

BACK TO NATURE

Education in Nature Guide



PROJECT

BACK TO NATURE PROJECT

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GUIDE

This guide is an outcome of 8 days training course of Back to Nature project with participation of 36 participants around the Europa and Asia.

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INTRODUCTION

During all our lives the learning process continues in formal (like school, university), non-formal (courses, sports club) and informal (from parents and friends) environments. But what do these terms; formal, non-formal and informal education actually mean?

In this first part of this guide, we're going to give the definitions of these terms according to works of Prof. Dr. Lynne Chisholm, who holds a Chair for Education and Generation at the Leopold-Franzens-University of Innsbruck in Austria where she leads the university's Research Centre on Education, Generation and Life-course and many



other studies related with education, training and youth.

Moreover we are going to try summarizing the principles and goals of non-formal education.

In the second part, we are going to share outcomes of an exercise we held during the 'Back to Nature Project' which can be an example for how nature is a productive learning ground for non-

formal education principles.

In the third part, we are going to share different activities that can be done in nature and which we enjoyed during the project.

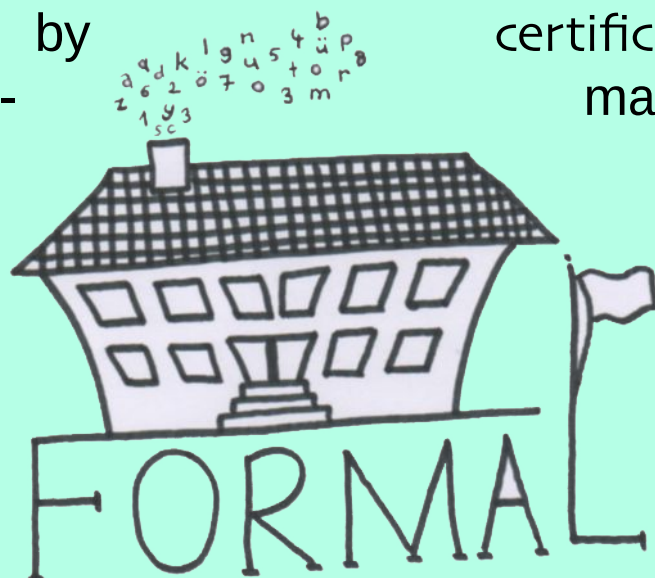
Finally in part five, we are going to give the conclusion and remarks of the 'Back to Nature Project', outlining the titles we went through during the project.

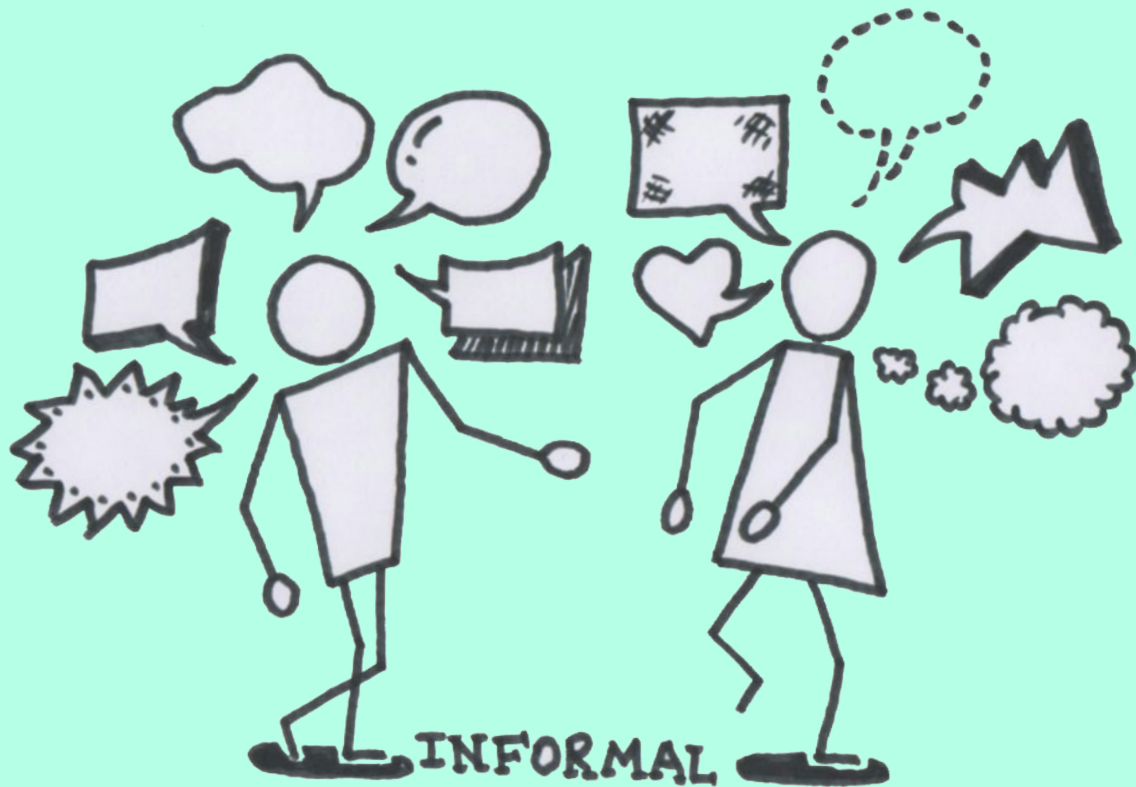
Part I

NON FORMAL FORMAL INFORMAL LEARNING

What is Formal Learning?

Formal Learning is purposive learning that takes place in a distinct and institutionalised environment specifically designed for teaching/training and learning, which is staffed by learning facilitators who are specifically qualified for the sector, level and subject concerned and which usually serves a specified category of learners (defined by age, level and specialism). Learning aims are almost always externally set, learning progress is usually monitored and assessed, and learning outcomes are usually recognised by certificates or diplomas. Much formal learning provision is compulsory (school education).





What is informal learning?

From the learner's standpoint at least, this is non-purposive learning which takes place in everyday life contexts in the family, at work, during leisure and in the community. It does have outcomes, but these are seldomly recorded, virtually never certified and are typically neither immediately visible for the learner nor do they count in themselves for education, training or employment purposes. Think about your own learning path so far:

What is non formal learning?

Non formal learning is purposive but voluntary learning that takes place in a diverse range of environments and situations for which teaching/training and learning is not necessarily their sole or main activity. These environments and situations may be temporary, and the activities or courses that take place may be staffed by professional learning facilitators (such as youth trainers) or by volunteers (such as youth leaders). The activities and courses are planned, but are seldomly structured by conventional rhythms or curriculum subjects. They usually address specific target groups, but rarely document or assess learning outcomes or achievements in conventionally visible ways.

If you want you can already look on your Youth Initiative project: Do you participate voluntarily? Is this an temporarily environment? Did you structure your process and plan the activity? Then you are in a non-formal learning process!



NONF

PRINCIPLES

- Learn by Doing
- Peer educator

GOALS

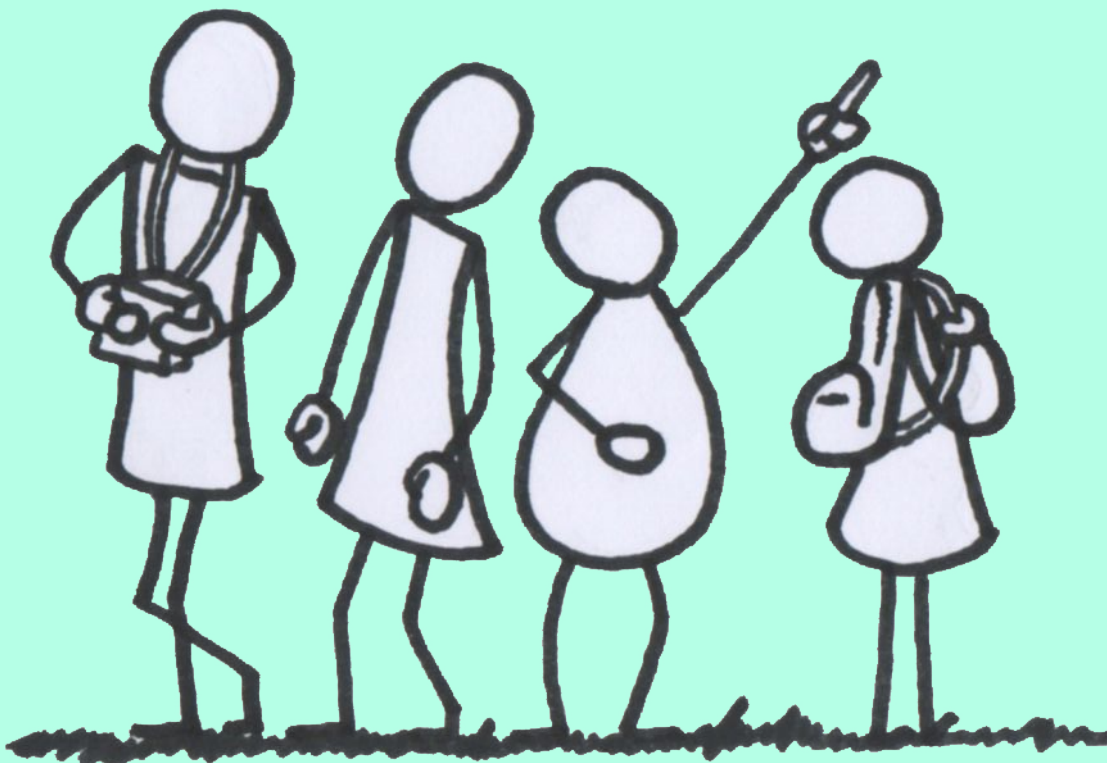
1. Personal Development
2. Improve Knowledge
3. Gain abilities

HOW CAN WE DO IT?

- With activities (team building, workshops, energizers, games, culture exchanges, etc.)
- Share information
- Observation
- Evaluation/Reflection

WHERE?

- At the sports fields
- In the forest
- In the house
- At the school
- On the beach
- On the street



FORMAL

Part II

BENEFITING NATURE AS A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



“Finding out how to Survive in Nature” practice was one of our main activities in ‘Bact to Nature Project’ and it’s an example practice which can be held with non-formal learning principles and using nature both as the subject and environment.

Demonstrating a disaster scenario in nature, the participants first tried to find out how to deal with these disaster conditions by themselves, made a presentation for their outcomes and afterwards their outcomes were evaluated by professionals, following with brief instructions on subject.

A para-medical doctor instructed the participants on possible psychological states during a disaster / accident in nature and the essentials of practising first aid. Two camping instructors shared important tips on making shelter and fire, finding water and food and protecting yourself in a wild environment.

All the instructions were held in nature, demonstrating the instructions while using nature as a class-room.



Here are the outcomes of the practice that participants finally came out with...

Tips on Psychological state

After realizing the situation you are in,

- Do not panic;
- Always stay positive;
- The first rule is don't consume your energy for unnecessary works. Less energy more work...

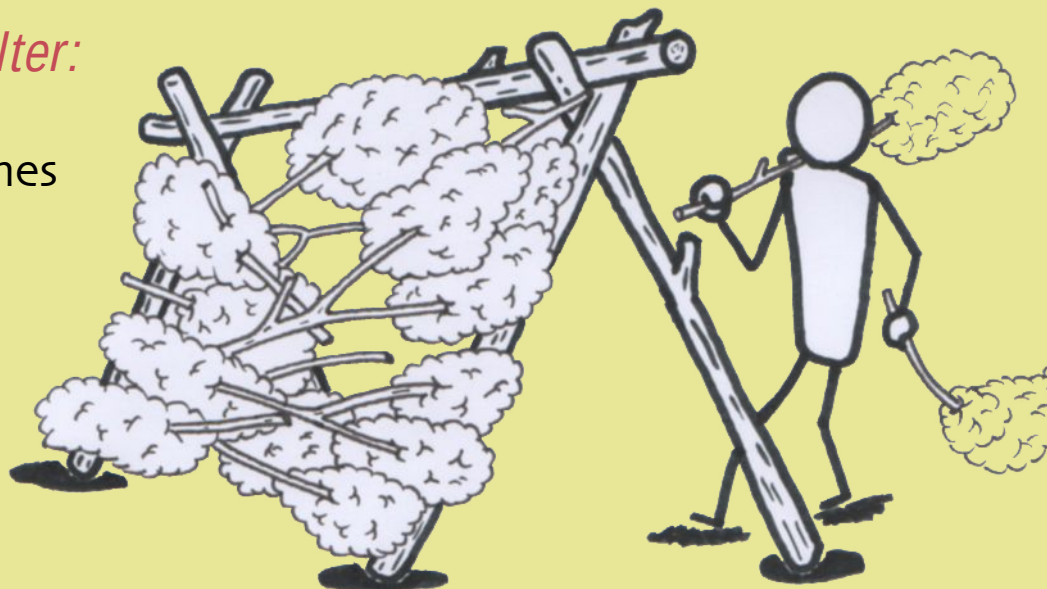


Tips on Finding / Making a Shelter

- Find a place to shelter which is not far from the river but also not too close to river;
- Try to be aware of the wild animals, so do not choose a place in the living area;
- Keep attention for falling stones;
- Entrance of the shelter SHOULD NOT be oriented towards the north, because cold wind blowing from the north can be easily destroy the shelter.
- Never build the shelter during the night. In dark it is hard to find materials for your shelter. It's better that you wait until the morning, meanwhile find a safe place under a tree.
- Place soft leaves as much as you can on already cleaned shelter ground in order to get comfort and protection from the cold coming from the ground.

Materials for DIY Shelter:

- wood sticks
- ropes/flexible branches
- big leaves





Making a Fire

- Make a fire close to your new shelter to protect yourself from wild animals.

keep warm and to

DIY FIRE STEPS

1. Collect: a lot of dry leaves, stones to border your fire small wooden sticks

2. Make a fire with a lighter, you might also prefer to make the fire with the magnesium stick in case you happen to forget your lighter at home try to make a fire with a glass and if you did not bring any glass, try to come back in the time and use the stones to make the fire. You should find an easyburning material to put flame on it. Moreover you can take a stick, and place the stick on a wood and turn stick around very very fast and try to start a flame on easyburning material. It is very hard but better than none.



Water is Vital

-Only use water from a spring for drinking, if there is no spring water around you, make sure to filter the water.

-If there is no rivers nearby, try to tie the plastic bag on a branch with leaves, make sure the bag is closed. After dehydration happens because of the sun, enjoy your water!



Keep yourself Safe



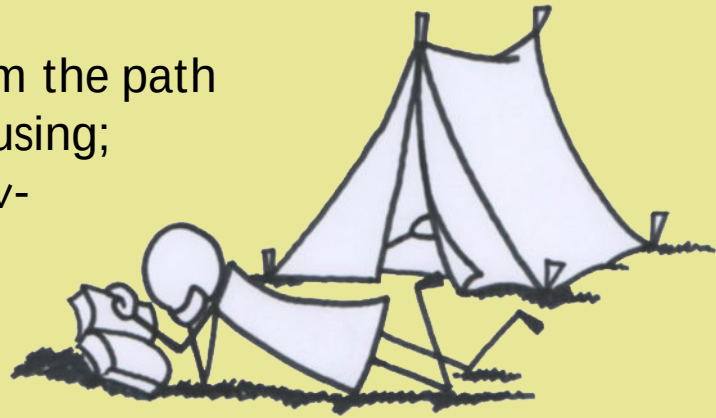
- First of all if you are not sure where to go, don't move to not get lost or face more dangerous situations.

- Always stay away from the path where the animals are using;

- During the nights, never leave the fire on;

- Do not visit a bear's cave;

- Find some stones and wood sticks just in case.



Tips for Finding Food

- Try hunting or fishing;

- Enjoy the mother nature's fruits;

- If you do not prefer the meat, try some leaves;

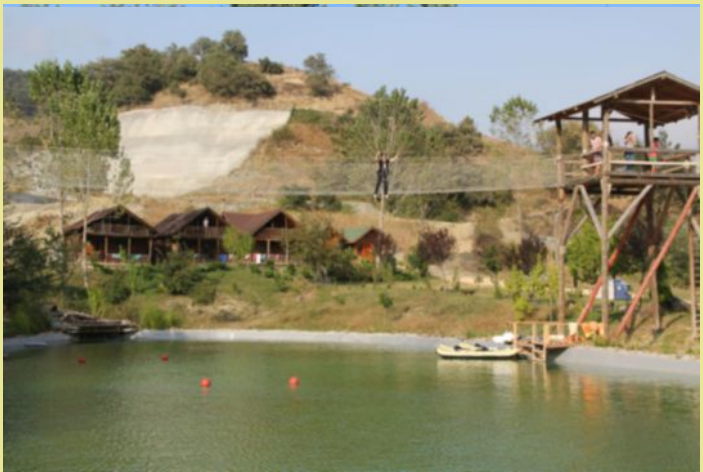
- If you do not recognize a plant - do not eat it! It might be poisonous.

First Aid

- If you do not know how to do first aid, just try not to kill anyone or yourself,

- If you got injured and have bleeding, tie the part you are bleeding with a piece of fabric and try to stop it and wait for the help.





Part III

GROUP ACTIVITY EXAMPLES THAT CAN BE HELD IN NATURE

THAT WERE TESTED AND PROVEN REALLY USEFUL AND ENTERTAINING
BY US DURING THE “BACK TO NATURE” TRAINING COURSE.



***Name+move**

Age: 7-70

Number of participants: from 8 to 40

Needed materials: -

Time: from 30 minutes to hour

Risks:

Explanation: Participants who don't know each other's names yet stand in a circle. One by one each participant comes in a middle and says his/hers name combining it with a move or a sound. Other players repeat the name and the sound or move.

Notes if any: The moves and sounds should be funny and original, not copying each other.



***Repeat the name**

Age: 7-70

Number of participants from 8 to 40

Needed materials:

Time: from 30 minutes to hour

Explanation: People in a circle. One says his name, and every next people says the names from the first people to his name

***The robots**

Age: 7-70

Number of participants: from to 60, must be divided by 3

Needed materials:

Time: up to 1 hour

Risks: minimal

Explanation: Divide players into teams of 3, where 2 are the robots and 1 is a administrator. The robots can only walk forward cannot control their movement, only administrators can make them change direction by tapping their shoulders. The main aim is to make two robots walk into each other and hug.

Notes if any: the robots should walk slow and "robotic"

***The spider web**

Age: 12-50

Number of participants: starting of 5

Needed materials: rope and scotch tape

Time: 1 hour

Risks: it's a physical activity which should be carried out with caution

Explanation: Create a spider web containing holes of various sizes which participants can possibly go through (see the pic.). The team has to make a strategy and get every participant on the other side of the web by using each hole only 3 times.

Notes if any: the number of holes should correspond the number of participants



***Picking pine cones**

Age: 7-70

Number of participants: 10-30

Needed materials: pine cones, blind folds

Time: 30 min

Risks: Blind folded participants can be crashed each other or may crash a tree or wall.

Explanation: Participants divide in pairs. One people with closed eyes must collect some items from the field, but only by listening the other people for directions

***Node**

Age: 7-70

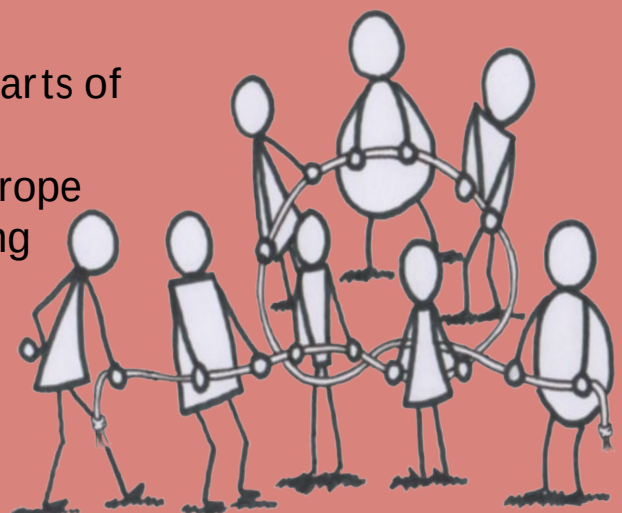
Number of participants 6-35

Needed materials: rope

Time: 20 min

Risks: May rope will be tied to some parts of body and it can cause hurts.

Explanation: People in circle take one rope and must make node without removing their hands from the rope. When the group things that they did it, group shows the node to leader.



***Spread the impulse**

Age: 7-...

Number of participants 10-30

Needed materials: 1 object (water bottle, a stick, etc.)

Time: 30 minutes

Risks: Participants can fall down because of sudden running reflex.

Explanation: Two rows of people hold their hands. One person gives hand impulse to the two ends of the rows, and the people in rows must spread the impulse fast, and the last people must run, take and bring some prepared object to the first impulse giver

***Simon says**

Age: 5-70

Number of participants: 5-100

Needed materials:

Time: up to 1 hours

Explanation: One participant (Simon) stands in a middle and others make a circle around him. When he says "Simon says..." and adds an action everybody repeats after him. E.g. when he says "Simon says jump" everyone jumps. But if he doesn't say "Simon says" the players have to remain still. The point is to pay attention and only do what "Simon says"

***Blanket volleyball**

Age: 15-50

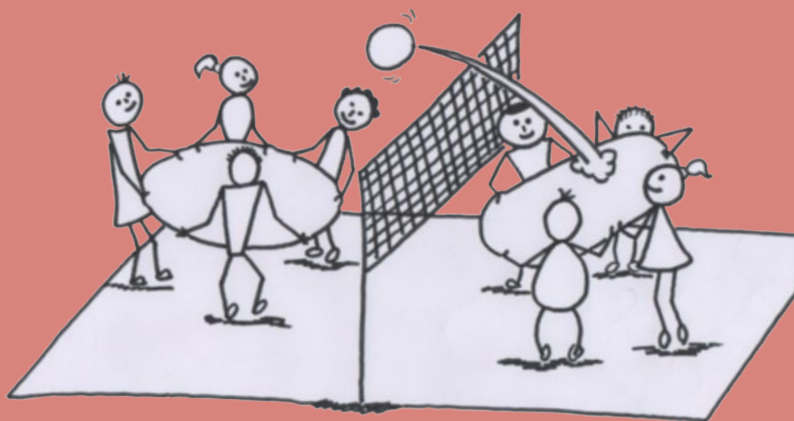
Number of participants: 5-12

Needed materials: Blanket, ball, net

Time: 30 minutes

Explanation: The aim is to catch the ball using blanket and through it back to other team for them not to catch it.

Participants are divided in two teams, each team stand front of each divided by net. Each team's participants need to hold the blanket and move only in hands of it. If the ball touches the ground the point goes to other team.



***Mouse and the cat**

Age: 7-70

Number of participants: from 8 to...

Needed materials:

Time: 30 minutes

Risks: falling down

Explanation: One of the players is a cat and the other is a mouse, other participants divide into pairs and lock their elbows. The mouse has to escape from cat and lock elbows with one of the players in pairs. When this happens the third participant unlocks elbows and becomes a new mouse. When a cat catches a mouse a mouse becomes a cat.



9

***Art installation**

Age: 7-70

Number of participants: Min 2 participant groups

Needed materials: Natural Stuff (Leaves, sticks, stones or plants, etc.)

Time: 2 hours

Explanation: Collect natural materials from forest and do some art or craft. Maybe an artistic material, maybe a visual for wall...

Notes if any: Try to be creative and express yourself with the help of natural materials



***CRABS and small FISHES**

Age: 5-70

Number of participants: 10-100

Needed materials: Limited area

Time: 20 minutes

Risks: If the activity place is small participants can fall down or crash each other.

Explanation: The aim is the crab to catch all the fishes by its two claws. hold hands. At the start there is one who catches. Each who is caught holds hands with the other catchers, and run together , using only the two free hands for others. Catching can be done only of the person who stand at the start or at the end of the hold hand line.

***Stone- paper- siccors in groups**

Age:7-70

Number of participants: from 8 to...

Needed materials:

Time: 30 minutes

Risks: Crashing eachother

Explanation: 2 group of participants stays in different to limited area. There will be a border between them like a voleybel net or a line on the floor. Each team will be represented by a leader for every steps of game. The leaders comes face to face on the border and play stone-paper –siccors. The winner group have the chance to catch

***Spirit spot (Self Evaluation Activity)**

Age:12-...

Number of participants: Individual Activity

Needed materials: Pen- Paper

Time: 30 minutes

Explanation: At the end of the day or activity each participant take a paper and pen and look for a place where she/he feel himself safe and happy. That place called 'Spirit Spot' . Spir-it Spot is a place where participants evaluate the day or the activity and reflect the evaluations. The reflection can be a song, a drawing or a handracft. After all participant spend half an hour at spirit spot all participants come together to share their feelings and reflections.



PART IV

CONCLUSIONS AND REMARKS

ESSENTIALS OF SURVIVING IN NATURE



Importance of Teamwork

- Organisation;
- Helping each other;
- Distribution of roles;
- Stay calm and positive;
- Stay together;
- Keep your energy, don't waste it;
- Be strong, care about the others;

What can we do?

- If you don't have any idea about the directions don't move and get lost.
- Make a shelter
- Make a fire
- Find water
- Search for food

Remarks

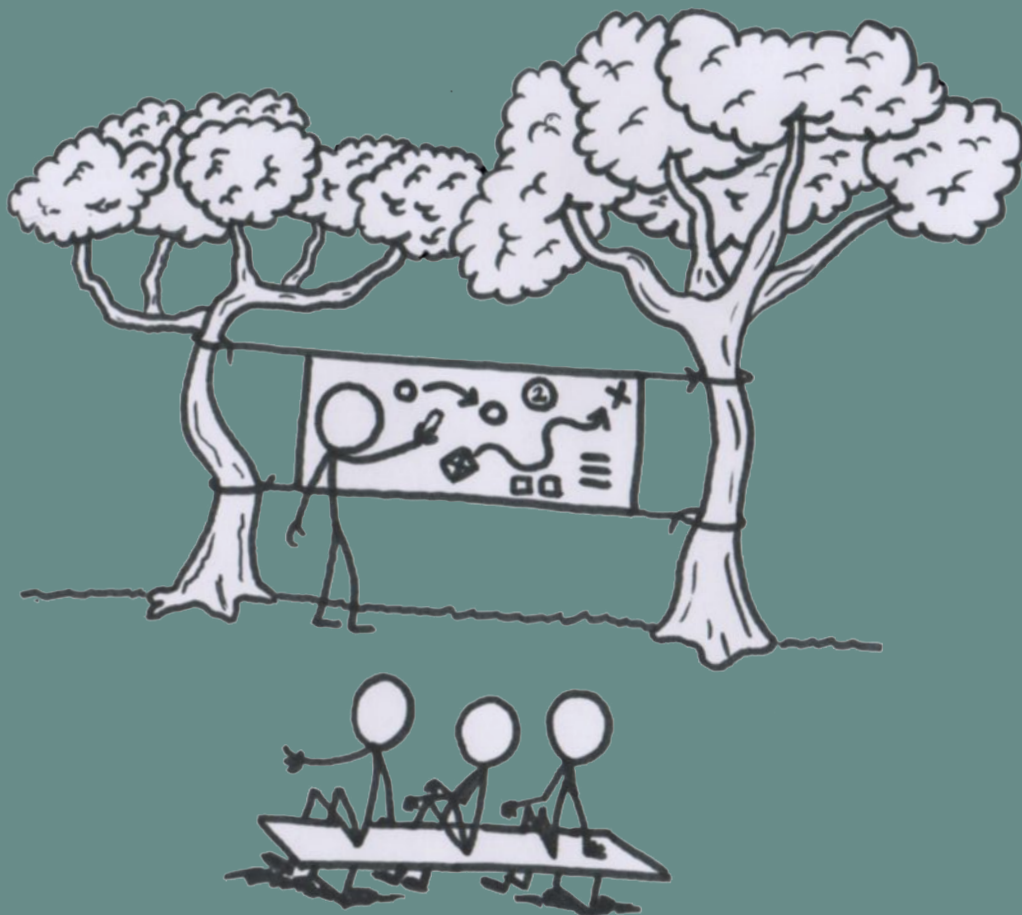
- Pay attention for environmental threats and useful resources;
- Don't panic;
- Learn how to practice first aid;
- Get ready for negative things, challenging and complicated situations;
- Set goals and priorities for surviving in nature;
- Be rational and practical.

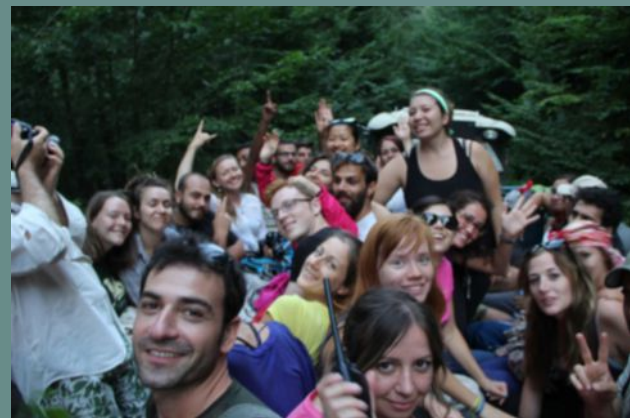
DEALING WITH CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

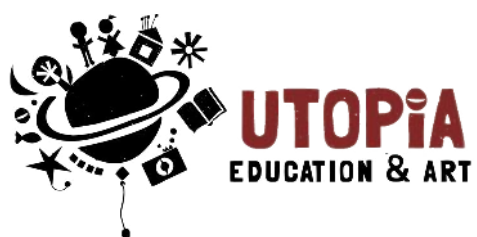
- Dealing with different reactions coming from different cultures;
- Try to communicate in a common language;
- Keeping all the team members active, avoiding leadership;
- Accepting ideas or ideologies and respect to each other.

SCHOOL IN NATURE

- 0 Find a suitable and attractive location in nature for the students;
- o Use team building tools (Start Connection!);
- 0 Let the students spend time for exploring and discovering the environment;
- o Exchange experiences and cultures, like music, skills, traditions, etc ;
- o Make some time for entertainment (games, free activities, etc.);
- o Motivate the students to learn from each other, and practice together;
- 0 Give some space to yourself and students to improve new experiences with nature;
- 0 Compare outdoor activities versus indoor classroom lessons;
- o Be creative with new elements, materials, objects;
- 0 Try to plan the activities in advance and be prepared;
- o Choose suitable trainers for the project (communicative, dynamic);
- o Flexible schedule (for mood and energy)
- o Using different environments and places for activities;
- 0 Always respect nature.







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