mindfulness. Emphasize how these benefits can help to alleviate symptoms of OCD.

4. Address any concerns or challenges that participants may have experienced during the session, such as difficulty with certain poses, discomfort with practicing in an outdoor setting, or difficulty focusing due to external distractions.

5. Encourage participants to continue practicing yoga on their own and to consider incorporating it into their regular routine as a tool for managing OCD symptoms.

6. Remind participants of the importance of listening to their bodies and modifying poses as needed to avoid injury.

7. Encourage participants to seek professional help if they are having difficulty managing their OCD symptoms and share resources for finding a qualified mental health professional.

8. End the debriefing session by thanking participants for their participation and encouraging them to continue to work on managing their OCD symptoms through yoga and other self-care practices.

**TOOL 14: PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE
RELAXATION**

Tool 14: Managing OCD Symptoms with Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Condition: OCD

Aim: The aim of this activity is to empower young people with OCD to take control of their symptoms by teaching them a self-regulation technique that they can use to manage their anxiety and tension.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following:

1. To introduce young people to the concept of progressive muscle relaxation as a tool for managing symptoms of OCD.
2. To teach young people how to use progressive muscle relaxation to reduce anxiety and tension in their muscles.
3. To provide young people with a coping mechanism that they can use to manage symptoms of OCD on their own.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: The activity will be taught using a combination of verbal instruction, demonstration, and practice. Participants will be guided through the progressive muscle relaxation technique and will have the opportunity to practice the technique in a safe and supportive environment.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

STEP 1 Introduce the concept of progressive muscle relaxation and explain how it can help to reduce anxiety and tension in the muscles. Show the young people the handouts or worksheets with diagrams of the muscle groups that will be targeted in the activity.

STEP 2 Next, play a recording of progressive muscle relaxation instructions or guide the young people through the technique yourself. Start by having the young people tense and then relax the muscles in their feet, moving up through the body to the muscles in the face. You can also give the following instructions:

1. Set a timer or stopwatch for 10–15 minutes.
2. Begin by tensing the muscles in your feet for 5–10 seconds, then release the tension and focus on the sensation of relaxation.
3. Move on to the muscles in your legs, then your stomach, chest, arms, hands, shoulders, neck, and face.

4. As you tense each muscle group, take a deep breath and hold it for 5–10 seconds before releasing the tension and exhaling.
5. As you release the tension, focus on the sensation of relaxation and let go of any thoughts or worries.
6. Repeat the exercise for the entire 10–15 minutes.

STEP 3 As the young people practice the technique, encourage them to focus on the sensation of tension and relaxation in their muscles, and to take deep breaths throughout the process.

STEP 4 After the activity, encourage the young people to continue practicing progressive muscle relaxation on their own as a coping mechanism for managing their OCD symptoms.

STEP 5 Create a discussion around the experience of the activity and answer any questions they might have, also provide some tips and suggestions for how to fit progressive muscle relaxation into their daily routine.

STEP 6 Encourage them to practice the technique for at least 10–15 minutes per day and to make it a part of their daily routine. Remind them that this is a self-regulation technique, and that it may take time and practice to see results, but that with persistence, they can learn to manage their symptoms effectively.

The Why behind the Tool:

Progressive muscle relaxation is a technique that can help individuals with OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder) to manage their symptoms by reducing muscle tension and promoting relaxation.

Muscle tension is a common symptom of anxiety and stress, which can exacerbate the symptoms of OCD. By learning to relax their muscles, individuals with OCD can reduce their overall level of tension, which can help to reduce the severity of their symptoms.

There have been studies that support the use of progressive muscle relaxation as a treatment for OCD. A study published in the *Journal of Anxiety Disorders* (Conrad & Roth, 2007) found that progressive muscle relaxation was effective in reducing the symptoms of OCD in a group of adults. Another study published in the *Psychosomatic Medicine* (Fritzsche, 2019) found that progressive muscle relaxation was effective in reducing the symptoms of OCD in a group of children. These studies suggest that progressive muscle relaxation can be an effective treatment for OCD in both adults and children.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Potential hazards during this activity are the following:

- Physical discomfort from improper technique application
- Anxiety or emotional distress from exposure to triggers related to OCD
- Disruption of other ongoing treatments or medications Overall, progressive muscle relaxation can be a beneficial tool for managing OCD symptoms, but it is important to approach it with caution and a plan for addressing any potential hazards.

Materials Needed:

- A comfortable space where young people can lie down or sit comfortably
- A CD or mp3 recording of progressive muscle relaxation instructions (can be found online like <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7QoBABZu8k>)
- Timer or stopwatch

Debriefing Session:

1. Review the activity: Begin by reviewing the overall goals and objectives of the activity and how well they were achieved.
2. Assess participant feedback: Ask participants for their feedback on the activity, including what they found helpful, what they found challenging, and any suggestions for improvement.
3. Evaluate progress: Assess the progress that participants have made in terms of managing their OCD symptoms and how the progressive muscle relaxation activity has helped them.
4. Address any issues: Address any issues that arose during the activity, such as physical discomfort or emotional distress, and discuss how they can be prevented or handled in the future.
5. Provide follow-up resources: Provide participants with resources such as contact information for a therapist who specializes in OCD, self-help techniques, and other support groups.
6. Reflect on the experience: Reflect on the experience of leading the activity and any changes you would make to improve the experience in the future. Overall, debriefing is an important step in evaluating the effectiveness of the activity, addressing any concerns that arose, and planning for future sessions.

TOOL 15: BREATH EASY

Tool 15: Breath Easy: A Mindful Journey to Managing OCD Symptoms

Condition: OCD

Aim: By practicing this activity, it can help the youth develop greater self-awareness, which can reduce OCD symptoms such as obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors. Additionally, deep breathing and relaxation techniques can also help to reduce stress and anxiety, which can exacerbate OCD symptoms. Overall, the goal is to help the youth to manage their OCD symptoms in a more effective way and improve their overall well-being.

Objectives: The objectives of the tools are the following:

1. To help young individuals recognize and acknowledge their obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors,
2. To learn to respond to them in a more flexible and non-reactive way,
3. To develop greater awareness of their thoughts and physical sensations,
4. To improve focus and concentration,
5. To reduce stress and anxiety related to OCD symptoms.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: Mindfulness activities can be a useful tool for relieving symptoms of OCD in young people. The basic methodology behind using mindfulness for OCD is to help individuals recognize and acknowledge their obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors, and to learn to respond to them in a more flexible and non-reactive way. This can be done through a variety of techniques, such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, and body awareness exercises.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Activity 1: Mindful Breathing and Observation Methodology:

This activity combines deep breathing exercises with observation of one's thoughts and physical sensations. By focusing on the breath and the present moment, individuals can learn to become more aware of their thoughts and bodily sensations, and to respond to them in a non-reactive way.

Steps:

1. Find a quiet place to sit or lie down.
2. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.
3. Begin to focus on your breath. Notice how it feels as it enters and leaves your nose or mouth.
4. If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the breath.
5. Observe your thoughts and physical sensations without judgment.
6. Repeat for 5–10 minutes, or for a longer period of time if desired.
7. Note: You can guide the youth or remind them to focus on their breath and non-judgmentally observe their thoughts and sensations as they arise. Encourage them to practice this activity regularly and it may help them to develop a greater awareness of their thoughts and compulsive behaviors, and to respond to them in a more flexible and non-reactive way.

Activity 2: Mindful Movement Steps:

1. Begin by finding a quiet space where the young person can feel comfortable and undisturbed. Encourage them to remove any tight or restrictive clothing and to use any props they feel they may need (e.g. yoga mat or pillows)
2. Explain that the activity is called "Mindful Movement" and it is designed to help them manage symptoms of OCD through movement.
3. Ask the young person to stand up and begin to move their body in any way they feel comfortable. It could be a simple thing like rocking back and forth or it could be more complex like doing a yoga pose. Encourage them to move slowly and mindfully, paying attention to each movement they make and how it feels in their body.
4. As they move, invite them to focus on their breath. Encourage them to take slow, deep breaths in through their nose and out through their mouth. Remind them that the breath is always with them and can be a source of stability and calmness.
5. Continue to move for 5–10 minutes. Encourage the young person to focus on the present moment and let go of any thoughts or worries that may arise.
6. After the movement session is over, invite the young person to sit down or lie down in a comfortable position. Encourage them to continue to focus on their breath and to notice how their body feels now.
7. Finally, invite the young person to share any observations they made during the activity and to reflect on how they feel. Encourage them to practice this activity regularly as a tool to manage their symptoms of OCD.

The Why behind the Tool:

Mindfulness can help individuals with OCD to develop greater awareness of their thoughts and physical sensations. This can enable them to recognize the onset of obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors, which can help them to intervene before these symptoms become overwhelming (Fairfax, 2008)

Mindfulness can help individuals with OCD to respond to their symptoms in a more flexible and non-reactive way. This can reduce the power of obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors, and can help to reduce the impact of these symptoms on the individual's life.

Mindfulness can help to reduce stress and anxiety, which can exacerbate OCD symptoms. Mindfulness activities such as deep breathing, meditation and body awareness exercises can help individuals to relax and to feel more in control of their thoughts and behaviors.

Lastly, mindfulness can help to improve focus and concentration, which can be beneficial for individuals with OCD, as the symptoms of this condition can make it difficult to focus on other things. In summary, using mindfulness activities can help individuals with OCD to manage their symptoms in a more effective way, reducing the impact of symptoms on their life, and improving overall well-being.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Some risks that can come out during the implementation of this tool are the following:

- Risk of physical discomfort or injury if seated in an uncomfortable position
- Risk of exacerbating symptoms of anxiety or panic if practiced without proper guidance or support. A session of guided mindfulness will help the participants to settle in before the session.
- Individuals who are seated in an uncomfortable position may experience physical discomfort or injury
- Individuals with a history of anxiety or panic disorder may experience an exacerbation of symptoms if the activity is performed without proper guidance or support

1. Participants are advised to choose a comfortable seated position to avoid physical discomfort
2. Participants who have a history of anxiety or panic disorder should practice the activity under the guidance of a trained professional

Materials Needed:

No specific material needed except some cushions and/or yoga mats to sit down comfortably.

Debriefing Session:

1. Take a few minutes to think about your experience with the mindful breathing and observation exercise.
2. Write down any thoughts or feelings that come to mind.
3. Consider the following questions:
 - How did you feel before, during, and after the exercise?
 - Did you find it easy or difficult to focus on your breath?
 - Did you notice any particular thoughts or physical sensations that stood out during the exercise?
 - How did you feel towards your thoughts and sensations?
 - Did you notice any changes in your mood or well-being after the exercise?
 - Share your reflections with a partner or a group if desired.

**TOOL 16: ANXIETY-REDUCING
AEROBIC WORKOUT ADVENTURE**

Tool 16: Anxiety-Reducing Aerobic Workout Adventure

Condition: Anxiety

Aim: The aim of the activity "Anxiety-Reducing Aerobic Workout Adventure" is to reduce anxiety in young people through participation in fun and engaging aerobic exercises. The activity is designed to be interactive and engaging, as well as to improve cardiovascular fitness, coordination, and muscle strength.

Objectives: The objective of this tool is to reduce anxiety in young people through participation in fun and engaging aerobic exercises.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13-17. To have between 8 -20 youth per group.

Methodology Used: The use of different exercises such as Jungle Run, which is a combination of running in place and high knees, and Ocean Swim, which is a combination of arm and leg movements similar to swimming, provide a variety of movement patterns that can be beneficial for mental health and well-being. Additionally, by asking the students how they feel after the activity and if they notice any changes in their anxiety levels, it aims to raise awareness of the benefits of exercise on mental health.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Instructions:

1. Explain to the students that they will be going on an adventure to reduce their anxiety through fun and engaging aerobic exercises and carry out some stretching activities.
2. Divide the students into small groups of 4-5.
3. Introduce the first exercise, "Jungle Run" and have the students practice the movement before starting. Jungle Run is a combination of running in place and high knees, where students will lift their knees up to their waist while running in place.
4. Set a timer for 3 minutes and have the students perform Jungle Run for the entire 3 minutes.
5. After the timer goes off, have the students take a 30-second break and then introduce the second exercise, "Ocean Swim" and have the students practice the movement before starting. Ocean Swim is a combination of arm and leg movements similar to swimming.
6. Set a timer for 3 minutes and have the students perform Ocean Swim for the entire 3 minutes.

7. Once the timer goes off, have the students take a 1-minute break and then repeat the cycle one more time.
8. After the second cycle, have the students take a final 1-minute break and then have them sit down in a circle.
9. Ask the students how they feel and if they notice any changes in their anxiety levels.
10. Optional: To make the activity more engaging, you can set up an obstacle course using cones or markers, and have the students complete the course while performing the Jungle Run and Ocean Swim exercises.

Benefits:

- Jungle Run: helps to improve cardiovascular fitness, coordination, and leg strength.
- Ocean Swim: helps to improve cardiovascular fitness, upper body strength, and coordination.

Explanation of the movement:

- Jungle Run: Start by standing with your feet hip-width apart, and your arms by your sides. Begin to run in place, lifting your knees up to your waist with each step. Make sure to keep your core engaged, and your arms swinging naturally by your side.
- Ocean Swim: Stand with your feet hip-width apart, and your arms stretched out in front of you. Begin to move your arms in a circular motion like you are swimming,

The Why behind the Tool:

Tools like this have shown the ability to reduce anxiety in young people because this provides a physical outlet for stress and tension. Exercise has been shown to have a positive impact on mental health by releasing endorphins, which are chemicals in the brain that act as natural painkillers and mood elevators (Harvard Medical School, 2020). Additionally, the use of fun and engaging exercises can also help to distract young people from their worries and concerns, providing a welcome break from negative thoughts and feelings.

Furthermore, aerobic exercises like Jungle Run and Ocean Swim can help to improve cardiovascular fitness, coordination, and muscle strength, which in turn can also improve overall physical health, making the students feel better and more capable.

Moreover, the opportunity for students to reflect on their experiences during the activity and to talk about how they feel can also be beneficial, as it can help them to gain a better understanding of their own thoughts and feelings and to develop coping strategies to manage their anxiety.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

The first potential risk is related to the physical demands of the activity. The exercises included in the activity, Jungle Run and Ocean Swim, are cardiovascular in nature and may be challenging for some students, particularly those with pre-existing medical conditions or limited physical abilities. To mitigate this risk, it is recommended that students are advised to take part at their own pace and that they are made aware of the importance of listening to their body and stopping if they feel unwell. Additionally, it is important to ensure that students have adequate hydration, and that appropriate medical attention is available if needed.

The second potential risk is related to the open space in which the activity will be conducted. It is important to ensure that the area where the activity is taking place is free from hazards such as uneven surfaces, trip hazards or obstacles. Additionally, it is important to ensure that the area is large enough for the number of participants and that there is enough space for the students to move freely and safely. To mitigate this risk, it is recommended that the area is inspected before the activity takes place and that any hazards are identified and removed or clearly marked.

Materials Needed:

The materials needed are:

- A large open space for the exercises
- A timer or stopwatch – Music (optional)
- Cones or markers to create an obstacle course (optional)

Debriefing Session:

Instructions:

1. Begin the reflection session by reviewing the objective and instructions of the activity with the students.
2. Hand out the reflection assessment questions to each student and ask them to take some time to reflect on their experience of the activity.
3. Allow students a few minutes to complete the reflection assessment questions on their own.
4. Once students have finished writing, divide the class into small groups of 3–4 students.
5. In the small groups, have each student share their answers to the reflection assessment questions. Encourage open and honest discussion and allow time for each student to share their thoughts.
6. After the small group discussions, bring the class back together as a whole, and ask for volunteers to share any key points or insights that came out of the group discussions.

7. As the educator, take note of the feedback provided by the students during the reflection session and use it to make adjustments to the activity as necessary.
8. Finally, remind the students of the benefits of regular physical activity on mental health, and encourage them to continue incorporating regular exercise into their daily routine.

Reflection assessment questions:

1. What did you enjoy about the activity?
2. What did you find challenging about the activity?
3. How do you feel after completing the activity?
4. Do you think the activity was effective in reducing anxiety? Why or why not?
5. What changes would you suggest to improve the activity?
6. How can you continue to incorporate physical activity into your daily routine to reduce anxiety?
7. How can you apply the insights and lessons learned from this activity to other areas of your life?

TOOL 17: MANDALA MAGIC

Tool 17: Mandala Magic: Creating Calm Through Nature's Art

Condition: Anxiety

Aim: The aim of this educational activity is to reduce anxiety in young people through mindfulness and the process of creating mandalas using natural materials. It also aims to promote emotional regulation, self-expression, and self-awareness in young people through art and nature-based activities.

Objectives: The objective, is to reduce anxiety in young people through mindfulness and the process of creating mandalas using natural materials.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17. To have around 8–10.

Methodology Used: By leading a brief mindfulness exercise and taking the students on a nature walk to gather materials, the activity encourages students to focus on the present moment and let go of anxious thoughts. The process of creating mandalas, and the act of creating something beautiful from natural materials, can also be therapeutic and help reduce feelings of anxiety.

Additionally, by providing the opportunity for students to share their creations and reflect on their experiences, the activity can help students understand their emotions and how to manage them.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Instructions:

1. Begin by leading a brief mindfulness exercise to help students focus on the present moment and reduce feelings of anxiety. This could include deep breathing exercises or guided meditation. Encourage students to pay attention to the sound, the sensation of breath, and the body.
2. Introduce the concept of mandalas and how they are used as a tool for mindfulness and self-expression. Show examples of mandalas created using natural materials and explain the history and symbolism of mandalas in different cultures.
3. Take the students on a nature walk to gather materials for their mandalas. Encourage them to find materials that speak to them or that they find interesting or beautiful. You can also explain the benefits of being in nature for mental health.

4. Back in the classroom, provide construction paper or cardstock and glue or glue sticks for the students to use to create their mandalas. If desired, students can also use markers or colored pencils to add additional details to their mandalas.

5. As the students work on their mandalas, encourage them to focus on the present moment and let go of any anxious thoughts. Remind them to take breaks if they need it and to notice the sensation of the materials in their hands.

6. Once the mandalas are complete, have the students share their creations with the class and discuss how they felt while working on them. You can also ask them to reflect on the colors, shapes, and materials they chose for their mandalas and what it represents for them.

7. To finish the activity, ask students to reflect on the experience and how it affected their mood and anxiety levels. Encourage them to take their mandalas home and use it as a tool for mindfulness and self-expression in the future.

The Why behind the Tool:

The activity of creating mandalas from natural materials is important in reducing anxiety for several reasons:

Mindfulness: The activity encourages students to focus on the present moment and be mindful of their surroundings, which can help to reduce feelings of anxiety by shifting attention away from worries and negative thoughts.

Nature: Being in nature has been shown to have a calming effect on the mind and body and can help to reduce feelings of stress and anxiety.

Creativity: The act of creating something beautiful from natural materials can be therapeutic and can help to promote a sense of accomplishment and self-expression, which can in turn help to reduce feelings of anxiety.

Emotional regulation: By encouraging students to reflect on their experience and the emotions that arose during the activity, the activity can help students to understand and manage their emotions, which can lead to better emotional regulation and reduced anxiety.

Self-expression: The activity allows students to express themselves creatively and in their own way, which can help them to feel more in control of their emotions and can boost self-esteem, which can lead to less anxiety.

Connection with nature: The activity allows students to connect with nature and to appreciate the beauty of the natural world which can help to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness, which can be a cause of anxiety.

Repetitive movements: The repetitive movements of creating a mandala can have a calming effect, similar to meditation or yoga, which can help to reduce feelings of anxiety.

Taking it home: The mandala created by the students can be a reminder of the activity and the feelings of peace, calm, and self-expression that came with it, and it can be used as a tool for mindfulness and self-expression in the future.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Safety on the nature walk: Ensure that students are properly dressed for the weather and that they have appropriate footwear for walking on trails. Remind students to stay on the designated trails and to be aware of their surroundings. Make sure that students know what to do if they get lost or injured.

Scissor safety: Make sure that students know how to use scissors safely and that they are supervised while using them. Remind students to keep their fingers away from the blades and to cut in a direction away from their bodies.

Glue safety: Ensure that students know how to use glue safely and that they are supervised while using it. Remind students to keep the glue away from their eyes and mouths and to wash their hands after using it.

Allergies: Make sure that you are aware of any student allergies, particularly those related to natural materials. If a student is allergic to a certain type of material, you can provide an alternative or ask the student to stay away from that specific material.

Weather conditions: If the weather is bad or there is a storm, it would be best to postpone the activity.

Materials Needed:

The materials needed are:

- Natural materials such as leaves, flowers, twigs, stones, shells, etc.
- Glue or glue sticks
- Scissors (if needed)
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Markers or coloured pencils (optional)
- A small speaker to play some calming music to keep calm down.

Debriefing Session:

1. How did you feel before the activity?
2. How did you feel during the activity?
3. What was your favorite part of the activity?
4. What was your least favorite part of the activity?
5. How did you feel after the activity?
6. What did you learn about yourself during the activity?
7. What did you learn about nature during the activity?
8. How can you use the techniques you learned in this activity in your daily life?
9. How do you think this activity affected your anxiety levels?
10. How can you continue to incorporate mindfulness and nature into your life to reduce anxiety?

These questions are designed to prompt reflection and encourage students to think about their experience and how it relates to their emotional well-being. It can be used as a guide to help the students to understand their emotions and how to manage them. The answers can be used to track progress and adjust the activity to better serve the student's needs.

**TOOL 18: NATURE'S ESCAPE: A
WILDERNESS THERAPY ADVENTURE**

Tool 18: Nature's Escape: A Wilderness Therapy Adventure

Condition: Anxiety

Aim: The aim of the activity is to use the benefits of wilderness therapy and "green exercise" to reduce anxiety in young people by immersing them in nature and engaging in physical activity, promoting mindfulness, teamwork, leadership skills, and reflection on their experiences, and how nature can positively impact their mental health. The activity aims to provide a fun, engaging, and educational experience for the students, and to help them develop a greater appreciation and connection with nature.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are:

1. To reduce anxiety in young people by immersing them in nature and engaging in physical activity
2. To help students connect with nature and appreciate its beauty, which is a great way to reduce stress and anxiety
3. To encourage students to explore their surroundings and take note of any particular plants, animals, or natural phenomena they encounter
4. To promote discussion and reflection on the students' experiences, and the impact of nature on their mental health.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: The methodology includes an experiential learning approach, which involves immersing students in a hands-on outdoor adventure that combines wilderness therapy and "green exercise" to help reduce their anxiety. The activity begins with a pre-activity explanation and sets the expectations, then students are divided into small groups and are provided with a notepad, pen/pencil, and a hand-held GPS unit or a map of the trail. They go on a hike through a nearby nature trail and engage in physical activities such as rock climbing, tree climbing, or other forms of light exercise. They conduct a scavenger hunt and photograph different things in nature, and upon returning, they share their discoveries and photos with the group. A guided meditation or yoga session follows, where students focus on the peacefulness of nature and the positive feelings they experienced during the hike. The activity ends with a group discussion about how the students felt before, during, and after the hike, and encourages them to share any insights they gained or any changes they noticed in their anxiety levels.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Instructions: Before the activity, explain to the students that they will be participating in an outdoor adventure that combines wilderness therapy and "green exercise" to help reduce their anxiety. Assure them that the activity is not a race but a journey and that the goal is to be present and enjoy nature.

Divide the students into small groups and assign each group a leader. Provide each group with a notepad, pen/pencil, and a hand-held GPS unit or a map of the trail. Take the students on a hike through a nearby nature trail. Encourage them to take in the sights, sounds, and smells of nature. Remind them to stay hydrated and use sunscreen and insect repellent as needed. Along the hike, have the students engage in physical activities such as rock climbing, tree climbing, or other forms of light exercise. Encourage them to explore their surroundings and to take note of any particular plants, animals or natural phenomena they encounter. Have the students conduct a scavenger hunt, where they must find and photograph different things in nature such as a specific type of tree, a certain bird or a certain rock formation.

Once back at the trailhead, have the students share their discoveries and photos with the group. Encourage them to share any insights they gained or any changes they noticed in their anxiety levels. After the hike, have the students participate in a guided meditation or yoga session. Have them focus on the peacefulness of nature and the positive feelings they experienced during the hike. Encourage them to continue to practice mindfulness and to come back to the present moment throughout the day. End the activity with a group discussion about how the students felt before, during, and after the hike. Encourage them to share any insights they gained or any changes they noticed in their anxiety levels.

The Why behind the Tool:

"Nature's Escape: A Wilderness Therapy Adventure" activity is important in reducing anxiety because it combines the benefits of wilderness therapy and "green exercise" to create a holistic approach to mental health.

Wilderness therapy, also known as adventure therapy, is a form of therapy that takes place in a natural setting and is based on the idea that the natural world has a therapeutic effect on individuals. Studies have shown that spending time in nature can improve mental well-being, reduce stress and anxiety, and promote feelings of calm and relaxation (Bratman et al., 2015).

Similarly, "green exercise" is the term used to describe physical activity that takes place in natural environments. Studies have shown that green exercise can improve mental well-being and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression (Pretty et al., 2005).

By combining wilderness therapy and green exercise, the "Nature's Escape: A Wilderness Therapy Adventure" activity provides a unique and effective approach to reducing anxiety in young people. The activity not only allows students to connect with nature and appreciate its beauty, but also encourages them to engage in physical activity, promoting mindfulness, teamwork, leadership skills, and reflection on their experiences, all of which can have a positive impact on their mental health.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Here are some potential risks to consider and steps to mitigate them: **Weather:** Be aware of the forecasted weather conditions for the day of the activity, and make sure students are dressed appropriately. If the weather is severe, consider postponing or canceling the activity.

Trail conditions: Make sure the trail is in good condition and appropriate for the student's abilities. Be aware of any potential hazards such as steep terrain, and rocky or slippery surfaces, and take precautions to avoid accidents.

Physical activity: Make sure the students are physically able to participate in the activity and that it's not too demanding for them. Encourage them to pace themselves and to take frequent breaks if needed.

First aid: Make sure that a first aid kit is available and that at least one member of the group is trained in first aid.

Communication: Make sure that all participants have a way to contact the leader of the group in case of an emergency. **Wildlife:** Be aware of the potential presence of wildlife in the area and take appropriate precautions.

Environmental factors: Be aware of potential environmental hazards such as poison ivy, ticks, snakes, or other hazards, and take appropriate precautions.

Student's needs: Consider students' individual needs, such as physical limitations, allergies, or any other health concerns, and make adjustments accordingly.

Materials Needed:

The materials needed are:

- Comfortable clothing and shoes for outdoor activity
- Water bottles
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Notepads and pens/pencils
- Hand-held GPS units or a map of the trail (optional)

Debriefing Session:

1. Begin the debriefing session by asking the students to take a few minutes to reflect on their experiences during the activity. Encourage them to think about how they felt before, during, and after the hike, and to consider any insights or observations they made.
2. Begin a group discussion by asking open-ended questions such as "What did you enjoy the most about the activity?" or "How did you feel during the activity?" Encourage students to share their thoughts and feelings and to listen to each other.
3. Encourage students to discuss any observations they made during the scavenger hunt, and how they felt while doing it. Ask them to reflect on how the activity helped them connect with nature and appreciate its beauty.
4. Discuss the practice of mindfulness and being present in the moment, and ask the students how they felt during the guided meditation or yoga session. Encourage them to share any insights they gained or any changes they noticed in their anxiety levels.
5. Address any questions or concerns that the students may have about the activity or their experiences.
6. Provide an opportunity for students to give feedback on the activity, and ask for suggestions on how to improve it in the future.
7. Conclude the debriefing session by summarizing the main points discussed and reminding the students that the activity was not a race but a journey and that the goal was to be present and enjoy nature.
8. Provide the students with any relevant resources or information that they can refer to in the future to continue practicing mindfulness and nature connection. It's important to remember that the debriefing session should be conducted in a safe and non-judgmental environment, and that all students should feel comfortable to express their thoughts and feelings.



**TOOL 19: BEING CALM AND
ECO-INCLUSIVE**

Tool 19: Being Calm and Eco-inclusive

Condition: Anxiety

Aim: The aim of this educational tool is to reduce anxiety in young people through an experiential learning activity that combines physical activity, mindfulness, and environmental conservation. By participating in plogging, young people can take their minds off their worries, feel a sense of accomplishment and purpose, and make a positive impact on the environment. Additionally, the tool aims to promote environmental conservation by encouraging participants to pick up and properly dispose of litter, as well as raising awareness about the impact of human activities on the environment and the importance of conservation.

Objectives: The objectives of the tool are the following:

- To reduce anxiety in young people through an experiential learning activity that combines physical activity and environmental conservation.
- To introduce the concept of plogging and its benefits for both personal fitness and the environment.
- To encourage participants to focus on their surroundings and the positive impact they are having on the environment, taking their minds off their worries and feeling a sense of accomplishment and purpose.
- To promote environmental conservation by encouraging participants to pick up litter and dispose of it properly.
- To raise awareness about the impact of human activities on the environment and the importance of conservation.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: Plogging

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Preparation:

- Choose a local park or trail for the plogging adventure.
- Identify potential areas for littering such as near picnic tables or playgrounds.
- Print or provide maps of the area for participants to use during the activity.
- Prepare trash bags and gloves for participants to use during the plogging adventure.

Activity:

1. Begin the activity by introducing the concept of plogging to the participants. Explain that it is a combination of jogging and picking up litter and that it is a great way to stay active and help the environment at the same time.
2. Divide the participants into small groups and provide each group with a trash bag, gloves, and a map of the area.
3. Explain the route that the groups will take and the areas they will focus on during the plogging adventure. Emphasize the importance of safety while plogging and remind them to stay on the designated trails and to be mindful of their surroundings.
4. Start the plogging adventure, encouraging participants to jog or walk at their own pace while picking up any litter they come across.
5. Along the way, encourage participants to take deep breaths and focus on their surroundings. Point out the natural beauty of the area and the positive impact that plogging is having on the environment.
6. After the plogging adventure, encourage participants to share their experiences with each other. Ask them how they felt during the activity and how it affected their level of anxiety.
7. Finally, take a moment to reflect on the impact of human activities on the environment and the importance of conservation. Remind participants that small actions, such as plogging, can make a big difference in preserving the planet for future generations.
8. Finally, end the activity by disposing of the trash collected during the plogging adventure in the designated areas.

The Why behind the Tool:

This activity is important because it addresses a few key issues that are relevant to young people's well-being.

First, it addresses anxiety, which is a prevalent mental health issue among young people. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), 1 in 13 young people worldwide have a mental disorder. Moreover, research has shown that physical activity can have a positive effect on reducing anxiety symptoms. Penedo and Dahn (2005) found that physical activity is an effective intervention for reducing anxiety symptoms.

Second, it addresses environmental conservation, which is a global concern. The activity aims to promote environmental conservation by encouraging participants to pick up and properly dispose of litter, as well as raising awareness about the impact of human activities on the environment and the importance of conservation.

Finally, it addresses the importance of mindfulness, by encouraging participants to focus on their surroundings and the positive impact they are having on the environment, taking their minds off their worries and feeling a sense of accomplishment and purpose.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Physical activity: Ensure the students can participate in the activity physically and that it is not overly taxing on them. Encourage them to move slowly and, if necessary, to take regular rests.

Weather: Pay attention to the predicted weather on the activity day and make sure students are dressed appropriately. If the weather is bad, you might choose to reschedule or cancel the activity.

Environment: Pay close attention to the area where you plan to carry out the activity. Avoid places with heavy traffic or dense populations that could endanger participants in any way.

Materials Needed:

The materials Needed are:

- Trash bags
- Gloves (optional)
- Hand sanitizer
- Water bottles
- Maps of the area
- Clipboards and pencils (optional)

Debriefing Session:

For the debriefing, the following questions can be asked:

- What did you learn today?
- Do you feel better?
- Do you feel that you have helped the environment you are living in?
- Are you more conscious?
- Had you ever noticed on how much litter there is on the street?
- What would you change in the activity?

TOOL 20: FIND THE WAY

Tool 20: Find the way

Condition: ADHD

Aim: The aim of the tool is to put focus on facing fears, direct energy to orienteering in the forest and sustain attention on the nature around youngsters.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following:

- Gives youngsters the opportunity to enjoy new experiences and to express curiosity. Exploring new environments can give used for the imagination and a chance to think in pictures (visual imagery).
- Direct energy into being active, orientation, and teamwork. A person with ADHD has difficulty making a decision or starting a task, but while orienting the focus has to stay on a card or a trail. Thanks to teamwork every participant can have one task at a time.
- To develop better information processing skills, perceptions of problem-solving skills, and more sustained attention.
- This tool is also good for youngsters with anxiety because sometimes the cause can be fear of fear itself (for example in this situation fear of getting lost).
- Orienteering with proper preparation and an instructor is a secure way to face this fear.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17. There could be 10 youth per instructor, divided into groups of 3 –5 per group.

Methodology Used: Orienteering in nature

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Preparation:

Choose a safe and ideally familiar hiking trail/ walking path in the forest and find or make a map of it (using Google Maps, GPS, or printing the map out and drawing the path with a pen). For Estonians, the trails can be found here: <https://terviserajad.ee/rajad/>. Prepare as many points on the track as needed. In those points, there can be some games, tasks, riddles, etc. The tasks can be printed out as text, as a QR-code to scan and put on trees on the trail (PS! Don't forget to laminate the papers) or the other option is to use the app Actionbound and have the tasks there. To avoid an accumulation of points, prepare each team with a different starting point. Youth workers can involve youngsters in the groundwork as well.

For example, there can be a team of organizers (youth active in the youth center for example), who can prepare the tasks and the trail with materials. Carry out the groundwork activities mentioned in the risk assessment before going into nature.

Activity itself:

When making teams, be sure that there is one instructor (youth worker) for every 3–5 members team. Give teams time to get to know each other, make agreements, and come up with the name of the team. Give every team a map or ask instructors to open the Actionbound app. Again, give them time to get to know the map together before moving.

While orienteering all teams should stick together with their instructor, but the instructor is just a mentor – participants are the ones holding and reading the map, doing tasks, etc.

After, when all the teams have finished, it is time for rest and reflection – it can happen during a picnic (optional).

For reflections use a ball or some toy: whoever holds that thing, has a right to say how he/she felt during the orienteering. Remind others that only the one who is holding the ball can speak.

The Why behind the Tool:

Orienteering involves running or walking through unfamiliar territory using a map, which challenges mental activity as well. Moving evokes emotions and has a positive impact on several physical qualities (endurance, speed, strength, flexibility, etc). (Beshlei, et al., 2022) Children with ADHD have difficulties with cognitive organization, social interaction, and sustaining attention. Therefore, the benefits of orienteering can be used to reduce the difficulties regarding attention, seeing the bigger picture, and problem-solving. Also, orienteering can also have a positive effect on children's memory. (Uzuner & Sahin, 2021)

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

For the risk assessment, it is important to carry out the preparation tasks mentioned before and to get to know orienteering youngsters before going into nature. Here are some ways to do it:

Together with youngsters find out what is orienteering. Youth workers can give youngsters a task to find as much information from the Internet as possible to develop the skills of searching for reliable information (method of youth information) or watch videos about orienteering together. Some examples of the videos: are “Basic Orienteering Skills” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzNA6-lx5n8>; “What is orienteering” <https://terviserajad.ee/videoope/elina-pahklimagi-ja-sixten-sild-mis-on-orienteerumine/> (in Estonian). Start a discussion with youngsters about what they knew about orienteering before, what they learned new and how this activity makes them feel.

Ask youngsters what kind of risk assessments need to be carried out before going into nature and what gear is needed (comfortable bright clothes and shoes that can get dirty, hat, water bottle, tissues, mosquito repellent spray, etc). Write it down and send the list of gear also to the parents before the activity.

Learn to read a map – start practice with an easy and fun game “Avoid the troll” (instructions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8FYMfYGF8>). This game helps to understand the basics – moving from one point to another by following a map. Carry this activity out in a safe and familiar place for participants – a youth center, sports hall, a park, etc.

When going on such an activity, be sure that youth workers have completed first aid training.

Materials Needed:

The following materials are needed:

- Laminated signs for the points and tape or rope to put them up
- Maps of the trail (different starting point for each team)
- Phones and Actionbound app (if needed)
- Something colorful for each team to understand, who is on which team (for example blue, red, and yellow ribbons to tie around the arm)
- First-aid kit
- Blankets and snacks for the picnic (optional)
- Ball for the reflection

Debriefing Session:

The following questions can be used during the debriefing process:

- How did you feel during orienteering?
- How did the teamwork go?
- What were the obstacles?
- What did you notice in nature?
- What did being outdoors make you feel?
- What fears did you have before, did those come to life?

TOOL 21: FIND YOUR FOCUS

Tool 21: Find Your Focus

Condition: ADHD

Aim: The aim of the tool is to put focus through the camera lens on something specific. Also, it is a way of giving youngsters a voice – they can use pictures to show their feelings, emotions, and stories to peers and listen to others' stories as well.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following:

- Imagination and creativity help to explore emotions. It gives youngsters a voice to express their feelings.
- Photography has therapeutic benefits, such as a sense of empowerment and increased self-knowledge, a sense of achievement and enjoyment.
- Photography as a non-formal method develops peer support, empathy and understanding of peers' experiences. Hearing each other's stories normalizes youngsters' own experiences and support to peers enables a connection on a personal level.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: Photography

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Preparation:

Decide together with youngsters what equipment you will use in this exercise – cameras (if your youth center has any) or phone cameras. When choosing the last option, make sure in advance that every youngster has a phone with a camera or makes pairs or trios, where one has a phone with a camera. Also, you might have to make teams with youth centers' cameras. Print out and laminate the photo bingo worksheets. You can make them in Canva, they have templates ready to use.

There are three options that youngsters have to find through a camera lens.

You go to the place you want to do the exercise and take pictures of some details that in the activity youngsters have to find and take pictures of as well.

Choose 6–9 colors and make the worksheets in each box a different color. Youngsters have to find something in nature matching that color and make a picture of it.

Write some details on the worksheet that youngsters have to find: for example orange leaf, piece of glass, alley, artwork of nature etc.

The activity itself: Photo bingo

Photo bingo can be a part of a hike, camping, or just one daily activity in the local park near to the youth center. Before the game, it is important to go over safety rules as well as remind everyone it is teamwork. When all the pictures have been taken there are two options to collect them: 1) you ask participants to put their pictures on the worksheet in Canva or 2) just send the files to your email or put them in an already made Drive folder.

Leave time (it does not have to happen the same day, if you are out in nature) to look at all the pictures together. You can make it a competition and the jury chooses their favorite shots, but it is not necessary. You can teach youngsters how to give feedback and find something great in everything and you can practice that while watching all the photos. Give every author a chance to explain the story behind his/ hers pictures. After, when you have watched the pictures, it is time for reflection. For reflections use a ball or some toy: who holds that thing, has a right to say how he/ she felt during the activity. Remind others that only the one who is holding the ball can speak.

Ask participants if they liked photography and if would they like to continue learning this. Find a way with a youngster to help him/ her continue this as a hobby. Optional: You can print out and laminate (or print on hard paper) the pictures and use them as mood cards in further activities. PS! Don't forget to ask permission from the photo's authors and put their names on the back of the card.

The Why behind the Tool:

Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health wrote about an experiment, where photography was used as a methodology to study young people's mental health state. Ten young people who attended a youth group used disposable cameras to take photographs of their experiences and perceptions of mental health and well-being. Also, semi-structured interviews were carried out to understand the story, feelings, and thoughts behind the pictures. Unfortunately, mental distress remains a stigmatized and hidden part of people's lives, but photography is a tool to represent emotional and psychological experiences. (Charles & Felton, 2019). ADHD can be mistaken for just "bad behavior", which makes kids feel not understood, and left out and makes them think it is their fault. Giving them a tool to express those feelings, can be a remarkable breakthrough. One part of the tool is listening to peers' stories. There has been a study, which results tell, that in collaborative tasks ADHD children give each other's behavior a positive impact (36–53% of times). (Bakeman et al, 2022)

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

- Use youth information tactics to learn about taking good photos. Show videos yourself (this for example https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NtrO4y_Gtw) or let youngsters find any tutorials and then let them make a big poster together with all the tips you found.
- When using cameras, tell youngsters how not to break them. Show how it is safe to wear a camera and tell youngsters that nothing sharp should not touch the lens and if needed, what you can wipe it with.

Materials Needed: camera, smartphones

Debriefing Session:

The following are some debriefing questions that can be asked:

- How did you feel during photographing?
- How did the teamwork go?
- What were the obstacles?
- What did you notice in nature?
- Did focusing on one thing make you see that differently?
- What did being outdoors make you feel?
- What fears did you have before, did those come to life?

TOOL 22: GARDENING CLUB

Tool 22: Gardening Club

Condition: Depression

Aim: The aim of the tool is to give youngsters something to take care of, which increases the feeling of being needed and loved. Also taking care of plants is a good way to teach how to be mindful and take focus off your own problems.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following:

- Gardening is a way to practice mindfulness – the process of being aware of the present moment without judgment. Being focused on plants holds pleasant concentration and takes us away from everyday concerns.
- Mindfulness has been shown in many different therapies to be an important method of symptom change in depression and anxiety. Gardening gives youngsters an opportunity to be in the fresh air and do some physical movement. Mild exercise helps to decrease depression and anxiety.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: Horticultural therapy and gardening

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

Horticultural therapy has different variations divided by the time it takes and the level of commitment and resources. In this tool, you will find two different ideas, on how to use gardening in your youth center.

FIRST OPTION “Inside gardening” This is a great choice if you don’t have a lot of room outdoors, but still want to get some nature into a youth center. Choose one windowsill which will be your greenhouse. Make a workshop with youngsters where everyone gets her/ his own pot and can decorate it. You can find inspiration from Pinterest. PS! Don’t forget to write names on or under the pot. Prefer clay pots, if you don’t have the resources to buy those, ask everyone to bring a pot themselves or ask for help from the community (for example from local Facebook groups). For getting the seeds there are two choices: you can buy the seeds or just ask youngsters to keep seeds from oranges, watermelon, nectarine, avocado, apples, etc. With every seed, there is its own way of how it has to be treated. Ask youngsters themselves to find out what care it needs and make a poster about it. Make a workshop with youngsters where you plant the seeds into the soil. Put all the plants on the selected windowsill. Also decide if everyone wants to water his/ hers plant themselves or

make a schedule when who is in charge of watering and put the schedule next to the new greenhouse. Optional: take every week pictures of plants, so later you can make a timelapse implementing the importance of taking care when growing. This can also be a task in the schedule for the one watering plants.

SECOND OPTION “Gardening outdoors” Gardening outdoors is a bigger project that needs more time, resources, and commitment. It is a good way to involve not only youngsters but their families as well. If you are not sure your youngsters will be interested, start with the first option, and in the reflection part you can discuss with them what it means to have a whole garden. The first step is to gather inspiration. You may do a workshop “My dream garden” and let youngsters draw what their gardens would look like, and what would grow there and also add, what will they do with those products they grow. Write “Community garden” into the Pinterest search bar to find cheap fun DIYs. Start a discussion about how much effort gardening can take, but also talk about the bright side – what are the benefits. Make a project together with youngsters about how you want your garden to be and what grows where (be aware, of what you can grow in your country). Find some ideas of urban gardens here: <https://www.urbangardeningproject.eu/>. You can consult someone wiser in gardening, in which part of the field should plants be considering sun, wind, and other influencers. Make a list of things you need – the equipment, soil, seeds or pre-grown plants, materials to build boxes (optional), name tags for the plants, etc and add a budget to it. Maybe you don’t need to buy everything, but ask for sponsorship from nearby businesses or lend/ get from locals.

Make a little team out of 3-5 youngsters (let’s call them gardening club) who want to be participants all the way from beginning to end. It is important to make agreements with a little team to not be left alone with a garden a few weeks into the process. Of course, more youngsters, their families, and friends can be included, but you can’t be sure how often they can contribute. When you have plans and a team, you can start building the garden, but be aware what is the perfect season in your country to start gardening.

It is not a short process, so it is recommended to do reflections with the gardening club consistently to keep the motivation up. With others, who are helping, you can reflect during the activity – asking how it feels to take care of plants, do they notice their everyday troubles are getting out of their mind for a moment and do they even like it. It is also really good to go to the garden for one-on-one meetings with youngsters to help him/ her open up.

The Why behind the Tool:

Horticultural therapy is a method used with mental health problems for many decades. Horticulture includes working with all different kinds of plants. This type of therapy consists of outdoor gardening, landscaping, indoor gardening, flower arranging, crafts and everything else where some kind of plant is part of. (Moore, 1989)

Gardening can improve physical health as well as psychological and social health. In long perspective, it may prevent various issues that are facing today's society. (Gaston et al, 2017) When the location and atmosphere are right and gardeners have understandable tasks, gardening increases coping, helps to adapt to changes, and develops skills. (Joyce & Warren, 2016)

Gardening has a positive effect on depression specifically as well, but the truth is that depressed people are less likely to contribute. (Joyce & Warren, 2016) Therefore youth workers have a better chance to get youngsters to participate, for example, by collaborating with schools and having it still as a non-formal education, but part of the school's curriculum.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Get to know the youngsters you are using this tool with – what are their fears and goals, and what are their depression symptoms so you can notice them. Earn their trust, so they are motivated to work with you and not scared to share their stories and feelings. Learn more about gardening – from the internet, articles, your grandparents, or whoever has experience in this.

There are some sharp tools in gardening, so make sure who uses them and show them how to use them safely. Always put the tools back where in their place – it can be harmful if something is just laying around.

Materials Needed:

Materials needed for the FIRST OPTION

“Inside gardening”

- Pots
- Latex paint (can be a spray) or leftover wall paint, brushes
- Seeds from fruits, vegetables, or from store
- Soil
- Piece of cardboard or film for preventing the mess
- Gloves
- Scoops if needed
- Paper or board and something to write with

Materials needed for the SECOND OPTION “Gardening Outdoors”

- Projector or a screen to watch videos and photos from
- Crafting materials to make posters outdoor area where you can make the garden things from your list you made together with youngsters

Debriefing Session:

In the debriefing, the following questions can be used:

- How do you feel while taking care of the plants?
- Have you had some setbacks; how did it make you feel?
- How is teamwork going?
- What are the obstacles?
- How to improve teamwork?
- What have you learned during gardening?
- Have you noticed practicing mindfulness while taking care of the plants?
- What did being outdoors make you feel? What fears did you have before, did those come to life?



**TOOL 23: CALMNESS
OF THE WATER**

Tool 23: Calmness of the water

Condition: ADHD

Aim: The aim of the tool is to challenge youngsters by staying calm and letting the magic of water teach them mindfulness and balance. Paddling also gives you a chance to put your energy into something calm but still requires strength.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following:

- Being on or in the water is a way to practice mindfulness – the process of being aware of the present moment without judgment. The lessened gravity that water offers gives the body a simple way of feeling good and relaxed.
- SUP-boarding gives youngsters an opportunity at the same time to be in the fresh air and do some physical movement. It is good for hyperactivity – gives an opportunity to put this energy into action.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: SUP boarding in still water

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

SUP-boarding can be a part of a hike, camping, or a whole day activity concentrating only on that. While going in the water with youngsters (not more than five) it is important there is one person in the water and one on land for safety reasons.

Choose a body of water that is closed – a (bog) lake. It is good if you are familiar with this body of water before you go there with your youngster(s). If the water is deep, it is harder to get back on a board if you fell over. Therefore it is suggested to watch the video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PiQIJwb73dc>) before going supping.

Before going on the water, go over safety requirements and get to know the equipment. You can also do some balance exercises on land to just get the right feel in the body: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WucTfPLDVfM>. Also, you can do some breathing exercises to get calm and into the present moment. The first time getting on the SUP board there is no hurry to stand up. It is possible to paddle while sitting on the board and that way there is no chance of falling. Just learn together getting to know the board, paddling moves and breathing while doing it. One step at a time.

When (a) youngster(s) already get(s) how it is working you can bring up some topic of conversation and enjoy the time in nature. You can chat about what you are seeing around you and how you are feeling or bring up some deeper topics if you feel there is trust and it is the right time. After supping you can have a reflection over a picnic (optional). PS! Make sure that no one is feeling cold.

The Why behind the Tool:

There was a study in Spain that said that water actions should be part of the education system, leisure, and free time for children with ADHD. The tests showed the longer kids were in an aquatic environment, the more energy was lost thanks to the hydrostatic pressure of the water body. (Alvita & Morillo, 2015)

The lessened gravity that water offers gives the body a simple way of feeling good and relaxed. During water therapy the body and mind find calmness in the quiet, simple, remarkable enjoyment of the lack of gravity, allowing them to release emotions and tension. (Torrellas, 2011)

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

For water activities like this, there are three golden rules to follow:

- 1.The ability to swim.
2. Safety equipment (life vests) and knowing the correct way to use it.
3. At least two youth workers – one on the water with youngsters and the other one on the land for quick response if needed. This depends on the size of the group. In water, they should be at least 1 to 5.

Be sure that youth workers have completed first aid training. Because this activity requires being out in the sun for an hour or more, it is important to wear a hat and drink plenty of water.

Materials Needed:

The Materials needed are:

- Life vests
- SUP-boards
- Oars
- Leashes
- Spare clothes
- Hats when it sunny day
- Picnic blankets (optional)

Debriefing Session:

In the debriefing, the following questions can be used:

- How did you feel during SUP boarding?
- How did you find and maintain balance?
- Were there any obstacles?
- How did you overcome those?
- What did you notice in nature?
- Did focusing on one thing make you calm?
- What did being outdoors make you feel?
- What fears did you have before, did those come to life?

TOOL 24: CONQUER THAT ROCK

Tool 24: Conquer that Rock

Condition: Depression

Aim: The aim of this tool is to give a challenge to young people and make them focus on achieving something in their life. This will help them to focus on achieving this thing rather than their depression.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are following:

- To help young people focus on a thing that they would like to achieve in life and help them to achieve it.
- Help the young people believe more in themselves when they manage to overcome their challenge

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: Rock Climbing

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

For this tool, it is very important to make sure that you will have an experienced and licensed rock climber that will take care of choosing the area where to do rock climbing and also make sure to prepare all the equipment needed safely.

For this activity, one would need to have a good location where to do the activity and then once the group gathers at the location, the first step is to actually sit down with the participants and then explain to them what will take place and what are all the safety measures that need to take place so as to stay safe and make sure that no one gets injured.

Once the rules or safety measures are explained, it will be ideal that each person will be given the responsibility of making sure that their buddy is safe. So, the group will be divided in buddies and they will be taking care of each other and make sure that their buddy is safe. This will also help them to have a sense of responsibility on taking care of each other. The rock climbing will take in buddy group and there should be no rush.

The Why behind the Tool:

More and more research is showing that rock climbing isn't just fun – it's also good therapy for folks dealing with depression. The sense of achievement one feels after rock climbing may be a reason why bouldering therapy helps alleviate depression, experts are saying (Metraux, 2022).

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Rock climbing is a risky activity and one should make sure that risks are minimized as much as possible.

One must make sure that you hire a professional expert who is a professional rock climber so as to make sure that the activity is safe as possible.

Make sure that when people are divided in groups they are actually taking care of each other and making sure that they are safe.

Make sure that when you go to do the rock climbing it was not raining the night before and that the rocks are not wet due to the fact that they can be very slippery and cause unwanted injuries. These decisions need to be taken in conjunction with the rock climber.

If the young people are very novices in this area one can also consider carrying out this activity in indoor rock-climbing places. Such places are safer and also offer more protection.

Materials Needed:

The materials need for this tool like ropes, harnesses etc will be taken care of by the trainer that you hire.

Debriefing Session:

In the debriefing, the following questions can be used:

- How did you feel during rock climbing?
- How did you find and maintain balance?
- Were there any obstacles?
- How did you overcome those?
- Do you feel that this experience can be compared to any real-life scenarios that we face?
- What will you take out of this activity today?

TOOL 25: FRISBEE FOCUS

Tool 25: Frisbee Focus: A Mindful Game of Present Moment Awareness

Condition: OCD

Aim: This activity will help young people with OCD practice mindfulness and learn to focus on the present moment, which can reduce anxiety and other symptoms associated with OCD.

Objectives: The objectives of this tool are the following:

- To help young people with OCD practice mindfulness and focus on the present moment, reducing symptoms of anxiety and other associated OCD behaviors.
- To improve self-awareness and increase understanding of how thoughts and emotions can affect behavior and performance.
- To encourage young people to take control of their thoughts and focus on the sensations of the moment, rather than allowing their thoughts to wander.
- To provide a fun and engaging activity that encourages physical activity and social interaction
- To promote healthy coping skills for managing anxiety and stress.

Target Group: Our target group is young people between the age of 13–17.

Methodology Used: The "Frisbee Focus: A Mindful Game of Present Moment Awareness" is an educational outdoor gym activity aimed at helping young people with OCD relieve their symptoms through mindfulness and physical activity. Participants play a game of frisbee while focusing on the present moment, which helps them develop coping strategies for managing anxiety and stress. The combination of outdoor gym and experiential learning makes the activity fun and engaging, while also providing practical benefits for mental health and well-being.

Description of the Tool including specific activities carried out:

These are the steps that the youth worker should take when implementing this tool:

1. Divide the group into pairs of two. Give each pair a frisbee.
2. Have each pair stand facing each other, about 6 meters apart.
3. Inform the group that they will be playing a simple game of catch with the frisbee, but with a twist: they must focus solely on the present moment and not let their thoughts wander.
4. Tell the group that if their thoughts do wander, they should acknowledge this and then bring their focus back to the game of catch and the sensations they are feeling in the moment.

5. Start the stopwatch and have the players begin playing catch.
6. After one minute, stop the stopwatch and ask each player to take a moment to reflect on
7. their experience. Did their thoughts wander? How did they bring their focus back to the present moment? Encourage them to share their experiences with their partner.
8. Repeat this activity for several rounds, for about 3–5 minutes each time. Emphasize the importance of focusing on breathing and the sensation of the frisbee in their hands.
9. After the final round, have the group come together and debrief the experience. Ask each player to share one thing they learned about being present and bringing their focus back to the moment.

The Why behind the Tool:

Outdoor gym activities provide a pleasant and interesting approach to exercise, which can improve mental health and overall well-being. Endorphins are released when you exercise, and they can lift your mood and lessen stress and anxiety. The natural environment further offers a change of scenery and might be beneficial to mental health.

Individuals learn via experience and reflection through experiential learning, which is a practical approach to education. This method can be very helpful in teaching people new abilities and methods for coping with the symptoms of mental health illnesses like OCD. In this activity, young people with OCD are provided with an opportunity to practice mindfulness and focus on the present moment through the physical activity of playing frisbee. Through this experience, they can learn how to manage their thoughts and emotions in real-time and develop new coping strategies for managing anxiety and stress.

By combining outdoor gym and experiential learning, the activity provides a fun and engaging way to help young people with OCD develop new skills and strategies for managing their symptoms and improving their overall well-being.

Risk assessment that Needs to be Carried out:

Physical Injuries: Participants may experience minor cuts, bruises, sprains, or strains while playing frisbee. To minimize this risk, participants should be advised to wear appropriate clothing and footwear and to warm up properly before starting the activity.

Allergic Reactions: Some participants may have allergies to grass, pollen, or other allergens in the outdoor environment. To minimize this risk, participants should be advised to bring any necessary medications and to inform the facilitator of any allergies before starting the activity.

Weather-related Risks: The activity may need to be canceled or postponed if weather conditions are hazardous (e.g. heavy rain, thunderstorms, high winds). To minimize this risk, the facilitator should monitor weather conditions and make a decision about whether to proceed with the activity in advance.

Mental Health Risks: Some participants may experience anxiety or panic while participating in the activity. To minimize this risk, participants should be advised to inform the facilitator if they are feeling overwhelmed, and the facilitator should have a plan in place for addressing any mental health concerns that may arise.

Materials Needed:

The materials needed are:

- A frisbee,
- A stopwatch,
- Large Open space

Debriefing Session:

Facilitate a discussion about what happened during the activity, how it went, and what participants enjoyed about it. Encourage participants to reflect on their experience by asking the following questions:

- How did you feel during the game of frisbee? Did you find it challenging or enjoyable? – Did you feel like you were able to focus on the present moment during the game? How did it impact your experience?
- What strategies did you use to manage any anxiety or stress that arose during the game?
- How can you apply what you learned during the game to your everyday life?

Close the session by thanking participants for their participation and asking if they have any final thoughts or comments.