

# A GUIDE TO Participatory Theatre Activities for Seniors



Co-funded by  
the European Union



APS Le Compagnie Malviste ETS (LCM), Italy, Milan  
Romanian Alzheimer Society (SRA), Romania, Bucharest  
Rightchallenge – Associação (RC), Portugal, Porto

Asociația Habilitas-Centrul de Resurse și de formare profesională (Habilitas), Romania, Bucharest  
University of West Attica (UNIWA), Greece, Athens  
Kinonikes Sineteris Drastiriotites Efpathon Omadon (EDRA), Greece, Athens



SOCIETATEA ROMÂNĂ  
ALZHEIMER



lecompagniemalviste

FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION. THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS EXPRESSED ARE SOLELY THOSE OF THE AUTHOR(S) AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION OR THE NATIONAL AGENCY FOR COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (ANPCDEFP). NEITHER THE EUROPEAN UNION NOR THE ANPCDEFP CAN BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THEM.



Co-funded by  
the European Union

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>BEHIND THE SCENES – FOUNDATIONS, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONTEXT OF PARTICIPATORY THEATRE</b>	2
HEALTH & WELL-BEING	5
PARTICIPATORY THEATRE	6
THE COMMUNITY	7
INTERGENERATIONALITY	8
THE THEATRE WORKSHOP	9
WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW AS A CONDUCTOR?	11
OTHER PROFESSIONAL FIGURES AND DISCIPLINES	12
HOW SHOULD THE LABORATORIES BE STRUCTURED?	13
RULES AND TIPS FOR SETTING UP A THEATRE WORKSHOP	14
COMMUNICATION	15
<b>ON STAGE – PRACTICAL EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES FOR MAKING THEATRE TOGETHER</b>	16
THINKING AND BREATHING	20
WHO IS LIKE ME?	23
PRESENTATIONS	26
ICEBREAKER DANCE	30
THE PIANO	32
LISTENING TO THE BODY	35
BALANCE AND STRENGTH	37

WEATHER MASSAGE.....	40
PERFORM EMOTIONS.....	42
IN THE MOMENT.....	45
THE MIRROR.....	50
WHO IS WRITING TO YOU?.....	52
MAY I HAVE.....	54
VOICES IN HARMONY.....	56
RHYTHMS OF MEMORY.....	58
LAUGHTER GAMES.....	61
TAKING A SOUND BATH.....	64
THE STORY CIRCLE.....	66
IMAGES THAT SPEAK.....	68
RADIO STATIONS.....	71
FRAMES OF THE HEART.....	75
WHAT I SEE, WHAT I FEEL.....	78
LINES BETWEEN MEMORIES.....	80
BODY MAP.....	82
MEMORY IN MY HANDS.....	84
FROM ME TO WE.....	86

WHAT IS IT FOR YOU? WHAT COULD IT BE?.....	88
THE SUITCASE.....	90
THE JOURNEY.....	94
WHERE DOES THIS SMELL TAKE YOU?.....	97
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>WEBSITES AND LINKS.....</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>ANNEX 1 - CARDS FOR “IN THE MOMENT”.....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>ANNEX 2 - CARDS FOR “RADIO STATIONS”.....</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>ANNEX 3 - MATERIALS FOR “BODY MAP”.....</b>	<b>126</b>

*We are the Melodies, and we will guide you through this Guide!*

*We live inside people, yes, right there, where the heart meets the mind.  
We are part of you: we connect emotions to thoughts, years to quality of life.*

*Sometimes we sleep, silent, inside certain bodies...*

*but all it takes is a breath of art, an emotion, a sound,  
and we awaken, spreading our wings.*

*When that happens, we turn on the light within you.*

*We enjoy socializing, listening,  
overcoming boundaries and transforming limitations into new possibilities.*



# BEHIND THE SCENES – FOUNDATIONS, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, AND CONTEXT OF SOCIAL THEATRE

*"Theatre is, by its nature, a plural act: it cannot exist in solitude, but is achieved only through the relationship with others, for others and together with others"*

**On stage in the Golden Age: Theatre for Healthy Ageing (AGE-THEA)** is a two-year project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union that aims to create knowledge and experience by raising awareness of the role of theatre in the prevention and treatment of the health and psychosocial well-being of the older people, with and without dementia, Alzheimers and other similar neurodegenerative diseases. For the first time, it involves six European partners in a collaboration, all active and with solid experience in the field of active ageing and the well-being of older people





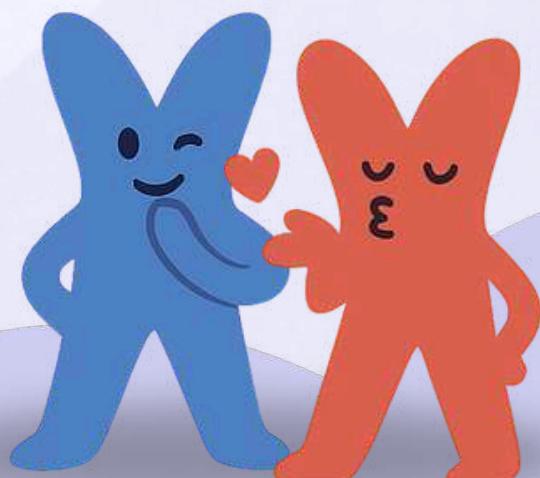
**From Romania**, two entities are participating:

- The Romanian Alzheimer Society (SRA), an organization that has been working for over twenty years to support people with dementia. It promotes person-centered care, integrating innovative approaches such as storytelling and theatre into care pathways. Notable projects include Story2Remember, ABM and AGE\_THEA, all dedicated to improving the quality of life of the older people through the arts.
- Asociatia Habilitas – CRFP, NGO engaged in the development of services and policies for active ageing, lifelong learning and the social economy. Habilitas promotes innovation and cooperation with public and private entities to improve the quality of life of the older people in Romania.

**From Portugal**, RightChallenge ((RC) participates. It's an NGO focused on inclusive education and social equity that offers training programs aimed at various groups, promoting active citizenship and equal opportunities.

**From Greece**, the following are involved:

- The University of West Attica (UNIWA), one of the leading Greek universities, with a wide academic offer and study programs related to health, social sciences, arts and engineering. It is also active in training and applied research.
- Social Cooperative Activities for Vulnerable Groups (EDRA), active since 2001, works in favor of mental health and inclusion of vulnerable groups. Handles facilities for people with mental health disorders, centers for children with learning difficulties and programs against poverty and for housing reintegration.





**From Italy**, APS Le Compagnie Malviste (LCM) participates, an association that has been promoting theatre as a tool for social cohesion and cultural regeneration for almost 20 years. The association organizes workshops, festivals and site-specific performances, involving local communities and arts professionals, with particular attention to the older people and people with fragility.

Through a series of actions, which exploit the opportunities and tools offered by the theatre, and the project outputs, the partners intend to foster collaboration between the health, social and cultural sectors, which are often clearly distinct and not very interconnected.

### **Specific objectives include:**

- study at European level how active and creative participation in cultural activities, in particular theatrical activities, can have a positive impact on the health and well-being of older people;
- develop an interdisciplinary, artistic and person-centered training program aimed at caregivers, professionals and family members;
- encourage creativity, socialization and empowerment in the over 65s, with or without a diagnosis of dementia, helping to combat marginalization; to raise awareness among local and (inter)national institutions on the value of theatre as a tool for active and healthy ageing.

In addition to the older people, the project addressed a wide range of target audiences: social workers, artists, formal and informal caregivers, health professionals.

### **Project outputs include:**

- a (trans)national report, available in five languages, documenting the role and impacts of theater on the psychosocial wellbeing of older people, based on research, focus groups and theatre activities (Link: [https://age-thea.eu/?page\\_id=937#flipbook-df\\_939/15/](https://age-thea.eu/?page_id=937#flipbook-df_939/15/) ) a joint training
- program, also multilingual, which combines theory and practice to promote the use of theatre as a method of prevention and support in social and health contexts (Link: [https://age-thea.eu/?page\\_id=330](https://age-thea.eu/?page_id=330) )
- this guide aims to be a useful product for anyone who wants to approach the practice of participatory theatre for older people, with or without Alzheimer's or dementia.

With this in mind, the project aims to represent a concrete step towards the adoption of theatre as an accessible, inclusive and transformative tool to improve the quality of life in old age.





## HEALTH & WELL-BEING

In recent years, interest in the use of artistic and cultural interventions as tools for health promotion and for healthy and active aging has grown significantly. In particular, theatrical activities have been recognized as effective practices to improve the physical, cognitive and emotional well-being of older people, both in the presence and absence of neurodegenerative diseases such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Theatre is configured as an integrated psychosocial intervention, capable of stimulating creativity, encouraging social interaction and generating empowerment. It has a positive effect on self-esteem, memory, emotional expression and a sense of belonging, contributing to the reduction of isolation and stigma. In the literature, these effects have been confirmed by numerous studies conducted internationally: United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Scandinavian countries, Australasia and by the WHO itself. Further recent Italian and Dutch experiences are helping to strengthen this field of research and intervention.

A further area of investigation concerns the impact of theatrical activities on formal and informal caregivers, who, through participation in theatre workshops or training courses, improve their communication and relational skills, while reducing the emotional burden and stress related to care. However, the analyses carried out within our project confirm the existence of significant gaps in research, public policies and in the cultural and person-centered care offer for people with dementia, in particular with regard to non-pharmacological approaches based on art. In this context, theatre is configured as a transformative, economically sustainable and replicable practice, capable of offering concrete benefits not only to older people, but also to the family, social and professional networks that surround them. Projects such as AGE-THEA propose an integrated and interdisciplinary model, which combines culture, care and participation, helping to redefine the very concept of active aging.





## PARTICIPATORY THEATRE

Art and culture represent powerful tools for connecting memory, identity and the community dimension. Theatre, in particular, offers a safe and creative space in which older people can rediscover and enhance aspects of themselves that are often clouded by illness. In this non-clinical context, it becomes possible to express complex emotions, keeping individual dignity intact and favoring the birth of relationships. The well-being and quality of life of the most fragile people depend on the ability to place their health condition within a broader vision, in which artistic and cultural expressions such as theatre, as well as music, poetry, dance, photography, manual skills, play, etc., find space. Investing in culture means promoting the development of personal and social skills, encouraging active citizenship, inclusion and social cohesion, promoting educational paths and contributing to the construction of health and well-being on an individual, collective and institutional scale.

Art and culture, and theatre in particular, must be understood not only as aesthetic expressions, but as real concrete tools of social intervention to promote relationships, sociality and well-being, especially for the benefit of older people – with or without dementia, Alzheimer's, etc. – and their caregivers and family members.

Theatre is an extremely effective means of promoting participation, social inclusion, community building and the promotion of health and well-being. It offers participants from different backgrounds – seniors, caregivers, artists and professionals – the opportunity to take part in a shared creative process, in which the experience and voice of each one are valued.

Through the creation of a safe and welcoming space, the theatre allows everyone to participate at their own pace and ability. Whether it is expressing oneself with words, with the body, with movement, with a look or simply with one's presence, every form of participation is recognized as meaningful. The group dynamics that develop in this context help to reduce the sense of isolation and strengthen social connections between participants.

By promoting personal storytelling, sharing memories and authentic self-expression, theatre stimulates the emotional and cognitive sphere. This function is particularly relevant for older people, who often experience a sense of exclusion from public life: the theatre, in this sense, becomes a channel of social and identity reintegration.





Participatory theatre, in particular, is based on shared memory and the construction of common meanings, thus configuring itself as a collective experience in which each individual can contribute. To make this happen, it is necessary to learn a language that is capable of reaching the other in his or her uniqueness, starting from the awareness that each person is unrepeatable, a "unique piece" in the mosaic of the community. The theatre workshop takes on a transformative function: its goal is not only to represent, but to activate processes of individual and collective awareness and responsibility. Through active involvement, it promotes the empowerment of people and communities, offering useful tools to deal with critical issues and daily problems. Ultimately, participatory theatre is not just an art form, but a creative, relational and community experience, capable of generating well-being, strengthening social ties and promoting an inclusive, conscious and participatory culture.

## THE COMMUNITY

In the living and engaging context of the theatre workshop, social labels tend to disappear, leaving room for an environment where people can connect deeply through shared stories, authentic emotions and the power of creative expression. The theatre workshop, in its essence, represents a space in which different voices come together, contributing to a collective narrative capable of overcoming barriers and fostering an authentic sense of belonging. The possibility of welcoming multiple fragilities at the same time highlights the power of theatre as an inclusive and unifying human practice. Within this space, definitions related to illness or personal condition fade, allowing the value of personal history and creativity expressed in different forms to emerge.

Theatrical activities lend themselves to a wide adaptability, allowing the unique strengths and skills of each participant to be valued. The approach shifts so as to highlight the limits to recognizing potential, promoting a truly inclusive, welcoming and supportive environment, in which every contribution is recognized and appreciated.

The focus is not on what a person "can't do", but on what he can do. In this type of context, labels and differences fade until they dissolve, leaving room for the enhancement of gestures, stories and skills that everyone brings with them. Working together allows us to grasp the richness of individual contributions, creating meaningful and deep human experiences.





*The central idea that guides this approach is that Alzheimer's – as well as all neurodegenerative diseases – is not exclusively a health issue but constitutes a challenge for the entire community. The promotion of health and well-being cannot be delegated exclusively to the health system, but requires the active involvement of each individual, families and the community as a whole.*

*These paths intend to encourage dialogue between inhabitants of the same community, stimulating bonds of solidarity and cohesion, contributing to the regeneration of the social fabric and the strengthening of collective life. Fostering these spaces of relationship means offering everyone the opportunity to experience the pleasure of being together, sharing and collaboration, essential elements for building lively, participatory and inclusive communities.*

*In the context of a theatre workshop aimed at older people, whether or not they live with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia, it is not only what is done that is relevant, but above all how it is done. The methodological and relational approach plays a central role in determining the quality of the experience. The focus shifts from the pursuit of perfection to the enhancement of effort and authenticity. Every gesture, every word, every expressive attempt is welcomed and recognized as meaningful, since what matters is the act of participating, not the final result.*

*The laboratory thus becomes a protected space in which emotions can emerge freely and safely, without the fear of judgment. Value is attributed to each contribution, regardless of the cognitive, physical or communication skills of the individual. The uniqueness of each participant is respected and welcomed, and differences become resources from which to draw collectively. There are no hierarchies, but a temporary community based on respect, care and reciprocity.*

## **INTERGENERATIONALITY**

*It would be desirable, as well as extremely profitable, to open the theatre workshops to the entire community, with particular attention to the involvement of children, adolescents and students of every order and degree. Such initiatives would encourage moments of intergenerational meeting and dialogue, generating enriching experiences for all those involved. The union of different age groups allows the exchange of experiences, knowledge and skills, contributing to the breaking down of stereotypes and the construction of more cohesive, inclusive and supportive communities. Through these moments, both the youngest and the older people acquire new perspectives, feel valued and actively participate in social, cultural and relational life. This type of interaction stimulates and reinforces core values such as empathy, active listening, and critical thinking.*





*The comparison between generations also produces mutual benefits in terms of emotional support, transmission of practical knowledge, personal growth and preservation of collective memory. These processes contribute substantially to the well-being of young and old, offering both the opportunity to feel an active part of a shared cultural and social project. Shared storytelling, at different stages of life, emotionally enriches and strengthens interpersonal bonds.*

## **THE THEATRE WORKSHOP**

*A theatre workshop, intended for older people with or without a diagnosis of dementia, and any caregivers, can be organized in multiple contexts, provided that the chosen space meets essential criteria in terms of accessibility (free of architectural barriers), safety and quality of the proposed experience (equipped with comfortable seats and arranged in such a way as to facilitate communication and meeting). It is essential that the environment in which the activity takes place is designed to welcome, stimulate and support the participants, encouraging active participation and offering a feeling of safety and tranquility. It is also important that the space is flexible enough to accommodate the different activities planned during the workshop.*

*The atmosphere must be welcoming, warm and free of judgment. The theatre workshop should be configured as a protected space, in which each participant feels free to express himself, without fear of being judged.*

*As for the possible locations, there are many suitable options. Theatres, civic halls and libraries represent culturally significant, large and symbolic spaces, capable of reinforcing the perception, by the participants, of being an integral part of social and cultural life. These places evoke a sense of belonging and stimulate involvement.*

*Even outdoor spaces, such as gardens, courtyards or parks, offer an additional dimension to the theatrical experience. The connection with the natural environment stimulates the senses, promotes freedom of movement and enriches the expressive path, contributing to the physical and emotional well-being of the participants. The interaction with nature, combined with the creativity of the theatrical language, creates a profoundly regenerative and engaging context.*

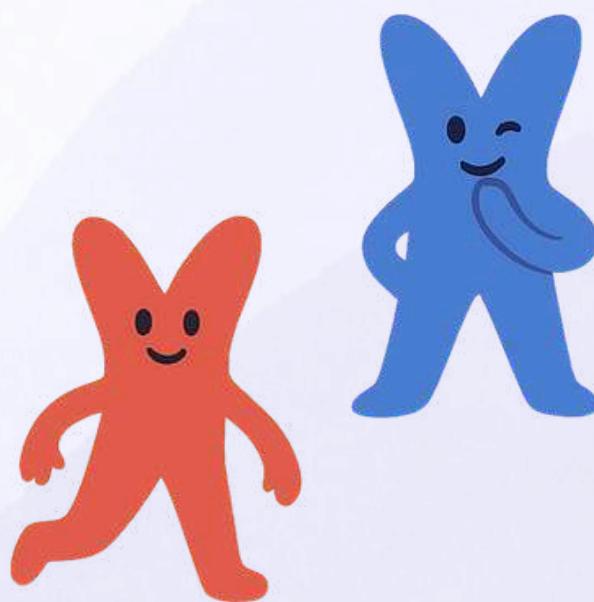
*The duration and frequency of the meetings of a theatre workshop are fundamental elements to be carefully calibrated, especially when working with older people and, in particular, with people with dementia or Alzheimer's. It is necessary to build a workshop time that takes into account the actual attention, presence and participation skills of the people involved, avoiding fatigue or disorientation.*





Typically, an effective workshop lasts two hours. However, this time must be managed with care, considering that some participants — especially those with physical or cognitive fragilities — may show signs of fatigue, difficulty concentrating or restlessness. For this reason, the 120 minutes can represent an ideal threshold, provided that the meeting is well structured and marked by a variety of stimuli, breaks and moments of relaxation. Weekly attendance is confirmed as the most suitable way to ensure continuity, consolidate the sense of belonging to the group and promote relational and emotional well-being, without creating overloads. One meeting per week allows you to keep motivation and involvement alive, while offering a constant and expected space in the personal routine of the participants.

The participation of family members and caregivers is highly encouraged and supported. Theatrical activities, in fact, are not only beneficial for older people without or with Alzheimer's (or other forms of dementia) but also represent an important resource for those who take care of them. The inclusion of caregivers in the theatre workshop allows them to observe and understand loved ones from a new perspective, offering alternative tools for dialogue and relation. This is particularly relevant as those who care for a person with dementia on a daily basis often find themselves living in solitude, without answers, support or recognition.





## WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW AS A CONDUCTOR?

The conductor or facilitator is an activator of expressive, relational and affective processes. In particular, working with older people and those living with dementia, the conductor must possess solid relational skills combined with social sensitivity, empathy and deep listening skills. He is dedicated to creating the conditions so that each participant can feel an active part of a shared creative process, respectful of everyone's rhythms and possibilities. Through theatrical games, improvisations, body and vocal exercises, the conductor stimulates imagination and memory, encourages spontaneity and welcomes the unexpected as a precious resource. He carefully takes care of the relational atmosphere of the group, enhancing the bonds between the participants, but also with families, operators and the surrounding social environment. It supports dynamics based on listening, mutual respect and empathy, and is able to adapt tools, materials and objectives from time to time according to the evolution of the group itself.

The conductor is called upon to observe carefully, to grasp signals - sometimes even minimal - and to modify the initial objectives when the path requires it. His gaze is not oriented to the aesthetic result, but to the process: he knows how to give value to a gesture, a smile, a look, a sudden memory that resurfaces. He works with delicacy, without judgment, with a poetic and profound human gaze. The transition from an approach of "leading" the workshop to one of "listening and co-building" is fundamental to making the group the protagonist of the creative process. In fact, the best proposals emerge from the interaction between the conductor and the participants, developing together during the activities. It is essential to carefully observe not only the words, but also the body signals, the gaze and the energy circulating in the group. The conductor must maintain an open and receptive attitude, avoiding closed postures such as arms or legs crossed, so as to always be ready to intervene or react. In fact, during the workshop, the conductor must be able to capture those moments in which the group comes alive: when the participants laugh, are moved or show greater participation, or when someone takes the initiative spontaneously, perhaps with a song, a story or a repeated gesture. These stimuli must not be allowed to go unnoticed but welcomed and valued. While maintaining a basic structure, the conductor must be flexible and adapt to the dynamics of the group, guiding the flow of activities without opposing, but following the current of what emerges spontaneously and naturally.





## OTHER PROFESSIONAL FIGURES AND DISCIPLINES

A theatre workshop aimed at older people, in particular people living with dementia, is based on the collaboration of a heterogeneous team. In addition to the central figure of the conductor, there are in fact numerous roles that contribute to creating a welcoming, stimulating and safe context, capable of supporting the well-being and authentic expression of each participant. It is a multidisciplinary space that requires the involvement of numerous professional figures, belonging to both the artistic and cultural world and the social and health fields. At the head of the meetings there is always the figure of the conductor, an expert in the activation of expressive and relational processes, who can be supported, depending on the planned activities, by professionals from different disciplines, such as musicians, actors, dancers, writers, set designers, costume designers, photographers, artisans, etc. The collaboration between these figures allows the workshop to be articulated in a plurality of languages, stimulating participation and encouraging creativity.

In fact, in addition to the theatre in the strict sense, the workshop can accommodate and integrate a wide range of artistic disciplines and creative activities, such as writing, drawing, painting, photography, dance, music, singing, and manual activities inspired by craftsmanship. Paths related to ceramics, weaving, the creation of artist's papers and books, personal diary or artistic printing can also be proposed. In order for the workshop to truly become an inclusive and generative space, it is essential to build an active and continuous dialogue between cultural professions – such as artists, artisans, cultural operators, experts in Social Theatre – and professions in the social and health fields, including social workers, psychologists, educators and health professional. This synergy makes it possible to respond in a more effective and integrated way to the needs of the people involved, taking into account both the emotional and expressive aspects as well as the cognitive, physical or relational fragility in a collaborative logic and social and cultural prescription.

The psychologist does not necessarily participate in every meeting, but can play a supervisory and support role, monitor the emotional well-being of the participants and support the team in managing any complex relational dynamics. The social worker, on the other hand, represents an important link between the laboratory and the local services, being able to deal with the dialogue with the families of the participants. Volunteers also play a valuable role: they facilitate the relational climate, welcome and accompany participants, collaborate in logistics, and over time can become affective reference figures, contributing significantly to the creation of an empathetic and reassuring environment.





## HOW SHOULD THE LABORATORIES BE STRUCTURED?

The structure of each meeting can follow a flexible but recognizable scheme, useful for orienting and reassuring the group. Within a theatre workshop, it is essential to pay particular attention to the opening and closing phases of each meeting. A warm welcome phase accompanied by an initial ritual (lasting about 20 minutes) helps to create a favorable atmosphere, reconnecting to the previous experience, and allows participants to relax, feel at ease and perceive the space as safe and inclusive. This atmosphere facilitates the willingness to listen, to relate and to actively participate. This is followed by the heart of the workshop activity, which can include theatrical exercises, improvisations, narration or movement, and which develops for about an hour. The closing is an equally essential moment, as the theatrical experience can be intense, both physically and emotionally. A moment of shared reflection, accompanied by a symbolic closing (about 10 minutes), offers the opportunity to rework the experience lived and to gradually accompany the return to everyday life. The last part (about 30 minutes) includes a time of leisure and free dialogue between the participants.

This structure, well defined and repeated over time, supports the emotional well-being of the participants and helps to create a sense of continuity and stability. Individual welcome plays an important role: greeting each participant one by one, with a look or a word, helps to establish a direct and personal bond. At the beginning, especially in the first meetings, it is useful to invite each person to introduce themselves - even with a gesture, according to their possibilities. With time and the acquisition of greater trust, the sharing of thoughts, stories, curiosities or small anecdotes, real or invented, can also be introduced, which promote mutual knowledge and the breaking of the ice.

These initial moments are also precious for the conductor, who can observe the composition of the group, its balances, the behavior of those who are more expansive or, on the contrary, more reserved. You can ask simple questions about how each person feels, thoughts or emotions related to the meeting, or news they want to share, even if only to break the silence and facilitate spontaneous expression.

The closing, as well as the opening, must take place with attention and care. A brief final restitution can be provided: those who wish can express their experience in words, even with a single word or a symbolic gesture. Finally, concluding the meeting with a convivial moment - for example by offering a tea, a cake or a simple snack - strengthens the sense of community and offers an additional informal space for relationships, precious for strengthening bonds.



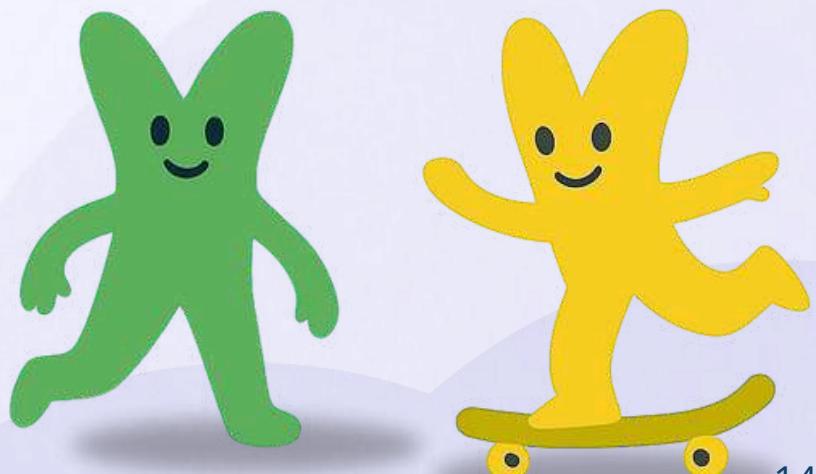


## RULES AND TIPS FOR SETTING UP A THEATRE WORKSHOP

Ideally, the group should work in a circle, whether the participants are standing or sitting. The circle, in fact, is a functional configuration that allows everyone to see each other, ensuring inclusion and equality. To support an inclusive climate, it is useful to establish some simple rules shared within the group. Among these, maintaining confidentiality is fundamental: what is said or expressed in the laboratory remains in that space, protecting mutual trust. In the same way, active participation is encouraged, but always respecting the times, limits and desires of each one. Finally, the use of kind, respectful and inclusive language is promoted, capable of welcoming each person as they are, without stereotypes or prejudices.

Within spaces and moments such as those described, it is necessary to respect rules and methods of relationship that are not imposed from above but shared and based on listening and mutual respect. In order to allow the conductors to better guide the activity, counting on everyone's collaboration, and everyone to feel good together in a common space, simple but not trivial precautions must be followed and adopted. The most important ones are listed below:

- minimize distractions (for example: turning off mobile phones during the session);
- active listening, do not interrupt when other participants speak;
- participation is encouraged but not forced;
- promote the individual expression of each person;
- listen in silence;
- everyone does what they can and feel;
- no judgment and no suggestions;
- knowing how to wait and give things time to emerge and mature;
- each participant has to turn off the voices in their head that say "What are you doing?", "You're too old to do these things", "You made a mistake", "I'm ashamed" etc.
- allow yourself to make mistakes, which are welcomed as part of creative exploration;
- if you witness any abusive or inappropriate behavior, let the facilitator know.





## COMMUNICATION

*In a theatre workshop there is a tendency to welcome any form of expression, not just purely verbal expression. Everyone communicates, even with silence, gestures, a look. For this reason, even the smallest forms of presence must be valued: a smile, a hand that rises, a deep breath. This approach also makes it possible to include those with physical or cognitive fragility, offering equal dignity to all forms of expression.*

*Communication, especially in a theatre workshop context with older people or people with cognitive impairment, goes far beyond simple words. To build a relationship of trust and encourage participation, it is essential to use the three main levels of communication in an integrated way: verbal, non-verbal and paraverbal. Verbal communication should be simple, clear, and respectful. It is important to use short, concrete sentences, avoiding overly complex instructions, so that everyone can easily understand. Speaking calmly and slowly facilitates understanding, especially for those with cognitive difficulties. Words must welcome, without ever being childish or belittling, always recognizing the dignity of the person with whom one communicates.*

*At the same time, non-verbal communication, made up of gestures, looks, posture and use of space, plays an equally fundamental role. A welcoming and direct gaze, never intrusive, conveys empathy and attention. The expressiveness of the face, the slow and easily legible gestures, help to show exercises or invite movement in a clear and reassuring way. The bodily presence must be "open", transmitting security and calm. It is important to respect personal physical distance, but also to be available for contact — a hand, a hug or a caress — always if desired and well received by the person.*

*Finally, paraverbal communication, i.e. everything that accompanies the word such as tone, rhythm, volume, timbre and intonation, has a decisive importance in building the relationship. A warm, engaging and never authoritarian tone helps to maintain attention and convey emotions. Variations in rhythm and intonation make communication more alive and meaningful. Silence also has its value: it can welcome, offer space for elaboration and allow moments of reflection. The volume must be moderate and well modulated: a tone that is too low can be confusing, while one that is too high can be scary. All these communication levels must integrate harmoniously and coherently. What you say, how you say it and how you present yourself with your body and voice must be in tune to convey a clear and authentic message. With frail older people or people with dementia, the relationship is often built first through the body, then through the voice and finally with words: the body speaks, and everyone perceives it.*





# ON STAGE – PRACTICAL EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES FOR MAKING THEATRE TOGETHER

*This section collects a selection of 30 theatrical activities designed for a participatory theatre path aimed at older people. These are simple, inclusive and modular proposals, designed to stimulate expressiveness, foster relationships and enhance the personal and creative resources of each participant. The exercises proposed in this guide are divided into four fundamental categories, each with a specific value but often interconnected with the others: body work, voice work, manual skills and work with photos and images.*

**Body work** - *In social theatre, the body is much more than a means of expression: it is a bridge between emotion, memory and relationship. Through physical exercises, improvisations and body awareness practices, participants rediscover their bodies as a narrative and communicative tool. This work makes it possible to overcome the limits of verbal language, promoting the authentic expression of emotions and breaking down social barriers.*

**Voice work** - *The voice is a powerful tool for individual and collective expression. Through breathing, modulation, rhythm and intonation exercises, the vocal potential is explored in relation to emotions, storytelling and active participation. The voice becomes a vehicle for stories, identities, moods and thoughts, and offers a space for recognition and belonging, especially for those who live in conditions of fragility or exclusion. Choral vocal work strengthens the sense of group, while reflection on social issues through the voice stimulates awareness and change.*

**Manual skills** - *Manual skills include all those creative activities that involve the use of hands to build, transform and invent objects, but also to create costumes, sets or props. It's not just about practical implementation, but about processes that stimulate collaboration, autonomy and self-expression. Working with the hands helps participants to rediscover skills that are often forgotten or underestimated, to contribute concretely to the theatrical project and to see their work transformed into something tangible and meaningful. The use of recycled materials and simple techniques makes these activities accessible and sustainable.*

**Photos and images** - *Images – photographs, drawings, collages, visual materials – are powerful tools for evoking memories, emotions and reflections. They serve to stimulate individual and collective storytelling, foster non-verbal communication and create emotional connections between participants. They can also be used to document the process and preserve the memory of the path taken, strengthening the sense of identity and belonging.*





Some exercises touch on a single category, while others intertwine more areas, resulting in richer, more multisensory experiences. To support readability, each category has been assigned a specific color.

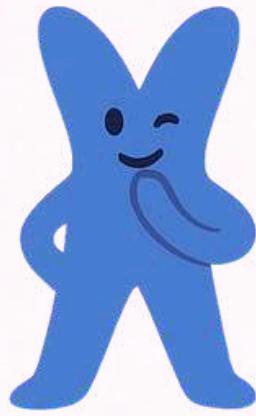
In each exercise sheet, the colors highlight which categories are involved:



Manual skills



Photos and images



Voice work



Body work

An exercise may include one or more categories and will display the corresponding colors accordingly



Co-funded by  
the European Union



These aims to foster body awareness, emotional expression, and creative engagement through a variety of accessible and inclusive practices. Participants are encouraged to explore breathing, gentle movement, and sensory awareness to enhance physical presence, relaxation, and well-being. Activities promote memory recall, imagination, and self-expression through storytelling, visual arts, music, and play, offering a joyful space for participants to share personal experiences, values, and cultural identities. Group dynamics are strengthened by encouraging mutual listening, empathy, collaboration, and trust, creating a supportive environment that nurtures connection and inclusion. Exercises stimulate both cognitive and motor functions through symbolic movement, improvisation, and rhythm, while promoting self-esteem and identity by valuing each participant's voice and role. By combining verbal and non-verbal communication, these activities offer opportunities for emotional release, spontaneous joy, and reflection, helping participants reconnect with themselves and others in meaningful ways. Ultimately, the sessions contribute to improved quality of life by blending creativity, play, and community into a shared artistic experience. The activities are designed for medium-sized groups, with an ideal number of around 20 participants. They are well-suited to older adults, including those with physical or cognitive limitations, such as individuals living with dementia or Alzheimer's disease. All sessions are inclusive and easily adaptable, allowing for participation while seated or standing, depending on individual mobility and comfort. Some activities may involve gentle movement, touch, or writing, and can be adapted accordingly for different cognitive, sensory, or physical abilities. The format works particularly well for mixed groups, including seniors, caregivers, family members, and professionals. While familiarity among group members can be helpful, it is not required, and the atmosphere is intentionally designed to be welcoming, supportive, and non-judgmental.

Several activities benefit from a quiet and concentrated setting, while others allow for more dynamic interaction, such as partner work, sound-based exercises, or storytelling. Importantly, no previous experience (musical, artistic, or otherwise) is necessary, ensuring that every participant can engage at their own pace and level.



*The first four exercises of the collection are designed as icebreakers: short and engaging activities that aim to open the workshop meetings. They have the function of warming the body and voice, dissolving tensions, encouraging mutual listening and stimulating a first level of communication and contact between the participants. It is recommended to use them at the beginning of the sessions, adapting them to the moment and the group. These activities can be freely combined, modified, or reworked according to the context and dynamics of the group.*

*There are no special cards with closing exercises, but the final moment of each meeting is just as important and deserves attention. Concluding calmly and consciously allows you to process what you have experienced together. A simple way is to propose a short sharing tour: feedback on how it went, how you felt, or a concluding word that summarizes the experience made. This moment helps create continuity between sessions and enhances each person's voice. The group can also decide to find or create a final greeting, verbal or non-verbal, with which to close each meeting by creating a shared ritual that strengthens the sense of group. It is also important to spend a convivial moment at the end of the activities, eating and drinking something together.*

*Each worksheet offers practical indications, objectives and suggestions to adapt the activity to the different needs of the group. The goal is not performance, but the creative and relational process that arises from doing together. These activities can be freely combined, modified, or reworked according to the context and dynamics of the group.*





# Thinking and breathing

## METHODS

*Seated guided movement exercise inspired by the Feldenkrais Method. The activity focuses on the rhythm of breathing, posture and attention to internal sensations. A delicate experimentation with different ways of breathing and moving different parts of the body will be directed.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*15 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- Chairs (if possible, without armrests)*
- Quiet space with minimal distractions*
- Optional: soft background instrumental music or nature sounds*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Speak slowly and clearly.*
- Remind participants that small movements and rest are always welcome.*
- Use calm tones and offer visual cues when it's useful.*
- Encourage participants to move within their comfort zone, without any effort.*





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

Start by welcoming all participants and creating a relaxed and inclusive atmosphere. Briefly introduce the session as a gentle exploration of breath and body awareness, inspired by Moshe Feldenkrais' Awareness Through Movement. Emphasize that the goal is not performance or perfection, but simply listening to your body, moving carefully and discovering what makes you feel comfortable and natural.

### Activity

Invite everyone to sit comfortably in a chair, feet flat on the ground, hands resting on their lap or thighs. Ask participants to close their eyes or soften their gaze, allowing their attention to gently shift inward. Start by guiding them to simply observe their breath without trying to change it, noticing the natural rhythm of inhalation and exhalation, where the breath moves in the body, and how it feels. Gradually, bring attention to specific areas involved in the breathing process: the chest, belly, back, ribs, and diaphragm. Encourage them to feel how each area expands and contracts with their breath. Then, introduce small, gentle postural changes by redirecting participants' attention to specific parts of the body: ask participants to bend forward slightly, then backwards, and finally return to a standing position. After each adjustment, encourage them to observe how their breathing responds: "Does air flow more easily? Is there more tension or release in a particular location?" Next, guide them to experiment with different breathing rhythms; maybe breathing slowly and deeply for a few moments, then lightly and quickly, before returning to a natural rhythm. At all times, remind them to stay within a comfortable and relaxing range, without forcing anything. Leave room for quiet moments between each instruction, giving participants time to notice, feel, and respond to their own internal feelings. The session should be gentle, slow, and mindful.

**Optional for participants who feel comfortable lying down:** If participants are able to lie on yoga mats, a version of the activity can be driven on the floor. Lying on their back with their knees bent and their feet flat on the floor, participants can explore gentle twisting movements such as slowly tilting their knees to one side while their arms are positioned in a relaxed "triangle" shape. These movements help to bring awareness to the muscles used in bending (such as curling up) and arching the body, improving control and coordination.

Introduce gentle breathing experiments in this position. These include slow and playful variations of chest and belly breathing, such as letting the chest rise as the belly falls, and vice versa, to help participants explore how different parts of the torso contribute to breathing. This helps to develop a more complete and flexible use of diaphragm, ribs and surrounding muscles.

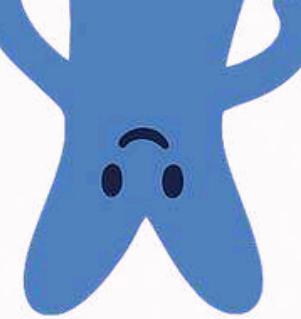




## **Discussion and feedback**

*To close the session, invite everyone to slowly bring their attention back to the room and gently open their eyes, if they were closed. Ask if anyone would like to share something about their experience. How did they feel during the activity? What did they notice? Have they felt any changes in their breath or awareness? Participation in the discussion should be voluntary and without pressure. Recognize that each person's experience is unique and valuable. Highlight the importance of breath as a resource for grounding, calming down, and connecting to oneself. End the session with a shared deep breath and a quiet moment of quiet, thanking the group for their openness and presence.*





# Who is like me?

## METHODS

*This icebreaker activity invites participants to form a circle and respond to light, personal statements like "Who is like me and loves pizza?" by making a shared gesture. As the game progresses, participants create their own prompts, encouraging creativity and connection. The exercise fosters group bonding, trust and curiosity, making it an ideal starting point for collaborative and participatory work.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**10 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- *An open space (if you use physical movement like stepping forward).*
- *Alternatively, a circle of chairs or a group of seats if space is limited.*
- *Optional: music for energy and rhythm*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Model enthusiasm and openness in your example.*
- *Encourage inclusivity and keep the space non-judgmental.*
- *If needed, provide a list of quick ideas*





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

To begin this activity, participants are arranged in a circle creating an open and welcoming space that fosters eye contact and relationship. The conductor briefly introduces the exercise, explaining that the aim is to get to know each other better in a light and fun way, discovering similarities and differences and recognizing common experiences.

### Activity

The activity kicks off with a simple suggestion from the facilitator, such as: "Who is like me and loves pizza?". Those present who recognize themselves in the expressed phrase respond with an agreed gesture — it can be a step forward, a raising of a hand or a snap of the fingers. This simple but shared gesture creates an immediate visual signal of connection and belonging. After a few guided initial rounds, invite participants to propose new affirmations themselves, encouraging creativity and direct involvement. The phrases can be light, funny, exciting or personal, always respecting the group. The game continues smoothly, giving space to those who wish to speak, until the available time is exhausted or when everyone has had the opportunity to participate.

Sample questions:

- Who is like me and loves chocolate?
- Who is like me and has a pet?
- Who is like me and plays a sport?
- Who is like me and loves to read?
- Who is like me and tried a new hobby this year?
- Who is like me and speaks more than one language?
- Who is like me and talks to their plants or pets?
- Who is like me and loves live music or concerts?
- Who is like me and loves to cook or bake?
- Who is like me and thinks too much about the little things?
- Who is like me and forgets the names immediately after hearing them?
- Who is like me and snoozes the alarm clock at least once?
- Who is like me and can't start the day without coffee?
- Who is like me and is the older brother?
- Who is like me and prefers the mountains to the beaches?

This activity breaks the ice effectively and helps to create a climate of trust, listening and mutual curiosity, which are fundamental for participatory theatrical work.





## ***Discussion and feedback***

*To close the session, ask if anyone would like to add anything or share their feelings and impressions. How did they feel during the activity? What did they notice? Participation in the discussion should be voluntary and without pressure.*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# Presentations

## METHODS

*This activity is designed to foster connection, empathy, and creativity in a fun and light-hearted way. Participants sit in a circle to promote openness and eye contact. The facilitator guides three exercises: (1) presentations through gestures that the group imitates to build empathy; (2) using a frame to symbolically present oneself as a unique "work of art"; and (3) creatively introducing the person next to them, blending real and imagined elements. Each step emphasizes respect, shared presence and authentic interaction.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**10 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- Any plastic or wooden frame (lightness is important)  
(40cm x 30 cm approximately)*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Inclusivity and respect for individual rhythm: Make sure everyone feels free to express themselves, even with minimal or symbolic gestures. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to participate. It is important to leave room for freedom of choice. Group pace: Give everyone the right time, avoiding haste or pressure. Collective observation repetition are also as important moments as individual expression.*
- Climate of trust: This type of activity works best in a context where participants feel welcomed, seen and not judged.*





- *Time management: It is important to give the necessary space to everyone, avoiding both haste and dispersion. The rhythm can remain light, but the moment of listening must be carefully preserved.*
- *Physical accessibility: Make sure the frame is lightweight and easy to grip. Alternatively, it can also be placed on a tripod or held by a facilitator for those with mobility difficulties. Acceptance and respect: The*
- *invention or use of imagination must never become an occasion for heavy jokes or uncomfortable statements. The conductor must make it clear that each story must be built with attention and care, even when choosing a playful or surreal tone*





# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

To begin this activity, participants are arranged in a circle creating an open and welcoming space that fosters eye contact and relationship. Introduce the exercise, explaining that the aim is to get to know each other better in a light and fun way, discovering similarities and differences and recognizing the experiences in common.

## Activity

For this exercise, it's possible to experiment with different variations.

**1- Introduce yourself with a gesture** Start the activity by asking a simple but powerful question to the group: "How do you feel today? Can you tell me with a gesture?" Each participant is invited to respond not with words, but through a gesture that represents their state of mind at that moment. The gesture can be large or small, symbolic or realistic, depending on how each person feels like expressing himself. After the person has shown their gesture, the whole group observes it and repeats it together, in a choral way. This moment of collective imitation not only enhances the person who proposed the gesture, but also strengthens empathy within the group, creating a sort of shared "emotional mirror". It then continues with the next participant, repeating the same pattern, until everyone has had the opportunity to express themselves and be listened to/imitated.

**2-The frame** To begin, take a frame (it can be made of cardboard, plastic or light wood) and show it to the group. With a warm and engaging tone, invite everyone to reflect on a simple but powerful idea: each person is a work of art. A unique, unrepeatable, non-cloneable piece. Just like a painting in a museum, each of us deserves to be "framed", observed carefully, listened to with respect, admired in its entirety. After this introduction, propose a small symbolic gesture: those who wish to introduce themselves will take the frame and hold it in front of their face, symbolically becoming a "portrait". He/she will be able to say his name, the place where he was born and where he currently lives. It's possible to add something more: a trait of the character, a special memory, a passion or a dream. It is important that the atmosphere is cozy and relaxed, without rushing. The conductor can start first, offering a simple and authentic example, perhaps even with a pinch of irony, to break the ice. After each speech, the group can simply welcome with a gesture (a light applause, a smile, a nod of the head), without comments or judgments. The passage of the frame from one person to another takes on a ritual value: it is a moment of attention, in which the group stops to look and listen, recognizing the presence of the speaker as something precious





**3 - Introduce the person next to you** It's also possible to propose a more creative and playful option: "If you had to introduce the person next to you to the rest of the group, what would you say? You can tell what you know, what you imagine, or even invent something completely new about her or him." In turn, each participant is invited to introduce the person sitting next to them (or an assigned person, in case you want to vary the interaction). The presentation can be based on real elements, on impressions, or it can be enriched – or entirely built – through the invention of anecdotes, biographical traits or imaginative details. The goal is not to faithfully describe the other, but to activate listening, creativity and relationship, giving life to an imagined or possible portrait, which returns attention and presence to the other in a light but meaningful way. If it is considered useful, invite the "introduced" person to comment or react (e.g. confirm, deny with irony, add a detail). The activity continues until all participants have had the opportunity to present and be introduced.

## **Discussion and feedback**

To close the session, ask if anyone would like to add anything or share their feelings and impressions. How did they feel during the activity? What did they notice? Participation in the discussion should be voluntary and without pressure.





# Icebreaker dance

## METHODS

*This activity combines seated movement and stretching with imaginative storytelling, using objects like scarves to encourage playful interaction. Breath is coordinated with gestures, while sound and rhythm are explored through improvisation. The focus is on group dynamics and fluid interaction, promoting creativity, presence and connection.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**20 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- *Lightweight scarves (enough for each participant)*
- *Optional: scarves with bells or sound elements*
- *Music player and quiet/instrumental music*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Emphasize breathing and relaxation throughout.*
- *Encourage participation without pressure: the movement can be small or large.*
- *Use eye contact and smiles to build trust and engagement.*
- *Offer verbal cues to help follow the sequence.*
- *Keep the music calm and uplifting;*
- *Adjust the tempo according to the pace of the group.*

## OTHER FIGURES INVOLVED

*Dance therapist or movement facilitator (optional)*





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

The activity opens with a simple but significant introductory moment: each participant is asked to choose a colored scarf from those made available. This small initial gesture, in addition to stimulating touch and sight, immediately invites personal expression and freedom of choice, laying the foundations for a playful and welcoming atmosphere.

### Activity

Once the scarves have been distributed, the group is arranged in a circle or semicircle for a guided warm-up that promotes conscious movement and body involvement. Introduce a short sequence of exercises, showing the movements to be performed and guiding the participants calmly and clearly. It begins with a simple gesture of greeting, addressed to someone in the circle or next to it, also repeated above the head to widen the range of movement. It continues with the "movement of the tide", in which the scarf accompanies the breathing: deep inhalation accompanies the extension of the arms forward, followed by an exhalation as the movement returns towards the body. Finally, the "stretching of the scarf" stimulates coordination and visual attention: one arm bent to the chest, the other extended, while looking along the direction of the scarf, as if you were aiming; the movement is then repeated on the other side. At the end of the warm-up, the group is invited to dance following a short choreographic sequence. Music accompanies this phase, supporting the rhythm and favoring the flow of gestures. Participants are encouraged to freely interpret the movements, adapting them to their body and time, leaving room for improvisation and personal creativity. To complete this phase, a variation is proposed that also introduces the auditory and relational dimension. Some scarves can be equipped with small sound objects, such as bells or noisy ribbons, offering different stimuli that enrich the sensory experience. The scarves are then passed from one participant to another in a circle, creating a shared rhythm and stimulating cooperation, attention and the pleasure of collective play.

### Discussion and feedback

To close the session, ask if anyone would like to share their feelings and impressions. How did they feel during the activity? What did they notice? Participation in the discussion should be voluntary and without pressure.





# The piano

## METHODS

*This imaginative musical activity engages both the body and brain by simulating the act of playing an invisible piano. Participants follow the facilitator's playful prompt to "play" together, using gestures and creativity. A volunteer then becomes the conductor, leading the group in expressive, synchronized movements to Mozart's Rondo alla turca. The exercise stimulates coordination, imagination and group cohesion, ending with applause and opportunities for new conductors to lead.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*10 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Speaker for playing music*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- **Accessibility:** Movements must be able to be adapted to the motor possibilities of each person. Even a small movement of the fingers can be enough. Imagination
- **and play:** It is important for the conductor to maintain a light and engaging tone, so that the participants feel free to enter the symbolic game. Cognitive stimulation:
- The activity invites you to evoke images, sounds and meanings through the body, indirectly stimulating memory, concentration and imagination.
- **Role rotation:** The figure of the conductor can be covered by several people, offering each one the opportunity to "lead" and feel at the center of attention in a positive way.





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

The practice of music is configured as an extremely enriching, pervasive, engaging experience as it is able to simultaneously activate different brain functions: attention, learning, memory, emotion, auditory analysis, planning and expectation, or behavioral and physiological functions such as motor responses, breathing and heart rate.

### Activity

Offer the group a playful and creative suggestion:

"Today we all play the piano together!"

Of course, some of the participants may exclaim with surprise or irony:

"But... Where's the piano?"

It is precisely at that moment that it's necessary to bring attention to the imagination, a central element of theatrical activity, responding:

"We have to imagine that there is!"

At that point stretch the hands in front, mimicking the movement of the fingers on the imaginary keys of a large invisible piano. The whole group is invited to do the same, imitating the gesture with freedom and creativity, each according to their own motor possibilities. Once everyone is involved in "playing" the imaginary piano, introduce a second phase of the exercise:

"Now we need a conductor!"

A volunteer participant is invited to stand (or even sit down, if necessary) to lead the group. In the background starts the famous "Rondo alla turca" by W. A. Mozart, a lively and recognizable piece that stimulates movement, coordination and enthusiasm. The conductor, with hand and body gestures, guides the rhythm and intensity of the collective performance of the imaginary piano. The group follows his direction, adapting the movements depending on whether the conductor invites them to play louder, quieter, slower or with more energy. At the end of the piece, thank the conductor with symbolic applause and propose a change: a new volunteer can take on the role and direct a new interpretation.





To expand the activity and further stimulate the imagination, you can introduce other imaginary musical instruments, accompanied by music that matches the rhythm and character of each chosen instrument. For example:

- Drums or percussion → rhythmic, tribal music
- Violin → soft or intense classical pieces
- Flute → light, dreamy melodies
- Guitar → folk, flamenco, or rock music
- Saxophone → jazz music

Invite participants to imagine playing these instruments, imitating the gestures and letting themselves be guided by the rhythm of the music.

Each instrument change offers a chance to explore new movements and new forms of expression, always respecting individual physical abilities and levels of participation.

## Discussion and feedback

To close the session, ask if anyone would like to share their feelings and impressions. How did they feel during the activity? What did they notice? Participation in the discussion should be voluntary and without pressure.





# Listening to the body

<b>METHODS</b>	<p><i>Guided body-based exploration with slow music. The activity focuses on individual bodyweight movement and/or dance without imitation or observation. Participants' focus will be on internal experience and sensory awareness of the body.</i></p>
<b>ALLOCATED TIME</b> (Indicative only)	<p><b>20 minutes</b></p>
<b>RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED</b>	<p><i>A speaker and playlist (e.g., ambient, instrumental, or soft piano) Chairs for participants who prefer to move seated</i></p>
<b>USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Emphasize that every movement, even the smallest, is valid.</i></li><li><i>Encourage participants to focus on what the movement feels like, not how it looks.</i></li><li><i>Keep a calm tone and avoid giving too many instructions – let the music do the driving!</i></li><li><i>Music suggestions: playlists by Ludovico Einaudi, Deuter or Calm Piano on Spotify or YouTube</i></li></ul>





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

Start by welcoming participants, creating a relaxed environment and explaining that the activity focuses on intuitive, personal movement, not dance moves or choreography. Reassure participants that all movements are valid, both large and very subtle, and that they are free to move standing, walking, or sitting, depending on what they think is best. If participants are able to walk and you want to promote a more dynamic atmosphere, encourage them to do the exercise while walking around the room.

### Activity

Ask everyone to find a comfortable seat in the room, making sure there is space between them. Play slow, gentle music in the background - instrumental or ambient tracks work very well. Invite participants to close their eyes (or look down, if you prefer) and take a few deep breaths. Gently guide them to start moving in any way that feels natural, slow and comfortable. There is no right or wrong. Movements can be imperceptible such as moving your fingers, swaying your torso, shifting your weight from side to side, or rolling your shoulders. Encourage participants to stay focused on themselves, their bodies and minds, without looking at others or trying to copy; simply by listening to their body and letting the music guide them. Let the activity continue for 10 to 15 minutes, gradually fading the music towards the end. Allow quiet moments and remind them that they can stop, rest or move again at any time.

### Discussion and feedback

Invite participants to slowly stop the movement, return to stillness and gently open their eyes. Ask if anyone would like to share how they felt during the activity (physically, emotionally, or otherwise). Recognize that free movement can awaken both calm and unexpected emotions and that all experiences are welcome. Conclude with a shared deep breath or a gesture of thanks to the group.





# Balance and strength

### METHODS

*Participants are guided through a series of gentle standing or sitting exercises that focus on slow, mindful movements. The exercises combine light stretching, balance practice and mindful body scanning. The atmosphere should be calm and supportive, with clear instructions and demonstrations.*

### ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*30 minutes*

### RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Non-slip floor surface  
Calm background music (optional)*

### USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Slowly demonstrate each exercise before asking participants to try.*
- Encourage participants to listen to their bodies and adjust movements as needed.*
- Offer gentle support or supervision to those who may need help with balance.*
- Emphasize slow breathing and relaxed shoulders the entire time.*
- Use positive reinforcement and celebrate small movements.*





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

Warmly welcome participants and invite everyone to find a comfortable and safe place to stand or sit. Explain that the session focuses on gentle movements to feel more stable, aware and relaxed in your body. Remind them that the goal is not intense exercise, but conscious connection with their body and balance.

### Activity

Invite participants to sit or stand with their feet flat on the floor. Guide them to close their eyes if they feel comfortable. Slowly bring awareness to every part of the body, starting from the feet and working the way up to the head. Encourage to notice sensations: "Are your feet firmly grounded? Are your shoulders relaxed? Take 2-3 deep breaths." The steps are the following.

#### **1. Gently rotate the head/neck and move the shoulders.**

It starts with a gentle warm-up of the head and neck area and shoulders. Participants are invited to slowly lower their chin towards their chest and then rotate their heads from side to side, with soft and controlled movements. Then, with a deep inhalation, bring the shoulders towards the ears, then let them fall down with the exhalation. This gesture is repeated several times, helping to release tension and relax the upper body.

**2. Seated or standing march** Then move on to a slow walking exercise, to be performed according to the stability of each individual: standing, with the support of a sturdy chair, or sitting. The movement consists of alternately raising the knees, marching in place at a regular pace for one or two minutes. This simple gesture stimulates circulation and awakens the muscles of the lower limbs.

**3. Heel-toe** Standing behind a chair (useful for balance and support), the participants place one foot in front of the other, making the heel of the back foot touch the tip of the front one. They hold this position for a few seconds, breathing steadily and then switch feet. For those who want an extra challenge, it is possible to walk slowly following the heel-toe line, always with the support of the chair, thus improving proprioception and stability.





#### **4. Side stretches**

*The activity continues with lateral stretches: while sitting or standing, raise one arm above the head and bend gently to the opposite side, holding the position for a few seconds and feeling the stretch along the side. The movement is then repeated on the opposite side, for a total of three or four repetitions on each side.*

#### **5. Ankles**

*Finally, spend a few minutes relaxing the ankles, an area that is often overlooked but crucial for stability and mobility. In a secure position, lift one foot slightly off the ground and slowly rotate the ankle first clockwise, then counterclockwise. Then repeat the movement with the other foot. Throughout the sequence, it is important to encourage a slow and conscious rhythm, with constant attention to the breath and body sensations. Small breaks can be introduced when necessary. This activity, in addition to physically preparing for theatrical work, helps to create a space for listening and presence, promoting well-being and concentration.*

### **Discussion and feedback**

*Invite participants to share how they feel after the exercises:*

*"Which movement did you like the most?"*

*"Did you feel more aware of your body or your balance?"*

*"How does your body feel now compared to the beginning?"*

*Thank everyone for their presence and remind them that these small movements can be repeated at any time to feel more balanced and healthier.*



# Weather massage

## METHODS

*A guided activity in which participants simulate weather patterns on each other's backs using light hand gestures. The emphasis of this exercise is on simple, repetitive and gentle tactile movements. They can be performed seated, with a clear and calm narration.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**15 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Comfortable chairs arranged in pairs or in a circle. Printed or spoken script for the facilitator. Optional: Soft background music*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Use slow, clear instructions and demonstrate each gesture beforehand.*
- *Keep gestures simple, calm, and short to keep the attention going.*
- *Always verify consent before touch-based activities.*
- *Encourage participants to give and receive or simply observe if they prefer.*
- *Match participants thoughtfully or invite staff/caregivers to assist.*



## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

Warmly welcome the group and present the session as a light and playful massage using the imagination. Explain that participants will gently "draw" the weather on each other's backs with their hands, while listening to a simple story. Invite each person to pair up with someone they feel comfortable with. Always ask for consent before starting any touch-based activity. Instead, offer the ability to observe or listen.

### Activity

Explain that you will guide them through a "weather journey" and they will use their hands to represent the weather on their partner's back. Encourage soft, slow and simple gestures. Then, start reading or narrating slowly:

"The warm sun shines softly on your back..." (use smooth, circular strokes with the palms)

"A light breeze begins to blow..." (light finger strokes or light breathing near the neck)

"The clouds slowly cover the sky..." (gently knead the shoulders or back with the fingertips)

"The raindrops are starting to fall..." (light touch with fingertips)

"The rain is getting stronger..." (touch with all fingers together)

"Booming thunder and lightning!" (draw a quick zigzag for lightning; gently clap the hands for thunder)

"Now there is also a bit of hail..." (light taps with relaxed fists)

"The storm is easing and the rain is getting sweeter..." (slow touch returns)

"The clouds are receding...." (soft touches on the back)

"The sun returns to warm the skin..." (again delicate circles of palms)

"And now... A rainbow appears in the sky." (draw an arc from shoulder to shoulder)

Repeat slowly and clearly. After a full round, invite participants to swap roles if they wish.

If working with participants with Alzheimer's or dementia:

- Use fewer gestures
- Keep each action shorter (about 10-15 seconds)
- Narrate slowly and calmly
- Use a reassuring tone and only maintain soft physical contact if the person is comfortable.

### Discussion and feedback

After both rounds, gather the group. Invite participants to share how they felt during the activity. Did they have a favorite part of the time? Those who prefer not to speak can use gestures or simply smile. Offer a few relaxing breaths as a group to close and thank everyone for their participation.





Voice work



# Perform emotions

## METHODS

*This activity uses pantomime, seated movement and emotional roleplay to explore nonverbal expression. Through creative improvisation and shared reflection, participants build empathy and deepen group connection by embodying emotions and engaging in silent, expressive interaction.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*40 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Open space for movement  
Emotional cards or visual aids (optional)  
Soft background music (optional)*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Normalize all emotional expressions: there is no "wrong" way to show feelings.*
- Maintain a supportive tone;*
- Laughter and emotional release are both welcome.*
- Be sensitive to participants who may feel vulnerable by expressing difficult emotions.*

## OTHER FIGURES INVOLVED

*Drama therapist (optional)*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

*This game will not only help participants explore and recognize their emotions, but it will also help them express their feelings in a creative and fun way.*

### Activity

*The activity opens with a dynamic and engaging warm-up called "Emotional Pantomime", designed to activate the body, stimulate emotional awareness and create an atmosphere of play and openness within the group. In silence, each participant reflects on how they feel at that precise moment, choosing an emotion to represent. Once ready, the emotion is expressed through body language: gestures, postures and above all facial expressions become tools to communicate it to the rest of the group, without the use of words. Others observe and try to guess what emotion was represented, sharing impressions and briefly discussing which visual cues guided them in their interpretation. This moment not only fosters active listening and attention to non-verbal language but also helps to develop empathy and connection between participants.*

*Next, the main activity focuses on the bodily and theatrical exploration of a range of emotions. Propose a series of moods – such as joy, sadness, surprise, anger, tranquility – and guides the group on a path of physical embodiment of each emotion. Participants are invited to consciously experience how the body changes when a certain emotion is felt: posture changes, gestures become more or less wide, the face takes on different expressions. This exploration can take place individually or, in a variant, even in pairs or small groups, where short silent scenes are constructed, entrusting the task of telling exclusively to the body and the spatial relationship. Through this activity, the group experiences how the body is a powerful tool for emotional communication, going beyond words and rediscovering the richness of non-verbal language in theatrical and relational work.*





## **Discussion and feedback**

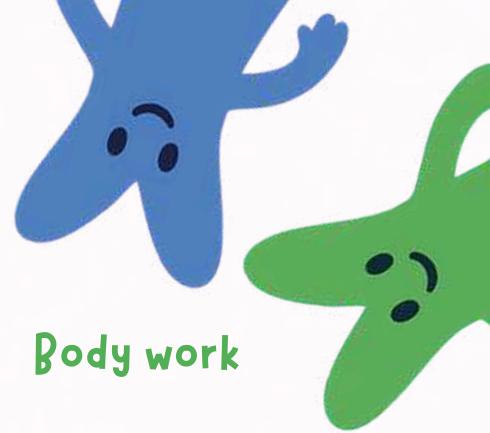
*At the end of the exploration, a sharing space opens up where participants are invited to reflect on the experience they have just lived. The discussion focuses on what they felt about representing different emotions through the body. Ask questions like "What emotion was easiest to show? Which one, on the other hand, was more difficult?" — a question that helps to recognize how everyone lives and manages their emotional world differently.*

*A further cue can concern the perception of one's emotion when it is expressed physically: "Was there any emotion that changed once you brought it into the body?". This moment promotes the awareness of how much the body influences and transforms the emotional experience itself. Participants can share personal insights, unexpected sensations or small changes in their mood that emerge during the activity. The final reflection is a precious opportunity to give voice to individual experience and strengthen the sense of group, through mutual listening and recognition of the emotions of others.*





Voice work



# In the moment

## METHODS

*Guided Imagination and Mime: Participants imagine or mimic simple situations (e.g., smelling a flower, opening a gift). Sensory stimulation (optional): Objects, scents, images or music can be used to make the experience more vivid.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*30 - 45 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Prompt cards (with mime instructions)  
Gentle music setup (portable speaker, playlist)*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Speak clearly and warmly;*
- *Encourage everyone to participate but leave room for silence or passivity.*
- *Use names often to make connections.*
- *Be flexible and follow the energy of the group and adapt accordingly.*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

Explain to the group that the exercise will be dedicated to sensory exploration, conducted through the use of imagination, body movement and memory.

### Activity

Begin by distributing the prepared cards to the participants, each containing a narrative or gestural suggestion designed to stimulate imagination and movement. After, propose one or two practical examples, useful for clarifying the way of working and gradually introducing the group into the atmosphere of the exercise. Once the examples have been illustrated, invite the participants to bring the suggested scene to life, leaving them the freedom to interpret it through mime, acting or simply imagination, depending on their individual propensity and level of experience. The goal is not performance, but sensory and expressive activation. After each scene, ask a reflection question related to the content of the note. This moment serves to encourage a personal elaboration of the experience and to encourage, without forcing, any spontaneous sharing by the group. The answers can relate to emotions, memories, mental images or physical sensations that emerged during the activity. Then continue with the other suggestions available, always maintaining a fluid rhythm and a light atmosphere. It is essential that the atmosphere remains welcoming and stimulating, so that each participant feels free to explore and participate at their own pace and in their own way.





	Cards	Thoughtful Questions
1	<b>Smell your favorite flower</b> Everyone takes a moment to smell or imagine their favorite flower.	"What's your favorite flower? What does it remind you of?"
2	<b>Open a surprise gift.</b> Experience the thrill of opening a gift.	"Imagine opening the perfect gift – what is it and why is it so special to you?"
3	<b>Eat your favorite dessert.</b> Mimic or describe the taste of a delicious cake.	"What is the dessert you love the most? When would you like to taste it?"
4	<b>Talking on the phone: good or bad news.</b> Pretend you're getting important news.	"Imagine a phone call you'll never forget. What made it so memorable?"
5	<b>Dance to your favorite song.</b> A few moments of swaying or dancing sitting to the rhythm of music.	"Which song makes you want to dance?"
6	<b>In search of a lost phone.</b> Take action by searching for your phone in the room.	"Have you ever missed something important? What happened?"
7	<b>Trying to open a stuck jar.</b> Use your hands to mimic the twisting of a stubborn lid.	"What do you do when something doesn't open?"





	Cards	Thoughtful Questions
8	<b>Entering a puddle.</b> Pretend to react to a cold surprise!	"Have you ever been surprised by rain or entered the water unexpectedly?"
9	<b>Love at first sight.</b> Imagine seeing someone and feeling an instant connection.	"Do you believe in love at first sight?"
10	<b>Walking on ice.</b> Carefully mimic balance on slippery ice.	"Have you ever had a fun or slippery time outdoors? What happened, and did anyone see it?"
11	<b>Taste something too spicy.</b> React to a spicy bite!	"Do you like spicy food? "
12	<b>Trying to hold back a sneeze (in church/theater)</b> Mime stifling a sneeze and tension.	"When was the last time you sneezed/laughed at the wrong time?"
13	<b>Painting an Easter egg that breaks.</b> Pretend decorating an egg, then react to its breakage.	"Did you decorate eggs as a child or with your family?"
14	<b>Dressing a swaying baby.</b> Mime trying to get a little one into a coat or shoes.	"Do you remember dressing your children or grandchildren? What made it fun, frustrating or sweet?"





	Cards	Thoughtful Questions
15	<b>Looking for glasses that are on your head.</b> He mimes the search, then realizes that they had always been there.	<i>"Have you ever searched for something that was right in front of you? What did you feel when you understood it?"</i>
16	<b>Cook an invisible pizza in a hurry.</b> Pretend making a pizza	<i>"If you could make a pizza right now, what would you put on it?"</i>

## Discussion and feedback

Invite the group to ponder and ask questions such as:

*"Is there anything today that made you smile or brought back a memory?"*

*"Would anyone like to share a favorite moment?"*





# The mirror

## METHODS

*This exercise promotes self-awareness and empathy through nonverbal interaction. Seated in pairs facing each other, participants take turns performing and mirroring simple gestures or expressions. The focus is on calm, attentive observation and slow, intentional movement to foster deep connection, mutual understanding and inclusive participation, regardless of physical ability.*

**ALLOCATED TIME**  
(Indicative only)

**20 minutes**

**RESOURCES OR  
ITEMS NEEDED**

*Music speaker (optional)  
Chairs (if the exercise is done while sitting)*

**USEFUL TIPS FOR  
THE CONDUCTOR**

- **Physical adaptability:** Consider any motor/physical limitations and propose appropriate gestures and movements for each participant. Climate of trust:
- **Foster a relaxed and judgment-free atmosphere.** He emphasizes that exercise is a game and that you don't need to be "perfect." **Pace and tempo:** Always slow down the pace to avoid frustration or anxiety.
- **Variety of movements:** Also encourage movements involving the face, hands, shoulders or small movements of the torso to stimulate overall motor coordination.



# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

*Body movement combined with attention and gaze towards the other is an attitude with very positive implications from the point of view of self-awareness that this exercise intends to pursue. Participants are therefore asked to be aware, collaborative and open to other participants.*

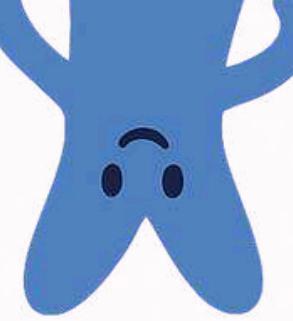
## Activity

*To start the exercise, it is important to invite the participants to sit comfortably in two rows, arranged one in front of the other, so that each has their partner in front of them. This positioning facilitates direct observation and immediate comparison between the gestures and facial expressions proposed. Take a few moments to clearly explain the purpose of the activity: it's not about performing "perfect" movements or judging others, but about exercising the ability to observe carefully, reproduce calmly and establish a nonverbal dialogue. The first phase consists of starting the movement or expression from one member of each pair. This participant chooses a simple gesture, such as a smile, a hand movement, a facial expression or a small shoulder movement. It is essential that the gesture is performed calmly and clearly, so that the companion can grasp every detail. The other participant, for his part, must observe carefully and try to reproduce as faithfully as possible the gesture or expression received. It is important that the reproduction takes place without haste, so as to allow a true and deep understanding of the movement. Attention to slowness is essential to avoid frustration and to allow even those with more limited mobility to actively participate. After a few minutes, when the participants feel ready, proceed with the exchange of roles. Now it will be the other member of the couple who will propose new gestures or expressions, perhaps slightly vary the complexity or add a pinch of creativity, always taking into account the physical possibilities of each one. This step allows everyone to experience both the role of the proposer and that of the observer and reproduction, fostering greater empathy and better mutual understanding.*

## Discussion and feedback

*At the end of the practical phase, it is very useful to spend a few minutes on a short collective sharing. By gathering the group in a circle, invite everyone to tell how they felt during the exercise, what gestures or expressions struck them the most and if they encountered difficulties or discovered something new about themselves or others. This moment of reflection is precious because it helps to consolidate the experience, strengthens the sense of community and enhances the human and relational aspect of social theatre.*





# Who is writing to you?

## METHODS

*This activity uses imagination and storytelling to explore memory and creativity. A sealed envelope is passed around the group; each participant invents or recalls a story about who sent it and what it contains. The sender and contents can be real or imagined, encouraging reflection, emotional expression and shared listening in a respectful, open environment.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**20 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Envelope/letter  
Sheets of paper*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Creative freedom: The activity allows for great freedom of expression. Those who do not feel like telling a story can simply imagine a symbolic object or sender. Emotions: Some stories may touch personal or sensitive chords. The conductor must be present and attentive in containing and welcoming any emotions that have emerged. Rhythm and attention: Give the right time to each participant without forcing or rushing. It is essential that each story is listened to carefully, to enhance those who share it.*



## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

*Imagination is the ability to mentally transcend time, place and/or circumstances to think about what might have been, plan for and anticipate the future, create imaginary worlds and consider remote and/or close alternatives to actual experiences. It must be considered that, when we imagine something that we have never seen or experienced, the process we put in place is to start from images already present in our memory (our experiential knowledge of the world) and rework them to create new ideas. In other words, we consider something already seen/experienced and endow it with new attributes.*

### Activity

*While holding a sealed envelope - you can use a large, showy envelope, perhaps even colored or aged, to increase the symbolic effect -, show it to the group and proposes to the group to pass it on, but without opening it. The recipient will have to reveal who the sender is and the content of the letter. The envelope begins to circulate among the participants, one at a time. The recipient takes a moment to reflect, look at it, feel its imaginary weight and then invents (or remembers) a short story, answering two simple questions:*

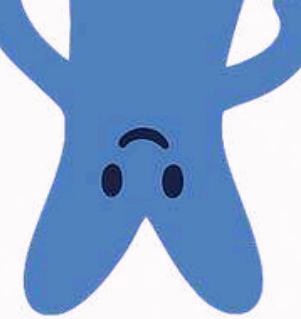
- *Who is writing to you? - The sender can be real, imaginary or symbolic: a loved one, a distant friend, a fantastic character, a part of oneself, etc.*
- *What's inside? -It can be a concrete object, an emotion, a memory, a request, a poem, a photograph, a perfume...*

*Each story can be invented, inspired by true events or a mix of fantasy and memory. The important thing is that the group listens without interrupting, welcoming each story with respect and participation.*

### Discussion and feedback

*To close the session, ask if anyone would like to add anything or share their feelings and impressions. How did they feel during the activity? What did they notice? Participation in the discussion should be voluntary and without pressure.*





# May I have

## METHODS

*In this reflective group activity, participants sit in a circle and take turns reading a powerful sentence found inside a symbolic envelope: "May I have the strength, the conviction and the courage...". In the first round, they simply read and internalize the phrase. In the second, each person completes the sentence with a personal affirmation or intention. Inspired by a scene from Stromboli by Roberto Rossellini, the exercise fosters self-expression, emotional connection and group empathy.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**20 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Envelope/letter  
Sheets of paper*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Atmosphere of listening and respect: It is important to create a calm, protected and welcoming atmosphere. Each sentence added is a part of oneself that is given to the group and should be listened to without comment or interruption.*
- *Freedom of expression: No one is obliged to share anything personal. Adding a symbolic or generic word is also fine. Emotional attention: Some conclusions can reveal deep experiences. The conductor must be ready to welcome or possibly facilitate brief sharing, if the group wishes.*





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

To begin this activity, participants are arranged in a circle creating an open and welcoming space that fosters eye contact and relationship. Introduce the exercise, explaining that the aim is to get to know each other better in a light and fun way, discovering similarities and differences and recognizing the experiences in common.

### Activity

The exercise is ideally linked to the previous one, in which the mysterious envelope is passed from hand to hand. This time, however, the envelope is reopened: inside, there is a sheet with a written sentence:

"May I have the strength, the conviction and the courage..." The sheet is then passed among the participants and each one reads it aloud, without yet modifying it. In this first round, the goal is to resonate with the words: to read them, to feel them, to let them resonate in the body and soul. Even those who have difficulty reading can be helped by the operator or a companion. At the end of the exercise, tell where this sentence comes from. In Roberto Rossellini's film *Stromboli*, in the final scene, the protagonist utters these words in front of the erupting volcano. After this first step, propose a second phase: everyone can reread the sentence and add something of their own, to complete it. And so, a second round begins. Each participant takes the paper, reads the opening sentence, and concludes it with personal words, out loud. For example:

"May I have the strength, the conviction and the courage... to keep smiling every day."

"... to say what I feel without fear."

"... to ask for help when I need it."

"... to accept what I cannot change."

The tone is that of a personal formula of self-affirmation, such as a small vow, desire or inner statement that is brought to light and shared with the group.

### Discussion and feedback

To close the session, ask if anyone would like to add anything or share their feelings and impressions. How did they feel during the activity? What did they notice? Participation in the discussion should be voluntary and without pressure.





## Voice work



# Voices in harmony

## METHODS

*This activity involves group choral reading, singing and open discussion of familiar, emotionally resonant poems and songs. It encourages vocal expression, pacing, and shared reflections and can be supported by live musicians or recorded music to enhance the experience.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**30 - 60 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Printed song lyrics or poems (we recommend printing in large print)  
Chairs arranged in a semicircle or circle.  
Optional: Audio playback device, keyboard/guitar, light percussion instruments  
Optional props/images related to song themes.*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Choose songs with cultural, emotional, or nostalgic relevance to the group.
- Start with a gentle vocal warm-up or humming.
- Use a clear and expressive reading/singing rhythm.
- Invites movement (e.g., clapping or swaying) for engagement.
- Leave room for memories or reflections to emerge naturally.
- Be flexible and responsive to participants' mood and attention span





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

The goal of the exercise is connecting through music, memory and voice. Explain that the activity includes singing, reading and optional reflection. Emphasize a relaxed and inclusive atmosphere: no one needs to be a "good singer".

### Activity

Start with a gentle vocal warm-up (e.g., humming or breathing exercise). Distribute printed texts or poems. Choose a song/poem that is familiar or related to the theme. Read it aloud together, then sing it as a group (with or without recorded music/instrument). Pause after singing to invite spontaneous comment: "What does this song remind you of? Does it bring to mind a particular person, place or memory?". Repeat the exercise with a second or third piece/song if time and energy allow. Allow for informal interaction and group pacing/movement if participants are responsive.

### Discussion and feedback

Ask for a final reflection: "How did you feel during the songs? Did something surprise or move you today?". Highlight the value of shared voices and stories. Optionally, end with a soothing song or group applause.





# Rhythms of memory

Manual skills

## METHODS

*This activity uses rhythm-based techniques to engage the brain and body. It includes guided handclapping, hand drumming, rhythmic call-and-answer games and simple group improvisation. Repetitive rhythmic signals are used to facilitate memory recall and improve coordination, taking advantage of the brain's tendency to synchronize movement with auditory beats.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**45 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Percussion instruments (e.g. hand drums or bongos, tambourines, shakers)  
Chairs for seated participants (arranged in a circle, if possible)  
Optional: A metronome or rhythm backing tracks to help maintain a consistent tempo  
Scarves or light ribbons for rhythmic movement activities*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Use simple, repetitive rhythms and keep a clear and consistent tempo. A steady pace makes it easier for participants to follow along and participate. Engage
- participants at any level: encourage them to clap their hands, tap their feet, play an instrument or even just listen and sway to the beat. All forms of participation are beneficial and validating.
- **Interactive re-expression.** If a participant starts a small rhythm or pattern, recognize it and ask the group to repeat it as a fun variation.



- *Monitor the energy and comfort of the group. Watch for signs of fatigue or overstimulation: Be prepared to slow down the pace, decrease the volume or take short break if necessary to keep everyone comfortable. Maintain a positive and supportive atmosphere. Smile, make eye contact, and verbally encourage each person's efforts. Remember that rhythmic responses require minimal cognitive processing, so even those with cognitive impairment can succeed and enjoy the activity when the instructions are simple and the mood is optimistic.*

## OTHER FIGURES INVOLVED

- *Optional: Musician*





# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Greet the participants warmly and have them sit in a circle. Introduce the session and explain the focus on rhythm, memory and fun. Start with a gentle stretch and breath.

## Activity

Start with simple handclap and body percussion patterns. Guide participants through basic rhythms, leaving time for repetition and adhesion.

Deploy tools and guided echo games. Play short beats and ask participants to repeat them.

Encourage creativity and optional leadership on the part of participants.

Play familiar rhythms and ask if they evoke memories. Use waltz or march rhythms, then discuss any thoughts or emotions they arouse. Gently reinforce memory sharing.

Lead a collaborative rhythm jam. Start a basic rhythm and invite others to join or overlap their own patterns. Encourage listening and responding to each other.

*Note: if there are the possibility and the will, the conductor can propose to the group to invent and build new and own tools.*

## Discussion and feedback

Slow down the pace and bring the group to quiet. Encourage a brief sharing of how participants are feeling and whether any rhythms were significant. It ends with a round of applause and thanks.





Body work



# Laughter games

Voice work

## METHODS

*Inspired by laughter yoga and drama therapy, this activity combines guided laughter exercises with playful movements and simple improvisational theater. Laughter yoga involves deliberate laughter and breathing techniques to induce positive emotions, often combined with activities that help participants overcome inhibitions and achieve a childlike and playful state. Elements of drama therapy are incorporated through light improvisation and role-play relationships in older adults. The facilitator conducts a series of structured games that adapt to different physical and cognitive abilities, ensuring that everyone can participate comfortably and safely.*

ALLOCATED TIME  
(Indicative only)

30 minutes

RESOURCES OR  
ITEMS NEEDED

*Music player (optional, for background music or rhythmic movement cues)  
Simple props such as scarves or soft balls (to inspire playful movement and interaction)*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Set a joyful and welcoming tone to help attendees feel comfortable*
- *Demonstrate each exercise clearly and enthusiastically.*
- *Provide simple instructions and adapt to physical needs.*
- *Allow breaks and adjust the pace according to the energy of the group.*
- *Ensuring emotional safety while respecting boundaries and levels of participation*
- *Offer praise and encouragement throughout the session*





# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Introduce the activity as a playful space for laughter and emotional release. A short warm-up with breathing, gentle stretching and lighthearted introductions helps participants relax and prepare.

## Activity

*Laughter Exercises* – Participants engage in laughter yoga-style activities such as clapping hands ("Ho, ho, ha-ha-ha!"), greeting each other with laughter instead of words, and passing a "laughter ball." These exercises aim to elicit real laughter through playful and exaggerated imitation.

*Playful improvisation* - Simple theatrical games follow, such as mirror movements and storytelling sounds with pauses for laughter. The props can be used for a fun pantomime. The emphasis is on imagination, spontaneity and joy.

## Discussion and feedback

Participants return to a circle sitting for a brief relaxation and reflection. They are invited to share how they feel or highlight a favorite moment. The exercise fosters emotional release and a sense of connection.





# Taking a sound bath

## METHODS

*Guided speech activity using sounds in a circular format. Group listening and participation are important for this activity, focusing on the sensory experience. Participants will alternate between creating sounds and receiving them through listening alone.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*20 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*A quiet room with chairs arranged in a circle.*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Use a calm, soothing voice and clear instructions.*
- *Encourage participation but allow people to opt out or just listen if they prefer. Watch out for participants who may be sensitive to sound and make sure everyone feels comfortable during the activity. Keep the group size small in the center to avoid overstimulation. Maintain a warm and playful atmosphere without pressure or judgment.*





# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Start by greeting the group warmly and inviting everyone to sit comfortably in a circle. Take a few minutes to introduce the activity: a creative sound experience to explore group listening and connection. If appropriate, invite participants to share whether they enjoy music or singing. Emphasize that no singing skills are necessary – the activity is to enjoy the sound, not to perform.

## Activity

Invite 2-3 participants to reach the center of the circle. They can sit or stand, and they will close their eyes (or look down) to simply listen. Reassure them that they are safe and that they are welcome to come by if they prefer to remain seated. Once they're settled, the rest of the group start humming the "hmm" sounds softly: delicate and varied tones, at different volumes and directions. Encourage each participant to hum to their own rhythm, letting the sounds fill the space around those in the center, like a "sound bath." The goal is not to harmonize, but to create a soft and lively soundscape. Allow the sound to continue for about 1-2 minutes, then gently fade away. Invite another small group to take a turn at the center and repeat the process. Repeat as many times as the group feels comfortable, usually 2-3 rounds.

## Discussion and feedback

After all participants have taken a turn (or chosen to observe), gather the group. Invite reflection with questions:

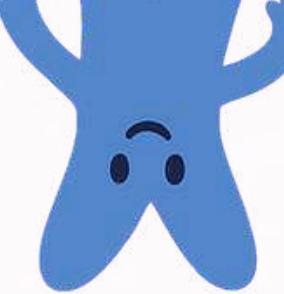
"How did you feel about being at the center?"

"What was it like to create the sound as a group?"

"Was the sound relaxing, energizing, or something else?"

Allow participants to share verbally or with a simple gesture or word. Take note of all the answers. Close with one last shared sound, a long "hmm" together, followed by a moment of silence and a thank you to the group.





# The story circle

## METHODS

*Based on narrative practices, participants sit in a circle and share personal stories inspired by a common theme (e.g., "My first love," "Once I was brave"). The activity emphasizes respectful listening, turn-taking and collective reflection.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*30 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Printed list of thematic suggestions Timer or clock to manage talk time. Optional: object (to be passed during shifts), paper and pens for notes, audio recorder (with consent)*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Start with a short welcome and clearly explain the activity and its basic rules.*
- Use a personal story to shape the sharing and set the tone.*
- Leave silence and reflection before starting the narrative round.*
- Encourage equal participation and respect for each speaker.*
- Remind attendees that they can always pass.*
- Moment at the end to reflect on shared themes and experiences*





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

Welcome participants and explain the goal of the activity: to share meaningful personal stories based on a cue, to foster empathy and inclusion. The basic rules are introduced: confidentiality, respect, one speaker at a time, right to pass. .

### Activity

Select a prompt and announce it (e.g., "Once I was brave"). Share a brief personal story to shape the process. Then, one after the other, the participants take turns sharing their story. The use of an object is encouraged to designate the speaker. Each person has about 2-3 minutes. Others listen without interrupting. Suggestion: Creating and using prompt cards will make this activity smoother and more inclusive. Participants can choose a card with the prompt they prefer (if laid out visibly), or they can draw one at random. Thematic prompt cards (1 prompt per card + simple icon):

A time I was brave  
A place I felt at home  
A helpful neighbor/teacher  
A favorite song or smell  
A first day (school, job, city)  
A small kindness I received  
A lesson I learned the hard way  
A celebration I loved  
A challenge I overcame  
A tradition I keep  
A walk I remember  
Something that makes me laugh

Remember not to pressure participants to share their story if they don't feel like it; you can create a 'pass' card they can use to skip their turn if they don't feel like talking.

### Discussion and feedback

Thank the group and propose a brief reflection: "How does it feel to share or listen? What stories have struck you? What themes emerged?". Emphasize the value of stories and express appreciation for participation. Close with a gesture of unity - for example, a group applause or a thank you.





Voice work

Body work

Photos and images

Manual skills

# Images that speak

## METHODS

*This activity combines photos with guided storytelling, sensory imagination and tactile object stimulation. It promotes body awareness and collaborative sharing through a multi-sensory, narrative approach.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*50 - 60 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- *Printed stock images*
- *Device with audio recording/playback capability (optional)*
- *Simple sound objects: paper, plastic cups, shells, sand, rice in jars, water bottles, etc.*
- *Pen and paper (optional for those who want to write or draw)*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Start with gentle encouragement: not everyone is ready to speak up right away.*
- *Offer supportive suggestions and allow silence - memories take time.*
- *For people with dementia, focus on emotions or sensations more than accuracy.*
- *Consider recording soundscapes or quotes (with consent) to share with families.*
- *Offering praise and gratitude for all contributions: listening is also participation.*

## OTHER FIGURES INVOLVED

*Musician or sound artist (optional)*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

The meeting opens with a moment of welcome dedicated to creating a serene atmosphere and mutual listening. Introduce the theme of the day in simple words: "Today we will travel in our memories through images and sounds". This short sentence helps to orient the imagination of the participants and to immediately activate an evocative, intimate and personal atmosphere. To prepare the body and mind for sharing, propose some gentle and accessible gestures, such as simple stretches of the hands, fingers or arms, performed slowly and effortlessly. This moment can be accompanied by guided breathing, inviting the group to inhale deeply and exhale calmly, letting go of any tensions. These small gestures help to center oneself, to get in touch with oneself and to create the conditions for authentic listening, both to one's own inner world and that of others.

### Activity

**Photo observation** Invite participants to observe a selection of proposed images, which can be generic but evocative photographs – such as a beach, a wedding scene, a market, a park or glimpses of familiar places. Each participant is free to choose the image that most resonates with their memory or sensitivity. Once the image has been chosen, the group is guided in a brief personal reflection. Ask a few questions: "What sound comes to mind?", "What smells or sensations does it arouse in you?" . The questions do not require complex answers, but serve to stimulate everyone's sensory and emotional experience, creating a bridge between the image and the memory. As an alternative to verbal expression, the person can be invited to perform a gesture or an action to describe what they see or to express an emotion. This approach is particularly useful for individuals who have difficulties expressing themselves verbally, such as in cases of dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

**Creating soundscapes** In a second phase of the activity, the group is invited to choose together a shared theme of memory: a familiar and recognizable experience that can evoke common images and sensations, such as a day at the beach, the market or a Sunday at home. This choice is made in a participatory way, leaving room for the suggestions that emerge spontaneously from the group.



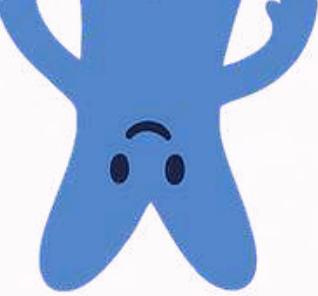


Once the theme has been identified, participants begin to recreate the sounds related to that experience, using their voice, body (such as hand claps, finger snaps or light percussion on the legs and chest), or simple objects in the space. Each sound represents an element of the evoked environment: the waves of the sea, the shouting of the market, the sound of dishes in the kitchen, the radio on in the background. Accompany the group in the construction of a short "sound history", guiding the sounds, their order, repetition and intensity, so that a real collective "soundscape" is created. This process is both creative and inclusive, as it allows everyone to participate, regardless of physical or language ability. If conditions allow, the execution can be registered. The shared listening to the final sound piece becomes a significant moment: a way to restore value to the process lived together and to recognize the beauty that comes from memory and collaboration. If desired, it is possible to further enrich the recorded soundscape by adding short vocal fragments: memories, keywords, small stories that the participants decide to share spontaneously. These testimonies, juxtaposed with collectively created sounds, return an even more personal and authentic trace of the lived experience, transforming individual memory into a choral and meaningful narrative.

## ***Discussion and feedback***

At the end of the experience, a space is dedicated to collective reflection, which is essential to give meaning to what emerged during the activity. Invite participants to share their impressions, asking simple, open-ended questions such as: "How did you feel while creating the sounds?", or "Was there anything that surprised you?". This moment promotes self-awareness and encourages mutual listening, offering everyone the opportunity to rework the emotions and memories that emerged in the group.





# Radio Stations

## METHODS

*The radio station activity uses a combination of:*

- *guided imagination*
- *light improvisation*
- *creative role-playing*

*to encourage self-expression, social interaction and joyful participation.*

*Participants take turns transforming themselves into ~~themselves~~ radio stations, expressing through voice, stories, gestures or songs. They can choose their own station identity or select from the suggested themes such as Funny Station or FM Kindness. A symbolic object, such as a toy microphone, can be used to make the experience more immersive. The facilitator plays a key role in introducing the concept, modeling examples, and adjusting the flow according to the energy of the group.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**45 - 60 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- *A set of cards with radio station suggestions, which may include: Radio Poetry (cards with short and famous poems), Rebus Station (cards with simple riddles), Fun Station, Kindness FM, Radio Nostalgia, Storytime AM, etc. Optional - An object to represent a microphone (for example, toy microphone, soft ball or similar object)*





## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Emphasize that there are no wrong answers.*
- *Strengthen the spirit of fun, freedom, and connection.*
- *Keep the energy, lightness and rhythm adaptable to the group.*
- *Encourage cheers after each "broadcast."*

## OTHER FIGURES INVOLVED

*Optional: musician or actor*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Start by getting the group together and introducing the idea in a light-hearted and curious way. "Today we're going to do something a little different: we're going to turn into radio stations! Each of you has your own special broadcast. We're going to tune in and hear what's playing."

## Activity

Before diving into the heart of the activity, it may be useful to ask:

"Do you ever listen to the radio? What kind of stations do you know: music, news, sports, talk shows? Do you have a favorite?"

Provide some of local and national radio stations or ask the participants which ones they know and like. Participants can customize their station based on a real radio they know in their country or create one that reflects their personality, interests or mood. This mix of memory and imagination supports emotional expression, cultural sharing, and playful engagement. The group proceeds with the next steps.

### 1- Draw a card with a radio station

Explain the first step: everyone receives or draws a prompt — one of the radio station cards. If someone isn't sure what to do, offer to do it together, give a suggestion, or even swap cards. It's possible to use a microphone or any similar object that can be passed from hand to hand. Whoever is holding it is officially on air.

If the group is small, do just one round and allow more time for reflection and sharing. If someone prefers to simply say the name of their station or even pass, that's perfectly fine. What matters is to celebrate each person's moment.

Radio station ideas:

- Radio Nostalgia - Hum, sing or move to an old song you love.
- Kindness FM - Say something nice to someone in the room.
- Funny Station - Tell a funny memory or a playful riddle.
- Grandma's FM Kitchen - Describe a dish that brings back childhood memories.
- Radio Passions - Share a hobby or activity you enjoy.
- Weather Radio - Provide a Funny or Dramatic Forecast
- Radio Poetry - Read or invent a short poem.
- FM Traditions - Talk about a holiday, festival or custom from your region.





**2 - Create your own radio station** After everyone has had a turn with a card, it's time to improvise. "Now that we've explored a few different stations, we're getting even more creative. This time, you can come up with your own! If you could broadcast anything, what kind of station would you be?" Leave everyone a moment to think. Some may have their idea right away, while others may need a little more time. Then encourages participants to express their skill however they like, through a whisper, a voice with a playful tone, a short song, sound effects or just a few simple words. There is no right or wrong way to do this. It's important to keep the energy warm and supportive and celebrate the creativity of each person, whatever form they take. If the group wants it, make a bonus round, mix some stations or try out companions' broadcasts.

## **Discussion and feedback**

At the end, it's crucial to thank everyone for participating, reminding them how creative and fun their stations were.

A suggestion to conclude could be:

"There are many ways to express yourself, stories, sounds, jokes, even just a kind word. Thank you for sharing your stations with us!"





# Frames of the heart

Voice work

## METHODS

*Participants bring personal photos (family, self- portraits, pets, landmarks, nature, abstract images, newspaper clippings). The facilitator guides the session using specific suggestions that create the connection and gently activate the memory. The session includes both lighthearted and deeper reflection questions to suit participants' comfort levels.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*60 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- Personal photos (family, pets, points of interest, portraits, nature, abstract)
- Optional: Stock photo set for participants who don't bring personal photos
- Soft background music to create a warm atmosphere

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Create a welcoming, judgment-free environment where every participant feels safe sharing.
- Use supportive body language and gentle encouragement.
- Alternate simple and fun prompts with deeper reflective questions.
- Pay attention to nonverbal cues — smiles, gestures — as positive engagement signals.
- Allow participants to skip questions if they prefer.
- Be aware of potential emotional triggers.





# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Prepare the space in a welcoming and relaxed way, arranging the chairs in a circle and arranging, if possible, an area where photos can be projected or shown to everyone easily. Explain to the participants that the photos will be used to share stories and memories, that there are no right or wrong answers, only memories and feelings.

## Activity

Each participant is invited to bring with them one or two significant photographs of their lives. They can be photos from childhood, important moments, loved ones or simply images that evoke something. The exercise begins with a moment of collective observation: one photo at a time is shown to the group. It's possible not to specify the owner, thus giving the other participants the opportunity to guess who it is. Invite those who want to freely share their impressions, comments or feelings about the image. This stimulates the empathic and creative gaze of the group, allowing each image to live even outside its history. Only after this first phase of observation, the floor is given to the person who brought the photo. The participant tells what he wants: where and when it was taken, who the people portrayed are, what moment of life it represents, what emotion is linked to that image. The story can be long or short, serious or light: every contribution is received with attention and respect.

As an alternative to verbal expression, the person can be invited to perform a gesture or an action to describe what they see or to express an emotion. This approach is particularly useful for individuals who have difficulties expressing themselves verbally, such as in cases of dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Guide the in-depth analysis with some stimulating questions, adapting them to the sensitivity of the group and the person.

### Simpler questions:

"Who is smiling in this photo?"

"Is there an animal or a pet in this photo? Tell us about them!"

"Does this remind you of a favorite place you've visited?"

"Who were you with when he was taken?"

"What was going on just before or after this photo?"

"What food or smell do you remember from that day?"

"What season is there in this photo? Do you like that time of year?"

"Was there any music when this photo was taken?"

"What clothes do people wear? Do they remind you of a special occasion?"





"Does this photo make you laugh? Why?"

"If you had to associate a song with this photo, what would it be?"

"What movement, gesture or dance does this image call back to you?"

"Is there a scent, a sound, a flavor that you would connect to this moment?"

"If you had to write a sentence, a poem or a caption, what would you say?"

### **Deeper, more reflective questions:**

"How do you feel when you look at this?"

"What does this photo say about you or your family?"

"What lesson does this memory have in store for you?"

"Who would you like to be able to talk to in this photo?"

"Does this photo remind you of something you're proud of?"

"What would you say to your younger self of this period?"

"Is there anyone in this photo that you often think about?"

"What words come to mind when you see this?"

"How do you feel about this place or time now?"

"What would you like others to remember about you in this photo?"

*Others are invited to ask questions, add comments and evoke similar images from their own lives. This transforms the exercise into a choral conversation, where stories intertwine and each image becomes an opportunity for collective memory. At the end of each presentation, collect the key words, the evoked images, the gestures or phrases that emerged and builds a poetic or theatrical caption of the photo with the group, which can be written on cardboard and read aloud. If a song has been indicated, listen to it together, maybe even sing or hum. If a movement has been proposed, the group can try to reproduce it, symbolically entering "inside" the photo, transforming the memory into shared action.*

### **Discussion and feedback**

*When everyone has shared, ask everyone to choose a word with the group to summarize the sensations felt during the exercise or invite a brief reflection with ideas such as:*

"What was one thing you enjoyed most about sharing your memories today?"

"Did anyone learn anything new about another participant?"

"Which story or memory made you smile the most?"

"Is there any memory that surprised you or made you think differently?"

*The activity ends with a warm thank you and reminder: memories and stories connect us through time and generations.*





# What I see, what I feel

Voice work

## METHODS

*Participants explore one or more photographs and write spontaneous words or thoughts that come to mind. They reflect on these associations and identify recurring themes or emotions. After that, they can share their thoughts in small groups or couples.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*40 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- *Printed images*
- *Blank sheets of paper or magazines*
- *Pens or pencils*
- *Optional: Soft background music*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Explain that there are no right or wrong answers. Words can be abstract, emotional or literal.*
- *Ensure a peaceful and supportive environment.*
- *Offer support if needed (e.g., "What's the first word that comes to mind when you see this photo?")*
- *Allow space and time for silence, some insights may take a moment to arise.*
- *To adapt to participants with dementia by simplifying language and shortening the process.*





# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Start the activity by introducing the session as an exploration of emotions through photos and words. Explain that each participant will choose one or more photos and write down the first words, thoughts or emotions that come to mind when they look at each image. Reassure them that the activity is not about being a good writer, even a word or feeling is enough and there are no right or wrong answers.

## Activity

Provide a selection of images. Give each person a pen and paper or pencil. Ask them to look at one photo at a time and write down spontaneous words or short phrases that come to mind. These can be memories, emotions, colors, sensations or whatever the image brings out. After some time, invite them to look at the words they wrote and ask themselves:

"Do I see a theme here?"

"Is there a feeling or message that comes through this photo and these words?"

"Does this remind me of something I care about, something I've lost or something I want?"

As an alternative to writing or verbal expression, the person can be invited to perform a gesture or an action to describe what they see or to express an emotion. This approach is particularly useful for individuals who have difficulties with writing, or in cases of dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Offer themes they might notice, such as belonging, loneliness, joy, pain, courage, togetherness or change. Emphasize that it is okay if no theme is found, the reflection process itself is already very valuable. Encourage participants who feel comfortable to share what they have discovered as a couple or in a small group. If working with participants with dementia or limited verbal expression, this can be adapted into a supported conversation based on their responses or gestures.

## Discussion and feedback

After creative time and sharing, gather the group. Invite reflection with questions such as:

"Was there a word or feeling that surprised you?"

"What was it like to connect memories and emotions through a photo?"

"Is there a theme that seems important to you today?"

Acknowledge each person's process and thank them for their openness. Close the exercise with some relaxing breaths and a warm reminder that every photo brings with it a story and every story helps us understand ourselves and others.





# Lines between memories

Manual skills

METHODS	<p><i>Participants choose a photo that has meaning to them. Using colored pencils, they draw freely around the photo on a sheet of paper, adding lines, shapes or scenes. The emphasis is on expression rather than artistry.</i></p>
ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)	<i>45 minutes</i>
RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal photographs</li> <li>• If participants don't have their own photos, a selection of them is provided)</li> <li>• White or light-colored A4 paper</li> <li>• Colored pencils</li> <li>• Optional: glue stick or masking tape if the photos are not pre-printed on the sheet</li> <li>• Optional: Calm background music</li> </ul>
USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide simple instructions; Visual examples can be helpful. Encourage artistic expression: abstract drawing is just as welcome as representational art. Be sensitive to the emotional reactions that may arise from the photos. Offer sensitive, open-ended questions (e.g., "What colors do you think belong in this memory?" or "What would you like to add around this photo?").</li> </ul>
OTHER FIGURES INVOLVED	<i>Optional: Art therapists</i>



# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Introduce the session as a creative way to explore personal memories using photographs. Encourage each participant to choose a photo that speaks to them. It could be a family photo, a landscape, a significant moment or even an image that they don't remember clearly but are drawn to. If participants need help choosing, assist them. Explain that they will place their photo in the center of a blank page and use colored pencils to draw freely around it. They can draw anything they can think of, such as shapes, colors or small scenes. Let them know that there is no right or wrong; it is not about art, but about feeling, memory and imagination. If the atmosphere is suitable, you can start playing soft music during the activity.

## Activity

Once everyone has their materials, have them start by placing their chosen photo on the paper. If necessary, help them glue it or tape it down. Encourage them to start drawing around the image, outlining it, creating a frame or letting the lines flow outward like memories that extend into space. Some may want to draw something they remember from the photo; others can simply choose colors or patterns. Both are welcome. Remember them to work slowly and enjoy the process. If necessary, offer support by sitting nearby, observing or asking some questions such as:

"What do you remember when you see this?"

"What colors fit this photo?"

"Is there anything you would like to add about it?"

Wait at least 20-30 minutes for the drawing to take place at a natural pace.

## Discussion and feedback

When participants are ready, lead the group to a stopping point. Invite those who feel comfortable to hold or describe their drawings. Ask open-ended questions such as:

"Would you like to tell us something about what you have created?"

"How did this photo make you feel today?"

Participants can also just enjoy seeing each other's creations.

End the session with a warm thank you and a brief reflection: memory and imagination are powerful tools that live in at any age; expressing them through color can be a beautiful, healing and connecting process.





# Body map

## METHODS

*Participants use a body outline to symbolically represent sensations, emotions or memories through colors, symbols and drawings. This creative process encourages self-expression and emotional exploration.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*45 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- Large paper (rolls or taped sheets) with body contours*
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils*
- Optional: Collage Materials, Scissors, Glue, Stickers*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Clearly explain the metaphorical use of the body outline*
- Reassuring that artistry is not necessary.*
- Offer suggestions such as "Where do you feel joy?"*
- Respect silence or verbal sharing during the process*



# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Welcome the group and introduce the concept of body mapping as a creative way to reflect on one's emotions, memories and experiences. Participants are encouraged to see the outline of the body as a symbolic canvas, an external representation of their inner world. Explain that no artistic talent is needed and that there is no right or wrong to complete the activity.

## Activity

Participants receive a large body contour or can trace their own contour with possible assistance, depending on mobility and comfort. Using a variety of drawing materials, they begin to fill the outline with images, colors, words or shapes that reflect how they feel in their body, meaningful memories associated with certain body parts or sensations they frequently notice. Offer optional prompts such as "Where do you feel stress?" or "What part of your body do you associate with joy?" Participants are free to work quietly or talk quietly with each other during the process. Adaptations can be made for those who prefer to work while seated or who have mobility issues. After the drawing session, participants are invited (but not obliged) to share something on their body map: what they have chosen to express and why. Promote a respectful space for sharing. If the group members feel comfortable, the maps can be hung throughout the room.

## Discussion and feedback

The session concludes with a group reflection, emphasizing the uniqueness of each participant's story and the power of visual expression. Offer final thanks and invite participants to take their artwork home or leave it for future exhibitions.





# Memory in my hands

## METHODS

*Participants are invited to think of a memory, a story or a feeling from their past that they would like to express. Using soft clay, they shape a simple shape that can be abstract or representational. After shaping, they can paint their piece of clay with colors that seem related to their memory. The emphasis is on exploration and fun, not artistry. Conductors and facilitators provide gentle support and help handle materials if needed.*

## ALLOCATED TIME

(Indicative only)

**60 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- *Soft, air-dried clay (or playing clay for easier handling)*
- *Basic clay tools (optional, safe for all abilities)*
- *Aprons or protective sheets*
- *Non-toxic paints and brushes*
- *Water bowls and hand cleaning cloths*
- *Optional: Quiet background music*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Give clear and simple instructions and show an example if helpful.*
- *Remind participants that shapes can be abstract.*
- *Allow more time to handle the clay and paint slowly.*
- *Support participants with gentle prompts, such as, "What shape feels right for this memory?"*
- *Encourage sharing stories if participants want to but never force them to do so.*

## OTHER FIGURES INVOLVED

*Optional: Artist; art therapist*





# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Start by explaining that the exercise is about exploring memories through touch and color. Let them know that they will shape the clay with their hands and paint it as they wish. There is no right or wrong, everyone's creation is special.

## Activity

Distribute the clay to each participant and, if necessary, demonstrate how to gently knead and shape it. Encourage them to think of a memory and let their hands find a shape that feels connected to it. Some may make simple figures; others may prefer abstract shapes. Once the shape is ready, offer paints and brushes so they can decorate their piece with the colors they think fit the memory. Wait 40-45 minutes to model and paint. If necessary, offer help with tools or brushes. The conductor can ask questions such as:

*"What does this shape remind you of?"*

*"Would you like to tell me about this memory?"*

Alternatively, participants could either create freely, or, if it feels easier, work around a simple theme - for example: nature, shapes or imaginary creatures. Guide them with light questions such as:

*"What did you make?"*

*"How did you feel while creating it?"*

*"What name would you give your piece?"*

## Discussion and feedback

When everyone is done, invite those who wish to share to show their final product and tell something about it. Others can just listen and watch. Close with a thank you and reminder that memories and art can bring connection and joy at any time in life.





# From Me to We

## METHODS

*This activity involves creating artistic collages visually tell individual and group stories. It focuses on transforming materials to stimulate concentration, encourages non-verbal self-expression, and promotes creative engagement through sensory experiences. Group discussion and emotional reflection help foster deeper connection.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**60 minutes**  
*(Adjustable; can be spread over two sessions)*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- Magazines, newspapers, colored paper
- Scissors, glue sticks, glue
- Sheets of paper, cardboard or cardboard for large posters
- Optional markers, crayons, stickers or textures
- Protective table covers or aprons (optional)

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Reassure participants that no artistry is required.
- Offer gentle suggestions (e.g., "Choose an image that makes you feel calm/happy/strong").
- Encourage tactile exploration: feel the materials, enjoy the textures.
- Be careful when using scissors – adapt them with pre-cut materials if necessary.
- Celebrate every contribution with positive feedback.
- Music can be played softly in the background to enhance the atmosphere.

## OTHER FIGURES INVOLVED

*Optional: Artist, art therapist*





# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

The activity opens with a short group discussion, during which participants are invited to choose together a common theme that can guide the entire creative process. Themes such as "The seasons of life", "My favorite place" or "Emotions in color" offer broad and accessible ideas, capable of stimulating memory, imagination and sharing. After identifying the theme, each participant reflects in a personal way on what that concept evokes for themselves, letting images, memories, emotions emerge.

## Activity

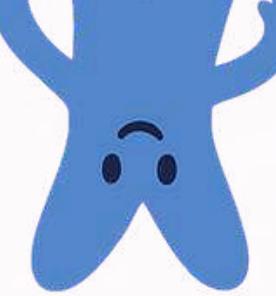
**Individual collage** - Each participant receives paper materials to make a collage. In this phase, everyone gives shape to personal visual work, freely choosing colors, shapes and images capable of expressing thoughts, sensations or fragments of experience related to the chosen theme. Accompany the work with discretion, offering support without judgment, remembering that there is no right or wrong way to build a collage: every choice is meaningful and valid.

**Group assembly** - Once the individual phase is completed, the group meets to combine the works into a single collective composition. Personal collages are arranged on a large poster or on a common surface, in a collaborative way, leaving room for overlapping, spontaneous juxtapositions and visual connections. This collective assembly represents a precious moment of symbolic dialogue between the different contributions: the individual works begin to "talk to each other", to intertwine, suggesting new and unexpected links.

## Discussion and feedback

The activity ends with open sharing. Each participant has the opportunity to tell their part of the work and the meaning it brings with it. The group observes and reflects on the entire composition, questioning what kind of collective history has emerged: what does the collage tell as a whole? What emotions does it return? If possible, the final work is exhibited in a visible and accessible space, thus enhancing the work done and offering a further opportunity for resonance and memory.





# What is it for you? What could it be?

## METHODS

*In this group activity, participants sit in a circle and pass around a common object (like a tennis ball). Each person shares a creative or metaphorical meaning the object holds for them, then passes it on with the same question. The exercise encourages imagination, expression through words or gestures and group connection. A variation include guessing the object's weight.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*10 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

*Examples of objects to be used: tennis ball, ball of yarn.*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Fantasy activation: Some participants may initially give literal answers. The conductor can offer creative examples or use humor to stimulate the imaginative turn. Acceptance of proposals: every image is valid. There are no wrong answers and every contribution is accepted without judgment.*
- Support those in difficulty: if someone does not know what to say, they can pass the turn or take a cue from what has already been said.*



# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

To begin this activity, participants are arranged in a circle creating an open and welcoming space that fosters eye contact and relationship. Briefly introduce the exercise, explaining that the aim is to get to know each other better in a light and fun way, discovering similarities and differences, and recognizing the experiences that we have in common.

## Activity

Start by holding a simple, everyday object — for example, a tennis ball or a ball of yarn — and show it to the group. Then, ask everyone with a playful and curious tone: "What could this object be for you?"

Now the game begins: the first participant takes the object and says what it could represent for them, letting their imagination flow freely. It can be something realistic, invented, or metaphorical.

After sharing their idea, the participant passes the object to the person next to them, asking: "What could it be for you?"

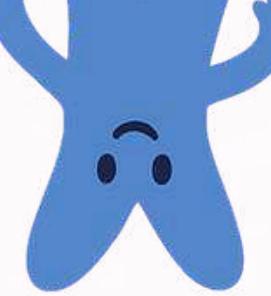
The next person then gives their own creative interpretation of the object and passes it along. The game continues smoothly, without interruptions, until everyone in the circle has had a turn. Each participant can also act out what the object represents to them, using their body, voice, or the space around them.

Another variation of this exercise involves asking participants to guess the weight of the object. At the end, the actual weight is revealed and compared with everyone's guesses to see who came the closest.

## Discussion and feedback

At the end of the exercise, ask the participants how the session went, bringing out difficulties, embarrassments and new variations that could enrich the exercise and make it more interactive.





# The suitcase

## METHODS

*This session uses a real suitcase filled with evocative objects to stimulate imagination, memory and storytelling. Participants pass the closed suitcase around, reflecting on its weight, contents and journeys it represents. Then, they choose an object and share personal stories or memories connected to it (My suitcase variant) or imagine preparing the suitcase for someone else, turning objects into symbolic gifts and messages (Suitcase for someone else variant). The activity fosters connection, emotional sharing and the transmission of experiences.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*30 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- *Vintage suitcase or box Assorted items: photos, perfumes, sunglasses, a swimsuit, sunscreen, a hat, a necklace, a bunch of keys, an old book, photographs, a scarf, a postcard, etc. Pens, paper, glue (for drawing or writing a memory)*
- *Optional: Background music*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- *Keep presentations short and warm.*
- *Use clear, slow speech and maintain eye contact.*
- *Encourage sharing, allow pauses and respect silence.*
- *Be prepared to support emotional reactions with empathy.*
- *Offer non-verbal options for participation (drawing, image selection)*



# FULL INSTRUCTIONS

## Introduction

Explain the purpose of the session. In this exercise, a suitcase takes center stage. A real, clearly visible suitcase that contains a series of assorted objects: sunglasses, a swimsuit, sunscreen, a hat, a necklace, a bunch of keys, an old book, photographs, a scarf, a postcard, and so on. Simple, evocative objects, chosen to suggest images, places, emotions, travels.

## Activity

The exercise begins with the collective presentation of the suitcase. It acts as both a symbolic and functional tool: something that participants can see, open and explore, triggering curiosity, storytelling and emotion. It helps stimulate sensory memory and imagination by creating a playful and engaging ritual.

Before opening the suitcase and discovering what it contains, an imaginative introductory moment is proposed: the suitcase, closed, is passed from hand to hand among the participants. Everyone can hold it for a few moments and answer some suggestive questions, such as: "How much does this suitcase weigh for you? What do you think is inside? Where are you going with it? Where are you coming from? ". This step immediately stimulates the imagination and creates an atmosphere of listening and curiosity, preparing the group for the theatrical and narrative game that will follow. In the next phase, after placing it on a table, each participant is invited to approach and choose one of the proposed objects. This is where two possible variants start, which can be alternated or freely assigned.

**1- My suitcase** Each participant imagines having to prepare for a trip. The journey can be real or imaginary, in the past or in the present: a beach holiday, a visit to a distant relative, a return to the hometown. The chosen object becomes the starting point to tell what you carry with you, why and what it represents.

The participant can share an anecdote related to that object or a similar experience: "This hat reminds me of when I first went to Ischia, with my husband. It was 1965..."

Invite everyone to briefly share something they love to remember. Then ask one by one to choose an item or present theirs. Use tips like:

"What does this remind you of?"

"How did you feel?"

"Who does all this put you in contact with?"





**2 - Suitcase for someone else** In this version, the participant is asked to imagine preparing the suitcase for an imaginary person: a young woman who leaves for her first adventure alone, a grandson who goes to study abroad, a fictional character. Here the chosen object is transformed into a gift, a symbolic message: "I put this necklace in my suitcase, because it belonged to my mother, and I want you to carry it with you as a lucky charm..." The emphasis shifts to transmission, to the passage of experiences, to care and memory that becomes a wish for the future.

*Note (optional): You can offer paper and pens if someone wants to write a note to add along with the items, especially in the range of the exercise where the suitcase is prepared for someone else.*

**Suggested contents of the travel box:**

<b>Map or small globe</b>	Supports orientation and spatial memory; invites you to choose the destination
<b>Train or plane ticket</b>	It symbolizes movement and transitions; suggests personal travel stories
<b>Sunglasses</b>	Suggests holidays or sunny places; adds humor or nostalgia
<b>Fabric scarf or hat</b>	It evokes the wind, the beach or the mountains; can be touched, smelled or worn
<b>Postcards or printed photos</b>	Serve as direct storytelling cues, each with a unique destination
<b>Mini compass or toy vehicle</b>	Adds a playful sense of adventure or exploration
<b>Luggage tag or travel diary</b>	Used to "label" imaginary journeys or trigger new ones



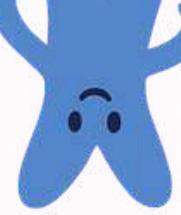


<b>Sunscreen bottle</b>	Familiar summer scent reminds participants of beach days, sunshine and holidays.
<b>Book</b>	Symbol of introspection, knowledge or companionship in moments of solitude.
<b>Bunch of keys</b>	It recalls homes, cherished places, doors that open or close in life.
<b>Makeup (e.g. lipstick) - Jewelry (e.g. necklace)</b>	Objects related to self-care, femininity, the desire to please, beauty.
<b>Plush or toys</b>	Connection with childhood, children, tenderness.

## ***Discussion and feedback***

*Reflect on shared feelings, group connections and memories. Recognize the emotional value of stories. Thank the participants.*





# The journey

## METHODS

*It combines storytelling, imagination, movement and sensory cues to help seniors remember or invent meaningful travel experiences. Participants respond to visual cues (postcards, photos), handle sensory objects (from a "travel box") and share imagined memories or journeys. A light group role-play fosters creativity and connection. This method supports memory, self-expression, social interaction and emotional engagement, all in a playful and inclusive way.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

**45 minutes**

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- Postcards or printed images of well-known places, landmarks or natural scenes
- Speaker or phone with short ambient travel sounds (e.g. train, waves, birds)

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Use a gentle, warm tone to invite participation.
- Use objects and postcards to stimulate memories.
- Be flexible: Accept silence, imagination, or short answers with equal value.



## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

The exercise blends personal storytelling, imaginative role-play and sensory engagement to invite seniors to a reflective and joyful exploration of real or imagined travel experiences.

It encourages both verbal expression and nonverbal participation through interaction with objects, images and sounds.

### Activity

Participants are invited to recall past travel experiences (real or symbolic) using visual aids such as postcards or photos of landmarks. This supports episodic memory, orientation in time and space and personal identity. Sample questions:

*"Have you ever been to a place like this?"*

*"What was your most memorable trip?"*

*"What makes you feel about this place?"*

Next, as in a group trip, participants imagine that they are all traveling together (for example, on a train, bus, boat or plane). This role-playing scenario encourages imagination, interaction, play and joint creativity.

The chairs are arranged in imitation of the real seating arrangement on the chosen vehicle: two parallel rows for the coach or train, with a front chair for the driver or train conductor, which can be interpreted by one of the participants. Once "on board", the imaginary journey begins: the participants physically and vocally simulate the movements of the vehicle, following curves, climbs, descents, sudden braking, potholes in the road, slowing down, jolts, with their bodies and voices. A small choral game is thus created, where everyone reacts in a personal but coordinated way to the common path.

Ask questions about where they are going, what they see or do along the way, what surprises or obstacles they encounter etc.





*Possible elements to integrate.*

- The driver can comment on the journey, giving directions: "Attention, turn right!" – "We climb up the mountain!" – "Oh no, it's raining very hard!"
- It's possible to insert characters on board: the passenger who talks too much, those who fall asleep, those who look out of the window and tell what they see etc.
- Participants can write a message "from their own trip". This message can be serious, humorous, poetic or simple and can include a drawing.
- During the journey, the group can make an imaginary stop and "get off", describing or mimicking what they are doing there (e.g. a stop at the lake, lunch, a market...).

*Note - Background sounds related to travel (e.g., trains, waves, birds, market noises) can help immerse participants in the imaginative journey and make the experience more vivid, especially for people with visual impairments or dementia.*

*This activity is designed to be flexible and culturally sensitive, allowing participants to connect through personal memories or the collective imagination of scenarios. To support this, it's possible to use visual cues (e.g., postcards or photos) that reflect a variety of recognizable landmarks, universal natural themes and local landmarks.*

*Famous monuments for inspiration and recognition:*

- The Colosseum (Italy)
- The Eiffel Tower (France)
- The Acropolis (Greece)
- The Palace of Parliament (Romania)
- Belém Tower (Portugal)
- Stonehenge (UK)
- Sagrada Família (Spain),
- Brandenburg Gate (Germany), etc.

*General Nature and Lifestyle Scenes:*

- Mountains
- The sea or a
- quiet beach
- A road in a
- rural village
- A railway
- station
- A market square
- A botanical garden
- A picnic
- in the countryside
- 

## ***Discussion and feedback***

*Conclude by asking the participants to tell where they went, how the trip was, what people they met, etc.*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# Where does this smell take you?

## METHODS

*The exercise is based on a well-known property of the nervous system: olfactory signals directly reach areas of the brain involved in memory and emotions. This olfactory recognition activity uses jars of spices, herbs, and foods to evoke memories through smell. Participants smell each jar, reflect on the sensations and memories it brings up, and then share their experiences in a respectful group circle. The exercise fosters sensory awareness, emotional expression and attentive listening.*

## ALLOCATED TIME (Indicative only)

*40 minutes*

## RESOURCES OR ITEMS NEEDED

- Several small containers/jars containing aromatic herbs (rosemary, oregano, basil, sage, lavender, mint etc.), coffee, vanilla, mushrooms etc.*

## USEFUL TIPS FOR THE CONDUCTOR

- Olfactory sensitivity and allergies: ask in advance if someone has intolerance or discomfort to certain odors and avoid substances that are too pungent or irritating.*
- Emotional reactions: A smell can evoke painful or melancholic memories. The conductor must be ready to welcome these emotions, leaving space but without forcing sharing. Respect for individual*
- rhythm: not everyone processes memories in the same way. Some will be able to speak immediately; others will prefer to listen or rework in silence.*





## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction

*This olfactory recognition exercise is a very useful activity, especially for stimulating memory and bringing back past memories.*

### Activity

*Point out how often we forget how deeply we can be affected by a distant memory that suddenly resurfaces through a smell — whether pleasant or unpleasant. After this introduction, invite the participants to calmly approach the table where the jars containing the different spices, herbs and foods are arranged. The jars can be opened one at a time or left freely available, depending on the number of participants and the context.*

*Each person, individually, can choose a jar, open it, smell its contents and take a few moments to listen to the sensations evoked. Invite to welcome any type of reaction, even if the memory is not immediate or if the smell arouses a negative feeling: the important thing is to observe and listen to what emerges: "What does it smell like? What is it about? Where does it take you?"*

*After this first sensory contact, propose a moment of sharing in a circle. Those who wish can tell what that smell reminded them: an episode, a face, a place, a sensation. Even fragmentary memories or vague emotions have value and deserve space. It is important to create a climate of respectful and profound listening, in which every testimony is received without judgment, with silence and attention.*

### Discussion and feedback

*At the end of the exercise, ask the participants how the session went, bringing out difficulties, embarrassments and new variations that could enrich the exercise and make it more interactive.*





## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Campostrini A., Manzella A., Caracciolo F. (2018). *Teatro Fragile. Guida agli effetti delle pratiche teatrali sui malati di Alzheimer*, Edizioni Mimesis.

Feldenkrais, M. (s.d.). *Awareness Through Movement [12 audio lessons]*. The Feldenkrais Project.  
<https://feldenkraisproject.com/collection/atm-book/>

Gastaldo, D., Rivas-Quarneti, N., & Magalhães, L. (2018). *Body-map storytelling as a health research methodology: Blurred lines that create clear images*. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 19(2). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-19.2.2858>

Haight, B. K., & Dias, J. K. (1992). *Examination of key variables in selected reminiscence modes*. *International Psychogeriatrics*, 4(Suppl 2), 279–290. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1041610292001369>

Halkola, U., Koffert, T., Koulu, L., Krappala, M., Loewenthal, D., Parrella, C., & Pehunen, P. (Eds.). (2011). *Learning and healing with phototherapy: Handbook of phototherapy in Europe*. Leonardo da Vinci Lifelong Learning Partnership Programme.

Lambert, V. (2014, May 12). *Alzheimer's: A "memory suitcase" helps dementia*. The Telegraph.  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/elder/10823395/Alzheimers-A-memory-suitcase-helps-dementia.html>

Luzio, A. (2018). *Malvisti*. Edizioni Mimesis.

Moscatelli M., Campostrini A., Manzella A. (2021), *Welfare per sognatori. Esperienze di rigenerazione sociale e urbana attraverso l'arte e la cultura*. Edizioni Mimesis.

Thaut, M. H. (2005). *Rhythm, music and the brain: Scientific foundations and clinical applications*. Routledge.

Welch, G. F., Himonides, E., Saunders, J., Papageorgi, I., & Sarazin, M. (2014). *Singing and social inclusion*. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5, 803. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00803>

Woods, B., Spector, A., Jones, C., Orrell, M., & Davies, S. (2005). *Reminiscence therapy for dementia*. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, (2). <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD001120.pub2>

Yim, J. (2016). *Therapeutic benefits of laughter in mental health: A theoretical review*. *The Tohoku Journal of Experimental Medicine*, 239(3), 243–249. <https://doi.org/10.1620/tjem.239.243>





## WEBSITES AND LINKS

Age & Opportunity. (2022). A toolkit for arts and creativity in care settings. [https://ageandopportunity.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/A\\_Toolkit\\_for\\_Arts\\_and\\_Creativity\\_in\\_Care\\_Settings2022.pdf](https://ageandopportunity.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/A_Toolkit_for_Arts_and_Creativity_in_Care_Settings2022.pdf)

Ageing and Dementia Research Centre (ADRC) at Bournemouth University, & Erasmus+ Partners (2019). Creative drama and storytelling in dementia care: Information for practitioners. Retrieved from <https://story2remember.eu/>.

Bexkens, J. (n.d.). Phototherapy and storytelling [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCYeSrd6tU4>

Clay work in long-term care [Video]. (n.d.). YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=902E805zROU>  
Collage art therapy - Part 1. (2012, July). Creativity in Therapy. <https://creativityintherapy.com/2012/07/collage-art-therapy-part-1/>

Creative Wellbeings. (2019). Why making a collage can make you happy. <https://www.creativewellbeings.com/blog/2019/3/13/why-making-a-collage-can-make-you-happy>

Creative Wellbeings. (2019). Because making a collage can make you happy. <https://www.creativewellbeings.com/blog/2019/3/13/because-making-a-collage-can-make-you-happy>

Delaware Division of Arts. (2025). Delaware's creative aging. <https://delawarescene.com/>

Houser, W. S., George, D. R., & Chinchilli, V. M. (2014). Impact of TimeSlips Creative Expression Program on Behavioral Symptoms and Psychotropic Medication Use in Persons with Dementia in Long-term Care: A Cluster-randomized Pilot Study. *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 22(4), 337-340. doi: 10.1016/j.jagp.2012.12.005

Pass the Sound. (n.d.). Shared learning resources – Sound Bath Exercise. <https://www.passthesound.org/>

Reminiscence Therapy: Engaging Long-Term Memories [Video]. (n.d.). YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wh5esQHFNAs>





ReStory to Care. (n.d.). Rewrite your story – Toolbox. <https://restorytocare.eu/io3-rewrite-your-story-toolbox/>

Shoshin Theatre. (n.d.). Atipia Project. <https://www.shoshintheatre.com/atipia>

The Phototherapy Centre – Judy Weiser. (n.d.). Related techniques. <https://phototherapy-centre.com/related-techniques/>

YouTube. (n.d.). 10-minute standing exercises for seniors – Bob & Brad. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BcPHWGQ044>

YOKIDS – Children's yoga at school: Die Wettermassage [Germany]. (s.d.).

Best Practice Manual – Creative Reminiscence and Life Story Work. (n.d.). [https://www.ageni.org/siteassets/documents/publications/best\\_practice\\_manual\\_creative\\_reminiscence\\_and\\_life\\_story\\_work.pdf](https://www.ageni.org/siteassets/documents/publications/best_practice_manual_creative_reminiscence_and_life_story_work.pdf)





## Annex 1 – Cards for In the moment

Dancing to your favorite song.

A few moments of swaying or seated dancing to music.

Co-funded by the European Union

AGE THEA

In the moment. A sensory adventure.

Co-funded by the European Union

AGE THEA



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# Smelling your favorite flower!

Take a moment to smell or imagine your favorite flower.

 Co-funded by the European Union



In the moment.

A sensory adventure.

 Co-funded by the European Union





## Opening a surprise gift.

Act out the excitement of opening a present.

 Co-funded by  
the European Union



*In the moment. A sensory adventure.*



 Co-funded by  
the European Union





Co-funded by  
the European Union

## Eating your favorite dessert

Mime or describe the taste  
of a delicious treat.



In the moment.

A sensory  
adventure.



## Talking on the phone, Good or Bad News

Pretend you are getting important news.

 Co-funded by the European Union



In the moment. A sensory adventure.

 Co-funded by the European Union





Looking for a  
lost phone.  
Act out searching  
the room for your  
phone.

 Co-funded by  
the European Union



In the moment. A sensory adventure.



 Co-funded by  
the European Union





## Trying to open a stuck jar.

Use hands to mime  
twisting a stubborn lid.



In the moment.  
A sensory  
adventure.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## Stepping Into a Puddle.



Pretend to react to  
a cold surprise, but  
kind of fun!



In the moment. A sensory adventure.





Love at  
first sight.



Imagine seeing someone and  
feeling an instant connection!



In the moment.

A sensory  
adventure.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## Walking on ice.

Carefully mime balancing on slippery ice.

 Co-funded by the European Union



In the moment.  
A sensory adventure.

 Co-funded by the European Union

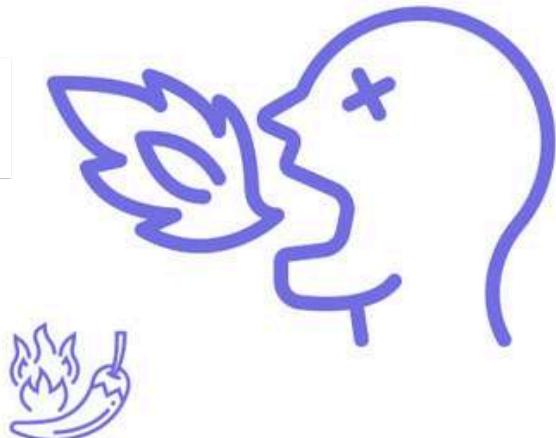


Co-funded by the European Union



Tasting  
something  
too  
Spicy.

React to a spicy bit.



 Co-funded by  
the European Union



In the moment.

A sensory  
adventure.



 Co-funded by  
the European Union



 Co-funded by  
the European Union



# Cooking an Invisible Pizza in a Hurry.



Pretend to make a pizza with flair! If you could make a pizza right now, what would you put on it?



 Co-funded by  
the European Union

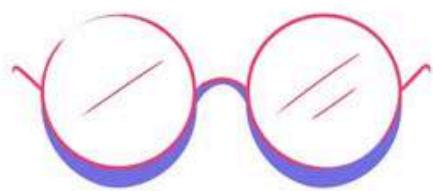


In the moment. A sensory adventure.



 Co-funded by  
the European Union





# Looking for Glasses that are on Your Had.

Mime searching, then realizing they  
were all along.

 Co-funded by  
the European Union



In the moment.  
A sensory  
adventure.



 Co-funded by  
the European Union





# Painting an Eastern Egg that breaks.

Pretend to decorate an egg, then  
react to it cracking.

 Co-funded by  
the European Union



In the moment.  
A sensory  
adventure.



 Co-funded by  
the European Union





# Trying to Hold in a Sneeze (in Church/Theatre)



Mime stifling a sneeze and the tension!

 Co-funded by the European Union



In the moment.

A sensory adventure.



 Co-funded by the European Union



Co-funded by the European Union



## Dressing a Wiggly Child

Mime trying to get a little one into a coat or shoes.

 Co-funded by  
the European Union



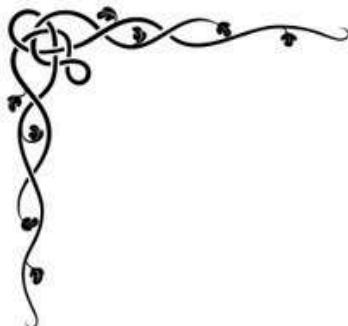
In the moment.  
A sensory  
adventure.

 Co-funded by  
the European Union





## Annex 2 – Cards for Radio Stations



### Radio Poetry



*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;  
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:  
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# FUNNY STATION



 Co-funded by  
the European Union



**“The 9 O’Clock Riddle”** – a new riddle  
every hour, answer revealed later!



**“Joke of the Day”** – a daily segment  
with fun, easy-to-get jokes

**“Guess and Win...”** – fun little logic  
quizzes and riddles.



**“Laugh of the Week”** – a  
listener-submitted joke!

 Co-funded by  
the European Union



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## FM Kitchen

 Co-funded by  
the European Union



*Good morning from FM Kitchen, the voice of good cuisine!  
Today we're talking about one of the most loved dishes in the world: pizza.  
Tomato, mozzarella, a drizzle of olive oil, and plenty of passion – but beware: there's good pizza... and then there's the questionable kind!  
Classic Margherita or creative toppings, the key is respect for the ingredients and perfect baking.*



 Co-funded by  
the European Union



Co-funded by  
the European Union



## RADIO NOSTALGIA



Co-funded by  
the European Union



*"Welcome back to Radio Nostalgia, the station  
that makes memories sing.*

*We're starting the day with a song that went  
around the world: "Volare" – or rather, "Nel blu  
dipinto di blu" – sung by Domenico Modugno at  
the 1958 Sanremo Festival.*

*A timeless hit that still makes hearts beat across  
every generation."*



*"If you have a song close to your heart, write to us or  
give us a call – here, every note has a story to tell."*



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# Radio Passions



Co-funded by  
the European Union



"Welcome to Radio Passions, where every voice shares what they love to do.

Today we're talking about gardening — a hobby that relaxes, keeps you active, and brings so much joy.

Some people care for flowers, others grow tomatoes on their balconies, and some have a vegetable garden behind the house.

If you too love the feeling of soil in your hands, stay tuned!"



"And coming up next, it's time for sewing — knitting, embroidery, crochet... crafts that people used to learn as children and that are now making a comeback. We'll also hear your stories: when did you learn? Who taught you?"



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# FM Traditions



Co-funded by  
the European Union



**"Festival of the Week"** – celebrating Italy's local feasts and traditions, one region at a time!

**"Back in the Day, They Used to Say..."** – traditional proverbs and expressions, told simply and with meaning.

**"Stories from the Village"** – voices from our listeners sharing memories, tales, and local legends.



**"Cooking Traditions"** – traditional recipes that celebrate the seasons and special holidays.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# Weather Radio



 Co-funded by  
the European Union



Today the sun is feeling shy: in the morning it peeks through the delicate veil of clouds, but by noon it will have the courage to shine in all its glory. A perfect moment for a smile in the open air!

In the afternoon, a few playful raindrops might pay us a visit, just long enough to refresh the leaves and make the autumn colors sparkle.

And the wind? Light and curious, it carries forgotten words. If you catch one passing by, grab it and keep it in your pocket.



 Co-funded by  
the European Union



Co-funded by  
the European Union



# RADIO ACTIVE



Co-funded by  
the European Union



*"We're at the basketball court, where exciting games are happening today. Players take turns dribbling, shooting at the hoop, and making quick team plays, trying to score points while defending their basket."*



*"We're at the soccer field, where thrilling matches are being played today. Players run across the pitch, dribble, pass the ball, and try to score goals while defending their own net."*

*We're at the athletics track, where training continues. Today on the track, athletes take turns doing 100-meter sprints, warm-up exercises, and a few long jumps.*



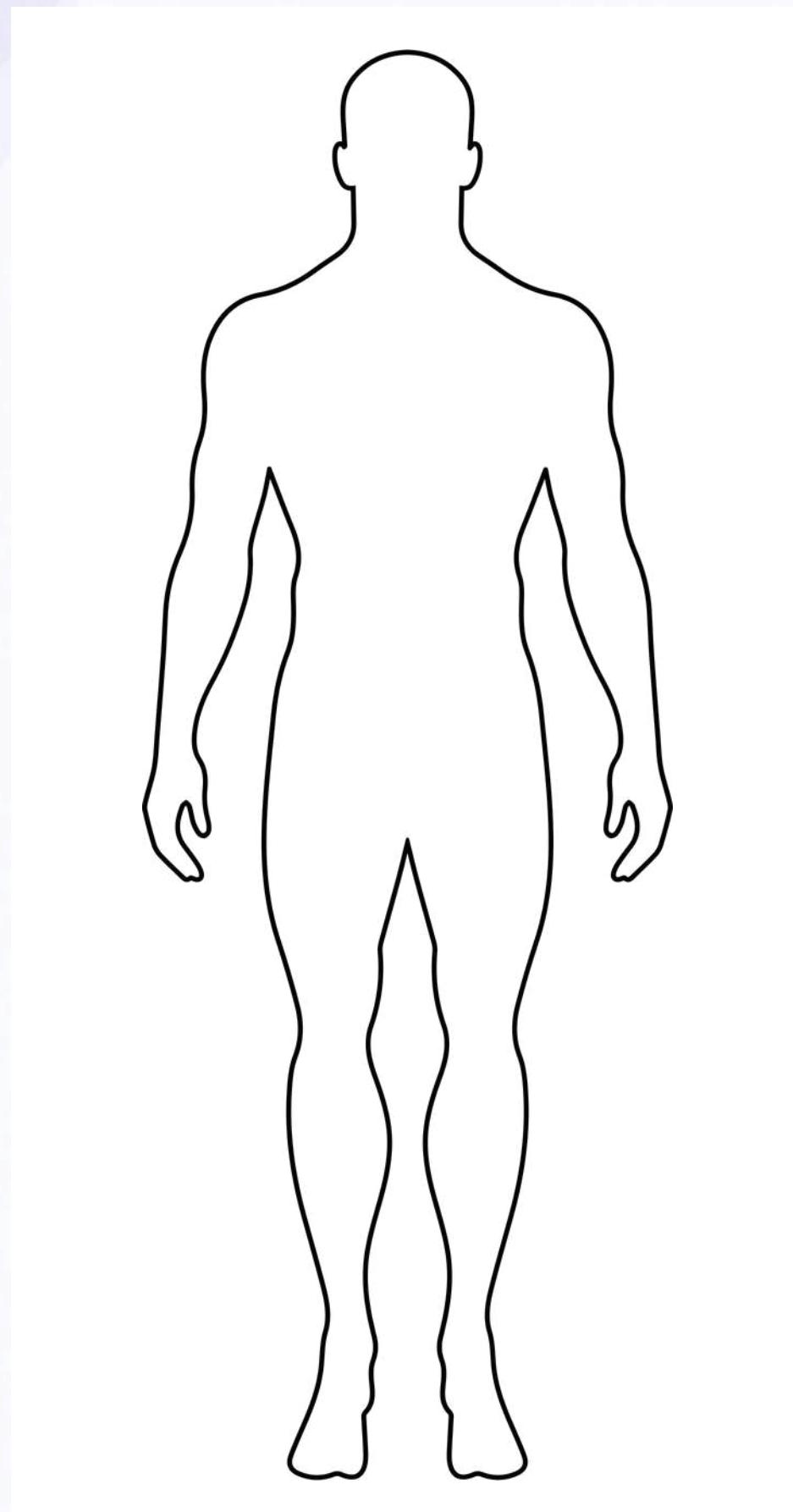
Co-funded by  
the European Union



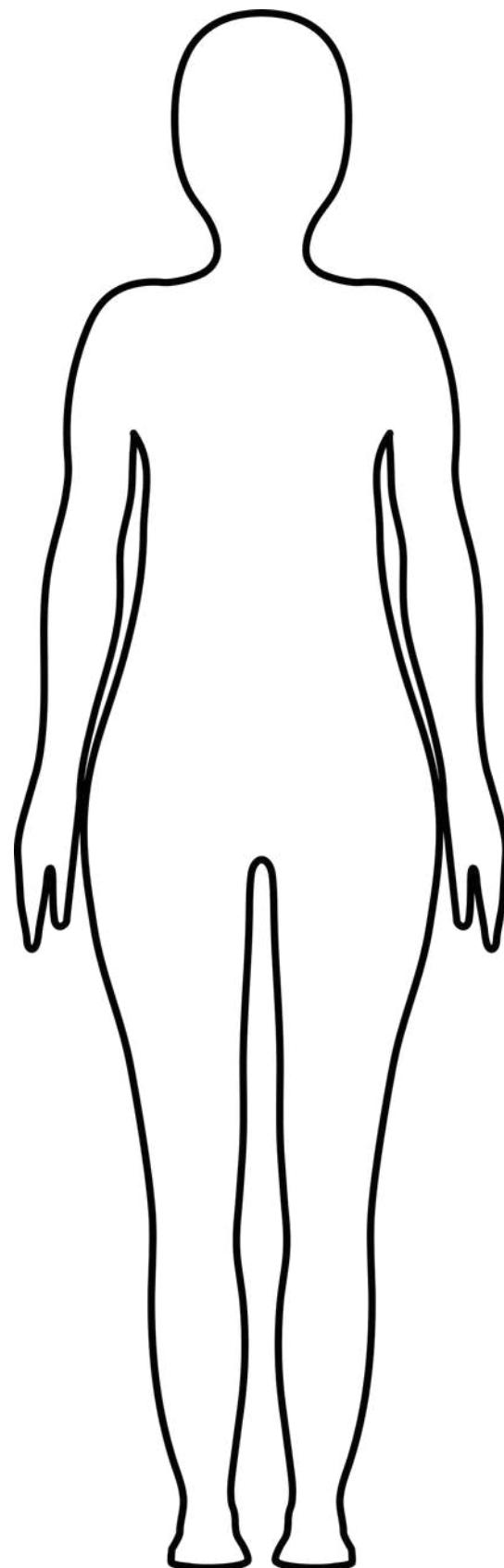
Co-funded by  
the European Union



## Annex 3 – Materials for Body map



Co-funded by  
the European Union





## **“ON STAGE IN THE GOLDEN AGE: THEATRE FOR HEALTHY AGEING”**

PROJECT NUMBER: 2023 - 1 - RO1 - KA220 - ADU - 000160973

**WEBSITE:** [https://age-thea.eu/?page\\_id=15](https://age-thea.eu/?page_id=15)

**FACEBOOK:** [AGE-TEA](#)

**INSTAGRAM:** [age.thea2023](#)



Co-funded by  
the European Union