

Meaning of Life

Synoptic Table of Intermediate Activities

Title	Objectives	Overview	Evaluation & Reflection
Smart Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-regulation • Decision-making skills • Engagement <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Intermediate</p>	<p>This is an Individual Activity, where students learn how to create SMART goals, which draws on an action-orientated planning that helps them monitor their progress and face difficulties.</p>	<p>After the end of the exercise, students will reflect on how they felt during the exercise. Also, they will focus on what they learned and how they can implement it in their everyday lives and decisions.</p>
The Future Me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Decision-making skills <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Intermediate</p>	<p>This is an Individual Activity, where students envision their ideal future self and ideal world and try to identify what they do in the present to reach those desirable situations.</p>	<p>After the end of the exercise, students will understand that every time we are called to make important decisions. In every situation our prime goal should be to cultivate our empathy and flexibility to take the right decisions in the present that will result to our future fulfillment.</p>
My Signature in The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-presentation skills • Creativity <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Intermediate</p>	<p>This is an Individual Activity, where students present in a creative and constructive way, what they want their life to be about.</p>	<p>After the end of the exercise, students will try to answer question like: “What is the legacy you may wish to leave in the world?” or “What impact would you most like to make?” or “What are the goals that will help you to achieve your purpose in life?”.</p>
It's Flow Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Creativity • Engagement <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Intermediate</p>	<p>This is a Homework Activity, where students learn how to enhance their everyday experiences of flow, so as to focus on the immediate and moment-to-moment experience of doing things for their own sake, and thus become aware of their potential to overcome challenges.</p>	<p>Students try to find out in which ways flow may be further facilitated in the future. Also, students need to understand that flow is a state when attention becomes effortlessly focused on an activity, because someone is doing intrinsically motivated activities.</p>
The Motivational Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-regulation • Critical thinking skills • Decision-making skills <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Intermediate</p>	<p>This is a Homework Activity that strengthens students' motivation towards and engagement in their goals through a self-reflection writing process that promotes recognition and self-control of internal states.</p>	<p>Self-reflection writing that draws on skills in optimistic thinking, reminds us why our goal is important and helps us to better deal with our anxieties and negative thoughts that act as motivational setbacks.</p>
Loving-Kindness Meditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-regulation • Engagement 	<p>This is a Homework Activity, where students learn to cultivate an attitude of self-compassion, feelings of</p>	<p>Applying the practice to daily life is a matter of directing a friendly attitude. Such an attitude provides meaning not</p>

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	<p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Intermediate</p>	<p>goodwill, unconditional love and kindness. Also, they enhance their personal resources, self-acceptance and wellbeing.</p>	<p>only to their daily actions, but to the overall process of trying to fulfill their life, school or work happiness.</p>
<p>Seeing Yourself Through the Eyes of a Significant Other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Self-regulation <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Intermediate</p>	<p>This is a Homework Activity, where students nurture their self-esteem and self-compassion through seeing themselves with the genuine respect and positive appreciation with which they were treated by someone else in the past.</p>	<p>Students should think of which skills did they cultivated by applying this exercise and think of ways of using those skills in their everyday lives.</p>
<p>Find Common Interests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Communication <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Intermediate</p>	<p>Common interests increase understanding and job satisfaction By improvising and collaborating can influence communication that will lead to necessary adjustments for effective implementation of tasks. Finding a common activity in a group that is most enjoyable increases attention and willingness to participation</p>	<p>The more the activity is enjoyable, the more the satisfaction and attention, thus flow occurs. When individuals 'enter the flow state' Sawyer (2015) they feel more confident leading to job satisfaction and to increase meaning at work.</p>
<p>Flow Triggers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Self-Regulation • Flow <p><u>Level of Difficulty:</u> Intermediate</p>	<p>By improvising and collaborating can influence communication that will lead to necessary adjustments for effective implementation of tasks. Flow activities provide opportunities for relaxation and rest (Csikszentmihalyi) Flow can build mutual understanding and trust among team members.</p>	<p>The more the activity is enjoyable, the more the satisfaction and attention, thus flow occurs. When individuals 'enter the flow state' Sawyer (2015) they feel more confident leading to job satisfaction and to increase meaning at work. Participants may reflect their thoughts about the outcomes of the exercise on a paper</p>

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Title of the Activity:	SMART Goals
Duration:	60 minutes
Type of Activity:	Individual
Level of Difficulty:	Intermediate
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To introduce an effective goal-setting skill that may help students clarify their vague intentions and objectives about their future, and to better organize their efforts regarding strategic success planning. To turn goals to certain realistic choices and prepare action steps with clear milestones and an estimation of the goal's attainability. To enhance self-awareness, self-regulation, decision making and engagement skills.
Instructions:	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pen / Pencils Papers Flip chart or Blackboard (for the career counselor / facilitator) Markers (for the career counselor / facilitator) <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>The school counselor can have a brief introduction (A) and then proceed by applying steps (B), (C) and (D):</p> <p><u>A: Introduction</u> Most of the times, when we start to look at our future vision, we set rather broad aims. In doing so, we neither specify why, how and when we intend to do these aims, nor we indicate how we will know when we have achieved the results we are looking for. Also, sometimes we may gear our efforts towards setting unrealistic goals, or goals that require more effort to achieve than we initially thought of. What we have to keep in mind is that goals, usually include an end point, but there are multiple stages involved in achieving the goal, which may require sustained effort</p>

and clear planning. Then, effective goal-setting is a necessary activity in order to “put flesh on the bones” with regard to our future vision.

A useful technique for goal-setting is the SMART model, which brings structure and tractability into our objectives. Every goal, from intermediary step to overarching objective, can be made S.M.A.R.T., which is an acronym that stands for the words: Specific, Measurable, Attractive, Realistic, and Time-framed, as these will be explicated further. This exercise will help you to break big, potentially vague, goals into manageable parts that you can evaluate for their effects on your life.

B: The GOALS First, the counselor asks students to think about their goals for the next five years. Questions that may be asked include “What do you want to be able to look back and be proud of?”, or “What do you want to have achieved?”. The students are encouraged to be as bold and authentic as they wish and to put aside any reservations.

Goals should be worded in positive, approach-orientated, terms (i.e. what they *do* want) and not in avoidance-orientated terms (i.e. what they *don't* want). The students should write down their thoughts about what they would like to have accomplished in different areas of their life and how they would like to be.

Finally, they are asked to choose one of their goals, the one that provides them with a sense of personal meaning and authenticity, and then to write it down in a different piece of paper as a heading (e.g. “My goal is to ...”).

C: SMART steps: The school counselor can use a flip chart to note the criteria of the SMART approach and the respective questions:

- **Specific:** What specific (clear and concrete) steps will I take to achieve my goal? What action do I need to take? What exactly do I want to achieve? Where? How? When? With whom? What are the conditions and limitations? What are possible alternative ways of achieving the same?

- **Measurable:** How will I measure my progress towards the goals, so I will know when I have achieved it?
- **Attractive:** Is this goal attractive to me? Is it worth pursuing? Does this goal excite, energize, or inspire me? Why exactly do I want to reach this goal? What is the objective behind the goal, and will this goal really achieve that?
- **Realistic:** Is this goal realistic? How confident am I that I can achieve it? Have I given myself the best chance of success? Do I have the necessary skills, or I need to develop them first? Do I have the necessary resources, or I should look for ways of getting them?
- **Time-framed:** What timeframe do I have around this goal? By what date and time will I expect to have achieved this? What deadline I may set by which I expect to have achieved a result? Is the timeline realistic and flexible enough to keep morale high?

D: SMART GOALS The school counselor asks students to provide written answers to these questions in order to make their selected goal SMART. In case there are any difficulties, the school counselor provides support and examines with the student whether the particular goal may need further refinement, or to be broken down a bit further, in order to be possible to be achieved.

Evaluation & Reflection:

- Goals stretch our creative potential, our skills and knowledge, thus helping us to grow and live meaningfully.
- People who set clear, concrete and practical goals tend to be more successful than those who do not. Thus, setting tangible and achievable goals is a vital component for being focused on our aims and on what really matters for us.
- Having SMART goals draws on an action-orientated planning that helps us monitor our progress as well as evaluate whether our

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goals are sufficiently meaningful for us to keep going, even if it is a stretch.

- Having SMART goals keeps us motivated and committed, while it aids us to identify missing skills that might increase our chances of success.
- Students should reflect on how they felt during the exercise.
- They should focus on what they learned and how they can implement it in their everyday lives and decisions.

<p>Title of the Activity: Duration:</p>	<p>The Future Me 60 minutes</p>
<p>Type of Activity:</p>	<p>Individual</p>
<p>Level of Difficulty:</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>
<p>Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce to the early and late adolescent students a dialectical process in developing their picture “Quality World” through the use of imagery. • To enhance <i>teamwork</i>, and to organize their efforts around <i>strategic success planning</i>. • To consider and explore what “future” may indicate about the type of career they are likely to find meaningful and fulfilling. • To enhance <i>self-awareness</i> and <i>decision-making skills</i>.
<p>Instructions:</p>	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three empty chairs • Pen / Pencils (in case students want to take notes) • Paper (in case students want to take notes) • Flip chart or Blackboard (for the career counsellor) • Markers (for the career counsellor) <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>Making meaningful choices in our personal or professional life is hardly a straightforward process. School counsellors should use their counseling skills to help students explore how specific activities influence their self-concepts, self-efficacy, and their worldview, helping students identify which aspects of these new roles they find rewarding and offer potential for future careers that they might regard as meaningful.</p> <p>It is important for school counsellors to help students process how the information gained through such activities relates to their developing awareness of their interests. In follow-up classroom lessons and group activities, school counsellors can ask students to consider if the experience</p>

helped them identify additional areas they want to explore, and what information and experiences they now want to pursue as result of the experience. When thinking about their future career, some students may exhibit such negative or irrational thoughts as the following:

- *“I will never be successful.”*
- *“What is the point in even trying?”*
- *“Why think about something now when it is so far away?”*
- *“There are so many jobs to think about and I will never be able to make a choice. I must make the right choice.”*
- *“Important people in my life must approve of my career choice.”*

Students can be taught how to identify and replace such irrational thoughts. This strategy can be a difficult to grasp, and thus, school counsellors are encouraged to reinforce this concept through concrete metaphors and repeated exposure.

School counsellors can discuss with the students their perceptions regarding how adults pursue meaning, what types of careers, community involvement, relationships, and leisure activities find meaningful, and efforts they have initiated in their pursuit of meaning. Students may consider what they are passionate about, what makes them passionate about their future, and what current and future pursuits would enable them to continue to explore this passion.

In this exercise, students will sit in three different chairs to help them get in touch with and to experience, in the present moment, different parts of their self with respect. Individual students sitting in the first of three chairs are asked to imagine, with their eyes closed, to envision their idealized picture of what they would like the world to look like as they imagine themselves ten years in the future. During this envisioning, the students are asked, in

	<p>sequence, to identify and report what they see, smell, and hear.</p> <p>They are subsequently asked to move to the second chair, and now undergo the same imagery process but envisioning their Quality, ideal World five years into the future.</p> <p>Finally, the students are asked to sit in the third chair, which represents their current self, and also to identify what they are doing today, in the present, to make possible their idealized visions.</p> <p>In other words, they are going to role-play these three parts of their self by sitting in the different chairs. They should try to relax and be open to the experience of self in an accepting way. It is important to let their thoughts and feelings flow freely.</p> <p>The school counsellor can use three different flip charts to note the future aspects and notice what emotions are coming up.</p>
<p>Evaluation & Reflection:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school counsellor prompts the students to reflect upon their experience by guiding the process with the use of the flip chart. • The student needs to understand that every time we are to make important decisions, our prime goal should be to cultivate our empathy and flexibility to take the right present decisions that will determine our future fulfillment. • The school counsellor needs to help students identify further areas for exploration. They can ask students to identify what additional information or experiences they want; what some extracurricular, volunteer activities, job shadowing, or informational interviewing opportunities would help them explore and reach their ideal future.

Title of the Activity:	My Signature in The World
Duration:	60 minutes
Type of Activity:	Individual
Level of Difficulty:	Intermediate
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To aid the students discover and clarify what has meaning in their lives. • To present in a creative and constructive way what they want their life to be about. • To enhance <i>self-awareness, self-presentation</i> and <i>creativity skills</i>.
Instructions:	<p>Material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils • Papers <p>Implementation Procedure:</p> <p>The school counselor may start with a brief introduction (A) and then provide the instructions on how to do the exercise (B):</p> <p>A: Introduction Having a clear personal definition of what is the meaning of our life, provides the framework for setting goals and making choices that would be consistent with our uniqueness and would increase our resilience, when facing difficulties and setbacks. Meaning-making is an active and creative process that evolves as we do, rather than a pre-destined “truth” that if discovered can provide us with long-lasting fulfillment. Also, meaning to life derives from many different sources and a wide range of activities, commitments and relationships.</p> <p>A useful method to help you discover at the present moment your personal meaning of life is to encounter in your imagination with the end of an important part of your life and identity, like the high school graduation. This imaginary technique empowers you for working out</p>

what is important for you and what gives meaning in your life. It involves of writing a tribute for yourself in an admirable newspaper, magazine, or journal if you prefer, after your high school graduation. All you need for this writing exercise is to get some quiet space and uninterrupted time for at least 20-30 minutes.

B: Instructions First, the school counselor / facilitator asks the students to have a few deep breaths to clear their mind. Then, s/he asks them to imagine that they have recently graduated from school and that a special edition is compiled to honor them. This edition would include interviews with people, who wish to pay tribute to them (e.g., family members, friends, colleagues, etc.). The participant should write down what s/he would *most like* these people to say rather than what s/he imagines people would actually say.

The school counselor / facilitator can use a slide projector or a flip chart to provide the following questions for the exercise (Corrie, 2009):

- What is written about you and why? Who contributes to the special edition and What do they say?
- What impact do people say that you have had in the world till now?
- Which achievements does this edition celebrate and honor?
- For what strengths and talents do people honor and celebrate you?
- What is your legacy till now (to those you love, your community, and globally)?

Evaluation & Reflection:

The school counselor may discuss with the student about his/her tribute, by keeping in mind the aforementioned questions to reflect upon the emotional experience of writing a tribute for yourself. Discuss if students have viewed things differently after this exercise and what did they learn about what really matters to them.

Questions that may be asked include:

- “What is the legacy you may wish to offer the world?”

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- “What impact would you most like to make?”
- “What are the goals that will help you to achieve your purpose in life?”

Students need to understand that having a clear mindset about what constitutes the meaning of our life provides structure and purpose in life. Self-reflection writing that draws on skills in meaning-making helps us discover our strengths, values and potentials, clarify our priorities and goals, and align our actions to what really matters.

<p>Title of the Activity: Duration:</p>	<p>It's Flow Time 60 minutes</p>
<p>Type of Activity:</p>	<p>Homework</p>
<p>Level of Difficulty:</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>
<p>Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help students enhance their everyday experiences of flow, so as to focus on the immediate and moment-to-moment experience of doing things for their own sake, and thus become aware of their potential to overcome challenges. • To enhance <i>creativity</i> since practicing <i>flow</i> results to dealing with challenges in a constructive, meaningful, and enjoyable way. • To build <i>self-awareness</i> as the students are expected to identify activities that are consistent with their skills, while they also develop the capacity to merge action with awareness. • To reinforce <i>engagement</i> in specific tasks.
<p>Instructions:</p>	<p>Material:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils • Papers • Slide projector or flip chart with the instructions (for the career counselor / facilitator) • Markers (for the career counselor / facilitator) <p>Implementation Procedure:</p> <p>The school counselor may have a brief introduction (A) and then provide the instructions on how to do the homework exercise (B) so as the student may proceed with by applying step (C) and reflect on it in the next session (D):</p> <p><u>A: Introduction:</u> Flow is the mental state where challenge and skill are in a balanced proportion. In a flow state, we do something just because we enjoy doing it, either it is play, work, or something else. It is the feeling of being "in the zone", since time seems to fly by and attention is so absorbed by the</p>

activity that no attention is left over to notice time passing and get bored or worried. People in flow experience effortless concentration, enjoyment, and satisfaction. To get into flow one needs to experience high perceived challenges along with high perceived skills. When someone lives with flow, their self-esteem grows, and they feel in control, involved, creative, and happy. Thus, it is important to learn how to bring flow in our everyday life.

B: Instructions: The school counselor can use a slide projector or a flip chart to provide the following instructions for the homework exercise:

Allow a short time (approximately 5-10 minutes) to consider a moment, an activity, or an occasion that you felt flow. Remember what did you do and how did you feel in as much detail as you can. Then try to connect this memory of flow to your skills and interests. Write in a piece of paper what it means for you to be in a state of flow. Try to identify how often you feel flow in your everyday routine and with which activities, or in which moments. Rate your flow level from 0 = a total lack of flow to 10 = totally in flow, regarding the past week. Define the level you wish to reach in the next days.

For the next week, try to facilitate flow by doing *each day* something that you choose with concentration and playfulness. Examples could be to do: (a) habitual things in different, new ways, than usual (e.g., cooking, having a shower), (b) things that inspire you (e.g., read poetry, painting, talking to friends, listening to music), and (c) rather arduous things with an attitude of increased curiosity and interest (e.g., work, studying, searching information on the net). Whatever you choose, try to be challenging tasks that are not too difficult (not overwhelming), nor too easy (not boring). In other words, make an opportunity each day to let yourself flow. Give yourself some time to be absorbed in what you are doing, to actively revel in the activity. These moments each day will be “flow time”: they might be quiet or energetic, creative or relaxing, but in any case, you enjoy the activity just for the sake of

	<p>it – exactly the way children know how to do by heart, when they play.</p> <p>At the end of each day, keep some notes of what happened and how you felt about it. Was your flow experience something that just occurred with no particular effort, or you had to make it happen? What was the activity about? Were you alone or with other people? What thoughts did you have afterwards?</p> <p>C: Implementation The student the homework exercise by following the instructions provided in step B.</p> <p>D: Next Session At the next meeting, the school counselor asks the students to present their flow experiences and to reflect upon emotions and thoughts that they have about them. Then, they may rate again their flow level from 0 = a total lack of flow to 10 = totally in flow, regarding the last week, to see whether there are any differences and to discuss about them.</p>
<p>Evaluation & Reflection:</p>	<p>Students reflect upon how these flow experiences may be connected to their skills. Participants are prompted to find out in which ways “flow” may be further facilitated in the future.</p> <p>It is important to understand that “flow” is a state of mind, where attention becomes effortlessly focused on a specific activity because during that time intrinsic motivations are activated. When we are in a state of flow, we experience the activity as intrinsically rewarding, because of that often the end goal is just an excuse for the process. Such an attitude provides meaning not only to our daily actions, but to the overall process of trying to fulfill our life goals.</p>

<p>Title of the Activity: Duration:</p>	<p>The Motivational Letter 60 minutes</p>
<p>Type of Activity:</p>	<p>Homework</p>
<p>Level of Difficulty:</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>
<p>Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen students’ motivation and engagement regarding their goals through a <i>self-reflection</i> writing process that promotes identification and <i>self-regulation</i> of internal states (i.e. strengths, weaknesses, thoughts, emotions, and motives) as well as critical evaluation of a challenging situation. • To enhance <i>self-awareness</i> and <i>self-regulation</i>. • To enhance the skills of <i>critical thinking</i> and <i>decision making</i> since it helps participants to become aware of their potential motivation setbacks and to better organize and plan the needed actions in order to attain their valued goals.
<p>Instructions:</p>	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils • Papers • Slide projector or flip chart with instructions (for the counselor) • Markers (for the counselor) <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>The school counselor may have a brief introduction (A) and then provide the instructions on how to do the homework exercise (B) so as the student may proceed with by applying step (C) and reflect on it in the next session (D):</p> <p><u>A: Introduction</u> When it comes to making important changes, we sometimes have mixed feelings, biases and fears about pursuing our goals that may discourage us or prevent us from taking appropriate action. Also, at times we may feel that things in our personal or professional life don’t quite work out for us as we have hoped, or we might feel scared by the potential</p>

failures and mischiefs. It is then that we may lose faith to ourselves, and our motivation and courage may need a boost. To this end, a useful method you may try is to write a motivational letter to yourself. All you need for this writing exercise is to get some quiet space and uninterrupted time for at least 20-30 minutes. The aim of this motivational letter is to encourage you towards your goals by adopting a self-soothing and positive attitude.

B: Instructions The school counselor can use a slide projector or a flip chart to provide the following instructions for the exercise (Corrie, 2009):

- The language of your letter should be compassionate, supportive, and concerned. Self-criticism or judgments should be avoided at all costs.
- It should remind you of all the times you managed to overcome obstacles and to succeed.
- It should remind you to view delays and setbacks as an inevitable part of your development process and as a challenge to learn something from them rather than due to lack of ability.
- It boosts an optimistic attitude that is based on the value of your goal and the personal meaning for keeping going
- It suggests you specific, achievable and practical actions that you can take in a short-term perspective (e.g., the next few minutes, hours, or days) to encourage you to keep your motivation going.

C: Implementation The student undertakes the homework exercise by following the instructions provided in step B.

D: Next Session At the next meeting, the school counselor may discuss with the student about their motivational letter to reflect upon the emotional experience of writing a letter from you to you. For example, the school counselor may encourage the participant to discuss about how s/he may have viewed things differently and more positively, and why the goal is

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	<p>important to get going after all. The school counselor may also inform the student about the other two options in writing a motivational letter to use them in the future: (a) writing on behalf of a family member or friend who is supportive and non-judgmental, and (b) writing on behalf of a member of the council of advisers (if any).</p>
<p>Evaluation & Reflection:</p>	<p>Students need to understand that to keep themselves motivated is a dynamic process that demands a constant active encouraging attitude.</p> <p>Self-reflection through writing that focuses on enhancing the individual’s skills in optimistic thinking can be extremely beneficial when it comes retaining self-motivation. Reflective writing is an effective way to be reminded why our goal is important and find the inner strength to deal with anxieties and negative thoughts that act as motivational setbacks.</p> <p>Writing a motivational letter to ourselves is acting like an objective, supportive, “observer” for us; an observer who guides us to realize that feelings of self-doubt, insecurity and fear are part for the course and that change involves more than good intentions.</p>

<p>Title of the Activity: Loving-Kindness Meditation</p> <p>Duration: 60 minutes</p>	
<p>Type of Activity:</p>	<p>Homework</p>
<p>Level of Difficulty:</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>
<p>Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To cultivate an attitude of self-compassion, feelings of goodwill, unconditional love and kindness. • The key to loving-kindness meditation is to enhance the feelings that should be inclusive and undiscriminating. Nothing is expected in return and as such, it is considered the purest form of love. • To experience feelings of deep warmth and affection for themselves and others, an ability to accept all parts of themselves, others and life, including pleasurable and painful parts. • To increase <i>positive emotions</i> and reduce negative ones. • To increase <i>personal resources, self-acceptance</i> and <i>wellbeing</i>. • To activate <i>empathy</i>. • To improve <i>social connection</i> and <i>positive relationships</i>. • To enhance <i>self-awareness, self-regulation</i> and <i>engagement skills</i>.
<p>Instructions:</p>	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils • Papers • Sheet of paper with the instructions • Loving Kindness Meditation to Develop Mindfulness and Compassion video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-d_AA9H4z9U&t=8s) <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>The school counselor may start with a brief introduction (A) and then provide the instructions on how to do the homework exercise (B). Students could make a first attempt to follow the instructions individually or as a group in class before following them on their own at home. Thus, school</p>

counsellor could ask them follow his/her instructions in class and try to follow them on their own at home (C) by reading them or listening to the relevant video. At the next session, they discuss about their experience (D):

A: Introduction Loving-kindness is a meditation practice which brings about positive attitudinal changes as it systematically develops the quality of 'loving-acceptance'. It acts, as it were, as a form of self-psychotherapy, a way of healing the troubled mind to free it from its pain and confusion. Of all meditations, loving-kindness has the immediate benefit of sweetening and changing old habituated negative patterns of mind.

Loving-kindness produces four qualities of love: Friendliness, Compassion, Appreciative Joy and Equanimity. The quality of 'friendliness' is expressed as warmth that reaches out and embraces others. When loving-kindness practice matures, it naturally overflows into compassion, as one empathizes with other people's difficulties. The positive expression of empathy is an appreciation of other people's good qualities or good fortune, or appreciative joy, rather than feelings of jealousy towards them. So, ultimately you remain serene, kindly disposed and caring toward everybody with an equal spread of loving feelings and acceptance in all situations and relationships.

B: Instructions The school counsellor can hand out the instructions for the homework exercise:

- Close your eyes. Sit comfortably with your feet flat on the floor and your spine straight. Relax your whole body. Keep your eyes closed throughout the whole visualization and bring your awareness inward. Without straining or concentrating, just relax and gently follow the instructions.

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- Take a deep breath in. And breathe out. Take a few deep breaths to relax your body. Take the air in, through your nose, breathing deeply into your lungs and release the breath through your mouth.
- After taking a few deep breaths, no longer try to control your breath but allow to come and go from your body naturally.
- Focus on your breath as it comes into your body and as it leaves. As you breathe in and out move your focus from your breath to your heart.
- Keeping your eyes closed, think of a person close to you who loves you very much. It could be someone from the past or the present; someone still in life or who has passed; it could be a spiritual teacher or guide, a good friend or a family member.
- Imagine that person standing on your right side, sending you his/her love. That person is sending you wishes for your safety, for your well-being and happiness. Hear and feel the warm wishes and love coming from that person towards you.
- Now bring to mind another person who cherishes you deeply. Imagine that person standing on your left side, sending you wishes for your wellness, for your health and happiness. Hear the wishes and feel the kindness and warmth coming to you from that person.
- Now imagine that you are surrounded on all sides by all the people who love you and have loved you. Picture all of your friends and loved ones surrounding you.
- They are standing sending you wishes for your happiness, well-being,

and health. Bask in the warm wishes and love coming from all sides. You are filled, and overflowing with warmth and love.

- Take a deep breath in. And breathe out. And another deep breath in and let it go.
- Notice the state of your mind and how you feel after this meditation.
- When you're ready, you may open your eyes.

C: Implementation The student undertakes the homework exercise by following the instructions provided in step B.

D: Next Session At the next meeting, the school counsellor asks the students to present their experiences and to reflect upon emotions and thoughts. Also, the school counsellor encourages the participants to reflect upon how these experiences may be connected to their skills and in which ways this process may be further facilitated in the future. Moreover, if the discussion takes place in the classroom, students could make groups of two and discuss to each other about the people sent them loving-kindness wishes, the content of the wishes and the emotions they felt during the exercise.

Evaluation & Reflection:

- Students should think if they learnt something new about themselves. And if so, what?
- Would they repeat the exercise on their own on daily basis?
- How did they feel, when they shared their experience?
- What benefits can they identify?

Students need to understand that loving-kindness is a heart meditation and should not to be seen as just a formal sitting practice removed from everyday life. Applying the practice to daily life is a matter of directing a friendly attitude and having openness toward everybody they relate to,

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without discrimination.

Such an attitude provides meaning not only to their daily actions, but to the overall process of trying to fulfill their life, school or work happiness. Thus, it shifts a person's basic view of the self in relation to others and increases empathy and compassion.

<p>Title of the Activity: Duration:</p>	<p>Seeing Yourself Through the Eyes of a Significant Other 60 minutes</p>
<p>Type of Activity:</p>	<p>Homework</p>
<p>Level of Difficulty:</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>
<p>Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To foster students' <i>self-esteem</i> and <i>self-compassion</i> through seeing themselves with the genuine respect and positive appreciation with which they were treated by someone else in the past. • To enhance <i>self-awareness</i> and <i>self-regulation</i> as it helps participants to become aware of their value. • To cultivate an unconditional positive view of themselves and to embrace an accepting, kind and caring attitude towards their limitations and vulnerabilities, thus promoting regulation of feelings, thoughts and behaviors.
<p>Instructions:</p>	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pen / Pencils • Papers • Sheet of paper with the instructions (for the career counselor) <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>The school counselor may have a brief introduction (A) and then provide the instructions on how to do the homework exercise (B) so as the student may proceed with by applying it at home (C) and they discuss about it at the next session (D):</p> <p><u>A: Introduction</u> Self-esteem affects how we feel, think, act, and make choices in life. Whether our self-esteem is fragile or robust depends initially on how much secure and appreciated we felt in our primary relationships with the significant others. However, we should keep in mind that self-esteem is not a static entity, but a dynamic and ever-changing part of ourselves. Thus, a key to healthy self-esteem is to better integrate and build</p>

upon our experiences with people who was unconditionally loving, accepting, kind, and encouraging to us. By bringing to our memory and reviving these experiences of valuing others it aids to develop a caring empathic self and to show compassion towards our inadequacies and imperfections, as these are limits of the human nature. Thus, our efforts to boost self-esteem involve systematic work both from the outside in and the inside out.

A useful method that combines both of these approaches is an imaginary exercise that you can undertake as a homework. All you need for this exercise is to get some quiet space and uninterrupted time for at least 15 minutes to do the following steps.

B: Instructions The school counselor can hand out the sheet of paper with the following instructions for the homework exercise:

In a quiet space, seat upright and breathe smoothly. Then, you may close your eyes and put aside all thoughts and worries. Take deep breaths and relax.

Now, you may bring to your memory a period or an incidence in your life, when someone (e.g., relative, teacher, friend, colleague, neighbor or even a stranger) showed to you kind and generous love, a benevolent attitude towards you that touched your life once and for all. It may be a unique act of generosity, or a simple act of kindness, which influenced your life decisively. Try to have a picture of the particular memory and to reflect on where you were, what was taking place around you, and which your needs were at that phase, in every possible detail.

Reflect upon the feelings that emerge as a result from that person's behavior towards you. They may be feelings of gratitude, humility, care, and interest. Reconnect yourself with these feelings in the here-and-now. You may notice that the more you are dwelled into these feelings the more tender you feel towards that person. You may also feel in a state of a harmonious connection

	<p>with him/her.</p> <p>Now, without forcing yourself, try to direct to yourself the kindness and acceptance you have felt by the other person. Think of an issue that tends to make you feel stressed or inadequate (e.g., school or relationship issue), and which threatens your self-esteem. Become the benefactor of yourself. Bring the compassion, empathy, acceptance, and care to deal with your own issue. Feel the compassion as it pours into you, soothing and comforting you.</p> <p>C: Implementation The students do the homework exercise according to the instructions.</p> <p>D: Next Session At the next meeting, the school counselor may discuss with the students about their experience, so they reflect upon their emotions and thoughts. For example, the school counselor may encourage the participants to discuss about which part of the exercise was difficult or easy for them, how they may have viewed things differently, and whether they felt a positive impact for their self-esteem after having done the exercise.</p>
<p>Evaluation & Reflection:</p>	<p>Students need to understand that a robust self-esteem is not about having unshakable confidence, but rather it is about developing a mature, compassionate, and accepting attitude to oneself.</p> <p>To see ourselves through the lens of a valuing other draws on our capacity for mirroring with others, a fundamental neuropsychological mechanism that contributes to our healthy development.</p> <p>What we need to keep in mind is that we have value as a human being regardless of our achievements or failures, and that we need to be compassionate towards setbacks so as to be able to learn from our experiences.</p> <p>Students should think of which skills did they cultivated by applying this exercise and think of ways of using those skills in their everyday lives.</p>

<p>Title of the Activity: Duration:</p>	<p>Find Common Interests (45 minutes)</p>
<p>Type of Activity:</p>	<p>Group</p>
<p>Level of Difficulty:</p>	<p>Intermediate</p>
<p>Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common interests increase <i>understanding</i> and job satisfaction • By improvising and <i>collaborating</i> can influence <i>communication</i> that will lead to necessary adjustments for effective implementation of tasks. • Finding a common activity in a group that is most enjoyable increases attention and willingness to participation.
<p>Instructions:</p>	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper • Pencils/pens • A flip chart paper <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>Ask participants to think about something that they do at work/school and they get absorbed in the task that they lose track of time. Discuss for 10' minutes.</p> <p>Ask participants to get into groups of 3-4 and imagine that they work together. They need to decide content of their workplace and write it down on a flip chart paper (e.g., working at a clothing store)</p> <p>Encourage them to think about together, an activity that is considered from all the most enjoyable at their workplace. Describe it by writing it down on the paper. Every single member needs to have a role in this workplace. Ask each participant to present the workplace, the enjoyable task and each assign role.</p>

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**Evaluation
& Reflection:**

The more the activity is enjoyable, the more the satisfaction and attention, thus flow occurs. When individuals 'enter the flow state' Sawyer (2015) they feel more confident leading to job satisfaction and to increase meaning at work.

Participants may reflect their thoughts about the outcomes of the exercise on a paper.

Reference:

Sawyer, K. (2015) Group Flow and Group Genius. The NAMTA Journal,40 (3)

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Title of the Activity:	Flow Triggers
Duration:	(45 minutes)
Type of Activity:	Group
Level of Difficulty:	Intermediate
Objectives (including skills which are expected to be enhanced):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By improvisation and collaboration, we can influence and elicit communication, that will lead to necessary adjustments for effective implementation of tasks. • Flow activities provide opportunities for relaxation and rest. • Flow can build mutual understanding and trust among team members. “Flow is collaborative, not argumentative”.
Instructions:	<p><u>Material:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip Chart Paper • Water painting • Big and Small Brushes <p><u>Implementation Procedure:</u></p> <p>Provide each participant with Flip Chart paper and ask them to think about 3 things are grateful about their work/school. Ask them to draw with the water colours the 3 things (could be abstract figures)</p> <p>Set groups of 3-4 participants. And ask them to find a way to join the 3 things that are grateful about work. Ask them to draw one picture how these things are connected/combined/interrelated.</p>

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Evaluation & Reflection:	<p>The more the activity is enjoyable, the more the satisfaction and attention, thus flow occurs.</p> <p>When individuals 'enter the flow state' Sawyer (2015) they feel more confident leading to job satisfaction and to increase meaning at work.</p> <p>Participants may reflect their thoughts about the outcomes of the exercise on a paper.</p>
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Reference:

Steven Kotler The Rise of Superman: Decoding the Science of Ultimate Human Performance

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1991), Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience

Csikszentmihalyi, M., Good Business: Leadership, Flow, and the Making of Meaning