



Creators of Concord

# Creative methods of conflict transformation

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Wings that carry peace





Roman Kandibur, Svetlana Lukianchenko

# CREATIVE METHODS OF CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

*Wings that carry peace*

Educational and practical manual

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This educational and practical manual outlines the basics of the Four Wings theory of creative methods of conflict transformation. The theory was born and tested as part of "The Creators of Concord School of Conflict Resolution" scientific and pedagogical project realized at the regional level. In this manual, we provide our view of creating a peaceful school environment. The Four Wings theory is based on the experience of using creative methods of conflict transformation and the theory of narrative reticulation of Jonathan Fox, co-founder of playback theater.

The manual contains theoretical and practical tools for transforming the school environment into a more peaceful and positive one for all participants in the educational process.

The materials of the manual can be used by managers, teachers, practical psychologists of general secondary education institutions for organizing work with teachers' and students' teams on conflict averting and prevention.

This project is implemented by the "Power of the Future" NGO in partnership with "The Etnodrive Movement" NGO with the support of the Civil Peace Service, funded by the Federal Government of Germany through GIZ.

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# Content

|                                                                                 |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Introduction one (rational)</b>                                              | 7  |
| <i>History of the project</i>                                                   | 10 |
| <i>From the authors</i>                                                         | 12 |
| <b>Introduction two (creative)</b>                                              | 13 |
| <b>A fairy tale about a colorful butterfly</b>                                  | 14 |
| <b>Chapter 1. Who are the Creators of Concord?</b>                              | 18 |
| <i>What do the Creators of Concord rely on in their work?</i>                   | 19 |
| <i>The theory of the four wings of conflict transformation</i>                  | 19 |
| <i>Story</i>                                                                    | 21 |
| <i>Atmosphere</i>                                                               | 21 |
| <i>Guiding</i>                                                                  | 22 |
| <i>Co-creation</i>                                                              | 23 |
| <i>The wing theory in real life</i>                                             | 24 |
| <i>Competencies of the Creator of Concord</i>                                   | 27 |
| <i>"The circle of the Concord Creator's skills" self-analysis</i>               | 27 |
| <i>The model of the teacher's competencies within the new peaceful paradigm</i> | 30 |
| <i>The teacher's competency model</i>                                           | 31 |
| <b>Chapter 2. School through the eyes of the Creator of Concord</b>             | 33 |
| <b>Story</b>                                                                    | 33 |
| <i>Common story of humanity</i>                                                 | 34 |
| <i>Social stories</i>                                                           | 35 |
| <i>Interpersonal stories</i>                                                    | 36 |
| <i>Personal stories</i>                                                         | 37 |
| <b>Atmosphere</b>                                                               | 38 |
| <i>Physical space</i>                                                           | 38 |
| <i>Temporal space</i>                                                           | 39 |
| <i>Comfort/challenge balance</i>                                                | 40 |



|                                                         |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <i>Support of diversity</i> .....                       | 41 |
| <b>Guiding</b> .....                                    | 41 |
| <i>Regulatory guiding</i> .....                         | 42 |
| <i>Informal guiding</i> .....                           | 42 |
| <i>J. Galtung's theory and "guiding"</i> .....          | 44 |
| <b>Co-creation</b> .....                                | 46 |
| <i>Play</i> .....                                       | 46 |
| <i>Open sensitivity</i> .....                           | 47 |
| <i>Creativity</i> .....                                 | 48 |
| <i>Role flexibility</i> .....                           | 48 |
| <i>Collaboration</i> .....                              | 50 |
| <b>Chapter 3. Tools of the Creator of Concord</b> ..... | 51 |
| <b>Energizers exercises</b> .....                       | 52 |
| <i>Massaging activator</i> .....                        | 52 |
| <i>Find your match</i> .....                            | 53 |
| <i>Australian rain</i> .....                            | 54 |
| <i>I like your...</i> .....                             | 55 |
| <i>A dragon</i> .....                                   | 56 |
| <i>I love...</i> .....                                  | 56 |
| <i>A gift</i> .....                                     | 57 |
| <i>An emotional mirror</i> .....                        | 58 |
| <i>An elephant, a toaster, a mixer and others</i> ..... | 59 |
| 33 .....                                                | 60 |
| <i>A colored ball</i> .....                             | 61 |
| <i>The bond</i> .....                                   | 62 |
| <b>Exercises for uniting the team</b> .....             | 63 |
| <i>Desert island</i> .....                              | 63 |
| <i>Everyone stop</i> .....                              | 64 |

|                                                                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <i>The Oscars</i> .....                                                           | 65 |
| <i>Creating a group fairy tale</i> .....                                          | 66 |
| <i>A joint drawing</i> .....                                                      | 67 |
| <i>The actor and the conductor</i> .....                                          | 68 |
| <i>Emotional Telegraph</i> .....                                                  | 69 |
| <i>Emotional tree</i> .....                                                       | 70 |
| <i>Forest of magical trees</i> .....                                              | 71 |
| <i>Spider web</i> .....                                                           | 72 |
| <i>Two pencils</i> .....                                                          | 73 |
| <i>Reflection on the back</i> .....                                               | 74 |
| <b><i>Exercises for self-regulation, calming and focus of attention</i></b> ..... | 75 |
| <i>Sounds around us, five senses</i> .....                                        | 75 |
| <i>A set of breathing exercises</i> .....                                         | 76 |
| <i>Find your star</i> .....                                                       | 78 |
| <i>Body scan</i> .....                                                            | 79 |
| <i>My garden</i> .....                                                            | 81 |
| <i>Literature</i> .....                                                           | 82 |



# **Introduction one (rational)**



The modern world is expanding its capabilities and boundaries right before our eyes. And whatever obstacles and circumstances arise on the path of humanity today, we will never be the same as we were in the last century. New generations may be like us, but, as no one else, they are experiencing the consequences of the disappearance of boundaries – both physical and spiritual, the increase of freedom and commitment to peace, the growth of empathy and mutual respect. And the goal of those who help new generations grow is to maintain these aspirations and a favorable environment and to observe the birth of a generation of a new quality.

School is being gradually transformed, reforms are changing not only the content of subjects, but they are modifying approaches as well – school is becoming more democratic, the competency approach is beginning to prevail in teaching. Subject-centrism and knowledge-centrism are being superseded by anthropocentrism which highlights the formation of skills, values, personal qualities that are necessary for a full, active, happy life in the modern world rather than the formation of knowledge of various subjects. That is why the New Ukrainian School (NUS) is currently being developed based on competency and activity approaches.

Obviously, any reform is a complex and lengthy process. Therefore, in addition to positive changes, the educational system faces certain challenges and difficulties. These include the unwillingness and reluctance of some teachers to work in the new conditions and to change approaches to building relationships both in the teaching and student teams. The directorial, authoritarian style of pedagogical management and communication prevails in institutions of secondary education. Statistically, more than half of teachers have over 20 years of teaching experience, hence professional and emotional burnout having a negative impact on their professional activities. Modern children can no longer remain passive in the process of acquiring knowledge. They are active participants in it, so it is necessary to use interactive teaching methods, project and research activities, team building methods which require a greater effort on the part of the teacher. At the same time, successful professional employment of such methods brings greater benefits to both students and the teacher. For, having mastered modern methods, the teacher is able to fill himself with energy and resources needed both in professional activities and personal life.

So, the birth of the project "The Creators of Concord" occurred simultaneously with the appearance of the following demand for teachers in society: creating a peaceful environment for a modern child conducive to his integral development, communication and existence in general.

“

*If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships - the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together, in the same world at peace.*

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*



# History of the project

The scientific and pedagogical project "The Creators of Concord School of Conflict Resolution" was born in late 2018 as a result of the cooperation with the "Power of the Future" NGO in partnership with the "The Ethnodrive Movement" NGO and the "Dnieper Academy of Continuous Education" municipal institution of higher education of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council. The project was made possible due to the support of the Civil Peace Service (CPS) in Ukraine funded by the German Federal Government through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The first year of the project was devoted to the development of the theory of creative methods of conflict transformation and practical training of the first wave of the "Creators of Concord". Starting from the second year our team began working in four secondary schools (hereinafter - schools) in the city of Dnipro. The main goal of the project at this stage was developing a school system of conflict prevention and resolution by means of creative methods and its introduction into the educational process of the New Ukrainian School.

It is this sequence of moves that allowed us to form a community of Creators of Concord as the educators. We had taught them in the educational course in the areas of "Drum facilitation", "Art techniques" and "Playback theater" started putting the acquired knowledge into practice in their educational institution. Moreover, they became the basis for building a team of coaches and began working at schools at the next stage of our project.

Over the period of two years, 90 project participants have mastered the creative methods of conflict transformation, both in theory and practice. While attending our classes they began realizing their own projects in schools and other educational institutions in Dnipro, the Dnipropetrovsk region and other cities of Ukraine. All of them were aimed at creating a school environment where a child can feel safe, free and remain committed to their aspiration for self-development. At the time the second stage of the project (work in schools) was being introduced, the training sessions embraced four schools, 100 teachers and 120 students. Using various methods the leaders who had mastered the creative methods of conflict prevention and resolution in a school and out-of-school environment were chosen to participate in the training workshops for teenagers. Training sessions for teachers helped them determine their own self-worth, become aware of their own needs as specialists and persons, pay attention to the relationships among the teaching staff and within classrooms. Indeed, to teach a child to meet his real self and build a full-fledged relationship, a teacher is supposed to be able to do it himself.

We believe that teaching nonviolent conflict transformation in Ukraine right now is especially significant. The armed conflict in the east of Ukraine, the occupation of the Crimea and the radicalization of Ukrainian society as a whole could not but affect the school environment as well. Teachers, students and parents feel stressed on a daily basis due to the uncertainty and ambiguity of the situation in which we all live. Every year brings more and more issues, challenges and contradictions. And adults can neither explain those to children, nor agree upon among themselves.

Adults have not been trained to negotiate. The previous system of education taught youngsters to live in confrontation, to fight against an imaginary enemy, to win on the labor and international "battlefields" rather than talking about their needs or perceiving others as persons like themselves.

That is why we are now working not only with students, the generation of the future, but are also turning to teachers who are in the position to change the future of the country by teaching students to understand their emotions, perception of differences and diversity, peaceful coexistence in the world of controversial views and opinions. We hope that this will help all of us to prevent conflicts locally and build a country where people can negotiate peacefully without the use of violence and weapons.

“

*We find in life only what we have put into it.*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*



# From the authors

This manual is not a book of magic spells resulting in an immediate miracle. But we believe that every miracle is the result of hard work. We will share our experience of creating a system of conflict transformation at school, our view of the school environment and the possibilities of changing it. You will see how to effectively organize the educational process for the benefit of all its participants based on the pedagogics of partnership, the development of emotional and social intelligence by means of creative methods of conflict transformation.

The first part of the brochure includes a theoretical basis, namely the theory of the four wings of creative methods of conflict transformation based on the theory of narrative reticulation of Jonathan Fox, the founder of the playback theater method. We are pondering over the necessary competencies for those who embody the peacemaking approach in their daily lives. In order for you to better understand the angle of our view of the school, we are providing examples of school stories, the course of our thoughts and some tools of self-analysis for the educator. We hope these tools and ideas provide you with necessary resources and support on the path of self-improvement.

The second part consists of practical exercises based on the methods of art techniques, playback theater, drum facilitation and the theory of four wings. These exercises will help you develop the competencies of the Concord Creator in yourself, your colleagues and students. Their uniqueness lies primarily in the fact they have been tested in different age groups of schoolchildren as well as in educators' groups and have proved to be effective in building interpersonal relationships in a non-violent way.

We would like to extend a special thanks to Kateryna Zeyzulina and Ingrid Landes, project advisors, who inspired us to describe our practical experience and were there during the challenging moments of our turbulent life.

We thank Jonathan Fox for creating a theory of narrative reticulation that helps see Man and create peace even when it seems impossible.

We are also sincerely grateful to the participants in "The Creators of Concord" project, it is their fruitful work in the school environment that provided us with materials for creation of the practical part of this manual.

We truly thank all the educators who find the strength to bring peace to school. We hope you find this manual useful to stay the course.



*We cannot save the world without changing it.*

*Gary Emerson Fosdick*



# Introduction two (creative)





## *A fairy tale about a colorful butterfly*

Once upon a time, in a fairy-tale country nestled in a valley between the mountains there lived strange creatures. Most of all they looked like butterflies. Similar to butterflies they laid eggs that gave birth to caterpillars who lived and gained experience, and when the time came they formed a cocoon and turned into butterflies. But since it was a fairyland the butterflies were unusual: what a butterfly would look like depending on the materials used by the caterpillar to form the cocoon. But far from all caterpillars were aware of the fact.

One part of this valley was covered with thickets of prickly thistle. For the soft bodies of the caterpillars, their thorns were sharp and painful so it was not possible to live off them. The caterpillars had to overcome a hard way up to eat the purple petals. So when the time to become butterflies came the caterpillars that lived on this meadow formed a cocoon from the prickly branches of thistle. Thus gray butterflies with small wings were born. They could not fly far and had to lay eggs nearby, in thistle flowers on the same meadow. Each time everything took place again and again, and the process lasted for so long that even the oldest butterflies did not know about the existence of another world.

One day a caterpillar was climbing up to the top of the thistle to have a meal but it was overtaken by other caterpillars and pushed into the thorns. When she reached the top there were no petals left to eat. For the first time in her life she looked at the blue sky as





around her. And just at that moment, several colorful four-winged butterflies flew over the thistle bushes singing a wonderful song. Our caterpillar was gazing after them for a long time hearing the echo of their song in the silence that followed.

"Where did they come from? Why do they have such bright wings?", the caterpillar wondered. Looking around again she decided to find them and went on a journey. She was crawling through the valley and as soon as all the caterpillars and gray butterflies found out where our caterpillar was heading told her, "That is not possible, are you crazy? You must be dizzy from hunger. Colorful butterflies do not exist. It's better to climb the thistle flower and have a meal". But the song of colorful butterflies was still ringing in the caterpillar's ears, so the words of other caterpillars that sounded so important yesterday had no effect on her.

After a while, the caterpillar came to the river bank. A gray butterfly that was flying nearby asked her, "Where are you going?"

"I need to go to the other side," the caterpillar replied.

"But there is nothing over there."

"How do you know?"

"No one came back from there," said the gray butterfly.

"I'll be the first," answered the caterpillar and jumped on a branch that was floating past along the mountain river.

The bubbling water was so cold the caterpillar had a hard time hanging on to the



twig. She even thought, "Why have I gone on this journey in search of colorful four-winged butterflies? Maybe they do not exist at all..."

It was at this moment of the greatest despair that the caterpillar saw a strange fast moving creature with large meshy eyes and green transparent wings.

"Help me, please," said the caterpillar. "Take me to the other side, I beg you."

"No problem," said the strange creature, picked the caterpillar up, carried it to the other side of the river and flew on.

Our traveler was on the other side of the river. There were strange green plants all around her, they smelled nice and had no thorns. She took a bite of a small piece of one of these plants and tasted how delicious it was. She began to savor this nectar with pleasure. In this way, the whole day passed. Followed by many other days. The caterpillar found out that there were a lot of different plants, various tastes and colors around – and no thorns. She met other caterpillars who, like her, were enjoying life. But she could not get rid of thoughts of home and her promise to come back. She was looking for colorful butterflies. But no one had heard of them.

One day, when a caterpillar was admiring the sunset sitting on a fragrant flower, she saw another caterpillar. This odd creature was tearing the petals off this beautiful flower and carrying it somewhere.

"What are you doing?" our caterpillar asked her.

"It's time for me to turn into a butterfly".

"And how are you going to make a cocoon when there are no thorns here?"

"I'll make a cocoon out of these petals."



And she started creating a cocoon right there. Our caterpillar was watching this process with amazement. After a while, a beautiful pale pink butterfly emerged from a cocoon. Her large wings were similar to the petals of the flower from which the cocoon was made. At that moment, our caterpillar realized that she needed to look for a meadow of colorful flowers rather than colorful butterflies.

And the first caterpillar she met the next morning said to her, "You need to go east!" Without hesitation, our caterpillar set forward again. She went through many adventures and funny incidents and tasted many delicious plants.

She was walking on and on but the meadow with the colorful flowers didn't show up. Our caterpillar felt that the time to turn into a butterfly had come. But she had a really great desire to make a cocoon out of colorful petals, which she could not find. So she climbed up the tallest flower and began to sing a song she had once heard from colorful butterflies. At that moment a whole cloud of colorful butterflies came flying from the east. They picked up our caterpillar and took her to the magical meadow covered with colorful flowers.



Our traveler chose four petals of different colors - yellow, green, blue and orange - and made her own cocoon.

The next morning, a beautiful four-winged four-colored butterfly emerged from this cocoon. Our butterfly spread her wings and flew up to other colorful butterflies and thanked them for bringing her here and for seeing them one day over the thistle bushes because they were the ones who inspired her to travel. The butterflies replied, "We heard you sing our song and wanted to help you."

"Can I ask you to do something else?" our butterfly asked.

"Of course," said the colorful butterflies.

The next morning everything was as usual in the thistle thickets. The caterpillars were forcing their way up through the annoying thorns pushing one another to have some meal - and suddenly a whole cloud of colorful butterflies flew over the thistles. They had brought bright petals from the magic meadow and were dropping them from above. Our butterfly sat on the thistle and said: "I am back! Who wants to become a colorful butterfly and travel through the endless valley, singing nice songs, go catch these petals and make cocoons out of them".

Do you think anyone took the advice of our butterfly? We believe so.



# Chapter 1

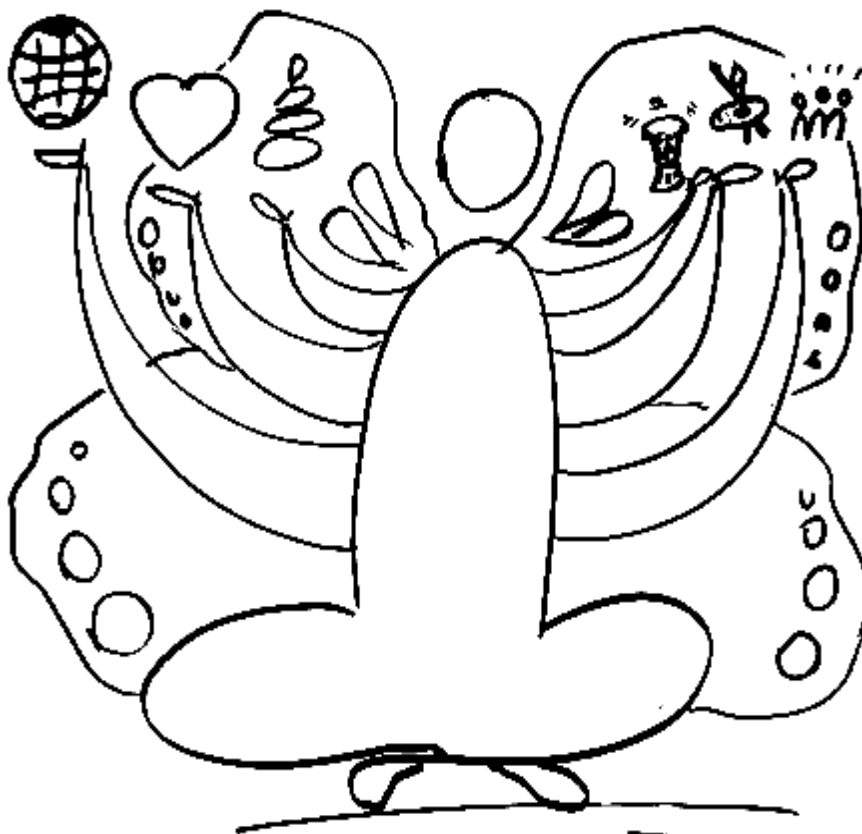
## Who are the Creators of Concord?

The Creators of Concord are not born like this. They become Creators of Concord them, and this path is not an easy and fast one. It is very important to change the inner attitude towards yourself, children and everything around you to a more peaceful and non-violent one. To be a Creator of Concord is to take daily steps towards building peace in the world, in your city, at work, at home and in your own soul. The path of the Creator of Concord begins in different ways, but it always leads to a place where peace and harmony, mutual understanding and empathy, acceptance of different views and the ability to cooperate with anyone reign. And it is in the last phrase that the most important skill of the Creator of Concord lies - he creates a peaceful environment around himself wherever he is.

“

*Let him that would move the world  
first move himself.*

*Socrates*



# **What do the Creators of Concord rely on in their work?**

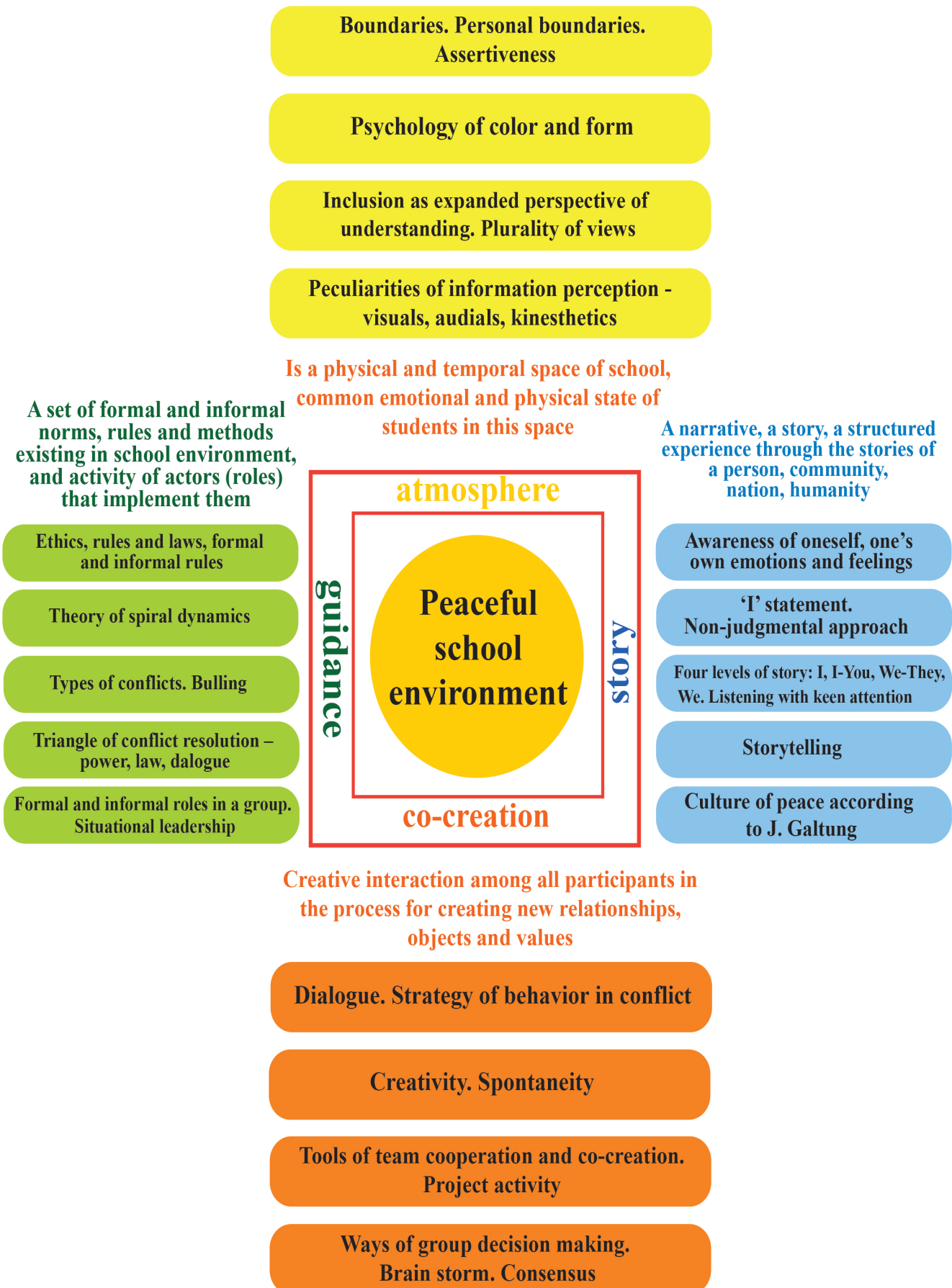
## **The theory of the four wings of conflict transformation**

The work of the Creator of Concord in the school environment is based on the four focuses of attention which we called the "Four wings". These are Story, Atmosphere, Guiding and Creativity. In other words, the Creator of Concord takes a special look at what's going on at school, through four focuses, analyzes what's going on there and gently offers new narratives and stories that will help gradually change the stories that have developed by now.

The idea of this concept came from the theory of narrative reticulation used in playback theater and proposed by Jonathan Fox in 2013. Narrative reticulation means the disclosure (diffusion) of individual narratives (stories) of people in a group and establishing diverse new connections (networks) between these narratives and, as a consequence, between people. It should be noted that new connections become really new - if they have not existed, they arise, and if they have existed they are renewed, change their quality - become more individualized, deep and open, more transparent. Conflicts are often caused by a lack of contact between people, a lack of connections. Therefore, making new connections will help us deepen the contact between the participants of the school environment.

Taking Jonathan Fox's theory of how new stories can create new connections and contacts, we were looking through this prism at school relationships applying this theory to everything that happens at school. That means, is we examine school life through the prism of the four aspects - story, atmosphere, guiding and co-creation. Below we present our views on these aspects and how they manifest in the school environment, as well as our view on how influencing these aspects of life can change the atmosphere at school to a more peaceful and non-violent one.

# Four wings of conflict transformation





# Story

**The first point in this quadrilateral is Story.**

*The story is a narrative, a structured human experience through the stories of an individual, community, nation and humanity as a whole.*

We consider "story" on four levels: the personal, interpersonal, social and universal ones.

While working on this aspect (first the analysis and afterwards the transformation of the identified moments), the participant of the educational process will need to develop skills of listening and understanding the stories/views of another person, to acquire skills of deep listening, empathy and awareness.

At this stage, it is important to provide children with information about emotions and their manifestations, as well as to introduce to them the concept of "human needs" and strategies to meet these needs. Activities in this step are related to the acquisition of these skills.

At this stage, the participants need to form a concept of human needs, strategies of satisfying them, emotions and feelings that arise in the case of their needs being or not being met. It is also necessary to understand the importance of the knowledge of needs, emotions and feelings in their activities.

Here we want to note that any conflict in the school environment is a story. Ordinary tripping or group bullying, misunderstanding between students and teachers, lack of mutual respect among the participants in the educational process, disputes between parents in chat rooms - the list can go on and on. And each one of these stories is a story of conflict.

The main task of the Creator of Concord is to hear this story from the view point of an independent and attentive listener, to embrace with his attention those levels that the main characters of the conflict may not even have been aware of and then to change the story, to suggest new narratives or stories that will be based on the idea of peace and positivity in the relationship.

# Atmosphere

*The atmosphere is the physical and temporal environment of the school, the common emotional and physical state of the participants who are present in this space.*

We encourage you to actively explore and change the physical environment of the classroom and school, to become more attentive to the physical and emotional comfort of each participant in the process. The Creator of Concord can help teachers and

students develop skills of responsibility for the environment in which they are present, form concepts about their own boundaries and develop an awareness of the boundaries of others, as well as develop the assertiveness skills. By assertiveness, we mean a person's ability to defend his point of view without violating the moral rights of another person, the ability to respond to criticism in the best way and the ability to say a firm "no" to himself and others if circumstances require this. We believe that the school atmosphere can be changed if all participants in the process - teachers, children and parents - have the desire and motivation to do so.

## Guiding

*Guiding is a set of formal and informal norms, rules and methods that exist in the school environment, and the activities of the actors (roles) who implement them.*

Guiding comprises conditions - laws, rules, rituals, traditions, values, hierarchical laws or other factors - that guide the activities of all actors in society one way or another. To greet with a handshake or a hug, to thank with words or gifts, to wash dishes after dinner, to cross the road only on green light, to hold the door open for somebody - even such 'unremarkable' habits and rules can change a certain story and atmosphere of a class or school.

At this stage of work with the school staff when the focus is on Guiding, the Creator of Concord conducts activities aimed at helping all participants in the process become aware of the rules and regulations in force in their school and identify an area of rules and regulations that can be changed and adapted to their own needs. Moreover, we believe that it is worth paying attention not only to activities for children. Teachers are also a very important part of the process. And we call on the administration and the whole society to view a teacher not just as a person-aka-function, that is the one who fulfills a certain demand of society and teaches children, but also to expand this view and see the need of teachers in resources and support. For, a person who is not in a state of resources will never be able to teach others effectively.

When a person is in the state of a lack of resources all his actions will often be based on enforcement which will lead to violence against the student's personality rather than to development. The Creator of Concord can help the school change the perspective and put a person (that is all participants in the educational process) in the center of the modern school. Then only the atmosphere in these institutions will be more peaceful. This approach corresponds to the principle of child-centeredness laid down in the concept of the New Ukrainian School.

# Co-creation

*Co-creation is the creative interaction between all participants in a process to create new relationships, objects and values.*

In our case by this concept we mean not only the artistic activity but also actions aimed at creating qualitatively new, unknown before spiritual and material values. The necessary components of creativity are first of all imagination and fantasy. Yet we do not always see fantasy and imagination in school life because of the usual lack of time, resources or just courage. At this stage, the Creator of Concord can be engaged in the activities aimed at developing the creative skills of each person, not only directly in the creative work (music, art and others) but also in a non-standard, creative approach to solving life problems. Spontaneity and the ability to act nonviolently play a significant role in this aspect. It is the act of creation in which all the characters of the conflict can manifest themselves and co-create what makes its transformation possible.

Jonathan Fox's theory distinguishes five types of co-creation: Play, Open sensitivity, Imagination, Role flexibility, Collaboration. When all these types of co-creation are developed and used by all participants in the school process it brings the school environment closer to a peaceful atmosphere.

In order to understand how in our opinion these types of co-creation are manifested in school, we are going to analyze them in more detail in the "School through the eyes of the Creator of Concord" section.

All aspects of our four-wing theory are interrelated. Story already contains atmosphere, guidance and creativity. At the same time, creativity permeates all other aspects and is the key to the transformation of conflicts by means of creative methods. For example, when we conduct a drum circle for a group of educators it is the process of co-creation, but also, the same practice changes the atmosphere, implies certain rules (guidance) that bring people closer to each other and encourages them to look for a common rhythm. Also this exercise becomes a joint story for this group, which they will mention from time to time again.

# The wing theory in real life

*(a case of working with conflict at school using the theory of the four wings of creative methods of conflict transformation)*

Let us consider the mechanism of work of the Creator of Concord using as an example a real story (all names are fictional). An interpersonal conflict arose in class 9-B between Artem and Vlad, boys from families of different levels of income and social classes. One boy has more opportunities while the other has higher learning capabilities, both are leaders of small subgroups in their class. The conflict manifested itself in the form of disputes, fights and insults. Over time the conflict began to involve not just the boys themselves but the entire class as well.

Thus, the class split into two radical subgroups and the situation was worsening day by day. The teacher could not do anything as she lacked any experience in resolving conflicts in the classroom and had no support from a more experienced teacher or psychologist.

At this time, the Creators of Concord came to the school. The teacher addressed us and we started working with the class together. The atmosphere felt quite tense, the children treated us with distrust and disrespect. The Creators of Concord tried to clarify the situation in the joint circle, but in response they heard that everything was all right. And then the Creators of Concord started talking privately with the teacher and boys. We heard the story that the teacher was in a state of helplessness and lack of resources to be able to change anything. The boys told the stories of their opponent being responsible for everything and unwilling to reconcile.

For the next meeting the Creators of Concord brought drums and invited the students to take part in the drum circle. At first, the children could not keep the beat, so the sound was more like sheer noise. But then we offered Artem to play the rhythm and whoever wanted could support him. Then we proposed the same to Vlad.

Thus we saw how divided the class was. Then we invited the boys to take part in a musical battle. The boys were in the center and all the other students played along with them standing in the circle. Next, the Creators of Concord suggested that all students in the class should play one rhythm. But it didn't work.

Then we asked the children, "Why do you think this happened? Why can't you play the rhythm together?" One of the students said that the reason was Artem and Vlad could not get along. Then the Concord Creator drew the boys' attention to that fact and asked them, "How can you play so that the whole class plays along with you?" They tried to do it playing in turn, one after another, and this resulted in the melody and a single rhythm.

Each boy had a place in it.

After the drum circle a discussion was held. The students of the class expressed their feelings and conclusions made after the drum circle. They noted that the conflict between Vlad and Artem had led to the conflict in the whole class and interfered with joint activities and peaceful coexistence.

Having received the feedback, Artem and Vlad realized that their relationship affected the emotional state of the entire class. After the session, we gathered the boys who were already willing to interact with each other. In the process of this conversation with the help of the Creators of Concord and the class teacher, they became aware of each other's differences not as an excuse for enmity but as a chance for cooperation.

Training sessions with the use of creative methods of conflict transformation in this class continued, and three months later the teacher noted that the atmosphere in the classroom improved, mutual understanding was established at different levels of communication, the students began to help each other and were ready to be engaged in joint activities, both in groups and as a class. Artem and Vlad began to treat each other well, sometimes agreed on joint activities and found new friends among classmates.

As we can see from this case, the Creators of Concord listened closely to the stories of the boys and the teacher. They realized that the conflict was not just within the interpersonal field but also at the social level. Verbal techniques (namely, conversations and the analysis of the situation) did not give the desired result and so they had to be reinforced with certain means. The atmosphere in the classroom was still difficult. Then we started using creative methods, namely the drum circle, which aroused children's curiosity, shifted the focus from the conflict to creativity, changed the atmosphere to a more trusting one; it allowed students to realize that the contact was lacking and the conflict prevented them from cooperating. Joint creative activities helped them to establish contact. Based on this experience the Creators of Concord were able to lead the boys to a dialogue.

Thus, the four wings - story, guidance, atmosphere and creativity - and their interpenetration helped change the atmosphere in the classroom to a peaceful one.

Another important aspect in the transformation of the atmosphere in the classroom was the fact that the class teacher began to pay more attention to the children, talking to them in a circle and enquiring about their feelings and needs. This became a kind of bridge that built new relationships in the class.

Thus creative methods of conflict transformation are a certain approach when we analyze everything that happens in the classroom in four aspects; we hear the stories told by the participants in the process - and not just their superficial content, but also whatever is behind the events: the needs of each actor (character) acting in this situation and the



feelings they have. We pay attention to the atmosphere in the classroom, to the rules (guidance), formal and informal, which operate in our environment.

And when all aspects have been analyzed we offer co-creation, in this case, the joint drum activities. During the co-creation process some new meanings appear, contacts between people become warmer and more friendly. For it is not possible to play along with someone at the same time being angry at the person who shares your positive pastime.

Shared emotions of joy and pleasure stretch new, at first invisible and weak, threads of new connections, and gradually the atmosphere changes to a more peaceful and non-violent one.



# Competencies of the Creator of Concord

The Creator of Concord is a person who creates peace around himself through creative methods of conflict resolution.

The Creator of Concord is an educator who is engaged in the development and improvement of himself (first of all) and the environment. We offer everyone to think along with us about the competencies that are needed for such activities. Let's look at this question through the prism of the theory of the four wings, exploring our own experience – both the previous and the desired future one.

## "The circle of the Concord Creator's skills" self-analysis

We offer you a small exercise that will help you look at the skills of the Creator of Concord and structurize your experience from the perspective of the Creator of Concord.

In order to take advantage of this four-wing theory and to be a Creator of Concord we need to develop certain skills in every aspect that comes to our attention. Most of the skills needed for the Creator of Concord are already inherent in the vast majority of people. With this exercise you will learn what skills are needed and will be able to analyze your own level of their development.

We offer you to assess your own level of a skill's manifestation.



### The "Story" Aspect

1. The ability to listen with close attention is the ability to hear a story at different levels of perception, to see and capture its essence.

2. The ability to create new transformative narratives (stories), to use storytelling as a technique to create a motivating story.

3. The ability to verbalize one's own emotions and emotions of others, the ability to show empathy (sympathy).

### The Atmosphere aspect:

4. The ability to be aware of the influence of an environment and time on me and others (choice of place and other things that shape the atmosphere in the group).

5. The ability to determine the emotional atmosphere of the group and describe it.
6. The ability to withstand uncertainty.

**The Guiding aspect:**

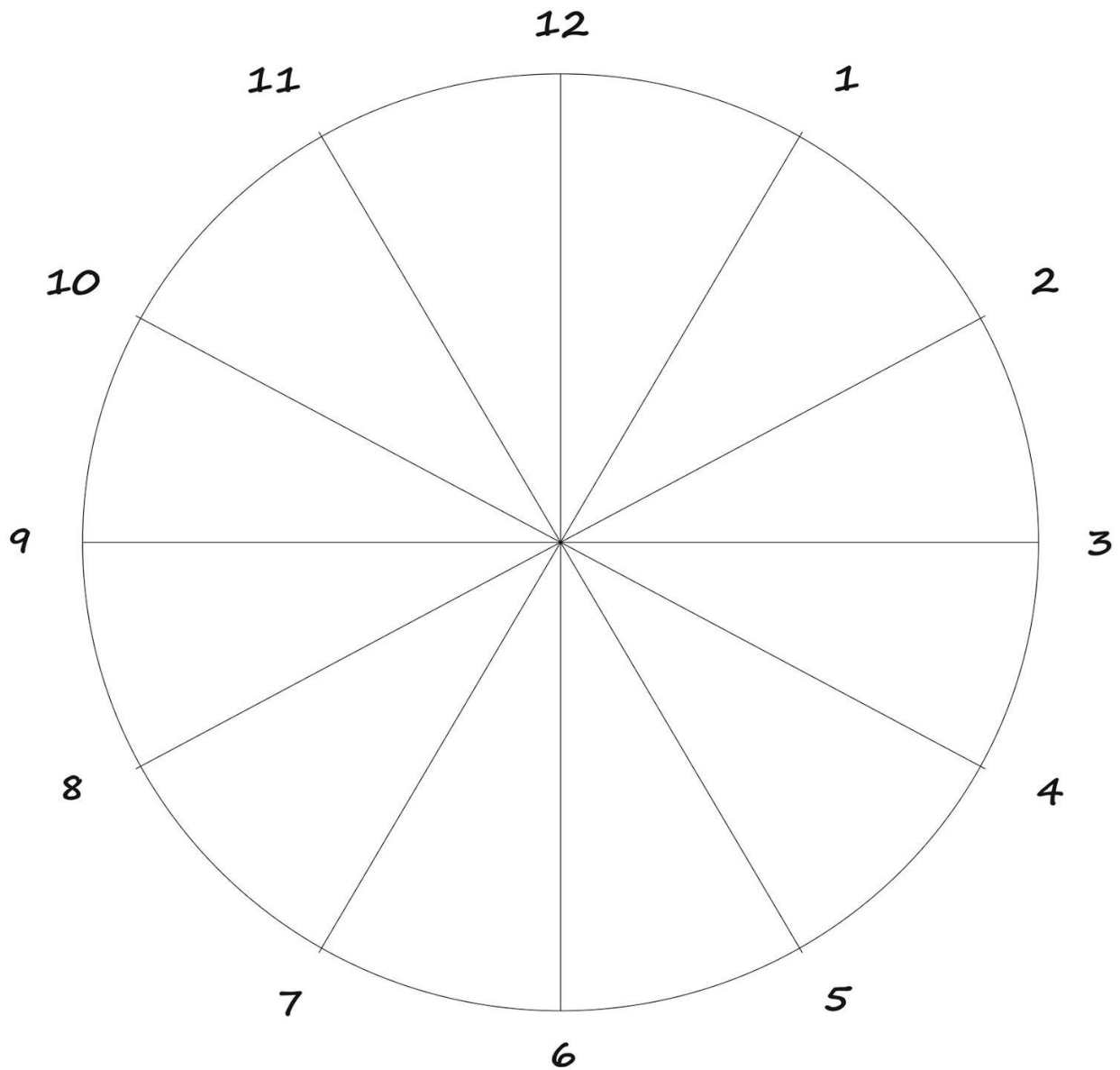
7. The ability to determine rituals, norms and rules in the group.
8. The ability to recognize structural violence in norms and rules.
9. The ability to change regulations and rules to more peaceful and non-violent ones.

**The Creativity aspect:**

10. The ability to be creative (to create new solutions, products and relationships using creative methods).
11. The ability to show spontaneity, flexibility, activity.
12. The ability to co-create and collaborate with other members of the group.

To determine your own level of the Creator of Concord-skills we offer you the following exercise. Each radius in the circle corresponds to one of the twelve skills listed above. The dot in the center is the reference point, zero, the beginning. The last sector, 10, is the maximum. Listen to yourself to determine your own level of the development of this skill. Put a dot on each radius marking this level. Join all the dots with a line. Be honest with yourself and remember that the first answer that comes to your mind is probably the right one.





### **How the result is to be analyzed**

The Creator of Concord strives for constant self-development and balance. The circle is a symbol of balance and harmony. If your wheel is uneven, you can say to yourself, "Looking at the circle of Creator of Concord-skills, I have to ..." (finish the sentence).

This is no excuse to be sad, but a reason to embark on the path of self-improvement. We will definitely meet there and help each other to develop the skills.

# **The model of teacher's competencies within the new peaceful paradigm**

With the aim of more thorough study of the competencies that the Creators of Concord have formed and that we offer each teacher and student of the New Ukrainian School, we have developed a model of Creator of Concord-competencies. It includes the following four components - knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. It is these components that we propose to use for educational activities and research, as well as for self-improvement.

The Knowledge component is the information that is needed for successful activities of the Creator of Concord,

The Skills component is a set of necessary skills and abilities of the Creator of Concord formed in the process of training,

The Attitude component is the nature of the Concord Creator's behavior of agreement with his own inner and the outer world which influences the activity,

The Values component embraces the profound, important convictions of the Creator of Concord on which he relies at the moment of decision-making, in building relationships, in his professional and daily life.

The development of the Creator of Concord-competencies will be useful to all modern NUS teachers as these competencies are specified in the Professional Standard of Teachers (Professional Standard for such professions as "Primary School Teacher", "General Teacher", "Primary School Teacher" (with a diploma of a junior specialist), approved by the Order of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Agriculture of Ukraine dated December 23, 2020 № 2736.

URL: <https://goo.su/9T98>

We call your attention to this model:



# Model of the teacher's competencies

| Knowledge                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Skills                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Attitude                                                                                                                                                                      |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Four wings of conflict transformation" theory</li> <li>- Four levels of story (I-I, I-You, We-They, We)</li> <li>- Concept of emotions and feelings, their characteristics and meaning</li> <li>- Concept of peace culture and the concept of "positive peace".</li> <li>- Types of violence according to I. Galtung.</li> <li>- Theory of nonviolent communication according to M. Rosenberg.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness of one's self, one's own emotions and feelings                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bodily awareness</li> <li>- Cognitive flexibility</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Ability to act in a non-violent way</li> <li>- Awareness and identification of one's needs</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-judgemental attitude</li> <li>- Responsibility for manifestation of emotions</li> </ul>                                          | Story       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge of boundaries</li> <li>- Peculiarities of information perception (visuals, audiles, kinesthetics)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to recognize the group atmosphere, to describe and change it</li> <li>- Ability to be aware of how events are related to the emotional state of the group</li> <li>- Relieving psycho-emotional stress by creative methods</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Responsibility for the environment and atmosphere</li> <li>- Awareness of variability of the atmosphere</li> </ul>                   | Atmosphere  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge of the types of conflicts and structure of conflicts</li> <li>- Group dynamics (stages of the group life)</li> <li>- Formal and informal roles in a group and in the society</li> <li>- Types of rules and regulations, traditions and rituals</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to understand the rules and regulations at school, to distinguish between violence and peace</li> <li>- Ability to change the rules and regulations to peaceful ones</li> <li>- Awareness of hierarchy, ability to act horizontally and hierarchically                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Critical thinking skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Introduction of peaceful methods of conflict solution</li> <li>- Social consciousness/sociometry</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Responsibility for compliance with regulations and rules</li> <li>- Awareness of the possibility to change informal rules</li> </ul> | Guidance    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge of the group dynamics</li> <li>- Dialogue, styles of behavior in conflict                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Team-building tools</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Tools of team cooperation, co-creation.</li> <li>- Project activity</li> </ul>                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to co-create/accept diversity</li> <li>- Ability to create new objects, relationships and meanings in cooperation with others                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to cooperate</li> <li>- Creative thinking</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Ability to create a play space</li> <li>- Flexibility</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Faith in people</li> <li>- Viewing conflict as creative energy</li> <li>- Goodwill and being ready to cooperate</li> </ul>           | Co-creation |
| Values                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Positive peace and non-violence</li> <li>- Humanism</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                               |             |

**Following are the competencies from the professional standard of the NUS teachers that we form in teachers during our training sessions and other activities.**

| Knowledge                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Skills                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Psychological competence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- peculiarities of information perception: visuals, audials, kinesthetics</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cognitive flexibility</li> <li>- social consciousness/sociometry</li> <li>- creative thinking</li> <li>- spontaneity</li> <li>- flexibility</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Emotional and ethical competence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the concept of emotions and feelings, their characteristics and meaning</li> <li>- knowledge of boundaries</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- awareness of myself, of my own emotions and feelings</li> <li>- bodily awareness.</li> <li>- awareness and identification of needs</li> <li>- the ability to be aware of how events are related to the emotional state of the group</li> <li>- the ability to act in a non-violent way</li> </ul> |
| <b>Competence of pedagogical partnership</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- group dynamics (stages of the group life)</li> <li>- formal and informal roles in the group and society</li> <li>- types of rules, norms, traditions, rituals</li> <li>- knowledge of the group dynamics</li> <li>- dialogue, styles of behavior in conflict</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the ability to cooperate</li> <li>- awareness of hierarchy, ability to act horizontally and hierarchically</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Health-preserving competence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the concept of culture of peace and the concept of "positive peace".</li> <li>- types of violence according to J. Galtung.</li> <li>- The theory of nonviolent communication according to M. Rosenberg</li> <li>- knowledge of the types of conflicts, structure of conflicts</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- removal of psycho-emotional stress by creative methods</li> <li>- the ability to change the rules and regulations to peaceful ones</li> <li>- introduction of peaceful methods of conflict solution</li> </ul>                                                                                    |
| <b>Organizational competence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- team-building tools</li> <li>- tools of team cooperation, co-creation.</li> <li>- project activity</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the ability to recognize the group atmosphere, to describe and change it</li> <li>- the ability to understand the rules and regulations at school, to distinguish between violence and peace</li> <li>- critical thinking skills</li> <li>- the ability to create a game space</li> </ul>         |
| <b>Innovative competence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Four wings of conflict transformation" theory</li> <li>- Four levels of a story (I-I, I-You, We -They, We)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the ability to create new objects, relationships and meanings in cooperation with others</li> <li>- the ability to create/accept diversity</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                             |

# Chapter 2

## School through the eyes of the Creator of Concord

In the next section we present our view of the situation in the school environment of Ukrainian educational institutions. We don't want it to be seen as criticism. This is definitely not our goal. It is an attempt to interpret events and stories in a certain way and to take a deeper look at the situation than it is usually done. As well as an attempt to help find new situational and motivating stories that will provide solution to certain problems of the New Ukrainian School.

### Story

As we wrote before, the Creator of Concord looks at the school environment through the prism of the theory of the four wings of conflict transformation.

The first wing in this theory is Story. Stories show us the state of any environment at the moment. So, what stories did the Creator of Concord hear? What new stories and messages need to be conveyed to school participants to create a peaceful environment? From the point of view of the theory of narrative reticulation each story can be considered on four levels:

- **the universal level** - related to the global problems of mankind, the archetypes clear to anyone on planet earth,
- **the social level** – that what is understood at the community and society level, stories that cover large communities (like citizens of the country and cities, professional communities of teachers and doctors, other communities categorized by type of activity and hobbies - teachers of other schools)
- **the interpersonal level** - stories that are understood within a team of two or three people (for example, teaching staff, a class, etc.).
- **the personal level** – stories regarding the inner world of a person, his feelings, emotions, needs and attitudes.

The skill of listening with close attention that we develop during the "Creators of Concord" training course allows one to hear all four levels in each story. While studying the school environment, we heard many stories. Below we present the main narratives we heard at each level of a story and new stories that can be brought to school, thus transforming the school environment into a more peaceful and positive one.

# Common story of humanity

The modern world is rapidly transforming. Digital technologies, globalization and the changing labor markets are challenging the education system around the world. The classroom system formed over the period of the industrialization era is unable to meet the needs of the modern post-industrial society. This is a systemic crisis sweeping the world. Some countries have begun their educational experiments but those have not become generally accepted yet. The universal story of modern education sounds like this, "We do not know how to help a child in his future adult life as we do not know how the world is going to change."

The Creators of Concord have heard and seen the echo of this story in Ukrainian schools. In our study, the teachers said that they do not see how their activities can really help the child in the future, yet they do not know how to act differently while holding on to old experiences.

The new Ukrainian School is also responding to the general crisis of the education system by offering a competency-based approach. However, this reform faces strong opposition from the old system. It is manifested in the fact that teachers learn the new principles proposed by the reform at teaching staff meetings and in other ways and they are well aware, for example, of the Pedagogy of Partnership and its principles, but, unfortunately, in their daily activities they communicate completely different values.

We encourage teachers to think about how often in their school life they use the phrases "You must", "Do it right now", "It's my order", "If you do not do it I am going to punish you", "Everyone should do so", "It's your fault."

Do you think these phrases show respect for the student's personality? Do they communicate a friendly and positive attitude? Do they inspire trust in a relationship? Are these not the goals that the pedagogy of the NUS partnership is supposed to lead? Are there at least first steps in this direction in your school? Have these values become deeply rooted in the vast majority of the teaching staff? Do teachers communicate them every day when they cross the school threshold? All these are rhetorical questions that encourage one to reflect.

And it is important to give an honest answer to them - not for public proclamation but rather for oneself. Because only by noting the point where we are now, we can set off. This path will not be quick and easy, because we will have to work with the deep beliefs and statements inherited from our parents and/or the old system. So it's time to change them. Our efforts will not be in vain, they create the basis for a happier future for our children.

We believe no one wants their children to live in an atmosphere of enmity and war, every person strives for peace and harmony. To begin with, we need to understand that peace and harmony begin in our own hearts and actions and then only they take form in collectives, cities and countries.

*The Creators of Concord rely on the new school vision that helps create a positive school world. "The modern world is unpredictable, but if we master the skill of being adaptable and maintaining awareness, as well as the skill of developing nonviolent relationships among all participants in the school process, it will help the child prepare for the challenges of the future life".*

## **Social stories**

Against the background of the general crisis of education, there are also social stories inherent in Ukrainian schools. These are stories of social inequality caused by the collapse of the Soviet system and the imbalance in the formation of the new market relations.

We have heard stories of conflicts with parents.

"We (teachers) are supposed to teach rather than to bring up, but they (parents) say, 'I pay taxes, so you have to ...'"

We have heard a story about the impossibility of change: "We (teachers) have no leverage to influence children and parents".

We have heard a story of misunderstanding: "We do not understand modern children at all, they lack the feeling of shame".

We have heard the story of social inequality: "We can't afford a vacation abroad", "The teaching profession is not a prestigious one, we are second-class people".

We also see a story of gender and age imbalances in school. The vast majority of teachers are middle-aged and older women. Lack of gender balance and large generational differences are often the cause of misunderstandings. According to statistics, more than 60% of teachers have over 20 years of teaching experience. Such teachers are often prone to emotional and professional burnout which tends to lead to tension and conflict.

*The Creator of Concord brings a new social story into the school environment: "We are all different, we have different worldviews and different opportunities, but if we pay attention to everyone's needs and feelings, we can create an atmosphere where everyone feels comfortable".*

## Interpersonal stories

The Creators of Concord have seen the stories of teachers' loneliness. The teaching staff rarely gathers together. For the most part, the teacher relies on himself, sometimes on a few friends and colleagues. When new teachers come, the process of adapting and joining a new team takes a while. And for the most part a new employee is treated with distrust and is assigned unpleasant administrative work.

When we asked the teachers for the reason of this state of affairs we heard the following reply, "We don't have time to drink tea, let alone to chat with others."

"Young teachers don't know anything at all."

"Every person for himself."

But we have also heard other stories, like, "When someone is sick, we help each other."

*The Creators of Concord see the need to update the stories about the value of the team and group support. These stories can be realized through traditions of team-building activities for teachers and the organization of a safe and comfortable environment for teachers where they can communicate and support each other. A new interpersonal story that will help the modern teacher goes like this, "We are a team of professionals who support each other. There is trust and respect between us."*





## Personal stories

If you listen carefully to a person, you can see his inner world and understand his problems. This enables you to realize his true values manifested in daily activities. At school, during our activities, we listened to stories told by students and teachers.

The Creators of Concord met with students and teaching staff and heard their personal stories.

Listening to the teachers we heard the stories of exhaustion, mistrust, sadness, and lack of resources.

*"They don't hear me and no one cares about me. But I have nowhere to go from here."*

*"I will do everything the administration says otherwise I will not be given a day off."*

*"I can't change anything."*

*"I love children but I'm exhausted by a lot of paperwork."*

*"All I can do is wait for the summer holidays."*

We also heard personal stories from the children:

*"Even when I'm with my classmates I feel lonely."*

*"They (parents) need ratings and grades while I need attention."*

*"You don't need chemistry to be a blogger."*

*"I'm bored here."*

*"Teachers don't pay attention to me."*

*"I'm not interested in lessons."*

*"What we are learning now will not be needed in life."*

Having heard the personal stories of teachers, we realized what new messages the modern teaching staff needs. These are ideas for self-regulation, self-preservation, things that empower them on a daily basis, not just during the holidays. When we offered teachers creative exercises for self-support we saw them become more resilient and energetic.

The new messages for students are "the teacher is a person who has his own feelings and needs. Becoming aware of them the student will be able to choose the most effective means of communication to achieve common goals and needs", "Even when there seems to be no way out, use a creative approach, find a 'third way' whereby either side of communication will benefit."

An important step in starting work on transforming the school environment is listening to stories and understanding their deep meaning.

The goal of the Creator of Concord is not just listening to stories, but also creating new narratives that will help change the "negative world" in our school and society. This skill, creation of new stories, or storytelling, is a well-known technique in the modern world. It also comes to school.

So, we have told you about new narratives that we think might come to school. If you, as a reader, respond to everything we talk about, you can join our "Creators of Concord" educational project or start on a personal path of self-development and self-education.

## Atmosphere

Atmosphere, as defined by the contemporary German philosopher Gernot Böhme is a subjective or social attitude mediated by the external environment. In other words, it is the combination of the physical and temporal space of the school and the common emotional state of people present in that space. From the point of view of our theory of the "four wings" the atmosphere consists of:

- **the physical space** - school premises, school grounds, wall color, lighting, temperature and odor;
- **the temporal space** – a schedule, time intervals during the day, week and month of the year; chronotype (individual peculiarities of a person's circadian rhythms);
- **the comfort/challenge balance** - the ability of participants to step outside their comfort zone without losing their resource and to safely overcome any challenges;
- **the support of diversity** - attention to the differences of each participant in the school process (cultural, religious, ethnic, physical and physical, mental ones and those related to gender, age and language) and their tolerant acceptance.

## Physical space

The physical space directly affects a person's feelings and emotional state. On the one hand we see that participants in the school process try to make the physical space in the school more positive and child-centered, attuned to the child and his needs. Most often this is manifested in the coloring design of the walls. Painted floors for children's games, ottomans and other seating areas appear. But this is not a systemic phenomenon and unfortunately, schools do not have the opportunity to make high-quality repairs and equip the classes according to the latest developments of interior design and ergonomics. But, on the other hand, a creative approach allows us to make small but influential changes in the

physical space transforming it into a more comfortable and supportive one. For example, various organic essential oils can improve children's concentration, soothe or excite them. Of course, there may be a question about the allergic reaction to the components, but with the dosage standards observed the risks can be cut down. However, we have not seen this knowledge and practice be used.

*The Creator of Concord uses the physical space of the school to gamify the school process which makes the school environment more interesting and positive. This can be a permanent quest with good wishes or walls where you can write your questions or draw, make greetings, organize the interior of the school with an annual cycle of holidays and school traditions. Modern technologies, such as augmented reality, are also positively changing the school environment. The Creator of Concord involves all participants in the educational process - teachers, children and parents - in the transformation of the physical space.*

## **Temporal space**

The temporal space of the Ukrainian school is still conditioned by the industrialization legacy. Similar to a factory, the school works according to the production schedule: a bell sounding at the same time every day, classes starting early in the morning, graduation of the next batch of students at the end of the school year. This is entirely contrary to such concepts as human health and biological rhythm, individual needs and capacities of students of different ages to devote time to learning.

Also, the current schedule and the existing temporal space do not allow all participants in the educational process to meet. Namely, at the time parents can afford to pay attention to the school process in the evening and on weekends, teachers and students do not work or study. Thus, the temporal space of the school does not allow educators to communicate with parents on a more regular basis. This lack of communication often becomes a source of conflict, misunderstanding and lack of warm relations.

The school's existing temporal space discriminates against people with a late chronotype ("owls") and makes people with an early chronotype ("larks") privileged participants. If a student with an early chronotype takes the exam at 8 am he is more likely to get a higher score than a student with a late chronotype, with the same level of knowledge.

*The Creator of Concord is aware of the difficulty of changing temporal space in school, but still offers to be aware of the chronotype of both educators and students and*

*take it into account. This focus allows for more environmentally friendly decisions for all participants. The Creator of Concord sets up the ground for educators, students and parents to meet regularly - taking into account time periods convenient for everyone.*

## **Comfort/challenge balance**

The main goal of the school is to promote the formation of new competencies. Researchers have shown that a child learns better in a safe and comfortable environment, for mastering a new experience is in itself a challenge. The child needs resources for this and those can be found only in a comfortable environment. This applies not only to students but to educators as well. In our study, we saw that the concept of comfort is perceived by educators in a distorted way. That is, they rarely care about their own comfort and that of students, they tend to forget about the drinking regime, the need to balance physical and mental effort. Most of the didactic material is based on visual and audio channels of perception, but the kinesthetic channel remains almost unrealized and sometimes is even forbidden. For example, a student with an active kinesthetic channel of perception may not be allowed to move while learning.

In the process of the research, we learned that many schools do not have a teacher's room and a student recreation room. Thus, the basic human need for communication and support from colleagues (who are equal to them with regard to the role identity) is not met. As a result, the teacher is constantly deprived of comfort, which leads to emotional and professional burnout.

Most formal challenges in the school environment are related to assessment. Students take exams, educators "defend" the category with schools themselves participating in competitions and rankings. Other challenges include team building (a class of students or a team of educators), self-perception in the team during the transition period (e.g. the adolescent crisis or adaptation of young teachers), group dynamics, school-community relations, global challenges (pandemic, digitalization, or decentralization) - are regulated mostly spontaneously and are often of violent nature. At the same time, the modern school from the point of view of the Creator of Concord does not meet the "comfort/challenge balance" criterion since the challenges of the educational process outweigh the comfortable state of its participants.

*The Creators of Concord analyze the environment and determine what changes can be made to create greater comfort for all participants in the process. They draw attention to the unmet needs for safety and comfort. Activities of the Creators of Concord help participants get support from their own team and promote cohesion. The Creators of*

*Concord teach how to deal with crises in a nonviolent way, using the creative methods of conflict transformation.*

## **Support of diversity**

Modern reforms in Ukrainian education are changing attitudes towards inclusion. Students with special educational needs and teacher assistants appeared in secondary schools. This is a positive achievement of independent Ukraine. But at the same time, we have seen manifestations of intolerance towards minorities and marginalized groups (national, religious, gender). Socio-political conflicts also occur in school (over the language issue, the war in Eastern Ukraine or the Revolution of Dignity), which divide groups into majorities and minorities and become a source of conflict and controversy. On the other hand, many current studies suggest that embracing diversity in teams is a competitive advantage of a community and makes such teams more effective than homogeneous socio-cultural groups. The main challenge in maintaining diversity in schools is that modern educators are in the "Be special" cultural trend while generations of educators have been shaped by the "Be like everyone else, don't be different" cultural trend. This contradiction leads to misunderstandings between educators and students, to burnout of teachers and devaluation of useful information adolescents receive from teachers. Because the school environment does not support diversity, all participants lose important things and feel stressed out.

*In the process of his own training the Creator of Concord develops such an important competency as social awareness. This allows him to understand and feel the social diversity in the team, to be sensitive to the stories of each separate group or person. He helps the school team create new unifying narratives that value diversity. Informal rules are also created to help use the characteristics of each person for the common comfort and well-being, to understand how to change the atmosphere and its physical space taking into account different needs of school participants.*

## **Guiding**

Guiding is a set of formal and informal regulations, rules and methods that exist in the school environment and the activities of the actors (roles) who implement them. The Creators of Concord consider the aspect of Guiding from two sides:

- the regulatory guiding includes norms of legislation (the Law of Ukraine "On Education", regulations of the Ministry of Education and Science, financial and economic normative documents, etc.), documents on labor protection and safety at school, school

charter, administration orders, curricula and instructions.

- the informal guiding includes traditions of a school and a class (initiation, birthday festivities, etc.), the personal style of the teacher, agreements, ways of making group decisions in teams of students and teachers, a set of methods for resolving conflicts and contradictions, values, stereotypes and attitudes.

## **Regulatory guiding**

When we, as the Creators of Concord, review legislation and formal instructions concerning school, we notice not only positive aspects but also some manifestations of violence against the teacher's or student's personality. Let's take a formal test of knowledge during external testing as an example. The test type of knowledge assessment is not suitable for people who perceive information mainly through the kinesthetic channel of perception. Such people cannot show a high level of knowledge during testing.

In educational institutions we also see an excessive burden on teachers due to a large amount of documentation and reports that need to be filled out. This leads to fatigue, burnout and devaluation of the teacher. From our point of view, this is formal violence against an educator. It leads the teacher to resist other innovations and changes for the better that come to the school and initially have a good idea and content (such as the New Ukrainian School), but are not supported by the community of chronically tired teachers.

*We understand that transformation of the normative guidance of educational institutions requires the joint efforts of all participants in the school environment and officials, as well as a certain period of time. This is a long way of transformation, and our project "Creators of Concord" is part of it. In this brochure, we do not go into detail, but we call for awareness of this problem and for further joint steps towards positive and peaceful change.*

## **Informal guiding**

Unlike regulatory guiding, informal guiding can be changed to create peace among all participants in the school environment. Therefore we prioritize this aspect.

We see that the setting of rules and traditions in a group is uncontrolled and spontaneous. Educators, with very few exceptions, do not use modern methods of facilitation and group guiding. Class teachers are not aware of the group dynamics and the role of the group leader. This results in a relationship of confrontation where the teacher commands and the children resist.



On the other hand, there are positive peaceful traditions that unite students and teachers. We saw the volunteer movement in schools, the warm traditions of some classes in recreation and spending time together (excursions and team building events).

*The Creators of Concord offer assistance to the class teacher in creating new peaceful traditions and class rules, teach all participants in the educational process in a new, democratic way to make group decisions and take into account the stages of group dynamics. In a situation of contradictions or conflicts they offer to develop new habits and ways to resolve them.*

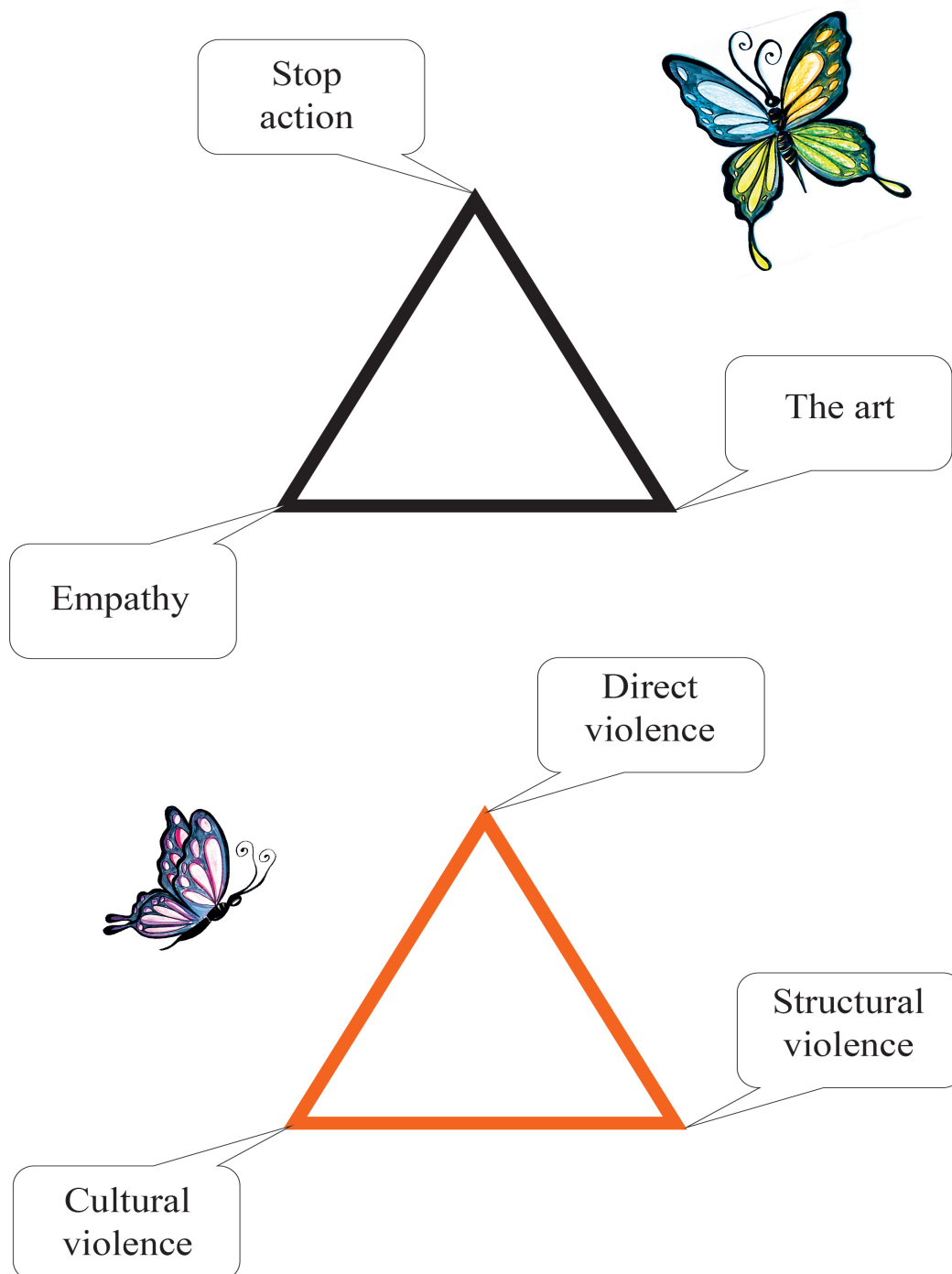
*The Creator of Concord provides information on types of violence and nonviolence, developing awareness in this area.*



## J. Galtung's theory and "Guiding"

Analyzing the aspect of "Guiding" we rely on the ideas of Johan Galtung and his theory of conflict transformation. (Johan Galtung is a Norwegian mathematician and sociologist, specialist in conflict analysis and resolution, founder and leader of the Transcend International movement).

J. Galtung distinguishes three types of conflicts and three ways of transforming them into peaceful states.



| <b>Direct violence/Nonviolence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Direct violence</b> is an action (physical, verbal, textual, graphic, etc.) that aims at the physical and moral injury. This type of violence is visible, destructive and the most dangerous. Direct violence must be stopped immediately and nonviolence is proposed instead.                                                                                                                                        | <b>Nonviolence</b> is an action (physical, verbal, textual, graphic, etc.) that aims at meeting the needs of all participants in communication or a process.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Structural violence/Creative approach</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Structural violence</b> is the creation of conditions by social institutions that do not allow people to meet their basic needs, it is a regulatory framework that legitimizes violence. The purpose of structural violence is to resolve contradictions. However, it is possible to work with contradictions by means of a creative approach as well.                                                                | <b>Creativity</b> is an opportunity to see conflict as energy that allows for finding a new solution. This is the way where all parties to the conflict "win".                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Cultural violence/Empathy</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Cultural violence</b> is those aspects of culture, of the symbolic sphere of our existence represented by religion and ideology, language, art and science, which are a source of direct and structural violence. As a result, direct and structural violence begin to be perceived as fair or as a norm despite the suffering or oppression of the individual. Cultural violence can be transformed through empathy. | <b>Empathy</b> is a basic universal skill that helps resist the dehumanization of another person or a group of people. Empathy is becoming aware of another person's relationships, feelings, and mental states in the form of sympathy. Empathy allows you to understand the needs of another person and find a way out when everyone "wins" (a "win-win" situation). |

Thus, when we see one of the types of violence in the school environment, we use counteraction.

# Co-creation

The next wing we will consider is Co-creation. Let's remember the definition: Co-creation is a creative interaction between all participants in the process to give birth to new relationships, objects and values. As we noted earlier, Jonathan Fox's theory identifies five types of co-creation:

- **Play** - a joint activity filled with positivity and energy. The ability to play together and create games on a 'win-win' basis (when everyone wins and there are no winners).
- **Open sensitivity** - the ability of participants to feel and recognize their own emotions and feelings, as well as the emotions of others. It also includes the skills of empathy and reflection.
- **Creativity** - a creative activity characterized by the ability to produce new ideas and bring them to a concrete practical result.
- **Role flexibility** - the ability to find the appropriate role for a situation, the ability to consciously switch between one's own roles and to understand what roles are played by other participants in the interaction.
- **Collaboration** - the ability to cooperate with other people, the ability to work in a team for achieving a cooperative result. A balance between personal needs and the needs of the group.

## Play

While working with schools we have seen that industrial and "academic" culture have strong roots in the modern Ukrainian school. This culture focuses on acquisition and transfer of knowledge, in which a person is part of the mechanism and performs an action of the same type throughout the entire learning process. "School is serious!" is still the main message of the modern system.

This approach ignores modern psychophysiological and sociological research which says that play and playfulness are the main area of development and learning not just for children, but for adults as well. For the most part, play takes a short amount of time in a modern school, mostly during breaks. Educators are rarely involved in the play space as participants. It is difficult for them to afford to play for fear of being assessed. The teacher constantly keeps himself within the standards and stereotypes. Even when there is a chance to get a new experience and test the rules of the game, the teachers do not allow themselves this experiment.

Many games and activities in the school environment take place on a competitive basis. Olympiads, competitions for the best teacher or student, ratings of students at school - all of this, on the one hand, is the gamification of the educational space, and on

the other, this is a space where achievements are evaluated, there is a division into those who perform well and who are not so successful, into winners and losers.

We've seen that there are almost no games whose main goal is to unite participants and enjoy the interaction. Processes such as team building (exercises for forming a team), festivals, fairs, social projects are rare in school and are not widespread. Still less amount of time is devoted to the 'win-win' games.

*The Creator of Concord invites the participants in the school process to try the play activities in which each one can get pleasure and support. These can be small games that can be played by all participants in the school process directly in the classroom (for example, movement games using bodypercussion, acting improvisation and art techniques) or large forms for the entire school (such as the carnival at the time of Maslenitsa (a Pre-Lenten festival, similar to carnival), a game of Secret Santa, a joint creation of an art object, a festival).*

## **Open sensitivity**

While working in the school environment, we realized that it is not customary in school to pay attention to feelings and emotions. As a rule, most feelings are restrained. This leads to emotional burnout. A systematic approach to the development of emotional intelligence of students and educators is lacking. We have also seen that feelings that last for a long time at some point do find an affective (emotionally destructive, toxic) way out and lead to conflict. The lack of a culture of empathy and reflection is a direct source of bullying and mobbing (harassment of adults in a group).

We found out that a number of educators (30%) know about psychological self-regulation techniques (such as mindfulness and relaxing psychological exercises), but do not use them on a systematic basis. Why is this happening? Our hypothesis is that the modern school is highly bureaucratized, the teacher is constantly engaged in non-stop activity, most of the time is spent filling out journals, reports and plans. The space and rules of school life do not allow participants to slow down and take care of themselves.

*The Creator of Concord offers the participants in the school process to develop new habits of constant use of psychological self-regulation techniques. Some of these techniques should provide resources and energy for the educational process, while others should provide stress relief and relaxation. The Creator of Concord also offers knowledge of the importance of ecological treatment of emotions and the development of emotional intelligence. It motivates both children and adults to develop their empathy.*

# Creativity

Creativity and innovation are a global trend nowadays. Mastering the creative approach is a great competitive advantage of any specialist, project, institution or country. While interacting with the school environment, we saw that the structure of the educational process is set up in such a way that compliance with rules and norms play a more important role than manifestations of creativity and innovation. We have seen that many teachers who propose creative changes face resistance from their colleagues and administration, and even get bullied. I believe you have also faced situations where new ideas and innovations were hampered by supporters of the "old bureaucratic rigid" system.

Another example of non-acceptance of children's creativity is a "difficult" class (according to teachers). This is a class where students showed their creativity and began to hold interesting flash mobs (for example, some students made an agreement to come to school in slippers). This caused outrage and a negative reaction from the side of the teachers.

On the one hand, we understand the fear of teachers and school administration to lose control, and on the other hand, we do not consider the response to any creativity (from the side of students and educators) by means of punishment and prohibition effective.

*The Creator of Concord responds to creativity with creativity, he is flexible and adaptable, finding new solutions to the challenges that arise every day. Our offer is to develop a creative approach not only for children, but also for adult participants in the school process. In this way, creativity will help educators, on the one hand, maintain control and responsibility, and on the other, support students and colleagues and integrate new ideas into the school process. This helps reduce violence in the school environment, because even Johan Galtung, a well-known peacemaker and scientist, says in his work that creativity is a way to resolve conflicts peacefully with all participants feeling satisfied.*

## Role flexibility

Over the period of time that we, the Creators of Concord, have been interacting with schools, we witnessed the role of flexibility becoming more common in the school environment. There are many examples when a teacher does not just play the role of a person who transmits new knowledge. Educators take on new roles as well – that of a facilitator, mediator, project manager and others. We see that there are many activities in school where children can show role flexibility and take on not just the role of a student, but also the role of an activist, inventor or a project participant.



But we will also see that these changes are not of a systemic nature, they appear spontaneously as responses to external challenges and opportunities. One of the causes of conflicts is role inflexibility. If we take the example of a flash mob with slippers, in that situation the teachers strictly adhered to the role of an authoritarian educator who demands compliance with the rules. The role in this situation would have been justified if the children were mere students at that time, but they played a more artistic, stage role. If educators in this situation showed the role flexibility and chose to interact with children from another role, such as a director or an art manager who supports "artistic" activity and fits it into the school framework, in that case, this flash mob would have been a positive and peaceful experience for everyone. Similarly, if the children showed greater role flexibility, one of them could have become the manager of this project and agreed in advance with the teachers to conduct a flash mob so that it would not become an unpleasant surprise.

*The Creator of Concord offers developing social awareness - that is, the skill of recognizing one's own roles and the roles of other students. It helps us be flexible and adaptable, choose roles effectively according to the situation. The development of role flexibility and social awareness is best formed in the process of systemic activities (training sessions, discussions or seminars), where participants learn to interact with each other in different roles.*



# Collaboration

The modern world needs effective teams and the ability to interact in a team. By team we mean a group of people united by a common goal, where its achievement enriches each of the participants.

In the modern Ukrainian school, we have not seen systematic measures aimed at the creation and development of teams - neither among students nor among educators.

The school system has several activities throughout the year for interaction of students, teachers and parents in groups. But in general, these activities are used for entertainment (nature outings, excursions or going to the theater) or for solving organizational issues (parent meetings and homerooms). These activities do not bring up the topic of the overall team goal, values, dialogue and team rules of interaction. There are no activities aimed at supporting group dynamics either among students or among educators. In such an environment, conflicts become regular, toxic and can last for several years.

75% of the schools that participated in the project lacked a teacher's room where the staff could communicate, support each other and share experiences. This testifies to the fact that participants in the school environment do not pay attention to issues of collective cooperation. But, on the other hand, our research shows that it is the greatest resource for teachers and students.

*For the development of collaboration, the Creator of Concord suggests using the opportunities that already exist in school. Homerooms, teaching staff councils or parent meetings - in these spaces, it is possible to be engaged in activities aimed at building teams. The Creators of Concord suggest a systematic approach to team-building training sessions, it is important that they are conducted several times a year. The decisions and results of these team-building meetings can be implemented in everyday school life. This will make it more peaceful and provide an opportunity for cooperation and co-creation. The Creator of Concord also shares the knowledge of group dynamics, conflict behavior strategies and the project approach with educators and students.*

# Chapter 3

## Tools of the Creators of Concord

Practice is a necessary continuation of reflections on the school environment. In this chapter, we offer some exercises from the rich experience of the Creators of Concord. These exercises are quite versatile, flexible, and can help you in different situations and needs.

We use these exercises for both the teaching staff and students.

Choosing exercises and using them.

1. Analyze the state of the team in terms of the theory of the four wings. Highlight the urgent needs of working with this team, the area of immediate development.

2. As the facilitator you should check your own state and see whether you are in a resourceful state. If not, you can do exercises from the self-regulation unit, see page 75.

3. Understand what time and physical resources you have (If time is short, choose an exercise from the section “Energizers”, if time and resources are more plentiful choose from the section on team building).

4. Choose an exercise according to your own needs and the needs of your team.

The description of each exercise consists of:

- the purpose of conducting it
- its duration
- number of participants
- materials needed for it
- the course of the exercise

The exercises are united into three groups:

- **energizer exercises;** using them helps increase vital energy, cheer up and get in the mood, as well as strengthen positive emotions;

- **exercises for uniting the team;** using them helps improve communication in the group, contributes to the relaxation of the participants, formation of a trusting and positive atmosphere in the group and strengthening of positive emotions;

- **exercises for self-regulation, calming and focus of attention,** which can be used when we need to reduce the manifestation of the negative emotions, to switch attention for further work and to restore internal resources.

# ENERGIZERS

## Massaging activator



**Purpose:** Relieving psychological stress.

**Duration:** 2 minutes.

**Number of participants:** even number.

### The course of the exercise

Pair all participants. In a pair, one of the participants turns his back to the other. The other participant "draws" with his hands on the back of the first one and says the following words:

*From tail to ears* (moves his hands from the waist to the ears along the back)

*A zebra has many stripes-stripes-stripes* (draws parallel horizontal lines)

*No circles* (draws circles)

*No check-patterns* (draws perpendicular lines)

*No drawing on the whole back* (draws a large square on the whole back)

*Only stripes-stripes-stripes from tail to ears* (again draws stripes and runs his hands from the waist to the ears).

Then the participants change roles.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

If the participants find the direct tactile contact uncomfortable, they can draw on the sheets of paper attached to the back.

Before starting the game the participants are supposed to learn these lines.

## Find your match



**Purpose:** movement, relieving stress, a way to "recharge batteries" and to warm up muscles, memory and attention.

**Required materials:** pieces of paper with a written text - the name of an animal (the name of each animal on two pieces of paper).

**Duration:** 5 to 10 minutes.

### The course of the exercise

The number of participants is divided into two - this is the number of animals.

We put the papers in a hat (this may be something else, for example, a bag or a box).

Children take turns taking a piece of paper out and, without showing it to anyone, read the text.

Then everyone begins to move simultaneously around the room (or a glade, if the game is played in nature).

The eyes should be closed with the hands, no speaking is allowed, one can only make animal sounds.

Everyone is supposed to find their match by moving and listening to others.

## Australian Rain



**Purpose:** relieving excitement.

**Duration:** 5 to 7 minutes.

**Number of participants:** the entire group.

### The course of the exercise:

Participants stand in a circle. The facilitator says the phrase, shows the action, and the participants repeat after him. The facilitator says:

- Do you know what the Australian rain is? No? Then let's listen together to what it is. Now in a circle you will pass my actions further on. But you will repeat these actions only after they are performed by your neighbor. As soon as the action comes back to me, I will pass it to the next one. Let's get started? Listen carefully! "In Australia, the wind has picked up (rubbing his palms). The wind intensifies (the facilitator rubs his palms and blows). It starts raining (clicks his fingers). The rain intensifies (claps his hands on his chest). A real downpour begins (the facilitator slaps himself on the thighs). And here is a real storm with hail (stomps his feet). Now the storm is letting up (slaps himself on the thighs). And the rain subsides (slaps himself on the thighs). Scarce drops fall onto the ground (clicks his fingers). The sun is coming out! (the facilitator raises his hands). Sunshine, we have been waiting for you!"

**Reflection and results:** the participants discuss their emotions and feelings. What did you like, and what did you not like and why? What did you learn that was new and useful for you? How can this knowledge be implemented in everyday life?



## I like your...



**Purpose:** movement, relieving stress, a way to "recharge batteries" and to warm-up muscles, memory and attention.

**Required materials:** a ball, but if a ball is lacking another object (a water bottle, a pen, etc.) can be passed in a circle.

**Duration:** 10 to 15 minutes.

### The course of the exercise

Participants stand in a circle. The coach throws the ball to one of the participants, saying at the same time: "I like your..." and names the quality he likes (or several qualities). The participant who has received the ball, throws it to another person and names the qualities he likes. The ball must go to all participants.



## A dragon



**Purpose:** activating the dynamics of the group.

**Duration:** 5 minutes.

### The course of the exercise

Participants stand in a circle. The coach throws the ball to one of the participants, saying at the same time: "I like your..." and names the quality he likes (or several qualities). The participant who has received the ball, throws it to another person and names the qualities he likes. The ball must go to all participants.

## I love...



**Purpose:** to identify common interests; activate the dynamics of the group.

**Required materials:** a ball.

**Duration:** 10 minutes.

### The course of the exercise

Facilitator: In order for us to get to know each other better and move around, I suggest you play the "I love" game. The one who gets the ball should throw it to anyone in the group and tell them exactly what they like to do. For example, I throw Olya the ball and say, "I like to ride a bike." Olya catches the ball and says her preferences. Then she throws the ball, for example, to Kolya, and so on.

## A gift



**Purpose:** training spontaneity, boosting the energy of the group.

**Duration:** 10 to 15 minutes.

**Number of participants:** even number.

### The course of the exercise

Participants pair up and start giving each other presents. To make a gift you just need to open your hands and give something to your partner without thinking in advance what it is. Having received a gift, you give it a name - the first thing that comes to mind. For example: "Oh, thank you, for the little dead cockroach." After that you quickly give a gift from you to your partner.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

It is best when this game proceeds fast and the participants do not have much time to think and so need to improvise. A good warm-up that will help the participants communicate positively and boost the energy level of the group.

## Emotional mirror



**Purpose:** to train spontaneity, the ability to tell stories and create characters. Helps gain acceptance of partner and reduce fear of manifesting oneself.

**Duration:** 5 to 15 minutes.

**Number of participants:** the exercise is done in pairs.

### The course of the exercise

Players stand in pairs, facing each other. One begins to speak in the gibberish language with a certain emotion (anger, joy, love, etc.) Emotions can be assigned by the facilitator, or the participants themselves. The other player immediately imitates the emotion of the first player and begins to speak in his own gibberish. There is no need to copy your partner's gibberish, and also both players must speak non-stop, without pauses. After about 10 seconds the other player changes the emotion and the first one immediately begins to copy it following the same principle.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The change of roles is announced by the facilitator, but it is also possible for the participants to decide for themselves.

After the exercise is done, the group can discuss how the participants felt, whether they managed to overcome the barrier and the fear of expressing themselves in an unusual way.

## Elephant, toaster, mixer and others



**Purpose:** boosting the level of energy.

**Duration:** 5 to 10 minutes.

**Number of participants:** 6 and up.

### The course of the exercise

For the game, all participants stand in a circle. The facilitator is in the center of the circle. He points to any participant and utters one of three expressions: "Elephant", "Toaster" or "Mixer". The participant and his neighbors perform the corresponding task.

"Elephant": the participant depicts a trunk (holding a hand to his nose and pushing the other hand into it). His neighbors should draw the elephant's ears with their hands moving in a semicircle and touching the participant.

"Toaster": the two neighbors hold hands so that the participant is in the ring of their hands. Then the participant jumps up, depicting a coming up toast, and shouts: "I'm ready!".

"Mixer": the participant revolves around himself. His neighbors point their hands at his head. He who was too slow to depict the figure, hurried or got confused, becomes the next facilitator (takes the place of the facilitator in the center of the circle).

## 33



**Purpose:** uniting the team, working together, developing focus of attention.

**Duration:** 5 to 15 minutes.

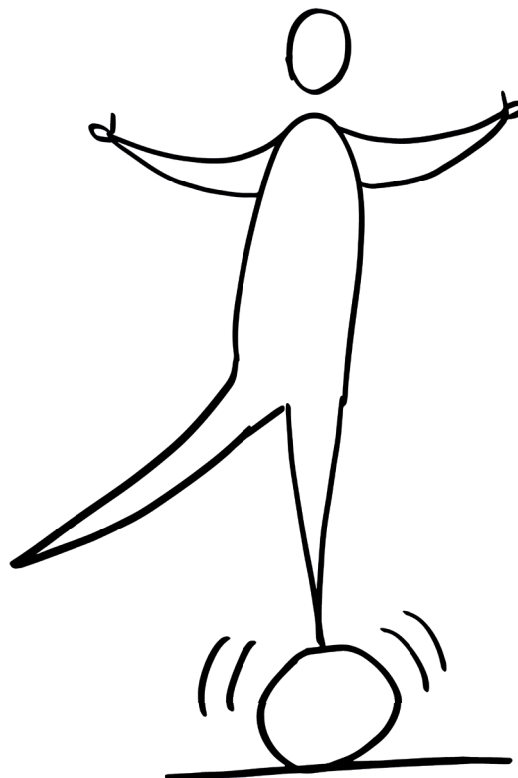
**Number of participants:** the entire group.

### Course of the exercise:

Participants stand in a circle, each naming numbers aloud in order from 1 to 33. The players whose number contains the figure "three" or divided by three (3, 6, 9, 12, 13, 16, 19, 21, 23, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33), should not name the number aloud, but just clap their hands.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The exercise helps participants focus before learning new material.





## Colored ball



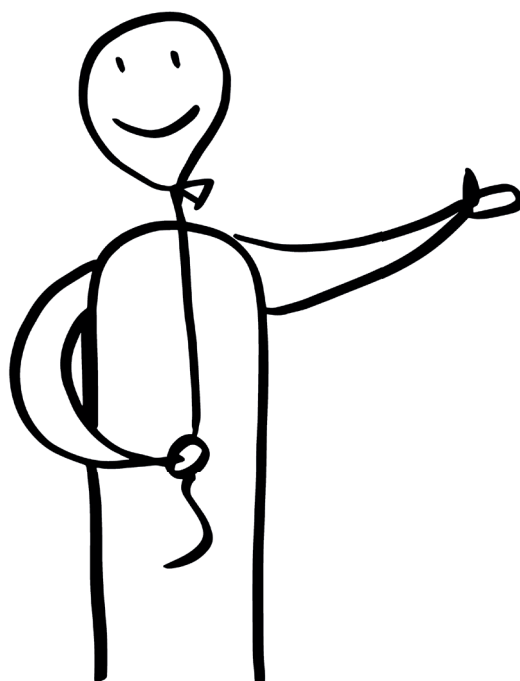
**Purpose:** uniting the team, working together, developing focus of attention.

**Duration:** 5 to 15 minutes.

**Number of participants:** the entire group.

### Course of the exercise:

Participants stand in a circle. The first player passes an imaginary small ball in the palm of his hand to the player next to him saying its color. The next one passes the "ball" around the circle also naming its color. The number of balls and colors grows with each round. The task is to focus on number and colors of the 'ball' and correctly convey the information to other players.



## The bond



**Purpose:** working in pairs, building trust, manifesting creativity, uniting the group, tuning to joint work.

**Duration:** 5 to 15 minutes.

**Number of participants:** work in pairs.

### The course of the exercise:

Participants stand in pairs, the facilitator names the part of the body. The pairs of players should "stick to each other" with this part and keep this position while moving. The music is turned on, and the players move slowly around, without breaking the connection until the facilitator's command. The latter can name different parts of the body such as palms, knees, shoulders or heads. The couple's task is to move freely to the melodies, while keeping in touch.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The exercise can be made more complicated by adding new "gluing" points. Maintaining the first connection, the participants try to keep an additional physical connection (for example, head-and-shoulder, palm-and-abdomen, etc.). When one of the participants can no longer move, he gives a signal, and the participants find a new match.

# EXERCISES FOR UNITING THE TEAM

## Desert island



**Purpose:** team building, distributions of the roles within the group, making collective decisions, building trust in the group, creating a sense of unity within the team.

**Duration:** 15 minutes.

**Required materials:** whatman paper and markers.

**Number of participants:** 9 to 30.

### The course of the exercise

The first stage. Divide all participants into three teams. The task is to imagine finding oneself on a desert island. Think what it is like, whether there are animals and what kinds of plants grow there. In general, what does it look like? Draw it on a sheet of paper. Distribute roles among the participants: who is in charge of food, shelter, etc. Is there communication with other islands and the outside world? Then each group presents its project.

The second stage. The facilitator suggests different situations to which the participants should respond. For example, the facilitator says, “One of the islands is running out of drinking water. What will you do?” (Other options: a storm begins, pirates attack you, giant sharks arrive, or a plane with delicacies lands on one island.) After that, the participants act out this situation with their team and interact with others.

The third stage. Reflection: How did you respond to the needs of your island and other people? If they helped you, why did they do so, if not, why not? What decisions did you make and how did you do that?

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The facilitator has to watch the teams and document the moments of decision-making. If teams hit a dead end, you can help them with some tips (it can be a bottle with a note, for example). During the third stage of the reflection, it is important to show the need for co-creation and cooperation, and to show how competition and violence can hinder positive coexistence.

## Everyone stop



**The purpose:** uniting the group, developing social intelligence, development of cohesion.

**Duration:** 5 to 15 minutes.

**Number of participants:** 8 and up.

### The course of the exercise

#### Level one

The facilitator gives the team the command to start moving, and the participants begin to walk around the place similar to molecules, moving chaotically (Brownian motion) in the space. Everyone is moving at their own pace. It is desirable for everyone to pass through the imaginary center of the place. At some point, the facilitator says: “Stop”, and everyone should stop. Then the facilitator gives the command to move on, and the movement resumes.

#### Level two

Brownian motion in the room is the same, all participants move at their own pace and rhythm and stop without any command, synchronously. The instruction is as follows, “Now you move chaotically, but you are supposed to stop together without agreeing, and then start moving in the same manner.” The outside spectator should not realize who was the first to stop.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The facilitator chooses the level of difficulty depending on the group and its needs.

You can also discuss with the group how the first variant of the exercise differs from the other one. What situations in your life does this look like?

## The Oscars



**Purpose:** formation of interaction skills in a team, development of imagination, becoming aware of one's own value, boosting self-esteem.

**Duration:** 3 to 5 minutes.

**Required materials:** any object that at the time of the game represents an "Oscar" statuette in your imagination (a pen, pencil, cone, stick, foil roll, whatever is at hand).

### The course of the exercise

The facilitator hands an imaginary Oscar statuette to one of the participants and makes a speech, naming the winning participant, for example; "Alexander, this Oscar is going to you for being..."

.... kind and for charging others with positive energy!

....a reliable friend!

....a fascinating conversationalist!

... cheerful and energetic!

The statuette is passed in a circle, handed to a neighbor along with sincere, positive words about him.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The exercise can be conducted at the end of the training session as a feedback exercise, where participants give an Oscar for the discoveries they made in each other during the training.

## Creating a group fairy tale



**Purpose:** analyzing and developing group cohesion, diagnosis of the basic values of the individual and of the ability to sound in the team; developing language creativity and creative figurative thinking, developing emotional intelligence; activating a creative resource.

**Duration:** 10 to 15 minutes.

**Required materials:** a set of drawings (cards) of different sizes, colors and plots. (You can use metaphorical associative cards, a set of random photos or just color clippings from magazines. Photos of animals, nature, people, colors, seasons, cars can be mixed - any picture will do).

### The course of the exercise

Each participant draws a card from the deck or chooses a card among those laid out on the table with the drawing down.

The facilitator begins to tell a story, and each participant in a certain order continues the narration of the previous one, including into it the image on the card.

The last participant ends the story with his own phrase, or the facilitator does it.

Discussion: "What does this fairy tale teach us?", "What were the turning points?", "Why were some characters represented more than other?", "See how the story was unfolding: whether the participants picked up each other's ideas, complementing them with their own ones".

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The story can be thematic (featuring friendship, growing up, the ability to make choices, etc.) During the discussion, pay attention to co-creation and the balance between personal needs and the needs of the group.



## A joint drawing



**Purpose:** forming teamwork skills, analyzing the general view of the team atmosphere.

**Duration:** 15 minutes.

**Required materials:** A1 sheets, paints or pencils, markers, chalk.

**Number of participants:** 6 to 25.

### The course of the exercise

Divide the participants into groups of 3-5 people.

Each group receives a sheet of paper, pencils and paints.

Task: without talking, create a joint picture on a particular topic. For example: Our class, our school, a future profession, a peaceful world, etc.

Teams make a presentation of their drawings. Other participants can make a statement by continuing the phrase: "I see here ...".

Discussion in a circle, "How did you feel about drawing without discussing the plot together? How did you make the decision while drawing together? What common features do you see in all the pictures that unite all of you? How do you differ from one another?"

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The discussion should lead to understanding the joint activities, the importance of paying attention to oneself as well as others, of understanding and seeing common and differing qualities in each other.

## **The actor and the conductor**



**Purpose:** mastering the skill of establishing and maintaining contact, developing focus of attention and interaction skills.

**Duration:** 20 min.

**Number of participants:** an even number.

### **The course the exercise:**

Participants are divided into pairs – the actor and the conductor.

Task: The conductor indicates to the actor (using only eye movements, without resorting to facial expressions or moving eyebrows, ears, etc.) in which direction the latter is to move. The actor should move in the direction of the eye movement (left, right, up, down, in a circle, etc.); the actor can create the history of his movements and make up a certain story. Then the participants change roles.

Discussion: "What was it like to be an actor? What was it like to be conductor? What role was more difficult?".

### **Recommendations for the facilitator**

The exercise can be used for recognizing emotions; the facilitator tells the conductors what feeling they have to use to control the actor (he does so in whisper so that the actor does not hear). They can be anger, joy, fatigue, fear, disgust, tenderness, etc. After the interaction the actor has to guess the feeling. The question "How did you know about the feelings of the conductor?" can be added to the discussion.

## Emotional Telegraph



**Purpose:** teaching to recognize and express emotions, activating participants, creating a positive atmosphere.

**Duration:** 15 minutes.

**Number of participants:** 5 and up.

### The course of the exercise

The participants line up in a row, with their backs to each other (so that they do not see what the first player in the line is doing). The coach gives the task to the first participant in line to show some emotion to the next participant in a non-verbal manner. So each participant passes the received information to the following one by delay. The last player has to guess what emotion was conveyed to him.

Then the participants mix and take different positions in the line.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

If the number of participants is above ten, you can make two parallel rows.



## Emotional tree



**Purpose:** the exercise is meant for developing focus of attention and for energy boost in the group, for developing non-verbal communication, emotional intellect and empathy.

**Duration:** 10 to 15 minutes, depending on the number of participants.  
Required materials: any deck of metaphorical cards, a chair.

**Number of participants:** 10 to 15.

### Course of the exercise

The facilitator unites participants in teams of 5 people.

Then the teams take their place in the room.

Each team has four actors and a spectator, who take turns (each one is supposed to be a spectator).

The facilitator comes up to the actors with a deck of cards, and one of them draws a card out.

The task of the actors is to show to the spectator what is depicted on the card without saying it aloud.

The participants take turns so that at the end a “tree” is made, but each branch stands out separately.

The first participant depicts the object only by means of body movements.

The second one uses only sound.

The third one uses just a few words about the feelings represented on the card, repeating the body movement and the sound.

The fourth participant, looking closely at what is missing from the full image on the card, adds it to the picture.

The participant who is in the role of the spectator is supposed to guess what is depicted on the card by looking at the ‘tree’.

The participants exchange roles until everyone has tried all the roles.

Discussion: How did it feel like to work in a team? Which roles were easier than the others? What did this exercise teach you?

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The exercise can be conducted outside, with the participants united into teams at once. You can take turns calling the ‘actors’ on stage, and the whole team can try to guess emotions together.

## Forest of magical trees



**Purpose:** developing empathy and the ability to work in a team.

**Duration:** 15 to 20 minutes.

**Required materials:** whatman paper, markers and felt-tip pens.

**Number of participants:** groups of 4 to 6 persons.

### Course of the exercise:

The task is the same for all groups, for example: to create a "Tree of Life" on a sheet of paper, so that each participant has his own branch as part of the joint work.

Players have to give it a name and come up with "magical" artifacts that help it live and grow (the number of artifacts corresponds to the number of people in the group).

They draw their image and write down what each artifact means.

Then all the teams make a presentation of their project, and laying them on the floor, creating a "Forest of magical trees".

The participants can spread them in a circle, stand inside and try to feel what it's like to be in a magical forest.

Discussion: In what way does this forest look like our team? What can it teach us? How was the work in the group? Has everyone had his share in the discussion? Have the participants agreed with each other?

### Recommendations for the facilitator

The facilitator brings the participants together in groups (they have to be mixed groups). It is especially important to divide those who are friends, with the purpose of developing the ability to find a common language with different participants in the training session.

## Spider web



**Purpose:** uniting the team, creating favorable conditions for children to meet, a friendly atmosphere and a cheerful mood, promoting the creative abilities of students.

**Duration:** 15 to 20 minutes.

**Required materials:** a ball of thread.

**Number of participants:** group of 8 and up, all participants.

### The course of the exercise

The participants form a circle. The facilitator holds a ball of thread, says a compliment and throws the ball to any of the children he wishes (the player winds the thread around the end of his finger). The next participant says another compliment and throws the ball to another player. The game continues, and a kind of web is formed among the children.

The game can also be used:

- for getting acquainted (the facilitator calls his name and throws the ball to another participant);
- for self-knowledge: "I do not want to brag, but I...";
- for determining the emotional state of a child; the student says about himself: "I am a person who...", and so on.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

Understanding what to do next with the spiderweb is important. It depends on the needs and the purpose: one can cut it into threads and tie a knot on the hand for memory, or put the threads on the floor and walk around it to visit each other, or one can create a picture from the web, and so on. The main thing is that threads are not just thrown away in front of the participants.



## Two pencils



**Purpose:** uniting the team, realizing one's worth in the team, creating favorable conditions for a friendly atmosphere and a cheerful mood.

**Duration:** 10 to 15 minutes.

**Required materials:** a box of pencils (one for each participant).

**Number of participants:** the entire group, all participants.

### The course of the exercise

The participants are divided into pairs, trying to hold the pencils with their index fingers. The facilitator may offer the players to sit down, bend over, turn around, and so on. The task of the participants is to hold pencils without letting them fall. Then the children unite in threes, fours, until they form one circle.

**Discussion:** What helped you to hold the pencils? What made it difficult? When was it easier to do so - in pairs or in a big group?

### Recommendations for the facilitator

Due to this exercise one can understand the importance of keeping the focus not just on oneself but on others as well, which leads to a strategy of cooperation and a 'win-win' situation.

## Reflection on the back



**Purpose:** getting feedback on the work, thanking for the cooperation.

**Duration:** 5 to 15 minutes.

**Required materials:** pens, scotch tape and sheets of paper.

**Number of participants:** 8 and up.

### The course of the exercise

Participants receive pieces of scotch tape and sheets of paper, attach them to their backs, take pens and begin to move in Brownian motion. They meet each other and write words of gratitude and wishes for others on the paper.

After that the participants take their papers from their backs. The facilitator invites participants to share how they felt about taking part in this exercise, whether they discovered something new and what surprised them.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

During the discussion, the participants can also try to make positive comments using 'I' statements.

# EXERCISES FOR SELF-REGULATION, CALMING AND FOCUS OF ATTENTION

## Sounds around us, the five senses



**Purpose:** calming, relieving tension.

**Duration:** 10 minutes.

**Number of participants:** the entire group.

### The course of the exercise:

The facilitator offers the participants to focus on their feelings.

- I see: the participants try to find things located nearby that they have not noticed before (a spot, a crack, a feather, etc.).

- I feel: the players try to feel the contact of clothes with the body, coolness/warmth, and to give meaning to the feelings that have been previously ignored.

- What I hear: the players are offered to hear as many different sounds as possible, especially those that have not been noticed before.

- What smells I feel: the participants close their eyes, feel as many different smells as possible in the room (a perfume, the smell of a book or fresh air, etc.) and find those that they have not paid attention to before.

- Taste: the participants try to recall the tastes they have recently experienced (tea, a cake, meals for breakfast or lunch).

Focus on the inner feelings. The exercise is followed by the reflection: "How have you been feeling?", "How do you feel now? What has changed?".

### Recommendations for the facilitator

This can be an exercise conducted on a regular basis. It is perfect to do it before an emotional intelligence or team building training, and it can also be used to calm down a participant who is overcome with strong feelings and losing emotional balance.

## A set of breathing exercises



**Purpose:** optimizing the work of the body and respiratory system, relieving stress, equalizing the psychological and emotional states. Learning to be aware of one's feelings.

**Duration:** 5 to 30 minutes.

**Required materials:** a ground of an appropriate size (2 m per person).

**Number of participants:** any number.

### The course of the exercises

#### Exercise 1

Participants take up space and breathe calmly and deeply, trying to feel their body. After a while the facilitator begins to give instructions as to what they are supposed to do:

*"Feel your body full and relaxed, as if in weightlessness";*

The facilitator offers to alternately feel several emotions and identify where exactly they are felt in the body, in which part of it: joy, surprise, sadness, anger, disgust, contempt, fear (2 minutes per each emotion). The exercise ends in the same way it was begun:

*"Feel your body full and relaxed, as if in weightlessness";*

#### Exercise 2

The participants begin to walk slowly in a chaotic manner in the space between the other participants without touching them, feeling their own deep breath and their own feet, and looking into each others's eyes. Meeting they linger on each other, take a few breaths together and go on moving.

### **Exercise 3**

- Slow inhalation on 4 counts (the facilitator counts 1, 2, 3, 4), respiration stops for 3 counts, exhalation for 7 counts (repeat 3 times).

### **Exercise 4**

- Get up, close your eyes, raise your hands, take a breath. Imagine that you are a big balloon filled with air. Stand in this position for 1-2 minutes, tensing all the muscles of your body. Then imagine that a small hole appears in the ball. Start to slowly let the air out, at the same time relaxing muscles of the hands, shoulders, neck, upper body and legs.

### **Exercise 5**

Sit more comfortably and focus on breathing. Take a calm breath for 4 counts, hold your breath for 4 counts, exhale for 4 counts. Thus, increase the count up to 8.

### **Recommendations for the facilitator**

You can combine different breathing exercises to boost them. You can also discuss with the group what exercises they can perform on their own and when.

## Find your star



**Purpose:** providing the opportunity to relax, boosting optimism and self-confidence.

**Duration:** 5 min.

**Required materials:** paper, pencils and felt-tip pens.

**Number of persons:** the exercise is conducted in a group or individually.

### The course of the exercise

#### Part one.

Close your eyes. Take three deep breaths.

Now imagine the starry sky. The stars are big and small, bright and dim. Some see one or more stars, others see countless bright shining points, which are now moving away, now approaching as close as the arm's length.

Look closely at the stars and choose the most beautiful one. It may look like your childhood dream, or it may remind you of the moments of happiness, joy and luck. Admire your star again and try to touch it. Try your best - and you will definitely get your star. Take it off the sky and carefully place it in front of you, take a closer look at it and try to remember what it looks like and what kind of light it emits. Notice how the star's rays fill your body with warmth and strength, and your emotional state calms down.

#### Part two.

Open your eyes, take a sheet of paper and felt-tip pens, and draw your star. This picture can be taken to the place where you need inspiration and resource most.

### Recommendations for the facilitator

Part one can be performed separately from part two.

## Body scan



**Purpose:** developing self-reflection, awareness, the feeling of one's own body and emotions; calming down.

**Duration:** 5 to 15 minutes.

**Number of participants:** performed individually or in a group.

### The course of the exercise

During the exercise, keep track of the images that occur. Track the feelings, images and colors that occur in a particular part of the body without assessing them. Accept everything as it is, without focusing in a separate place.

1. Sit on a chair with both feet on the floor and hands on your knees. Close your eyes. Take a few deep breaths.

2. Focus on your feet and feel the floor surface. Press your feet to the floor. Move your toes. Press your heels lightly to the floor. Scan the floor surface through the sensations in the feet.

3. Next, scan your ankles, legs and knees. Then scan the thighs, using your attention.

4. Move further to your pelvis. Feel your glutes and the surface of the chair, pay attention to the pelvic floor muscles.

We have to note the sensations, colors, temperature and images that appear on the surface of consciousness.

5. Scan your lower abdomen and waist. Look inside the body, pay attention to intestines and the navel.

6. Focus on your upper abdomen. Look at the organs: your stomach, liver and pancreas. Scan your lungs. Breathe: inhale/exhale. Note the area between the shoulder blades and the solar plexus.

7. Gradually move the attention to your chest, muscles, lungs and the heart. Breathing should be free, deep and calm.

8. Direct your inner eye to your shoulders.

9. Move to your neck, looking at the throat and nape, taking note of the feeling.

10. Feel your head: the lower part, chin, jaw, mouth, tongue, gums, teeth; face, nose, cheeks, temples, eyes, eyebrows, forehead, brain and the hair.

11. Direct attention to the top of the head.



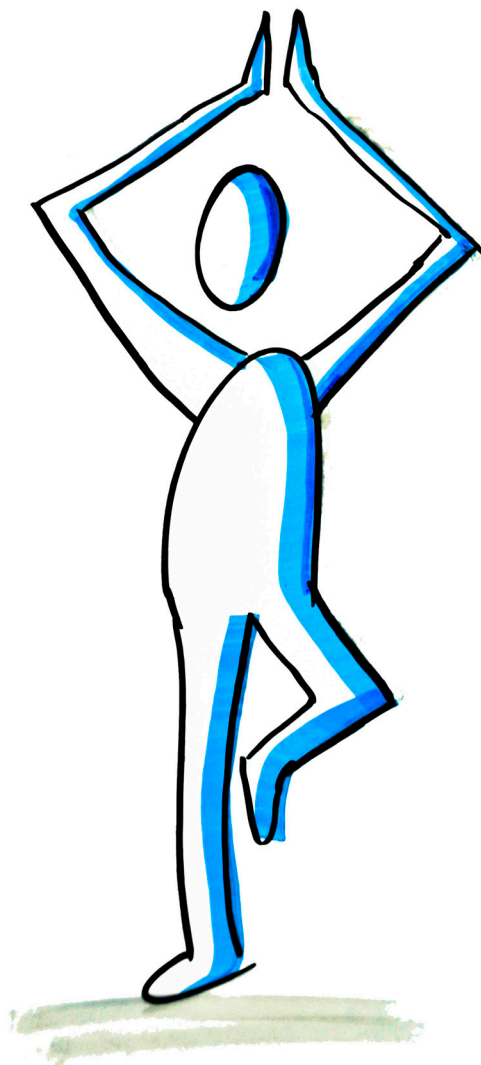
We slow down and notice the sensations, colors, temperature, images that appear on the surface of consciousness.

Then we begin to move in the opposite direction - from top to bottom.

Embrace the whole body with your attention, noting the sensations, colors, temperature and images that appear on the surface of consciousness.

### **Recommendations for the facilitator**

It is important that the facilitator can do a body scan on his own before guiding the exercise to see what tempo and timbre of the voice are required. If the exercise is performed regularly in a group, the facilitator can ask the participants, "How did the feelings today differ now from the previous times? What affects your feelings?"



## My garden



**Purpose:** finding emotional balance, reducing the impact of toxic feelings, integrating the experience.

**Duration:** 5 minutes.

**Number of participants:** the exercise can be done individually or in a group.

### The course of the exercise

Sit still or lie down just for 5 minutes. Inhale and exhale. Focus on yourself. Close your eyes. Imagine that all the events of today are turning into plants in your garden. What kinds of plants grow in your garden? Let the events and conditions that are beneficial for keep growing, while the negative situations turn into weeds that you can easily clear out and turn into useful humus for other plants. Visualize how you walk through the garden. Water the plants and take care of them. Some plants can hear your voice and respond to your words. They can grow or change shape. Your garden becomes more beautiful and fragrant. Feel what it smells like here, and what sensations you have in your body when you are in the garden. Fill yourself with the energy of your garden.

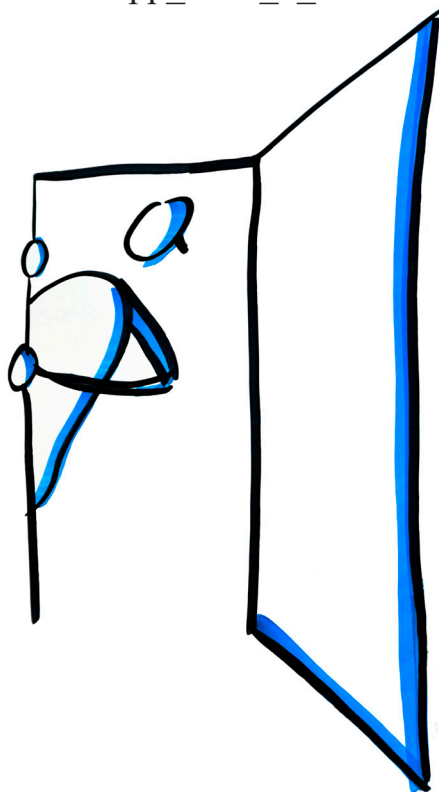
### Recommendations for the presenter

If the exercise is practiced before going to bed, one can fall asleep after doing it.

It is best to practice regularly so that the participant can realize how the emotional state changes.

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# Хати саміе яркіе маменти

Сила майбутнього

3.769

2018

1.769

I. форум

Сообщество  
Матч згоди

3. волна

2021

Форум 2

I. волна МЗ

Трансформация

Школа

II. волна

Школа вирішення конфліктів

2020

СОНА

Scribing

giz

Фріенд

Міжнародна  
Міністерство

СОНА

СОНА