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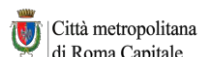
Support in career design (especially) highly sensitive students Handbook for advisors

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2



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
INDIVIDUAL SCENARIOS	12
Scenario 1	12
Scenario 2	20
Scenario 3	28
Scenario 4	40
Scenario 5	49
Scenario 6	56
GROUP SCENARIOS	67
Scenario 1	67
Scenario 2	75
Scenario 3	82
Scenario 4	92
Scenario 5	101
Scenario 6	111
Scenario 7	121
Scenario 8	129
Scenario 9	137
Scenario 10	149
Bibliography	167



INTRODUCTION

The term highly sensitive person (HSP) was introduced in the 1990s and popularized by American psychologist Elain N. Aron. Research conducted in this area (including Aron, 2002; Aron & Aron, 1997; Aron, Aron, & Jagiellowicz, 2012; Lionetti et al., 2018; Pluess et al., 2018) confirms that highly sensitive people process information and stimuli from the environment more strongly (intensely) and deeply than others. These individuals are therefore more sensitive to both positive and negative experiences. There are many colloquial terms that are used to describe highly sensitive people. Sometimes they are referred to as hypersensitive, overly emotional, tearful, oversensitive, or anxious. These in no way capture the essence of the phenomenon and the support needs of the developmental tasks facing every student, especially those with high sensitivity.

We invite you to read and use a set of scenarios designed to consciously support the career design of students, especially those for whom intensity of perceived stimuli can sometimes be a challenge in everyday functioning. In this context, adequate support for students who are particularly highly reactive to internal as well as external stimuli becomes especially important. First and foremost, we pay attention to creating conditions for students to develop. Such a task requires the involvement of both the counselor/career planner and the student. It is the person of the educator, teacher, tutor, counselor and their skills that create conditions that foster development, in this case entering the process of preparing to enter the labor market.

According to the above, designing support for highly sensitive students is not about modifying their traits. Conscious work does not involve interfering with the trait (temperament) of young people. That is not the goals to make a teenager "less sensitive", to take this trait as a



difficulty or problem to be dealt with, but the goal is providing conditions in which highly sensitive students will have equal opportunities to develop their potential, interests, predispositions. The purpose of this handbook is to propose tools to support highly sensitive students in designing their professional careers.

The assumptions of this publication were based on a thorough review of the literature in the area of sensory processing sensitivity and environmental sensitivity carried out within the framework of the project "PRO-MOTION.Sensitive career management" 621491-EPP-1-2020-1-PL-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN. The basis for the constructed scenarios was the assumptions of positive psychology and also the broader construct of environmental sensitivity model (Pluess, 2015).

SENSORY PROCESSING SENSITIVITY

Sensory Processing Sensitivity (SPS) is understood here as a trait describing interpersonal differences in sensitivity to the environment, both positive and negative. The analyses conducted so far show that high sensitivity can be both a risk factor for later psychological difficulties and a protective factor. Studies show that lack of support and understanding of high sensitivity can lead to depression, anxiety, shyness and learned helplessness in adulthood. Highly sensitive people (HSP) also often show giftedness (resulting from depth of processing, attentiveness to nuance, among other things). To explain the special predisposition of HSP to benefit from supportive developmental conditions, the concept of Vantage sensitivity (sensitivity that gives advantage) was developed (Pluess, 2017; Pluess & Belsky, 2013). SPS is not a disorder, but under adverse conditions in the immediate environment (home, kindergarten, school), highly sensitive children may change their behavior in ways that deviate from the developmental norm. This manifests itself in decreased well-being, satisfaction, higher risk of behavioral problems and psychopathology in childhood and adulthood (Aron, Aron, & Davies, 2005). In addition, highly sensitive children raised in stressful home and school environments are more likely to get sick and suffer more injuries. In



contrast, in relatively less stressful environments, they get sick and suffer injuries less often than their peers (Boyce & Ellis, 2005; Ellis, Essex, & Boyce, 2005).

In addition, it is worth adding that, according to Aron and Aron (1997), the number of people characterized by high sensitivity is too high to treat this trait as a disorder, but is too low to be understood and supported by the environment in an adequate way. A key role in the development of children, especially highly sensitive children is played by their adult caregivers, the immediate school and home environment, which must be characterized by an awareness of the individual differences of students, the biological basis of temperamental traits.

SENSITIVITY AS A SIGNATURE STRENGTHS

According to the research conducted so far, high sensitivity is not a disorder or dysfunction, while highly sensitive people who grow up and develop in inappropriate, difficult and stressful conditions are more likely to experience psychological difficulties such as depression, anxiety disorders, and job burnout (cf. Jaekel, Pluess, Belsky, & Wolke, 2015; Lionetti, Pluess, Aron, Aron, & Klein, 2019; Liss, Mailloux, & Erchull, 2008; Liss, Timmel, Baxley, & Killingsworth, 2005; Pluess & Boniwell, 2015). Sensitivity can be viewed not only through the prism of being a risk factor for difficulties, but also as a protective factor for proper development, or the special benefits associated with enjoying supportive and good conditions. In positive psychology, we talk about so-called **Signature Strengths** (Seligman, 2004, 2006), that is, what is most important, most developed in us, what testifies to us as people. On their use depends to a large extent on job satisfaction.

In the case of highly sensitive people, these advantages are related to the special functioning of the nervous system, including the very accurate processing of incoming information. Frequent use in life and at work of qualities associated with sensitivity, such as sensitivity to nuances, subtleties, to beauty, making sense of experiences, increases satisfaction with the activity performed. According to these assumptions, a person who has the opportunity to use his qualities is more likely to achieve high job satisfaction. Therefore, career planning



should also take into account knowledge of the trait, the ability to identify it, and include methods of support and assistance in dealing with unfavorable beliefs about one's sensitivity.

It is therefore worthwhile for adult professionals to have the knowledge that sensitive people are endowed with potential and resources that enable them to understand themselves, others, insight, empathy, careful decision-making, innovative and creative approaches. However, their resources can only be used under the proper conditions. In a favorable environment, work for sensitive people can be more than a means to achieve income goals. It can be a vocation, a dedication to work for its own sake. People for whom work is a vocation find fulfillment in it regardless of promotions or pay. They believe that their actions contribute to the general good, to something greater and more important than themselves. Highly sensitive people are more likely to find meaning in good work, mainly, because that's what they need to lead a full life.

SUPPORTING CAREER DESIGN

Previous research also indicates (e.g., Baryła-Matejczuk et al., 2021; Monika Baryła-Matejczuk, Artymiak, Ferres-Cascales, & Betancort, 2020; Monika Baryła-Matejczuk, Fabiani, & Ferrer-Cascales, 2021) that due to the nature of the trait and potential misunderstanding by their immediate environment, highly sensitive individuals may function below their competence. In other words, they may have difficulty discerning their potential, have trouble making decisions, but also challenges or expressing their own ambitions and plans. Sensroic processing sensitivity, like any temapreamnet trait, has its good as well as difficult sides - it all depends on the circumstances and conditions. Based on the assumptions of temperament-based intervention, we developed:

- ten group counseling scenarios - prepared for implementation in the school classroom
- five individual counseling scenarios - prepared for highly sensitive students.

The purpose of the exercises included in the scenarios is to support students in developing the competencies needed to discern their potential in the context of their future careers. The activities are designed in such a way that each successive activity expands the area that was the subject of the lesson with the counselor. Therefore, it is recommended that the scenarios be implemented in accordance with the proposed order. The scenarios were developed for high school students (15-18 years old).

Initially, students are introduced to the construct of so-called high sensitivity. The scenario entitled. "*High sensitivity, which means what?*" takes up the issue of temperamental sensitivity. The purpose of the lesson is to familiarize students with information on high sensitivity, to introduce the differences between people in terms of the threshold of excitation of the nervous system, as well as to provide basic knowledge about the characteristics of highly sensitive people. Students are encouraged to reflect in depth on their own sensitivity, its severity, individual susceptibility to stimuli. After the first class, the counselor/teacher can help students measure the intensity of sensory processing sensitivity using standardized tools for this purpose. This is also a good time to invite selected students for individual counseling, during which the student(s)' beliefs about the benefits and difficulties of different sensitivity intensities can be addressed in a targeted manner. To this end, five scenarios have been developed for individual contact (described below).

The next group activity scenario (no 2) is designed to help students expand their insight about themselves. Among other things, the purpose of the individual exercises is to familiarize Students with the four basic characteristics of highly sensitive people (acronym DOES), to stimulate their cognitive curiosity to learn about themselves and other people, and to better understand themselves and the world around them. Students are encouraged to point out the positive aspects of high sensitivity and the resulting potential and also to build a positive self-image.

In turn, Students measure themselves against the knowledge of their own emotional competence. The area addressed in the scenario exercises is the importance of emotional competence, and the purpose of the exercises is to familiarize Students with the issue of



emotional intelligence, to point out the importance of emotional intelligence in personal and educational and professional life. Young people are encouraged to reflect on their emotional competencies, as well as opportunities for their development.

During the following classes, young people deepen their knowledge of emotional competence, learn to recognize and name emotions. The teacher/counselor provides information on the importance of emotions on human behavior, allows in safe conditions to consider the role of feelings in human life.

Then, Students move on to develop skills of emotion management and self-regulation. Young people have a chance to touch on the diversity and richness of the emotions they feel, thus becoming better acquainted with and accepting their own emotional states and the feelings of others. The aim of the classes is to promote emotional and social development, as well as to learn the importance of empathy, to familiarize with the concept of active listening.

Scenario 7 entitled. "*I know what I feel and what I need*" concerns the area of awareness and understanding of needs. The purpose of the classes is to acquaint Students with the importance and role of needs in human life, to indicate the relationship of need - emotion - action. Thanks to the exercises, young people have a chance to shape the skills of recognizing their own needs, become sensitive to their own and other people's needs.

After discernment of self, Students move on to personal development planning. The counselor/teacher introduces the issues of sentences and developmental goals of adolescence. Counselor/teacher helps Students realize the benefits associated with their successful realization of goals, points out tools that can help develop individuality and encourages self-reflection, self-knowledge and self-development.

Students then move on to analyze difficulties and limitations related with planning the future career. They address the importance of stress and coping (in response to the stress of planning for the future). The teacher/counselor explains to the students the mechanisms of stress: stress as a response to a threat; introduces basic information on the neurobiology of

stress. The youth's attention is directed to the positive and negative effects of stress and their impact on health, well-being and psychosocial performance;

Another scenario deepens the area related to coping with stress by developing self-regulation skills. Students learn about issues related to the phenomenon of stress based on polyvagal theory. With the support of a counselor/teacher, they learn relaxation techniques and improve their ability to cope with stress in difficult situations.

The end and conclusion of the series of classes is the analysis of professional potential. The exercises of this scenario are oriented towards expanding awareness of one's own talents and abilities. In an active way, young people work on developing their self-esteem by exploring their personal potential.

The second part of the activities, five individual scenarios, is dedicated to highly sensitive students. Use them in individual work, deepening specific and characteristic issues of highly sensitive people. During the first meeting, the student can deepen self-reflection on their strengths and weaknesses. The aim of the classes is to educate about high sensitivity, to discover the potential that comes from being a highly sensitive person, as well as to create conditions for deeper self-reflection, self-discovery, developing cognitive curiosity, as well as self-understanding and self-acceptance. Subsequent scenarios address the following issues: spheres of comfort and seeking opportunities for rest and relaxation, exploring and cognitively correcting unfavorable beliefs about one's own sensitivity, deepening issues of emotional competence, so-called emotional intelligence. Students have the opportunity to develop self-regulation skills - reducing the influence of a trait on behavior, with the support of a counselor/teacher seek internal and external sources of support. The goal of the entire series of individual meetings is to develop the ability to identify the resources necessary to achieve educational and career goals. Students, with awareness of their own traits, prepare to make professional and educational decisions, strengthen a positive self-image, develop the ability to assess their own capabilities and the ability to manage priorities.



The scenarios and the exercises included in them are part of preventive activities (universal prevention) and implement a psycho-educational strategy: teaching so-called life competencies.

In conclusion, designing support for highly sensitive students and helping them design their professional careers is not about modifying their traits. Conscious work does not imply interfering with a trait, accepting it as a difficulty or problem to be dealt with, but on providing conditions in which all students (and especially highly sensitive ones) will have equal opportunities to develop their potential. In preparing adult caregivers (counselors, teachers) to adequately support highly sensitive adolescents, attention should be paid to the developmental tasks of adolescence period of life. Research in recent years on the determinants of dysfunction and difficulties in adaptation in children and adolescents has focused not so much on risk factors as on protective factors. Thus, confrontation with tasks can become an opportunity for young people to adapt and acquire new skills or the emergence of dysfunctions and maladaptive behavior. Proper support makes it possible to see the potential in each trait and adequately support the skills needed to cope with the challenges that accompany it.



INDIVIDUAL SCENARIOS

Scenario 1.

Area: deep self-reflection on strengths and weaknesses

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the individual class is to improve knowledge of the characteristic traits of highly sensitive people. Psycho-education about high sensitivity is aimed to generate cognitive curiosity, encourage self-knowledge, develop the ability to understand and take care of oneself followed by self-acceptance.

The teacher discusses the most distinctive traits of the highly sensitive, starting with positive aspects of sensitivity, presenting them as unique, distinctive and advantageous. As a result, the teacher encourages the student to consider which aspects of their high sensitivity are particularly close to them and how they interact with them.

By highlighting the benefits of being a highly sensitive person, the teacher encourages exploration of the student's strengths and their potential, which is reflected in specific skills.

Class purpose:

- To educate on high-sensitivity;
- To discover the potential of being a highly sensitive person;
- To encourage deep self-reflection

Learning outcomes:

- Knowledge that provides understanding and self-acceptance



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- Deep self-reflection
- Awareness of one's own potential

Materials and aids:

1. A4 white paper
2. Coloured pens, coloured pencils
3. Worksheets (Annex 1)



Course of Action

The teacher asks the student whether they remember unique traits of highly sensitive people. Then the teacher recalls the characteristic features may include:

1. Increased ability to perceive and avoid mistakes;
2. Conscientiousness
3. Good memory

Exercise 1.

The teacher asks the students to reflect on traits, behaviours (responses) which, in their opinion, are the most typical of them.

He asks whether the student knows many people who have exactly the same traits or behave in exactly the same way. Together, they wonder whether the features listed include those which are highly sensitive ones.

Teacher: Imagine you have undergone a medical experiment that will change some of your traits. Before it starts, you are asked to fill in a questionnaire by answering the following questions:

1. Which of your most important traits need to be preserved so that after the experiment you know who you are?
2. You can keep three traits you like most. Which ones? Please explain briefly.
3. You can get rid of three most disruptive traits. Which ones? Please explain briefly.
4. We can give you three additional traits (skills, predispositions). What kind of person would you like to be?



Exercise 2.

The teacher asks for a self-portrait 'I am a plant' to be drawn, pointing out that it can be hybrid (combination of different plants into one, also fantasy ones).

After that, the teacher asks the student to imagine that the plant drawn is very delicate and, at the same time, because of its unique traits, under protection. The student's task is to explain these specific 'characteristics' and to put forward arguments for their usefulness for the common good and for their protection.

The teacher summarizes the exercises and stresses the fact that just like a plant which, in order to grow needs the proper conditions and care, humans can also develop in a favourable environment. We feel better in some places, in some other places we need more peace and quiet one day, and the next day we want to talk to someone. We also have activities, tasks and duties that give us pleasure, whereas others do not as we find them tired, stressful or simply boring.

Exercise 3.

1. The teacher asks the student to consider:

What activities/tasks/obligations do you enjoy doing and which of them are you the most engaged in?

2. What skills do you use for these activities?

3. When and how did you learn to do them so well?

4. Which of your traits do you demonstrate when performing these tasks?



5. How do you think, which activities you enjoy doing, can be found useful for your future career?

Summary

The teacher and the student analyze these exercises and skills, identifying those that result from high sensitivity. The teacher may also ask the student whether these are the features that they also like in other people, and whether they are associated with some values they appreciate in life.

At the end of the class, the teacher once again highlights the unique traits of highly sensitive people. They are born to this world with a tendency to notice more details in their surroundings and to reflect further before taking action. They process the information received at a deeper level. They often think, analyze and predict. They are empathic, clever, creative, conscientious, cautious, highly intuitive and deeply moral. Highly sensitive people have a different nervous system from other people. Therefore, they should not build their sense of value by comparing themselves to the majority. For this reason, it will be much more beneficial to discover, cultivate and appreciate their uniqueness and exceptionalism.

Homework

The student receives a worksheet (Annex 1). Their task is to observe themselves, their thoughts and emotions and complete the table for 1 week.



References

Stallard, P. (2021). *Czujesz tak jak myślisz*. Zysk i S-ka.



Annex 1

Table of activities that make the student feel better

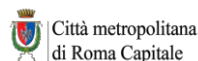
ACTIVITIES THAT MAKE ME FEEL BETTER	ACTIVITIES THAT MAKE ME FEEL WORSE
	



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Scenario 2.

Area: searching for comfort zones

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the individual class is to improve knowledge of the characteristic traits of highly sensitive people. Education about high sensitivity is aimed to generate cognitive curiosity, encourage self-knowledge, develop the ability to understand and take care of themselves followed by self-acceptance.

The teacher discusses the most distinctive traits of the highly sensitive, starting with positive aspects of sensitivity, presenting them as unique, distinctive and advantageous. As a result, the teacher encourages the student to consider which aspects of their high sensitivity are particularly close to them and how they interact with them.

By highlighting the benefits of being a highly sensitive person, the teacher encourages exploration of the student's strengths and their potential, which is reflected in specific skills.

Purpose of the activities:

- To educate on high-sensitivity;
- To discover the potential of being a highly sensitive person;
- To encourage deep self-reflection

Learning outcomes:

- Knowledge that provides understanding and self-acceptance
- Deep self-reflection
- Awareness of one's own potential



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Materials and aids:

1. A4 white paper
2. Coloured pens, coloured pencils
3. Worksheets (Annex 1)



Course of Action

The teacher asks the student whether they remember unique traits of highly sensitive people. Then the teacher recalls the characteristic features may include:

1. Increased ability to perceive and avoid mistakes;
2. Conscientiousness and confinement to detail;
3. Deep concentration skills;
4. Ability to perform tasks requiring carefulness, precision, detection of minor differences;
5. Ability to process the material at a deeper level;
6. Frequent consideration of one's own thoughts;
7. Ability to learn different things when the opportunity arises;
8. More vivid imagination;
9. Witty sense of humour;
10. Consideration of others;
11. Reading emotions and reactions of others, extensive empathy to adapt to adverse conditions.

The teacher poses a question whether being a highly sensitive person has only positive sides. Does the student notice the consequences of high sensitivity that disturb daily life, and if so, what are they?

Taking into account the student's response, the teacher points to the most common difficulties highly sensitive people have to deal with.

The teacher explains that highly sensitive people, due to recognizing each of the smallest details of the circumstances in which they find themselves (e.g. noise, scents, mess, colours, temperature, light), get tired more easily, as they have to process all this incoming data. In very stimulating situations, HSPs inevitably receive more stimuli and become overexcited more quickly, which makes them act and feel worse (experiencing the feeling of overloading, fatigue, unsettlement, difficulty of concentration). As they are easier to undergo excessive stimulation,



they are more likely to experience failures in situations involving acting under pressure or being observed. They may then not feel happy with what they should. As a result, they may lack self-confidence, life satisfaction, instead they become sensitive to criticism or shy. Highly sensitive people tend to experience more stress, and they are struggling to accept changes in their surroundings. As they are highly sensitive people, they absorb other people's moods around them, just like a sponge absorbs water. HSPs may be overloaded with other people's emotions and feel overburdened by them. Both positive and negative emotions flow to highly sensitive people with a high intensity, leading to overexcitement or collapse/freezing.

How to deal with it?

Exercise 1. Worksheet (Annex 1)

After completing the worksheet and discussing a sample situation, the teacher asks for the student's homework. Together, they analyze the activities that made the student feel good.

Exercise 2.

The teacher sets the timer for 3 minutes and asks the student to write down all the feelings that come to their mind during that time.

Instruction: For three minutes, write down all the emotions you may think about. Write every single idea that comes to your mind and try to reach the deepest feelings. Keep on writing without bothering about spelling, grammar or style.

After that, the student is asked to draw up a list of the most important people, places and activities in their lives. It may include e.g. mother, father, brother(s)/sister(s), best friends, acquaintances, boyfriend/girlfriend, grandparents, home, school, reading books, listening to music, extra activities (hobby), playing with a phone, watching films on Netflix, visiting a new



place, discovering new people, event, concert, exam. The teacher can help the student to create this list.

Teacher: match the written feelings to each person/place/activities.

When do you feel best?

When do you feel worst?

The teacher explains that the people with whom we are staying, the places we are visiting or the activities we are conducting may be the cause of strong emotions. In most cases, we try to do these things, walk or stay with those who give us a pleasant feeling. We are trying to avoid those that make us feel bad. It sounds good and reasonable.

However, it happens that emotions become dominant and we are refrained from doing what we want to do, e.g. you want to go to an event, exhibition, gym, sketch, etc., but the likelihood of meeting new people makes you feel you will not be able to go there. You want your friends' company but you are too scared to do so. You want to take part in the competition, but you feel paralyzed by stress just at the very thought of it.

In these and similar cases, the emotions that you feel and thoughts that continue to fly through your mind will stop you from doing what you are afraid to do. Learning to identify hot thoughts and master emotions can help to eliminate these limitations.

First of all, make good contact with yourself, learn to listen and treat your body with respect.

Exercise 3.

Time to clear your mind, take care of yourself, 'calm down' your tired brain is very important. The research shows that mindfulness, an attempt to focus on yourself and the feelings from



your body and the inside are extremely effective during regeneration. The second effective method is cognitive techniques of turning threatening ideas into more rational statements. This is a transition from emotion to the head level. It is important to make good contact with yourself, respecting yourself. When my body tells me I do not feel like doing something, I do not have to do it, I just let it go.

Summary

Highly sensitive people are also sensitive to positive stimuli, and can benefit from them more than non-HSPs. Surrounded by positive people, in an environment that respects their needs, linked to the low threshold of stimulation, “the highly sensitive” will flourish, sharing with others what is best in them: creativity, humour, kindness, mindfulness, finding meaning where others do not see it.

In unfavourable conditions, they will be more responsive to some situations with stress, anxiety, frustration than others. They may burden themselves with other people’s emotions and feel overwhelmed by them.

References

Gyoerkoe, K., Weigartz, P. (2016). *Zwalcz niepokój. Uspokój umysł i odzyskaj swoje życie*. Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne.

Pennebaker, J. W., Smyth, J.M. (2018). *Terapia przez pisanie*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Stallard, P. (2021). *Czujesz tak jak myślisz*. Zysk i S-ka.



MAGIC WHEEL

Think about what you have been doing / have done recently, and what made you feel good/nice

What did you think?

What did you do?

What did you feel?



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Scenario 3.

Area: changing beliefs about one's own sensitivity

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to show the students the link between thoughts, feelings and activities. Making young people aware that the way we think of ourselves is sometimes transformed over time into rigid thinking patterns, creating a filter through which we look at the world and our future. The way we think influences how we feel. Thoughts are a source of different emotions.

Pleasant thoughts create pleasant feelings. Negative thoughts lead to unpleasant emotions.

Some feelings will not be very intense and may not persist for too long. But sometimes unpleasant feelings are very strong, it seems to us that they last for ever. In highly sensitive people, the feeling of overloading with unpleasant emotions can occur frequently. If these feelings persist or become very strong, they start to influence behaviour.

Class purpose:

- To develop emotional competences
- To develop emotional intelligence
- To discover the link between thinking, emotions and behaviour
- To introduce psycho-education

Learning outcomes:

- Self-awareness of emotions
- Understanding the relationship between thought, emotions and behaviour
- Awareness of cognitive errors



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Materials and aids:

1. A4 white paper
2. Pen, pencil
3. Worksheets (Annex 1)



Course of action

The teacher introduces the issue to the student by giving a small talk.

The way each of us thinks about ourselves, assesses what we do and predicts our future, becomes the model of our thinking after a certain period of time. Such mindsets-shaped, rigid and, at the same time strong, are called core beliefs. These are short statements, e.g. I am smart, I am good, I am consistent, I am hard-working, I am good, I am pretty/handsome.

Positive beliefs are quite common.

If I am smart, I will pass the exam.

If I am good, people will like me.

If I am consistent, it will achieve my objectives.

In general, core beliefs are useful. However, some of them may be less helpful.

I always fail.

I am lazy.

I will never achieve anything in life.

No one will ever love me.

Everything I do, I must do perfectly.

I must be the best.

I am not an attractive man / woman.



These helpless beliefs mean that we assume from the outset that something bad will occur. They make us fail from the very beginning.

Core beliefs, once they have arisen, are triggered by the so-called automatic thoughts.

Different thoughts are constantly flowing through our head. Automatic thoughts are always with us, commenting on what is happening around us, what we are doing and what we are thinking about. Many of these thoughts concern ourselves, so this is why they influence what we feel and do.

Activity 1.

Imagine you are sitting on a train, the images you see behind the window are your automatic thoughts, moving constantly one after another.

Tell us what images/thoughts you see behind the window when you think about:

yourself

.....

what you do

.....

your future

.....

The teacher and the student analyze the answers by checking which of the automatic thoughts are more - positive or negative ones. They wonder what the consequences of these thoughts are. How do they affect mood and action? How can they influence future plans as well as educational and professional career?

The teacher continues the talk.

Automatic negative thoughts are particularly powerful because:

- they are always with us,
- they cannot be turned down,
- they are not heard by anyone else,
- they are not easy to get rid of,
- the more we hear them, the more we believe in them

Some automatic thoughts make us feel unpleasant. These are so-called hot thoughts. Unfortunately, the ease with which automatic thoughts reach our mind and their frequency means that we rarely stop them, question and check them. On the contrary, the more often we hear them, the more willingly we believe in them, looking for their confirmation. This is how thinking errors arise.

References

Stallard, P. (2021). *Czujesz tak jak myślisz*. Zysk i S-ka.



Among the most common thinking errors are the following ones (Annex 1)

It is interesting to check what thinking errors we make every day. The teacher encourages the student to check their cognitive errors.

1. How often do you focus on negative sides of events?
Never Sometimes Very often
2. How often do you focus on what went wrong or what is not good enough?
Never Sometimes Very often
3. How often do you ignore or fail to see positive and good events?
Never Sometimes Very often
4. How often do you diminish the importance of positive events?
Never Sometimes Very often

(GOOD MOOD REDUCERS)

1. How often do you think in terms of “everything or nothing”?
Never Sometimes Very often
2. How often do you exaggerate your failures?
Never Sometimes Very often
3. How often do you feel that one negative event begins to grow to something much larger, like a snowball?
Never Sometimes Very often

(EXAGGERATION)

1. How often do you think that you know what other people think about you?
Never Sometimes Very often
2. How often do you predict failures?
Never Sometimes Very often

(PREDICTING DISASTERS)



1. How often do you feel you are a loser who cannot do anything well?

Never Sometimes Very often

2. How often do you think that you are stupid or bad?

Never Sometimes Very often

(EMOYIONAL THINKING)

1. How often do you say to yourself 'I must', 'I should' do this or that?

Never Sometimes Very often

2. How often do you think something is not good enough until it is ideal, perfect?

Never Sometimes Very often

(FAILURE-ORIENTED APPROACH)

1. How often do you blame yourself for what happened or failed?

(IT IS MY FAULT!)



The teacher encourages the student to do self-reflection by asking the student to recall specific situations in which they made a cognitive error. They analyze this event together by considering the consequences of the most frequent errors. Can some of them be typical for HSPs?

Homework

The student receives a worksheet (Annex 2)

The teacher gives the following instructions: For the next week, create a journal to help you identify the most common automatic, hot thoughts and cognitive mistakes you make. At the end of the week, spend 30 minutes on checking what you managed to note. Think to what extent you will then believe in the credibility of the emerging thoughts and the mistakes made.



Annex 1

GOOD MOOD REDUCER We only focus on negative experiences. We only see things that went wrong or are not good. Any positive aspects are ignored, being treated with disbelief or as invalid ones.

1. Black glasses – let you see only one side of the coin – negative! If you have a good time or experience good things, the black glasses will find something that went wrong or was not good enough. These are the negative things you notice the most quickly and remember best.
2. Positives do not matter – this error consists of rejecting any positive aspects as irrelevant or undermining them in any other way.

EXAGGERATION

Exaggerating the negative side of events makes them more important than they really are.

1. Thinking in terms of ‘everything’ or ‘nothing’ – everything is perceived according to the ‘everything’ or ‘nothing’ rule, it seems there is nothing in-between those extremes. Minor shortcomings and inability to be perfect are considered to be a complete disaster.
2. Exaggeration of negative aspects – overemphasizing the evaluation of the validity of events. Their negative aspects are exaggerated and disproportionately highlighted.
3. The snowball effect – a single event or a failure – is growing rapidly, pushing for an endless disaster.

PREDICTING DISASTERS

Looking forward to what is expected to happen, we expect the worst.

1. I read someone’s mind – the feeling that we know what other people think, e.g. I know that he does not like me; I assume that everyone is laughing at me now.



2. Foretelling the future (Clairvoyant) – it seems to us that we know what will happen, e.g. I know that I will not be able to do it.

EMOTIONAL THINKING

Our emotions are becoming very strong and override the way we think and see things. What we think depends on how we feel rather than what is actually happening.

1. Emotional reasoning – feeling bad, being sad and depressed, we assume that everything else is also the same. Emotions are over us and influence our thoughts.
2. Separating waste – we attach labels to ourselves and it seems to us that we do everything following them, e.g. I am a loser, That is all me, I am simply good for nothing, I am nobody...

FAILURE-ORIENTED ATTITUDE

It concerns the standards and expectations we face. The bar is often set so high giving the impression of not being able to jump over it. We therefore identify ourselves with the possibility of failure. We become more aware of our weaknesses and things that we have not done. Such thoughts often start with the following words:

— I should, I must, I shouldn't, I can't

and end up with setting unachievable standards that we do not actually manage to meet.

IT IS MY FAULT!

We feel responsible for all negative events, even though we have no influence on them. All bad things are our fault.



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Annex 2.

Day and time	Situation What, where, when and who?	Thoughts What were your thoughts like? Evaluate how much you believe in them.	Feelings How did you feel?



Scenario 4.

Area: Developing self-regulation skills – exercises

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: the aim of the class is to provide the student with knowledge of the functioning of the autonomous nervous system (ANS) and its influence on thoughts, feelings and activities in order to be able to develop self-regulation skills.

The autonomous nervous system is a continuous monitoring system with a single purpose – to check whether it is safe around us. Its intention is to protect us either by responding to a threat or by looking for all safety signals.

This ANS vigilance takes place far below the state of consciousness and far beyond our control. In order to understand how the process of scanning of what is inside and outside us, we need to look more closely at our individual experiences and responses.

Class purpose:

- To deepen knowledge of the functioning of the autonomous nervous system
- To encourage self-reflection

Learning outcomes:

- Awareness of different autonomous states

Materials and aids:

1. A4 white paper



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2. Pen, coloured pens, coloured pencils
3. Worksheet (Annex 1)

The autonomous nervous system, operating continuously 24 hours a day, consists of two basic parts: the sympathetic system and the parasympathetic system.

The sympathetic nervous system gives us the opportunity to survive through movement and the ability to act actively or refrain from taking action, i.e. fight-to-flight response. When the need for motivation is gone, it is the parasympathetic system that steps in with its ventral part of the vagus nerve (responsible for e.g. rest, regeneration, relief, safety, close relationships).

The second part of the sympathetic system, the so-called dorsal branch of the vagus nerve, is responsible for the extreme feeling of danger, freezing, which is the last level of reaction to a stressful situation. The vagus nerve, the so-called tenth cranial nerve has therefore two branches, ventral and dorsal, and both of them belong to the sympathetic part of the autonomous nervous system.

The ANS manages all our daily experiences. First of all, we always try to use the ventral system – seeking to communicate and build relations with others as social beings. Only when we cannot establish relationships with others, when we do not have the right people to communicate with, our autonomous nervous system abandons safety and triggers a response fight-to-flight (the sympathetic system), then trying to return to a feeling of safety and commitment again. It is only when the mobilization of the sympathetic system fails and a threat does not pass, we return to a state of collapse, freezing – just like animals simulating death.

This transition response cycle from one autonomous state to another is the daily experience of each of us. This is the case for an individual response pattern. Some are rapidly moving into a state of mobilization and overexcitement. Others almost invisibly collapse, breaking communication with others.

It seems that, due to their innate sensitivity to subtle stimuli and the immediate reaction of the autonomous nervous system that often operates beyond consciousness, highly sensitive people quickly move through the ladders of these different states, without knowing where they are currently and how to find the way to the moment they feel safe. This can lead to a feeling of being lost, losing control, a constant energy consumption and, as a consequence, exhaustion.



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A map is needed to enable to move consciously to achieve the desired goal, i.e. safety. The Personal Profile Map answers the following question: “Where am I?”. With it, we will learn to recognize our own state of autonomy and how it manifests itself in body, thinking, emotions and action.



Course of Action

Exercise 1.

The student receives a worksheet (Annex 1). The teacher informs him that it is a ladder that we walk on every day. Moving up or down the ladder is not a value, there is no good or bad direction. The ventral vagal state at the top of the ladder is safe and social. A sympathetic state is characterized by mobilization and the fight-to-flight response. A dorsal ventral state at the bottom of the ladder symbolizes immobilization and collapse.

The teacher asks the student to choose the colour that matches his/her autonomous state best. Which colour do you associate with sympathetic danger, mobilization, the fight-to-flight response? Which colour, do you think, matches the threat that is so strong that you have the impression that nothing can be done about it? Which colour represents a sense of safety and ventral engagement? The student chooses three coloured pens he/she will use.

Everybody has their own response pattern, known as one's own neuronal profile. The teacher asks the student to write his/her name on the worksheet in the empty box which, in his/her opinion, matches the ladder step best.

The teacher informs the student that he/she will continue to complete the personal profile map during the next class.

In the meantime, the teacher asks the student to identify and name his/her current state, thoughts and feelings that are emerging. The teacher asks whether the student is often in that state, what other situations come to his/her mind in which he felt in a similar way.

Homework

The student is asked to bring three objects representing each autonomous state.

Tips



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* this scenario needs to be introduced after Class 9 presenting the foundations of the polyvagal theory

References

Dana, D. (2020). *Teoria poliwagalna w psychoterapii*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

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Annex 1

PERSONAL PROFILE MAP

Ventral vagal state	
Safe	
Social	
Sympathetic state	
Mobilization	



Fight-to-flight
Dorsal vagal state
Immobilization
Collapse



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Scenario 5.

Area: Searching for internal and external sources of support

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: the class will be devoted to educational and professional career planning. The student, with the teacher's support, will look for answers to the following questions:

1. For which professions can my traits of a highly sensitive person bring benefits?
2. Which professions, duties, tasks may be particularly burdensome or even impossible for me?
3. Is it possible to reconcile my career path with my specific traits?

Class purpose:

- To prepare the students to make a good professional and educational decision.
- To support the development of interests and skills
- To get to know one's own resources

Learning outcomes:

- Knowledge of the factors causing overexcitement

Materials and aids:

1. A4 white paper
2. Pen, coloured pens, coloured pencils
3. Worksheet (Annex 1)



Course of Action

The teacher introduces the class topic to the student by informing him/her that it will be a follow-up to the previous class. The teacher asks for the objects that the student was supposed to bring to the classroom, which represent different autonomous states. The student's task is to say a few words about each object, describe memories related to it, as well as its features on the basis of which it was selected as a symbol of a particular state.

The teacher encourages the student to always keep with him/her an object that represents a ventral vagal state (feeling of safety, relations with others, feeling fine) as a reminder, that such a state exists and he/she can find the way to it.

Exercise 1.

Based on a worksheet of the Personal Profile Map (previous class Annex 1)

The teacher asks the student: fill in part of each state by writing on the worksheet how you feel it, what it is like, what sounds it uses. What happens to your body?

What do you feel? What do you think? What do you do?

The teacher facilitates the task for the student, putting him/her into a particular state by reading the following descriptions.

1. Sympathetic nervous system. Recall a situation when you felt you had too much energy and you felt uncomfortable for this reason. You had the impression that this energy started to overwhelm you, the more of it coming, you would lose control of yourself. The sympathetic nervous system can activate when you are under the pressure of time, you are ignored, feel lost or responsible for too many things, etc.



2. Dorsal vagal state. Think of a situation when you have too little energy to function well. Even in a room full of people, you have the impression of being separated from them with thick glass, being able to see them but unable to contact them. It is then difficult to preserve hopeful and positive thoughts. The dorsal vagal system takes control over the body when you feel trapped, significant/insignificant, you feel as if you did not matter much / mattered a lot and when you feel alienated.

3. Ventral vagal state. Think about a situation when you felt that you were quite well. Neither excellent nor perfect, but simply fine. The world is safe enough and you move around it freely. The ventral vagal system becomes active when you think about people that are important to you, listen to music, make your own choices, walk in the forest, stroke a dog or a cat or drink tea with friends.

Once each subsequent part has been filled in, the teacher asks the student to finish the following sentence: "I'm..." and "The world is...". When the whole map is completed, the teacher asks the student to describe each part.

Exercise 2.

Triggers and Glimmers Map (Annex 2). The teacher tells the student about the second map he/she will be using. Its purpose is to help find out what makes the student's autonomy state change and also to show that autonomous experience can be predictable. This map allows giving meaning to what is happening to us at a given moment. The knowledge of the reasons for each state makes it possible to know the mechanism of getting into and out of each state. It is possible to answer the following question: "Why do I react this way?"

Triggers: these are factors that go beyond an optimal stimulation state. They create a sense of danger, rivalry, life-threatening, and activate the mobilization or immobilization response.

Glimmers: they calm down the nervous system, create a sense of safety, acceptance, balance.

The student completes the second map on the basis of his or her individual experience.

By completing the map, the student is encouraged to pay attention to what happens to his/her body, in his/her surroundings, in relations with others. Triggers and glimmers are specific events/experiences/activities that make the student move upwards or downwards on the ladder of autonomous states.

The searches can be initiated by the following questions: What brought me to this place? What made me be here?

Conclusion

The teacher stresses the importance of glimmers, i.e. all that make us all feel well, safe, in relations with others. The teacher encourages to practise everything that generates positive emotions - even if this pleasant experience is short, it can be a source of stable resources for the organism.

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Dana, D. (2021). *Teoria poliwagalna w praktyce. Zestaw 50 ćwiczeń*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

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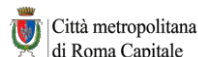
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Annex 1

PERSONAL PROFILE MAP

Ventral vagal		
Safe		
Social		
Sympathetic		
Mobilized		



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Fight/Flight	Glimmers
Dorsal vagal	Triggers
Immobilized	
Collapsed	Triggers



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Scenario 6.

Spread your wings

Area: developing the ability to identify the resources needed to achieve educational and professional objectives

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: the class will be devoted to educational and professional career planning. The student, with the teacher's support, will look for answers to the following questions:

1. For which professions can my traits of a highly sensitive person bring benefits?
2. Which professions, duties, tasks may be particularly burdensome or even impossible for me?
3. Is it possible to reconcile my career path with my specific traits?

Class purpose:

- To prepare the students to make a good professional and educational decision,
- To enhance a positive self-image,
- To develop self-assessment skills,
- To develop the ability to manage priorities

Learning outcomes:

- Knowledge of your potential, resources and talents,
- Identifying your skills,
- Awareness and acceptance of restrictions,
- Understanding high sensitivity in terms of sensitivity perceived as an advantage also in the labour market



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Materials and aids:

1. A4 white paper
2. Pen, coloured pens, coloured pencils
3. Worksheet (Annex 1)



Course of Action

The teacher starts the class by initiating a casual conversation, starting with the following question: Is there something unique in each of us?

Then the teacher asks the student to reflect on what characteristics of highly sensitive people he/she considers to be unique. Which of those characteristics does he/she have and which of them are assets to be used in the future (at university, at work)?

The teacher stresses that the best studies/jobs for highly sensitive people are those associated with their innate potential. He/ She reminds the student that:

- As HSPs are mostly aware of their weaknesses, they demand much of themselves, continue to learn, develop their skills and competences – seek perfection.
- They do not like being idle, instead they demonstrate hard work, creativity, are inspiration for others as well as being conscientious and accurate.
- They like acting as planned, being rarely impulsive/careless. They are reluctant to take a risk, but if they decide to do so, this is supported by an earlier in-depth analysis.
- They have a good memory.
- They have an analytical capability. They create possible scenarios of events and the solutions in their mind before taking action. They collect information, pay attention to detail, process it thoroughly, combine facts and then use this knowledge to make better predictions in the future.
- They are empirical. They support, console and always provide advice and support with a conversation and give a helping hand (sometimes even at their own expense). They also sense the atmosphere between people, their moods and the relationship among them.
- They have perfect intuition.
- They do not like being wrong. They seek perfection in everything they do. Once they are involved in a task, they do it with all their heart.



- They listen well.
- They have an aesthetic sense.
- They represent a high level of morality. They are sensitive to injustice, breaking rules, disobeying rights, inequality, intolerance.

The student, with the teacher's support, thinks about the fields of study and professions in which highly sensitive people could make use of their potential.

The teacher can suggest that it was Aron that identified areas where HSPs do well. These include teaching, medicine, law, art, counselling, religion. When analyzing various professions, it is useful to take into account such well-known professions as a driver, a doctor, a builder, a nurse, an architect, a lawyer, soldier, seller, teacher, photographer, police officer, mechanic, psychologist, a IT specialist, a programmer, a musician, an actor, etc., as well as those less popular ones, e.g. a ghost writer, a tester, a geophysicist, a project manager, a financial controller, a brand manager and others.

The teacher recalls that there is also the other side of the coin of high sensitivity. Some of the characteristics of HSPs may make it difficult or even impossible to perform optimally also in the educational and professional sphere.

- Highly sensitive people are quite often over-emotional in social situations.
- They are reserved in their contacts. They do not like superficial relationships and small talks.
- They are susceptible to stress, overloading and emotional exhaustion.
- They have a physical and/or emotional feeling of fatigue after meeting different people when much happens.
- They are slow in decision making, dislike changes and surprises. They find it difficult to adapt to new circumstances.
- They do not like to act under the pressure of time and while being watched.
- I cannot stand failure and criticism.



As in the case of the strengths of HSPs, the teacher asks the student to reflect on what professions, duties, tasks may be particularly burdensome or even impossible for him or her and other highly sensitive people to perform.

The teacher may suggest that sensitive people are likely to find it difficult to find themselves in all professional activities that are characterized by a constant and high level of stimulation, a tense atmosphere, a fast pace of work, noise, rivalry, a small talk, rapaciousness.

Exercise 1.

The teacher asks the student to recall the situation when he/she scored a success, then ask questions the following one by one:

1. Can you tell us about this situation?
2. What did you feel? (What emotions did you feel?)
3. What did you have to do to achieve this success?
4. What helped you?
5. What did you need to practise?
6. What was the most difficult?

The teacher summarizes the exercise by asking the student the following questions: What are you usually praised for? Why are you most often proud of?

The teacher asks the student whether he/she is familiar with the concept of 'flow' and what he/she associates it with.

He presents the figure of Mihály Csíkszentmihályi, an American psychologist of Hungarian origin, who defines the state of 'flow' (a state of 'concentration, having wings') as an experience of being fully absorbed in the activity conducted. It is likely that everyone has experienced the flow – a state of concentration.



The student's task is to reflect on whether it is a feeling close to him/her or whether he/she happens to be fully absorbed in what he/she does and uses his/her full potential, at the same time enjoying it. Are there any activities that attract you in such a way that you are not tired or even lose the sense of time? Tell us about it.

Exercise 2 (Homework)

For the next 7 days in the evening write on the worksheet (Annex 1) the activities you conducted and mark them on a scale from 0 to 7 how much you enjoyed them, where 0 means that you did not find any pleasure in them and 7 means they were enjoyable. The notes collected over a week will allow you to identify the types of activities you like doing. Think what made you immersed in this activity? What do you need to get back to this state? Will you be able to use these activities in your educational and professional future? Or maybe they will give you a clear message on how to develop and what profession (group of professions) is suitable for you?

Once the student identified what he/she likes doing, it is useful to reflect on what he/she does not, and/or what activities are difficult for him/her and do not bring the desired results.

What subjects do you find difficult to learn?

What activities don't you like?

What certainly wouldn't you like to do in life?

Together, they are reflecting on a professional area which the student would feel comfortable in.

To sum up the content of the class, and having knowledge of what the student is interested in, what his/her potential is, what he/she likes doing and what activities give him/her difficulty and



therefore he/she dislikes performing them, an attempt can be made to draw up an initial professional development plan (Annex 2).

Conclusion

Albert Einstein said: Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish in terms by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.

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Annex 1

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DAY OF THE WEEK	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION	Points 0-7
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		



Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		



Annex 2

1. Your objective: what would you like to learn in the coming days, months, years?
Skills/knowledge from which area would you like to develop, acquire?

Days —

Months —

Years —

2. Your three resources (strengths, interests, skills, abilities) to help you achieve the objective.
3. What resources do you lack?
4. List three obstacles you see in achieving the objective.
5. Do you have any ideas/methods to overcome the obstacles you see?
6. How can you use your sensitivity now and in the future to achieve the objective?



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GROUP SCENARIOS

Scenario 1.

High sensitivity, i.e. what exactly does it mean?

Area: Understanding temperamental sensitivity

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to familiarize the students with the concept of a HSP (highly sensitive person) and specific (characteristic) traits of highly sensitive people. The knowledge provided on how high sensitivity is demonstrated in daily activities allows its different dimensions to be presented in an accessible way for young people, in other words, it allows them to grasp what high sensitivity really means.

The teacher encourages the students to reflect on whether the presented aspects of high sensitivity seem familiar to them, whether they can find these traits in themselves, in their close relatives, acquaintances or partners. It must be stressed, however, that highly sensitive people constitute around 15-20 % of the total population, with usually 1-3 highly sensitive students in the classroom. A similar number may refer to individuals with moderate sensitivity. In addition, it can be assumed that everyone is sometimes very sensitive – it was the pandemic time, distance learning as well as social isolation that, for a very large number of people, revealed their sensitivity. In most people, a sensitivity aspect is therefore noticeable in certain situations. In view of the above, knowledge of high sensitivity is valuable for everyone, enabling them to learn more about themselves and understand their thoughts, emotions and behaviours.

Class purpose:

- To become familiar with the information about high sensitivity,



- To understand the differences between people in terms of the nervous system stimulation,
- To provide with some basic knowledge of the traits of highly sensitive people,
- To encourage deep self-reflection.

Learning outcomes:

- The teenagers know the level of stimulation of the nervous system and understand its impact on human behaviour;
- The teenagers understand that sensory processing sensitivity is neither a disorder nor a defect. They know that this is a biologically dependent trait rooted in the nervous system.
- The teenagers know that everyone is sometimes over-stimulated and overloaded. They learn self-observation.
- The teenagers acquire knowledge of the threshold for optimal stimulation of a HSP and a non-HSP.
- The teenagers see the potential of sensitivity.

Materials and aids:

1. Printed copy of Annex 1
2. Printed copy of Annex 2
3. Presentation



Course of Action

Part One

The teacher starts the class with the following exercise:

Exercise 1. (5-10 min)

The teacher asks the students to form groups of four. Their task is to complete the sentences (Annex 1) by any possible number of definitions that come to their mind.

The representative of each group reads the sentences completed by the group. The teacher (or the student) writes down the proposals on the flipchart/board. What follows is teacher-moderated discussion on recurring definitions of sensitivity and characteristic traits of sensitive people.

Part Two

Based on the presentations.

The teacher explains that sensory processing sensitivity is a trait that refers to interpersonal differences in environmental sensitivity. It is a hereditary temperamental feature, closely linked to our nervous system. There are differences in sensitivity in both the human and the animal world. This means that some people are more sensitive than others. Those whose sensitivity to sensory processing is heightened are highly sensitive persons (HSPs), i.e. those who react more intensively to everything around them, with greater attention given to many details. The structure of the nervous system of highly sensitive people makes it possible, for instance, _____ to _____ see the smallest details in the surroundings, as well as recognizing other people's moods. The teacher notes that a large amount of information acquired and analyzed is often tiring.

The teacher asks the students: How do you think, why is this the case?

The teacher introduces the concept of stimulation threshold and explains to the students that, regardless of whether humans are highly sensitive or not, they feel best when their nervous



system is moderately stimulated. The lack of stimulation makes humans dull, bored, ineffective. Too strong stimulation makes people stressful, nervous and prone to losing control over themselves. The desired, so-called optimal level of stimulation falls somewhere in the middle. The teacher asks the students whether, in their opinion, the optimal level of stimulation means the same thing for every one.

Exercise 2. (5-10 min)

The teacher distributes question cards (Annex 2) to the students and reads the instructions:

Read the questions below carefully and try to answer them taking into account the last month of your life. In the brackets there are different sample reactions of people, which may be similar to yours, or you may react in a completely different way. There are no bad and good answers. What matters is your individual experience.

After the time spent on individual work, the teacher asks if someone would like to share their thoughts. No matter whether there are volunteers or the students prefer to leave information for themselves, it should be stressed that the purpose of the exercise was primarily to encourage them to identify situations in which we do not feel well because our stimulation threshold has been exceeded.

Coming back to the issue of high sensitivity, the teacher explains to the students that HSPs have a low stimulation threshold, i.e. they do not need much to reach the optimal level. While for most people the situation may be moderately stimulating, it is highly stimulating for HSPs. On the other hand, what the majority of people find highly stimulating is unbearable for the highly sensitive. The greatest price of sensitivity is therefore a rather rapid overload of the nervous system. Each of us has a limited ability to receive information and stimuli, we experience overloading, overstimulation and overburdening the moment they are exceeded. Without doubt, the highly sensitive reach this point faster than others.



High sensitivity is characterized by greater attention given to detail, more accurate processing of information, connecting facts and then using this knowledge to make better future predictions. The highly sensitive are also well aware of the atmosphere between people, their sentiment and the relationship between them. It can be compared to a gift that brings benefits, but another time perceived as the extra effort that is simply not paid for.

Summary:

The teacher concludes that high sensitivity is commonly referred to as hypersensitivity, being oversensitive, demonstrating tearfulness, helplessness in the face of life, fussiness, being prone to stress, delicacy, timidity, fear, emotionality, empathy (other terms most frequently given by the students). The teacher stresses, however, that some of these traits match certain dimensions of high sensitivity, but some of them are perceived as harmful labels.

No matter if we are HSPs or not, no one likes too much stimulation. We feel as if things were beyond our control, we cannot gather thoughts, we are tired, irritated and fed up with it. It is important to learn to recognize when we reach our optimal level of stimulation needed to perform best and to know the ways to maintain it.

Risks and recommendations

Due to the large amount of material to be covered within 45 minutes, it is recommended that the topic should be continued during the next class or/and Annex 2 should be distributed to the students to be completed at home to be discussed during the next class.

References

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Annex 1

1. High sensitivity is...
2. A very sensitive person is someone who...
3. If sensitivity was an animal, it would be...
4. If sensitivity was a colour, it would be...
5. If sensitivity was a flower, it would be...
6. If sensitivity was a film/cartoon character, it would be...
7. If sensitivity was a book/comic book figure, it would be...



Annex 2.

1. Remember when you felt that there was too much of it and what was happening both outside and inside you was overwhelming. Describe it in a few words.
2. Under what circumstances were you tired of the frequency and/or intensity of the emerging stimuli (tastes, sounds, scents, images, thoughts, information, events)? Name them.
3. How did your body react at that time? (dizziness, headaches; suffocations, fast heartbeat, pain in the chest, nausea, tight stomach, diarrhoea, etc...);
4. What did you think? (it is too much, I am lost, I want to escape from here, I am confused...);
5. What did you feel? (I feel uneasy, I am overwhelmed, tired, irritated, I am losing control of myself, I will lose control in a moment, I will explode...);
6. How did you act? (I was not able to concentrate, I lost temper easily, I was saying bad things to others, I was crying...)



Scenario 2.

Area: Widening the insight

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to raise the students' awareness of high sensitivity by characterizing the four key traits of highly sensitive people included in the DOES acronym. Presenting and discussing each of the four dimensions of high sensitivity and referring to daily functioning will help grasp the benefits of having this trait. The students will also be aware that some aspects of high sensitivity may be a burden or even an obstacle in life.

It is worth stressing that this is entirely natural that many features have 'two sides of the coin', everything depends on the circumstances in which people find themselves and whether they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. The teacher encourages the students to better understand the characteristic traits of highly sensitive people and make attempts to make reference to themselves and to their family members, friends and partners. Such an analysis can be an opportunity to reflect on their thoughts, emotions and reactions, which are not always understandable. Knowledge of the causes of human behaviour leads to self-knowledge and acceptance.

Class purpose:

- To become familiar with four basic traits of the highly sensitive (DOES acronym)
- To stimulate cognitive curiosity to learn about oneself and others.
- To get a better understanding of oneself and the surrounding world.
- To identify positive aspects of high sensitivity and its potential.
- To build a positive image of oneself



Learning outcomes:

- The teenagers know and understand the characteristic traits of highly sensitive people;
- The teenagers understand that high sensitivity is not a dysfunction or a disorder;
- The teenagers undertake self-reflection.
- The teenagers learn self-acceptance, understanding that everyone has such features that may be desirable in some circumstances and become burdensome in others.

Materials and aids:

1. Printed copy of Annex 1
2. Presentation



Course of Action

Part I

Based on presentations

The teacher introduces the topic of high sensitivity to the students by giving the most important information about it, then asks the students what they can remember about high sensitivity.

After that the teacher briefly summarizes and recalls that it is an innate, hereditary trait that occurs in approximately 15-30 % of the population. Males inherit this trait as often as females. Due to the fact that sensitive nervous systems are quite common and can be found in people of different races and in populations of other species, they cannot be a disorder or a genetic error. The existence of a high sensitivity is justified, into which we will try to get more insight.

The teacher explains that the concept of a highly sensitive person was introduced by Elaine Aron. In order to understand how highly sensitive people work, the concept itself needs to be better understood. Elaine Aron used the acronym DOES to present clearly the main characteristics of highly sensitive people. She attributed to each of the letters the behaviours that indicate different characteristics of high sensitivity.

D – depth of processing,

O – overstimulation,

E – emotional reactivity and empathy,

S – sensitivity to subtleties.

The depth of processing is an inclination to further process the information. Highly sensitive people look for a relationship between what they perceive, experience at a specific moment, between the past and all similar situations. HSPs have the ability to remember and analyze many details, giving attention to what is not obvious. Some information and emotions

are ‘overdue’ in HSPs, which results in more effective learning from one’s own experience, repeatedly subjected to mental treatment. This activity, which can be expressed in slow decision-making, leads to deeper analysis and well-considered conclusions. It is also followed by deep, provocative questions or consideration of many aspects of life. The depth of processing is expressed in characteristics such as attentiveness to others, conscientious in action taken, intensity of experiencing. It is also associated with more vivid dreams, a richer imagination, a witty sense of humour.

Through the ease of stimulation, recognizing and analyzing so many details, HSPs get tired and become overloaded more easily. HSPs are often stimulated with incentives, which is a discomfort. They feel bad and underperform in different situations when there is a lot going on. They do not like acting under the pressure of time while being observed by others.

Emotional reactivity and empathy. Highly sensitive people read emotions of others well and are attentive to their mood. They are characterized by high empathy and compassion, making it pleasant to stay in their close company. HSPs absorb people’s moods around like a sponge. However, emotional reactivity of sensitive people means that the emotions experienced are processed more intensively and much longer, which can lead to overloading. They also tend to experience more stress. It is not always possible to distinguish emotions ‘absorbed’ from others from their own feelings. Emotional reactivity is not only an intensification of unpleasant emotions such as anger or fear, but also of pleasant ones.

Sensitivity to subtleties. Highly sensitive people see details and subtlety. They record nuances that others miss. They often have a well-developed aesthetic sense and seeing beauty makes them happy.

The teacher asks the students: Do you have any of the above-mentioned traits and would you like to say something about it? Or do you see it in some of your friends, family members? Students respond, yet when they are unwilling to speak, they leave reflections for themselves.

Exercise 1. (7-10 min.)



The teacher asks the students to form groups of four and then distributes cards with instructions (Annex 1). The task of each group is to describe two situations in accordance with the instructions given in the Annex. A representative of each group reads the answers. The discussion is moderated by the teacher, with particular attention given to the fact that, as in the case of high sensitivity, many features have ‘two sides of the coin’, all depending on the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

The teacher presents a cultural context of high sensitivity and points out that in some cultures, for example, in China, students who are shy and sensitive are among the most respected and loved. The opposite is Canada. The representatives of expansionist cultures tend to value mentally resilient, risk-taking people who are willing to work for many hours. The widespread strive to reduce costs in order to increase competitiveness means that in many areas those who are able to work long periods of time under pressure, often in difficult conditions, are more highly valued.

On the other hand, there are many areas where the traits of highly sensitive people can be very useful or even irreplaceable, such as the ability to perceive and avoid mistakes, conscientiousness, precision of movements, good memory, learning of different things when the opportunity arises.

Everyone has some skills, abilities, talents that they can use in different areas of life. Many features, on the one hand, can be very useful, but on the other hand, they may disturb our personal and professional lives. We have already mentioned this when analyzing the characteristics of the DOES acronym.

The teacher asks the students: Think about one trait you have and which can be considered both to be your strength and weakness. The examples given are written on the board or flipchart encouraging a free discussion.

Conclusion



In many situations, sensitivity is an advantage and can serve multiple objectives. On the other hand, it may become a burden in certain circumstances and then hinders the implementation of the plans. This is entirely natural.

It should be stressed that persons who do not have the characteristics of a HSP are also inclined to be sensitive as it is a trait on a certain continuum. Highly sensitive people are simply at one of its ends.

Awareness of one's own features, including those of highly sensitive people, is the first step towards better functioning at different levels. By knowing what we enjoy, what we are good at, how we respond to different situations, what places and circumstances we feel good at, we can make the best decisions for us, including educational and professional ones. At the same time, this knowledge will make it possible to identify areas where we underperform or where we cannot find ourselves. Perhaps we will decide that we want to make a conscious effort on our personal and professional competences in order to be able to achieve the objectives assumed. It is certainly a way to discover personal potential of both those who are HSPs and those functioning in a typical way.

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Annex 1

1. Select one trait of highly sensitive people and describe a situation in which it may be very useful and necessary.
2. Think for a while and describe a situation in which the same feature may be an obstacle or inconvenience.



Scenario 3.

My emotional competences

Area: Emotional competence

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to make teenagers aware of the value and benefits of the self-discovery process.

The teacher encourages the students to make a personal development effort, pointing to its significance in their personal and professional lives.

It gives the students the opportunity to check by means of a short test whether they are highly sensitive and in what dimensions their sensitivity is demonstrated, stressing the fact that everyone has their place on the sensitivity continuum.

The teacher makes the students aware of the fact that knowledge about ourselves is a prerequisite for optimal functioning in the world, building good relations with others, pursuing our plans, achieving goals.

Class purpose:

- To familiarize the students with the issue of emotional intelligence,
- To highlight the significance of emotional intelligence in personal, educational and professional life,
- To encourage the teenagers to reflect on their emotional competences and opportunities for their development.



Learning outcomes:

- The students check for themselves whether they have characteristic traits of highly sensitive people,
- The students are able to identify cognitive functions of emotions,
- The students understand the concept of empathy and its role in interpersonal communication,
- The students learn self-acceptance, understanding that everyone has such features that may be desirable in some circumstances whereas in others will become an obstacle.

Materials and aids:

1. Printed copies of Annex 1
2. A4 paper, pens, coloured pens
3. Flipchart
4. Presentation



Course of Action

The class starts with completing the following sentence by each student: “I feel like... today”

The teacher reminds the students that high sensitivity is a trait at a certain continuum and that highly sensitive people are at one of the ends. On the other hand, persons who do not have the characteristics of a HSP are also inclined to be sensitive.

Eleine Aron has developed a tool that can help identify the characteristics of HSPs.

Test (7-10 min.)

The teacher asks about the students’ impression of the test questions and the result obtained. It encourages everyone to reflect on their sensitivity and how it manifests in life. The teacher asks the students whether some traits of sensory processing sensitivity are a surprise for them or whether they are aware of them, e.g. reluctance to change, or difficulty in performing tasks while being observed or when we are under time pressure, or whether a low pain threshold can be a sign of our sensitivity.

The teacher explain the etymology of the word “emotional” – derived from a Latin word *emovere* – being moved (emotions push us into motion) and then asks the students to list their emotions (e.g. anger, happiness, love, anger, frustration)

After that, the teacher writes them down on the board and explains the difference between emotions and feelings, stating that feelings are more complex and contain so-called basic emotions. There is a certain number of emotions that we can feel, but there is no maximum number of feelings.

Emotions come mainly from the limbic, older part of our brain. The feelings are the result of abstract thinking, that is to say, an activity characteristic of the cerebral cortex (the youngest area of the brain, which only developed in humans in the course of evolution). Feelings are



therefore the next thing after emotions, a response to emotions that includes the cognitive content.

How are emotions created? The teacher explains that:

- ✓ Emotions are the result of a long evolution that started in our ancestors. That is how emotions emerged, which are common to all of us. Emotions contain information about our needs, thus allowing us to fulfill them.
- ✓ Different events and situations in our lives lead to emotions that are specific to only one individual.

Emotions can arise in response to certain events or stimuli as a result of learning processes and the individual experience acquisition. The same event may lead to no emotions in one person, but to a very strong emotion in another. The characteristics of a place or other circumstances may trigger an emotional reaction, for instance If we were once bitten by a dog, we are scared at the sight it or hearing a dog barking.

The teacher asks the students whether they can think of any other situations of triggering emotions. They may have learnt how to react with their own emotion as a result of a specific experience.

Basic emotions, known as core ones, refer to a typology based on research among people in different parts of the world (Europe, Asia, South America, Israel, New Guinea, the United States).

A researcher and a psychologist Paul Ekman analyzed non-verbal behaviour of people living in these areas. Based on the results, he identified six basic emotions that are universal to people regardless of race, age, gender or culture.



Basic emotions include: happiness, fear, sadness, anger, disgust, shame (the feeling of guilt).

How do we know what someone feels?

Exercise 1.

The students in teams of two or three receive a card with one basic emotion (Annex 1) and they are tasked to:

1. Write down information that shows someone is experiencing a particular emotion;
2. Look for the function of this emotion in early man;
3. Indicate the role of this emotion now, what it can inform us about.

Once physiological correlates have been listed, each team presents their descriptions in front of the others where they can be discussed further.

Summary of the exercise: When a person feels an emotion, it is accompanied by specific reactions

of the body: sweating, shivering, turning red, faster heartbeating, tense muscles, stomachache, dizziness as well as facial expression, body posture, tone of voice. When, for example, we get angry, we feel tension in the muscles, rapid heartbeat, rapid breathing, in other words, the evolutionarily oldest part of the brain wakes up and prepares the body to the fight-to-flight response. We recognize this emotion by observing lips pursed together, eyes fixed on something, eyebrows down and put together. The main function of anger is to protect our own borders when someone wants to exceed them. It also reaction to frustration, harm and unfair treatment.

Exercise 2 (5 min)



The teacher asks the students to divide into groups of four and to think what they associate the concept of “emotional intelligence” with. All the ideas can be written on the board. When the time is over, a representative of each group reads the results of the team work.

The correct associations are written down on the board. It is likely that many ideas will recur, with everyone working together to choose the most important definitions.

The teacher presents a scientific definition of emotional intelligence. The concept of emotional intelligence was disseminated by Daniel Goleman in the 1990s. It manifests itself in basic capabilities such as the ability to recognize one’s own emotions (self-awareness), emotion management (self-regulation), the ability to motivate oneself (motivation), recognition of emotions in others, the ability to experience other people’s feelings and needs (empathy, one of the fundamental features of HSPs), establishing and maintaining relationships with others (social skills). In short, emotional intelligence is the ability to cope with emotions which manifests itself in real life situations.

Goleman, based on many years of research, concluded that emotional competences are twice as important for achievements in working life than intelligence and expertise. Emotional intelligence is significant to achieve a success at work, almost in all professions and positions.

The shared capability line runs between emotions and thinking. Some capabilities, such as analytical reasoning or inference, are purely intellectual. In others, thinking merges with feelings and this is what is called “emotional capabilities”.

It all got started with tracking the careers of Harvard graduates. The research proved that powerful corporations are not run by the best students, but people with an average IQ level.



The research was conducted in the largest US companies in terms of the traits that distinguish their best employees. Business leaders have proved, for instance, to be at the forefront of the management of their emotions.

Two other psychologists, Peter Salovey and John Mayer, put forward a general theory of emotional intelligence in 1990. They defined emotional intelligence as an ability to recognize and regulate one's own emotions and other people's emotions, and to use feelings to steer thinking and action.

The teacher asks the students: How do you think, can emotional intelligence in this sense be developed, is it something we can work on? Or maybe some people simply have it whereas others do not and we have no influence on it?

According to Goleman, emotional intelligence is not an innate feature. Recognition, designation and control of emotions can be improved throughout life. This is very good news.

When we learn to treat our emotions as post signs, we will better care for our needs, communicate more effectively, build more satisfactory interpersonal relationships, plan and achieve our goals.

Exercise 3. (10-15 min)

The students are asked to reflect on how to practise and develop their emotional competences in everyday life. The teacher recalls that these include: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills.

The best ideas are written down on the board.



Conclusion

Emotional intelligence has an impact on how we use our knowledge and skills, therefore it plays an important role in both personal and professional life. Self-awareness and self-regulation are very important constituents of emotional intelligence (EI). Self-aware people know what emotions they feel and why they feel them. They realize the relationships between their feelings and what they think, do and speak, and how their feelings influence their behaviour. It allows them to understand their goals, values and dreams. Controlling emotions, instead of disturbing the performance of the current task, facilitates the whole process in order to achieve the objective set.

If a highly sensitive person is not aware of his/her trait and its influence on his/her daily life, he/she will not be able to manage his/her potential wisely. This may lead to the attachment of harmful labels (weepy, shameful, reserved, unable to cope with stress, etc.). This is where emotional intelligence can help. Some elements of EI are somewhat embedded in the very essence of high sensitivity, such as empathy, i.e. sensing the feelings of others, demonstrating the ability to look at the situation from their point of view. It seems that the development of self-regulatory skills by HSPs, combined with their above-average sensitivity, can be an indicator of above-average achievements and successes.

Risks and recommendations

Due to the large amount of material to be covered within 45 minutes, it is recommended that the topic should be continued during the next class or/and Exercise 2 should be given as homework to the students.

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Annex No 1

Happiness

Anger

Sadness

Fear

Choke

Disgust

Sense of guilt



Scenario 4.

Area: Developing emotional competences

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to make the students aware of the role that emotions play in their lives.

The teacher encourages the students to make an effort related to learning about the world of emotions. As a follow-up to the previous class, the teacher recalls how important for entering adult life and the labour market are emotional competences. These skills make it possible to discover the students' own potential in different spheres of life in order to be able to manage it and use it to implement their plans and dreams.

Emotions are internal information, they define our attitude towards the world around us. They are all needed to help us meet our needs.

Class purpose:

- To develop the ability of recognizing and naming emotions
- To provide information on the impact of emotions on human behaviour;
- To raise the students' awareness of the role of feelings in human life

Learning outcomes:

- The students can indicate the functions of emotions
- The students are able to recognize and name their emotions
- The students understand the role emotions play in human life



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- The students learn to accept their emotions without assessing them in terms of “good” and bad”.

Materials and aids:

1. Printed copy of Annex 1 and Annex 2



Course of Action

The class starts by asking the students to recall the basic emotions discussed during the last class. Then they move on to Exercise 1.

Exercise 1

The students divided into groups of 2 or 3 receive a worksheet with one basic emotion and a human body outline. Their task is to mark in the drawing what makes them feel this specific emotion or someone else in their surroundings feel it.

Each group presents its descriptions in front of the others to be discussed further.

Summary of the exercise: When a person feels an emotion, it is accompanied by specific body reactions such as sweating, shivering, turning red, rapid heartbeat, tense muscles, stomachache, dizziness as well as face expressions, body posture, tone of voice. When, for example, we get angry, we feel muscle tension, rapid heartbeat, rapid breathing, our evolutionarily oldest part of the brain wakes up and prepares the body for the fight-or-flight response. We recognize this emotion by observing pursed lips, eyes fixed on something, eyebrows lowered down and put together.

The teacher explains that the physiological aspect of emotions has been discussed. In addition to this, there is also a cognitive and behavioural aspect.

The cognitive element refers to thinking about ourselves, other people, life or tasks to be performed (e.g.: 'I am afraid that something bad will happen', 'I will not manage....'; "The teacher has it in for me!"; 'This is disgusting, 'I can't rely on anyone', 'I can manage, I am able to do it'.) Behavioural component is action taken that occurs automatically while experiencing an emotion, e.g. escape, attack, withdrawal, avoidance, refraining from performing activities. Thus, each emotion involves specific thoughts, physiological reactions and behaviours.



The teacher asks the students whether emotions can be divided into good and bad ones.

The teacher's explanation:

Emotions should not be valued as good or bad – each of them is needed and has a specific function in human life. On the other hand, basic emotions and their derivatives can be divided into pleasant (e.g. happiness or pride) and unpleasant (e.g. fear, anger, disgust or a feeling of guilt).

Emotions always show those who experience them. Even if they appear while having a relationship with a person, they still reflect us and the state of our needs.

It happens that the same person in a similar situation, depending on our current state, will make us angry, sometimes amused, or even emotional some other time. The same person, the same action, different reactions. Why? Because emotions always say about us and whether our 'fuel tank' is full (the needs more or less covered – pleasant emotions, sense of balance) or empty (the needs postponed, unpleasant emotions, losing temper).

The teacher asks the students: Can you think of a situation that has generated different/extreme emotions in you? In order to motivate the students, the teacher gives some situations from his/her own life as an example.

So what are the functions of our fundamental emotions?

Emotions tell us whether our needs are met or not.

Anger indicates that our limits have been pushed or we cannot obtain what is desirable for us. It enables us to express hidden emotions and to defend our own value and territory.

Sadness is the response of an individual to the loss of something important or a failure to achieve the goal. The essential feature of sadness is that the responsibility for such a loss cannot be



attributed either to other people or to ourselves – hence it involves insecurity, passivity and being self-centered.

Fear is a response to a direct, real, physical threat (e.g. assault, accident, disaster). The cause of fear is defined and often considered to be justified. It sends a signal of danger to mobilize us to the fight-or-flight response.

Happiness provides information that our need has been fulfilled and that the objective has been achieved.

Disgust is aimed is to take us away from a potential poison. It can also be moral in nature when we abhor a person who commits treason, theft or fraud.

Surprise is a signal that something we did not plan has occurred.

Exercise 2 (5 min).

The students receive a worksheet (Annex 2). The task of each person is to describe the three components of emotions in relation to a specific situation in their lives.

Once all blanks have been completed, the teacher may encourage the students to reflect on the function of the emotion experienced in a specific situation.

Conclusion

Recognizing emotions and feelings is the most basic group of skills that needs to be developed. Understanding the experienced emotions, both pleasant and unpleasant ones, makes it possible to know oneself better, but also helps cope with them and express them in a controlled way. The awareness of emotions enables us to define goals and dreams. A person who can name his/her feelings can use them to implement his/her plans.

One of the characteristics of the highly sensitive is emotional reactivity. HSPs have a particular potential to benefit from positive events and circumstances. Their stronger reactions focus primarily on positive emotions, as a result of which they appreciate the pleasant results of specific actions, remember them and then organize themselves in such a way as to bring them back to them. This is an indication for everyone that if you really want to feel like doing



something, you need to have the right emotional reasons, and what motivates most is the feeling that what we do really makes sense and can be useful in later life.

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Annex 1

Human body outline + basic emotion e.g. anger



Annex 2

MAGIC WHEEL

Think about a situation that took place last month when you **felt anger (happiness, fear, disgust, surprise, sadness)**. Write/draw:

What did you think?

What did you do?

What was the reaction of your organism?



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Scenario 5.

Emotion management

Area: developing self-regulation skills

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to teach the teenagers to control emotions.

The teacher points out that in order to know and understand the functioning of highly sensitive people, with particular attention given to their functioning at the educational and professional level, we need to learn more about the world of emotions, needs and values. These are fundamental aspects of every human life. Therefore, the topics of our classes are important for people in different places at the sensitivity continuum.

The previous class was devoted to emotional intelligence and its significance in personal and professional life. Above all, it is the ability to manage our own emotions properly and to recognize emotional states of others. Emotional intelligence is a post sign to build relationships with others and to steer itself towards the goals set.

People can develop their emotional competences throughout their lives. Learning about the management of emotions, the heart matter of emotional intelligence, is training in shaping the emotional sphere towards maturity.

Class purpose:

- To develop emotion management skills;
- To be aware of the diversity and richness of the emotions felt,
- To understand our own emotional states and feelings of others,
- To promote emotional and social development,



- To understand the significance of empathy,
- To get familiar with the concept of active listening.

Learning outcomes:

- The students understand the role of emotions in life;
- The students learn to manage emotions;
- The students learn to accept their feelings;
- The students understand the meaning of empathy and its importance in interpersonal relations;
- The students know how to listen to others.

Materials and aids:

1. Printed copy of Annex 1 and Annex 2
2. Sheets of paper
3. Highlighters, coloured pens



Course of Action

The teacher makes the students aware of the fact that recognizing and naming their emotions is not tantamount to the ability to manage them. Being aware of what we feel in a given situation and naming our feelings is not enough to take control of them. There is a fundamental difference between being in a bad mood and coping with it in a constructive way. Stating simply that “I am in a bad mood today” does not lead to action to change my mood.

Emotional self-control should not be confused with excessive control over ourselves and holding back feelings. We can pay for it with our physical and mental health. In order to manage our emotions, it is important to give ourselves consent to a particular emotion, to name it, to acknowledge it. Once we accept the fact that our emotions are something natural, they appear for a specific reason and are needed, we can decide what to do with them.

Very often, unpleasant emotions are treated as enemies, as if they wanted to threaten us. At that time, we want them to be thrown away, hide them. We find different ways of denying feelings, avoiding them, not confronting them. However, such unwanted and unheard emotions will eventually be heard anyway, often in an uncontrolled way.

Emotionally mature people are able to look deep inside and often ask themselves what they feel at a specific moment.

Exercise 1. (5-7 min)

The students receive worksheets (Annex 1). Their task is to answer all the questions there. The teacher informs the students that they will not have to share their answers in front of the whole class.

The teacher asks the students the following questions: Was the task difficult? Do you often ask yourself such questions? Which of them did you find the most difficult and to which of them



did the answers come quickly? Do you have any reflections on this exercise? Can it serve something?

The teacher concludes by saying that although emotions are as natural as breathing, we are not always aware of them. When we start thinking about them, we realize that we do not have sufficient knowledge of them.

One of the traits of highly sensitive people associated with the depth of processing, which results from it, is an increased activity of the so-called consciousness centre. HSPs are more aware of what is happening inside them, organize information about their internal states and emotions better. They are more familiar with the world of emotions, but this does not mean that they will be able to manage it better. Controlling emotions is therefore a skill that needs to be developed regardless of its level of sensitivity.

Not only is the ability to recognize your own emotions important. The ability to recognize emotions in others is equally important. Combined with compassion, it is called empathy. As we know from the previous class, empathy is one of the unique traits of highly sensitive people. As no one else, HSPs are able to feel and understand the situation of other people. Empathy is sensing feelings and views of others and showing active interest in their concerns, anxieties and worries, including the ability to listen.

Exercise 2.

The teacher informs the students: ‘Imagine that our class is divided into half, on the right side there is ANGER and on the left side there is PEACE (the teacher sticks the sheets of paper with the appropriate feelings in a visible place)’.

The teacher tells the students that he/she will read the descriptions of different situations whereas their task is to occupy the part of the class that more accurately describes their response to the event.

The teacher reads (Annex 2)



The teacher summarizes the exercise. The key to knowing the emotional area of other people is good knowledge of our own emotions and the awareness of the fact that how we perceive the reality, how we react and what we feel is influenced by many factors. Empathy allows us to understand and accept others who differ significantly from us. If we are in the same shoes, we can react in totally different ways.

An empathic person can also listen. The art of active listening is a skill that is essential to build satisfactory relationships among people. The teacher asks the students how an ideal student should behave. (The ideas are written down on the board).

The teacher makes additional comments. A good listener is physically oriented to the speaker, maintains eye contact and does not make deconcentrating movements, e.g. taking a glance at a telephone screen. The listener treats the speaker with respect, does not interrupt his/her speech, does not finish his or her sentences, does not interfere with his or her stories. The listener tries to check whether he or she understands the speaker well. For longer speeches or those concerning difficult matters, the so-called paraphrase, i.e. reconstructing what the speaker just said in one's own words, can be used.

Exercise 3. (5 min)

The teacher allows the students to choose their pairs so that they can feel free in their company, then informs them that the exercise will take place without words. One person in each pair will be a person standing in front of the mirror, the other one will be his/her mirror reflection. For one minute, the person standing in front of the mirror makes movements, the other one – 'the mirror' is supposed to repeat them, not at once, but with delay. All the time, the students look into each other's eyes.

The teacher asks about the students' observations.

The teacher concludes. Very often, It is difficult for us to wait until someone comes to an end with their speech. We have a tendency to interrupt, speed up, not to be attentive. Careful



listening, like the other components of emotional intelligence can be practised. One of the fundamental intentions that should guide us is to listen to others in the way we would like to be listened to ourselves.

Conclusion

Emotions in our lives are like traffic lights, only a little bit more sophisticated in structure. Every emotion is 'for something', each of them matters and tells us about something. Some of them tell us to stop definitely, others to prepare and others let us know: 'go ahead, this is it, do it now'. Every emotion teaches us something about ourselves, about other people, about our lives. Managing emotions starts by recognizing, naming and accepting our emotions and understanding their role in our lives. What is not the management of emotions certainly like?

The management of emotions is not:

- denying emotions and their existence,
- pretending that we do not feel something or there is no emotion,
- holding back or hiding emotions, e.g. under a smiling mask,
- calming down with drugs or risky behaviour,
- letting emotions out in the form of aggression, criticism, hate, poignancy;
- running away by being focused too much on tasks, demonstrating an increased sense of control, perfectionism.

The issue of emotional intelligence is becoming increasingly common in the context of the labour market and scoring professional successes. People are driven mainly by emotions in their lives while taking decisions, so the ability to use them properly is invaluable, especially in a professional environment.



Risks and recommendations

* The group at this stage should already be formed on the basis of mutual trust – we are cautious if the dynamics of the group is different; there is a risk of being laughed off, found guilty of something, mocked at

Due to the large amount of material to be completed within 45 minutes, it is recommended to continue the topic during the next class. In addition, Exercise 1 (Annex 1) may be omitted and given to the students as homework by distributing the question card at the end of the class.

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Annex No 1

- How often do you ask yourself what you feel?
- In what situations do you most often do it?
- What emotions are you most likely to discover?
- Can you then find the reasons for them?
- What is your favourite emotion?
- Which emotion don't you accept most?
- What emotions are you most likely to experience?
- Which emotion do you deal with best?
- Which emotion do you deal with worst?



- What emotions do you most often hide from the environment?



Annex No 2

1. Someone jumps the queue in front of you.
2. Your family member eats the last sweet you wanted.
3. The colleague copies the answers from your test.
4. The colleague starts dating the boy you like.
5. Parents check your phone.
6. The colleagues are not on speaking terms with you any more and you don't know why.
7. You run to the shop to buy a charger and see the worker closing the shop.
8. You travel on the bus with the headphones on and suddenly someone touches you.
9. You are back from school to have peace and quiet and your mum gives you a list of tasks to be done in the afternoon.
10. You sleep soundly on Saturday and suddenly your next door neighbour starts the renovation.
11. You come back home after school and suddenly your parents' first question is: 'How was it at school?'
12. You are on a lesson, hear the bell sound and the teacher says: The bell is for the teacher.
13. You tell someone about something that is important to you, ask a question and this person says: 'Sorry, what did you say?'
14. You buy a new jumper, come to school the next day, and your class colleague wears exactly the same jumper.



Scenario 6.

I know what I feel and what I need

Area: needs awareness and understanding

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to develop self-awareness of needs and their impact on life.

The teacher recalls that emotion management is the ability to recognize one's own emotions and emotions of others as well as the ability to respond appropriately to different emotions.

Empathy, i.e. the ability to imagine how other people live and feel, is also essential to build a satisfactory relationship between people. Empathy makes it possible to understand and accept others who differ from us.

A necessary aspect of our emotional competences is also our self-awareness, i.e. the ability to know ourselves, our strengths and weaknesses, what we like and what we do not. In the process of discovering ourselves, we need to reach our needs. They are the cornerstone of any human action and its fundamental impulse – every human behaviour serves to fulfill needs.

Class purpose:

- To understand the role of needs in human life
- To identify the link: needs – emotions – action
- To develop the ability to identify one's own needs
- To teach sensitivity to one's own needs and needs of others



Learning outcomes:

- The students get acquainted with the hierarchy of needs;
- The students understand the role of needs in human life;
- The students are able to recognize their own needs;
- The students talk about their needs,
- The students understand the needs of others,
- The students use knowledge of needs to self-discovery and to achieve objectives

Materials and aids:

1. Printed copy of Annex 1 and Annex 2
2. Sheets of paper
3. Highlighters, colored pens



Course of Action

The teacher informs the students that every emotion contains information about what is important for us. It is the emotions that signal us whether our needs are met, and in such a case we feel pleasant emotions, and when we have postponed or neglected them, we end up with unpleasant ones.

The most familiar classification of needs is the so-called Abraham Maslov's Hierarchy of Needs.

At the bottom of this pyramid are the most basic physiological needs, e.g. food, sleep, water, warmth. Safety needs are slightly higher, e.g. freedom from anxiety and fear, shelter, stability. The need for love and belonging occupies even a higher position, e.g. a sense of being a family member, having a friend, acceptance. The need for self-esteem is just above, e.g. being respected by others, having respect for oneself, independence. The need for self-fulfilment, i.e. self-acceptance, acceptance of others and fulfilment of one's abilities, is high in the hierarchy. At the top, there are high-ranking needs that go beyond the individual's personal needs, e.g. seeking justice, faith and peace. According to Abraham Maslow, it is only when an individual meets lower-level needs (e.g. sleep, food), they can move to higher levels and address the needs of the next floors. It is not possible to reverse this hierarchy, with the exception of heroic situations such as giving life to a beloved homeland, or a person.

The teacher asks the students the following questions: In your opinion, which of the needs are the most important? Is it possible to value them or can they be disregarded at the expense of others? Which of the most common needs do you fulfil?

The teacher summarizes the discussion by saying that all needs are really important. Fulfilling some of them determines the possibility of fulfilling the others. Very often, we neglect our basic needs, such as the need for sleep or rest, and then we are surprised that we cannot learn something or that our relationship with others is not working well. At first sight, we may not



see the link. But if, in line with Maslow's theory, we look closer to our needs, we see that deprivation of these basic ones can prevent optimal functioning in other spheres of life.

In particular, highly sensitive people should keep in mind all the time whether their unfulfilled basic needs do not contribute to overstimulation. As we know, highly sensitive people are easy to exceed the stimulation threshold. When some unpleasant emotions occur or when we cannot perform a task following our own expectations, we should ask ourselves: 'Do I feel like eating something?, Did I get a good sleep, Am I too hot or too cold or Do I feel at risk, or Am I overloaded by the emotions of others?'

The needs are the source of our emotions. Failure to fulfill our needs are expressed with emotions. When we feel fear, anger, happiness or sadness, it is certainly one of the needs that should be at the heart of our concern. You only need to learn well to recognize them.

The teacher distributes sheets of paper and pens to the students.

Then the teacher informs the students that the following questions can help us to identify needs:

If I feel now what I feel– what do I lack?

If I feel now what I feel – what do I have too much?

If I feel now what I feel - what do I have enough?

If I feel now what I feel – what do I miss?

If I feel now what I feel – what should I take care of?

The teacher gives the students a moment to try to answer the above questions. For this purpose, the teacher reads each of them slowly again.

After that, the teacher asks the students: 'What did you find the most difficult in this exercise?'

The teacher explains what needs are. Needs are not something external to us, neither objects nor things, they are not material things. To find your needs, you need to look inside you. Needs are internal. An unfulfilled need is a source of unpleasant emotions and leads to undesirable

behaviour. When we learn to identify our needs, to express them properly, and to perceive the behaviour of other people in terms of their needs, then we will live better.

Exercise 1.

The teacher distributes the worksheets (Annex 1) to the students, then asks them to select two emotions and to complete each column. On the back of the card there is a list of needs they can use. This card is an excellent exercise in identifying one's needs. The students can complete the table with other emotions as homework. An interesting suggestion is to invite family members (parents, brother(s) or sister(s)) and friends to complete the table. It can be really interesting to share one's reflections.

The teacher asks the students whether, on the basis of what has been discussed, he/she is able to identify needs that can be particularly important for highly sensitive people, or someone else outside the list comes to their mind.

All ideas are written down on the board to be discussed further.

The teacher points out the role of needs in interpersonal communication. The ability to recognize needs is also the basis for having a good relationship with others, both of a personal and professional nature. What others say and do is not the cause of our emotions. Taking responsibility for one's own feelings by recognizing one's own needs and refusing to attribute responsibility to others for failing to meet our expectations prevents many unnecessary conflicts. Talking about our emotions and needs and listening to others in this way helps to create a dialogue that allows its participants to meet.

Communication based on respect and understanding is the one in which each party adheres to the following principles:

1. Be always ready for someone not to agree with the solution you are proposing.
2. If your goal is to make the other person behave as you expect, i.e. you violate the rules of effective communication. The idea is to seek compromises and common solutions.



3. Consider what you expect. Answer the questions: What can the other person feel in this situation? What can the other person think? Consider whether the solution you propose will be feasible for someone and whether it also works well for him/her.
4. Try to avoid the following phrases: 'you must....., I want you to., you should..., I deserve that you.... , I demand that you should.... Instead, try to use the following ones: 'Could you.... What do you think about such a solution, How do you feel about , Is it possible that you.....?'

Exercise 2

The teacher asks the students to quote the most irritating opinions they hear most frequently, expressed by:

1. Parents
2. Teachers
3. Peers
4. Family members
5. Other people from their surroundings.

The ideas are written down on the board.

The teacher asks the students to count from 1 and 5 and then all the students with number 1 get together, with number 2 sit together..., etc. The task of each group is to choose one sentence (group 1 the sentence made by parents, group 2 made by teachers, etc.) The task of each group is to guess the needs that lie beneath the words spoken by that person.

The teacher asks the students whether an attempt to understand another person in terms of his/her needs changes anything. How can this affect our relations, communication? Can your awareness help highly sensitive people to accept themselves? On the other hand, will knowledge of the specific needs of HSPs allow them to be better understood by the environment and not labelled?



The teacher reminds what labels are most frequently affixed to HSPs: whining, forgetful, miserable, oversensitive, fearful, reserved, a philosopher...The students list their associations.

Each of these terms makes reference to the behaviour of highly sensitive people based on their needs. Recognizing them and taking care of them will certainly contribute to keeping balance and not exceeding the threshold of excitement by escalating emotions when the needs are not listened to and disregarded.

Conclusion

The needs always inform us about what is important for us now. The unfulfilled ones do not disappear. Pushed aside and disregarded, they are a source of unpleasant emotions and will come to light in an increasingly difficult and a less controlled way. They can range from little irritation to strong anger, from delicate anxiety to huge fear, from a small bad mood to a great sadness, from slight fatigue to a fit of anger. You need to listen to your needs and the emotions they signal, so that you can develop by their conscious fulfillment, at the same time respecting the needs of others.

The individual hierarchy of needs in each individual may be different, what people lack depends on many factors. Moreover, our needs are constantly changing, so our pyramid is constantly being rebuilt. However, it has its permanent foundations – physiological needs, safety needs and higher floors that need to be kept in mind.

Risks and recommendations

Exercise 1 and its Annex may be set as the students' homework. The teacher encourages the students to ask their relatives to perform the task.



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Annex 1

Anger, happiness, sadness, surprise, fear, shame, sense of guilt			
I FEEL WHEN...	THEN I THINK.....	I THEN I DO...	THEN I NEED...
E.g. anger My parents forbid me to return home late	that they treat me like a child - they do not respect me and do not trust me	argue with them	To be understood, heard, given attention, trust, freedom, space



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List of needs by Marshall Rosenberg

Physical needs • Air • Food • Water • Shelter • Movement • Recreation • Sleep • Expressing sexuality • Touch • Physical safety

Interacting with oneself • Authenticity • Challenges • Learning • Clarity • Awareness • Competences • Creativity • Integrity • Self –Development /Growth • Self-expression • Self-esteem • Self-acceptance • Self-respect • Achievements • Privacy • Sense • Feeling of agency and Impact on life • The whole • Cohesion • Development • Stimulation/Excitement • Trust • Celebration of fulfilled needs, dreams, plans and crying over the unfulfilled ones • Objectives

Joy of life • Fun • Humour • Happiness • Ease • Adventure • Diversity/Variety • Inspiration • Simplicity • Physical /Emotional welfare • Comfort • Hope

Autonomy • choosing one’s own plans, objectives, dreams and values • choosing one’s own way to achieve them • freedom • space • spontaneity •independence

Relationship with other people • Contributing to enriching life • feedback whether our activities have contributed to enriching life • Belonging • Support • Community • Contact with others • Company • Closeness • Sharing ups and downs, talents and abilities • Bonds • Attention/Being given attention • Emotional safety • Sincerity • Empathy • Interdependence • Equal Opportunities • Being seen • Understanding and being understood • Trust • Warmth • Comfort • Intimate love • Collaborative force • Cooperation of •Mutuality

Relationship with the world • Beauty • Contact with nature • Harmony • Order • Cohesion • Peace



Scenario 7.

Who am I? My tasks and objectives

Area: planning of personal development

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to make the students aware of the development tasks they are facing and to develop skills that will help achieve them.

Every period of life is related to specific development tasks. Achieving these goals and tasks is, in some way, preparation for adulthood. The development tasks of the adolescence period are as follows:

1. Gaining experience of physical maturity, including sexual maturity;
2. Developing one's own individuality;
3. Shaping social commitments;
4. Gaining autonomy;
5. Growing out of egocentrism;
6. Reorganization of the value system

Class purpose:

- To introduce the issues related to development tasks and objectives of adolescence
- To raise awareness of the benefits of their successful implementation
- To identify tools to help develop individuality
- To encourage self-reflection, self-discovery, self-development

Learning outcomes:



- The students learn about the development tasks they are facing
- The students are aware of the challenges of adolescence
- The students raise motivation for self-development
- The students developing interpersonal skills

Materials and aids:

1. Printed copy of Annex 1 (Achievement of objectives)
2. Sheets of paper
3. Coloured pencils, coloured pens, pencils
4. Bag with approx. 30 different small objects



Course of Actions

The teacher introduces the issue of development tasks of adolescence to the students. Every life span is related to specific development tasks. Performing them is, in some way, preparation for their achievement and scoring a success in adulthood.

Development tasks combine the demands of the society with the individual's needs, interests and objectives.

The teacher lists the development tasks of adolescence, stressing that they are all equally important. However, due to the subject matter of our class, we will focus on developing individualism by trying to answer the question 'Who am I and who would I like to be?'

Achieving development goals and tasks requires the development of certain life skills such as establishing interpersonal relationships, making choices, taking decisions, dealing with various difficulties, or pursuing interests.

Exercise 1. (10 min)

The teacher passes through the class with a bag containing various small objects. Each student draws a specific thing from the bag and is expected to complete the sentence: "I'm like (the name of the object he/she drew) because..."

The teacher asks the students about their impressions from the activity. Together, they think whether any of the terms they used is associated with a high degree of sensitivity.

The teacher asks the students what they think is the biggest challenge of the adolescence period. Can the competences we discussed during the previous class help you deal with the difficulties of the adolescence period (management of emotions, identification of needs, empathy, satisfactory relationships, communication based on respect and understanding).

In order to make an attempt to answer the question: ‘ Who am I?’, you need to know yourself well.

Exercise 2. (10 min)

The teacher asks the students to draw the outline of their self-portrait in the middle of the page. Then the students are tasked to divide the page into half, drawing an even line along the page.

Instruction:

On the left, write down your traits and behaviours that answer the question: Who am I?

On the right, write down the traits and behaviours that answer the question: What would I like to be?

The teacher asks the students to choose one trait/behaviour from the right side of the drawing which seems to them the most important at the moment.

The following sentence is written on the board:

I could be.....,

if I was/were able to..... .

The students work in pairs. While completing the first part of the sentence with the chosen characteristic/behaviour, they work together to find answers to what skills would be helpful to achieve change.

It is certainly not easy to determine exactly who we would like to be and even more difficult to find the tools that will help us get it. Many of the difficulties you face in your life occur because you do not know exactly where to go and what you want to achieve. The act of planning the



achievement of the objective you have chosen will help to reduce uncertainty and frustration as well as providing you with a helpful tool to perform the tasks you are facing.

Exercise 3 (10 min)

The teacher distributes the worksheets (Annex 3) and asks the students to complete them.

The first activity is to select one of their educational and professional objectives that they would like to achieve in the near future. The teacher explains that as we are preparing for a professional role, it is this area of life that has been chosen. In the future, students can use this way to plan the achievement of objectives from other areas.

Once the exercise has been done, what follows is a free discussion on the degree of the difficulties, the motivation to implement the project, which can help to pursue the objective in a persistent way.

Conclusion

Due to the nature of the class and the time constraints, only a small area of issues related to specific development tasks will be discussed. It is a sign post for the directions that can be followed while building one's own identity.

Recommendations: Exercise 3 can be an excellent homework. However, it is important that the teacher should explain well the purpose of the exercise and the way it should be done.

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Annex 1

Achievement of objectives

Select one of your educational and professional objectives that you would like to achieve in the near future

.....

1. On a scale from 1 to 10 (where “1” means you are have only started achieving your objective) and “10” means that the objective has been fully achieved) tick the place where you are now

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Where would you like to find yourself in a month?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. How will you know that you are here?

.....
.....

4. What can you do next week that will bring you closer to your objective?

.....
.....

5. In order to do it next week, what can you do tomorrow?

.....
.....

6. In order to do it tomorrow, what can you do today?

.....



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Scenario 8

And what do we need this stress for?

Area: The importance of stress and methods of dealing with it (in response to stress related to planning the future)

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to make the students aware of when we can take positive advantage of stress as a motivator and when we need to be protected from it and cared for.

Stress is a natural reaction of an organism to an event or an external factor that puts an individual out of balance. Stress is not harmful itself. Mild or moderate stress can help to maintain carefulness and attention. The problem arises when a person is exposed to stress for a long period of time or lives in constant stress, in such a case it is harmful and prevents optimal functioning.

It is important to understand what happens to the body in stressful situations. A crucial element is the awareness of the consequences of permanent stress, which can affect the body's ability to keep balance.

Class purpose:

- To explain the stress mechanism to the students: stress as a response to a threat
- To get familiar with basic information on stress neurobiology
- To draw the students attention to the positive and negative effects of stress and their impact on health, well-being and psychosocial efficiency;
-



Learning outcomes:

- The students understand the essence of stress and the role it plays in human life
- The students will learn basic information about the autonomous nervous system
- The students identify signs of stress at the level of emotions, thoughts, somatic symptoms
- The students are able to identify situations that cause stress

Materials and aids:

1. A4 sheets of paper
2. Coloured pencils, coloured pens



Course of Action

Exercise 1 (10 min)

The teacher asks the students to draw how they imagine their stress. After 5 minutes, the teacher asks the volunteers to show the drawing and describe it (the drawing can be attached to the board with a magnet so that everyone can see it).

Then the teacher summarizes the exercise by asking the students to define stress based on what they said. The answers are written down on the board.

The teacher gives a definition of stress as the body's natural response to a variety of factors and situations that distort balance, after that asks the students to say what happens to them when they are under stress.

What are the body signals?

What are the emotions?

What thoughts come to your mind?

The answers are written down on the board.

Exercise 2.

The teacher asks the students to split into groups of four. Each of them is tasked to give examples of two different situations that cause daily stress and one that could be particularly stressful for a highly sensitive person.

The group representatives read these situations, which gives rise to a discussion over stressors that are common to everyone. The teacher asks the students whether HSPs are more often under stress and feel it stronger.



The teacher explains that our autonomous nervous system, acting below the level of consciousness, continuously monitors the environment in order to timely detect potential dangers – this is the so-called neuroception, which switches the nervous system to a specific mode. Everything that is happening around is constantly assessed as safe – dangerous or life-threatening.

The autonomous nervous system, independent of our will, consists of the sympathetic system –and the parasympathetic system.

Like animals, we have two basic ways to respond to a situation that we judge to be a fight-to-flight response.

During the response, the sympathetic part (responsible for mobilization) is activated.

Stress hormones then released are designed to ensure the body's readiness in emergency situations. The principal ones are adrenaline, noradrenaline, cortizole.

Hormones released by the body during stress act positively, but only when stress lasts for a short time, and consequently when hormones act only for a certain period of time and in small amounts.

Once the danger has passed, the parasympathetic system steps in with its ventral part of the vagus nerve (responsible for, e.g. rest, regeneration, calming down, safety, close relationships).

The second part of the sympathetic system, the so-called dorsal branch of the vagus nerve, is responsible for the extreme feeling of danger, freezing, the last level of reaction to a stressful event.

The vagus nerve, the so-called the tenth cranial nerve has therefore two branches, ventral and dorsal, both of which belong to the parasympathetic part of the autonomous nervous system.

This neuroception, i.e. the scanning of the surroundings by the nervous system in order to check whether it is safe, takes place at an unconscious level. Neuroception is an experience without



words. Before our brain understands the event and makes it meaningful, the autonomous nervous system has already assessed the situation (e.g. I cannot make it, I am good for nothing, I am doing everything wrong) and initiated a reaction (e.g. heartbeat, sweating, shaking hands, stomach cramps, stream of consciousness, difficulties in concentration, etc.)

There are therefore three levels of response to stress: the ventral part of the vagus nerve, which gives us a sense of relaxation, feeling of safety, public engagement; the sympathetic system (fight-to-flight response, mobilization) and the dorsal part of the vagus nerve which is responsible for the reaction of freezing, shutdown, feeling of hopelessness and depression.

The most important thing is to be aware of the fact that neither of these systems is bad, there is nothing like an inappropriate reaction of the body. The more frequent we are at some level, the more a temporary state changes into a permanent one.

A dysregulated, incapable of inhibiting defensive reactions, the nervous system continues to activate the state of mobilization (overexcitation), i.e. as if we had been pressing the gas pedal, or the immobilization (understimulation) – a handbrake pulled up, which results in somatic diseases, difficulties in relations, disorders of cognitive functions and continuous search for safety.

Hans Selye, who introduced the concept of stress into health sciences, identifies three phases of the stress response:

Phase I: alert phase:

seconds, minutes – severe stress, the body mobilizes all available forces (e.g. a rise in blood pressure, a rise in body temperature, sweating);

Phase II: resistance or adaptation

minutes, hours – an individual copes with stress factors quite well, but is less tolerant towards additional stimuli that were previously harmless (e.g. sounds, scents, feeling of hunger);

Phase III exhaustion



hours, days, months – stress factors are too intense or long. Defense capabilities are lost, which makes physiological functions disrupted. In the final stage, permanent negative changes in the body may occur.

Exercise 3

Which phase are you in?

— Did you think about something that makes you worried during our previous class?

— Did you think about something you fear?

Why zebras don't get ulcers

While relishing delicious green grass, a zebra faces a threat. All of a sudden, a lion appears on the plain attacking the herd. The zebra starts running as fast as it can. It manages to escape. Animal stress is usually abrupt and transient.

When the hazard disappears, the zebra shakes off the stress and gets back to eating the grass. The zebra does not keep the stress in mind indefinitely. The stress comes to an end and the zebra gets back to mental balance.

Yet, people do not behave like zebras. Beyond the threat diagnosis and response phase, we often do not return to mental and physical balance. We spend a lot of time by thinking about potential (not necessarily real) threats, looking back to negative experiences from the past, predicting, criticizing themselves, foreseeing. We are thus under stress not only when a threat arises and to the degree necessary to solve the problem, but also long before and after it.

If our mind and body do not notice that the threat has disappeared, it will not disappear. When stress is a frequent guest in our body, even positive or neutral events may appear to be stressful and overwhelming. Our body works on an autopilot, somehow it traces down potential danger. When we live in constant stress, the brain creates images that are threatening to us (if I turned



off the iron, I am writing a math test tomorrow, I told Anna too much yesterday, Michał totally ignores me, etc.), despite the fact that we are not in danger right now. The response to stress then comes regardless of whether or not we need it.

In the process of deep processing of all information from the outside world as well as from the body's inside, the experts are, as we already know, highly sensitive people. Scanning the environment and analyzing the incoming information is one of the **fundamental traits of HSPs. Their above-average sensitive nervous system assesses whether they are safe or endangered with even greater intensity. The neuroception of the HSPs, i.e. an automatic and subconscious process that reacts to images, sounds, scents, emotions and body signals, is therefore extremely sensitive.**

Stress causes changes in the functioning of the body in the following three spheres:

physiological indicators: accelerated pulse, mydriasis, increased sweating, palpitations, muscle tension of arms and legs, stiffness of the neck, dryness in the oral cavity, throat tightness, psychomotor stimulation, alternating feeling of the heat and the cold, stream of consciousness;

psychological indicators: irritation, suspicion, hostility, feeling of undefined anxiety, apathy, depression, feeling of loneliness, difficulty in making decisions, low self-esteem;

behavioural indicators (changes in behaviour): increased stimulation, nervous tics, impulsiveness, loss of appetite or a feeling of continuous hunger, sleep disorders (insomnia or increased drowsiness), sudden fits of anger or cry, susceptibility to accidents, alcohol abuse, excessive smoking, tendency to get into disputes with others, lack of job satisfaction, reduced productivity)

Conclusion

Daily life shows that we cannot avoid stress. It depends, to a large extent, on us how we will cope with it. It should be made clear that it is not stress itself but our response to it that is harmful to us. As Selye put it: Stress is the spice of life. It is not stress that kills us, but our



response to it. In order to be healthy and to operate at an optimal level, it is essential to develop the ability to cope with it.

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Scenario 9

Cut off stress

Area: developing self-regulation skills

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to present the students different ways to cope with stress and to draw their attention to the mind-body relationship

Stress is a permanent guest in our life. It does not only concern our mind, but we also experience it in the body. In response to the forthcoming test, the driving test, or the number of duties to be done in the near future we have stomachache, headache, stomach cramps, the heart beats as fast as it can. To reduce stress, we need to understand our body and use its wisdom.

Class purpose:

- To improve knowledge of the stress phenomenon based on polyvagal theory
- To learn relaxation techniques
- To improve the ability to cope with stress in difficult situations

Learning outcomes:

- The students notice and reflect on stressful situations
- The students identify autonomous states
- The students cope with stressful situations
- The students consciously mitigate the effects of excessive stress

Materials and aids:



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1. Printed copy of Annex 1
2. Printed copy of Annex 2
3. Presentation



Course of Actions

The teacher reminds the students that stress is a natural reaction of our body. It is an integral part of a person's life, in many situations warns us against danger, allowing for survival. This is what it makes its evolutionary function.

Stress is not a threat in itself, but how we respond to it. Like each of us chooses their favourite style of dress, their favourite dishes, we do the same thing with the methods we use to cope with stress. We use our favourite strategies in a more or less conscious way.

Exercise 1

The teacher divides the class into smaller groups. Each group is provided with a description of a specific situation (Annex 1). Its task is to propose strategies to deal with the stressful situation.

The best strategy for dealing with difficult situations is written down on the board.

The teacher recalls the concept of 'neuroception' as our personal, 24 hours a day monitoring system, which checks the environment to make sure it is safe. Thanks to it, we quickly assess risks and take up or abandon the challenge. Neuroception shapes every single response. It is very fast and unconditional. Before our brain understands an experience, neuroception notifies the autonomous nervous system which initiates a response independent of our will. Then our heart starts beating very fast, we turn red, we sweat, our breath speeds up, our hands are shaking, we have stomach cramps, or we feel dizzy.

So, what can we do about it?

The essence of neuroception is that we are usually unaware of how it works, but in most cases we are usually aware of the reaction of our own body. We need to know how the vehicle, we use throughout our lives, really works.



All our daily experiences are received by the autonomous nervous system and interpreted as safe or dangerous/threatening. This, in turn, triggers reactions and activates a certain state. Every day, we constantly climb a ladder: on the top, there is a safe and social state, in the centre there is the state of mobilization, fight-or-flight response, and at the bottom the state of collapse and immobilization.

An awareness of being on a specific ladder step makes it possible to give meaning to the response of our body, to find the causes that brought us there and to find ways to stay on or move to another one that is more beneficial to us.

How can we help our body find the balance?

The sympathetic part is the gas pedal, whereas the parasympathetic part is the brake. To cope with stressful situations well, you need to be able to drive the vehicle with two feet. Otherwise, when you push the pedal to the metal – you have a panic attack, when you slam on the brakes – you faint. We have access to the regulation of this mechanism through breathing.

Each breath is a delicate pressure of the gas pedal: the blood pressure slightly increases, the bronchial tubes expand, we are becoming anxious and mobilized. Each exhale is like delicate pressing of the brake pedal: the heart slows down and we feel more relaxed. Rhythmic and sustainable breathing allows benefiting from these two options: pushing the gas pedal a bit on inhalation and then pushing the brake pedal a bit on exhalation.

Exercise 2

A break for breathing

The teacher asks the students to make themselves comfortable. They may close the eyes or leave them open. He asks them to feel their feet touching the floor, coming into contact with the floor. They can imagine as if they were putting down roots that are naturally entering deep down the earth from their feet.

The teacher reads the following instructions (Annex 2):



Breath 1.

1. Relax the abdomen.
2. Let your breath be slow but deep.
3. Give it time to gradually fill the chest.
4. Enjoy the inhale without haste and pressure.
5. When you feel you are ready for the exhale, release the air calmly.
6. Empty the chest gradually, hold in the abdomen gently to empty the lungs.
7. Repeat several times, without haste, calm down. WOW!

Breath 2.

1. Relax the abdomen and chest.
2. Take a breath and imagine how the air wave passes into your body, and fills it from the inside.
3. Observe the breath for several cycles (approximately 5), inhale-exhale, inhale-exhale, inhale-exhale.
4. Take a full breath and stop air for a moment (as much as you need).
5. Take full exhale, push all the air out of the lungs.
6. When you feel you are ready for the exhale, release the air calmly.
7. Repeat several times, without haste, calm down. WOW!

Breath 3.

1. Relax the abdomen and chest.
2. Take a breath and imagine how good energy passes into your body, and fills it from the inside.
3. Observe the breath for 5 cycles.
4. Empty the chest gradually, hold in the abdomen gently to empty the lungs.



5. While releasing the air, say the words: “calm” or “gratitude” (or others that are the most appropriate for you).
6. Repeat several times, without haste, calm down. WOW!

Breath 4.

Devote some time to a few deeper breaths. Then tilt your head slowly from side to side, taking several longer breaths at each tilt. Calmly and slowly. There is no need to rush. Then move your body a bit, maybe your arms, feet, fingers and toes... Take a deep breath. Feel body moving. WOW!

We all sometimes feel stressed and then unconsciously bring stressful images. When we feel severe stress, or we only imagine it, we resemble an anxiety-driven brain which turns off in search of threats. When we track down threats, we lose everything else. Even neutral events can generate stressful images and reactions in us.

Adapting to what is happening around by noticing these aspects of the reality which are good for us, prevents the tendencies of our stressed brains to search for what is not good.

Exercise 3.

The teacher reads the following instruction (Annex 3)

1. Look around. Let your eyes examine the surroundings. Don't rush to see what is around you and what you could not see before. Let your eyes choose something and fix your eyes on it for a few moments. They enjoy this moment. Bravo!
2. Find something good around you, something you enjoy looking at. Let your eyes fix on it. Then put your hands on the abdomen and let the next breath fill your lungs. By exhaling the air, allow the lungs to empty completely. Check out what you feel in your body when you stare at something really nice. Pay a special attention to areas in the body that are less tense than others. Take a deep breath. Stop when you need it. Good luck!



3. Look around you for something that does not contribute to stress. A tree, a flower, a sun ray, an animal, a person, a beautiful painting. A really pleasant view to see. Do you feel this break affecting your body? Feel and see those parts of the body that are OK, where you feel no tension and anxiety. That are simply natural. Take this moment. Bravo!

4. Rubbing your ears – we take an ear lobe between the fingers and slightly twist it back and forth (5 times each side). This movement, through the vibration of the membrane, stimulates the brain area responsible for reducing stress hormones.

Conclusion

Self-regulation skills provide something very valuable – presence here and now, involvement in the present. The possibility of using tools that help to free from stress gives us a feeling of safety, which results from the fact that we can take the best care of ourselves. Everyone has the ability to calm down their own brain and body and is able to take care of themselves in order to feel safe.

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Annex 1

Situation 1: You are preparing for the test/examination on which your final grade depends. You notice that the longer you are studying, the less you remember. You get the impression that you do not know anything. There are different ideas in the head – I won't make it, I will become everyone's mock, I am good for nothing, it's better to give up and resign.

Strategy for dealing with the stress:

Situation 2: You are looking for a weekend job to earn extra money. You found a good job offer, but you are paralyzed by the thought of having an interview with the employer. On the other hand, you know that if you do not go to work, you will not fulfill your dream. You do not want to give up because you are afraid.

Strategy for dealing with the stress:

Situation 3: You have promised that you help your colleague in mathematics. Unfortunately, it turned out that you have too much to do and you will not find enough time. You do not feel comfortable about it as you have always been a person to rely on. At the same time, you know that without your help your colleague will fail the semester and it's been a while since you promised to help him/her. On the other hand, you have to do your duties. What to do?

Strategy for dealing with the stress:

Situation 4: You are coming to a decision about what you would like to do in the future. You are looking for information on the internet and talking to your friends. However, you have the impression that it is useless, because your parents have already decided for you. You are already



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fed up with the ongoing discussions on that. However, you know that the profession they chose is totally inappropriate for you.

Strategy for dealing with the stress:



Annex 2

Breathing techniques

Breath 1.

8. Relax the abdomen.
9. Let your breath be slow but deep.
10. Give it time to gradually fill the chest.
11. Enjoy the inhale without haste and pressure.
12. When you feel you are ready for the exhale, release the air calmly.
13. Empty the chest gradually, hold in the abdomen gently to empty the lungs.
14. Repeat several times, without haste, calm down. WOW!

Breath 2.

8. Relax the abdomen and chest.
9. Take a breath and imagine how the air wave passes into your body, and fills it from the inside.
10. Observe the breath for several cycles (approximately 5), inhale-exhale, inhale-exhale, inhale-exhale.
11. Take a full breath and stop air for a moment (as much as you need).
12. Take full exhale, push all the air out of the lungs.
13. When you feel you are ready for the exhale, release the air calmly.
14. Repeat several times, without haste, calm down. WOW!

Breath 3.

7. Relax the abdomen and chest.
8. Take a breath and imagine how good energy passes into your body, and fills it from the inside.
9. Observe the breath for 5 cycles.
10. Empty the chest gradually, hold in the abdomen gently to empty the lungs.
11. While releasing the air, say the words: “calm” or “gratitude” (or others that are the most appropriate for you).
12. Repeat several times, without haste, calm down. WOW!

Breath 4.

Devote some time to a few deeper breaths. Then tilt your head slowly from side to side, taking several longer breaths at each tilt. Calm and slowly. There is no need to rush. Then



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move your body a bit, maybe your arms, feet, fingers and toes... Take a deep breath. Feel body moving. WOW!



Annex 3.

Self-regulation.

1. Look around. Let your eyes examine the surroundings. Don't rush to see what is around you and what you could not see before. Let your eyes choose something and fix your eyes on it for a few moments. They enjoy this moment. Bravo!
2. Find something good around you, something you enjoy looking at. Let your eyes fix on it. Then put your hands on the abdomen and let the next breath fill your lungs. By exhaling the air, allow the lungs to empty completely. Check out what you feel in your body when you stare at something really nice. Pay a special attention to areas in the body that are less tense than others. Take a deep breath. Stop when you need it. Good luck!
3. Look around you for something that does not contribute to stress. A tree, a flower, a sun ray, an animal, a person, a beautiful painting. A really pleasant view to see. Do you feel this break affecting your body? Feel and see those parts of the body that are OK, where you feel no tension and anxiety. That are simply natural. Take this moment. Bravo!
4. Rubbing your ears – we take an ear lobe between the fingers and slightly twist it back and forth (5 times each side). This movement, through the vibration of the membrane, stimulates the brain area responsible for reducing stress hormones.



Scenario 10

Area: Analysis of professional potential

Class duration: 45 min.

Target group: teenagers aged 15-18

Tips for the teacher: The aim of the class is to develop self-awareness and strengthen self-esteem through awareness of one's own potential

Once we can call our emotions, we know that they are rooted in the causes that we learn to recognize and care for, when we know the significance of good communication, respect for the others' needs and empathy. We develop self-awareness and use tools that help us feel comfortable with ourselves, even in difficult and stressful situations. This is the right moment now to reflect on what I like and I want to do to be a happy adult.

Class purpose:

- To analyze the students' professional potential;
- To develop knowledge and awareness of one's own talents and skills;
- To raise self-esteem by learning about personal potential.

Learning outcomes:

- The students identify their talents, interests and strengths;
- The students organize information about themselves;
- The students learn to see their potential;
- The students draw conclusions on the diversity of capacities of their class colleagues, with a particular focus on highly sensitive people.



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Materials and aids:

1. Flipchart, board
2. Highlighters, chalk
3. Printed copy of Annex 1 and 2



Course of Actions

The teacher asks the students whether they know themselves well.

Then the teacher moderates the discussion on why it is important to know oneself and one's own potential (strengths, qualities, abilities, likes) in the context of career planning. The results of the discussion are written down on the board for the whole class.

The teacher asks if there are some students who have a precise idea of what they will do in the future. Are there any students who are not yet fully aware of this? Is your job a close or distant topic for you? What emotions and thoughts come to your mind when you think about your future?

Exercise 1.

The teacher distributes the worksheets to the students to be completed (Annex 1)

The teacher encourages the students to do self-reflection, pointing out that learning about oneself is a cost-effective effort. Everyone has some skills that they can use in their educational and professional life. We are different from each other and that is perfect as there is a place for everyone in the labour market.

Certain traits must even be in the minority as it is the case with high sensitivity. Less sensitive people in the group are responsible for taking action. More sensitive people report on possible risks, due to their ability to perceive details and subtleties. More sensitive ones are engaged in planning, forecasting and warning, whereas less sensitive ones in acting, this way everyone perfectly complements one another.

After that, the teacher presents Howard Gardner's concept of eight types of intelligence.

Howard Gardner, American psychologist, has identified eight types of intelligence: logical-mathematical, linguistic, environmental, musical, spatial, motor, interpersonal,



intrapersonal. Gardner's theory assumes that there are different cognitive styles, thus there are many individual ways of learning and understanding the world.

Gardner's main idea is that each of us has all types of intelligence, but we have developed their different degrees. All these types of intelligence complement one another and can be developed through various exercises and appropriate stimulation.

The students receives the questionnaire (Annex 2) and completes it following the instructions.

The teacher discusses the test results with the students, then presents the descriptions of eight types of intelligence.

The teacher asks the students to split into groups of four. Their task is to reflect on how a given type of intelligence can be developed and for which professions it is useful.

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Annex 1

1. Think about your skills. Consider your interests, knowledge of specific topics, what you like doing. Write down everything that comes to your mind.
2. What are you usually praised for? Why are you proud of?
3. Think about the impression you give. What makes you unique among others, how are you remembered?
4. If you didn't have to worry about money, what would your ideal job be?
5. What don't you like most? What kind of job wouldn't you certainly be able to do in the future? Why?
6. What would you like to learn over the next few years? Skills/knowledge from which area to develop and acquire?



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7. How can you use your sensitivity now and in the future?



Annex 2

**Intelligence test based on Howard Gardner's MI model
Give each topic the appropriate rank as follows:**

- 1 – I strongly disagree
- 2 – I do not agree
- 3 – I agree
- 4 – I strongly agree

1.	I like learning about myself, do psychological tests, etc.	
2.	I am able to play a musical instrument	
3.	I prefer to do physical work rather than studying or considering things	
4.	I often 'sing' to myself in the head	
5.	I manage my money in a reasonable way and can plan my expenses easily	
6.	I like inventing stories and tales	
7.	I have very good motor coordination	
8.	Words matter to me	
9.	I like crosswords, riddles, scrabble	
10.	I don't like ambiguity, I like when someone says exactly what he/she expects from me	
11.	I like logical and mathematical puzzles and riddles similar to SUDOKU	



12.	I like helping to solve arguments among people, being a mediator in disputes	
13.	Music is very important in my life	
14.	I am persuasive when lying (if I want)	
15.	I like and do sport or/and dance	
16.	I like interest tests, psychological tests, personality tests and IQ tests	
17.	I am irritated by irrational and unpredictable behaviour	
18.	Music influences my feelings and emotions	
19.	I am a very sociable person and I like spending time with other people	
20.	I like being accurate, systematic and always well prepared	
21.	Graphics, graphs, diagrams and lists are easy for me to understand	
22.	I can swim well, play team games	
23.	I find it easy to remember quotations, phrases, sentences	
24.	I will always identify the places I have been to (despite the passage of time)	
25.	I value a wide range of styles and types of music,I listen to different music	



26.	When I focus on something I tend to draw things on paper	
27.	If I wanted, I could manipulate people	
28.	I can predict my feelings and behaviour in specific situations	
29.	I am successful in mental work – mathematics and accountancy	
30.	I can distinguish the majority of sounds without knowing what makes them	
31.	At school, one of my favourite subjects was/is Polish.	
32.	When I solve a problem I carefully consider the consequences of the action	
33.	I like debates, conversations and discussions	
34.	I love adrenaline, sports, dangerous activities	
35.	I value individual sports most	
36.	I care how people around me feel	
37.	There are a lot of drawings and photographs in my house	
38.	I can do various manual work and I like it	
39.	When I do something I often listen to music	
40.	I can easily remember phone numbers or car registration numbers	



41.	I often set my own plans and objectives for the future	
42.	I am realistic (I learn from experience)	
43.	I can easily assess whether someone likes or dislikes me	
44.	I can imagine the appearance of an object (from a different perspective/side)	
45.	I do not need to use instructions to unpack and assemble furniture	
46.	I find it easy to talk to strangers	
47.	I learn best when I practise – I simply have to try myself	
48.	When I close my eyes, I can see clear and distinct images	
49.	I can count in memory	
50.	I often talk to myself – in my head or in my mind	
51.	I liked music at school	
52.	When I am abroad, I can easily learn the basics of a foreign language	
53.	Team games are easy for me and I like playing them	
54.	My favourite subject in school is mathematics	



55.	I always know what mood I am in	
56.	I know my strengths and weaknesses	
57.	I write a diary/journal/blog	
58.	I understand other people's body language	
59.	I have always liked / like art subjects at school	
60.	Reading books gives me great pleasure	
61.	I read maps very well	
62.	I find it irritating when someone cries and I am unable to help	
63.	I can help resolve arguments and disputes among others	
64.	I have always dreamed of becoming a musician or a singer	
65.	I prefer team sports	
66.	Music puts me into a good mood	
67.	I never got lost when I was alone in a new place	
68.	When I learn new things, it's easy for me to follow the schemes	
69.	I am happy to spend my time alone	



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70.	My friends can always come to me for support or advice	



Key:

Category name	Question numbers	RESULT
1	5, 10, 11, 17, 20, 29, 32, 40, 49, 54	Mathematical/logical
2	6, 8, 9, 14, 23, 31, 33, 50, 52, 60	linguistic
3	2, 4, 13, 18, 25, 30, 39, 51, 64, 66	musical
4	3, 7, 15, 22, 34, 38, 42, 45, 47, 53	kinaesthetic
5	1, 12, 16, 28, 35, 41, 55, 56, 57, 69	interpersonal
6	19, 27, 36, 43, 46, 58, 62, 63, 65, 70	intrapersonal
7	21, 24, 26, 37, 44, 48, 59, 61, 67, 68	Visual/spatial

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Description

Linguistic intelligence

— ability to use a language, patterns and systems

Those who prefer the type of linguistic intelligence:

- Learn by writing, reading and dictating;
- Are sensitive to words, their sounds, and the voice modulation;
- Have the ability to transfer information accurately, persuade and introduce a positive atmosphere into a conversation;
- Like poems, rhymes, riddles;
- Attach great importance to a spoken and written word while learning, working, interacting with others;
- Learn accents quickly, take on the characteristics of the way others speak;
- Are good listeners;
- May show the dominance of the hearing representation system.

Mathematical and logical intelligence

— abstract thinking, love for precision, structuring.

People preferring the type of mathematical – logical intelligence:

- Find it easy to use symbols and abstract concepts;
- Learn concepts such as time, place, quantity, number quickly in childhood;
- Their strength is deductive thinking, the recognition of cause-effect relationships and the structure of complex phenomena;



- Use inductive thinking efficiently, often use analogies, draw good conclusions from an incomplete set of information, are easy to create models;
- Have mathematical capabilities, like solving logical riddles.

People preferring the type of visual and spatial intelligence:

- Have a good coordination of movements;
- Have designing abilities, are capable of constructing three-dimensional objects;
- Are able to reproduce images and objects in their memory;
- Learn quickly the operating rules of machinery and mechanical appliances;

Music intelligence

— sense of rhythm, emotional sensitivity.

Those who prefer the type of musical intelligence:

- Distinguish and often experiment with sound systems;
- Are able to distinguish the sound of different instruments;
- The climate of the music being listened to influences their mood;
- Like music and music improvisation;
- Feel rhythm and react to sound by dancing, rhythmic tapping their feet, writing the lyrics;
- Are interested in raising awareness about music.

Interpersonal intelligence



— they develop relationship with others easily, demonstrate negotiation skills, are communicative.

People preferring this type of interpersonal intelligence:

- Use verbal and non-verbal communication efficiently;
- Are able to see different perspectives, interests of different parties;
- Establish good contacts with people from diverse backgrounds;
- Understand the thoughts, feelings and motives of other people's behaviour;
- Are good listeners, willing to get to know and help other people;
- Can effectively influence the behaviour of others;
- Like working in a team.

Intrapersonal intelligence

— they demonstrate a high level of self-awareness, positive personal image, self-motivation.

Those who prefer the type of intrapersonal intelligence:

- Have a high awareness of their thoughts, feelings and behavioural motives;
- Like 'philosophy' and look for 'sensitivity of life';
- Endeavour to create their lives according to their own values and standards;
- Personal development is significant for them;
- Like reading;
- Dedicate a lot of time to thought and reflection.



Kinaesthetic intelligence

— they have manual capabilities, prefer a sense of touch, demonstrate good visual and motor coordination and space organization as well as good timing.

People preferring the type of kinaesthetic intelligence:

- Prefer the reception of sensations by touch, movement, physical contact;
- Learn through action, model design, practical classes, excursions, etc.;
- Show good visual-motor coordination, agility, balance, good timing;
- Ensure physical well-being and development;
- Rarely remain stationary.



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