



MERCURY

MERCURY

METHODOLOGICAL

GUIDE

Methodological guide for youth workers based on desk research of academic literature, entrepreneurship and employability frameworks, and drama therapy as well as a state-of-the-art analysis of young people's traumatic events influence on their entrepreneurial and employability potential



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MSK:

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INTRODUCTION

About the MERCURY project

Objectives

- To understand trauma relation to young people's entrepreneurship and employability potential in 4 partner countries.
- To develop an innovative methodological guide, toolkit, and recommendations to better equip youth workers.
- To support youth to move beyond trauma and increase their wellbeing, employability, and entrepreneurship.
- To contribute to the development of youth workers' competences in supporting young people.
- To contribute to a more innovative and well-functioning youth work system in EU.

Implementation

The activities include 1) creation of Methodological guide, covering analysis of post-traumatic growth theory, best drama practices, analysis of young people's trauma relation to entrepreneurship and employability in partner countries and the set of MERCURY's entrepreneurship skills 2) tool-kit of 25 drama therapy practices, including digital 3) recommendation for youth workers to support young people in the early stages of trauma and preserve their entrepreneurship and employability potential.

Results

During the project, 220 young people who have experienced traumatic events, 172 youth workers and around 15000 people online will be directly engaged. In addition to improved skills of involved young people, youth workers and project staff, it is expected that the partnership will present relation of trauma and young people' entrepreneurship and employability potential to countries outside the partnership, to inspire and replicate a positive cross-sectoral change at European level.

Definitions and explanations of terms for the project MERCURY

In the context of this project, it is important to clarify the definition of "trauma" as it relates to young people's experiences. While the term "trauma" is commonly associated with psychological trauma and its clinical implications, it is essential to establish a distinct understanding within the scope of this project.

For the purpose of this project, we define "trauma" as challenging or difficult experiences that young people may encounter throughout their lives. These experiences can include but are not limited to personal setbacks, socio-economic disadvantages, discrimination, loss, or significant life transitions. It is crucial to note that



this definition does not encompass the clinical or diagnostic understanding of trauma as it pertains to mental health conditions.

By adopting this definition, we aim to acknowledge and address the various obstacles and hardships that young people may face, which can impact their entrepreneurial and employability potential. Recognizing the potential influence of these challenging experiences allows us to develop a more comprehensive approach to supporting young individuals in their entrepreneurial endeavors and enhancing their employability skills.

Throughout this guide, we will explore how these difficult experiences can shape young people's perspectives, motivations, and abilities related to entrepreneurship and employability. By understanding and responding to the impact of these experiences, youth workers can provide targeted support, create inclusive environments, and offer tailored strategies to help young individuals overcome barriers and maximize their potential.

It is important to emphasize that this project's focus on trauma is not intended to diagnose or provide clinical interventions for mental health conditions. Instead, it seeks to create awareness, sensitivity, and responsiveness to the challenges faced by young people and their potential implications for their entrepreneurial and employability journeys.

By adopting this project-specific definition of trauma, we can ensure a clear and relevant framework for understanding and addressing the difficult experiences that young people may encounter, promoting their resilience, and supporting their entrepreneurial and employability growth.



PARTNERSHIP

Miejska Strefa Kultury w Łodzi Poland Łódź (Public Authority Body) – Coordinator

MSK is a public cultural centre co-financed by the Municipality of Łódź. The main aim of MSK is to respond to the arts and cultural needs of the local community in the area of non-formal and informal education. The mission of MSK is to educate adults and youth, propagate culture, and animate and integrate the local community.

Menas ir inovacijos (NGO) – Partner

ART+INN is a non-profit organisation, that unites enthusiastic and well-experienced professionals who believe in the great importance of ART and SCIENCE collaboration. The organisation's mission is to bring the world of art and the world of science together in order to create a prosperous and sustainable synergy of innovation, creativity, and mass entrepreneurship.

Beogradska akademija poslovnih i umetnickih strukovnih studija (HEI) – Partner

Belgrade Business and Arts Academy of Applied Studies (BAPUSS) is the first and leading accredited higher education institution in Serbia in the fields of information systems and technologies, finance, accounting, banking, tax and customs, public administration, management, marketing, arts, and design.

BAPUSS consists of 2 departments: the Department of Business and Information Studies and the Department of Arts and Design.

Ownership: Public, Established in 1956, Number of employees: 310, Number of students: 8.000.

LATERNA MAGICA (NGO) – Partner

LATERNA MAGICA was established to create demanding and unique cultural and educational projects in Hungary and abroad as well. Organisation has experience in EU-level project management and strong connection with Hungarian cultural and educational institutions and organizations. Established: 1998.



ABOUT THE MERCURY METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE

Purpose

The purpose of the MERCURY Methodological Guide is to provide youth workers with a comprehensive methodological framework for supporting young people affected by traumatic events in their entrepreneurial and employability journeys. It aims to integrate insights from academic literature, entrepreneurship and employability frameworks, drama therapy, and a state-of-the-art analysis of the influence of trauma on young people's potential. By following this guide, youth workers can gain a deeper understanding of trauma's impact and acquire practical tools and strategies to effectively support and empower trauma-affected youth in their pursuit of entrepreneurship and employability.

Scope

MERCURY Methodological Guide encompasses a multidisciplinary approach, drawing from desk research of academic literature, established entrepreneurship and employability frameworks, drama therapy principles, and a state-of-the-art analysis. It explores the intersection between trauma, entrepreneurship, employability, and drama therapy to provide a holistic perspective on addressing the unique needs and challenges faced by young individuals affected by traumatic events. The guide offers methodological recommendations for youth workers, highlighting trauma-informed approaches, the integration of drama therapy techniques, the creation of safe and inclusive spaces, and collaboration with relevant professionals. It also emphasizes the importance of ongoing evaluation and adaptation to ensure the effectiveness and impact of the interventions. Highlight the importance of addressing trauma and its impact on young people's entrepreneurial and employability potential.



RATIONALE FOR INTEGRATION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP, EMPLOYABILITY, AND DRAMA THERAPY APPROACHES

The rationale for integrating entrepreneurship, employability, and drama therapy approaches lies in the potential synergies and benefits that arise from their combination. Here are some key points to explain the rationale:

1. **Holistic Approach:** Entrepreneurship and employability focus on developing practical skills, knowledge, and competencies related to business, innovation, and career readiness. Drama therapy, on the other hand, leverages creative expression, role-play, and storytelling to address emotional, psychological, and interpersonal aspects. By integrating these approaches, we can provide a holistic support system that addresses both the practical and emotional needs of young individuals.
2. **Creative Expression and Exploration:** Drama therapy offers a unique avenue for young people to explore their emotions, experiences, and identities in a safe and supportive environment. It allows for creative expression, imagination, and the embodiment of different perspectives. By incorporating drama therapy within entrepreneurship and employability programs, young individuals can tap into their creativity, develop self-awareness, and gain insights that can enhance their entrepreneurial mindset and problem-solving abilities.
3. **Self-Confidence and Communication Skills:** Drama therapy techniques, such as role-play and improvisation, can boost self-confidence and communication skills. These skills are essential in entrepreneurship and employability, where effective communication, networking, and pitching ideas play a crucial role. Drama therapy provides a unique opportunity for young individuals to practice and refine their communication skills, build self-assurance, and develop a sense of presence and authenticity.
4. **Emotional Regulation and Resilience:** Traumatic experiences can impact emotional regulation and resilience. Drama therapy offers tools and techniques to explore and manage emotions, develop coping strategies, and build resilience. By integrating drama therapy within entrepreneurship and employability programs, young individuals can develop emotional intelligence, enhance their ability to adapt to challenges, and build the resilience necessary to navigate the ups and downs of entrepreneurial and work environments.
5. **Empathy and Interpersonal Skills:** Drama therapy fosters empathy, understanding, and the ability to perceive and connect with others' emotions and perspectives. These interpersonal skills are valuable in entrepreneurship



and employability, as they contribute to effective teamwork, leadership, customer relations, and negotiation. By incorporating drama therapy, young individuals can enhance their empathetic skills, cultivate positive relationships, and develop a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives.

6. **Trauma-Informed Approach:** Drama therapy provides a trauma-informed approach to addressing trauma-related challenges and supporting healing. By integrating drama therapy within entrepreneurship and employability programs, we create a safe and supportive environment that considers the specific needs and triggers of trauma-affected youth. This trauma-informed approach ensures that individuals feel respected, validated, and supported as they explore their entrepreneurial and employability potential.
7. **Personal Growth and Self-Reflection:** Drama therapy offers opportunities for personal growth, self-reflection, and the exploration of one's strengths, aspirations, and values. By incorporating drama therapy into entrepreneurship and employability programs, young individuals can engage in introspection, identify their passions, clarify their goals, and align their entrepreneurial or career paths with their personal values and sense of purpose.



LITERATURE REVIEW

a) Trauma and its Impact on Youth

Numerous studies have highlighted the detrimental effects of trauma on the psychological well-being of young individuals (Briere & Scott, 2015; Copeland et al., 2007). Trauma can lead to symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and PTSD, which may hinder their entrepreneurial and employability potential.

Research has shown that trauma can create barriers to success in entrepreneurship and employment by affecting self-esteem, trust, communication, and coping mechanisms (Hammen et al., 2012; Mersky & Topitzes, 2010).

Traumatic experiences during youth can have long-lasting effects on cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects, impacting the development of skills and competencies necessary for entrepreneurial and employability success (Pynoos et al., 2015; Waddell et al., 2006).

b) Youth Entrepreneurship and Employability

Entrepreneurship and employability frameworks emphasize the acquisition of skills and competencies such as problem-solving, creativity, communication, and adaptability (European Commission, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2020). These skills are crucial for entrepreneurial and employment success.

Research has shown that entrepreneurship and employability programs can enhance self-efficacy, motivation, and career readiness among young individuals (Lackeus, 2015; Neck et al., 2014).

However, little attention has been given to the impact of trauma on the development of these skills and competencies, highlighting the need for trauma-informed approaches within entrepreneurship and employability programs.

c) Drama Therapy and its Benefits

Drama therapy, a creative and experiential approach, has been found to be effective in addressing trauma-related challenges and promoting well-being (Emunah, 2017; Johnson, 2012).

Studies have shown that drama therapy techniques, such as role-play, improvisation, and storytelling, can improve self-expression, communication skills, emotional regulation, and empathy (Baim et al., 2015; Landy, 2015).

Drama therapy provides a safe and supportive environment for young individuals to explore their emotions, build resilience, and enhance self-confidence, which are valuable assets in entrepreneurship and employability.

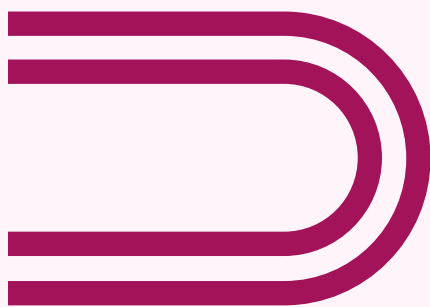


d) Trauma-Informed Approaches and Drama Therapy Integration

Trauma-informed approaches emphasize safety, trust, collaboration, and empowerment in working with trauma-affected individuals (Harris & Fallot, 2001; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014).

Integrating drama therapy within trauma-informed entrepreneurship and employability programs can provide a holistic support system that addresses the emotional, psychological, and practical needs of young individuals affected by trauma.

Limited research exists on the integration of drama therapy within entrepreneurship and employability contexts specifically. However, the principles and benefits of drama therapy make it a promising approach for enhancing the trauma-informed nature of these programs.



THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN TRAUMA, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND EMPLOYABILITY

The intersection between trauma, entrepreneurship, and employability is an important area of study, as traumatic events can significantly influence young people's potential and aspirations in these domains.

Understanding the intersection between trauma, entrepreneurship, and employability highlights the need for trauma-informed approaches in supporting young individuals affected by trauma. It emphasizes the importance of addressing mental health and well-being, building resilience, and providing tailored support and resources to help young people overcome the barriers posed by traumatic experiences. By integrating trauma-informed practices within entrepreneurship and employability programs, we can create environments that foster healing, empowerment, and the realization of young people's potential in these areas.

Here's an analysis of how traumatic events can impact young people's entrepreneurial and employability potential:

Impact on Psychological Well-being

Traumatic events can have profound effects on the psychological well-being of young individuals. Experiences such as abuse, violence, or loss can lead to symptoms of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These mental health challenges can affect self-esteem, confidence, and motivation, which are essential for pursuing entrepreneurial endeavors and establishing successful employment pathways.

Impaired Self-Efficacy and Risk Perception

Trauma can erode an individual's self-efficacy, which refers to the belief in one's own ability to accomplish tasks and achieve goals. Young people who have experienced trauma may doubt their competence, hesitate to take risks, and feel a heightened sense of vulnerability. This diminished self-efficacy can limit their willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities or pursue employment opportunities.

Trust and Interpersonal Relationships

Traumatic events can disrupt a young person's ability to trust others and establish healthy interpersonal relationships. Entrepreneurship and employability often require collaboration, networking, and building relationships with mentors, partners, and clients. However, individuals with a history of trauma may struggle to develop and maintain trust, hindering their ability to form vital connections in the business or employment world.



Communication and Social Skills

Effective communication and social skills are essential for entrepreneurial success and employability. Traumatic events can impact a young person's ability to express themselves, articulate their ideas, and engage in meaningful interactions. Difficulties in communication and social skills can impede networking, pitching business ideas, or performing well in job interviews.

Coping Mechanisms and Resilience

Trauma can disrupt the development of healthy coping mechanisms and resilience. Young people who have experienced traumatic events may struggle with emotional regulation, stress management, and adapting to new challenges. These skills are crucial for entrepreneurship and employability, as both domains involve navigating uncertainties, setbacks, and high-pressure situations.

Educational and Career Disruptions

Traumatic experiences can disrupt a young person's educational and career trajectories. It may lead to educational gaps, interrupted schooling, or difficulties in obtaining qualifications and skills necessary for entrepreneurial or employment success. The long-term consequences of trauma on educational attainment and career advancement can limit opportunities and hinder aspirations.



TRAUMA AND ITS MANIFESTATIONS

Trauma is a complex and deeply distressing experience that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope. It can occur because of a single event or a series of events and can have profound and lasting effects on a person's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being.

Definition of Trauma: Trauma can be defined as an event or a series of events that are deeply disturbing, distressing, or life-threatening. It goes beyond a person's normal capacity to handle the situation, resulting in feelings of helplessness, fear, and a loss of control. Traumatic events can include physical or sexual abuse, natural disasters, accidents, combat, witnessing violence, or the sudden death of a loved one.

Psychological Manifestations: Trauma can lead to a range of psychological manifestations, including:

- a. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): PTSD is a specific psychological disorder that can develop after experiencing a traumatic event. It is characterized by symptoms such as intrusive thoughts, flashbacks, nightmares, hypervigilance, avoidance of triggers, and emotional distress.
- b. Anxiety and Panic Disorders: Trauma can trigger chronic anxiety and panic disorders, leading to excessive worrying, fear, and recurrent panic attacks.
- c. Depression: Traumatic experiences can contribute to the development of depression, characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a loss of interest in activities.
- d. Dissociation: Dissociation is a coping mechanism in which individuals disconnect from their thoughts, feelings, memories, or sense of identity as a response to trauma. It can involve feelings of detachment, amnesia, or a sense of being outside one's body.

Physical Manifestations: Trauma can also have physical manifestations, such as:

- a. Physical Pain and Tension: Traumatic experiences can contribute to physical pain, muscle tension, headaches, and other psychosomatic symptoms.
- b. Sleep Disturbances: Trauma often disrupts sleep patterns, leading to insomnia, nightmares, and difficulty falling or staying asleep.



c. **Impact on Physical Health:** Chronic trauma can have adverse effects on physical health, contributing to conditions such as cardiovascular disease, gastrointestinal issues, immune system dysregulation, and a weakened overall immune response.

Behavioural Manifestations: Trauma can impact an individual's behaviour and functioning in various ways, including:

a. **Avoidance:** Trauma survivors may actively avoid situations, people, or places that remind them of the traumatic event to reduce distress and anxiety.

b. **Hyperarousal:** Individuals who have experienced trauma may display heightened levels of arousal, including hypervigilance, irritability, difficulty concentrating, and an exaggerated startle response.

c. **Self-Destructive Behaviours:** Some trauma survivors may engage in self-destructive behaviours such as substance abuse, self-harm, or risky behaviours as a way to cope with their distress.

d. **Social Withdrawal:** Trauma can lead to social withdrawal and difficulties in establishing and maintaining healthy relationships. Trust issues, fear of vulnerability, and feelings of isolation are common among trauma survivors.

Understanding the various manifestations of trauma is crucial in recognizing and addressing the needs of individuals who have experienced traumatic events. It highlights the importance of providing trauma-informed care, psychological support, and evidence-based interventions to promote healing, resilience, and recovery.



POTENTIAL BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES THAT TRAUMA SURVIVORS MAY FACE IN PURSUING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EMPLOYABILITY OPPORTUNITIES

Trauma survivors may face several barriers and challenges when it comes to pursuing entrepreneurship and employability opportunities. These challenges can stem from the psychological, emotional, and practical effects of trauma. Here are some potential barriers and challenges that trauma survivors may encounter:

Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem: Trauma can significantly impact a person's self-confidence and self-esteem. Trauma survivors may struggle with feelings of worthlessness, self-doubt, and a lack of belief in their abilities. This can hinder their motivation to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors or seek employment opportunities.

Trust and Relationships: Trauma often affects an individual's ability to trust others. Trauma survivors may find it challenging to build and maintain relationships, which can be crucial in networking, collaborating, and accessing resources for entrepreneurship or employment.

Fear of Failure and Rejection: Traumatic experiences can instill a fear of failure and rejection in individuals. The fear of experiencing further trauma or being judged by others can hold trauma survivors back from taking risks, seeking opportunities, and putting themselves out there in the entrepreneurial or employment context.

Emotional Triggers and Stress: Trauma can make individuals more susceptible to emotional triggers, which can lead to heightened stress and anxiety. The demands and uncertainties associated with entrepreneurship or employment can be triggering and overwhelming for trauma survivors, affecting their ability to cope effectively.

Flashbacks and Dissociation: Trauma survivors may experience flashbacks or dissociation, which can disrupt their focus, concentration, and overall ability to perform tasks required for entrepreneurship or employment. These symptoms can interfere with productivity, decision-making, and problem-solving.

Limited Resources and Support: Trauma survivors may face challenges related to limited financial resources, access to education or training, and supportive networks. Lack of resources can impede their ability to pursue entrepreneurial ventures or secure stable employment.

Reintegration into Society: Trauma can cause individuals to withdraw from social activities and isolate themselves. Reintegrating into society and engaging in



professional settings may pose challenges for trauma survivors as they navigate social interactions, workplace dynamics, and societal expectations.

Trauma Triggers in Work Environments: Certain work environments or job requirements may inadvertently trigger trauma-related symptoms for survivors. This could include high-pressure environments, confrontational situations, or exposure to stimuli reminiscent of their traumatic experiences.

Addressing these barriers and challenges requires a trauma-informed approach that recognizes the unique needs of trauma survivors. Providing support, resources, and tailored interventions can help trauma survivors build resilience, enhance their self-confidence, develop coping strategies, and navigate the entrepreneurial and employment landscape successfully. Creating inclusive and supportive work environments that prioritize psychological safety and provide accommodations for trauma survivors can also contribute to their empowerment and success.



EXISTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EMPLOYABILITY FRAMEWORKS

Established frameworks and models related to youth entrepreneurship and employability:

Several established frameworks and models related to youth entrepreneurship and employability have been developed to guide and support young people in their entrepreneurial and career journeys. Here is a review of some prominent frameworks and models:

The Entrepreneurial Mindset:

The Entrepreneurial Mindset Framework: This framework emphasizes the development of entrepreneurial competencies and attitudes such as creativity, risk-taking, opportunity recognition, resilience, and problem-solving skills. It focuses on fostering an entrepreneurial mindset in young individuals, regardless of their specific career path.

The Business Model Canvas:

Business Model Canvas: The Business Model Canvas is a widely used tool for developing and analyzing business models. It provides a visual framework to understand key elements such as customer segments, value propositions, channels, customer relationships, revenue streams, key activities, key resources, key partners, and cost structure. It helps young entrepreneurs design and refine their business models.

The Social Entrepreneurship Model:

Social Entrepreneurship Model: This model focuses on addressing social and environmental challenges while creating sustainable business ventures. It emphasizes the integration of social impact, innovation, and financial viability. It guides young entrepreneurs in developing business ideas and strategies that create positive social change.

The Lean Startup Approach:

Lean Startup Methodology: The Lean Startup approach promotes a build-measure-learn iterative process for launching new ventures. It emphasizes rapid experimentation, customer feedback, and continuous improvement. It encourages young entrepreneurs to validate their assumptions and adapt their business models based on market feedback.

The Employability Skills Framework:



Employability Skills Framework: This framework outlines the key skills, knowledge, and attitudes that enhance an individual's employability. It includes areas such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking, adaptability, and digital literacy. It helps young people develop the skills necessary to succeed in the job market.

The Career Development Model:

Career Development Model: This model focuses on guiding young individuals through the process of career exploration, planning, and development. It emphasizes self-assessment, goal setting, acquiring relevant skills and qualifications, and networking. It assists young people in making informed decisions about their career paths.

These frameworks and models provide valuable guidance and structure for youth entrepreneurship and employability. They help young individuals develop the necessary competencies, strategies, and mindsets to succeed in the entrepreneurial and employment landscape. It is important to adapt and customize these frameworks to suit the specific needs and contexts of young people, considering factors such as cultural backgrounds, educational levels, and socio-economic conditions.



MERCURY'S SKILLS FRAMEWORK

MERCURY's soft-skills framework, developed through this project, plays a central role in this exploration. The research, conducted through the project, spans multiple countries, including Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, and Serbia. It seeks to understand how life experiences, specifically trauma, can influence the entrepreneurial abilities and employability skills of youth. By recognizing and harnessing the resilience, goal-oriented mindset, emotional intelligence, creative thinking, and financial literacy of trauma-affected youth, we aim to empower them on their entrepreneurial journey. This research not only identifies their unique strengths but also contributes to fostering a culture of resilience, growth, and innovation within organizations. In the upcoming sections, we explore survey insights and how MERCURY's framework guides success for young individuals with trauma.

MERCURY Survey Insights

MERCURY surveys, conducted with young individuals who have experienced trauma, highlight several key findings:

1. **Resilience is a Common Trait:** A significant number of respondents reported that they've developed heightened resilience due to their experiences. Many expressed that their ability to endure and bounce back from challenges is a strength they can bring into entrepreneurship.
2. **Goal-Oriented Mindset:** A striking result from the surveys is that these youth tend to be goal-oriented. Their experiences of setting personal goals for healing and recovery have equipped them with skills that can be applied to set and achieve business objectives.
3. **Emotional Intelligence and Empathy:** Respondents consistently noted their ability to understand and manage emotions effectively. This emotional intelligence fosters better communication, trust, and positive relationships, making them well-suited for the interpersonal demands of entrepreneurship.
4. **Innovation and Creative Thinking:** A substantial portion of respondents highlighted their creativity and innovative thinking as a result of their experiences. This skill can be a catalyst for developing groundbreaking ideas and solutions in the business world.
5. **Financial Literacy and Resource Management:** Many survey participants expressed their proficiency in managing resources and budgeting. This financial literacy enables them to make informed decisions about resource allocation and financial planning.



Utilizing MERCURY Survey Insights for Success

1. **Harnessing Resilience:** The inherent resilience found among youth with trauma is a powerful asset in the entrepreneurial toolkit. They should channel this resilience to confront challenges head-on and adapt to dynamic circumstances. Their ability to inspire confidence and determination in others through their stories of resilience can foster a positive and supportive work environment.
2. **Goal Setting and Time Management:** The survey results indicate that setting and achieving personal goals is a common practice among these youth. They should apply this skill to set clear and meaningful business objectives and efficiently manage their time. This will help them stay focused and measure progress.
3. **Leveraging Emotional Intelligence:** Their emotional intelligence and empathy are valuable skills in entrepreneurship, where interactions with diverse individuals are commonplace. These skills enhance communication, build trust, and foster positive relationships, all of which are crucial for success in the business world.
4. **Encouraging Innovation:** Their creative thinking skills can be channeled to develop unique and groundbreaking ideas in the entrepreneurial landscape. These innovative approaches set them apart in competitive markets and offer solutions to real-world problems.
5. **Financial Literacy and Resource Management:** The ability to understand financial concepts, budget effectively, and make informed financial decisions is crucial in entrepreneurship. Survey participants with financial literacy skills should utilize them for responsible financial management and resource allocation.

Incorporating survey findings empowers trauma survivors in their entrepreneurial journey. Embracing resilience, goal-oriented mindset, emotional intelligence, creative thinking, and financial literacy transforms their experiences into assets for success. These skills not only ensure venture viability but also contribute to fostering a culture of resilience, growth, and innovation within their organizations. Survey results illuminate the untapped potential in youth with trauma. Recognizing and leveraging these skills equips them for a successful entrepreneurial journey with the necessary tools and support.

Why MERCURY among others

While numerous entrepreneurship and employability frameworks have been developed to guide individuals on their entrepreneurial journeys, MERCURY's soft-skills framework distinguishes itself through its unique focus and tailored approach. Unlike widely recognized frameworks like EntreComp, The PixLEDGE, and DIGITAL EUROPE 2021-2027, MERCURY's framework specifically addresses the challenges and strengths of young individuals who have experienced trauma, making it a valuable and essential addition to the field.

1. **Targeted Approach to Trauma-affected Youth:** EntreComp and similar frameworks offer valuable insights into entrepreneurial skills, but they do not account for the unique experiences and needs of youth who have faced trauma. MERCURY's framework recognizes the resilience, emotional intelligence, and creativity that emerge as strengths in this demographic. Tailoring guidance to trauma-affected youth, MERCURY offers a more inclusive and relevant resource.
2. **Resilience as a Core Skill:** While resilience is considered a vital skill in entrepreneurship across various frameworks, MERCURY places a special emphasis on harnessing the inherent resilience found among trauma-affected youth. It recognizes adversity's role in building exceptional resilience. MERCURY guides individuals in channeling this resilience to confront challenges, adapt to dynamic circumstances, and inspire confidence through their stories.
3. **Emotional Intelligence and Empathy:** Entrepreneurship often involves extensive interactions with diverse individuals, requiring high levels of emotional intelligence and empathy. While other frameworks may touch upon these skills, MERCURY explicitly recognizes the emotional intelligence and empathy of trauma-affected youth. It highlights these skills as valuable assets that enhance communication, build trust, and foster positive relationships, all of which are crucial for success in the entrepreneurial world.
4. **Innovative Thinking Grounded in Experience:** Creative thinking and innovation are widely acknowledged as essential entrepreneurial skills. MERCURY's framework, however, goes a step further by connecting trauma-affected youth's creativity and innovative thinking to their experiences. It encourages them to draw upon their unique perspectives to develop groundbreaking ideas and solutions that resonate with authenticity and relevance.
5. **Financial Literacy Informed by Resource Management:** Understanding financial concepts, effective budgeting, and making informed financial decisions are fundamental to entrepreneurial success. While financial literacy is a common focus in many frameworks, MERCURY recognizes that trauma-affected youth often acquire proficiency in resource management as a result of their experiences. It helps them use these skills for responsible financial management, making their decisions more informed and strategic.

In conclusion, MERCURY's soft-skills framework stands out as an inclusive and tailored resource that acknowledges the distinct experiences and strengths of trauma-affected youth. While existing frameworks like EntreComp, The PixLEDGE, and DIGITAL EUROPE 2021-2027 provide valuable guidance for entrepreneurship and employability, MERCURY's framework offers a specialized approach that empowers trauma-affected youth to leverage their resilience, emotional intelligence, creativity, and financial literacy for entrepreneurial success. It fills a crucial gap in the field by recognizing and supporting the unique journey of these individuals on their path to entrepreneurship.



KEY SKILLS AND COMPETENCES REQUIRED FOR WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PTSD ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Success in working with young people with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) on entrepreneurship is a complex endeavour that demands a comprehensive approach. Youth workers and non-formal youth education programs play a pivotal role in providing the necessary guidance and support for these individuals to thrive in their entrepreneurial journeys. Here are key elements necessary for success in this context:

Trauma-Informed Approach

Understanding the impact of trauma on young people and adopting a trauma-informed approach when working with them.

Creating a safe and supportive environment that promotes healing, trust, and empowerment.

Empathy and Active Listening

Demonstrating empathy and active listening skills to understand and validate the experiences, challenges, and aspirations of young people with PTSD.

Creating a space where they feel heard, understood, and respected.

Building Rapport and Trust

Establishing a strong rapport and building trust with young people by demonstrating authenticity, reliability, and a non-judgmental attitude.

Building a supportive and collaborative relationship to foster a sense of safety and security.

Individualized Support

Recognizing that each young person's experience with PTSD is unique and tailoring support to their specific needs, strengths, and triggers.

Providing individualized guidance, resources, and strategies that are relevant to their entrepreneurial goals.

Resilience and Empowerment

Promoting resilience by helping young people develop coping mechanisms, build self-confidence, and navigate setbacks or triggers related to their PTSD.

Empowering them to take ownership of their entrepreneurial journey and make informed decisions.

Skill-Building

Providing opportunities for skill-building and capacity development in areas such as business planning, marketing, financial management, and communication.

Offering workshops, training sessions, or mentoring programs to enhance their entrepreneurial skills and competencies.

Collaboration and Networking

Facilitating opportunities for young people to collaborate, network, and connect with other entrepreneurs, professionals, and resources in relevant industries.

Encouraging participation in entrepreneurial communities, workshops, and events to expand their networks and access potential opportunities.

Flexible and Holistic Support

Recognizing that the process of entrepreneurship for young people with PTSD may require flexibility and adapting support to their unique circumstances.

Taking a holistic approach by considering their overall well-being and providing access to resources and support services beyond entrepreneurship.

Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion

Respecting and embracing the cultural diversity and backgrounds of young people with PTSD.

Ensuring that support and resources are inclusive, accessible, and sensitive to their specific cultural contexts and identities.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Regularly evaluating the effectiveness of support interventions and programs.

Seeking feedback from young people to improve the quality and relevance of the support provided.

By incorporating these components, skills, and competencies into their work, individuals working with young people with PTSD on entrepreneurship can create a nurturing and empowering environment that facilitates their growth, resilience, and success in entrepreneurial pursuits. Youth workers and non-formal youth education programs are essential partners in this process, providing the expertise and support needed to guide these young entrepreneurs on their journey to recovery and success.



DRAMA THERAPY IN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PTSD ON INCREASING ENTREPRENEURIAL AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AND CAPACITIES

Drama therapy, as a therapeutic approach, can provide unique benefits in working with young people with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to develop entrepreneurial and employability skills. Collaborating with youth workers and non-formal youth education programs, drama therapy offers a creative and holistic framework for enhancing the psychological well-being and skill development of these young individuals. Here are some of the benefits of incorporating drama therapy in this context:

Emotional Expression and Regulation

Drama therapy offers a creative outlet for young people with PTSD to express and explore their emotions in a safe and supportive environment.

Through drama techniques such as role-playing, improvisation, and storytelling, they can process and regulate their emotions related to trauma, reducing emotional distress and facilitating emotional healing.

Building Self-Confidence and Self-Efficacy

Engaging in drama activities and performances can help trauma-affected youth build confidence in their abilities, talents, and strengths.

Through experiential learning, they can develop a sense of accomplishment, enhancing their self-efficacy and belief in their entrepreneurial and employability potential.

Empathy and Perspective-Taking

Drama therapy encourages young people to step into the shoes of different characters, promoting empathy and perspective-taking.

By embodying diverse roles and experiences, trauma-affected youth can gain a deeper understanding of others' perspectives, enhancing their interpersonal skills and ability to relate to customers, colleagues, and stakeholders in the entrepreneurial and employability contexts.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Drama exercises foster communication skills, including verbal and non-verbal expression, active listening, and effective dialogue.

Through collaborative activities, trauma-affected youth can develop essential interpersonal skills necessary for networking, team collaboration, and building professional relationships.

Problem-Solving and Creative Thinking

Drama therapy stimulates creative thinking and problem-solving skills by engaging participants in improvisation and creative exploration.

Young people with PTSD can develop the ability to think outside the box, find innovative solutions, and adapt to unexpected challenges, all of which are vital in entrepreneurship and employability.

Risk-Taking and Resilience

Drama activities provide a supportive environment for trauma-affected youth to take calculated risks, experiment, and overcome performance anxiety.

By gradually engaging in challenging theatrical exercises, they can build resilience, develop a growth mindset, and apply these qualities to entrepreneurial and employability pursuits.

Body Awareness and Non-Verbal Communication

Drama therapy focuses on the body-mind connection, enhancing participants' body awareness, and non-verbal communication skills.

Young people with PTSD can learn to manage their physical presence, gestures, and facial expressions, improving their ability to convey messages effectively and create a positive impact in professional settings.

Narrative Reconstruction and Identity Development

Drama therapy offers opportunities for young people to explore and reconstruct their personal narratives related to trauma.

Through storytelling, they can reflect on their experiences, reframe their identities, and develop a sense of purpose, which can positively influence their entrepreneurial and employability journeys.

By incorporating drama therapy techniques and principles, youth workers can provide trauma-informed support that nurtures the development of entrepreneurial and employability skills in young people with PTSD. This approach offers a holistic and creative pathway for healing, growth, and empowerment in their professional pursuits.



BENEFITS OF USING DRAMA THERAPY IN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PTSD ON DEVELOPING THEIR ENTREPRENEURIAL AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AND COMPETENCES

Drama therapy offers numerous benefits for young individuals, particularly in enhancing self-expression, confidence, communication, and emotional regulation. Youth workers can help maximise these advantages, ensuring a comprehensive approach to the development of these essential skills:

Self-Expression

Drama therapy provides a safe and supportive space for young individuals to express themselves freely and authentically.

Through dramatic techniques, such as role-playing, improvisation, and storytelling, they can explore and communicate their thoughts, emotions, and experiences in a creative and non-threatening manner.

Confidence and Self-Esteem

Engaging in drama activities and performances helps young individuals build self-confidence and self-esteem.

Through the process of taking on different roles, facing challenges, and receiving positive feedback, they develop a sense of achievement, fostering a stronger belief in their abilities and value.

Communication Skills

Drama therapy enhances communication skills, including verbal and non-verbal expression, active listening, and empathetic communication.

Young individuals learn to articulate their ideas, thoughts, and feelings effectively, improving their ability to express themselves assertively and connect with others.

Emotional Regulation

Drama therapy provides a platform for young individuals to explore and regulate their emotions in a safe and controlled environment.

Through dramatic exercises, they can express and process complex emotions related to their personal experiences, facilitating emotional healing and regulation.

Empathy and Perspective-Taking

Engaging in drama activities encourages young individuals to step into the shoes of different characters, promoting empathy and perspective-taking.

By embodying diverse roles and experiencing different perspectives, they develop a deeper understanding of others, enhancing their interpersonal skills and ability to relate to others.

Creative Problem-Solving

Drama therapy fosters creative thinking and problem-solving skills in young individuals.

Through improvisation and creative exploration, they learn to think outside the box, adapt to new situations, and find innovative solutions, enhancing their problem-solving abilities in various contexts.

Social Skills and Collaboration

Drama activities involve teamwork, cooperation, and collaboration, allowing young individuals to develop social skills and work effectively in groups.

They learn to listen, respect others' ideas, negotiate, and contribute to a shared goal, building essential skills for successful collaboration in personal and professional settings.

Stress Reduction and Resilience

Engaging in drama therapy can reduce stress and enhance resilience in young individuals.

By exploring emotions, practicing coping strategies, and experiencing a sense of accomplishment, they develop resilience, learning to manage challenges and bounce back from adversity.

Overall, drama therapy provides a powerful platform for young individuals to develop and enhance essential skills and qualities. By promoting self-expression, confidence, communication, and emotional regulation, it supports their personal growth, social interaction, and overall well-being.



STATE-OF-THE-ART ANALYSIS

Poland

- Conducted by: Miejska Strefa Kultury w Łodzi
- Date of Data Collection: 1-30 September 2023
- Participants: Nearly 60 young people under the age of 30

Conclusions from Poland: The survey conducted in Poland by Miejska Strefa Kultury w Łodzi focused on the impact of various life elements on employment and entrepreneurship among young people. It emphasized the significance of age, gender, education, employment form, and past experiences. The key recommendations include designing tailored support programs that consider age and gender, promoting lifelong learning, creating practical educational and development programs, and supporting holistic development that is inclusive and open to diversity.

Lithuania

- Conducted by: ART+INN
- Date of Data Collection: 11 August - 8 September 2023
- Number of Valid Responses: 52

Conclusions from Lithuania: ART+INN conducted a survey in Lithuania and found insights into age and skill development, gender-specific challenges, the importance of education and skill levels, and the perception gap between self-assessed skills and actual competencies. Key conclusions recommend tailored support programs for different age groups, gender-inclusive support strategies, integrating skill development into education, and promoting practical experience and self-reflection.

Hungary

- Conducted by: Laterna Magica
- Date of Data Collection: 4-20 September 2023
- Number of Valid Responses: 50

Conclusions from Hungary: Laterna Magica conducted a survey in Hungary among secondary school students and youth in Budapest. They observed that the majority of respondents faced challenging life situations related to school changes and reported various specific challenges. The survey highlighted the importance of support from

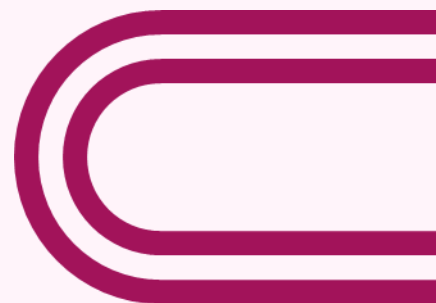
youth workers and the significance of adaptability, communication, and creative thinking as important competencies. Key findings suggest tailoring support programs for different age groups, addressing gender-specific challenges, integrating skill development into education, and promoting self-assessment and self-awareness.

Serbia

- Conducted by: Belgrade Business and Arts Academy of Applied Studies
- Date of Data Collection: 12-15 September 2023
- Number of Valid Responses: 88

Conclusions from Serbia: The survey conducted by Belgrade Business and Arts Academy of Applied Studies in Serbia revealed a positive correlation between age and self-assessed skills. It emphasized the significance of gender-specific challenges, the value of higher education in skill development, and the impact of practical work experience on skill perception. Conclusions recommend tailored support programs for gender-specific challenges, encouraging lifelong learning, a balanced approach to skill acquisition through education and practical experience, and the use of insights to inform policy and program design.

In summary, these surveys conducted in Poland, Lithuania, Hungary, and Serbia have provided valuable insights into the challenges young individuals face in terms of employment and entrepreneurship. They have offered recommendations for tailored support, gender-inclusive strategies, skill development, and policy design to empower young people in their career pursuits.



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EXISTING CASE-STUDIES ON THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN TRAUMA, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, EMPLOYABILITY, AND DRAMA THERAPY

Existing case studies, and programs have explored the intersection between trauma, entrepreneurship, employability, and drama therapy, shedding light on effective approaches and outcomes. Here is an examination of some notable examples:

Case Studies:

- **“The magic of theatre” (Lithuania)**
 In Lithuania, at Vytautas Magnus Gymnasium in Trakai, Gintarė Padvelskienė led a groundbreaking theatre project for students aged 13 to 19. Beyond acting skills, this initiative focused on boosting confidence, breaking barriers for students with special needs, and fostering teamwork. Through stage exercises, virtual learning, and mentorship from professionals like Aleksandras Špilevojums, the project revealed how theatre can empower students, promoting inclusivity and personal growth."
- **“Loving life” (Lithuania)**
 Lithuania's "Loving Life" project supports cancer patients, survivors, and families, improving their emotional well-being through counseling, art therapy, and support groups. By extending services to multiple locations, including rural areas, it ensures broader access. Tailored support and continuous assessment sustain its impact in addressing diverse needs.
- **“The path to emotional healing” (Lithuania)**
 The "Path to Emotional Healing" project in Šiauliai, Lithuania, focused on children (6 to 18) who witnessed domestic violence. By using drama therapy, counseling, legal advice, and family support groups, it aimed to help them heal emotionally. Positive outcomes included improved well-being for children, empowered families, and a more resilient community. Insights highlighted the effectiveness of creative therapies, tailored group support, and the importance of empowering families through counseling and legal guidance. The project emphasized ongoing support and collaboration among professionals to address domestic violence's complexities.
- **“Music and the arts as a way to create intercultural dialogue” (Lithuania)**
 The "Unlimited Future" project brought young people from different countries together to tackle miscommunication and stereotypes using music and arts. Through exchanges, workshops, and cultural presentations, it successfully improved understanding between participants, challenged stereotypes, and

boosted communication skills. It also had a positive impact on local communities by promoting tolerance and cultural awareness.

- **"Increasing Access to Inclusive Arts and Social Services in Highland Villages of Georgia" (Georgia)**

The project "Increasing Access to Inclusive Arts and Social Services in Highland Villages of Georgia" by "Youth for Social Equality," supported by the East-West Management Institute and USAID, aimed to help individuals with disabilities in Georgia's highland villages. It introduced inclusive arts programs, trained teachers in therapeutic disciplines, and provided online arts therapies, engaging 60 beneficiaries. Despite challenges in online services and awareness, the project highlighted the importance of ongoing collaboration to create inclusive communities for people with disabilities.

- **"LET'S TALK, HOW WE TALK ABOUT GENDER" (Poland)**

The primary methodology employed by the Kurdybanek Foundation was Forum Theater, a form of interactive theater developed by Augusto Boal. This approach utilized drama as a tool for social change, engaging participants in scenarios related to gender and sexual discrimination. Through art and performance, young adults from various countries explored societal issues, fostering empathy and promoting dialogue, while utilizing music and creative expression within the Forum Theater framework.

- **"Survival strategies" (Poland)**

Teatr 21 in Poland, amid the pandemic, shifted rehearsals online, engaging actors with Down syndrome and autism in creating eight powerful video etudes exploring isolation. These poignant artistic expressions, spanning diaries, poems, songs, and more, reflect individual experiences, fostering deeper dialogue and reflection on isolation's impact in an accessible online format. This innovative adaptation showcases the resilience of artists in redefining theatrical expression during challenging times.

- **"ESCAPE WORLD" (Poland)**

The "Escape World" project by Theatre Gdynia Główna in Poland involved individuals emerging from homelessness crises, culminating in a transformative theatrical performance led by director Magdalena Polakowska. This initiative not only aimed to prevent homelessness but also fostered empathy and social awareness while serving as a platform for participants to regain independence. Through powerful storytelling and professional guidance, the project highlights theater's role in addressing societal issues and empowering individuals in crisis towards recovery and understanding.

- **"Srebrnica" (Poland)**

The Jubilo Foundation's "Srebrnica" project aimed to bring solace and peace to women and children affected by the Srebrenica massacre's trauma. Through a peace march, workshops, and cultural exercises like Ashtanga yoga



and Bosnian lullabies, the initiative provided temporary relief from war trauma and fostered cultural exchange, despite challenges in organizing trips and training leaders for handling such sensitive contexts. This effort stands as a crucial step in resocializing trauma-affected groups and preventing future occurrences of similar tragedies.

- **“Open space” (Poland)**

Chorea Theatre's "Open Space" aimed to empower blind and partially sighted youth and local dancers through movement exercises, fostering body awareness and communication for independence in artistic and economic pursuits. While successful in strengthening social and artistic competences, the challenge lay in balancing artistic presentation without overshadowing the primary goal of skill enhancement and competence development.

- **“Way out” (Hungary)**

Implemented by the Child Protection Center, this initiative offered monthly drama sessions for children aged 12-18 in residential care, aiming to boost self-confidence and equip them with vital life skills. Through engaging drama pedagogy, the program successfully fostered self-expression, strengthened relationships, and empowered marginalized youth to navigate challenges confidently.

- **“Theatre, drama and experiential learning” (Hungary)**

"Empowering Education: Drama Integration in Central Hungary" by the Open Circle Association focused on implementing drama pedagogy across schools, enriching students aged 5-18 with experiential learning and cooperative skills. Through interactive theater performances and skill-building exercises, this initiative not only fostered inclusivity for disadvantaged students but also revealed profound insights into individual personalities, enhancing understanding and breaking down barriers within educational settings.

- **“Where did you go boatman?” (Hungary)**

"Where Did You Go, Boatman?" tackled stress among high schoolers in Kecskemét through a play based on Sándor Weöres's drama, focusing on trust and love. Across 29 sessions, it sparked self-reflection, improved communication, and problem-solving skills, leaving students eager for more.

- **“Play With No Limits” (Hungary)**

"Play With No Limits" by Montage Drama Pedagogy offered an intensive camp experience for 13-20-year-old students, focusing on performing arts skills. With over-subscription and a rigorous selection process based on talent and motivation, the program achieved remarkable >90% participant satisfaction, fostering friendships and self-discovery while swiftly building trust and camaraderie through movement theater exercises.

- **“Theater Education for Active Democracy” (Hungary)**

"Theater Education for Active Democracy" by the Round Table Theater Education Center engaged marginalized youth in exploring democratic

concepts through tailored theater programs, fostering partnerships with teachers and stimulating ongoing professional dialogue. Supported by cultural institutions, their initiative culminated in an exhibition amplifying marginalized youth voices on societal issues, aiming to spark continuous engagement and understanding.

- **“Art Therapeutic Workshops for Children” (Serbia)**
"Art Therapeutic Workshops for Children" in Serbia, led by Tatjana Trajković, utilized diverse artistic methods like painting, sculpture, and theater exercises to help children aged 6 to 18 express themselves, build confidence, and address personal challenges. The workshops fostered improved self-expression, boosted confidence, transformed behavior, and created an inclusive space where children discovered their creative talents, showcasing the transformative power of art therapy in supporting personal and social development among youth.
- **“Drama workshops for children” (Serbia)**
"Drama Workshops for Children" in Serbia, led by the ApsArt Center for Theater Research, aim to counter increasing passivity among children due to technology dominance. These workshops empower children through creative character development, exploration of life roles, and critical thinking, fostering confidence, creativity, inclusivity, and a proactive approach to life, emphasizing that children have the capacity to be active creators in their lives and communities.
- **“Winter SKI Kamp Kopaonik 2023: Enhancing Rehabilitation and Resocialization for Children with Malignant Diseases” (Serbia)**
The "Winter SKI Kamp Kopaonik 2023" in Serbia, organized by NURDOR, provides post-treatment support to adolescents recovering from cancer. Through tailored physical activities, psychological workshops, and peer interaction in a natural setting, the camp fosters renewed self-esteem, resocialization, and renewed hope, demonstrating the critical need for holistic post-treatment care for these adolescents.
- **“Unique innovative camp for children” (Serbia)**
Child Hub's "Unique Innovative Camp for Children" in Serbia transforms youth aged 7 to 18 into problem-solving innovators through IT, STEAM, and entrepreneurship education. In a three-week program, they tackle real-world challenges, improving employability, nurturing creativity, and fostering social responsibility. Challenges include managing diverse age groups and ensuring resource allocation while striving for continuous improvement.
- **“Sand therapy - from conflict resolution to creativity development” (Serbia)**
Center zAnima's sand-based therapy programs in Serbia support individuals of all ages, addressing emotional challenges, enhancing communication, and

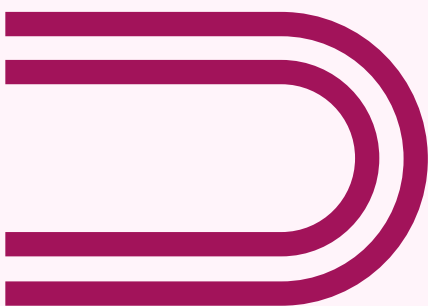


nurturing family bonds. Through sand-based therapy, these programs notably improve emotional well-being, communication skills, and cognitive development. While managing diverse age groups and ensuring consistent family involvement pose challenges, the therapy's adaptability and holistic approach significantly contribute to its success in promoting overall well-being and personal growth.

These examples highlight the growing recognition of the intersection between trauma, entrepreneurship, employability, and drama therapy. The full-length descriptions of the case studies are available in Annex 2. They provide evidence of the effectiveness of integrating trauma-informed approaches, entrepreneurship education, and drama therapy techniques in supporting trauma-affected individuals to overcome challenges, develop essential skills, and pursue entrepreneurial and employability opportunities.

While more research and evaluation are needed, these case studies and programs contribute to the understanding and advancement of best practices in the field. They offer valuable insights into the potential of trauma-informed entrepreneurship and drama therapy interventions for supporting the well-being and success of young people affected by trauma.

These examples demonstrate the involvement of various organizations and funding sources in initiatives, research studies, and programs related to trauma, entrepreneurship, employability, and drama therapy. The financial support from governmental institutions, foundations, corporate social responsibility funds, and research grants underscores the recognition and commitment to addressing the needs of young people affected by trauma in the context of entrepreneurship and employability.



GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH WORKERS ON DRAMA THERAPY FOR ENHANCING ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS IN YOUTH WITH PTSD

Here are practical guidelines and recommendations for youth workers in the areas of trauma-informed approaches, integration of drama therapy techniques, designing safe and inclusive spaces, and identifying assessment tools:

Trauma-Informed Approaches for Engaging and Supporting Young People

Educate yourself: Gain knowledge and understanding of trauma and its effects on young people. Stay updated with the latest research, resources, and best practices in trauma-informed care.

Create a safe environment: Establish an atmosphere of trust, safety, and respect. Be mindful of potential triggers and create a trauma-sensitive space where young people feel comfortable and supported.

Practice empathy and active listening: Show genuine empathy, listen attentively, and validate the experiences and feelings of trauma-affected youth. Create opportunities for them to share their stories and express themselves.

Foster empowerment and choice: Encourage young people to take control of their own healing journey. Offer choices and involve them in decision-making processes to build a sense of agency and ownership.

Integration of Drama Therapy Techniques within Entrepreneurship and Employability Programs

Collaborate with drama therapists: Work closely with drama therapists or professionals trained in drama therapy to integrate appropriate techniques into entrepreneurship and employability programs.

Incorporate creative activities: Infuse drama-based activities, role-playing exercises, improvisation, and storytelling into program sessions. These techniques can help young people explore their emotions, enhance communication skills, build confidence, and promote self-expression.



Foster collaboration and teamwork: Use drama therapy activities that encourage teamwork, cooperation, and problem-solving. This can simulate real-life entrepreneurial and employability scenarios and build essential collaboration skills.

Utilize reflective exercises: Incorporate reflective exercises, journaling, and group discussions to help young people process their trauma, identify strengths, set goals, and envision their entrepreneurial and employability aspirations.

Designing Safe and Inclusive Spaces for Trauma-Affected Youth

Provide a supportive atmosphere: Create an environment where trauma-affected youth feel safe, respected, and heard. Ensure confidentiality and privacy to encourage open expression and sharing.

Foster a sense of belonging: Establish a sense of community and belonging within the group. Encourage peer support, mutual respect, and empathy among participants.

Offer flexibility and choice: Recognize that trauma-affected youth may have unique needs and preferences. Provide flexible options and adaptive approaches to accommodate their comfort levels and individual differences.

Identifying Appropriate Assessment Tools to Measure Progress and Impact

Collaborate with professionals: Engage with experts or researchers experienced in measuring the impact of trauma-informed programs and drama therapy interventions to identify suitable assessment tools.

Use validated measures: Select assessment tools that have been validated and proven effective in measuring outcomes related to trauma recovery, entrepreneurial skills development, employability, and well-being.

Consider multiple domains: Choose assessment tools that cover a range of domains such as mental health, emotional well-being, self-efficacy, communication skills, entrepreneurial mindset, and employability competencies.

Regularly evaluate and adjust: Continuously assess the effectiveness of the assessment tools used and adjust as needed to ensure they align with the specific needs and goals of trauma-affected youth.

By following these guidelines and recommendations, youth workers can create trauma-informed, inclusive, and empowering environments that integrate drama therapy techniques into entrepreneurship and employability programs for young people with trauma backgrounds. These approaches can help young individuals explore their potential, build resilience, and overcome barriers to achieving their entrepreneurial and employability goals.



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