



Developing Attunement through the Experience of Joy

GUIDELINES FOR ADULT EDUCATORS

Result R4-A5

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Gender declaration

For reasons of better readability, the language forms male, female and diverse (m/f/d) are not used simultaneously. All references to persons apply equally to all genders. The abbreviated form of language has exclusively editorial reasons and does not imply any valuation.



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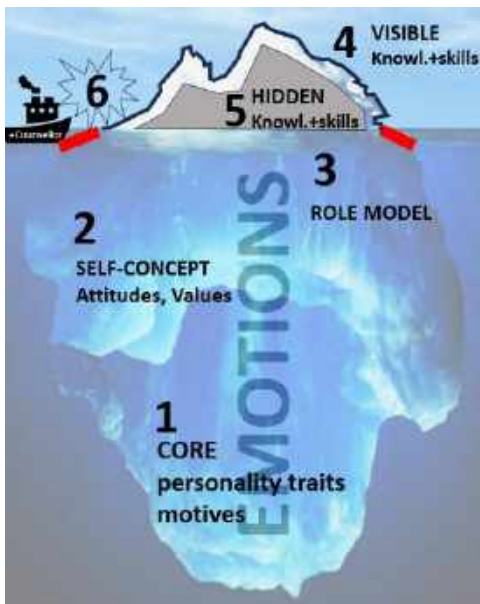
1. Introduction

These ‘guidelines for Adult Educators’ aims to take an in-depth look at selected approaches within the JOY. The ratio behind these Guidelines for Adult Educators is the fusion of five socio-creative approaches and the combination with a bottom-up approach of Valuation of Prior Learning, as to motivate, to stimulate NEETs to become more aware of their being and their abilities and to increase their employability and their interest for further Education or Training, and to increase their joy and well-being.

The JOY method was developed within the frame of the Ode to Joy – Developing Attunement through the Experience of Joy project, a project co-funded by the Erasmus + project from the European Union.

The Joy project has as target group the young adults (15-29 years) who are “Not in Employment, Education and Training” (NEET). The reasons for being not in education and not at work varies from (early) school-leavers not interested in work, young women who are at home taking care for a child or for other family members, people who not able to work, young adults who are ill, frustrated, disappointed, up to those who are not registered (illegal work). The all lack a visibility of who they are and what there are able and interested in to do and how the (want to) learn . The learning outcomes are often not visible to the outside world. Reasons are, for instance, because they are not aware of their competencies, or they are hiding/protecting themselves, or because they are not able to promote themselves.

A comparison of a human being can be made with an iceberg. The iceberg-competence model shows certain challenges that JOY and valuation in general must deal with. 90% of the volume of an iceberg lies under water, only 10% is above water surface. And from that 10% is only the outside layer visible. And this part is often covered with a thick protection shield.



1. The **personality traits** and **motives** are mostly hidden deep in a person. The people we work with require cautious and careful interventions.
2. By working on the **self-concept**, self-evaluation, **self-esteem**, and a self-image, a person has to change existing attitudes and personal value norms.
3. Each person fulfils one or more **role models** that can strongly be influenced by the environment and often little by a strong self-concept.
4. The **positive emotions** are giving strength and support opening up. Negative emotions make the person to hide even more or to fight against the influences.



5. The visible part is the hardest and most complex, it should not be destroyed but gently shaped by the person himself, through working with the deepest layers.
6. In the core of the iceberg, there is a selection of knowledge and skills that are kept hidden for different reasons (personal experiences as being a refugee, bullying, abuse at home, childcare, school, ...).

The outside world can only see the outside of the part above water and people often protect this part with a thick shield.

The unknown size and shape of the submerged part of the iceberg in the sea poses a danger to ships (e.g. career guides, parents) that get too close. They all Rescue services may damage their ships and as a reaction a person may be reluctant to co-operate. And underwater there are submarines, unnoticed, coming closer to the hidden part of a person. The intentions of these intruders are unknown.

The JOY approach is making the inner side more visible for the person themselves and for the outside world, become more aware, increase their self-esteem, strengthen their personality, their self-concept and to lower the protect shield. JOY addresses the positive competence of a NEET-person and uses a fusion of five socio-creative methods combine with a method of recognising and valuing competences.

The JOY instruments combined with the valuation approach are fundamental for:

2. Becoming aware of all the elements in the iceberg competencies model.
3. Connecting all these elements together.
4. Developing/adapting toward a change in their set of norms and values.
5. Understanding why these elements are connected and in which way they can influence the well-being.
6. Using and controlling positive emotions.
7. Describing competences.
8. Making competences more visible, usable, and valuable.



2. The JOY results

The project results offer supporting background information, guideline, the JOY-model and approach, alternate curricula, a toolbox with training materials, a position paper and these guidelines for adult educators. All these documents can be downloaded from the

JOY-resources on the JOY-website:

<https://joy-experience.eu/resources/>

These resources are:

1. A **research report** of the perception of the actors in the system (NEETs, companies, Education, Government), including a needs analysis for the impact of COVID19 and the economic tensions on the position of NEETs.
2. The **JOY-guideline for a pedagogical methodology** for the JOY-training instruments.

Based on the research and the guideline, methods/approaches were selected which provides trainers and adult educators with detailed knowledge to enrich their working practice and supporting them in their curriculum-planning and implementation task.

3. the **Joy-Toolbox** with a collection of specific exercises and instruments of the methods (drama, storytelling, working with nature, bodywork, symbol work, bottom-up valuation of prior learning) that aim to enhance the experience of positive emotions.
4. the **Joy-handbook** will be a collection of articles about the approaches and the impact mechanism of the methods serving as a “theoretical” background for the Toolbox.
5. The **JOY-card set**, with summaries of the toolbox activities.
6. The **JOY Course** with training schemes, that includes structure/materials needed to increase the awareness of competences and the connection with their emotions, personal characteristics, motivation, and the role they play. The training approach is multilevel, multidisciplinary, and work-based, in order to train a NEET-person in a relatively short time, including elements for valuation of informal and non-formal learning.
7. A **synthesis report** of the results above and scenarios and advice for further application of the Joy-model, procedures, and instruments.
8. A **Positioning paper** with policy recommendations.
9. These **guidelines for adult educators**

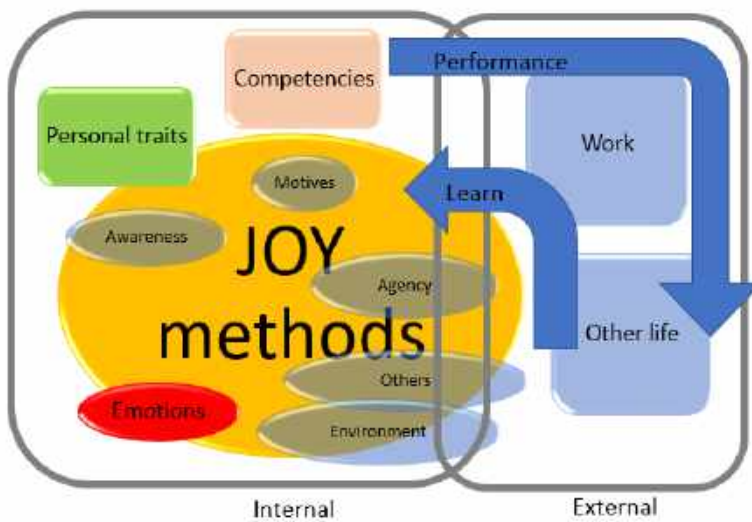
LINK JOY-resources on the JOY-website: <https://joy-experience.eu/resources/>



3. The JOY model

(more information can be found in the research report and the handbook)

Different factors lead to personal well-being, and also there is a very complex dynamic in-between them. Practitioners working with complex dynamics, have to see the whole picture, although we can only intercept with small elements, the key is to find the factor(s) in the dynamics, where our intervention can reach the most potential impact.



The two main areas interacting are the “inside”/internal, and the “outside”/external: the person and the environment. Coaches, counsellors, and trainers cannot have a direct impact on the “outside” of the person, however through working with the individual factors, they can have an impact on them as well as they have an impact on the internal environment of our client.

The main area of our JOY method is the internal world of a person:

1. **Personality traits**
2. **(Positive) emotions**
3. **Awareness**
4. **Motives**
5. **Agency** (the competence to act and having control).

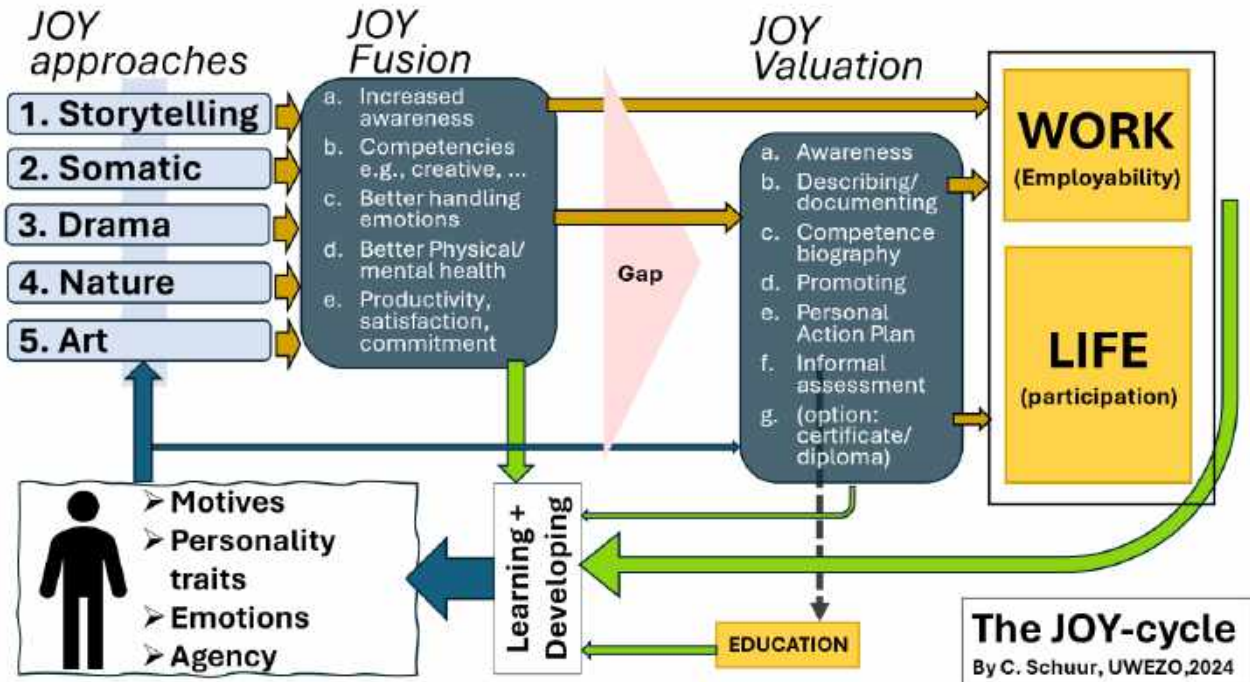
And the combination with the valuing process of learning outcomes against a combination of different norms and values (1) personal, 2)social,3) societal/work, and 4) formal (qualifications).

To feel in control, we need to have an awareness of our feelings, motives, and personality traits. The level of personal agency can change throughout our lives.



4. The JOY-process

The steps in the JOY-process



STEP 1. Fusion of socio-creative approaches

Combinations and fusions of the socio-creative methods of Storytelling, somatic, Drama, Nature, and Art, lead to:

- *An increased awareness*
- *The (further) development of competencies, such as creativity, communication, teamwork, innovation*
- *A better handling and use of emotions*
- *Physical and mental healthier*
- *More attentive, satisfied and committed, most likely leading to higher productivity and fewer mistakes.*

STEP 2: Valuation of the learning outcomes.

The outcomes of the socio-creative exercises, combined with other personal traits, motives, emotions and agency.

- *Further development of the awareness of competencies, more related to functioning in society and work.*
- *Analysing the personal process of putting competencies into action*



- *Improving ways to present their competencies to employers and in their social environments.*
- *Planning their personal development*

More insight in valuation of prior learning can be found in annex 3.

STEP 3: Learning and consolidating.

Making their continuous learning visible and how it contributes to their sustainable development.

- *Continuous informal and non-formal learning in work and society.*
- *Learning from the Socio-creative exercises and the valuation of their competencies*
- *Learning from putting their talents (competencies, personal traits, motivation, and emotions) into a “personal enterprise”.*



5. The JOY handbook

As result R2 a handbook is published, which is a tool to go in depth the Joy method: this is composed by a set of disciplines which focuses on providing tools to support NEET people in rediscovering themselves. Storytelling, dance, somatic, working with nature and art are the main approaches identified, which can facilitate connection with the self. The JOY method thus tries to help these people look for the right motivation to start an educational or professional pathway.

In this handbook, by interviewing experts in the various fields, the partners tried to understand why these methodologies can be particularly functional in activating positive emotions. Each partner interviewed a professional belonging to one of the above-mentioned disciplines and asked him or her how the chosen approach is able to support positive emotions and enhance the learnings previously acquired by people during their past experiences.

This handbook demonstrates, through the words of the chosen experts, the fundamental importance of a combined method, capable of bringing together different approaches that all aim at the well-being of the person. By paying attention to what was explained by the people interviewed, it is possible to see how these methods are all closely related to each other and can easily be used to enable the person who decides to try them out to investigate his or her deepest desires. Rediscovering the self, paying attention to one's unexpressed feelings, and admitting one's limitations but also one's abilities increases self-esteem, strengthens one's self-image and enables the individual to face life with different strength and joy. Dancing, storytelling, contact with nature, creativity, and improvisation are all parts of a great self-exploration mechanism. All this, combined with an appreciation of what has been learnt in non-formal contexts, leads the individual to feel capable, once again able to have different experiences in various areas of life, no longer stuck in a sense of incapacity and frustration.

The handbook concludes with an article on the importance of the bottom-up method of the valuation of prior learning (VPL) as a starting point in the context of working with NEETs but also in educational work in general.

The manual helps to deepen and clarify doubts concerning the JOY method approaches and that it is an opportunity for personal enrichment and growth. Moreover, it explores the socio-creative methodologies with practical exercises on the Joy Toolbox, which you can find on the project website (www.joy-experience.eu). For further theoretical content on the following methodologies, it is possible to explore our Joy Model, always from our free educational resources. En-JOY the reading!



6. Effective guidelines for adult educators

6.1 Introduction:

Informal, non-formal and formal Learning by Adults plays a crucial role in today's society, catering to the diverse needs and interests of the adult learners and driven by the ever-faster changing world, increasing complexity and an insecure future. Whether learning in formal institutions, community centres, or workplace settings, adult educators face unique challenges and opportunities. To ensure optimal learning outcomes, educators need to employ effective strategies tailored to the specific needs of adult learners. In this manual, we'll explore practical guidelines to help adult educators foster a supportive and engaging learning environment.

The Joy method encompasses five socio-creative approaches:

1. **Storytelling and narrative techniques** are related to the art of narrating thoughts, emotions, and experiences through a process of identification. These methodologies allow the person to undertake a path of interior growth and self-understanding in an environment that cares for the individual's needs.
2. **Drama therapy** is the use of theatre techniques to facilitate personal growth and promote mental health. The participants are immersed in the subject, and their bodies, minds, and emotions are highly active when they become engrossed in the drama.
3. **Somatics** is a field within bodywork and movement studies which emphasizes internal physical perception and experience. The term is used in movement therapy to signify approaches based on the soma, or "the body as perceived from within".
4. **Nature-based techniques** have several other additional features, besides using nature and the connection to nature. The methods here apply specific developing targets (such as social competence, behavioural skill, personal competence, self-knowledge, etc...) and reflection. Human is considered part of nature.
5. **Art** is an essential tool in making people feel better, find more inspiration and energy, can be more creative, have higher productivity and/or increase retention, and make people more resilient.

Added to these 5 approaches is the **Valuation of Prior Learning**, which values bottom-up against the different valuation standards/systems a person has to deal with.

1. *A personal standard/norm driven by personality traits, emotions, and motivation (like an iceberg, most not visible)*
2. *Social standards, such as family, friends, colleagues*
3. *Organisational standards, like volunteers, hobby-clubs.*
4. *National and EU standards/function profiles.*



6.2 Collaborative and Respectful Learning Environment

Essential is to create a safe learning environment and a respectful learning atmosphere that encourages active participation, collaboration, and mutual respect among learners. This is done by incorporating interactive activities, group discussions, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities to promote engagement and knowledge sharing. The adult educator and the participants address learners' diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, fostering an inclusive environment in which NEETs feels understood, valued, and heard.

A safe, collaborative, and respectful learning environment is essential for fostering engagement, participation, and mutual respect among NEETs. In such an environment, learners feel valued, supported, and empowered to contribute actively to their training experience. It is the responsibility of the adult educators to create spaces where learners can collaborate, share ideas, and learn from one another respectfully and inclusively.

Why collaboration and respect Matter:

The reasons for safety, collaboration and respect are that they are the foundational elements of effective adult training. Collaborative learning activities promote **active engagement (agency)** and participation among learners, leading to deeper understanding and retention of course material. Such an environment also encourages learners to share their **diverse perspectives**, experiences, and insights, enriching discussions and enhancing learning outcomes for all participants.

Collaborative learning experiences help **develop essential competencies** such as communication, teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving, which are valuable in both personal and professional contexts. Learners are more **motivated**, and a respectful learning environment fosters a sense of belonging, acceptance, and psychological safety, reducing stress and anxiety levels among NEETs and **enhancing overall well-being**.

How to foster collaboration and respect?

Communicate **clear expectations** for behaviour, participation, and communication from the outset, emphasising the importance of collaboration, active listening, and mutual respect. Begin sessions with **icebreaker activities** or introductions to help learners get to know one another, build rapport, and create a sense of community. Part of the JOY approach is **getting to know yourself**, to become aware of competencies, personality traits, emotions, and motives. Incorporate **group work, discussions**, and peer-to-peer learning activities into the training approach to promote collaboration and knowledge sharing. Provide clear guidelines and roles for group tasks to ensure equitable participation.

- *Encourage the NEETs **to active listening** by modelling attentive listening behaviour, summarising, and paraphrasing others' contributions, and asking clarifying questions to demonstrate understanding.*
- *Foster a culture of **respectful communication** by modelling respectful language,*



acknowledging diverse viewpoints, and addressing conflicts or disagreements constructively.

- *Encourage learners to provide **constructive feedback, feedforward and feed-up** to their peers on their work, presentations, or contributions, emphasising the importance of supportive and respectful critique.*
- *Provide opportunities for NEETs to **reflect** on their learning experiences and provide feedback on the learning environment, teaching methods, and course content.*

6.3 Understand the characteristics of NEETs: key insights for Adult Educators

Adult education, especially for NEETs, is a dynamic field that caters to the diverse needs and motivations. Unlike traditional students, NEETs bring life experiences, responsibilities, and expectations to the training group, but can also bring resistance, history, failures. To effectively engage and support NEETs, educators must understand their unique characteristics and tailor teaching approaches accordingly. Some of the key characteristics of NEETs define the implications for the teaching/learning. Recognising these personality traits is essential for tailoring training approaches effectively.

Adult learners typically exhibit a high degree of self-direction or resistance in their learning endeavours. Unlike children or adolescents, young adults should be motivated and **self-direct** by their own goals and interests rather than external directives. With JOY they learn to take control of their learning process, set their own objectives, and determine the pace and direction of their learning journey. The JOY approach develops this intrinsic motivation by providing opportunities for self-directed learning activities, goal setting, and autonomy in decision-making.

Young adult learners bring to the training **life-experience**. These experiences have shaped their perspectives, values, and attitudes, and can enrich training with their diverse insights and viewpoints. Educators can leverage this experiential knowledge by bringing examples, case studies, and real-world applications into the training. Encouraging the young learners to share their experiences and insights fosters a collaborative and enriching learning environment for all participants.

The practical **relevance** of the subject matter to their personal or professional lives motivates the young adults. The learning outcomes of a JOY training must immediately be felt, applicable and have tangible benefits, such as being more aware, accept peer-support, acquiring new skills, finding and getting more recognition, solving real-life problems, and advancing their work/life careers. This can be done by enhancing the relevance of their instruction by connecting JOY course content to learners' goals, interests, and real-world challenges and to highlight practical implications and opportunities. It reinforces the relevance of the material and enhances NEETs engagement.

Balancing multiple responsibilities, such as work, family, social/community commitments, and planning activities is a challenge for NEETs. Planning and time constraints can significantly impact



their ability to participate fully in training activities and complete assignments on schedule. In the JOY approach these constraints are recognised and discussed in small groups or plenary by reflection, feedback, feedforward, and feed-up from peers and by self-reflection fosters a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

NEETs who participate in the JOY-training are searching for and be motivated to achieve learning goals and objectives. Whether satisfying personal interests, improve their (future) situation in life, pursuing further recognition of their competencies, advancing their careers, they approach the JOY-training with a search for meaning, purpose and determination. Adult educators can capitalise on this intrinsic motivation by selected and aligning the JOY training elements and activities, providing meaningful feedback and recognition, and fostering a supportive learning community. Acknowledging learners' progress and celebrating their achievements increases their **self-esteem**, **positive emotions** (e.g. satisfaction, proud, joy), and **motivation**. This strengthens their **goal-orientation**, commitment and enhances their sense of accomplishment.

6.4 Use of varied training methods and resources:

The JOY-approach employs a diverse range of training methods and resources (see the JOY Toolbox) to accommodate different learning styles and preferences and to reach different aims. JOY incorporates **different socio-creative, experiential learning methods**, dance, role-play, hands-on learning activities, and real-world situations to cater to the varied needs of the NEETs. Flexibility in training approaches, applying alternate curricula, varying learning styles, connecting to recognition of their competencies and fusion of the methods, allows educators to adapt to the preferences and interests of their learners effectively.

JOY encourages peer training, group work, and collaborative projects among the NEETs. The peer training promotes **active engagement**, **knowledge sharing**, and **social interaction**, while collaborative activities foster teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills. Moreover, the JOY training enforces self-(e)valuation, self-steering, self-promotion in which the young adult is steering his/her own learning, development, and activities.

6.5 Critical thinking and problem-solving skills:

JOY stimulates critical thinking and problem-solving skills by engaging learners in challenging activities and discussions. The JOY exercises encourage the NEETs to question their assumptions, to train them to analyse critically, and to define problem-solving strategies to their real-life situations. It provides opportunities for self- and peer-reflection and constructive feedback, feedforward and feed-up helps learners develop their analytical and decision-making abilities.

Some practical strategies for fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills are:

- *In the JOY-exercises the young adults are trained to ask questions, explore topics of interest, become more aware of their body and mental state, and investigate solutions independently. This stimulates curiosity and fosters **critical inquiry** by exploring, experimenting, and discovering.*



- Joy uses **Socratic questioning techniques** to stimulate (self-)critical thinking and encourages NEETs to analyse and evaluate information, consider alternative perspectives, and articulate with and for others their reasoning through open-ended questioning.
- Integrate problem-based learning activities into the alternate curriculum, where the NEETs work collaboratively to identify, discuss, and solve personal, social, and societal problems studies. JOY thus promotes active learning, teamwork, and the application of knowledge in practical contexts, and train them in problem-solving skills and creative thinking.
- The VPL-component of the JOY-method incorporates **analytical writing** assignments, **reflective** journals, and guided reflections encourages the young adults to critically evaluate and value their experiences, articulate their thoughts, and connect the outcomes with common norms and values at personal, social, societal, work, and formal (qualification) levels.
- JOY emphasises on **role-playing** exercises, simulations, and scenario-based activities in order to cope with real-world contexts. The “Drama/dance” approach in JOY encourages empathy, perspective-taking, and decision-making under pressure, develop the positive impact of emotions and to cope with and/or use negative emotions (e.g. fear, angry, disappointments, frustration), enhancing learners' mental strength and to respond effectively to challenges in life.

The JOY approach connects body, mind, personality traits, competencies, emotion by the integrating the socio-creative methods and connecting this with the demand in the world around the young adult. The adult educator trains the young adults to draw connections between different areas, themes, and diverse perspectives and to deal with the challenges.

As stated before, the adult educator emphasises on constructive feedback on critical thinking and problem-solving efforts, on the importance of clarity, honesty, coherence, and evidence-based reasoning and augmenting.

6.6 Continuous learning and competence development:

Continuous learning is not just a one-time event but a lifelong journey of growth and development. An adult educator embraces a culture of lifelong learning by promoting sustainable competence development and personal growth among the adult learners. This includes an offer of opportunities for further learning, personal and professional development, and competence enhancement to empower the young adults to pursue their goals and aspirations. Provide access to resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities to support their ongoing learning journey.

In the JOY training continuous learning is embraced by:

- *Allocating time and patience for learning.*
- *Setting clear goals.*
- *Experiencing the positive feeling of mental growth.*
- *Increasing curiosity.*



- *Asking feedback (from mentors, peers, adult educators, family and friends).*
- *Embrace failure.*
- *Celebrate and enjoy!!!*

By embracing continuous learning, the adult learners enhance their competences, adaptability, and resilience, positioning themselves for success in an ever-faster-changing world. A JOY training seizes every opportunity to expand their horizons and unlock their full potential. The journey of learning never truly ends.

6.7 Technology

In a JOY training, the use of technology is reduced to a minimum. The trainees have to turn off their mobiles during the training sessions. The JOY training is focused on the individual young adult and uses group exercises to become aware of personality traits, emotions, motivation, exchange with and learn from others, reflect, evaluate, value, increase self-esteem. Technology would interfere and disturb the socio-creative training and the valuation of prior learning.

Although discussions and reflection of the use and influence of integrate technology into the learning environment and into daily life and work are held and it is used to find a new balance between the engagement, accessibility, and flexibility of technology. The direct (using ICT) and indirect (ICT that changes society/work) influence and impact of online (learning) platforms, multimedia resources, interactive simulations, and virtual collaboration tools on their lives are clarified. Each trainee can take/renew their own decision about the level of use of these technologies.

6.8 Evaluate and value learning outcomes and adapt accordingly.

The goal of a training is to facilitate meaningful learning experiences that learners to achieve their full potential. But successful learning outcomes requires more than just delivering content. It requires ongoing assessment, evaluation, valuing and adaptation. JOY offers practical approaches for enhancing training educational effectiveness and learners' success.

Main reasons for evaluation are accountability. Improvement, learners' success, curriculum alignment and continuous improvement. Therefore, the adult educator can apply different strategies, such as:

- *Define clear, measurable learning objectives (SMART): outline the knowledge, skills, and competencies learners are expected to acquire by the end of the JOY training.*
- *Use diverse assessment methods: e.g. elf- and peer evaluation, feedback, performance assessments, presentations, , portfolios.*
- *Collect and analyse data: analyse trainee performance, achievement, and engagement, and search for trends, patterns, and areas for improvement.*



- *Ask for trainee feedback: surveys, evaluations, focus groups, and informal discussions with trainees.*
- *Reflect on training practices.*
- *Collaborate and share insights, practices and approaches with colleagues and peers:*
- *Adapt training strategies and instruments:*

Continuously assess learner progress and satisfaction to gauge the effectiveness of teaching methods and make necessary adjustments. Solicit feedback from learners through surveys, evaluations, and informal discussions to identify areas for improvement and refinement. By monitoring learning outcomes and adapting instructional strategies accordingly, educators can ensure that their teaching remains responsive to the evolving needs of adult learners.

The JOY-approach creates a thoughtful and learner-centred approach that prioritises self- and peer-reflection, positive emotions, motivation, engagement, and meaningful relevance. By understanding the characteristics of NEETs, fostering a collaborative learning environment, utilising a fusion of training methods combined with the recognition of prior learning outcomes, enhances a sustainable learning experience for young adult learners. By following these guidelines, adult educators can empower learners to achieve their goals, fulfil their potential, survive and thrive in today's ever-changing world. And most important in good (mental) health and with Joyfully feelings.



1. Annex 1: About the JOY-project

The project Ode to Joy, is named after one of the positive emotions (joy, pride, contentment, esteem) which are catalysts for increasing people's satisfaction generally in their personal lives and professionally in their work. Joyful people are more motivated to act and participate, are much less likely to experience burn out, and have a better mental and physical health and are more resilient towards uncomfortable emotions. The partnership of the project wants to achieve this through fusing experience-based methods together, such as drama, bodywork, dance, music, Symbolwork, storytelling, nature work, that help NEETs reconnect with their body and mind, increasing their ability to experience joy and to connect and through this experience develop a greater sense of attunement and joy.

Moreover, considering that the recognition and validation of the competences acquired in non-formal and informal settings is difficult but extremely important for employability and participation, the Ode to Joy project wants to intervene with specific instruments that are able to connect with the deeper layers of a person (invisible knowledge and skills, social roles, self-image, personal characteristics, motives, and underlying positive emotions) and use the positive emotions to make them visible and connect them with recognizable demands from companies/organisations, through valuation of prior learning.

Main results are:

- *Joy Model* – a Guideline for a pedagogical methodology for the JOY-training instruments
- *Ode to Joy Educators' Resources – Toolbox and Handbook*: a collection of methods/approaches aimed at providing trainers and adult educators with detailed knowledge to enrich their working practice and supporting them in their curriculum-planning and implementation task.
- *JOY Course* – A training scheme which includes structure/materials aimed at increasing the awareness of competences and the connection with emotions, personal characteristics, motivation of the beneficiaries of the project.
- *JOY Positioning Paper* – a Memorandum of Understanding addressed to policymakers, stakeholders, and organisations dealing with NEETs to pave the way for the endorsement of the JOY-model, methodology and instruments in a wider EU level.

The partnership is the following:

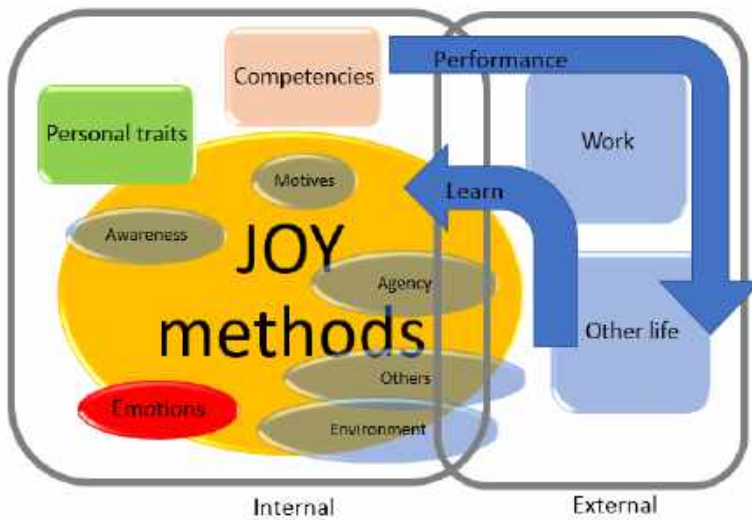
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- [Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo Danilo Dolci](#), Italy

Further information can be found at the following website: <https://joy-experience.eu/>



2. Annex 2: The JOY model and socio-creative methods

Finding out how to increase personal well-being, is not a simple issue. Complicated, because there are several factors leading to personal well-being, and also there is a very complex dynamic in-between them. Practitioners working with complex dynamics, have to see the whole picture, although we can only intercept with small elements. The key is to find the factor(s) in the dynamics, where our intervention can reach the most potential impact.



The two main areas interacting are the “inside”/internal, and the “outside”/external: the person and the environment. Coaches, counsellors, and trainers cannot have a direct impact on the “outside” of the person, however through working with the individual factors, they can have an impact on them as well as they have an impact on the internal environment of our client.

The external dimension in our model consists mainly of “work” and “other

life areas” or personal life itself. It is rather arbitrary: why mention work and not mention other important areas, like family or hobbies? It is because of the objective of our model: how to increase the level of well-being in work-related circumstances, including preventing burning out. Work is a very important factor of our lives, an area, which in itself is not of choice: as adults, all of us need to work.

For some, the area of work and other life areas are more overlapping, however for most people, there is a clear distinction in this issue. Several people feel the area of work is only a “must do”, which is a clear factor for unhappiness. If we spend 40 or more hours per week going somewhere we don’t want to be and doing something which we don’t like, that’s an issue to work with. On the other hand, NEETS do not have regular work. It is the consequence of the definition. But they have to deal with how they approach the job. If they feel competent and confident and they have a realistic self-valuation they will give a better impression in an interview and can get an easier and a better job.

The basic interface between work and internal life is the area of competencies. We present our inner selves in work through them. There are very functional (work-related) competencies—however counsellors or trainers do not tend to work with these.

The so-called methodological competencies, the ability to apply knowledge and methods to make sense of, and operate in any context, are also closely related, and our methods can have an impact



on them. Still, we are not directly aiming at them either. What is more important from our perspective are the personal competencies and social competencies. Personal competencies are personal traits and abilities that affect your results in the workplace and in life, like self-discipline, stability, stress resistance, integrity, self-reflection, creativity, and self-management. Social competencies are the ability to handle social interactions, having empathy, understanding the actions of others, and communication skills. Our JOY model has a direct impact on developing these through experience.

Other areas of life – family, friends, hobbies, learning, home etc. – can have an even bigger impact and blurred relationship with our internal life and feelings. Based on Maslow's pyramid we all know that environmental factors – having shelter and food and heating – are the basic needs to be solved, it has a very clear impact on how we actually feel. If we are cold or hungry, our interests and motivation are just crippled to do anything.

However, just on top of the physiological and physical safety, the third need of existence in Maslow's pyramid is relationships. The need for esteem and self-actualisation is above the relationships, but they are needs of growth. Relationships are partly outside – as the person we are in any kind of relation with -, and partly inside, as the relationship is the dynamics between us and the others, which is deeply rooted in our internal patterns of connecting and bonding. Our model directly addresses these two areas: providing a safe environment, where we can work with our relationship patterns.

The main dynamics between external areas and internal is happening through our “performance”. The important work here is to find the previously learnt and developed maladaptive patterns and behaviours and provide support in changing them.

The main area of our JOY method is the internal world of a person: personality traits, emotions, awareness, (personal) motives, and agency.

1. **Personality traits** are natural abilities we are born with. Some of us are personality-wise more introverted, others extroverted. Some of us enjoy working with details, others do not. Personality traits – although they evolve and very slightly change through a lifetime – cannot be externally changed. It might happen for example that due to a hardship a previously outgoing person becomes introverted, but in reality, a person will suffer in this state, and it will be based on fears, and not on a natural tendency.
2. The role of **emotions** in the learning and performing process has been a growing topic of research interest over the past 20 years, and a specific focus has been given by the neurosciences to the relationship between emotions, learning and achievement / performance. Emotions are deeply rooted in our somatic being, they are connected to our working body – “embodied” and are evolved for sustaining our lives and reproduction. Importantly, research has revealed that emotion and cognition are sustained between each other and thus interdependent – there is no such action which is not based on emotions.

However, unlike personality traits, emotions can be changed quite easily both from inside and outside. Just imagine such self-care methods when being tired and upset, like drinking



a hot, delicious coffee, being hugged, listening, or sitting down and meditating or sleeping. But even for basic self-care, we can tend ourselves much better, if we increase our awareness of our emotions.

3. We are not born with this **awareness** as much as we are born with emotions. We learn to differentiate them and recognise them from others, especially from our primary caretakers in the first years of life. This happens through the process, called mirroring, when our parent tells us, to reflect on how we feel: “my little baby is hungry...”. However, there is a level of what we learn at an early age, and for more complex feelings we have to learn to self-reflect and assess our own feelings. This self-reflection can clearly be developed.
4. Our **motives** – desires and drives which generate an effort toward reaching something we want, are also important factors related to learning and performance. They are in an interaction with our emotions, with our traits and our competencies, and usually, they drive us towards something which in the end makes us happy. Motives are driven by “gratification”, a positive result at the end of our actions – the higher the perceived positive result is, the larger our motive is. Throughout our lives we need to develop long-term motives, however, usually only long-term motives do not make us content in our lives. We always have to balance out short-term motives and long-term ones.
5. Finally, but not least importantly we reach into the factor of **agency**. Agency means that we feel in control of what happens to us, to feel to have an impact on our environment. To feel in control, we need to have an awareness of our feelings, motives, and personality traits. The level of personal agency is not the same throughout our lives. At the very beginning, babies cannot even have control over their own movement. They learn to control their body, later be in control of their feelings, and also later be in control of their circumstances.

Criteria for JOY methods

Based on our model, we consider those methods of working with clients, where the practitioners take into consideration all the different factors described in our previous section.

The methods should meet the following criteria:

- Person-centred approach
- Works in safe space (transient space)
- Experience-based
- Group method
- Leads to real-life outcomes
- Mindful approach of actual state
- Leads to increasing level of agency
- Validates of emotions, development of emotional intelligence
- Supports self-valuation, external valuation
- Helps to create and maintain healthy relationships



- Helps to be aware of our physical environment, both built and natural.

JOY methodologies

In the following section, we describe several different socio-creative methodologies fulfilling our criteria, which can also give inspiration for a further JOYful practice. We consider these methodologies to be leading to experience joy, contentment, and personal growth, based on our research and personal experience.

As a practitioner working with different groups, experiencing these methods can also be a good way to start to build up an own practice, or by learning any of these, continue with an existing approach.

The methods mentioned are not exclusive. There are several other methods, not mentioned here, leading to the same outcome. Also, a use of these methods with not so good facilitators can lead to less pleasant or less fruitful experience.

STORYTELLING AND NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES

Storytelling and narrative techniques (creative book therapy and poetry therapy) are related with the art of narrating thoughts, emotions, experiences through a process of identification. In fact, these methodologies allow the person to undertake a path of interior growth and self understanding into an environment that cares for the needs of the individual. These practices do not involve a simple chronological narration of the events, but their goal is to let users identify with the plot, feeling the story as their own. In doing so, the message crosses every barrier because it becomes the viewer's personal narration. In this way, the story becomes an experience for the user, who, through the narration of a fictitious story, manages to establish links with his/her own experience, finding answers to some questions about his/her own existence.

Storytelling turns out to be an important and innovative methodology because it can be used with different groups of people, and it works in very different areas. Currently we can briefly mention these different types of storytelling:

1. Oral Storytelling
2. Visual Storytelling
3. Narrative Storytelling
4. Digital Storytelling

In any case, the aims of this practice are disparate: therapeutic, commercial, health, religious, social, political, artistic, relational, scholastic, and so on. Therefore, storytelling is a broad practice that can be adapted to multiple contexts. It can be used as an educational method with distinct users to promote a path of growth and learning. Also, in the migration field storytelling has become an important practice to foster the integration of migrants within local communities.



Many projects were created to help increase the confidence and motivation of refugees in European Society. The projects allowed them to build a stage to share their story and increase their integration. Examples of such projects are:

- the *Misty Project* (<https://danilodolci.org/project/mysty/>)
- the *Storyliving Project* (<https://storylivingyouth.eu/partners/>)

DRAMA TECHNIQUES

Drama can be divided in drama as therapy and drama as a teaching method.

Drama therapy is the use of theatre techniques to facilitate personal growth and promote mental health. Drama therapy is used in a wide variety of settings, including hospitals, schools, mental health centres, prisons, and businesses. Drama therapy, as a modality of the creative arts therapies, exists in many forms and can apply to individuals, couples, families, and various groups. (Wikipedia) In drama as a teaching method, learners are fully involved in learning with drama. They are immersed into the subject. Their bodies, minds, and emotions are extremely active when they become engrossed in the drama. Activities in improvisation, pantomime, play-making, and scene re-enactment serve to develop the creative potential in the participants and help to develop critical thinking skills. (Google)

It has been well-known for a long time that drama is not only for actors. It can be therapeutical for anyone who is open to develop their personality with the help of the tools of drama. Our approach towards drama adjusts to all the criteria of the JOY Model. It follows the Rogerian theory; it's always used in a safe environment in small groups. It includes the mindfulness method; it deals with the emotions in a complex and person-centred way. Through the situational exercises the participants are supported to create healthy relationships with each other and from that they can have a great advantage in their external life (for example: peers, family, romantic relationships).

SOMATIK TECHNIQUES

Wikipedia states: "Somatics is a field within bodywork and movement studies which emphasizes internal physical perception and experience. The term is used in movement therapy to signify approaches based on the soma, or "the body as perceived from within". In dance, the term refers to techniques based on the dancer's internal sensation: Bodywork is a collective term relating to all techniques which are working with the body.

Somatic approach is an embodied approach: it believes that mind and body are inseparable, what happens in the mind / with the person is also happening with its body. Feelings are not happening in the mind, they happen in our whole, embodied, somatic self. Therefore, one of the simplest ways to experience joy is to work with the body.

There are different levels of using somatic approaches. It is always recommended in a workshop / class to reach a level of "embodiment", to have the participants arriving to their bodies, turning their attention inside, being mindful of the here and now. These can be reached through basic



breathing, relaxation, and movement exercises. Blindfolded movements are also often used to increase trust, or for learning experiences. Simple peer massage (when pair give a short shoulder massage, or people in a circle give each other massage) is also an often-used form of refreshing, focus-reorientation in workshops, training events. Any kind of nonverbal work is good for deepening the level of mindfulness, and somatic work is a good way to do so in both natural or artificial environment.

NATURE-BASED TECHNIQUES

In nature-based techniques, human is considered part of nature. In JOY, nature-based techniques have other additional several features, beside using the nature and the connection to nature. The methods we discuss here always apply specific developing target (such as: social competence, behavioural skill, personal competence, self-knowledge, etc...) and reflection. The two keys of these methods are the learning zone which considered to be between the comfort zone and the panic zone. It is called learning zone, because the aim is to move out of the comfort zone to the learning zone without reaching the panic zone. This is the place where our experiential learning process are the most effective. The other key is relationship: building a healthy relationship with nature, with the other participants and with ourselves.

The different objectives of the nature-based methods require different qualifications. The basic objective is joy itself. That means we can play together or can have a nice excursion just for having fun. That kind of objective generally requires no prior training, but some experience might be handy. The next level of objective is development., in which the session leader must have experience as a group leader, have a good understanding of the objective, as well as the characteristics of the group. It is also important to have experience in dealing with group dynamics. A further level of objective could be therapy. In that case, the group leader must be qualified to provide therapy as regulated in the country concerned. This usually requires at least a degree in psychology, often clinical psychology. Still, it often happens that an exercise done for pleasure or development has a therapeutic effect.

Experiential education, adventure, or nature techniques are highly pursued by those who would like to develop skills in problem-solving, communication, cooperation, failure tolerance. In these methods, the group works together to solve a problem out of their comfort zone. Realistic goals and joint effort increase mutual acceptance, trust, and self-confidence. The methods often use Kolb's circle of experiential learning. The group works together on planning, action, reflection, abstraction, application. Using this kind of approach and reflection the participants learn not only about the specific practice, but abstraction and application can help them to learn about themselves or others.

ART-RELATED METHODS



ART is the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty (aesthetic) or emotional power. It usually is limited to drawing, painting, sculpting.¹

Adults typically have complex, ambivalent feelings about art and art making; common responses range from dismissal and derision to awe and sometimes shame about their own lack of artistic skills. We become viewers of others' art rather than being active creators, and we lose the many benefits of creative self-expression. (American Scientist). ART offers a guidance in connecting or reconnecting with the creative practices that support mental health, and that help people to deal with life challenges and uncertainties and to become more resilient.

The objectives for using art are 1) healing or coping with mental or physical health problems, 2) increase creativity and create new things. 3) expressing oneself in a painting, drawing, sculpture, 4) develop better / other perceptions, 5) improve interpretation of objects and processes. Besides, art can be used to develop co-creation capabilities.

ART is an important tool in making people feel better, find more inspiration and energy, and can be more creative, have a higher productivity and/or increase the retention, make people more resilient. Results from a University of Essex study² showed that participants who worked in an enriched office environment, arranged with art and plants, worked 15% quicker and had fewer complaints than those working in a boring, corporate cubicle where all is done to avoid distraction. In an empowered work-environment, in which they could select and arrange the art and plants themselves people could work much more effectively. ART offers moments of distraction, a moment of escape, moments of re-energising. And art therapy is used to improve cognitive and sensorimotor functions, foster self-esteem, and self-awareness, cultivate emotional resilience, promote insight, enhance social skills, reduce, and resolve conflicts and distress, and advance societal and ecological change.

ART approaches

Art therapy may include creative exercises such as drawing or painting a certain emotion, creative journaling, or freestyle creation.

Art therapy is used to improve cognitive and sensorimotor functions, foster self-esteem, and self-awareness, cultivate emotional resilience, promote insight, enhance social skills, reduce and resolve conflicts and distress, and advance societal and ecological change.

Free painting is like an adventure trip, full of surprises and sensations. Many adults believe that they can only paint from a template and a theme in their heads. The surprise and increasing enthusiasm are great when they experience how easy (free) painting is. After a while nobody wants to paint sitting down, it's too restrictive.

¹ The term Arts includes also music, movement, writing, drama and other creative activities.



Free painting is like an adventure trip, full of surprises and sensations. Experiencing the space in motion, allowing more physicality and still being calm, this freedom flows into the pictures. Nothing distracts: Everything is there and can be painted within a protected space, free from pressure, influence, interpretation, and evaluation.

Visual, perceptual, emotional thinking is mainly located in the right hemisphere. And in the left hemisphere is the verbal, analytic, logical thinking mainly located. Betty Edwards, describes in her book 'The new drawing on the right side of the brain' methods to use the art of painting to increase the self-awareness, stimulate the increase the use of the right hemisphere.

A picture (or sculpture) is more worth a "thousand" words, meaning that the visual aspect of art means more than just colours, shapes, and designs. It can stimulate person's well-being and it brings life to society through prevailing measures.

Other project activities related to ART and NEETs are digital art, where young adults can use the opportunity to improve the competences that are needed for digital art and to be employed in this sector.



3. Annex 3: Valuation of prior competences – Valuation bridging the gap between emotions and formal recognition

One of the cornerstones of the JOY methodology is based on the Valuation of previously acquired skills. The basic idea is that in order to embark on a path of personal and professional growth, one should not only rely on knowledge acquired in the formal environment but also on life experiences gained independently. JOY approaches therefore tend to lead participants to rediscover themselves also by virtue of what they have learnt during their lives. Here, specifically, we will take a closer look at what the bottom-up method, based on the CH-Q method for sustainable self-management of competencies and the valuation of previously acquired skills consists of.

We are continuously being valued for what we know, what we do or who we are. We are valued in education, at work, socially and by ourselves. People's perspective is made of a combination of different valuation systems. Each system and each 'level' have their own set of norms and values. The competencies must be made visible and understandable to oneself and to others to make a valuation possible. People have to become aware of their own competencies, understand the power of each of those combinations of competencies.

The result of a positive valuation makes people feel more satisfied, proud, confident. This leads to greater creativity, productivity, and motivation. This state also helps people feeling happier and more interested in improving themselves. Research² has found a link between an upbeat mental state and improved health, including lower blood pressure, reduced risk for heart disease, healthier weight, better blood sugar levels, and longer life. But it is not clear whether positive emotions lead to better health or being healthy causes positive emotions.

Through valuation we evaluate/estimate the nature, quality, ability, extent, significance, and/or the meaningfulness of our competencies. Valuation of competencies shows the real human potential based on the analysis (by oneself and by others) at four levels:

1. Personal (self-valuation of personality traits, emotions, motives)
2. Social, (valuation by family, friends, colleagues, volunteers, ...)
3. Methodological valuation of general competencies)
4. Functional competencies (work/function related)

Being positively valued strengthens our self-esteem, well-being, and identity, which consequently can increase our participation in life and work. It gives meaning to our life; as we become stronger,

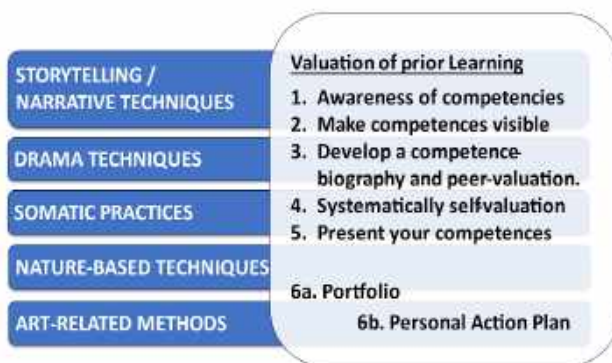
² National Institute of Health, (2015) <https://www.nih.gov/sites/default/files/news-events/research-matters/2015/20151224-nihm-highlights-full-list.pdf>



we have less fear of failure, less worries and a better self-control and self-management of the use and development of our competencies.

The European council encourages Member States to put in place national arrangements for validation. These arrangements often contain the formal Validation/recognition of Prior Learning (VPL) “to identify, document, assess and certify (=validate) all forms of learning to use this learning for advancing their career and for further education and training.”³ Validation is defined as the process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard (e.g. NQF)⁴. The participation in VPL is limited, mainly because 1) the formal standards don't connect well with the personality traits, individual motivations, emotional competences of and meaningfulness for a person, 2) It is often a lot of work and 3) for most of the professions it is not a guarantee for getting a job.

The JOY methodology adds valuable exercises from different methods to the prior learning assessment process based on the CH-Q⁵ approach. To a certain extent, these exercises provide special insight and support for the assessment of prior learning.



1. Becoming aware
2. Making competencies visible
3. Develop a competence-biography and peer-valuation.
4. Systematically self-valuation
5. Presentation of competencies
6. Plan for the future: action plan.

Competence assessment in the JOY methodologies is in addition to the valuation method and is partly overlapping. The benefits of combining the two approaches are listed below.

1. Competence development. JOY methods and exercises can develop several types of competencies, such as creativity, communication, sensitivity, group-work.
2. Connecting the awareness of specific competencies with underlying emotions, motivations, and personality traits.
3. Making competencies better or in other valuation systems visible and valued.
4. Indirect positive impact on the valuation of other competencies.
5. Strengthening the use of personality traits and increasing self-esteem.

³ <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en>

⁴ NQF = National qualifications frameworks classify qualifications by level, based on learning outcomes - that is, what the holder of a certificate or diploma is expected to know, understand, and be able to do. This classification reflects the content and profile of qualifications. (CEDEFOP)

⁵ CH-Q is a bottom-up approach for recognising competencies, leading to a sustainable self-management of them.



6. Effective use and control of emotions opens hidden and unexpressed positive emotions and understands how they contribute to well-being and how they affect negative emotions.
7. Increased motivation to participate, persist, or work to achieve.
8. Strengthening the identity.
9. Experiencing new context, which can increase the understanding of competencies.
10. Discovering/recognising cultural and contextual meaning and planning appropriate actions and behaviours.

Let's take a deeper look into the valuation systems in the life of a person. A person is generally confronted with valuations at three different levels. In the overall assessment system, from the person's point of view, these three levels are linked to different normative approaches (ranging from self-assessment to National Qualification Framework validation and outcomes from self-esteem to graduation).

There are two main approaches in valuation:

- Bottom-up (Valuation + JOY-approach)
- Top-down (National Qualification Framework + Validation of Prior Learning)

In the following, different ways of valuation will be considered, starting with individual one and ending with the Valuation method. When combined, these valuations can lead to a good overall assessment of the person.

Self-valuation

The centre of valuation, the point where all the valuation systems and types meet, is the INDIVIDUAL. S/He needs to be competent in bringing all the valuations together and to match it with his/her self-valuation results. The challenge is to connect deeply and honestly, by diving in the deeper layers of being, where there are personality traits, emotions, self-image, roles played and motivation.

External valuation (valuing)

By external valuation we mean that carried out by colleagues, working place but also friends, family. In the work environment, it can also turn into salary increases, recognition of various kinds. Important competencies nowadays, in the ever-faster changing society and work-environments, are communicating and networking. Often, however, young people struggle to find work in their area of expertise or study, having to accept low paid jobs. This increases their stress level and lowers their self-esteem. It is also a fact that 65-94% of adult learning is informal. The level of participation in informal learning remains high until retirement, while the level of formal learning (and assessment) declines rapidly after the age of 40. It is therefore moderately unreasonable to place so little emphasis on what is learned and is valued in informal or non-formal settings.

Validation / Formal Accreditation (VPL, VNIL, APL, APEL, etc.)

The formal approach for recognition (Education, Validation of Prior Learning) is based on the National Qualification Framework or on branch standards. The validation is strongly promoted at



global, EU and national levels. In 2022, more than 40 % of people aged 25-34 years in the EU had completed tertiary education. In February 2021, the Council of Europe approved a resolution that sets an EU level target: the share of people aged 25-34 years with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 45 %, by 2030. Therefore, formal accreditation, even at the lowest EQF levels, will need even more formal accreditation in education systems through validation. ⁶.

The use of VPL in the formal approach to education and work is very limited, despite all the national and international efforts of the last 20 years. Despite the attempt to increase strategies, Cedefop states that we have little information on the level of adoption of this system.⁷ Monitoring systems for validation are still limited and little is known about the level of acceptance of validation as a pathway for assessing or certifying competences.

JOY Valuation of Prior Learning

The JOY bottom-up method, starts with the creation of a safe environment, with assessment at the personal level, then reaching the social level and thus providing a basis for the recognition of competences at the informal and non-formal level.

It works like a pyramid. At the bottom, we have a very dynamic process of self-estimation in which the emotions play a very important role. Positive emotions will support this process and fear and anxiety will protect us from making wrong decisions or dangers that are on our life pathway.

The JOY bottom-up method strengthens the emotional quotient with:

- Emotional self-awareness.
- Emotional self-control.
- Motivation.
- Adaptability.
- Achievement orientation.
- Positive outlook.
- Empathy.
- Social skills.
- Organizational awareness.
- Influence.
- Coach and mentor.
- Conflict management.
- Teamwork.
- Inspirational Leadership.

The figure below gives an overview of the different recognition levels, norms, values. At the top is the formal recognition, the validation, confined in a formal framework (EQF/NVQ) of laws and regulations, ending with a diploma or certificates. It is static system, in which changes / adaptation take place at a very slow pace. And as our vocational education system is build on this framework, the adaptation of the formal learning environment, also takes a long time. And if we assume that a) more that half of the jobs in 2030 do not yet existing, b) the system will change slowly and c) a person intuitive expects that short valuation processes in the networks they are in, most likely will guarantee a better future.

⁶ [European Union, 2022](#)

⁷ [CEDEFOP](#)

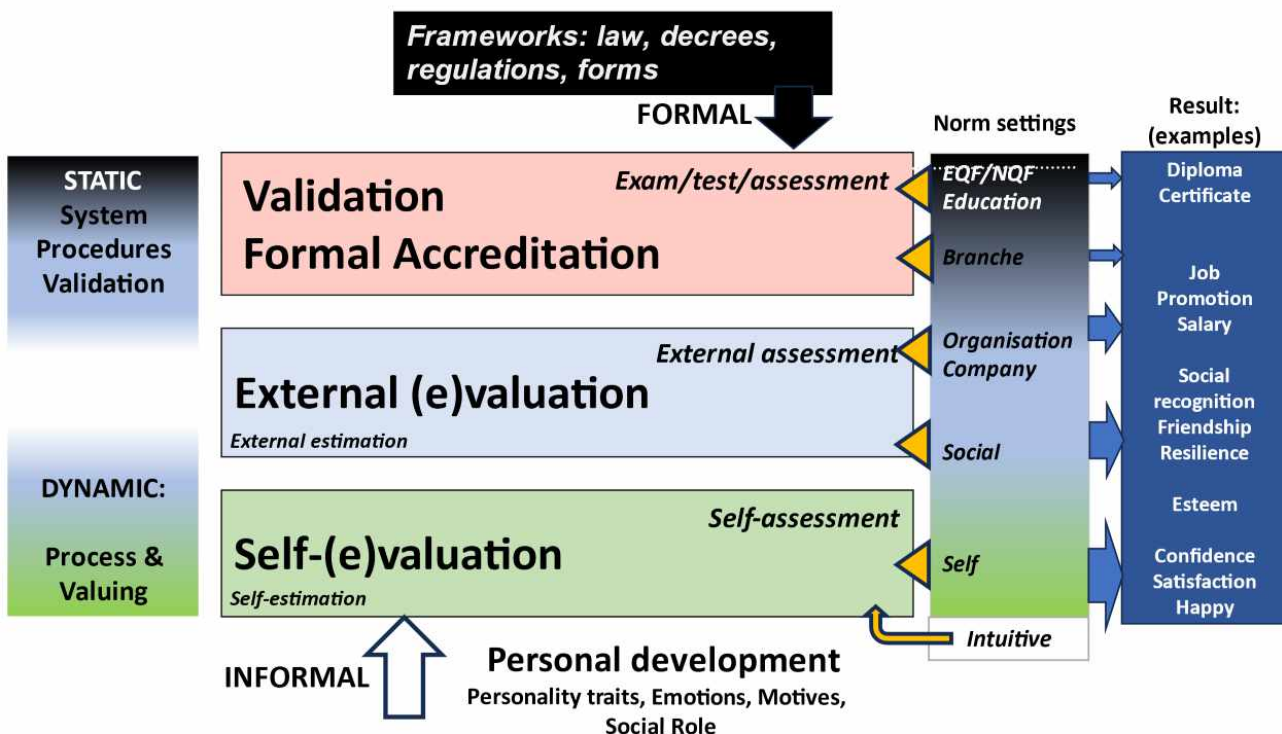


The strength of the bottom-up approach are the flexibility and adaptability and the direct result at personal and social level. Positive valuation has a direct impact on the, the confidence, self-esteem, resilience and will positively influence the positive emotions like proudness, happiness, satisfaction.

We need urgently to reconsider our approach in learning and valuing.

- There is a mismatch when 65-94% of all adult learning takes place informally (learner-centred and -steered, bottom-up) and the policy and educational focus of recognition of learning outcomes is on the formal recognition (system-directed, top down)
- Valuation has a short period for Return-on-Investment, which young adults appreciate, especially in the present fast-moving society.
- Research has shown that employers are more interested in the motivation, personality, attitude, general competencies, flexibility / adaptability of a person than in detailed description of all the learning outcomes during the years at school.

VALUATION PROCESS OF COMPETENCIES.: THE POWER OF CONTROL – Top down or Bottom-up



Kees Schuur, UWEZO GmbH, 2024

This bottom-up approach is highly necessary because:

- It answers the specific needs of a person through a person-centred approach.
- It provides for quick responses in the evaluation. While the formal (top-down) approach involves lengthy procedures, strong quality control and is often expensive (or subsidised).
- It gives special attention to the hidden qualities.



- It fits in with the reality of society, in which approximately 80% of adult learning takes place informally and it is estimated that up to 80% of competence recognition takes place informally.
- It pays strong attention to personal motivation, personality traits and positive emotions.

The JOY valuation method also pays special attention to the competence diagram invented by Spencer & Spencer, in 1993: the competence iceberg. In their book, these authors describe competences using the metaphor of the iceberg.

In the top of the iceberg, rising from the sea level are.

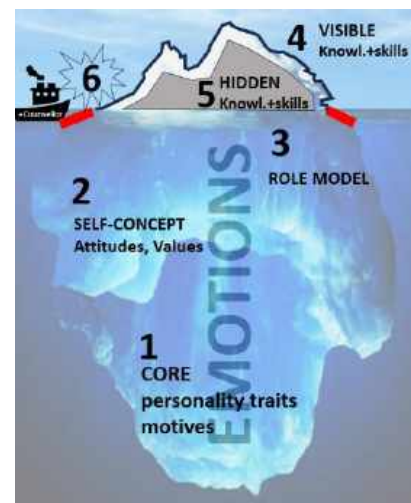
- **knowledge**
- **skills,**

under the sea level are

- **self-image** (identity and 'self-value')
- **social role** (expected attitude and behaviours for a function in a social or job function)
- **emotions**

and at a deeper level

- **personality traits** like intelligence, creativity, curiosity, conscientiousness, self-confidence, self-awareness, empathy, optimism, leadership, extra- and introversion, curiosity.
- **motivations**



The iceberg-competence model shows also certain challenges that JOY and valuation in general must deal with:

- The personality traits and motive are mostly hidden deep in a person. The people we work with require cautious and careful interventions.
- By working on the self-concept, self-evaluation, and self-esteem, a person has to change existing attitudes and value norms.
- Each person fulfils one or more role models that can strongly be influenced by the environment and often little by a strong self-concept.
- The visible state is the hardest and most complex, it should not be destroyed but gently shaped by the person himself, through working with the deepest layers.
- In the core of the iceberg, there is a selection of knowledge and skills that are kept hidden for different reasons (personal experiences as being a refugee, bullying, abuse at home, childcare, school, ...).
- The unknown size and shape of the submerged part of the iceberg in the sea poses a danger to ships that get too close. Rescue services may damage their ships and as a reaction a person may be reluctant to co-operate.

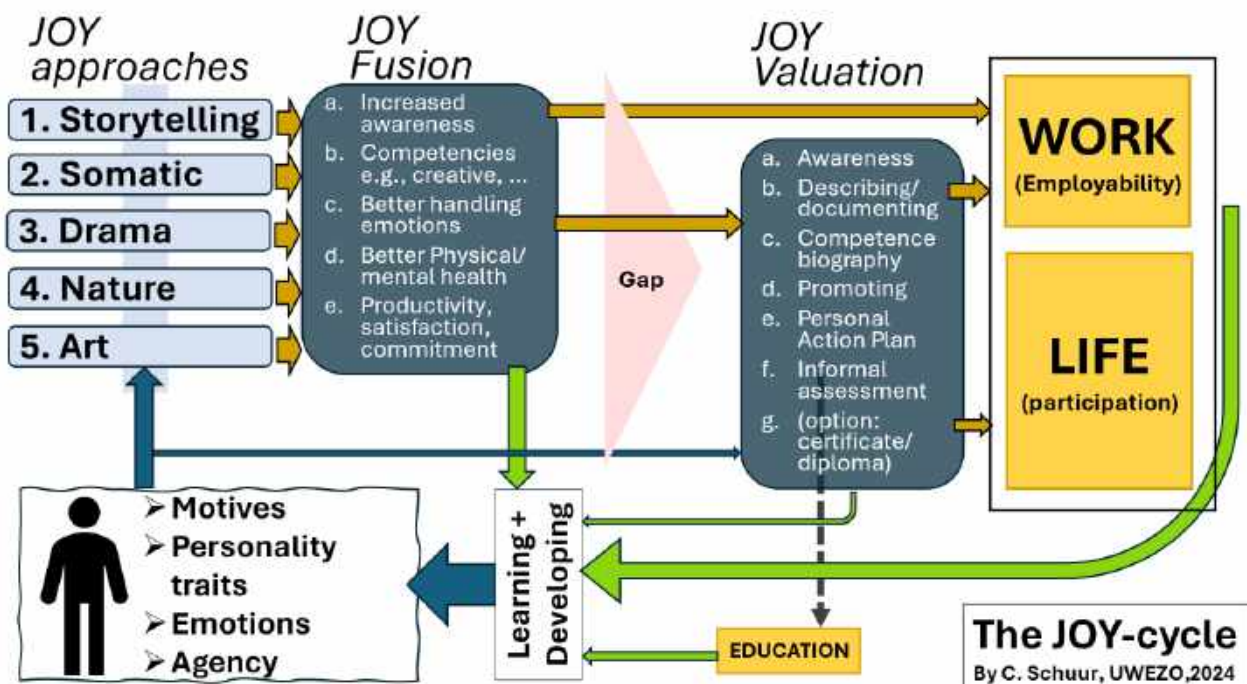


Making the competencies more visible and the person aware of underlying elements is important. It can lead people to a personal, sustainable management of their competencies. The metaphor of the iceberg also visualises the difference between the top-down VALIDATION approach and the bottom-up VALUATION approach. Validation mainly limits itself to identify, document and validate a specific part of the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to a qualification of the NQF or branch certifications but the 90% of an iceberg lies below the sea level and is not visible.

The socio-creative approaches, combined with the valuation approach are fundamental for:

- *Becoming aware of all the elements in the iceberg competencies model.*
- *Connecting all these elements together.*
- *Developing/adapting toward a set of norms and values.*
- *Understanding why these elements are connected and in which way they can influence the well-being.*
- *Using and controlling positive emotions.*
- *Describing competencies; making competencies visible, usable, and valuable.*

The combination of JOY exercises (art, somatic, drama, nature, storytelling) and the bottom-up valuation of competencies enable the specific needs of NEETs to be addressed, ranging from the search for meaning and identity to the desire to fit into a pathway within society, e.g. finding a job, linking ongoing informal learning with formal learning and validation opportunities.



This combined intervention can also be applied to younger people (as a preventive intervention) and older people (improvement, reintegration).



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