



# BYMBE

Bringing Young Mothers back to education

# BYMBE ORIENTATION PACK 104

Erasmus+: KA2 – Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices  
– Strategic Partnerships for adult education  
[Agreement N° 2017-1-AT01-KA204-035007]



Co-funded by the  
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## Project Information

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Document author:	<b>Angela Pittl, Sonja Karbon</b>
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

BYMBE partnership has come together to support professional inclusion of NEETS (not in employment, education or training), more specifically young mothers at risk of dropping out of the education system, by raising their motivation to re-enter and finalise education or VET training and by providing them support services (including professional orientation, motivation and soft skills training) to continue and finish the education or training.

Even if after the campaign (IO2) young mothers are aware of the need to finalise their professional education, they will need special support to carry it out - in how to organise their next steps and professional orientation for making the right decision regarding their professional life. Reliable support networks have to be organised to assure that they can carry out the education till the end. This does not only mean the organisation of child care, but also knowledge in building up support networks of their own in case of back draws, times of frustration or stress. Skills which they often do not possess, as these are not taught in school or in their social environment.

IO4 - IO6 is a holistic package tailored to these special needs of young mothers in order to involve them, empower them and keep them motivated in order to avoid drop-outs. Due to the different strengths of the partners there are different lead partners for the tasks and the packages are one after another building up on each other.

IO4, the BYMBE Orientation Pack is the first of the packs of support instruments for young mothers. Their main objectives are:

- Improvement in social cognitive skills
- Improvement in emotion, recognition, and understanding
- Better self-control
- Better planning for solving cognitive tasks
- More thinking before acting
- More effective conflict resolution
- More positive classroom atmosphere

To reach these aims the project applies innovative tools in a combination of workshops, individual coaching sessions, peer-support sessions, decision making and planning how to implement the decisions by using the project method, idea generation session on overcoming obstacles.

For professional orientation we will use easy understandable tools like Symbol work for counseling which we learned from other project is an approach to get more in deep with the young mothers who are not used to counseling settings. Symbol work methodology allows to express and make visible hidden agendas which than may be solved and personal motivational strategies.

Impact: Provide a holistic orientation and decision support tailored to the needs of Young Mothers; at the end the participants shall be able to take a educational/professional decision suitable to their current situation to improve their later chances of employment and being able to achieve their own income.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

### 2.1. Objectives of the BYMBE Orientation Pack

The BYMBE Orientation Pack is an innovative approach to help young NEET mothers to find their own way to education and profession. It is based on a holistic approach combining group workshops, individual coaching sessions and peer sessions with the following contents:

- professional orientation and counselling
- guidance in a decision for a certain education
- planning of an individual professional education path
- organisation of child care if needed

The pack shall deliver a training proposing methodologies to build up a group atmosphere in order to install a support group on the one hand and to conduct orientation and counselling suitable for the target group, their guidance in a decision for a certain education and the planning of an individual professional education path on the other hand. The method is to enhance their self-awareness and competences, in order to strengthen their self-consciousness. In short, this is to provide orientation for career advances and education choices.

Therefore, we decided to work with the methodology for Symfos as this method fulfils all these requirements and at the same time fosters activation and assumption of agency over their own actions.

The handbook therefore will contain the explanation on the symbol work methodology how to implement it in training, organisation of child care and other support needed and how to overcome stereotypes of motherhood and childcare, which might be a barrier to education and training.

## 2.2. Structure of the BYMBE Orientation Pack

The BYMBE Orientation Pack intends to use the following pathway:

- workshop for preparation and training,
- followed by individual coaching support sessions and peer-support sessions,
- followed by decision making and next planning how to implement the decisions by using the project method.

BYMBE Orientation Pack consists of 20 hours of participative practical training and 3 individual counselling sessions. The training and the individual sessions with at least 2 weeks between each in order to utilize spaced and repetitive learning methods and to involve young mothers via individual tasks between the training and the individual counselling sessions.

## 2.3. Methodology for the Workshops

### 2.3.1 TEAM AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING

The first training day is focusing on getting to know each other and team building activities so that the group of young mothers learns to appreciate the advantages of building a support network for each other. This will help them to follow the objective to finalize their professional education within the next months/years. During the exercises they can figure out other young mothers living in the same area, with children in the same age or with the same interests and hobbies.

Other exercises will improve their teamworking capacities. Those will make clear different working styles and their strengths and things they have to be aware of. This also contributes to their strength as a group but will also improve life-skills they need in later professional life.

A special part will also be the reflection on their role as a mother and the pictures they are expected to fulfil. What are ideas of the society, of the family and what do they want themselves for their small family. This exercise is important to empower them personally and give them orientation in the way they want to follow in the next future.

You find a short description of each exercise, its aim and the methodological background in part 3 of this guide.

### 2.3.2 PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION BY SYMFOS METHODOLOGY

#### *a) Why we decided to work with SymfoS*

SymfoS – Symbols for Success project promotes an innovative education and career guidance method addressed to young disadvantaged people based on sets of symbols. As very often the traditional counselling methods are aimed at young people who have advanced writing and reading skills, are integrated in the national education and professional training framework and are already supported by a strong social system. These kinds of interventions can be ineffective with young people, who, for various reasons and obstacles in their environmental situation, find difficulties in expressing in words their situation, their needs and their goals for the future. Working with symbols is an opportunity for them to use a universal language to do it and **especially to detect their own needs and desires.**

What are SymfoS aims? On one hand, SymfoS aims to support young people who encounter difficulties in finding their own pathway within the education system and labour market to set their own goals for their future. On the other hand, it aims to provide educational guidance and a holistic method for professional operators that improves the overall quality of counselling. **SymfoS especially aims to foster the engagement and self-responsibilities of young people and raise the success rate by overcoming resistance and withdrawal, by making decisions to their own decisions, considering the young mothers as experts of their own lives. In this sense SymfoS is not just only a training method providing some exercises, it is at the same time the provision of orientation, empowerment and self-confidence building.**

Additionally, the “Peer Buddy system” makes full use of the resources from the peer group. The support from peers and from the social network is at least as important as professional guidance. Starting from the supporting group, which will be constituted in a counselling session by being nominated and trained as “buddies” to support their colleagues in their challenging adventures of finding their right place in education system. And in the case of BYMBE project the Peer Buddy Approach will **strengthen the group feeling of the young mothers and shall support them during the whole training period.** It makes visible common issues and related problems and inspires them to help each other right from the beginning of the Support packages, an approach will be promoted by IO4-IO6.

For BYMBE we will use 2 of the counselling scenarios the SymfoS:

- The basic clearing tool as a “gateway” into our work. This gives a short case history to be clear, that the method fits to the client

- The “Life Road Map“ or “Planning roadmap“ to work on personal competences and resources

These tools will help to identify young mothers hidden resources and potentials, to get clearness about their goals and to plan concrete next steps in education to do.

The agreed upon action plan will help them to transfer the results from counselling (e.g. the career choice) into real live. Therefore, we will create individual pathways with each of the young mothers, where we fix a concrete Roadmap with next steps to carry out and resources of support needed.

These personal maps will be then discussed and worked on in the individual counselling scenarios. (here see 3.3 methodological explanation for the individual sessions)

#### *b) Symbol work in a nutshell*

**“The world is a forest of signs and they need to be interpreted.”** (Umberto Eco)

With the help of symbols we are able to provide people with an additional language when they cannot find the right words. In this context, symbols work similarly to an interpreter; furthermore, they transmit information one cannot or does not want to share.

What is the meaning of symbols in connection with consultancy work?

According to individual experience, a symbol may have many if not infinite meanings and is interconnected with multiple feelings, depending on the matter. From the perspective of interplay between meanings and feelings there are no identical meanings corresponding to a symbol.

Donald Sandner describes a symbol as follows: “A symbol is something that can convey a concept. It can be a word, a mathematical formula, an act, a gesture, a ritual, a dream, a work of art, everything that can transport a concept of linguistic-rational, imaginative-intuitive or emotional-evaluative nature. The key is an effective transfer by the symbol itself. The concept is the meaning of the symbol.” In his definition, Donald Sandner refers to an extensive and important work by Susanne K. Langer with the title "Philosophy in a New Key - A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art". In this publication, there is a chapter with the title “The Logic of Signs and Symbols”, which is especially relevant to our work.

In a nutshell, symbol work is about getting a person to reach him- or herself. The main goal is not the achievement of something.

Furthermore, working with symbols is always about “grasping” something, in both meanings of the term. This is the essential and fundamental difference in comparison to other points of view.

Working with symbols means: To do something. I always am what I do. I do what I am.

Any item can be used as a symbol. Items are selected by a person who is working with symbols; the choice is connected to a story or one or more feelings. This way we are able to approach queries and ambiguity and gain a quick understanding.

This is why items, things, objects play a central role in symbol work.

Symbols stand in when there are situations that are hard or impossible to describe through other means of communication such as gestures or mimicry.

One of the main interests of symbol work is to find out how people can act autonomously right from the beginning and how processes, including solutions and changes, can be accelerated or shortcut. This also refers to the processes and activities taking place during the training course. Participants refer to it as “getting to the point quickly.”

If one is neck-deep in the waves they better not hang their head.

In a real situation, this happens surprisingly quick. There are factors that prevent the participants from becoming emotionally overstrained in such situations.

The single working steps are most successful if certain skills can be detected and experienced at an early stage.

Skills and strengths (resources) are taken into consideration the same way as understanding a problem and setting clear goals.

Symbol work constantly demands the practical and committed use of these elements.

All Interventions and creative media have been created through practical work. These are the tools that can literally be “grasped” by the participants.

The materials are suitable for all kinds of settings and for the use by people of all ages. They can be used for anamnesis, diagnosis, as therapeutical intervention as well as for supervision, team support/coaching, consultancy, training and prevention.

*This introduction on symbol work originates from the working paper “Grundlagen für die Arbeit mit Symbolen” (Basics of Symbol Work), written by Wilfried Schneider in 2012.*

The materials and interventions used in the SymfoS-Methodology are based on his approach of “Psychologische Symbolarbeit”.

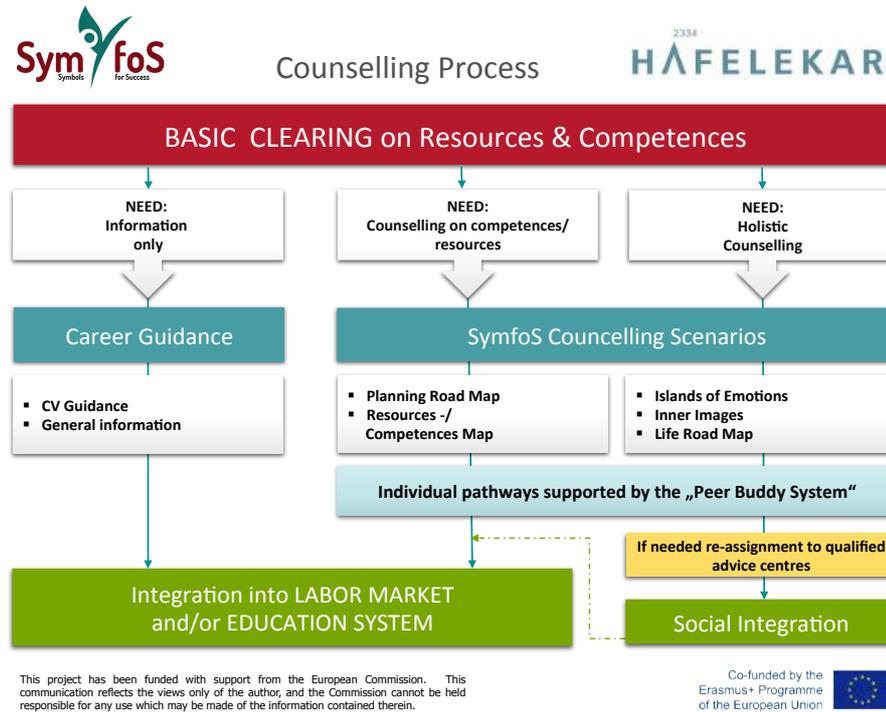


Figure 1: SymfoS – Counselling Process

The SymfoS Counselling Process is mainly based on 4 different kinds of counselling tools:

- 1) Basic Clearing
- 2) Various SymfoS - Counselling Scenarios
- 3) Individual Pathways, supported by a Peer Buddy System

The counselling process starts with a basic clearing that helps to screen appropriate youth for symbol work.

We will split up into three groups:

- Young people who only need information will be provided with CV-training and regular job seeking instruments like databases, etc.
- Young people with need of counselling in the field of resources and competences will be supported by Symbol scenarios called Planning Road map and life Road map.
- For all others, who need additional support on different topics, we will work with the whole SymfoS toolkit as fee. Exploration of inner images and islands of emotions.

Symbol counselling scenarios will be chosen according to specific needs, aims and objectives of our young mothers. To assure a successful learning transfer, the outcomes from the counselling process (e.g. job

application, choice of high school, etc.) will be defined in a roadmap. This allows the young mothers to reach their targets more easily and in a structured way.

Finally, we also developed a Peer buddy system that delivers support for the difficult transfer from training into daily life, here especially to support the education/training period and to avoid dropout rates.

### *c) Fundamental pedagogical approach*

The trainer's fundamental pedagogical approach is crucial for the successful implementation of symbol work sessions. Therefore, you will find the description of this approach in the beginning of the handout.

#### Basic systematic approach in developmental pedagogy

SymfoS assumes a belief in a client's developmental capabilities and aims at reinforcing the client's personal strengths. Development is possible in any situation, and young mothers are capable of assuming responsibility for their own development.

Systemic-oriented counsellors assume the autonomy of the person seeking help and advice and view this person as a 'self-expert'. The unique experience of the individual is understood to be the subjective processing of his personal history and emotional and cognitive experiences of relationships. In the fields of therapy and counselling, systemic practice is oriented towards the concerns of the client (customer) and dispenses with pathologizing and setting normative goals. Within the framework of care-oriented, social-pedagogical procedures, systemic practice links into the resources of the individual involved in order to achieve ethically justifiable conditions.

(<https://systemische-gesellschaft.de/systemischer-ansatz/was-ist-systemisch/>)

#### An open, client-centric basic attitude

Throughout the entire counselling process, the young people decide on the content of the work carried out together. They define the subject matter, together with the goals, objectives, and pace of the work, with the support of their counsellor and peers.

The trainers run the risk of judging, categorising, and failing to listen and perceive with an open mind. This causes them to focus on their own issues, hypotheses, value systems or goals, and force their ideas upon the young mothers. A specific time is, therefore, planned into the counselling for them to express their own theories, ideas and suggestions. The client listens to these and can decide which ones he will take on board and heed. He retains the responsibility for the content of the counselling.

#### An accepting, appreciative basic attitude

The young people are first and foremost to be accepted and valued for who they are – with their own stories and personal backgrounds, character traits, unique characteristics, skills, strengths and weaknesses. This may initially sound banal or simple but happens to be a great challenge in practice. In addition to the *accepting and supporting* aspects, value also involves *fostering and challenging independence and assumption of responsibility*. The purpose of the counselling is not to relieve young people of their struggles or carry them through life, but to empower them to take the necessary steps themselves. At times, young mothers tend to avoid taking responsibility for their actions. They try to get the counsellor or the group to do the work for them. In such cases, it is important to push the ball back into the client's court and to motivate him to work. Resource- and solution- orientated as well as unpleasant, provoking, or confrontational questions can sometimes be helpful here.

When a young person violates the rules or exhibits anti-social behaviour or behaviour that is not conducive to achieving the goals, the person should still be valued, but their behaviour should be questioned. The person should be confronted with the existing agreements, rules, the opinions of others, and the consequences of their behaviour. This technique is part of an approach that values the client and takes them seriously.

#### A resource- and solution-oriented basic attitude

One of the goals of SymfoS is to help young people to discover (or rediscover) their abilities and skills and to expand on these. SymfoS begins with these personal competences and personality traits and brings in social, material, and infrastructural resources. Social resources include people from the client's family, friends and acquaintances, and people from their school, work and social environment; infrastructural resources include people, institutions, associations and public spaces from their living environment.

The basic assumption is that all behaviour makes sense and is viewed as advantageous by the person exhibiting it. It is important to continue to appreciate the person even in the event of supposedly incomprehensible or 'negative' behaviours. The counsellor should address the utility of these behaviours and identify and foster any resources.

Symbol work counselling primarily focuses on solutions, not the young people's problems. Biographical research serves to form a case history and highlights the resources listed above, which are helpful in defining and achieving goals.

#### *d) SymfoS – Counselling-Method: Always walk through Five Steps!*

Within about 10-15 minutes time and without spectators, a young person creates/builds the Basic Clearing or other SymfoS Counselling Scenarios ("resource- / competence pathway", "planning pathway", "exploration of inner images", "exploration of islands of emotions") on her own.

When she has finished, everyone sits down around the young woman and her model.

#### **1. Presentation**

The young woman:

She presents the heading/ topic of her presentation.

She talks about what she has displayed.

The young woman always states which symbol she is talking about. (e.g. "this hand stands for...")

The group (if the group is too big, 3 persons will be selected):

Everyone listens carefully to what is being told.

They are aware of the young woman's presence.

While she is speaking, the group observes her gestures, mimicry, posture, breathing, the pitch of her voice.

Does she show emotions, does she touch a symbol, which one?

#### **2. Factual questions**

The Group:

The group (or the 4 selected persons) asks factual questions.

These questions only refer to the symbols, to "what is visible". No "why"- or "how come"-questions are asked. This is not about interpretation but understanding only.

The young woman:

She answers to the factual questions.

#### **3. Perception**

The Group:

The group addresses the young woman directly

They describe everything they have perceived and everything they have observed while they were told the story. If someone detects emotions, he or she should be able to explain how they were perceived. (Mimicry, gestures, pitches of the voice etc.) The young woman: Listens attentively.

#### 4. Interpretation

The Group:

The group talks about the young woman.

They are thinking aloud, asking questions like "What is the problem?", "What should be different?", "What would she want to solve/understand/do?", "Where could be difficulties? Where not? "

The young woman: She listens attentively and does not respond for now.

#### 5. Agreement on actions

When the group has finished "thinking aloud", the young woman talks about her thoughts regarding the considerations of the group. What is true? What is not? Where are insecurities? Are there doubts?

What does she like to hear? What does she not like to hear?

What is especially important from the things said? Where would she like to begin?

#### *e) Overview on different Counselling Scenarios*

##### **Basic Clearing**

SymfoS Basic clearing has been established to provide practitioners with a quick assessment tool to establish the needs of the young person they meet. By the end of the assessment practitioners will have decided, in conjunction with the young person, the need level of the client and if the use of symbols is applicable to them.



Figure 1: Basic Clearing

##### Methodology:

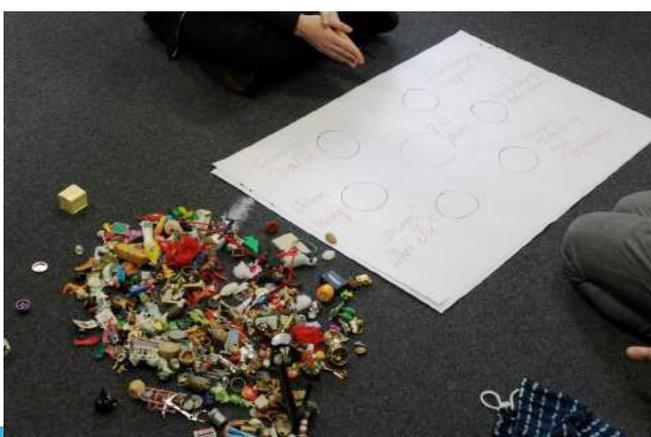
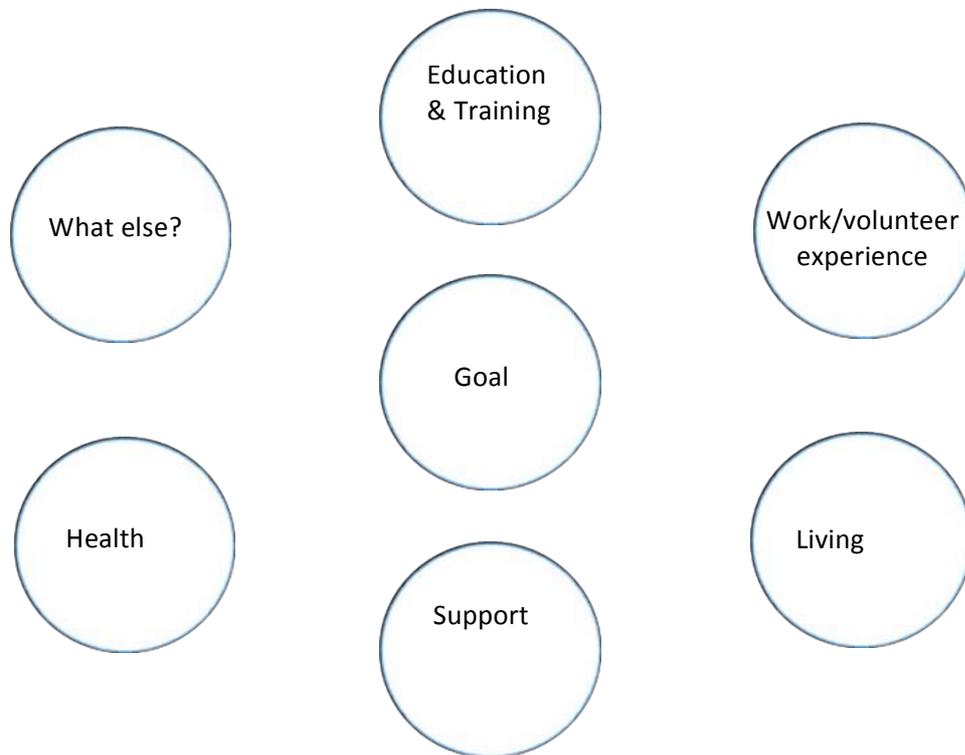


Figure 2: Work pad for basic clearing



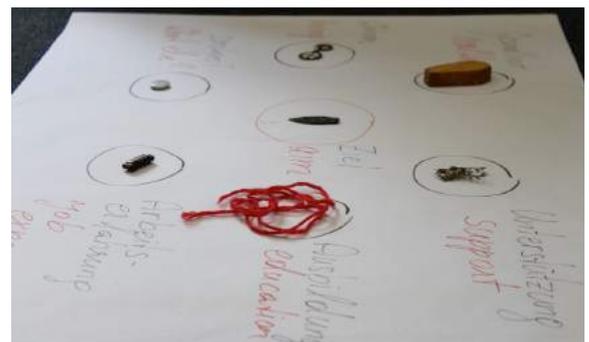
The work pad is structured like an atom, with a goal at the centre and relevant aspects of the young person's life surrounding it.

I.) Starting point: Goal setting

The young person discloses their goal to the practitioner, chooses a symbol for their goal and puts it on the centre of the page. In some cases, the practitioner and the client will have to clarify or reframe this aim, if it seems too unclear or implausible.

II.) Choosing symbols for each aspect

As the young person works through the sheet they select symbols that they feel represent each of the areas on the page relevant to their own lives. In some cases, young mothers may leave some areas without a symbol, which also



gives certain information.

Figure 3: Symbols chosen for each aspect

III.) Evaluate the situation in each area

To evaluate each area, the young person is invited by the practitioner to assess their personal situation in each area. To make this visible, the young person then chooses to lay pathways between each symbol and their goal; either solid ground, thick ice or thin ice.

Solid ground; I feel very stable and safe here

Thick Ice; I feel somewhat stable and safe but I feel a little wobbly

Thin Ice; I am very shaky and the ice could break at any moment



Figure 4: Evaluation Tools



Figure 5: Symbols and evaluation pathways on the work pad

**Pathways: Resource-/ Competence Pathway and Planning Pathway**

Every road is suitable either for a look back, the determination of the current position (like Resource-/ Competence Pathway) and a preview (Planning Pathway), always related to life goals and visions. It is advisable to decide whether to work on short-, medium or long-term goals. **The advantage of SymfoS is that it is very flexible and you as a trainer can adapt it to the specific needs of the client. You can compare it like a tool box, depending on the issue you have to fix, you can choose the suitable tool for that matter.** If you need a screwdriver take this, if you need a hammer, there is another tool.

**Even the planning road map offers different options you can either do the planification of a day, a week, a month or several months with the cards, depending on the problem of the client. Planning roadmap is especially the suitable tool if the client doubts the possibility of combining training with family duties. Or if you as a counsellor want the client to be aware of all parts of the future plan. So, you can reassure that**

it is possible and the client can take necessary prevention or support activities in time, even before problems may arise, which have not been taken in consideration.

For a future agenda, the year cards can also be transformed into cards for months, weeks, days or even hours. This allows flexibility for planning and reorientation.

### Working surface

Participants and trainers should work on the floor, if possible.

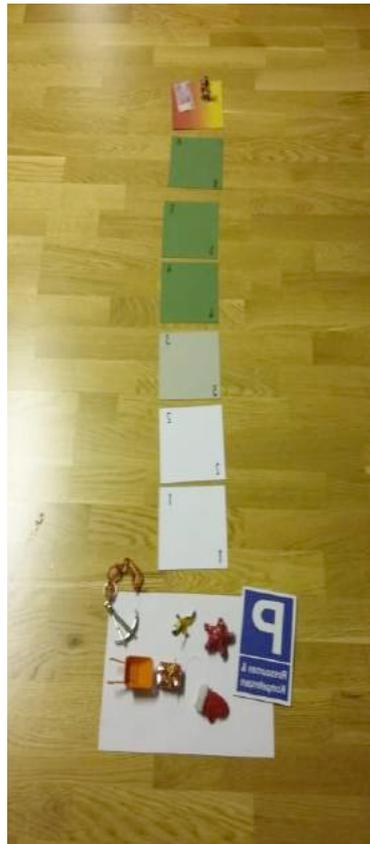
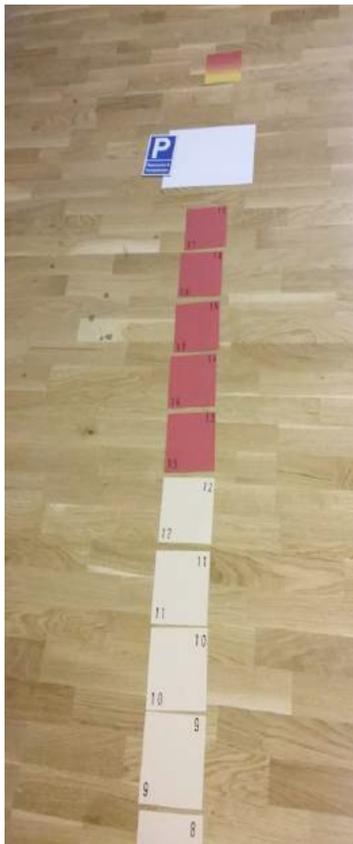


Figure 6: Resource-/Competence Pathway and Planning Pathway

### *f) Counselling session*

#### 1. Presentation

The client presents the heading/ topic of their presentation

They talk about what they have displayed. The client always states which symbol they are talking about. (e.g. "this hand stands for...")

The practitioner listens carefully to what is being told. They are aware of the client's presence. While the client is speaking, the practitioner observes their gestures, mimicry, posture, breathing, the pitch of their voice. Do they show emotions, do they touch a symbol, which one?

## **2. Factual questions**

The practitioner asks factual questions. These questions only refer to the symbols, to "what is visible". No "why"- or "how come"-questions are asked. This is not about interpretation but understanding only.

The client gives answers to the factual questions.

## **3. Perception**

The practitioner addresses the client directly. They describe everything they perceived and everything they observed while being told the story. If someone detects emotions, they should be able to explain how they were perceived. (Mimicry, gestures, pitch of the voice etc.)

The client listens attentively.

## **4. Interpretation**

The practitioner talks about the client. They are thinking aloud, asking questions like "What is the problem?", "What should be different?", "What would he want to solve/understand/do?", "Where could be difficulties? Where would there not be difficulties?"

The client listens attentively and does not respond for now.

## **5. Agreement on actions**

When the practitioner is finished "thinking aloud", the client talks about their thoughts regarding the considerations of the practitioner.

What is true from their point of view? What is not? Where are their insecurities? Are there doubts? What do they like to hear? What do they not like to hear? What is especially important among the things said? Where would they like to begin?

This phase leads into a discussion between client and practitioner about the support needed and further steps for the client to reach their goal. At the end, the client should be committed to agreed actions.

### *g) Filing Action plan*

The practitioner can address the action agreement through the action plan. Together, the client and practitioner can review what strengths or barriers each area presents in relation to their goal and create a complete action plan based on this.

The action plan allows the client and the practitioner to correctly identify the level of intervention that is required after the basic clearing assessment. Relying on their professional training, practitioners can review

the action plan and establish what category of support is required for the client moving forward; information, guidance or holistic support. A template of the action plan is available with this document.

The basic clearing model can be carried out on a one to one basis or in a group setting. The group setting can allow for extra interpretation and feedback from group members for the client. This can be enlightening for some young mothers and provide additional insight and support. Some young mothers however may find this uncomfortable and are more suited to the one to one interaction. The practitioner should use their knowledge and training to decide which setting suits a client's needs best.

#### *h) SymfoS Peer Buddy Framework*

The methodologies for a Peer Buddy system developed within the SymfoS project are aiming at utilising the strong support that can be gained within a peer relationship to strengthen the link to employment and training pathways for young people. In any walk of life, one's peers have the capability of providing insight and support that those removed from your inner circle may be unable to offer. Peers provide links to other networks and community supports that professionals will not always have access to. This type of informal networking can supplement the traditional professional guidance services that young people access, creating an increasingly holistic approach to professional networking.

The SymfoS Peer Buddy Framework incorporates elements of group and individual peer coaching, building on a curriculum of counselling scenarios; basic clearing, planning road map, life road map, exploring the island of emotions and exploration of inner images. Any peer group requires trust and openness in order to support one another. The SymfoS Peer Buddy Framework is designed to occur after a group of young people have been guided through the full SymfoS curriculum as a group. This time together will allow the group to bond and grow trustful of one another, garnering the bond required for trusted peer support.

The Peer Buddy Framework seeks to provide group members with support to complete their training or employment action plans developed throughout the SymfoS model. The methodologies developed a practical step in the guidance process using a more holistic approach of peer support, in keeping with the SymfoS ethos. The elements of best practice to facilitate this are outlined below:

- **Common feature should unite the group:** peer buddy systems allow a range of young people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences to come together to support one another with their goals. Indeed, the success of many groups relies on this diversity as young people learn about different experiences from their peers. However, in order for the group to have some sense of coherence there should be a common theme which the peers focus on e.g. employment prospects. This allows

the peers to have a focus while also creating safe boundaries of what areas they are expected to support one another with.

- **Support from a practitioner should always be available:** while young people are a great support to one another through peer buddy systems, it has to be recognised that professional support may be needed at times. Guidelines should be established with the peer group about the availability of practitioners to support their peer interactions but also when it is essential for them to revert back to the practitioner e.g. if there are issues of potential danger.
- **Group contract:** a group contract should be created within the peer buddy group to ensure confidentiality and respect. This also encourages the young people to take responsibility for their own experience. This process should enable the young people to engage and express what they want to achieve from the process and also put boundaries and safety structures in place. A practitioner should be on hand to ensure this is appropriate and manageable.
- **Network building:** a key element of peer buddy support is allowing the young people to extend their social network through interaction with a diverse group of peers. The young people should be facilitated to meet as many young people through this process to increase this network building. This can be done through group work or rotating of buddies. There may also be ways that organisations find more feasible for them to do this. It is important to provide space for the young people to reflect on this and document their learnings.
- **Motivation and confidence building:** one of the key advantages of peer buddy systems is the ability of peers to promote confidence and motivation in one another. Peer buddies should be facilitated to meet with each other or share their positive experiences. This exchange allows young people to see their peers achieve goals and builds their confidence that it is possible to also reach similar goals. Peers can support each other and this can create a positive motivation to follow through on their goals.
- **Reflection on learning:** peer buddy groups should be facilitated to reflect on their learnings from the peer buddy process used by an organisation. This can be done through group feedback or reflection sessions. Equally it can be done through a learning journal or log. Allowing the young people to discuss how they wish to record or acknowledge their learning from the peer buddy system during the development of the group contract can allow more ownership of this process for the young people.

- **Young people should take as much control of the group as possible:** it is key to remember that this process should be peer led. The practitioner has a role to guide the young people through the process but at all times should be a secondary role within the interactions. The young people should be encouraged to take as much responsibility for the process as they can as this engagement is where the learning and extending of social networks through peer buddies occurs.

### 3. Training modules

#### 3.1. Schedule Overview

##### Day 1 – Building the BYMBE Group 7 Units à 50 min - 9 am – 5 pm

Nr.	Duration	Topic	Exercise Name/Method
1	20 min	Welcome, Orientation	BYMBE Welcome
2	20 min	Introduction of Participants	Choose a symbol
3	40 min	Get to know the group	Sociogram five levels
4	20 min	Feedback of positive impressions	Shower of positive impressions
5	60 min	Getting to know each other in the group Learning as group dynamic process How to approach a problem Who takes which role Make strengths visible	The Flying Egg
6	15 min	To energize after lunch break and to learn how to work in a team	The Carpet Exercise
7	60 min	Reflect about stereotypes, the picture of the mother role in our society and own desires and wishes	To be a Mother
8	60 min	To get to know more about their actual situation and to learn from each other how to manage situations	Challenges & Chances as a Young Mother
9	35 min	By creating a motto from the group, they have something to remember or what carries them during the project	BYMBE Team Motto
10	20 min	Reflection of the day	My Symbol at the End of the Day

##### Day 2 – Professional Orientation of the BYMBE Group 7 Units - 9 am – 5 pm

Nr.	Duration	Topic	Exercise Name/Method
11	20 min	Welcome to the second day, Orientation	BYMBE Check up
12	30 min	Participants shall receive a short overview about work with symbols and how it works	Introduction of the SymfoS Methodology
13	45 min	First SymfoS session with one participant as client and	Competences Roadmap or Basic Clearing depends on participant

		three as observers	
13	45 min	Second SymfoS session with one participant as client and three as observers	Competences Roadmap or Basic Clearing depends on participant
13	45 min	Third SymfoS session with one participant as client and three as observers process	Competences Roadmap or Basic Clearing depends on participant
14	15 min	Activity after lunch break	Zip-Zap
13	45 min	Forth SymfoS session with one participant as client and three as observers process	Competences Roadmap or Basic Clearing depends on participant
13	45 min	Fifth SymfoS session with one participant as client and three as observers process	Competences Roadmap or Basic Clearing depends on participant
13	45 min	Sixth SymfoS session with one participant as client and three as observers process	Competences Roadmap or Basic Clearing depends on participant
15	15 min	Results of the day – agreements – next steps	This Day in a Nutshell

### Day 3 – Professional Orientation / Goal Setting of the BYMBE Group 7 Units à 50 min - 9 am – 5 pm

Nr.	Duration	Topic	Exercise Name/Method
16	20 min	Welcome to the third day, Orientation, schedule Open questions	BYMBE Learning Diary
17	60 min	To boost the ressources of each woman in the group	Backpacking
18	30 min	1 <sup>st</sup> Planning of next steps to do after the orientation from day 2	Planning Roadmap
18	30 min	2 <sup>nd</sup> Planning of next steps to do after the orientation from day 2	Planning Roadmap
18	30 min	2 <sup>nd</sup> Planning of next steps to do after the orientation from day 2	Planning Roadmap
19	15 min	Warm up and group support	Ice Flows Game
18	30 min	3 <sup>rd</sup> Planning of next steps to do after the orientation from day 2	Planning Roadmap
18	30 min	4 <sup>th</sup> Planning of next steps to do after the orientation from day 2	Planning Roadmap
18	30 min	5 <sup>th</sup> Planning of next steps to do after the orientation from day 2	Planning Roadmap
18	30 min	6 <sup>th</sup> Planning of next steps to do after the orientation from	Planning Roadmap

		day 2	
20	45 min	Goodbye (for IO4 group trainings) and looking forward individual counselling sessions	BYMBE Farewell

### 3.1. Training units description in detail

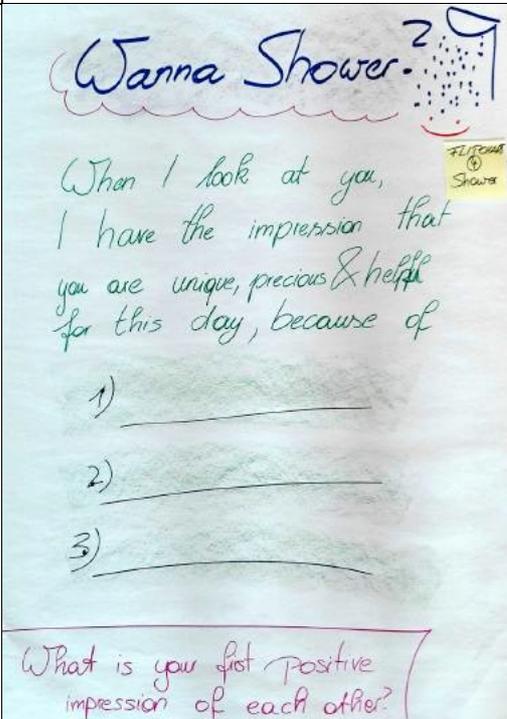
<b>Nr:</b>	<b>1</b>
Exercise Name	BYMBE Welcome
Specific objectives	Welcome to the training Provision of Information about the training structure and timetable
Duration	20 minutes
Material/room	Materials: Flipchart 1: Welcome Flipchart 2: Agenda Setting: Comfortable room, no tables, chairs in a circle,
Nr of participants	All
Description	Welcome participants, Give an overview of the day, provide organisational information if needed
Methodological advice	let them feel comfortable
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further material

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>2</b>
Exercise Name	Choose a Symbol
Specific objectives	Participants shall give a short introduction of themselves
Duration	20 min
Material/room	But different kinds of Symbols in the middle of the room on the floor
Nr of participants	all
Description	Participants choose a symbol and present themselves by this symbol and explain why they have chosen it.
Methodological advice	Use the symbols from the symbol work. This exercise already serves to get in touch with the symbol work in the later part of the training, at the same time it

	<p>serves as an icebreaker as they can talk via the mean of the symbol and can talk about that what they want to present us.</p>
Variations	-
Country specific adaption	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>3</b>
Exercise Name	Sociogram on five levels
Specific objectives	Get to know the group and show them their similarities, but also differences in a playful way
Duration	40 min
Material/room	Prepare a map of the country and stickers,
Nr of participants	all
Description	<p>Sociogram on Five levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Where are you living – let them put a sticker with their name on the map where they are living</li> <li>2. Name and Age of the child/children – let them add the name of their child and the age on the sticker</li> <li>3. favourite colour – let them stand together those with the same colour</li> <li>4. favourite hobby – let them walk around and ask who has similar hobbies</li> <li>5. favourite music – let them guess what the other person may like – and then answer</li> </ol>
Methodological advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Knowing where they are living they already identify who is next to them;</li> <li>2. Putting the name and the age of their child shows that they are one unit and lets them identify who as children of about the same age</li> <li>3. just a short question to answer to warm up with personal interests and building smaller groups</li> <li>4. this already needs them to walk around and communicate with each other to find out</li> <li>5. This requires them to assume something about the others and check if their assumption is right or not. So, they start getting more and more in touch</li> </ol>
Variations	You can also ask other questions if they seem more appropriate to you
Country specific adaption	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>4</b>
Exercise Name	Shower of Positive Impressions
Specific objectives	Get to know each other with a first positive impression
Duration	20 min
Material/room	Enough space in the room to walk around

Nr of participants	all
Description	Let them stand up and show them the flipchart. Task: Walk around in the room and find another person (always 2) and first just look at the person (eye contact is important at the beginning), then they say their first positive impressions of each other (best would be to name 3 things, which they think that's good about the other, i.ex. „When I look at you, I have the impression you are very helpful for this day because you seem to be funny, say what you think, have a nice smile ....). No need to think too much, just simply the first impression. Important is that you as a trainer also participate at this activity so you can get in contact with the participants. When two people are finished, then change and every one should do this with every one in the group
Methodological advice	Do a short reflection after the exercise how they felt during this exercise
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	 <p>Wanna Shower?</p> <p>When I look at you, I have the impression that you are unique, precious &amp; helpful for this day, because of</p> <p>1) _____</p> <p>2) _____</p> <p>3) _____</p> <p>What is your first positive impression of each other?</p>

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>5</b>
Exercise Name	The Flying Egg
Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting to know each other in the group</li> <li>• Learning as group dynamic process</li> <li>• How to come together to a problem</li> <li>• Who takes which role? Make strengths visible</li> </ul>
Duration	60 min
Material/room	Every group gets: 1 raw egg, 1 sizzle, 10 sheets of paper, 1 tape. You need to have access to a balcony or a safe construction where you can throw the construction with the egg down
Nr of participants	All, divide the group into 2-3 subgroups and in addition two observers.
Description	Every group has to wrap and pack the egg in such a way that the egg will be

	still raw when it is thrown from the first floor of the building, which means the group has to be creative and find a packing where the egg will not be destroyed. The observers have the task to observe silently how the group dynamic is going, who is having the lead, who is the helping hand and so on, ... One of each group goes up to the window of the first floor of the building and throws the egg to the floor. The rest of the group is waiting downstairs. Finally, the package will be unwrapped and it will be checked if the egg survived. The observers give the group constructive feedback (who had which strength to solve the problem)
Methodological advice	Instruction 15 min Exercise 30 minutes Final Check 5 min Feedback of the observers – 10 min
Variations	If you do not have the possibility to let the egg fall down you can let them do a construction of a certain height on a table which at the end should carry a certain weight – either a raw egg or something else; the important part is the observation of their cooperation styles and solutions.
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

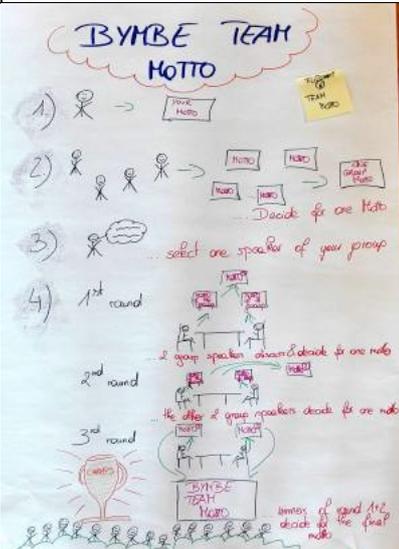
<b>Nr:</b>	<b>6</b>
Exercise Name	The Carpet Exercise
Specific objectives	To energize after lunch break and to learn how to work in a team
Duration	15 min
Material/room	One carpet in the middle of the room
Nr of participants	all
Description	Put one carpet in the middle of the room, invite all of them to stand on the carpet. Task: They have to turn the carpet. Rules: No one is allowed to touch the floor or use any things for help. Aim: Develop skills to use the group as a resource and group dynamics as a strength
Methodological advice	
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>7</b>
Exercise Name	To be a Mother

Specific objectives	Reflect about stereotypes, the picture of the mother role in our society and get aware of own desires and wishes and in a further step be able to realise them
Duration	60 min
Material/room	Flipchart template
Nr of participants	All divided in groups of 4 participants
Description	Ask the participants first to reflect about what a good mother is and let them write their answers on cards, then ask them to present their cards on the board and put similar cards together. Then divide the participants in groups to 4 people and ask them to discuss in those groups what of those statements on the cards are stereotypes, what are expectations by our society and what they think is really important for a child and why. Collect these points on the board again. Then ask them which one they would choose for them personally if they have a limited choice of three, which ones seem to be the most important.
Methodological advice	Clarify the expressions stereotypes and expectations of our society so that everybody is aware of it. Presentation of the cards 15 min Discussion in small groups 25 min Presentation of the findings of the group (only the point important for the child) 10 min Own selection 10 min – this point shall make clear that you cannot always satisfy everyone. You have to concentrate on the most important.
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>8</b>
Exercise Name	Challenges & Chances as a Young Mother
Specific objectives	To be aware of the situation as a young mother and to learn from each other how to manage situations
Duration	60 min
Material/room	Space for the 3 subgroups working, flipchart paper and markers
Nr of participants	All – divide them into 3 subgroups,
Description	Every subgroup should work out the questions -what are the challenges of being a young mother, -what could be possible challenges during BYMBE project and -what could help to overcome these challenges. They shall use flipcharts for the presentation
Methodological advice	Please provide them the three questions on a flipchart or board so that the structure is clear to everybody. Instruction 5 min Exercise 40 minutes

		Every group has around 5 minutes to present their answers / results in the big group
Variations		-
Country adaptations	specific	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further	-

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>9</b>	
Exercise Name	BYMBE Team Motto	
Specific objectives	By creating a motto from the group, they have something to remember or what carries them during the project	
Duration	35 min	
Material/room	Cards	
Nr of participants	all	
Description	<p>Every woman gets a card to write a name, slogan, symbol, ...which she thinks suits best for the project and the group.</p> <p>Group of 3-4: Discuss and decide for one card. Every group nominates a speaker who represents them in the final round.</p> <p>Group speakers (has to be 3 or 4, depending on the number of groups) have a duel based on an exclusion principle to decide for one motto for the whole group in the final round.</p>	
Methodological advice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Individual selection (10 min.)</li> <li>2.. Small groups (15 min.)</li> <li>3. Final round (15 min.)</li> <li>4. Recheck (5 min)</li> </ol>	
Variations	You can also let each participant chose a symbol which is suitable for the group and then let them negotiate which one suits for all	
Country adaptations	specific	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further	

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>10</b>
Exercise Name	My Symbol at the end of the day
Specific objectives	Reflection of the day and the effect on themselves
Duration	20 min
Material/room	Symbols
Nr of participants	all
Description	<p>Put again the symbols in the middle of the floor and let them select a symbol which represents them and their state of mind now at the end of the day</p> <p>Presentation to the group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. why they chose this symbol</li> <li>ii. what changed during the day compared to their first symbol</li> <li>iii. how they liked the day</li> <li>iv. what they take home</li> </ol> <p>As a memory of the day they can take their symbol home and ask them to bring it to the next session.</p>
Methodological advice	Ensure to have enough inspiring symbols ;-)
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further material

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>11</b>
Exercise Name	BYMBE Check up
Specific objectives	Call back memories from last day and report what happened in between training days, what they expect of today Trainer present programme of the day
Duration	20 min
Material/room	Participants bring their symbols from last day, comfortable room, no tables Flipchart with the schedule of the day
Nr of participants	all
Description	<p>Each participant presents the symbol she selected last training day and repeats the reason why. Then tells how she feels today and what happened between the training days related to BYMBE project</p> <p>The Trainer presents the working schedule of the day</p>
Methodological advice	
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further material

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>12</b>
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Exercise Name	Introduction of the SymfoS Methodology
Specific objectives	Participants shall give a short overview about work with symbols
Duration	30 min
Material/room	Materials for SymfoS to present, Flipcharts or handouts for working steps of the interventions
Nr of participants	all
Description	<p>Introduction of the methodology, how it works, our experiences and why we are working with this method in this project. Especially the peer buddy system will empower them as a group and implement a support within the group which should help to get them through the whole project. SymfoS methodology also helps a lot as it is a tool strengthening the self-responsibility, motivation and activation of the client.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- roles of participants and their tasks</li> <li>- how works the peer buddy support</li> <li>- rules for participants regarding respect and communication</li> </ul> <p>2 different scenarios we use for professional orientation for BYMBE</p>
Methodological advice	
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>13</b>
Exercise Name	Competences Roadmap or Basic clearing
Specific objectives	Orientation intervention for 1 participants with peer support To find out her professional goal – do agreements for next steps to report effort to the counsellor or to fulfil with the counsellor in the individual sessions
Duration	45 min
Material/room	Materials for interventions, cushions, comfortable place on the floor
Nr of participants	All – let the group divide in two as they like and do similar sessions with each smaller group
Description	One young mother will participate as a client – the Trainer will do the counselling (assure that the trainer has counselling experience and that he is trained in the SymfoS method and three young mothers participate as observers. Whilst the client prepares her scenario, the trainer will check with the observers their tasks.
Methodological advice	See in the theoretical part of this guide the explanation of the methodology Encourage the participants to take photos of their intervention in order to remember for the follow up. Even to take note of important things after the intervention.
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

material	
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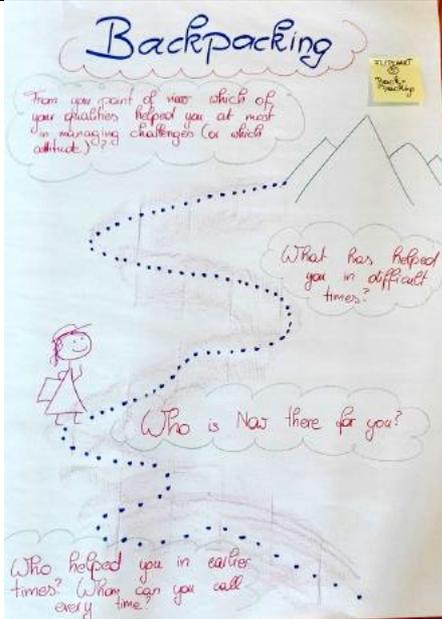
<b>Nr:</b>	<b>14</b>
Exercise Name	Zip Zap
Specific objectives	Warm up after lunch break – fostering concentration
Duration	15 min
Material/room	Enough place to stand in a circle
Nr of participants	all
Description	Participants are sending flashes in the circle from one to the other by putting their hands together and showing in a certain direction. “Zip” goes to the left. “Zap” to the right. With “Pop” you can cross the circle to the other side (important to look at the person you mean!). You should not mix up the expressions otherwise you are out. And you should remember who is out in order not to address them. If you put your hands up saying “poing” you can refuse to accept a “Pop” and the person gets it back and has to send to somebody else.
Methodological advice	First try it out the easy way with “Zip” “Zap” only then add more difficult levels.
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, Videos, further material	

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>15</b>
Exercise Name	This day in a nutshell
Specific objectives	Evaluation of the results of the day, reminder on the agreements in front of the group, reassure mutual support
Duration	15 min
Material/room	-
Nr of participants	all
Description	Everybody is asked to give Feedback on the day with 4 words and feedback to the support of the group in one sentence

Methodological advice	
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>16</b>
Exercise Name	BYMBE Learning Diary
Specific objectives	Follow up of the results of the day, reminder on the agreements in front of the group, reassure mutual support
Duration	15 min
Material/room	BYMBE Learning Diary
Nr of participants	all
Description	Introduce the “BYMBE” Learning Diary and ask the participants to take note of the agreements of the 2nd training day in there. Everybody remembers? Do a short check and then explain how you will work on these agreements on this day.
Methodological advice	
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>17</b>
Exercise Name	Backpacking
Specific objectives	To make resources visible another time after day 2
Duration	45 min
Material/room	Symbols and small bags for each participant
Nr of participants	all
Description	<p>But the symbols in the middle of the floor. Every participant is given a small bag in which she is asked to put up to 5 symbols. The symbols shall stand for own resources, support who helps her to handle the upcoming challenges within the next months.</p> <p>Helpful Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who is there for you NOW?</li> <li>2. Who helped you in earlier times? Who would be possible to call every time in case you need someone?</li> <li>3. What has helped you in difficult times?</li> <li>4. From your point of view which qualities do you think helped you at most in managing challenges or which attitude?</li> </ol> <p>All of them shall have the opportunity to explain their symbols and tell their</p>

		story. Encourage the participants to take a photo of “their” support system.
Methodological advice		Let people enough time to think over and do the choice of the symbols.
Variations		-
Country adaptations	specific	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further	 <p>The poster is titled "Backpacking" in a decorative font. It features a central winding path of blue dots that starts from a small figure of a person at the bottom left and moves upwards and to the right, ending near a mountain range. Several thought bubbles are placed along the path, containing the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Top bubble: "From your point of view which of your qualities helped you at most in managing challenges (or which attitude)?"</li> <li>Middle bubble: "What has helped you in difficult times?"</li> <li>Bottom bubble: "Who is Now there for you?"</li> <li>Bottom-most bubble: "Who helped you in earlier times? Whom can you call every time?"</li> </ul> <p>There is a small yellow sticky note in the top right corner with the text "STUDENT Backpacking".</p>

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>18</b>
Exercise Name	Planning Road Map
Specific objectives	Follow up of the results of the day, reminder on the agreements in front of the group, reassure mutual support, prepare the steps to take within the individual sessions
Duration	30 min
Material/room	Symbols, road map cards; cushions, comfortable place on the floor
Nr of participants	All – go back to the 2 groups from training day 2
Description	Whilst the Resources Roadmap is looking on the past the planning road map is looking to the future and helps to put clear the next steps to do or to organise a weekly, monthly or yearly structure. Detailed description can be found in the theoretical part of this guide. Interventions shall be done along the needs of each participant
Methodological advice	Assure to engage the other members of the group as observers and peer support
Variations	-
Country adaptations	specific
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>19</b>
Exercise Name	Ice floes game

Specific objectives	Fostering group support
Duration	15 min
Material/room	ropes form the Ice floes
Nr of participants	all
Description	There are ice floes for each participant at the beginning with a different distance to the safe land. If you have a long enough rope there can be even two or three on one ice floe. But the ice floes are melting so everybody has to reach the safe land on one side of the room without falling from the ice floes or touching the ground. Somebody touching the ground has fallen into the sea and is out. An ice floe without participant is sinking and cannot be used anymore. (trainer has to put it away. The objective is that everybody reaches the safe land. Participants get three trials.
Methodological advice	The tricky thing is that they cannot reach the goal without thinking on supporting each other. Make this clear in a reflection after the game that this helps also in BYMBE project.
Variations	-
Country specific adaptations	-
Weblinks, Pictures, material	Videos, further material

<b>Nr:</b>	<b>20</b>
Exercise Name	Farewell rite
Specific objectives	Create a strong common picture of farewell to keep in memory
Duration	15 min
Material/room	Ask participants already at the end of training day to bring some nature materials next time. Does not matter if stones, leaves, flowers, whatever they think might be nice.
Nr of participants	all
Description	Put a frame in the middle of the room and ask the participants to create a common picture with all their materials
Methodological advice	
Variations	-

Country  
adaptions

specific



Weblinks,  
Pictures,  
material

Videos,  
further

## 4. Individual counselling sessions

After the 3 group training sessions there are 3 individual counselling sessions foreseen. These sessions aim at the arrangements of the next steps the young mother has to do and the support by the counsellor on these tasks:

- inform about different opportunities of education in the field the young mother is interested in,
  - the specific field should be already clear after the SymfoS intervention;
  - here you have to clarify next start of education, timetable, duration and all these practical things with the young mother
- support to choose the best suitable education for her in the field the young mother selected if there are more options
- inform about conditions regarding the chosen education
  - timetable,
  - distance
  - etc
- assist in the inscription of the education
- check costs
  - if there are for the training
  - and if there are inform about possible financial support
- assist in claiming for financial support for education (if there is)
- help to find suitable child care (if needed)
- assist in inscription of child care
- assist in claiming for financial support (if there is) for childcare

Basic information for the counsellor on country specific information can be found in the Handbook of IO1, the Report on National Education and Support Services for Young Mothers.



**BYMBE**  
Bringing Young Mothers back to education



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EXCHANGE HOUSE IRELAND  
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frauen im  
brennpunkt



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