''Visualizing Mental Well-being: A Collage Exploration''
The activity **"Visualizing Mental Well-being: A Collage Exploration"** is designed to foster dialogue and reflection on the concept of mental well-being through an engaging and creative process. It serves as a tool to help participants collectively define mental well-being, encouraging self-expression, mutual understanding, and collaboration. The activity involves small groups of participants creating collages using images from magazines to visually represent their personal interpretations of mental well-being. Once completed, collages are exchanged, and participants attempt to interpret their peers' work, fostering a deeper exchange of perspectives. Through guided discussion, key themes and keywords are extracted, ultimately forming a collective definition of mental well-being. This method is particularly effective as it leverages visual art as a universal language, making it accessible to diverse groups, including individuals from different cultural backgrounds. It promotes emotional expression, active listening, and teamwork while providing a space for introspection and dialogue. Additionally, the reflective and interpretative nature of the activity helps participants broaden their understanding of mental well-being beyond their own experiences. By engaging in this exercise, participants develop emotional competence, enhance their communication skills, and gain insights into how mental well-being is perceived differently by others. The process not only supports personal growth but also strengthens social bonds and encourages a more inclusive approach to mental health discussions.
Action objective and results
• *To* find a common definition of mental well-being; to open a dialogue on the mental well-being topic among participants. • *What results do you expect from the implementation of the activity/tool?*; Expression of ideas through visual art, as it is a universal language; Active listening to each other's ideas as a growth tool; Dialogue and mutual understanding; Collaboration and mediation to plan in a group. • *A division into general and specific objectives can be used.* 1. to find out a definition of Mental well-being; 2. to open a dialogue on the Mental well-being topic among participants; 3. Developing emotional competence
Brief description / scope of activity / tools / practices
• The activity consists of gathering participants into groups around tables where they will find the materials to make a collage. Facilitators ask "*What does mental well-being mean to me?*" or guide people with other inputs. They will have to represent their idea in a collage using images and photos taken from magazines. Once the collage is finished they will pass it to their neighbor and they will take turns interpreting their neighbor's works. The facilitators invited the participants to reflect on the meaning of mental well in order to find the 4 keywords that emerged from the interpretation of the drawings. The keywords will be used to form a sentence defining what mental well means to that group. • This activity is important because it is an effective reflective strategy.

Being able to connect people through art is an inclusive and motivating way to express oneself and experiment with a topic. The contribution of the neighbours in giving an interpretation is essential to be able to restore an element that could have been missed by the authors.
Information about the authors
• Alessandra Dal Pozzolo; Studio Progetto Soc. Coop. Soc.
Resources
• The resources are: Facilitator. Groups of 4/5 people (up to ⅝ groups) of young people with and without migrant background. Time: 50 minutes. Materials and space: tables and chairs, A3 white papers, old magazines, glue, scissors, flipchart, markers.
Plan and timetable (if applicable)
1)Start by preparing the tables with 1 sheet of A3 paper per participant (dividing the group in 4/5 participants per table). In the middle of the table prepare the materials (old magazines, scissors, glue, markers). 2)The facilitator asks the question “What does mental wellbeing mean to me”? Participants have to represent their ideas in a collage using images and pictures of the magazines (10 minutes) 3)As soon as the participants have their collage ready they pass it to the next neighbor and everyone takes turns trying to interpret their neighbor's drawing. The owner of the draw can make some comments if he/she thinks it will be useful. The facilitator can ask questions to encourage participants to reflect on their own understanding of mental well-being and how it may have evolved through the activity. (15 minutes) 4)At the end, the group of the table need to find 4 common keywords that emerged by the interpretation of the draws (5 minutes) 5)Each table presents the 4 keywords in the big group and the facilitator writes it in a flipchart forming clouds when the words or concepts are linked (10/15 minutes - depending on the number of tables) 6)The keywords will be used to form a sentence defining what mental well-being means to that group (5 minutes)
Methodology and references (background)
• The collage is an artistic technique that is used for teachers and educators training. It is a different mode of action carried on by the trainers that is inserted as part of the art-based research (McNiff, 2008), and the arts-informed research (Cole & Knowles, 2008). This passage allows us to identify some cognitive and reflective processes related to the practice of collage that make it an effective tool in a training context.
Budget (if applicable)
• Stationary (flipchart, post-it, markers, glue, scissors,...): approx. 30 euros
Success criteria
• Feedback from participants; evaluation questionnaire at the end of the activity
Team

- Facilitator
- *T*he skills required are listening and mediation skills. Have a pro-positive and inspiring attitude.
- *Roles and responsibilities of team members:* The facilitator has the role of helping the group so that they can best express their abilities. And have the responsibility of fostering an inclusive and respectful environment for sharing interpretations. Facilitate discussions to ensure all voices are heard and valued. Guide participants in synthesizing common themes from the collages. In the end, emphasize the importance of collaboration and mutual understanding in defining citizenship.

Communications and Reporting

- If the participants agree, the collages created can be collected in an **album** or a **virtual gallery**. However, it is important to first ensure that the participants do not wish to keep their own work for themselves, as the collages are personal and may reveal emotions and experiences that they do not want to share with a wider audience.

Attachments