



If I want things to be different, I must change something

(short title: Differently)

Counselling workshop for the (long-term) unemployed
Presenter's manual

Peter Gabor | Ljubljana, July 2015

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Peter Gabor
IF I WANT THINGS TO BE DIFFERENT, I MUST CHANGE SOMETHING
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Counselling workshop for the (long-term) unemployed
Presenter's manual

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This presenter's manual is a translation of a manual with the same title, written in slovenian language in the year 2012.

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1 WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

The title of the workshop was taken from the book *Easy: Mit Leichtigkeit das Abenteuer Leben gestalten* (with the permission of the author, Eva Gütlinger).

The workshop is conceived as a counselling workshop. It employs a combination of five main approaches:

- self-reflection techniques
- different exercises, methods and interventions for self-realization,
- training of certain skills,
- career counselling and
- personal counselling.

The main problem of clients and counsellors is often the inability to solve the problem of the client or the inability of the client **to become aware of certain psychic contents** (mostly unconscious ones) that have been preventing them from taking a step forward. This is true for counselling taking place at the employment service as well. Employment counsellors, career counsellors and rehabilitation counsellors are doing their best to help clients overcome their obstacles, limiting beliefs etc. However, the standard approach, i.e. talking to clients, giving them advice, testing them and attempting to motivate them, turns out to be, although well-intentioned, **inadequate in certain cases.**

This is especially true for the long-term unemployed people.

When necessary, it is possible to approach clients in a different, supplementary way –using approaches, methods, techniques and interventions that can be described as “soft” or (partially) artistic techniques. These techniques can be used to encourage clients to **strengthen their connection with themselves** which helps them with their decision making and problem solving.

The emphasis is on the client improving their connection with themselves (and, as a consequence, **feeling empowered**) by themselves, whereas the counsellor acts merely as an initiator of the process. This process enables the clients to search within themselves and find the answers that are right for them.

This workshop is intended to provide to the participants **additional assistance in shifting** from their status quo situation (long-term unemployment) to resolving the situation. The workshop is not intended for teaching participants employment-seeking skills, explaining how the labour market works, etc.; there are other workshops and measures to meet these purposes.

The workshop is primarily intended for the long-term unemployed and for demanding clients. It is conceived as a short form of personal growth. The workshop is also suitable for other groups of clients (people who are registered as unemployed with the employment service). However, those who are more employable will not require a whole month; a shorter workshop should suffice to meet their needs.

Subject: slightly different, supplementary approach to long-term unemployed people, aiming to encourage them to start resolving their situation of unemployment by themselves

Purpose: achieving (self-initiated) change of certain opinions and beliefs the long-term unemployed have about themselves and their situation of unemployment

Goals:

Participants will:

- strengthen their connection with themselves,
- strengthen their connection with their professional desires and needs (what they want to do in their professional life),
- express some of their beliefs and opinions about the world and themselves,
- change some of their beliefs and opinions about the world and themselves,
- experience a certain degree of empowerment,
- practise setting goals (including employment-related ones) and identifying the steps needed to reach them.

Target group:

The workshop is suitable **for all unemployed people**, but it is primarily intended for:

- **the long-term unemployed and the least employable (excluding psychiatric patients and people with obvious psychological problems), who**
- have completed (at least) vocational secondary education; however, experience shows the workshop is also suitable for people without vocational education, **provided they are open enough.**

Group size: 8 – 10 people

Presenters:

- vocational counsellors,
- rehabilitation counsellors,
- employment counsellors for the long-term unemployed, and
- counsellors for the unemployed who are more employable,

who are good at or have an affinity to this kind of approach to counselling, and

who have previously attended (not a necessary condition, but very welcome) at least some of the following **in-house workshops**:

- communication,
- methods and techniques of working with groups,
- the counselling interview,
- activation of the counselling process,
- motivation,
- motivational interviewing.

As the workshop mostly employs a non-directive approach, it is recommended that the counsellors who decide to conduct the workshop do not do so at the labour office where they work, but rather at other labour offices, with clients they have not worked with. Clients tend to perceive their counsellor

as an authority figure, which might prevent the counsellor from establishing a soft enough approach that is required to ensure an optimal experience of this workshop.

Procedure, course and duration of the workshop:

- written invitation to attend the presentation of the workshop; in addition to the standard invitation, potential participants also receive **a special invitation** (see appendix),
- **presentation of the workshop to potential participants**, motivating them to attend the workshop **(from 30 to 60 minutes)**,
- **5 sessions** (alternatively **4 or 6**, depending on the group dynamics) **of approximately 2-2.5 hours each; sessions take place once or twice per week** (about 1 month altogether).

Additional activity after the workshop:

monitoring the participants – at least one individual follow-up session with each participant.

Materials:

- presenter's manual.

Key information about the units of the workshop:

- each learning or working unit includes a table with basic information;
- tables are comprised of the following elements:
 - **priority**; priority levels are marked with letters A, B, or C:
 - priority A: necessary
 - priority B: less necessary
 - priority C: not necessary
 - **goals**: unit goals
 - **methods**: methods used
 - **materials**: materials needed
 - **conclusions**: ideas for consolidation and reflection of the contents; possible questions for guided discussion (where applicable).

Basic literature:

- Amundson, N. E. (2009). *Active Engagement: The Being and Doing of Career Counselling*. Canada: Ergon Communications.
- Braden, G. (2011). *Božanska matrika: most, ki povezuje čas, prostor, čudeže in prepričanja*. Ljubljana: Cangura.
- Gütlinger, E. (2011). *Easy: Mit Leichtigkeit das Abenteuer Leben gestalten*. Ennsthaler.
- McGraw, P. C. (2002). *Življenjske strategije: kako se odločati, obnašati in živeti učinkovito*. Ljubljana: Orbis.
- Matthews, A. (2000). *Prisluhnite svojemu srcu: poiščite smisel v življenju in pri delu*. Ljubljana: DZS.
- Zimbardo, P. G., Boyd, J. (2009). *The Time Paradox: The New Psychology of Time That Will Change Your Life*. New York: Free Press.

Other materials:

- flip chart, coloured pencils (one pack of 12 per 2 participants), A4 white paper.

1.1 Feedback from the participants of the first two workshops:

- The workshop was very well-received;
- participants especially appreciated the laid-back approach to conducting the workshop (which encouraged them to be more open and receptive to the contents, exercises etc.):
- participants were largely satisfied with the concept and contents of the workshop as well as the exercises, methods and techniques that were used - they easily accepted them and found them effective;
- participants pointed out specifically that the workshop **provided them with an opportunity to talk about themselves, express their opinions, and talk to each other and the presenter;**
- on the individual level, participants reported **attaining better knowledge of self, becoming aware of certain things about themselves, identifying what they should change about themselves, and feeling empowered**, which are the primary goals of the workshop (in relation to seeking employment as well).

2 THEORETICAL AND EXPERIENTIAL BASES

2.1 Four approaches to career and/or employment guidance

There are **four approaches (conceptual frameworks)** in the field of career and employment guidance (Sultana, 2012).

- The first approach is the **social efficiency** approach («matching», supply and demand in the labour market, societal needs, realism, work placement, competence approaches).
- The second approach is the **developmentalist** approach (self-fulfilment of the individual, choice of the individual, constructivist approaches, narrative approaches).
- The third conceptual framework is the **social reconstructionist** approach (decoding the social, critical and reflective practice, structural approaches).
- The fourth approach is the **academic** approach (status-oriented, expert models, research-based approaches).

Each of these approaches emphasises one aspect of reality of the career and employment field. **They only form a totality when combined.**

The social efficiency approach is just one of these four approaches.

The best approach to career and employment counselling appears to be one that takes into account, to some degree, the views of all four approaches.

The logic of the **social efficiency** approach is well known as we all use it predominantly, at least on a declarative level (practice inevitably tends to be closer to real life). However, **the scope of its insight, approach and methods may be estimated as limited** - mainly because its conceptual framework is, in contrast to the complexity of life, career and employment, **highly reductionist**.

This is corroborated by research in the field of career and employment guidance performed in Luxembourg: »Research has shown that **the labour market comes only fourth** among the factors that individuals take into account when making career decisions (Ruppert, 2010d)«.

The workshop is conceived as **a supplementary approach to the established approach of social efficiency**. It takes from each of the other three approaches: a small part from the academic approach, some more from the social reconstructionist approach, and the most from the developmentalist approach and constructivism.

This **comprehensive view** of employment and/or the labour market situation acknowledges the equal importance of **the individual's personal responsibility** for their career and **their power** to create their career, as well as **the responsibility of the social, political, economic and monetary system** for the individual's career development and **the individual's responsibility for co-creating** this broader social environment. At the same time, it takes into account **supply and demand**, but puts **much less emphasis on them**.

Perspective(s) are very important in all of our lives. So many things depend on our perspective, i.e. our way of looking at (and, as a consequence, experiencing) everything in our lives: our attitude towards life and towards people, our expectations, aspirations, level of motivation, level of hope, level of courage, and everything else within society, such as relationships, collective expectations, collective motivation, the spirit of a nation, etc.

Perspectives are important **on the levels of individuals, institutions, and social systems at large**. These perspectives are **intertwined and mutually dependent**.

It is by all means true that **institutions influence their users heavily** through perspectives they offer to their users.

Perspectives can be either (more or less) **partial, impractical and limiting**, or (more or less) **comprehensive, practical and liberating**.

A comprehensive view of employment and the labour market situation and a comprehensive approach to counselling offer clients **a perspective that is different** from the currently established (majority) perspective. In contrast to this limiting, claustrophobic perspective of supply and demand, adjusting to the labour market conditions, blaming the individual exclusively for their situation of unemployment, etc., the perspective suggested here is more liberating.

2.2 Theory of motivation for the present times; what motivates us the most

The world of people is changing. The **paradigm** is changing and so are our views of the world and ourselves. We are changing as well. **Old ways of functioning lose their power as new ways emerge**.

It is becoming increasingly clear that **the old ways of self-motivating and motivating others**, including the old beliefs about motivation, **have become, to some extent, obsolete**. The "carrot

and stick” approach to motivation **has not been as effective lately** as it was before. This is not to say that it is entirely obsolete; it may be, quite possibly, still required, but it cannot remain the prevailing approach.

The researchers of human motivation have been discovering that reward (financial reward, assuming the individual in question makes enough money to lead a normal life) and punishment/discomfort, caused by external sources, are no longer the leading factors that motivate people for action.

2.2.1 Carrot and stick: seven weaknesses

The carrot and stick approach can:

- Extinguish intrinsic motivation.
- Diminish performance.
- Crush creativity.
- Crowd out good behavior.
- Encourage cheating, shortcuts and unethical behavior.
- Become addictive.
- Foster short-term thinking (Pink, 2011, p. 59).

2.2.2 The surprising truth about what motivates us

The following **three factors** motivate human activity to the greatest extent:

- **Autonomy** (people are the most motivated for their work when they have been given a sufficient amount of autonomy/independence in choosing what they want to do, as well as when and how they want to do it);
- **Mastery** (people like to practise, becoming increasingly better at what they do. Mastery abides by three rules:
 - mastery is a **mindset** – it requires the capacity to see your abilities not as finite, but as infinitely improvable,
 - mastery requires **effort, grit, and deliberate practice**,
 - mastery is **impossible to fully realize**, which makes it simultaneously frustrating and alluring);
- **Purpose** (people are motivated when their work is in line with their life purpose, i.e. **when they have found a deeper meaning in what they do, a sense of working towards a higher goal**) (Pink, 2011).

The first two legs of the tripod, autonomy and mastery, are essential. But for proper balance we need a third leg – **purpose**, which provides a context for autonomy and mastery. Autonomous people working towards mastery perform at very high levels. But those who do so in the service of some greater objective can achieve even more. The most deeply motivated people – not to mention those who are most productive and satisfied – hitch their desires and aspirations to a cause larger than themselves (ibid.).

Purpose is a crucial part of who we are, yet it was neglected or even entirely overlooked by the older theories of motivation. »**Purpose provides activation energy for living**« (Csikszentmihalyi, as cited in Pink, 2011).

2.3 Career/employment counselling and personal counselling

Helwig's (1987) extensive study indicated that **possessing personal motivation** and **effective job search attitudes** are as important **or more important for a job search campaign** than possessing job search skills and techniques (Liptak, 2010).

»Imbimbo (1994) suggested that career counselling and personal counselling have always been viewed as two distinct fields of practice. The problem with this view is that it often ignores the long tradition in the field of career development of recognizing the importance of personality factors in choosing and succeeding in a career. He believed that "in both the personality and career development theories, the counsellor is required to be **able to move back and forth** between **the active and directive role of the career counsellor** and **the facilitative and exploratory role of the personal counsellor**. ... To suggest that career and personal counseling should be mutually exclusive or that individuals can separate their personal issues from what happens in their career lives is simplistic"« (Liptak, 2005).

The workshop covers »personal motivation and job search attitudes« and »personality factors«. »Peterson and Gonzalez (2005) agreed that personal and career counseling "**no longer need sharp distinctions**, because people who come for career counseling often require both"« (Liptak, 2005).

2.4 Roadblocks to effective counselling:

- Warning, threatening,
- moralising, preaching,
- judging, criticising, blaming,
- shaming, ridicule,
- ordering, directing, commanding,
- arguing, lecturing, advice (Gordon, as cited in Fuller and Taylor, 2011).

2.5 Creation, creating one's life

Until recently, the (scientific) view of the world we live in maintained that the world was an unresponsive system, not influenced whatsoever by humans. **This is the view of the observer.**

The more recent (scientific) view is diametrically opposed. It may be described as **the view of the participant.**

In her book *The Field: The Quest for the Secret Force of the Universe*, McTaggart writes that for the last few decades, some researchers have been arguing – based on quantum equations and, later on, experimentation – that **»the very underpinning of our universe was a heaving sea of energy, one vast quantum field«** (McTaggart, 2004, p. XI).

Quantum physicists have discovered that »in the quantum world, quantum fields are not mediated by forces but by **exchange of energy, which is constantly redistributed in a dynamic pattern«** (ibid., p. 23).

Living beings are a part of this field as well, including people: **»On our most fundamental level, living beings, including human beings, are packets of quantum energy constantly exchanging information with this inexhaustible energy sea«** (ibid., p. XI).

»The existence of the Zero Point Field implied that all matter in the universe was interconnected by waves, which are spread out through time and space and can carry on to infinity, tying one part of the universe to every other part« (ibid., p. 24). **»If this were true, everything would be connected to everything else like some invisible web«** (ibid., p. XI).

If we are actually connected to everything through the Zero Point Field and the whole universe is an indivisible energy whole, it can be concluded that **creation responds to us – to our thoughts, feelings, and actions – and, at the same time, we respond and have access to the whole and its parts, events, etc. These two processes are intertwined, most likely to the point of being inseparable.**

The model of the universe, as outlined recently by researchers, is a model of the universe that is, »to some degree, under our control. **Our wishes and intentions create our reality«** (McTaggart, 2004, p. 138). **»We think, therefore we affect«** (ibid., p. 201).

Gregg Braden calls this »vast quantum field« **the Divine Matrix**; »The implication of both the ancient texts and quantum theory is that **in the unseen worlds we create the blueprint for the relationships, careers, successes, and failures of the visible world.** From this perspective, the Divine Matrix works like a great **cosmic screen that allows us to see the non-physical energy of our emotions and beliefs** (our anger, hate, and rage, as well as our love, compassion, and understanding) projected in the physical medium of life« (Braden, 2010, p. 14).

We create the blueprint for »careers, successes, and failures« as well.

The cosmos responds to human actions, deeds, thoughts, feelings, emotions, the conscious and the unconscious, the rational and the irrational.

This is true for **non-limiting** thoughts, emotions, conscious and unconscious, as well as for **limiting** thoughts, emotions, conscious and unconscious.

That does not, however, imply that each individual is responsible for every circumstance of their life.

We **co-create** the socio-cultural reality we live in, including (to some degree) our individual personal circumstances. The operative word being **co-creation**.

Other factors that greatly influence creation of individuals' lives include the broader societal context, politics, economy, etc. It is very dangerous to attribute to the individual full responsibility for their life, implying them and only them are responsible if they fail in life (financially or otherwise) – ignoring the influence of society, state, politics, capital owners, and other co-creators of our social reality.

Which is, of course, not right: individuals do not and can not live and act independently of the broader socio-cultural context.

2.5.1 How is this reflected in practice?

2.5.1.1 Synchronicity

The claim that we are capable of, to some extent, co-creating our reality, is supported by **the phenomenon of synchronicity** as introduced by C. G. Jung.

Jung's personal experience, experience of his patients, experience of unbiased people (scientists, philosophers, etc.), and his study of classical Chinese philosophy lead him to start thinking about the phenomenon he would later call synchronicity (Jung, 1995, p. 185): »As a psychiatrist and psychotherapist I have often come up against the phenomena in question and could convince myself how much these inner experiences meant to my patients. I have been observing these effects for decades« (ibid.). He established that »in most cases they were things which people do not talk about for fear of exposing themselves to thoughtless ridicule. I was amazed to see how many people have had experiences of this kind and how carefully the secret was guarded« (ibid.).

He described synchronicity as »**an acausal connecting principle**« (ibid., p. 187). **The term refers to a meaningful connection between seemingly unrelated events – a psychic state or phenomenon on one hand and a simultaneous objective event on the other hand.** »Synchronicity therefore means a simultaneous occurrence of a certain psychic state with one or more external events which appear as meaningful parallels to the momentary subjective state – and, in certain cases, vice versa« (ibid., p. 297).

Emotions play an important role in synchronicity events; »there is another important factor that should not be ignored when dealing with synchronicity phenomena – emotions. It can be confirmed empirically that occurrences of various synchronicity phenomena are connected with archetypal events, such as crises, diseases, onset of psychosis, and especially death. It is known that individuals experience strong affective reactions in archetypal situations, which brings up the question if **emotions assist in the formation of synchronicity phenomena**« (Jerotić, 1990, p. 55).

Braden further substantiates Jung's findings: »Our oldest and most cherished wisdom traditions remind us that there is, in fact, **a language that speaks to the Divine Matrix**, one that has no words

and does not involve the usual outward signs of communication we make with our hands or body. It comes in a form so simple that we all already know how to “speak” it fluently. In fact, we use it every day of our lives - it is the language of **human emotion**« (Braden, 2010, p. 16).

It is therefore of uttermost importance to cultivate awareness of our beliefs, thoughts, emotions, prejudice, judgments, rational and irrational contents. This workshop is intended to help participants become aware of these contents and to enable them to transcend the ones that are keeping them stuck in place.

2.5.1.2 Self-fulfilling prophecy and mindset

The phenomena of **self-fulfilling prophecy** and **mindset** have been known for quite some time in psychology. Often, our “prophecies” are realised and our mindset yields results – as far as our own life circumstances are concerned, as well as other people: »...our perception of another person affects the way we treat them, causing them to react in a way that confirms our perception of them – a vicious cycle« (Online source I).

Our beliefs, opinions, emotions, etc. affect ourselves and our life circumstances, as well as others and their life circumstances. They allow us to co-affect and co-create.

»Not only does set affect the way we see other people, it can sometimes **change the other person for better or for worse**. A study of over one hundred children measured the extent to which the parent’s expectancy of a child’s ability affected the child. Of those children whose mothers had rated them below average and predicted that they would remain so, only 7.7 percent were free from emotional disturbances at the ages of ten to eleven. Whereas, of those children whose mothers rated them above average, 46.2 percent were free from symptoms. This relationship was independent of other factors, such as the educational level of the parents, their occupations, ages, the type of delivery or family size, suggesting that it was indeed a direct influence of “set”« (Russell, 1990, p. 165).

»Similarly, at school a teacher’s expectancy of a child’s ability can often determine the child’s actual performance at school. If a group of children is divided into two groups of equal aptitudes but their teachers are told that children in one group have high IQs and are expected to excel at school whereas the other children are academically poor, the first group will do much better than the second. This effect, known as the **Pygmalion effect**, has been borne out by numerous studies, **not only in school, but in business, psychiatry, medicine, politics, social relationships, and other situations**« (ibid.).

In other words: **motivation is an interpersonal phenomenon**. This goes to say **our clients are, to some extent, influenced by that the way we perceive them and the kind of relationship we establish with them.**

It needs to be emphasized that the phenomena of self-fulfilling prophecy and mindset **apply to more than just superficial expectations and behaviour. They are not merely thought phenomena;**

thoughts are not the only factor that brings about their effects in practice. Psychology is, due to its tradition, still largely occupied with cognition, therefore **unjustifiably neglecting non-cognitive aspects of humans**. Emotions actually play a very important role in these phenomena. In all likelihood larger than cognition.

Assumptions + basic beliefs + expectations + emotions + behaviour + ... = a created real life experience, i.e. self-fulfilling prophecy.

Either:

- I was never good in maths and I never will be;
- I will die at 80, just like my grandfather;
- it takes hard work to survive;
- if I give my boss a piece of my mind, I will get fired;
- etc.

Or:

- I will have earned my first million by the time I am 28;
- men are not to blame for everything;
- my family life is so great that it is almost corny;
- etc.

2.6 Ambivalence

People wish to resolve their problems or the undesirable situation they have found themselves in, yet many encounter problems with **antagonistic motivation**. Although we want to make a change, we find ourselves hindered by our negative past experience, limiting beliefs and resistance – in one word, **blockages**.

The usual way of motivating our clients, partners, etc. is more or less ineffective in these instances. **Nobody has the power to »inject« another person with massive motivation to take action and resolve their situation.**

Each of us has to **resolve** their ambivalence towards their motivational **goals on their own**.

Each of us possesses **their own resources to resolve it** – plenty of them. Each of us has to find their own solutions, more or less on their own. Each of us is unique and knows best what is best for them.

Counsellors can **merely assist** clients in achieving this.

- **Ambivalence:**
 - is OK and natural;
 - causes us to explore;
 - facilitators work with ambivalence« (Fuller and Taylor, 2011).

The joy – pain dilemma

When it comes to decision making, this is our **most common type of dilemma**.

If you choose one path (change), **you will lose something valuable**, but gain **something you need**. On the other hand, if you choose the other path (status quo), **you will keep the thing you value**, but **lose something you need**. This is a double whammy. Whatever you do, you both gain and lose.

Individuals facing this type of dilemma usually move back and forth between two pros and two cons in their heads in a never-ending circle, unable to make a decision, and so become **stuck with the behaviour that is the current habit**. This is the kind of dilemma that leads to **stuck behaviour**.

- **Four voices:**

- best stay put;
- best to change;
- stay put and lose;
- change and lose« (Fuller and Taylor, 2011).

The etymological explanation of the word **“to decide”** (from Latin *decidere*, “to cut off”) is quite meaningful. Every decision presumes cutting something off. Namely, cutting off the old, familiar and comfortable, giving up something and accepting something different.

2.7 Decision-making strategies

There are two kinds of approaches to decision-making and problem-solving strategies:

a) cognitive decision-making methods, such as pros and cons,

b) intuitive decision-making.

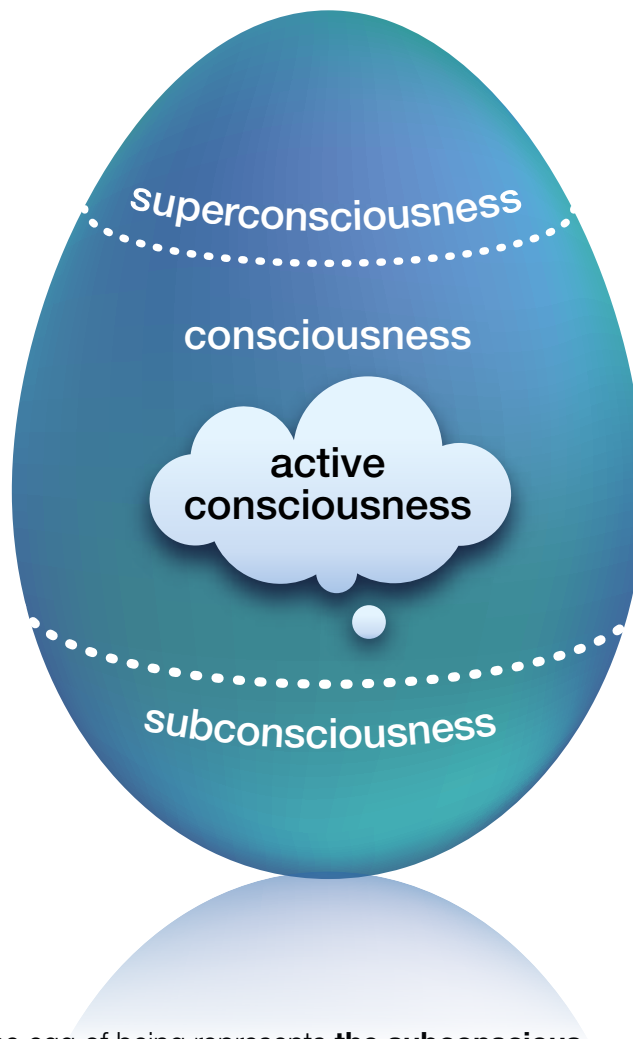
For many people, decision making encompasses more than just weighing various factors; it is a highly intuitive process that touches their soul. Having a good feeling about one’s decision may be the key factor in the decision-making process (Amundson, 2009).

It is becoming increasingly clear that the decision-making process involves both the irrational and the rational level; it is always **an integrated process**. People never make decisions solely on a rational basis (as some of the older theories have argued). **Making a decision inevitably encompasses (a part of) the irrational, such as intuition, feelings etc.**, wherein each individual can have their own view of what a rational and appropriate decision is (ibid.).

What we need right now is balance. Everything is changing so fast these days that it is not wise to make decisions based on old formulas, habitual practices and limited models. **We need to find balance between using exclusively scientific methods and relying solely on our instincts. Going from a complete dominance of logic to a complete dominance of intuition cannot be considered progress** (ibid.).

Decision making is a process; it is not always necessary to have everything worked out before taking a step forward.

2.8 The egg of being, levels of consciousness



- the bottom third of the egg of being represents **the subconscious**,
- the middle third of the egg of being represents **consciousness, the conscious**,
- the upper third of the egg of being represents **the superconscious, the super-ego or the higher self**,
- the boundaries between these three parts of the personality/mind **are transient**,
- the boundary separating the egg of being (the individual) from the environment **is transient**,
- the individual is **largely unaware** of both **the subconscious** and **the superconscious**,
- not all the contents of the consciousness are constantly present in our active consciousness (Parfitt, 1997).

The higher consciousness or the higher self is »**a place of inspiration, a realm of creativity and great beauty, and of noble ideas**« (Meadows, 2003, p. 79-80). It is also the place where **solutions and sources for solving problems** are located, as well as **love, etc.**

The contents of the higher consciousness can be accessed by the consciousness through meditation, music, (therapeutic) talk, feelings, etc., and through certain techniques and methods that can be described as **artistic techniques**. All of these **establish a connection between the unconscious and the conscious**.

2.8.1 How the unconscious works; dynamic self-assessment and problem solving

Techniques and methods of projection are very welcome for the purposes of personal development and working with clients.

The main reason why they are so useful is that **people are simply not aware of many things about themselves and their relationship with themselves, the world and other people.**

There are several reasons for this:

- we perceive ourselves from the inside rather than from the outside, therefore our view of ourselves may contain several blind spots,
- for one reason or another, we simply do not wish to be aware of certain things (pain, defence mechanisms, etc.)

Another reason should be mentioned that is closely connected to the ones above: **we usually accept and abide by our own insight, findings and discoveries about ourselves.**

On the other hand, when we receive insight about ourselves from others and from life itself, **we are not inclined to receive it with open arms. Receiving information about ourselves from external sources is usually met with resistance and obstinacy.**

»Communication with oneself and problem solving may happen on a half-unconscious level, with the **creative process acting as a powerful driving force.** Creative energy that is released in this process usually serves as a beneficial resource for solving problems in counselling (directly or indirectly). Some examples of creative processes:

- **drawing,**
- **writing poetry,**
- **story writing and storytelling,**
- **use of metaphors,**
- **use of the body,** etc.« (Amundson, 2009).

At the beginning, these processes are, to a certain extent, carried out outside of the individual's active consciousness. In time, however, the individual becomes fully aware of their effects. It can be said that these methods and techniques allow the individual to **load a particular program** into their unconscious mind. The program is then processed, with results appearing in the individual's active consciousness sooner or later.

With the help of certain techniques of self-projection, the individual can:

- **provide themselves with certain answers regarding themselves.** These techniques do not require an in-depth interpretation by a professional. Although the counsellor and the client can briefly discuss the latter's product, self-exploration and self-awareness remain the main purpose of these methods and techniques. They are quite effective; **if insight and resolving the problem are not brought about immediately, they will occur after some time.**
- **resolve (certain) problems or (certain) situations** they have found themselves in. These methods and techniques allow the individual to load a program into their unconscious mind; sooner or later, the program is processed and the results of this processing reach the individual's consciousness.

Disadvantages:

- these activities do not appeal to everybody,
- many clients worry about the aesthetic appearance of their product,
- counsellors should offer these activities in an appropriate manner,
- etc.

Advantages:

- they make the counselling process more dynamic,
- they are interesting to both the counsellor and (especially) the client,
- they require less effort on the part of the counsellor (not having to convince the client),
- they enable the client to establish a connection with themselves,
- etc.

2.8.2 Drawing (general idea of drawing in career orientation by Amundson 2009)

Drawing is a very powerful and useful technique of self-projection.

All of us have drawing in our blood, whether we practise it or not.

Although the verbal language is distinctively human, humans are much more than just linguistic beings. **A picture is worth a thousand words.** Drawing gives us an opportunity to express contents that may be hard to express verbally. **When we are drawing, our connection with ourselves (including the unconscious parts of ourselves) is stronger** than when we are (merely) talking.

2.8.2.1 General instructions for the use of drawing in the counselling process:

We briefly explain to the client the purpose of drawing, for example: **»Drawing will enable you to answer certain questions for yourself«**, then proceed as follows:

- a) We ask the client if they are OK with drawing.
We stress that they should not be concerned about the aesthetic value of their drawing.
- b) Before the client starts to draw, we ask them to **simply doodle on an empty piece of paper for 3–5 minutes**, thus switching from rational to creative mode and **relaxing**.
We ask them about the **feelings and emotions** they experienced while doodling and **if their mood has changed** (and how).
- c) We give **short instructions for the specific drawing**.
- d) **This method does not require feedback or interpretations from the counsellor. A short discussion with the client about their drawing, encouraging them to briefly explain the drawing to themselves, will suffice.**

- e) We ask the client to briefly describe **the feelings and emotions they were experiencing while drawing and the ones they are experiencing while looking at their drawing.**

When they are finished, we ask them **briefly** to explain **what they drew** and **why they drew it the way they did.**

When needed, we use paraphrasing to clarify.

If we notice anything that stands out, yet the client did not articulate it, we mention it in a calm, friendly manner, preferably in question form, such as: **»I have noticed that ... What do you think about this?«**

- f) If we, for whatever reason, do not wish to discuss the client's drawing with them, **we do not have to do so.**
- g) **When drawing is used in a group setting, each participant can decide voluntarily whether they want to present their drawing to the group or not. The presenter may even decide to skip these presentations.**

2.9 Positive emotions vs. negative emotions in the workshop

All the **exercises, methods and interventions for self-reflection** used in the workshop (drawing, guided visualisation, etc.) are designed in such a way that the individual **does not experience negative emotions. They enable communication with the individual's higher self**, which is a place of **so-called positive emotions and feelings.**

Each of these exercises, methods and interventions belongs in one of the following categories:

- a) **direct communication with one's higher self**, such as drawing one's life purpose;
- b) starting out as **communication with the self** (problem, predicament, etc.), followed by **communication with the higher self** (solving the problem), such as guided visualisation or problem solving through drawing.

Even with exercises and methods that **start out** by addressing the so-called negative feelings and emotions (for example, when we choose a problem we wish to solve and we focus on it, negative feelings arise **automatically – feeling is always present**); however, in the **second phase** of the exercise these negative feelings and emotions retire or are even transformed into positive feelings and emotions.

Experience with the exercises and methods described in this manual shows that participants do not experience negative attitudes, outbursts of negative emotions, etc. while taking part in them and during sessions in general. On the contrary, participants reported experiencing peace, calmness, joy, playfulness, freedom, etc.

2.10 Storytelling

People are basically storytellers. Telling and listening to stories is in our blood.

We all have the need for our story to be heard. Not until we have told the story of our life or described an event from our life to another person, is the experience **completely embedded in us**; in a way, only after we have shared it with someone, it becomes consolidated and entirely real.

Telling stories also allows us to become **aware of the patterns** governing our actions. The narrator often experiences an aha moment while telling a story from their life; the act of storytelling serves as an opportunity for them to become aware of their actions, how they operate, the way they function, and to identify some of the assumptions that have affected their life. This effect could be described as **»when I share, I become aware«**.

It is **relatively easy** for people to transmit and assimilate knowledge, behaviour or information encoded in stories.

It is also possible to **inspire**, encourage or unburden others through stories.

Storytelling is about telling stories of/from our lives and listening actively to others' stories:

- **Clients sharing with the counsellor**

Active listening on the part of the counsellor gives the client validation of their worth, a feeling that someone cares about them, etc.;

- **Counsellor sharing with clients**

»If counsellors share their life and professional experience with clients, that's a very good thing« (Ruppert, 2010a). It is not forbidden for counsellors to share experience from their life and work with their clients; on the contrary, it is actually welcome. This act is deeply humane and charged with **powerful motivation** that can help the client face their situation and make decisions. It is not very likely for the client to make the same decisions or act in the same way the counsellor did. Each of us is unique and eventually makes their own decisions; nevertheless, transfer of experience, motivation and courage through the act of sharing experience can prove very helpful.

2.11 Asking questions and discussing

Humans are **beings of relations**, hence we need **dialogue-oriented communication**.

»Our brain functions in such a way that **when it is faced with a question, it automatically begins an active search for the answer**« (Gütlinger, 2011).

Guided discussion helps clients become aware of certain contents (beliefs, solutions to problems, etc.) – **when I share, I become aware**. At the same time, it allows us to **counsel** and encourage participants to discuss and share opinions and experience **among themselves** as well.

2.12 Emotions

Emotions are part and parcel of the human being. They are not of any lesser importance than reason.

»Recent studies, including ones in the fields of biology and physiology, stress the importance of co-operation and interaction of reason and emotion. As Daniel Goleman states in *Emotional Intelligence*: “The old paradigm held an ideal of reason freed of the pull of emotion. The new paradigm urges us to harmonize head and heart”« (Wilks, 2009).

Emotions are necessary; **they carry out certain functions**, hence they should be taken into account in counselling.

In recent times, studies of two areas of the brain - amygdala and neocortex - have shed some light on the relationship between emotions and reason. The (phylogenetically older) amygdala, also known as **the emotional brain**, is responsible for all of our impulsive reactions, including the ones that may save our life (Bokan, 2012, Online source II).

The neocortex, also called **the rational brain**, developed at a later point in human evolution. Among other things, it allows us to **think about the emotions we feel**, guiding us to a **deeper understanding of our own mental experience**, its interpretation and expression. It is precisely the neocortex that **allows us to delve into the logic of our emotions and learn from them** (ibid.).

If our neocortex does not function alongside our amygdala, we can **lose our self-control** and act in an unrestrained manner. This includes rage and other strong emotions that may drive us into completely unreasonable actions such as manslaughter. If, however, our neocortex functions and our amygdala does not, life becomes bland and dreary. One young man whose amygdala had been surgically removed for medical reasons seemed to have lost all recognition of feelings - his own as well as other people's. This is called emotional blindness. Without an amygdala, there can be no tears, no joy, no bliss ... (ibid.).

What follows is an attempt to describe the connection between these two parts of the brain in a more contemporary language. **The emotional brain (the amygdala) perceives and remembers virtually every emotional impression; the neocortex processes this information**, using all of our emotional experiences as basis to predict what would happen if we acted in a certain way or what consequences a certain action would bring to ourselves and others. This goes to show that the information we get from emotions serves as **basis for our rational actions**, therefore it is **essential for these two parts to be connected** (ibid.).

Physiologically speaking, there is a functional **connection between emotions and reason**. Our ability to handle our emotional and mental processes, balancing between the messages of emotions and those of reason in our everyday life, is an entirely different question though. It can be illustrated with receiving only two TV channels; sometimes their messages match, while at other times they are entirely opposite. Which one should we believe? Sometimes we follow our emotions, hoping they will

lead us to our goal; other times, we let reason take over. Whichever prevails at a given moment, we use them both to find lasting satisfaction, fulfilment and happiness. Are we succeeding? Most indicators show that we are not doing so well. **The »either – or« (either reason or emotions) mode of operation does not prove effective most times.** If we keep choosing one of the two, we end up suppressing the other (ibid.).

Many people have already become aware that it is necessary to maintain a different relationship between emotions and reason – one that is **based on cooperation** instead of domination of one over the other. The question is how to achieve this. How to establish an inner balance that will reflect the truth of emotions and reason complementing one another? How to connect these two diametrically opposed ways of thinking and rise to a higher quality of inner and outer life? Because that is precisely what it is all about. **We are tired of feeling stuck or going round in circles.** We want to move forward - namely, **we want to have rich, fulfilling relationships; to express ourselves openly; to create for ourselves a self-image that will correspond to our true self; to live in accordance with our realisations and values; to discover deeper love; to overcome our fear of emotions – our own as well as other people's; to live in the kind of freedom that will allow us to fearlessly accept responsibility for ourselves; and much more** (ibid.).

In doing so, we open a new field of learning. This is not meant to say that emotional life is new for us; still, most people are unfamiliar with ways of facing their own emotions, understanding the meaning of their emotions, and understanding the deeper messages they carry. This is our chance to learn **the alphabet of emotions** and **emotional literacy**. Learning from emotions is a process of rationally discovering why we feel the way we feel, i.e. identifying the triggers and motives of our emotional reactions (ibid.).

Emotions and emotional patterns take their time; **they persist as long as it takes for us to understand the message**, which may be tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, or never, depending on our dedication to change and grow. **The process of coordinating our emotions and thought changes our relationship to things, events, people, patterns, beliefs, etc., therefore expanding awareness.** A true symbiosis between emotions and reason is necessary to open **a field of deeper awareness**, one where we are capable of understanding those dimensions of life and ourselves that would otherwise remain hidden. When our rational intelligence and emotional intelligence are correctly linked, this opens the way to powerful knowledge that elevates our psyche and our life in general and gives them meaning. This is the intelligence of the heart, also known by some as spiritual intelligence — another reason why it is so important for our self-development to be familiar with the purpose of emotions and their dynamics, knowing how to control them and how to develop emotional intelligence (ibid.).

Emotional aspect is a very important factor in decision-making processes as well - much more important than we were willing to admit until recently. Decision-making models based exclusively on reason are in decline as they do not reflect the reality of everything we are. Feelings, emotions, intuition etc. play a very important (although still somewhat mysterious) role in our lives.

2.12.1 Emotions and employment

»Career/employment counselling theorists - as well as practitioners, to some extent - often **leave out the emotional part of decision making** from their generalizations, which is a colossal reductionist mistake« (Ruppert, 2010b).

»In the counselling process, it is very important to take into account the fact that there is an intense correspondence between emotions and cognition. Counsellors should employ so-called **cognitive empathy** in relation with the client. In all probability, cognitive empathy could be considered the key competence of counsellors« (Ruppert, 2010c).

2.12.2 Addressing emotions

Emotions are also an essential, constitutive part of motivation. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to draw a clear dividing line between emotions and motivation, making motivation an essential factor that either encourages or discourages our behaviour. All of us make decisions primarily based on our emotions, both pleasant (joy, agreeable excitement, anticipation, delight, optimism) and unpleasant (fear, uncertainty, negative experience, lack of trust).

The counselling process, at least in Slovenia, **does not give enough attention to addressing emotions of the clients.** It seems that **we usually address (solely) their cognitive aspect.** This is because we are victims of the old paradigm which »often belittles emotions as having less value than reason« (Wilks, 2009).

Addressing the participants' emotions and asking them questions about their emotional life gives us an opportunity to **recognize them as whole people, allowing them to experience their emotions** (including the so-called negative ones). This allows us, among other things, **to send them a message that we perceive them positively** while helping them **work with their emotions** as well.

Once the individual becomes fully aware of **the emotion they are currently experiencing and why they are experiencing it**, it becomes **easier for them to accept it** (assisted by a supporting environment). Once they accept the emotion and the message it carries, **its intensity is instantly decreased** by half or more. As a consequence, their view of the current situation become clearer and decision making easier, especially in case of intense, so-called negative emotions.

When we are not dominated by too strong emotions, our decision-making is easier and clearer, therefore we can proceed actively and efficiently in our desired direction. It is especially negative emotions that often hold us back, preventing us from taking a step forward – in the sense of creating our reality, too.

The purpose of asking clients questions regarding:

- their emotional states, or
- the emotions they are experiencing while carrying out a certain exercise, or

- the emotions they are experiencing while talking about a certain topic,
- etc.,

is to help them **recognise their emotions and address them briefly**. People are **grateful** for having their emotions handled in such an open way; that **enhances** the counselling process.

There are two key questions the counsellor can ask the client:

- What emotions are you experiencing at the moment or what emotions were you experiencing?
- Why do you think you have been experiencing these emotions? What message do you think they carry?

2.12.3 Emotional relief techniques (EFT and PEAT)

We are much more than what the culture allows us to see. We are more than just the physical body and the rational mind.

We are **physical** as well as **non-physical** beings. Our bodies represent our physical component, while our non-physical portion consists of our energy, spiritual, conscious and unconscious parts. Our physical body represents a relatively small portion of what we are; the material body is said to comprise merely 3–5 % of our whole being. The ratio of our physical part to our non-physical parts is about 10 : 90, at best.

It is important to emphasize that the unconscious **does not contain merely repressed contents**, as argued by Freud; it is actually much more diverse.

Traditional Chinese medicine teaches that in addition to bodily fluids, there is also something else flowing through our bodies: **energy**. Energy flows through energy vessels or channels called **meridians**. We can influence the flow of energy by **touching certain points** on the body. Emotions are energy in motion (**e-motion; energy in motion**), hence we can influence our emotional states or moods by **dissolving** energy knots, blockages, etc., thereby stimulating the flow of energy.

There are various schools of thought within **meridian/energy psychotherapy**, the most noted ones being:

- **EFT** (Emotional Freedom Technique),
- **PEAT** (Psycho-Energetic Auro Technology) by Živorad M. Slavinski,
- **EMDR** (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing).

The first two methods can also be used, to a certain extent, for **self-treatment**. They include **pressing** or **tapping** on certain acupuncture points on the body while saying **certain affirmations**. Pressing or tapping is continued until the situation we wish to resolve – one that has had a great negative emotional influence on the client – **has been liberated of its negative valence**. After the treatment(s), the client is left with merely the memory of the negative experience; its negative emotional charge has been dissolved. This enables the client to **act in a more relaxed, liberated manner** (in the future).

»**The cause of all negative emotions is a disruption in the body's energy system.** There is no long, drawn out, "tell me your life story" feature to EFT. There are no pills. There is no painfully reliving past traumatic events. It doesn't take months or years. It takes a fraction of the usual time and is often done in minutes. People simply get beyond their emotional luggage, usually permanently, and go about their lives more effectively« (Craig, n.d.).

»EFT is based on the discovery that **imbalances in the body's energy system have profound effects on one's personal psychology.** Correcting these imbalances, which is done by tapping on certain body locations, often leads to rapid remedies« (ibid.).

2.13 Imagination

Imagination is a **truly effective technique with a noticeable effect** on individuals' lives and circumstances. This has been long known in psychology as well.

The most plausible explanation why imagination actually works is a combination of the following: through content processing (conscious or unconscious), and/or through the quantum field (see above). Using imagination and visualisation allows individuals to **wilfully affect their consciousness and, as a consequence, their unconscious as well, which is eventually manifested in their material reality.**

Drawing contents from one's life, solving problems through drawing, telling stories, etc., are, in a way, forms of imagination as well.

2.14 Life purpose, mission

Each of us is unique and has **their own, unique life purpose.** Life purpose/mission is the **most basic drive** in our lives, our deepest motivation. **When we are using this motivation as the base upon which we build our lives, we feel fulfilled, useful, etc.**

Besides having their goals set, highly successful people are also aware of their mission, their calling, their primary goal in life. How these people define their success is not significant; the nature of one's purpose can be, for example, religious (like Mother Theresa or Albert Schweitzer), artistic (director Steven Spielberg or painter Pablo Picasso), or technological/ creative (Bill Gates) (Schwarz and Schweppe, 2005, p. 41).

It is not necessarily true that these people are more talented, more intelligent or more vigorous than others, that they possess stronger willpower or that they have been blessed with luck. What is more significant is that they have managed to direct all of their efforts and powers towards a single goal, which is what we call mission. It is a **joint effect of all the values, beliefs, interests, desires and goals** of an individual. A sense of mission provides the individual with a **persistent awareness of their life goal, strengthens their identity and determination, and awakens their passion and enthusiasm** (ibid.).

A large number of people are **not aware** of their life purpose and are therefore drifting through life somewhat ineffectively, if this is the correct term.

»Most people lack ... primary purpose of life, a mission. They have an occupation, a job - work they have to do - and they have their private lives, where they try to fulfil their values by doing what they really desire« (Schwarz and Schweppe, 2005, p. 41).

A great number of people choose their occupation or career **based on fears, especially their fear for survival**, instead of basing their decisions on their life purpose. Therefore, the choices they make in their lives do not bring them satisfaction, joy or happiness.

They base their decisions on pain instead of joy. **They create their lives from a place of pain rather than from a place of joy.**

We are meant to live our lives from a place of joy, with joy, and not from a place of pain, suffering, making immense sacrifices for others, etc. **This is becoming increasingly clear.** We no longer agree to »living in a vale of tears so that we can go to heaven after we die«.

One's **professional purpose** is a substantial, if not the most important part of their life purpose. It is usually in accordance with their abilities, interests, personal traits, etc. Experience shows that people who choose their professional path based on their calling do not usually encounter great trouble seeking employment.

One's professional purpose can be, for example, either to »contribute to the development of my professional field«, or to »work as a welder, earning a net monthly salary of €800–1000«, etc.

It is certainly beneficial for the individual to stay in touch with their life purpose and live in accordance with it. What is more, **all of us will benefit from their work, passion, joy, enthusiasm, results, creations or whatever they have shared with and done for the world.** It is hard to imagine this world without Albert Einstein, Nelson Mandela, the waitress in the bar next door, the counsellor at the employment service, etc. **Each of us performs a function that is indispensable for that person as well as for society at large**, including people who seem to be doing nothing and/or are long-term unemployed.

2.15 Time orientation

We live our lives with different **time orientations** (and sub-orientations) on the past-present-future continuum.

Zimbardo and Boyd (2009) identified five time perspectives:

- past
 - **past-negative**
 - **past-positive**

- present
 - **present-hedonism**
 - **present-fatalism**
- **future.**

The dominant time perspective of the individual influences their way of life and its quality.

2.15.1 Optimal time-perspective profile

- »**Past-positive** time perspective: high
A sense of a positive past gives you roots. The center of self-affirmation, the past connects you to yourself over time and across place. A positive past grounds you, provides a sense of the continuity of life« (Zimbardo and Boyd, 2009).

If we perceive our past as positive, regardless of our (most likely) substantial negative experience, we are not too high in past-negative time perspective and are therefore **liberated of the grip of the past and its power to drag us back**. Unfortunately, we mostly focus on the negative things in our lives. To exaggerate a bit, **we are spending most of our time contemplating our negative, bad, unpleasant experiences**.

However, it seems justified to say that we are **more or less satisfied** with our lives at least **half of the time (or even up to three quarters)**.

This is corroborated by research in psychology showing that **»events that are negatively valenced will have a greater impact on the individual than positively valenced events of the same type«** (Baumeister et al., 2001, as cited in Online source III).

This is »not to be misunderstood. It is not to say that the bad attracts us more than the good, but rather that the **bad often repulses us more than the good attracts us**. The greater power of the negative over the positive can be seen in many areas, such as **life events (traumatic events)**, interpersonal relations and partnership (conflicts affect us more than agreement, infidelity more than fidelity), **learning, upbringing, emotions, and opinions** (negative feedback, negative emotions and bad parenting have more impact than positive ones; bad impressions and bad stereotypes are quicker to form than good ones)« (ibid.).

- »**Future** time perspective: moderately high
With a future perspective, you can envision a future filled with hope, optimism and power. The future gives you **wings** that enable you to soar to new destinations and to be confident in your ability to deal with the unexpected challenges that you might encounter on the way. It equips you to escape the status quo, the fear inherent in straying from the safe, known ways« (Zimbardo and Boyd, 2009).

Individuals who are **too low** in future time perspective are not very likely to »amount to anything«

in their lives because they are not willing to make an effort to reach their employment, educational, personal, etc. goals in the future. On the other hand, individuals who are **too high** in future time perspective will spend virtually all their time working for the future in order to achieve and possess even more. These people are workaholics who find it hard to relax and enjoy life.

- »**Present-hedonistic** time perspective: moderately high
A hedonistic present gives you **energy and joy** about being alive. That energy drives you to explore people, places and self. Present-hedonism is life-affirming« (Zimbardo and Boyd, 2009).

Individuals who are **too high** in present-hedonistic time perspective only live for the moment – not in the sense of being fully present in the present moment, but rather of merely enjoying life, having fun, taking it easy, living without effort, etc. – missing the future perspective. Individuals who are **too low** in this perspective, however, find it hard to feel joy of life, to have some fun, to take a break and relax.

- »**Past-negative** time perspective: low« (Zimbardo and Boyd, 2009)
See above (past-positive time perspective)
- »**Present-fatalistic** time perspective: low« (Zimbardo and Boyd, 2009)

Individuals who are **too high** in this time perspective indulge in feeling and thinking that nothing can be changed or improved, either in their personal lives or in the broader sense, thus perceiving any potential effort or endeavour on their part as futile.

2.15.2 Individuals, stuck in the past and present

A part of the population is stuck in one of the following:

- **negative past,**
- **overly hedonistic present,**
- **fatalistic present.**

When people adopt either of these time perspectives, they are generally not sufficiently future-oriented. These people **do not possess cognitive schemas** telling them they need to do something in order to achieve their goals. They were not raised to do so, maybe they were born this way, etc. An appropriate future orientation encompasses, among other things, orientation towards effort, work, etc.

Another reason (or maybe just another way of looking at the same problem) behind these people's inability to act can be found in the fact that **their motivation is actually blocked by psychological blockages or energy blockages** of emotional nature, also called energy knots. These usually include:

- **fears,**
- **disappointment,**
- **resentment,**
- **anger,**
- **hate,** etc.

These usually appear as a consequence of negative past experience that was not appropriately resolved or processed, causing the individual to **stop trusting or believing** that they can, to some degree, create their life in a »positive« way. They proceed to create their life in a »negative« way (self-fulfilling prophecy, etc.); what's more, they **attribute this creation (excessively) to external reasons, their significant others, the state, and external circumstances.**

2.15.3 How to help individuals stuck in negative past, overly hedonistic present or fatalistic present

There are several ways, methods or interventions that can be used to correct, to an extent, the above fixations. Most of them require an effort on the part of the individual who has decided to change their time-perspective profile and improve their way of life. Some changes can be achieved with the help of a (psycho)therapist.

However, us **counsellors at the employment service** can be of some assistance, too. We can help the unemployed people by teaching them how to **set goals** and **identify the steps** needed to reach them.

Zimbardo and Boyd (2009) performed an experiment with pupils who scored really low on the future perspective due to the above fixations. They trained them in **setting goals** for their future and **identifying the steps** needed to achieve them.

They began with setting goals for **the current day**, then proceeded to setting goals **for the following day, week and month.**

The results were encouraging: after a week of this practice, the pupils became noticeably **future-oriented**. They learned that they needed to do something in order to achieve what they wanted. They also learned to focus on each single step towards their goal and on the process of »stepping« itself, thus being liberated from the crippling need to achieve their goal right away.

Attempting to help clients in this way is something us counsellors at the employment service are already doing, but we are doing it in a more or less **delegating way**, demanding from them to do certain things. Our efficiency seems to be hurt by our assumption that all our clients are (sufficiently) future-oriented – **which is, of course, not true.**

A specific sub-group of registered unemployed people take this kind of more or less delegated goal setting, decision making, job seeking, etc. **as a personal attack.** We demand from them something that is simply not present in their **description of the world**, hence labelling them as unwilling to cooperate, etc.

It can be said for many of these people that future time perspective, although not entirely absent from their lives and their time profiles, is disabled due to their **difficulties with motivation.**

We can help clients, especially those who **are not sufficiently future oriented**, by:

- **talking to them** briefly, kindly and openly **about their time orientation** and explaining to them why their time profile is not optimal,
- encouraging them **to set goals**, starting with short-term goals and proceeding to increasingly long-term ones (**for today, tomorrow, next week, next month, next year**),
- introducing them to the practice of setting goals.

We help these clients by teaching them the process of achieving goals **step-by-step**; we ask them **which steps need to be taken** for their goal to be reached.

3 GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING THE WORKSHOP

- **Ask the participants a lot of questions and discuss with them the contents of the workshop, their experience in relation to the exercises, their lives, their problems and predicaments, etc.**; talking, discussion, guided discussion, etc. may take up about half of the time intended for each session;
- methods, exercises and interventions used in the workshop **are easy to use for both the presenters and the participants**; »keep it simple«;
- **combine** the techniques, methods and exercises with **personal counselling** in the group setting, as well as **employment counselling** (if needed);
- **only use personal counselling when you feel it is necessary, to the extent you feel confident**;
- attending the workshop **is voluntary**; never use repressive measures against clients who do not decide to enrol, those who quit during the course of the workshop, or those who do not want to take part in certain techniques or exercises;
- never force anyone to do anything, **only offer them suggestions**;
- try to approach the participants in a **contemporary, neutral** way as much as possible; do your best to refrain from judging, evaluating, etc.,
- **do not hesitate** to act decisively when necessary – for example, when you need to stop a potential spiral of negativity or face the participant with their potential destructive or self-destructive behaviour;
- **share** with the participants **stories, experience, events from your life**, your views of certain contents, etc.; this kind of sharing, i.e. exchange between equal partners, puts soul into the pro-

cess, therefore achieving a better impact than ex-cathedra lectures. However, if you do not feel comfortable exposing yourself like this, don't do it, or only do it to the extent you find acceptable,

- when necessary, **address the emotions of the participants and their experiencing**; communicate about their emotions actively and clearly and/or ask them about the emotions they are experiencing at a given moment;
- before engaging in each exercise, intervention and method, **briefly explain** its theoretical or experiential background to the participants; remember to keep the explanation brief unless they request a more detailed one;
- to an extent, **adjust** the contents to the needs of participants;
- if you feel the need to **change the order** of the contents, **do so**;
- if any of the contents, methods and interventions described in this manual don't appeal to you, or if your intuition warns you against using them, **don't use them**;
- **only explain theoretical knowledge as much as you find it necessary and appropriate for the participants**,
- **adjust the workshop to the group dynamics**, changing the sequence of contents if needed;
- if you feel the need to **add** any particular contents or methods, **do so; adjust the workshop to yourself, to some extent (each of us is unique; we do things best when we do them in our own way)**;
- **avoid trying to cram** too many contents, exercises, methods, lectures, etc. into a single session; **less is more!**

4 PRESENTATION OF THE WORKSHOP TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

Priority	A
Duration	30–60 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will get acquainted with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the purpose and the goals of the workshop • the conceptual framework of the workshop • approximate time frame of the workshop • approximate contents of the workshop • basic information and rules
Methods	Giving information, explaining, clarifying
Materials	/
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion;</p> <p>questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about the workshop? • Are you interested in it? • Will you enrol? • Do you agree with the rules? • Is there anything that bothers you? <p>Answering questions</p>

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

You were invited to attend the workshop Differently because you are **long-term unemployed** (registered with the employment service for longer than one year).

We assume this situation of long-term unemployment **is not what you want**. However, if the situation does not bother you, there is absolutely no need for you to change just because we would like that.

We would love to give you all jobs, but we are not in a position to do so as **we are not the ones who create jobs**. We are not the most important factor in the labour market. The labour market itself is the most important factor.

We are **merely an intermediary** between job openings and job seekers. We also perform the task of **putting out fires** – systemic as well as individual ones. Both are closely intertwined. We are not the ones causing these fires. We play both roles - acting as an intermediary and putting out fires - to the best of our abilities (which are limited by the socio-institutional framework on one hand and individual frameworks of our users on the other, as well as the interaction of both). We also perform several other necessary functions, but job creation is not one of them.

Having said that, since you are registered with the employment service, **we should do something** with you. We realise that we are not really helping you by imposing things on you. Unfortunately, we're required to do this to some extent. Each individual should make their own decisions regarding their life, otherwise they might not be right for them; imposing is not helping anyone.

Our intention and the intention of this workshop is to **encourage you** and to **help you discover** what you want from your life, what you want to do, and which steps you would like to take in the future, with the focus on employment, but not limited to it. We would like to help you start living your life according to your wishes and establish a better connection with yourselves.

Every person is the architect of their own life. Many things depend from the outer world, but not even remotely everything. What we are saying here is that every one of us, to some degree, creates their life. We would like to encourage you to ask yourselves how you create your life, and if you could become better at it.

As practice shows, habitual approaches (talking to clients, giving them advice, testing them, referring them to job vacancies, etc.) have limited effects on helping individuals discover what they really want and what they should improve in order to achieve their goals, therefore we have decided to create a **slightly different** workshop.

In the workshop, we will be:

- talking,
- exchanging experience,
- carrying out exercises (in small groups),
- drawing,
- setting goals and identifying the steps needed to reach them,
- performing visualisation exercises, etc.

How it will work:

- there will be **five sessions of about 2 hours each; one or two per week**,
- sessions will be **interesting** rather than boring,
- you **will not be forced** do anything,
- the decision to attend the workshop **is voluntary**,
- the decision to take part in any exercise, technique, method, etc. **is voluntary** as well,
- we just want to **encourage you** to think about yourself and your situation of unemployment, and
- help you **resolve problems** you might have been experiencing,
- through talking, exercises and techniques that will **help you change the things** you want to change.

We will abide by the following **rules**:

- what happens in the group or is shared in the group, stays in the group,
- the decision to participate in activities, exercises, sharing, etc. is entirely voluntary; you will not be required to do or share anything you do not want to (no repercussions).

5 FIRST SESSION

5.1 Welcoming the participants

Purpose: creating a pleasant atmosphere, ensuring the well-being of the participants

Goals: clearing up any confusion, providing a sense of security

Priority	A
Duration	5–10 minutes
Goals	Participants wil: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feel accepted • feel safe
Methods	Approaching participants directly, inviting them to enter the room
Materials	/
Conclusions	/

5.2 Resolving one's (current) antagonistic motivation - calming through PEAT technique

Priority	A, B
Duration	5–10 minutes
Goals	Participants wil: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become acquainted with the method of resolving antagonistic motivation • try out and experience the method • possibly begin using the method in their daily lives
Methods	Giving information, explaining, clarifying, using the technique
Materials	/
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this technique make sense to you? • Do you feel any different after using the technique? • In what way? • Do you find the technique useful in everyday life? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Antagonistic motivation **can be neutralised:**

- at the beginning of each session, or
- during the course of a session, when needed (restlessness, disorder, etc.).

See subsection 2.12.3 Emotional relief techniques (EFT and PEAT), p. 27.

+

Antagonistic motivation

Antagonistic motivation implies a conflict between opposing drives.

There are **two types** of antagonistic motivation:

- **deep** antagonistic motivation; each of experiences deeply rooted antagonistic motivation that determines our lives to a large extent – the so-called **primordial polarity**, a personal **yin-yang conflict**, so to speak. Each of us experiences their own primordial polarity. Deep PEAT offers a possibility to resolve it, to merge the two opposite poles into a harmonious whole;
- **shallow** antagonistic motivation; encompasses **everyday issues**, such as:
 - there is something I should do, but I do not feel like it at the moment,
 - I want to do something, but I am tired,
 - I want to ask a girl on a date, but I am too scared of it,
 - I want to ask a boy on a date, but I am too scared of it,
 - I have an appointment at 9 with a client whom I would rather avoid;
 - **I would like to apply for a job, but I am afraid, etc.**

Shallow antagonistic motivations of an individual may also be partially connected to their deep antagonistic motivation.

PEAT in practice

PEAT suggests the following method of **self-resolving one's current antagonistic motivation**:

- apply pressure (acupressure) on the **I-Point** (on the breastbone) +
- say the following affirmation (several times, calmly):
»Even though I, (name), (... the problem), I fully and absolutely accept and love myself, my body, my personality and (... the problem)« (Inštitut AM, 2011).

Another PEAT method of self-resolving one's current antagonistic motivation is called **quick relaxation**:

- arm extended, eyes closed +
- message to self:
»When my hand touches my leg, I am perfectly OK and see myself as such« (ibid.).

Advantages of using this method:

- it helps us feel relieved,
- it provides a shortcut to the state of »flow«,
- it makes us calmer, more patient,
- it only takes 15–30 seconds (ibid.).

After one's current antagonistic motivation has been neutralised, they will feel much calmer (if they were restless prior to neutralisation), more focused, etc., which will enable them to engage in activity with more motivation and clarity than before.

5.3 Writing and drawing the book of life (Amundson 2009)

Priority	A
Duration	Doodling: have the participants doodle on an empty sheet of paper for 5 minutes to quiet the ever-present critical mind and relax (see below) Writing and drawing: between 30 and 60 minutes
Goals	Participants wil: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write and draw their books of life, • allowing them to review their lives and • possibly become aware of certain things from their past, present (current situation, difficulties, problems, etc.) or future (wishes, etc.)
Methods	Individual exercise
Materials	A4 paper, pen or pencil, coloured pencils
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you experience any difficulties? • What kind of feelings did you experience while writing and drawing? • Why did you experience these feelings? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Before writing and drawing the book of life, we briefly give the participants the following

general introduction (also applies to **drawing and some other methods** used in the workshop):

- our brain consists of two hemispheres;
 - **the left hemisphere** is oriented towards logic, language, planning, criticism, etc. (in one word, it can be called **our rational part**);
 - **the right hemisphere** is oriented towards creativity, feeling, calmness, etc. (in one word, it can be called our **irrational part**);
- in our culture, we tend to use predominantly the left hemisphere;
- the right hemisphere is neglected (we do not use it as much as we could);
- the problem is that **logic and critical mind alone do not suffice** for resolving problems optimally, making holistic decisions, etc.;
- in order to hear **the voice of our intuition and creativity**, we should quiet down the constant chatter of our logical and/or critical mind;
- this can be achieved through **listening to music, meditation, visualisation, drawing**, etc.

Instructions for writing and drawing the book of life

a) To begin, I would like to invite you **to doodle on an empty sheet of paper for several minutes.**

b) Discussion; questions:

- How are you feeling?

- Do you feeling any different than before doodling?
- In what way?

Participants report experiencing positive feelings and emotions: joy, relaxation, delight, calmness, etc.

c) Writing something down or drawing something allows us to ground our thoughts, hence becoming aware of them and acknowledging to ourselves some stuff we otherwise would not have.

d) Writing and drawing the book of life:

- fold a sheet of white A4 paper in half, then fold it again,
- write down the title of your life on the front page,
- on the inner pages, organise your life in chapters (in writing and drawing),
- on the last page, write or draw the desired or expected future chapters of your life (desires, needs, etc.).

Feel free to include song lyrics, draw or sketch something, etc.

Writing and drawing the book of life is a powerful method of **self-reflection** and **self-exploration**.

5.4 Introduction of the presenter

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing contact with the participants • Sending them the message: »I am one of you, we are not really that different« • Possibly encouraging them to overcome their problems and obstacles by setting an example
Methods	Briefly sharing the story of the presenter's life, focusing on the aspects of education and employment
Materials	/
Conclusions	/

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

See subsection 2.10 Storytelling, p. 23.

+

Share with the participants as much as you are comfortable with. If you don't want to share anything, that is OK, too.

The presenter may introduce themselves before the participants' introductions or after them, depending on the group dynamics.

5.5 Introductions of the participants, presenting their books of life

Priority	A
Duration	30–60 minutes (depending on the number of participants, their willingness to talk about themselves, etc.)
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present their books of life to the group
Methods	Individual presentations
Materials	/
Conclusions	Feedback from the presenter or guided discussion after each presentation (if needed)

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

See subsection 2.10 Storytelling, p. 23.

+

Active listening gives the narrator **confirmation of their worth, a feeling that someone cares about them**, etc.

It is recommended that the listeners **avoid judging** the narrator or the contents. Experience shows that **judging only promotes more judging and resistance**, while **listening without judgment allows a desire for change to arise within the narrator**.

This is not to say that feedback from the presenter and/or other participants is not welcome or necessary, but rather that it should be given in a non-judgmental way.

Instructions for participants

»I would like to ask you to present your book of life to the group. You don't have to share everything you wrote or drew. Only share the contents you want to share.«

Each individual presents their book of life to the group provided they want to do so – **if they don't, we don't force them to**.

5.6 Recap of the presentations

Priority	B, C
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	Setting up the stage for the next portion of the workshop
Methods	2 options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking notes on a flip chart • verbal summarising only
Materials	Perhaps a flip chart
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you noticed your presentations having anything in common? • What do they have in common? • Why do you think this is the case? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

After all the presentations are completed, you can do a recap of what they had in common, if necessary.

6 SECOND SESSION

6.1 Discussing experiences from the previous session and the time between sessions

Priority	A
Duration	15–30 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express their experiences from the previous session • express their experiences from the time between sessions (in relation to the exercises and interventions from the previous session)
Methods	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you feel about the contents from the previous session? • Do they make sense to you? • Why? Why not? • Have you experienced any insight in relation to the exercises you carried out in the previous session? • Any interesting thoughts? • Any interesting effects? • Etc.
Materials	/
Conclusions	Perhaps taking notes on a flip chart

6.2 External and internal factors affecting us and our lives

Priority	A
Duration	2x: Group work: 10–15 minutes Presenting posters: 5 minutes per group Guided discussion and explanation: 10–15 minutes = about 60 minutes
Goals	Participants will realise that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are two main sources of influences and motivation affecting the individual
Methods	Exercise (group work): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making posters
Materials	Flip chart sheets, markers
Conclusions	Explanation

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Individuals are influenced by **external** as well as **internal factors**.

We will take some time to think about, explore and discuss these two groups.

6.2.1 External factors affecting us and our lives

Priority	A
Duration	Group work: 10–15 minutes Presenting posters: 5 minutes per group Guided discussion and explanation: 10–15 minutes = about 30 minutes
Goals	Participants will think about and discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extrinsic motivation, and • the system, thereby • taking extrinsic motivation off the agenda and proceeding to focus on inner resources of the participants
Methods	Exercise (group work): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a poster on the subject of external factors that affect us and our lives <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which external factors affect the behaviour and actions of individuals? • To what extent?
Materials	Flip chart sheets, markers
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which external factors affect individuals' decisions and lives? • To what extent do you think external factors influence the behaviour of individuals? • Why? • To what extent can the individual liberate themselves from the influence of external conditions? • How? <p>Explanation</p> <p>Final question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does complaining about politics, the system, employment service, employers, your partner, etc. help you in any way (even if it's justified)? Does it make you feel any better? Does it fill you with energy? Does it help you take the steps you want or need to take in your life?

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Also see the next chapter; external and internal factors are closely intertwined, hence it is impossible to separate them entirely.

We live primarily in the so-called cultural reality. This implies that we view ourselves and the world (more or less) through a lens of what is perceived as right and true in our culture and society.

What we know, see, feel and discover is predominantly what the culture we were born in allows us to see – more or less. We live, act and perceive in a way that is prescribed by the culture we were born in – more or less.

Within this context, there is certainly room for individuality and free will. The extent to which an individual will assert their individuality depends on social pressure on one hand and his desire for self-realisation on the other.

Socio-cultural beliefs and commandments regarding reality, what is possible and what is not, what we may and may not do, how we should behave, how we should live, what kind of decisions we should make, how we should feel when particular events occur, etc., **largely determine the individual's perceptions – and, as a consequence, their actions.**

These beliefs and commandments are reflected on many levels, such as the:

- economic,
- political,
- systemic,
- institutional,
- personal,
- »What will people/the neighbours say?«
- etc.

The sociocultural system is what it is. It is indisputable that **it is not even remotely the best one possible, nor is it fair to everybody.** It forces us to do many things that are not beneficial for us, things we do not want to do. More and more people are awakening to this realisation and to the fact that **the sociocultural system is not a »God-given« fact**, therefore it is subject to change.

The system certainly carries its share of responsibility for things being the way they are, e.g., that **you don't have a job right now.** The capitalist system we currently live in, for example, is designed in such a way that at no given moment is the entire working-age population employed. **There can never be a situation where all the people who are capable of working are employed.** This is one of the ways of maintaining **a high level of uncertainty and fear** within society which is beneficial for capital owners.

Unfortunately, not enough jobs are available – that's how it is.

Unfortunately, there is not a wide range of well paying jobs available – that's how it is.

This is particularly evident right now, in times of recession.

In addition to bringing about the state of affairs described above, the neoliberal capitalist system we currently live in keeps imposing a feeling of substantial individual guilt on people who have difficulties living in it.

Which is, of course, not fair.

The main reason for the situation of unemployment, both on the level of society/system and on the level of the individual, is associated with **the personal power of the individual**. The system has been suppressing or attempting to suppress the power of the individual because that is beneficial for it. In this way, we keep depending on the system; we have given the responsibility for ourselves to someone or something external, such as another person, the state, an institution, etc.

On the other hand, with the purpose of hiding its true intentions, the same system has been imposing on us a feeling that we are entirely responsible for our life situations.

This is both true and not true.

It is not true because we have handed over our power to the system, therefore it is not in our hands anymore.

At the same time, it is true because the power that has been handed over to someone or something external is actually our power.

We can take this power back any time.

The matter at hand is further complicated by the anthropological fact that we keep co-creating at a micro level the society we have been born in (and extensively shaped by through our way of thinking and acting). However, due to our having been programmed, this co-creation is, to a large extent, merely maintaining the system as it is.

All of us, including a majority of the politicians and employers, are somewhat lost and greatly confused due to the complexity of this intricate double game that is playing out between the system and ourselves.

On a declarative level, it is true that an unemployed person is responsible for their situation of unemployment, but the whole truth is that they gave up their power because they had been programmed to do so.

Additionally, all of us (politicians, employers and individuals) are currently influenced by the **general paradigm change**. The world is changing and as a consequence, so is our view of the world and/or vice versa. The economic crisis seems to be one aspect of these changes.

The world is changing; it is shifting towards joy, towards loosening the institutional frameworks, etc. Still, the old socio-cultural ways **keep fighting for survival** by amplifying their solutions, ways of operation, and perspectives. **The emerging friction is producing a great deal of extra tension that all of us have been feeling**, particularly the unemployed – people who have lost employment or cannot find one that would appeal to them.

A part of this tension is a substantial confusion regarding where we are headed or where we would like to be headed, both as individuals and as a society. This confusion and the accompanying fear

are due to the fact that **we are in the middle of the process**. The old ways have not entirely disappeared yet, and **new solutions are still unclear** to the majority of politicians, employers and individuals.

It seems that people who have lost their jobs are primarily the ones who mainly based their occupation and employment choices **on pain or fear for survival**. Because of this socially generated approach to themselves and their career, they had chosen education and jobs that did not make them happy. Since this is no longer appropriate on a broader level, losing employment forces these people to re-examine their career choices. A similar process is taking place in the area of interpersonal relations and partnership.

At the same time, increasingly less people feel the need to be involved in a very common mind game virtually all of us play, **“the game of the victim and the aggressor”** (Benz, internetni vir IV). The changes that have been taking place urge us to ditch this game – on the levels of individuals, institutions, and the state.

Due to these (and other) changes, an increasing number of people, including the registered unemployed, no longer conform to the old view that in order to ensure their bare survival, they should be **satisfied with employment that they don't feel an affinity to, that does not make them happy and does not bring them enough money**. The times of self-sacrificing or sacrificing for a greater social good are through.

The new paradigm differs greatly from the old paradigm that was present in socialism and continues to be present in capitalism of **sacrificing for a greater social good, i.e. demanding from individuals to deny their true desires, interests, needs, etc. in order to do whatever society wants or needs from them**.

Since **neither counsellors nor clients have a big impact** on extrinsic motivation and external drives, we will hereafter focus on our **inner power** and **intrinsic motivation** – the most important factor for counsellors as well as clients.

6.2.2 Internal factors affecting us and our lives

Priority	A
Duration	Group work: 10–15 minutes Presenting posters: 5 minutes per group Guided discussion and explanation: 10–15 minutes = about 30 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become aware that the main field where they can take action is the inner rather than the outer field • focus on intrinsic motivation
Methods	Exercise (group work): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a poster on the subject of internal factors that affect us and our lives Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which internal factors affect the behaviour and actions of individuals? • To what extent?
Materials	Flip chart sheets, markers
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which internal factors affect individuals' decisions and lives? • To what extent do you think internal factors influence the behaviour of individuals? • Why? • To what extent can the individual liberate themselves from the influence of internal factors? • How? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Although the social system we live in is what it is, we hold considerable power to create our lives. The problem is that we are not aware of this power – **our own power** to create our lives. We were taught that our power is limited and that it needs to be **validated by the outer world**. We have given a big part of our power to the outer world, i.e. the world of society, politics, economy, etc.

The social system we live in **has two faces**. While constantly attempting to **limit or diminish our power** with the purpose of pursuing its own interests, it also keeps imposing on us **excessive guilt** for »not having been employed for an indefinite period of time for the last 10 years«, etc.

Our main predicament is **our belief that we only have very limited power to create our own lives.**

Granted, the power of individuals to create their own lives is somewhat limited. It is limited by the socio-cultural beliefs trying to convince us **that we, as individuals, are weak**, and that we should

give in to what society expects from us.

However, it is not really as limited as it may seem to us.

Saying that each and every one of us possesses a great deal of inner power to create their own life is not meant to imply, to exaggerate a bit, that every one of us has the capability (or desire) to start their own business. The fact is that **not all of us were born to be self-employed.**

We are, however, capable of co-creating a job or employment for ourselves using »the energy we radiate into the world« (to an extent) – which is not limited to self-employment.

It is becoming clear that whatever is best for the individual is also best for the society as a whole. We are not talking about hyper-egoism, as demonstrated by tycoons, for example here, but rather about the so-called **enlightened egoism.**

Enlightened egoism allows individuals to take care of themselves first, before tending to the needs of others and of society. How can we take care of others (emotionally, financially, etc.) if we do not take care of ourselves first? We shouldn't carry the responsibilities of others on our shoulders, as doing so helps neither them nor us. The most important thing for each individual is what they truly desire for themselves, not what others desire for them or expect from them.

When we truly live from ourselves – from our true potential, we are making the biggest contribution possible to society, too.

It may be argued that the situation of unemployment is, in a sense, a call for contemplation, giving the individual a chance to think about **what they really want to do in life, to identify beliefs and emotional knots that prevent them from doing that, and to think about their own power.**

A good many unemployed people simply don't know what they really want to do in their lives. At the same time, there are many limiting beliefs – societal as well as personal – preventing them from achieving what they desire.

We are influenced by both internal and external factors, not merely the external ones as we were mostly taught to believe. At the same time, not everything in our lives depends entirely on us. This could be the case if our socio-cultural framework allowed it, but it does not, at least not yet.

However, all of us co-create our socio-cultural system in several ways, including through what we agree to (and not agree to). Each of us has the power to influence and/or change things simply through what they agree to or not agree to.

The following exercises will help you:

- attain better knowledge of self, and
- transcend some of the limiting beliefs that are holding you back.

6.3 Practising setting goals and identifying the steps needed to achieve them

Priority	A
Duration	<p>First option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> doodling: 3–5 minutes drawing or describing a goal they would like to achieve: 3–5 minutes writing down the steps needed to achieve the goal: 5–10 minutes = about 15 minutes <p>Second option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> writing down a goal they would like to achieve writing down the steps needed to achieve the goal: 5–10 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> set a short-term goal identify the steps needed to achieve this goal
Methods	Individual work
Materials	Paper, coloured pencils, pen or pencil
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did it go? Did you have any difficulties? What kind? Why do you think you had difficulties? Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

- Choose a goal you want to achieve today, i.e. a particularly short-term goal,
- close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, relax, and try to imagine yourself in a situation where you have already reached this goal:
 - What are you seeing?
 - How are you feeling?
- write down your goal or draw it,
- write down the steps, i.e. everything that needs to be done so you can achieve your goal.

6.4 Imagination

Priority	A
Duration	5 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get acquainted with the theoretical and experiential basis of imagination/visualisation
Methods	Explanation
Materials	/
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this make sense to you? • Do you think it might work? • Do you have any experience with meditation and/or imagination? • Would you like to give it a try?

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

See subsection 2.13 Imagination, p. 28.

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We experience our inner world as something **perfectly natural**. We enter it in our **dreams** and when we're **daydreaming**, indulging in **imagination, creating**, etc. Our inner world is **a part of us**. Apart from potential nightmares, **we don't have any negative experience** with it.

The only difference between our usual way of entering our inner world through dreams and fantasy and guided imagination is that the latter allows us to enter it fully conscious and with a specific intention.

Our intention is to resolve our chosen problem on an **inner/symbolic**/energy level. After this inner resolution, it is highly likely that the problem will be resolved in the outer world as well.

We are often unaware of the programs that are running in our inner world. Guided imagination allows us to **express certain contents to ourselves in a kind and effective way, to resolve a problem, to repair an old program that has been causing us pain, etc.**

This is how these things work. They really work.

»The subconscious can be accessed **through symbols and images**« (Gütlinger, 2011, p. 22). Our inner world consists of and is revealed to us through symbols and images.

6.4.1 Changing inner images

Priority	A
Duration	10 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take part in a guided imagination exercise, enabling them to • resolve a problem or predicament from their life on a symbolic level, in their inner world, which will • initiate a process of resolving the problem in the outer world as well
Methods	Guided imagination
Materials	/
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you encounter any problems? • What kind of feelings did you experience? • Does the exercise make sense to you? • What kind of effects do you expect from this exercise? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Experience shows that a small number of participants might not see inner images during their first imagination exercise. These participants need some practice. As a rule, all participants see inner images during their second imagination exercise, which takes place in the second session.

Instructions for participants

Choose a problem or predicament from your life that troubles you and you want to resolve it, but you are not sure how exactly. Start by choosing a minor problem. The problem does not have to be related to employment (we will get there in our next sessions).

Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and relax.

Guided imagination (Gütlinger, 2011, p. 25-27)

When we picture a subject or concern from our lives in our imagination, **an image appears**. It can be either **symbolic** or **concrete**. This image or symbol shows us **how our subconscious perceives a certain issue**. It is merely an image, **free of judgment, evaluations or explanations**.

Choose **one subject or concern from your life**. It does not have to be related to your situation of unemployment.

When you think about, for example, your job, **what image arises in your fantasy?** An office? A landscape? A big rock? Something else?

Or, try thinking about **your relationship with your partner. What symbol arises** when you think about it?

You can do this with anything that is troubling you at the moment: an exam, your plans, your next project ... whatever you wish.

Allow your subconscious to show you an image regarding your chosen subject.

If an image does not arise spontaneously, do not worry. If this is the case, just **choose a symbol that corresponds to your current situation. It may as well be something that is in front of you**, such as a desk, an indoor plant, or a bird on the balcony. Such symbols **are just as effective** as images in your imagination.

When you have chosen an external symbol, continue **using it as a starting point for further work in your fantasy.** The external image (desk, plant, bird ...) **should stay as it is.**

It does not really matter whether you use an external or internal symbol. **The image you are seeing at the moment is a symbolic representation of your chosen subject, provided by your subconscious at this moment.**

The image represents your chosen subject along with your feelings, thoughts, expectations and experiences associated with it.

Note: there is **no need for you to interpret** this symbol. It is difficult to translate the language of images into words. We do not need to know why the bird is singing or why we are seeing an image of a small village in the mountains. If you are seeing a cluttered desk, just let it stay this way for the time being.

Take a good look at your symbol and allow the image to simply be there in your imagination.

What does the symbolic representation of your subject look like?

Which details (images, forms, sounds, etc.) do you recognise in your symbolic image?

Is there anything you do not like about your image?

Some people **see rich and diverse images** in their fantasy, some **hear sounds**, some others can **smell very well** ... Do not worry about the way your subconscious communicates with you; **it does not matter** which sensory channel it chooses.

It is important that **watching your image feels right to you, that it is just like you want it to be.**
Does the image feel harmonious?

If your inner image contains anything that **you do not like, start changing the image. Make it prettier.**

Whatever you do with your image, whether you **remove any elements, change colours, resize it, modify anything**, etc., do so in order to make your inner image more appealing to you. You might trim the tree, paint the house, replace the roofing, let the fruit grow, move the desk next to the pool – **there are no limits to your imagination!** The only thing that matters is that every change you make **feels harmonious to you**, that it feels good to you.

You may do anything you like, as long as your image is becoming increasingly harmonious with every change you make.

Keep modifying your inner image **until you are truly pleased with it**, until it brings you joy. **Then memorise your improved image, paying attention to details.**

That way you will be able to recall it whenever you would like to – before going to sleep, while driving, while waiting in a waiting room, etc.

Doing so, you present your subconscious with the task of bringing this image to your everyday reality. This effect is real – it is something that actually happens.

This is a way of communicating with your subconscious, reassuring it there is a harmonious, beautiful solution to every one of your problems.

After the imagination exercise, we can ask the participants to draw the harmonious image they have created in their imagination. Experience shows this additional task is very welcome. It enables the participants to imprint the image in their mind, making it easier for themselves to recall it several times in the following days, thus reminding their subconscious to resolve the problem.

7 THIRD SESSION

7.1. Discussing experiences from the previous session and the time between sessions

Priority	A
Duration	15–30 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express their experiences from the previous session • express their experiences from the time between sessions (in relation to the exercises and interventions from the previous session)
Methods	<p>Guided discussion;</p> <p>questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you feel about the contents from the previous session? • Do they make sense to you? • Why? Why not? • Have you experienced any insight in relation to the exercises you carried out in the previous session? • Any interesting thoughts? • Any interesting effects? • Etc.
Materials	/
Conclusions	Perhaps taking notes on a flip chart

7.2 Time orientation

Priority	B, C
Duration	<p>Explanation: 10–15 minutes</p> <p>Self-assessment: 5 minutes</p> <p>= about 10–15 minutes</p>
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become acquainted with the concept of time orientation • become aware of their own time orientation/time profile
Methods	<p>Explanation</p> <p>Individual work</p>
Materials	Paper, pen or pencil
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion;</p> <p>questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you have any difficulties assessing your time orientation/time profile? • Why? • What is your dominant time orientation? • Why do you think this is so? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

See subsection 2.15 Time orientation, p. 29 – 33.

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There are five time orientations:

- past
 - **past-negative**
 - **past-positive**
- present
 - **present-hedonism**
 - **present-fatalism**
- **future.**

All five perspectives are expressed in each of us to various degrees, with some of them possibly dominating the others.

Instructions for participants

I would like to ask you to:

- think about your time perspective profile, trying to determine your dominant time perspective, and
- write it down.

Alternatively, Zimbardo Time Paradox Inventory (ZTPI) can be used.

7.3 Each step towards the goal counts

Priority	A
Duration	5 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become aware of their potential problem with feeling overwhelmed by their end goal
Methods	Explanation
Materials	/
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this happen to you? • Do you recognise yourself in this situation? • Do you have difficulties with this? • How does it feel? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Dreams, desires and attitudes give us clarity about what we want. Nonetheless, merely dreaming and fantasizing is not enough to realise our dreams and desires.

Achieving goals needs to be approached deliberately and with discipline.

Each step towards the goal counts.

It is important to reach our goals, otherwise we are merely wandering. Reaching a goal makes us feel good about ourselves, helps us advance, etc. It is, however, important to **stay focused on the current step as you go along**, trying to enjoy each step as much as possible.

Getting too focused on the goal, **wanting to achieve it immediately** and/or **fearing the number of steps and their difficulty** take away the energy and courage of the individual, making them feel paralyzed in their endeavours and preventing them from moving forward.

This is not a rare occurrence.

We need to feel a sense of progress and success, which can be achieved by dividing a long journey into small steps and focusing on one step at a time.

7.4 Creating one's reality; the power of our beliefs and emotions

Priority	A
Duration	15–30 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will become familiar with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concept of quantum field • our power to co-create our reality • how they stand in their own way with certain limiting beliefs, thoughts and emotional states
Methods	Explanation
Materials	/
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think about this? • Does it make sense to you? • Do you recognise this in your life? • In what way? • Can you share some examples?

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Beginning to talk about these aspects of life with our clients will do a lot of good on its own. Our experience with the workshop so far shows that participants feel an affinity to this way of perceiving reality and themselves.

See subsection 2.5 Creation, creating one's life, p. 13 – 17.

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The world without is a reflection of the world within. What appears without is what has been found within. The world without reflects the circumstances and the conditions of the consciousness within. Harmony in the world within will be reflected in the world without by harmonious conditions, agreeable surroundings, the best of everything (Haanel, 2008, p. 21).

We cannot express powers that we do not possess. **The only way by which we may secure possession of power is to become conscious of power**, and we can never become conscious of power until we learn that all power is from within (ibid.).

Thoughts and emotions

Our thoughts and emotions are **closely intertwined**. A thought is usually followed by a corresponding emotion. When we think of something unpleasant, an unpleasant emotion arises; when we think of something pleasant, it is followed by a pleasant emotion.

We can only think one thought at a time; it can be either optimistic or pessimistic. We can only feel one emotion at a time; it can be either pleasant or unpleasant.

We were taught that we do not have any control over our thoughts and emotions, that we are their powerless victims, which is not true. It is becoming increasingly clear that we can choose which thoughts we want to think and which emotions we want to feel. **To a large extent, we have the power to choose.**

Of course, it can be hard to change the programming that was instilled in us.

But it is not even remotely impossible!

What we attract or create in our lives largely depends on our thoughts and emotions. **Pleasant ones create pleasant experiences; unpleasant ones create unpleasant experiences.**

The main limiting factor in our lives is **fear**; it is the source of all our negative thoughts and emotions.

Cultivating gratitude

Cultivating a sense of gratitude is a very effective approach for advancing in life. It is about being grateful for everything we have in our lives, including things that we perceive as bad or negative.

As far as negative things and situations are concerned, the act of gratitude actually **allows us to become aware of why certain unwanted situations have occurred in our lives**, thereby opening the door to resolving these situations. **Awareness is followed by acceptance, and acceptance is followed by change. We cannot change anything unless we accept it. Acceptance expands our awareness of the reasons for different events and situations and the needs behind them.**

The effects of gratitude are opposite to those of fighting.

The trouble with fighting is that **the more we fight something, the stronger it becomes**. We have somehow forgotten this ancient wisdom. Carl Gustav Jung, among others, wrote about this as well.

If you turn your life into a campaign against things, **the things you fight will expand**. Decide what you are for (Matthews, 2000).

We were taught otherwise. We grow up believing that we have to struggle against things we don't want in our lives.

Acceptance does not mean agreeing with everything that befalls us in life – **far from it. We may disagree** with things, but fighting them furiously is not wise. **Focus on what you want instead of fighting what you do not want.**

Gratitude and acceptance of the negative do not imply giving up, such as »If I am grateful that my bank account is overdrawn, it will stay this way forever.« Actually, it is just the opposite.

As far as all the positive things in our lives are concerned, cultivating gratitude opens the path for receiving more of them.

Twenty keys of conscious creation of our own reality (Braden, 2010, p. 220-222)

- **Key 1:** The Divine Matrix is the **container** that holds the universe, the bridge between all things, and the mirror that shows us what we have created.
- **Key 2:** Everything in our world is **connected to everything else**.
- **Key 3:** To tap the force of the universe itself, **we must see ourselves as part of the world** rather than separate from it.

- **Key 4:** Once something is joined, it is always connected, whether it remains physically linked or not.
- **Key 5:** The act of **focusing our consciousness is an act of creation.** Consciousness creates!
- **Key 6: We have all the power** we need to create all the changes we choose.
- **Key 7: The focus of our awareness becomes the reality of our world.**
- **Key 8:** To simply say that we choose a new reality is not enough!
- **Key 9: Feeling is the language that “speaks” to the Divine Matrix.** Feel as though your goal is accomplished and your prayer is already answered.
- **Key 10:** Not just any feeling will do. **The feelings that create must be without ego and judgment.**
- **Key 11: We must become in our lives the things that we choose to experience as our world.**
- **Key 12:** We are not bound by the laws of physics as we know them today.
- **Key 13:** In a holographic “something,” every piece of the something mirrors the whole something.
- **Key 14:** The universally connected hologram of consciousness promises that the instant we create our good wishes and prayers, they are **already received at their destination.**
- **Key 15:** Through the hologram of consciousness, **a little change in our lives is mirrored everywhere in our world.**
- **Key 16:** The minimum number of people required to “jump-start” a change in consciousness is the square root of 1% of a population.
- **Key 17:** The Divine Matrix serves as the mirror in our world of the relationships that we create in our beliefs.
- **Key 18:** The root of our “negative” experiences may be reduced to one of three universal fears (or a combination of them): **abandonment, low self-worth, or lack of trust.**
- **Key 19:** Our true beliefs are mirrored in our most intimate relationships.
- **Key 20:** We must become in our lives the very things that we choose to experience in our world.

7.5 Becoming aware of one's beliefs about the world (basic idea by Inelia Benz, internet source IV)

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become aware of some of their beliefs about the world
Methods	Individual work
Materials	Paper, pen or pencil, perhaps coloured pencils
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you manage to write down some of your beliefs about the world? • Did you have any difficulties doing so? • What kind of difficulties? • What kind of beliefs do you have about the world (in general)? • Would anybody like to present their beliefs to the group? • Do the rest of you have similar beliefs? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

I would like to ask you to

- think about your beliefs about the world, such as »The world is cruel«; »The world is beautiful«; »The world is a magical place«; »The world is kind«; »The world does not give a damn about me«, etc.,
- write them down on a piece of paper,
- with each belief, pay attention to the emotions and feelings it evokes,
- write them down as well (next to the corresponding beliefs),
- if you feel like it, you can also draw them, use colours, etc.

You will not be required to read or present your beliefs to the group.

7.6 Becoming aware of one's beliefs about oneself

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become aware of some of their beliefs about themselves
Methods	Individual work
Materials	Paper, pen or pencil, perhaps coloured pencils
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you manage to write down some of your beliefs about the world? • Did you have any difficulties doing so? • What kind of difficulties? • What kind of beliefs do you have about the world (in general)? • Would anybody like to present their beliefs to the group? • Do the rest of you have similar beliefs? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

I would like to ask you to

- think about your beliefs about yourself, such as »**I am a good person**«; »**I am a unique human being**«; »**I am stupid**«; »**I cannot do anything right**«, etc.,
- **write them down on a piece of paper,**
- with each belief, **pay attention to the emotions and feelings** it evokes,
- **write them down as well (next to the corresponding beliefs),**
- if you feel like it, you can also draw them, use colours, etc.

You will not be required to read or present your beliefs to the group.

7.7 Becoming aware of one's beliefs about employment

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become aware of some of their beliefs about employment and job seeking
Methods	Individual work
Materials	Paper, pen or pencil, perhaps coloured pencils
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you manage to write down some of your beliefs about employment? • Did you have any difficulties doing so? • What kind of difficulties? • What kind of beliefs do you have about employment (in general)? • Would anybody like to present their beliefs to the group? • Do the rest of you have similar beliefs? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

I would like to ask you to

- think about your beliefs about employment, such as »**There is no job for me**«; »**The labour market is cruel**«; »**The only way to get a job is to know the right people**«; »**My dream job is out there somewhere**«; »**There is a job for me, too**«, etc.,
- **write them down on a piece of paper,**
- with each belief, **pay attention to the emotions and feelings** it evokes,
- **write them down as well (next to the corresponding beliefs),**
- if you feel like it, you can also draw them, use colours, etc.

You will not be required to read or present your beliefs to the group.

Remember to bring the three lists of your beliefs to our next session.

7.8 Seven steps to reaching one’s goals

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get acquainted with recommendations for setting goals (seven steps to reaching one’s goals)
Methods	Explanation
Materials	Flip chart
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this make sense to you? • Do you follow these steps to achieving goals? • Which steps do you follow? • Which steps do you not follow? • Why not? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Present briefly (or as needed) seven steps to reaching one’s goals (McGraw, 2002)

Step 1:

- **Express your goal in terms of specific events or behaviours.**
- Unlike dreams, which tend to gloss over important details, or omit them altogether, goals leave no room for confusion about that which is desired.
- **In order for a goal to be attainable, it must be operationally defined.** In other words, it must be expressed in terms of the events or behaviour that constitute the goal.
- For a dream to become a goal, it has to be specifically defined in terms of operations, meaning what will be done. So decide what it is you want. Identify and define your goal **with great specificity**. Know the **answers to the following**:
 - What are the specific behaviors or operations that make up the goal?
 - What will you be doing or not doing when you are “living the goal”?
 - How will you recognize the goal when you have it?
 - How will you feel when you have it?
- **Bottom line: Your answers to these questions, expressed in concrete detail, will become essential signposts, telling you whether or not you are effectively moving toward your goal, or whether you need to make a midcourse correction.**

Step 2:

- **Express your goal in terms that can be measured.**
- Unlike dreams, goals must be expressed in terms of outcomes that are measurable, observable, and quantifiable.
- In order for something to rise to the level of a manageable goal, you have got to be able to

determine your level of progress. You need to know how much of the goal you have attained.

- You have to have some way of knowing whether you have, in fact, successfully arrived at where you wanted to be.
- In the dreamworld, you might state, »I want a wonderful and rewarding life.« In the world of goals and realities, you would define wonderful and rewarding with the same kind of specificity we stated in Step 1, but also in terms that are measurable. That is, you would express them in such a way that you could determine how much »wonderful« you have, and how »rewarding« it is.
- Relevant questions might be:
 - In order for your life to be wonderful, where would you live?
 - In order for it to be wonderful, who would you spend your life with?
 - How much money would you have?
 - In what type of work or activities would you be involved?
 - How would you behave?
 - How much time would you spend doing certain activities?
 - Etc.
- **Bottom line: Express your goal in terms of the measurable outcomes that will let you know whether you are approaching it, how far you still have to go, and whether you have obtained your goal or not. Test your goal by asking the same kinds of questions about it as are shown above.**

Step 3:

- **Assign a timeline to your goal.**
- You will obtain your goal only if you are on a timeline and commit to a certain date. Once you have determined precisely what it is you want, you must decide on a timeframe for having it.
- Unlike dreams, which are vague in both definition and time, goals require a particular schedule or calendar for their achievement.
- A dream world statement might be, »I want to be rich some day.« A statement in the world of goals and realities sounds like, »**I want to have achieved an income of €100,000 per year by December 31 in the year 2012.**«
- By making a schedule or timeline, you impose **project status** on the goal; the deadline you have created fosters a sense of urgency or purpose, which in turn will serve as an important motivator. **Goals involve time-sensitive requirements that do not allow for inertia or procrastination.**
- Thinking in terms of a timeline allows you to assess the realism of your plan, and to determine the intensity of what you must do to reach your goal.
- **Bottom line: You will obtain your goal only if you are on a timeline and commit to a certain date. Once you have determined precisely what it is you want, you must decide on a timeframe for having it.**

Step 4:

- **Choose a goal you can control.**
- Unlike dreams, which allow you to fantasize about events over which you have no control, goals have to do with aspects of your existence that you control and can therefore manipulate.
- A dream world statement might be, »My dream is to have a beautiful, white Christmas.« A more

realistic statement might be, »I am going to create a nostalgic and traditional atmosphere for our family at Christmastime.« Obviously, since you cannot control the weather, snowfall is not an appropriate goal. On the other hand, you can control such things as the decorations, the music, and the food you offer during the holidays.

- Goals have to do with aspects of your existence that you control and can therefore manipulate.
- **Bottom line: In identifying your goal, strive for what you can create, not for what you can't.**

Step 5:

- **Plan and program a strategy that will get you to your goal.**
- Unlike dreams, where the objective is merely longed for, goals involve a strategic plan for getting there.
- Figuring out a strategy to get from point A to point B can be outcome-determinative. To pursue a goal seriously requires that you realistically assess the obstacles and resources involved, and that you create a strategy for navigating that reality.
- One of the great benefits of having a well-planned, well programmed strategy is that it liberates you from a pointless and misguided reliance on willpower.
- Remember, **the notion that you've got to have willpower is a myth.** Willpower is unreliable emotional fuel: experienced at a fever pitch, it may temporarily energize your efforts; once the emotion is gone, however, the train stops. There are times when **you do not feel motivated**, when you do not feel energized. The only way to guarantee forward movement during those downtimes is to design **a solid strategic plan**; your environment, your schedule and your accountability must be programmed in such a way that all three support you, **long after the emotional high is gone.**
- Suppose, for example, that your goal is to make physical exercise a regular part of your life. It's easy to get out there and exercise when you're all fired up about your new program. But if it is emotion (willpower) that fuels your effort, what happens on that cold morning in February when you find that you really do not care about exercising and would much rather sleep? Willpower is gone, but the need remains. Only programming your environment in such a way that it is difficult or impossible not to do what you have committed to do will carry you through.
- Even the simplest programming can be dramatically effective. For example, I am invariably hungry when I come home at the end of the day. For the longest time, I would enter the house through a door that led me through the kitchen. I would tell myself repeatedly that I wasn't going to snack before dinner. Sometimes the emotion would carry me, and sometimes it would not. So, to program myself for success, I just started entering the house through another door that did not take me through the kitchen. The route I took had no opportunities for failure, and I got past that reactive eating that had plagued me so. Believe me, this method is a lot more pleasant, and effective, than relying on the fickle emotion of willpower.
- Suppose you wanted to **read and study a five-hundred-page book in a thirty-day period.** Notice, first of all, what makes this a workable goal: it's specific, it's measurable, and it has a timeline. Determining how many pages you need to read per day would be a simple arithmetic problem. **The real challenge would be to make a plan that would program you and your world for literally getting those pages read.** This would require:
 - Identifying how **much time per day you would require** to read the specified number of pages.
 - Identifying **the specific time, each day**, when the reading would take place. (Scheduling is important here. Approaching it from the standpoint of willpower will not get it done. Setting

aside the specific time of day, and protecting that time, will get it done.)

- Identifying **the physical location** where you can read without interruption or distraction, and where you can be sure you will be present at the appointed time in your busy day.
- The significance of programming is that it recognizes **that your life is full of temptations and opportunities to fail. Those temptations and opportunities compete with your more constructive and task-oriented behaviour. Without programming, you will find it much harder to stay the course.**
- **Bottom line: Make a plan, work your plan, and you will attain your goal.** Rely on your strategy, planning, and programming, not on your willpower. Arrange your environment in such a way that it »pulls for« that result that you desire. Identify those places, times, situations, and circumstances that set you up for failure. Reprogram those things so that they cannot compete with what you really want.

Step 6:

- **Define your goal in terms of steps.**
- Unlike dreams, whose outcomes we pretend will just »happen« one day, goals are carefully broken down into measurable steps that lead, ultimately, to the desired outcome. A dream world statement might be, »I am going to drop down to a size eight from a size eighteen by summer-time.« A reality-based statement would instead be, »I will take certain steps to lose three pounds per week for the next twenty weeks. At the end of that time, I will be wearing a size eight.«
- **Major life changes don't just happen; they happen one step at a time.**
- **When we are considering our goal in its entirety, it can seem so overwhelming as to be paralyzing.**
- **But it begins to look like a decidedly manageable goal when broken down into steps.**
- **Bottom line: Steady progress, through well-chosen, realistic, interval steps, produces results in the end. Know what those steps are before you set out.**

Step 7:

- **Create accountability for your progress toward your goal.**
- Unlike dreams, which can be entertained at will, goals are structured in such a way that you have some **measure of accountability** at each and every interval step.
- In the dream world, you might decide that your child should have all B's on his or her report card by the end of the grading period. In the world of goals and realities, that same child would have step-by-step accountability, perhaps reporting to you or a teacher every Friday afternoon to re-view his or her results on all homework, quizzes, and tests. Faced with this interim accountability, the child is now motivated to perform and adjust, since he or she now expects to be scrutinized on a weekly basis.
- **Without accountability, people are apt to con themselves,** failing to recognize poor performance in time to adjust and keep from falling short.
- So consider who in your circle of family or friends might serve as your »teammate«, the person **to whom you commit to make periodic reports on your progress.**
- **We all respond better if we know that somebody is checking up on us, and that there are consequences for our failure to perform.**
- **Bottom line:** Create meaningful accountability for your actions or inactions.

7.9 Practising setting goals and identifying the steps needed to achieve them

Priority	A
Duration	<p>First option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doodling: 3–5 minutes • drawing or describing a goal they would like to achieve: 3–5 minutes • writing down the steps needed to achieve the goal: 5–10 minutes = about 15 minutes <p>Second option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing down a goal they would like to achieve • writing down the steps needed to achieve the goal: 5–10 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set a short-term goal • identify the steps needed to achieve this goal
Methods	Individual work
Materials	Paper, coloured pencils, pen or pencil
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you have any difficulties? • What kind? • Why do you think you had difficulties? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

- Choose a goal you would like to achieve **within a week**.
- **Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, relax and try to imagine yourself in a situation where you have already reached this goal:**
 - **What are you seeing?**
 - **How are you feeling?**
- Write down your goal or draw it.
- Write down the steps, i.e. everything that needs to be done so you can achieve your goal.

7.10 Changing inner images

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take part in a guided imagination exercise, enabling them to • resolve a problem or predicament from their life on a symbolic level, in their inner world, which will • initiate a process of resolving the problem in the outer world as well
Methods	Guided imagination
Materials	/
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions (after the imagination exercise):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you have any difficulties? • What kind of feelings did you experience? • Does the exercise make sense to you? • What kind of effects do you expect? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

Choose a problem or predicament from your life that troubles you and you want to resolve it, but you are not sure how exactly. Choose a somewhat greater problem if you feel like it. The problem does not have to be related to employment (but it can be).

See instructions for guided imagination, p. 52 – 54.

8 FOURTH SESSION

8.1. Discussing experiences from the previous session and the time between sessions

Priority	A
Duration	15–30 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express their experiences from the previous session • express their experiences from the time between sessions (in relation to the exercises and interventions from the previous session)
Methods	<p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you feel about the contents from the previous session? • Do they make sense to you? • Why? Why not? • Have you experienced any insight in relation to the exercises you carried out in the previous session? • Any interesting thoughts? • Any interesting effects? • Etc.
Materials	/
Conclusions	Perhaps taking notes on a flip chart

8.2 Creating positive/less limiting beliefs about the world (basic idea by Inelia Benz, internet source IV)

Priority	A
Duration	5–10 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transform their negative and limiting beliefs about the world into positive and non-limiting ones on a symbolic level
Methods	Individual work
Materials	The list of their beliefs about the world (from the previous session), pen or pencil, perhaps coloured pencils
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Were you able to identify your negative or limiting beliefs about the world? • Have you transformed all your negative and limiting beliefs? • If not, why not? • Would anyone like to present the beliefs they have transformed? • Have the rest of you transformed similar beliefs in a similar way? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

I would like to ask you to:

- take the list of your beliefs about the world from the previous session,
- highlight the beliefs you **identify as negative or limiting or do not make you feel good,**
- **circle them with a red pen or coloured pencil, then cross them off with a line inside the circle,**
- transform these beliefs **into positive or non-limiting ones so that they make you feel good,**
- **write them down,**
- **read them out to yourself quietly or in a low voice once or twice,**
- if you fell like it, you can also draw them, use colours, etc.

You will not be required to read or present your work to the group.

Some of the participants might not be able to transform certain beliefs into less limiting ones. Virtually all of us have difficulties with this, but that is alright. They might be able to transform them in some time.

8.3 Creating positive/less limiting beliefs about oneself

Priority	A
Duration	5–10 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> transform their negative and limiting beliefs about themselves into positive and non-limiting ones on a symbolic level
Methods	Individual work
Materials	The list of their beliefs about the world (from the previous session), pen or pencil, perhaps coloured pencils
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did it go? Were you able to identify your negative or limiting beliefs about yourself? Have you transformed all your negative and limiting beliefs? If not, why not? Would anyone like to present the beliefs they have transformed? Have the rest of you transformed similar beliefs in a similar way? Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

I would like to ask you to:

- take the list of your beliefs about yourself from the previous session,
- highlight the beliefs you **identify as negative or limiting or do not make you feel good,**
- circle them with a red pen or coloured pencil, then cross them off with a line inside the circle,**
- transform these beliefs **into positive or non-limiting ones so that they make you feel good,**
- write them down,**
- read them out to yourself quietly or in a low voice once or twice,**
- if you fell like it, you can also draw them, use colours, etc.

You will not be required to read or present your work to the group.

Some of the participants might not be able to transform certain beliefs into less limiting ones. Virtually all of us have difficulties with this, but that is alright. They might be able to transform them in some time.

8.4 Creating positive/less limiting beliefs about employment

Priority	A
Duration	5–10 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> transform their negative and limiting beliefs about themselves into positive and non-limiting ones on a symbolic level
Methods	Individual work
Materials	The list of their beliefs about the world (from the previous session), pen or pencil, perhaps coloured pencils
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did it go? Were you able to identify your negative or limiting beliefs about yourself? Have you transformed all your negative and limiting beliefs? If not, why not? Would anyone like to present the beliefs they have transformed? Have the rest of you transformed similar beliefs in a similar way? Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

I would like to ask you to:

- take the list of your beliefs about employment from the previous session,
- highlight the beliefs you **identify as negative or limiting or do not make you feel good,**
- circle them with a red pen or coloured pencil, then cross them off with a line inside the circle,**
- transform these beliefs **into positive or non-limiting ones so that they make you feel good,**
- write them down,**
- read them out to yourself quietly or in a low voice once or twice,**
- if you fell like it, you can also draw them, use colours, etc.

You will not be required to read or present your work to the group.

Some of the participants might not be able to transform certain beliefs into less limiting ones. Virtually all of us have difficulties with this, but that is alright. They might be able to transform them in some time.

8.5 What is my general life purpose or mission in life?

Priority	A
Duration	Doodling: 5 minutes Drawing: 15 minutes Guided discussion: 10–15 minutes = about 30 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore their general life purpose • think about their mission in life • become (somewhat) aware of their mission in life
Methods	Drawing one’s life purpose
Materials	Coloured pencils, white paper
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What emotions did you experience while drawing? • Does your life purpose surprise you? • Did you have any difficulties drawing? • Why do you think you had them? • Do you live your life according to your purpose? • Did you experience yearning while drawing? • How many of you did experience yearning? • Etc. <p>Perhaps taking notes on a flip chart, summarising</p> <p>Explanation</p>

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

See subsection 2.14 Life purpose, mission, p. 28 – 29.

+

It is very empowering to have a purpose in life. However, this is not a state, **but rather a life-long process.**

Despite this issue being one of the most important aspects of every individual, we rarely touch upon it with the unemployed. Each of us has their life purpose or mission.

Each of us has unique talents and can therefore carry out different tasks, work and missions. Our life purpose is largely connected to our work, but there is more to it.

Life purpose is the main driving force for each of us. However, not all of us are in touch with it or aware of it. Drawing it can help us become more aware of it.

Experience shows that all participants respond positively to this exercise.

Instructions for participants

»Please draw your general life purpose or mission in life. Draw it in a way that feels close to you.« Some people prefer to draw abstract drawings and others realistic ones.

When the participants are done drawing, it is recommended that we ask them to define their life purpose and **write it down in one short sentence** (short being the operative word). This ensures that both aspects of learning are covered – the irrational as well as the rational/verbal.

After the exercise, we can ask the client some short questions, thereby helping them become aware of certain things (see table above).

Individuals experience pleasant feelings and emotions, such as »**warmth, joy, freedom, playfulness, peace, happiness, love, yearning**«, etc.

8.6 Practising setting goals and identifying the steps needed to achieve them

Priority	A
Duration	<p>First option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doodling: 3–5 minutes • drawing or describing a goal they would like to achieve: 3–5 minutes • writing down the steps needed to achieve the goal: 5–10 minutes = about 15 minutes <p>Second option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing down a goal they would like to achieve • writing down the steps needed to achieve the goal: 5–10 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set a short-term or mid-term goal • identify the steps needed to achieve this goal
Methods	Individual work
Materials	Paper, coloured pencils, pen or pencil
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you have any difficulties? • What kind? • Why do you think you had difficulties? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

- Choose a goal you would like to achieve **within a month**,

- **close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, relax and try to imagine yourself in a situation where you have already reached this goal:**
 - **What are you seeing?**
 - **How are you feeling?**
- write down your goal or draw it,
- write down the steps, i.e. everything that needs to be done so you can achieve your goal.

8.7 Changing inner images

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take part in a guided imagination exercise, enabling them to • resolve a problem or predicament from their life on a symbolic level, in their inner world, which will • allow them to initiate a process of resolving the problem in the outer world as well
Methods	Guided imagination
Materials	/
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions (after the imagination exercise):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you encounter any problems? • What kind of feelings did you experience? • Does the exercise make sense to you? • What kind of effects do you expect from this exercise? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

Choose a problem or predicament from your life that troubles you and you want to resolve it, but you are not sure how exactly. Choose a major problem if you feel like it. Choose a problem related to employment if you feel like it.

See instructions for guided imagination, p. 52 – 54.

9 FIFTH SESSION

9.1. Discussing experiences from the previous session and the time between sessions

Priority	A
Duration	15–30 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express their experiences from the previous session • express their experiences from the time between sessions (in relation to the exercises and interventions from the previous session)
Methods	<p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you feel about the contents from the previous session? • Do they make sense to you? • Why? Why not? • Have you experienced any insight in relation to the exercises you carried out in the previous session? • Any interesting thoughts? • Any interesting effects? • Etc.
Materials	/
Conclusions	Perhaps taking notes on a flip chart

9.2 What is my professional purpose in life?

Priority	A
Duration	Doodling: 5 minutes doodling Drawing: 15 minutes drawing Bulleted list: 5 minutes Guided discussion: 10–15 minutes = about 30 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore their professional purpose in life • think about their professional purpose in life • become (somewhat) aware of their professional calling
Methods	Drawing one’s professional purpose in life
Materials	Coloured pencils, white paper
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What emotions did you feel while drawing? • Does your professional purpose surprise you? • Did you have any difficulties drawing? • Why do you think you had them? • Do you live your life according to your purpose? • Do you seek employment according to your life purpose and/or professional purpose? • Did you experience yearning while drawing? • How many of you did experience yearning? • Etc. <p>Perhaps taking notes on a flip chart, summarising</p>

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

»Please draw your professional purpose in life. Draw it in a way that feels close to you.«

When the participants are done drawing, we ask them to **describe** their professional purpose and **write it down in the form of a short bulleted list**. This ensures that both aspects of learning are covered – the irrational as well as the rational/verbal.

It is possible that you cannot get a job also **because you are not really sure what you want to do**.

Many people **don’t know what they want – and they are upset because they are not getting it**. If you don’t know exactly what you want, figure out what is closest to it – and go from there (Matthews, 2000, p. 75-77).

If you don't know what you like doing, maybe you stopped listening to yourself years ago.

Many of us become different in order to please our family ... You wanted to play basketball but mother made you play piano, you dreamed of sports cars but always bought something »practical«, you wanted to be a journalist but you became an accountant, you ached to travel South America but always vacationed at the nearest holiday resort (ibid.).

If you smother your passion for long enough, you won't even remember what you really love. A voice inside will remind you that it's selfish to do what you really want (ibid.).

Most importantly, get comfortable with the idea of doing what you like. To do what you love doing, you have to believe it's possible (ibid.).

As you discover what you like to do with your time, you begin to find answers to the question, »What do I want to do with my life?« (ibid.)

Doing what you love is not pulling in a pay check for lying on a tropical beach. It is having a passion for something – and putting all your love, energy and creativity into making it work (ibid.).

People who choose to do what truly makes them happy and follow their yearning get a job quicker and easier. Moreover, they get a job that truly makes them happy. This way, »doors keep opening« for them.

Or, to be more precise, they keep opening doors for themselves.

9.3 Committed action

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become aware of the fact that we should be committed to whatever we do in life (for our own sake, not for others)
Methods	<p>Explanation + guided discussion;</p> <p>questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you approach things (tasks, assignments, chores, etc.) in your life? • In a committed way? • Do you usually do your best? • Why not? • How do you feel when you perform to the best of your abilities? • How do you feel when you don't perform to the best of your abilities? • Who do you do things for? • For others? • Why? • For yourself? • Why?
Materials	/
Conclusions	/

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

In addition to inner (mental, emotional, motivational, etc.) factors or inner creation, action or outer creation is required as well.

Committed action

If we always give our best,

- we will not feel guilty later, and
- our endeavours will usually have a happy outcome.

There are **two good reasons to do your best** (Matthews, 2000, p. 72-74):

- Firstly, **when you give one hundred percent, you are happier and more satisfied with yourself.** Remember back to when you were at school. Remember what it felt like walking to school, on those days when you had done all of your homework – and done your best. Didn't you feel just a bit more enthusiastic than usually?

It doesn't matter whether you have been out of school for fifty years, **the »homework principle« still applies.** Your teachers told you to work hard – but you don't work to please parents and teachers and to keep your boss of your back. **You do it for you.**

- Secondly, **the universe has a way of punishing laziness and arrogance.** Enough things will go wrong in your life (and work) without your giving a half-hearted effort. When we get casual, things start to collapse. Just ask the boxer who underestimates his opponent.

Have you ever noticed how some taxi drivers make a trip a pleasure and some make it a pain? Same repetitious job. So where's the difference? The happy ones have a different philosophy. Fred says: »But good cabbies give good service because they're cheerful.« No! **They're cheerful because they give good service.**

It depends on you and you alone whether you will enjoy your work or not.

Whatever you can do, or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius and power and magic in it – begin now (Johann Wolfgang Goethe).

Indecisiveness has a paralysing effect on all of us, regardless of its underlying cause (fear, outer circumstances, inner circumstances, doubts, insufficient knowledge of self, etc.)

Granted, empowerment primarily takes place on the level of mental and emotional set, inner creation, etc., but without action and taking steps towards our goals in the outer world, it is often futile.

9.4 Practising setting goals and identifying the steps needed to achieve them

Priority	A
Duration	<p>First option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doodling: 3–5 minutes • drawing or describing a goal they would like to achieve: 3–5 minutes • writing down the steps needed to achieve the goal: 5–10 minutes = about 15 minutes <p>Second option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing down a goal they would like to achieve • writing down the steps needed to achieve the goal: 5–10 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set a long-term goal • identify the steps needed to achieve this goal
Methods	Individual work
Materials	Paper, coloured pencils, pen or pencil
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you have any difficulties? • What kind? • Why do you think you had difficulties? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

- Choose a goal you would like to achieve **within a year**,
- **close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, relax and try to imagine yourself in a situation where you have already reached this goal:**
 - **What are you seeing?**
 - **How are you feeling?**
- write down your goal or draw it,
- write down the steps, i.e. everything that needs to be done so you can achieve your goal.

9.5 Changing inner images

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take part in a guided imagination exercise, enabling them to • resolve a problem or predicament from their life on a symbolic level, in their inner world, which will • allow them to initiate a process of resolving the problem in the outer world as well
Methods	Guided imagination
Materials	/
Conclusions	<p>Guided discussion; questions (after the imagination exercise):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you encounter any problems? • What kind of feelings did you experience? • Does the exercise make sense to you? • What kind of effects do you expect from this exercise? • Etc.

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

Choose a problem or predicament from your life that troubles you and you want to resolve it, but you are not sure how exactly. Choose a problem related to employment if you feel like it.

See instructions for guided imagination, p. 52 – 54.

9.6 »The miracle question« regarding employment

Priority	A
Duration	10–15 minutes
Goals	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think about their future employment wishes • visualise and/or draw or describe these wishes
Methods	Individual work and/or visualisation
Materials	Paper, coloured pencils, pen or pencil
Conclusions	Guided discussion; questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it go? • Did you have any difficulties? • What emotions did you feel during the exercise? • What effects do you expect?

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Instructions for participants

Two possible questions:

- first option: »Please think about **what you would like your life to be like in a year's time.**«
- second option: »Please think about **what you would like your professional life (work, job) to be like in a year's time.**«

Procedure

- Step one: **visualisation:**
close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, relax and try to imagine yourself and your (professional) life in a year's time.
Imagine yourself having achieved great changes in your (professional) life:
 - What do you see around you in a year's time?
 - What can you hear others saying to you?
 - What are you thinking about yourself?
 - How do you feel?
 - How much do you really want to achieve these changes?
- Step two: **describe the life you want to live in a year's time. Then draw it and write down the key words.**
- Step three: **assessing the strength of one's desire to change:**
How much do you want to change your (professional) life? How much do you want to change?
Mark the strength of your desire to change on the »I want to« scale from 0 to 10.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- Did you mark a number below 10?
- What is stopping you from marking 10?
- What can you do to move one step closer to 10?
- Write it down (adapted from Fuller and Taylor, 2011).

9.7 Workshop closure

Priority	A
Duration	20–30 minutes
Goals	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give feedback about the workshop • say goodbye to each other <p>Participants and presenter will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wrap up their time together on a friendly note
Methods	<p>Questionnaire for the participants</p> <p>+</p> <p>Guided discussion; questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you feel about the workshop? • What did you like about it? • Why? • What did you not like? • Why? • Do you feel the contents of the workshop and the work you did will help you in your life? • In what way? • Etc.
Materials	Questionnaire for the participants, paper, pen or pencil
Conclusions	/

CONTENTS, EXPLANATION:

Three options:

- survey/questionnaire for the participants,
- asking the participants to write down their feedback in short essay format (this type of feedback is the most telling),
- a combination of the above.

APPENDIX I:

Special invitation to the presentation of the workshop

Workshop: »If I want things to be different, I must change something«

The purpose of this workshop is to encourage you to think about what you want from life and what steps you would like to make in the future (with the focus on employment, but not limited to it). We would like to help you start living your life in accordance with your dreams.

The workshop will be conducted by..... counsellor

There will be five sessions of about two hours, once or twice per week.

The sessions will be interesting.

In the workshop, we will be:

- talking,
- exchanging experience,
- carrying out exercises (in small groups),
- drawing,
- performing visualisation exercises,
- etc.

Presenter (name and surname)

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11 INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

5.3 Writing and drawing the book of life

Instructions for writing and drawing the book of life

e) To begin, I would like to invite you to doodle on an empty sheet of paper for several minutes.

f) Discussion; questions:

- How are you feeling?
- Do you feeling any different than before doodling?
- In what way?

Participants report experiencing positive feelings and emotions: joy, relaxation, delight, calmness, etc.

g) Writing something down or drawing something allows us to ground our thoughts, hence becoming aware of them and acknowledging to ourselves some stuff we otherwise would not have.

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h) Writing and drawing the book of life:

- fold a sheet of white A4 paper in half, then fold it again,
- write down the title of your life on the front page,
- on the inner pages, organise your life in chapters (in writing and drawing),
- on the last page, write or draw the desired or expected future chapters of your life (desires, needs, etc.).

Feel free to include song lyrics, draw or sketch something, etc.

Writing and drawing the book of life is a powerful method of self-**reflection** and **self-exploration**.

6.4.1 Changing inner images

Instructions for participants

Choose a problem or predicament from your life that troubles you and you want to resolve it, but you are not sure how exactly. Start by choosing a minor problem. The problem does not have to be related to employment (we will get there in our next sessions).

Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and relax.

Guided imagination (Gütlinger, 2011, p. 25-27)

When we picture a subject or concern from our lives in our imagination, **an image appears**. It can be either **symbolic** or **concrete**. This image or symbol shows us **how our subconscious perceives a certain issue**. It is merely an image, **free of judgment, evaluations or explanations**.

Choose **one subject or concern from your life**. It does not have to be related to your situation of unemployment.

When you think about, for example, your job, **what image arises in your fantasy?** An office? A landscape? A big rock? Something else?

Or, try thinking about **your relationship with your partner**. **What symbol arises** when you think about it?

You can do this with anything that is troubling you at the moment: an exam, your plans, your next project ... whatever you wish.

Allow your subconscious to show you an image regarding your chosen subject.

If an image does not arise spontaneously, do not worry. If this is the case, just **choose a symbol that corresponds to your current situation. It may as well be something that is in front of you**, such as a desk, an indoor plant, or a bird on the balcony. Such symbols **are just as effective** as images in your imagination.

When you have chosen an external symbol, continue **using it as a starting point for further work in your fantasy**. The external image (desk, plant, bird ...) **should stay as it is**.

It does not really matter whether you use an external or internal symbol. **The image you are seeing at the moment is a symbolic representation of your chosen subject, provided by your subconscious at this moment.**

The image represents your chosen subject along with your feelings, thoughts, expectations and experiences associated with it.

Note: there is **no need for you to interpret** this symbol. It is difficult to translate the language of images into words. We do not need to know why the bird is singing or why we are seeing an image of a small village in the mountains. If you are seeing a cluttered desk, just let it stay this way for the time being.

Take a good look at your symbol and allow the image to simply be there in your imagination.

What does the symbolic representation of your subject look like?

Which details (images, forms, sounds, etc.) do you recognise in your symbolic image?

Is there anything you do not like about your image?

Some people see **rich and diverse images** in their fantasy, some **hear sounds**, some others can **smell very well** ... Do not worry about the way your subconscious communicates with you; **it does not matter** which sensory channel it chooses.

It is important that **watching your image feels right to you, that it is just like you want it to be. Does the image feel harmonious?**

If your inner image contains anything that **you do not like, start changing the image. Make it prettier.**

Whatever you do with your image, whether you **remove any elements, change colours, resize it, modify anything**, etc., do so in order to make your inner image more appealing to you. You might trim the tree, paint the house, replace the roofing, let the fruit grow, move the desk next to the pool – **there are no limits to your imagination!** The only thing that matters is that every change you make **feels harmonious to you**, that it feels good to you.

You may do anything you like, as long as your image is becoming increasingly harmonious with every change you make.

Keep modifying your inner image until **you are truly pleased with it**, until it brings you joy. **Then memorise your improved image, paying attention to details.**

That way you will be able to recall it whenever you would like to – before going to sleep, while driving, while waiting in a waiting room, etc.

Doing so, you present your subconscious with the task of bringing this image to your everyday reality. This effect is real – it is something that actually happens.

This is a way of communicating with your subconscious, reassuring it there is a harmonious, beautiful solution to every one of your problems.

After the imagination exercise, we can ask the participants to **draw** the harmonious image they have created in their imagination. Experience shows this additional task is very welcome. It enables the participants to imprint the image in their mind, making it easier for themselves to recall it several times in the following days, thus reminding their subconscious to resolve the problem.

9.2 What is my professional purpose in life?

Instructions for participants

»Please draw your professional purpose in life. Draw it in a way that feels close to you.«

When the participants are done drawing, we ask them to describe their professional purpose and write it down in the form of a short bulleted list. This ensures that both aspects of learning are covered – the irrational as well as the rational/verbal.

It is possible that you cannot get a job also because you are not really sure what you want to do.

Many people don't know what they want – and they are upset because they are not getting it. If you don't know exactly what you want, figure out what is closest to it – and go from there (Matthews, 2000, p. 75-77).

If you don't know what you like doing, maybe you stopped listening to yourself years ago. Many of us become different in order to please our family ... You wanted to play basketball but mother made you play piano, you dreamed of sports cars but always bought something »practical«, you wanted to be a journalist but you became an accountant, you ached to travel South America but always vacationed at the nearest holiday resort (ibid.).

If you smother your passion for long enough, you won't even remember what you really love. A voice inside will remind you that it's selfish to do what you really want (ibid.).

Most importantly, get comfortable with the idea of doing what you like. To do what you love doing, you have to believe it's possible (ibid.).

As you discover what you like to do with your time, you begin to find answers to the question, »What do I want to do with my life?« (ibid.)

Doing what you love is not pulling in a paycheck for lying on a tropical beach. It is having a passion for something – and putting all your love, energy and creativity into making it work (ibid.).

People who choose to do what truly makes them happy and follow their yearning get a job quicker and easier. Moreover, they get a job that truly makes them happy. This way, »doors keep opening« for them.

Or, to be more precise, they keep opening doors for themselves.
