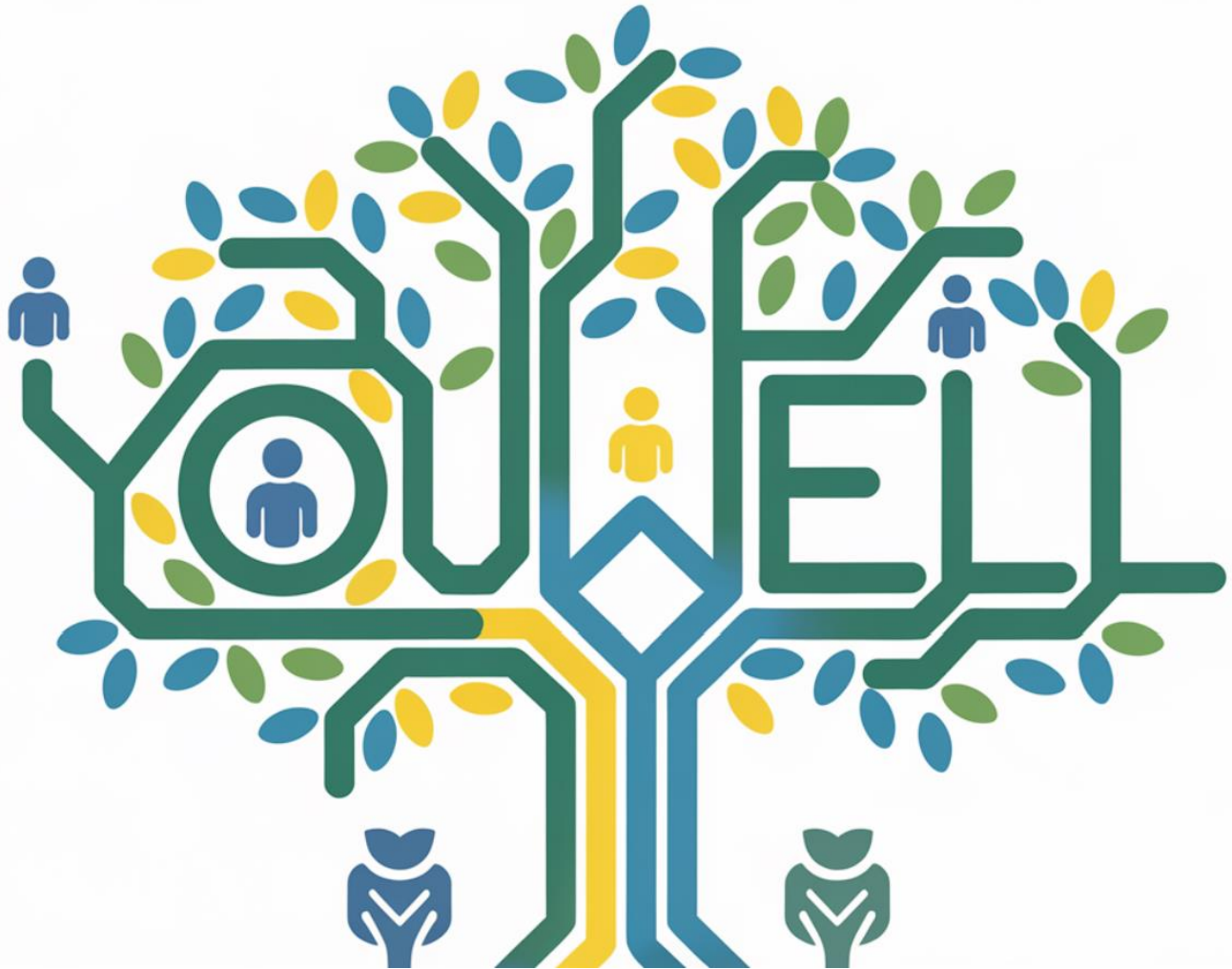




Co-funded by
the European Union



RESOURCE GUIDE
FOR SELF-LEARNING OF NOVICE TEACHERS

Sustaining Young Teachers' Wellbeing at School



Co-funded by
the European Union

YouWell Resource Guide for Self-learning of Novice Teachers

Authors: Yuliyana Dobрева and Biserka Zarbova, PhD

Reviewer: Lachezar Afrikanov, PhD

This publication is a product of a partnership under the YouWell - Sustaining Young Teachers' Wellbeing at School project, consisting of five organizations: Sindikat Obrazovanie Podkrepa, Bulgaria; Samostoen sindicat za obrazovanie, nauka i kultura na Republika Makedonija, North Macedonia; Celjski Mladinski Center, Javni zavod za mladinsko kulturo, izobraževanje, informiranje in šport, Slovenia; New Mindset Coaching & Training, Belgium, and National Management School, Bulgaria.

The project is implemented under the Erasmus+ Programme, KA220-SCH - Cooperation partnerships in school education, Project number 2022-1-BG01-KA220-SCH-000085901. Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. Project website: <https://www.youwellproject.eu/>

The images and graphics used are original, generated by AI.

ISBN: 978-619-92508-4-6

Publisher: National Management School

Sofia, 2024

Copyright © 2024 YouWell Project Consortium represented by the partner National Management School, Sofia, Bulgaria

Please cite this publication as:

Dobрева, Y., Zarbova, B., Afrikanov, L. (2024). YouWell Teacher Mentor-Coach Handbook, National Management School, ISBN: 978-619-92508-4-6

Introduction

Dear novice teachers,

We have prepared this resource guide to support you in your quest for self-development and affirmation in the teaching profession.

In developing the content, we have taken into account the results of two surveys conducted in the framework of the YouWell project in 2023, in Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Slovenia. The first survey provided us with information on the difficulties that novice teachers face in the adaptation process and the barriers to their professional development and retention in the profession.

The second survey carried out with direct participants in the mentoring programme showed what their expectations were regarding the benefits and areas of development in which they would like to be supported.

Based on the analysis of these data, we have identified 6 relevant and significant topics for newly recruited teachers. In this resource guide, we have structured these topics into a short theoretical section with information about the phenomenon, practical guidelines for developing the skills sought by teachers, and additional resources for self-learning.

We believe that these materials will appropriately complement the mentoring sessions, support your adaptation to the school environment, and contribute to your personal growth and stable your motivation for long-term professional development.

We wish you success!

The authors

Table of Contents

1. Communication of the newly appointed teachers with students, parents and colleagues	6
1.1. The essence of effective communication	6
1.2. Benefits of effective communication for pedagogical practice	9
1.3. Barriers to effective communication	9
1.4. Strategies for improving communication	10
2. Classroom management	13
2.1. Essence of the phenomenon	13
2.2. Classroom management benefits	14
2.3. Barriers to classroom management	15
2.4. Classroom management strategies	16
3. Positive self-perception	22
3.1. Essence of the phenomenon	22
3.2. Benefits of developing a positive self-perception	24
3.3. Barriers to positive self-perception	24
3.4. Strategies for the development of positive self-perception	25
4. Planning and organising pedagogical work	30
4.1. Essence of the process	30
4.2. Benefits of planning and organising	31

4.3. Barriers to planning and organising	32
4.4. Strategies to improve planning and organising.....	32
5. Self-reflection and self-awareness.....	37
5.1. Essence of the phenomenon	37
5.2. Benefits of developed self-reflection skills.....	38
5.3. Barriers to self-reflection.....	39
5.4. Strategies for developing self-reflection and self-knowledge	40
6. Managing workplace stress.....	46
6.1. Essence of stress and its management.....	46
6.2. Benefits of stress management.....	48
6.3. Barriers to stress management	48
6.4. Stress management strategies	49
6.5. Coping strategies in acute stress	51
Conclusions.....	53

1. Communication of the newly appointed teachers with students, parents and colleagues

1.1. The essence of effective communication

Communication is broadly defined as a two-way exchange of information, thoughts, ideas and feelings between at least two parties who use common symbols and who take turns as speaker and listener.

It is a fundamental process that begins at birth and develops throughout a person's life. This is why it is paradoxical that often getting along with each other turns out to be one of the most complicated things in the process of interpersonal interaction.

From a 21st century social science perspective, the ability to communicate is critical to professional and personal success, but most problems and conflicts at the individual, group, and organizational levels stem from deficits in the participants' communication skills.

Every communicative process has a content aspect and a relationship aspect. With the help of the content component people convey information, data and facts. The relational component contains the interpersonal relationships, attitudes and emotions of the one who sends the message and the one who receives it (Paul Watzlawick).

Depending on the way information is conveyed, the following two forms of communication can be distinguished: verbal - spoken and written speech, and non-verbal - body language (facial expressions, gestures) and para-language (exclamations, sighs, pauses). These forms are



inextricably linked and have a specific impact on the effectiveness of the communication process, which requires particular attention and preciseness to their use.

It is impossible not to communicate. We communicate even when we say nothing. Just because we use the same words doesn't mean we will always understand each other. Often we don't hear what is being said, but what we want to hear. The way we say what we say adds new meaning to the content.

Communication is effective when it achieves the goals of mutual understanding of the information exchanged between the actors. The prerequisites for this are related to the transmission and reception of information. To be able to communicate effectively, when we pass on information we must be willing and able to do so clearly and understandably, specifically, fairly, accurately, and with respect for other people, consciously listening to the other party's responses, distinguishing between significant and insignificant, being empathetic to the needs of others. When communicating effectively, partners respect one another. They not only exchange useful information but also influence each other.

In receiving information, the key prerequisites for achieving effective communication are active listening skills, giving and receiving feedback and empathy.

Active listening requires active presence and participation in communication through: eye contact, open body posture, nodding, expressing agreement verbally, reflecting feelings, paraphrasing, asking open questions, summarizing, affirming, trusting. Listening is presence in the here and now, it is attitude and behaviour.

Feedback is intended to improve performance and understanding. The correct use of 'feedback' is one of the key skills of any teacher. When receiving and giving feedback it is important to have an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect as well as understanding and concern. When given,

feedback should be timely, specific, constructive, understandable and acceptable to the recipient. When receiving feedback, patience and tolerance, positivity and gratitude should be shown.

Empathy is the ability of a person "to see the world through the eyes of the other" (Heinz Kohut). Empathy allows understanding the other by experiencing his/her emotional, mental and spiritual world. It is the ability to imagine what is going on inside the other persons, what they are experiencing and how they perceive the world around them. To understand the feelings of others and to synchronize our own behaviour with them is a mark of emotional intelligence.

There is no doubt that those who provide emotional support to other people, notice them, listen to them and evaluate them appropriately, are sought after and popular, unlike those who mostly criticize.

A teacher's profession requires that he or she communicate with students, their parents, colleagues and administrative staff. In order to be effective in communicating with these, he or she needs to know the specific characteristics of each of these groups and to take them into account.

Novice teachers, as well as anyone starting out in their career and/or entering a new workplace, often have difficulty in networking, finding appropriate approaches to communication, a friendly community and supportive surroundings. Overcoming these is essential to creating supportive and fruitful relationships with students, parents and other teachers.

1.2. Benefits of effective communication for pedagogical practice

- Building a supportive and stimulating learning environment.
- Holding students' attention and focusing on key concepts.
- Maintaining clear expectations and standards for behaviour.
- Partnering with parents.
- Collaborating with other teachers.
- Dealing with difficulties and obstacles in the learning process.
- Stimulating teachers' intrinsic motivation for sustained personal and professional development.

1.3. Barriers to effective communication

- The lack of a common communication language.
- Mismatch between verbal and non-verbal content.
- Exaggerated emotional reactions.
- Shortage of time.
- Lack of information or information overload.
- Selective listening.
- Unreliability of the source.
- Censoring of information.
- Exaggeration and/or generalisation.

1.4. Strategies for improving communication

With students:

- ➔ Establish a positive atmosphere by maintaining a good mood and friendly attitude. Instil confidence and a sense of calm.
- ➔ Be approachable and open to individual conversations and questions.
- ➔ Use language that is clear and understandable to students.
- ➔ Encourage students to ask questions and express their opinions.
- ➔ Listen carefully and respond to their ideas.
- ➔ Maintain student interest by using technology, group discussions, projects, and other means to make communication more interactive and engaging.
- ➔ Be patient, interested in students' individual needs, and supportive.
- ➔ Show enthusiasm and genuine interest in your subject.
- ➔ Be open to feedback.
- ➔ Develop constructive conflict resolution skills by maintaining respect and honesty in interactions with students.
- ➔ Create opportunities and participate in extracurricular activities such as sporting events, exhibitions, and other educational and social activities.

With parents:

- ➔ Organize periodic meetings where parents can get to know you, hear about the goals you set, and ask questions. Encourage their active role in their children's education.
- ➔ Consult with them when difficulties arise in classroom management.

- Keep parents informed of their children's progress and difficulties and how they can help with homework.
- Establish jointly clear channels of communication between them and you- - telephone, email, face-to-face meetings, etc.
- Be responsive and address their questions and concerns.
- Share information about the curriculum, assessment methods and criteria, as well as upcoming events, projects and exams.
- Work with parents to constructively resolve problems with students.
- Use an individual approach in communicating with parents and families.
- Share helpful information and resources that can assist parents in supporting their children's learning activities.
- Express gratitude when parents become engaged in their children's learning process. Show that you appreciate their efforts and cooperation.

With other teachers:

- Be open with your colleagues, share information about yourself and show interest in their work and experience by asking questions and listening carefully.
- Actively participate in teacher meetings, training and other professional events.
- Be willing to collaborate and share ideas with other teachers.
- Show yourself open to their suggestions and opinions.
- Work to build bridges between different departments or classes.
- Share resources and ideas that may be useful to other teachers.

- ➔ If you have questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to ask more experienced teachers for help.
- ➔ Be willing to provide help where possible.
- ➔ Show respect for the opinions and styles of teachers with different backgrounds.
- ➔ Participate in team projects and activities where you can collaborate with other teachers.
- ➔ Participate in informal meetings or events outside the school context where you can get to know your colleagues better and build friendships.
- ➔ Participate in trainings and conferences where you can meet new people and better integrate into the community of teachers.



Sources

Paul Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson, Pragmatics of Human Communication, 1967, OCLC 168614

Rosenberg, M., Communication without Aggression, Puddledancer Press, 2007

<https://www.clickvieweducation.com/blog/classroom-management/essential-skills>

<https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/communication-skills-for-teachers/>

2. Classroom management

2.1. Essence of the phenomenon

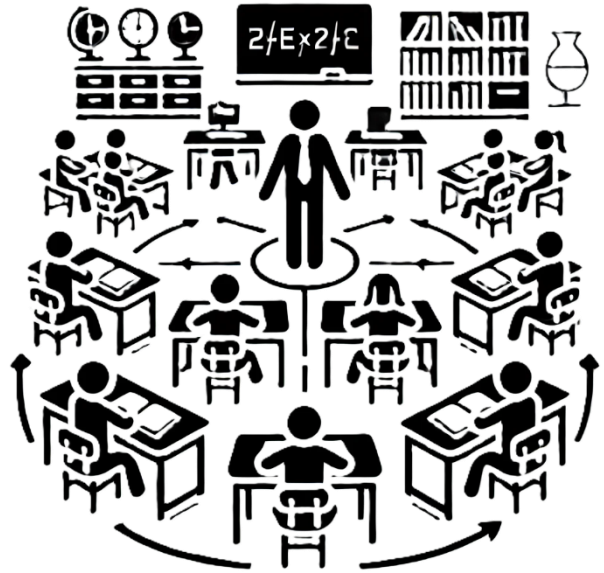
Classroom management is the process teachers use to ensure that classroom lessons run smoothly without disruptive behaviour from students compromising the delivery of instruction. It includes the prevention of disruptive behaviour pre-emptively, as well as effectively responding to it after it happens. (Wikipedia)

Classroom management encompasses a variety of skills and techniques that teachers can use to create a high-performing learning environment.

At its core, it aims to ensure classes run smoothly, disruptive behaviour from students is kept to a minimum, and teaching materials and activities promote learning. The ultimate goal is to ensure that both the students and the teacher get the most out of the classroom experience.

Like any management process, according to the concept of management put forward by Henri Fayol, it includes the following main functions: planning, organizing, executing, coordinating, controlling.

At the heart of the planning process lies the development of a plan of action, which should be based on the resources available to the teacher and the possible trends that may occur in the future.



Organisation covers the preparation of the teacher with everything he/she needs to implement the planned activities - teaching materials, texts, visual resources, etc.

Implementation includes the activities to achieve the optimal effect for learning, engaging students' attention and participation in the classroom. Fayol outlines the following basic management rules that are fully applicable to school activities:

- Try to get to better know the people you interact with;
- Give a good personal example;
- Don't go into excessive details;
- Conduct periodic check-ins;
- Strive to create a work atmosphere that fosters unity, energy, initiative and loyalty among the team.

Coordination aims to ensure optimal harmony between the different activities in the implementation process.

Monitoring is designed to check and ensure that what is happening is in accordance with the pre-established plans, principles and standards of work. Through controlling, errors and weaknesses in performance are detected in order to neutralize them and minimize their occurrence in the future.

2.2. Classroom management benefits

Effective classroom management has a number of benefits for both teachers and students. Here are some of the key benefits:

- ➔ Better learning and higher student achievement
- ➔ Improved discipline
- ➔ Development of students' social skills
- ➔ Stimulating student motivation and engagement
- ➔ Improving teachers' professional skills
- ➔ Better structured and effective lessons
- ➔ Improved communication between teacher, students and parents
- ➔ Developing students' social intelligence

A well-managed classroom not only optimizes the educational process but also prepares students for a more successful and satisfying future.

2.3. Barriers to classroom management

- ➔ Bad discipline, excessive noisiness
- ➔ Ineffective time management
- ➔ Poor knowledge of classroom management principles and mechanisms
- ➔ Students' passivity
- ➔ Diverse learning needs and styles
- ➔ Conflict relationships in the class

2.4. Classroom management strategies

Classroom management strategies can look very different depending on several factors, such as:

- ➔ Course subject
- ➔ Age of students
- ➔ Size of the classroom
- ➔ Your personality as a teacher
- ➔ The behaviour of your students.

However, when researching classroom management strategies, you'll notice that there are some techniques you can use that will apply in pretty much all cases.

Implementing the top four components of classroom management from the start will set you and your students up for success all year long as follows:

Classroom design — has to do with the overall arrangement of the room and the placement of furniture (desks, tables, chairs, cabinets, chalkboard/flip chart), equipment (computers, tech gadgets, books, lights), visual materials and tools in it, respectively the positioning of the teacher and students in the room space so that it is functional, comfortable and safe for learning and work. The classical arrangement of desks in columns and rows implies a concentration of students' attention on the area ahead (the blackboard, the teacher) but does not allow visibility and interaction between the students themselves. In this sense, a pattern of passive learning is set in class. The "Interactive Classroom" method changes the situation and suggests a more imaginative layout and use of space in the room through the use of blocks or U-shaped seating arrangements. In this classroom model, teachers will be responsible for teaching, guiding,

directing and assisting, moving freely through the space, and students will be the center, having the opportunity to interact with each other and actively participate in lessons with activities such as:

- Interactive presentations
- Project-Based Learning with the Mosaic Method
- Quizzes
- Role plays
-

Interactive classroom activities are becoming increasingly popular. This is considered one of the most effective classroom management strategies for capturing students' attention in real time.

Rules/discipline — to create a safe and caring school community, develop classroom rules your students understand and — hopefully — respect. While it may not be fun, be sure to communicate that breaking classroom rules will have concrete yet fair consequences. Experienced teachers spend the first 2 weeks of the school year teaching their students routines and procedures so that the rest of the year things run smoothly in the classroom.

- Begin to establish an effective environment on the first day of class.
- First impressions are extremely important in setting the tone for the rest of the semester, so plan your first class carefully.
- Introduce yourself. Explicitly state the way you would like to be addressed.
- Consider offering an ice breaker to relax students and encourage interaction.
- Take class time to review the syllabus and emphasize important aspects. In fact, use the syllabus to begin building student engagement even before you meet with students by

ensuring that it articulates learning outcomes, class format, and expected behaviour. During those first few hectic add/drop weeks, students appreciate an instructor who clearly and concisely presents a course overview.

- Expect some students to come in late. They're getting lost, too!
- Consider setting community rules (e.g., regarding phones, laptops, talking, sleeping, eating, late arrivals, and early departures) with the students; they will appreciate the democratic approach.
- Start learning names right away; anonymity discourages student engagement. Using props (name cards, photos, index cards), taking attendance and handing back papers and homework can help you to connect a name with a face.
- Refer to First Day of Class for more information on first class activities and learning students' names.
- Interact with students regularly. Consistent interaction will help ensure rapport and reduce classroom management issues.

Scheduling/organization — being on time, keeping on task and staying organized will help set up your lessons (and your students' learning) up for success.

- Greet students as they enter the classroom.
- Chat with them for a few moments - consider opening class with a brief casual conversation about a current event or something interesting from the homework.
- Intersperse lecture with discussion, group work, or video segments to encourage involvement and help students connect the content with real-world events and issues.

- ☑ Ask questions (giving plenty of wait time) and respond to student comments.
- ☑ Make eye contact with as many students as possible during class.
- ☑ Be ready to respond to challenges.
- ☑ The best way to avoid challenges in the classroom is to anticipate the possibilities ahead of time and plan accordingly.

Instructional technique — while you may not have the flexibility you'd like when it comes to content and curriculum, you should have the freedom to choose how you teach. For example, 8th grade students may prefer a lecture-style lesson with small group discussions while 3rd grade students may prefer learning maths with a digital game-based learning platform. Observe how your students learn best and use the classroom management strategies and techniques to teach your lessons.

Innovative teaching methods are a transition from educational programmes that approach from the content to the learners' abilities. They help foster students' creativity and develop skills including self-exploration, problem-solving and critical thinking, soft skills and self-assessment.

Innovative teaching methods that can activate and enliven the class include:

- Use of design thinking
- Use of virtual reality technology
- Use of AI in education
- Distance learning with in-person meetings
- Project-based learning
-

In addition to certificates and academic achievement, what helps students truly become "adults" and cope with life after school are social skills. Their effective development happens through:

- Performing group tasks and work in a team
- Mutual learning and evaluation
- Experiential learning techniques
- Note-taking and self-reflection
- Discussions and debates
- Peer Review
-

In recent years, traditional methods of teaching and learning have gradually made way in the era of technology 4.0. Teaching has now been completely redesigned using technology tools to create a dynamic, evolving and highly interactive learning environment for students. An example of this is the Classroom Response System (CRS), which can now be easily implemented, e.g. with a smartphone, students can participate in audio and visual multimedia polls, brainstorm and present word clouds, play live quizzes, etc. Some popular classroom response systems are AhaSlides, Baamboozle, iSpring, Kahoot, Edpuzzle and Gim Kit.

There are many different classroom management strategies. However, to find out what works with your class and students, there is no other way than to be patient, creative, and listen to your students' needs every day. And especially, don't forget about the advantages technology brings to teachers today - tons of educational tools are waiting for you to use!



Co-funded by
the European Union

Sources:

Davidesco M. (2021), Consent Factors of the new Teachers for Coping with Conflicts in the Class, South-West University "Neofit Rilski" dissertation <https://ahaslides.com/blog/classroom-management-strategies/>

<https://teachthinkelementary.blog/team-points-for-classroom-management/>

3. Positive self-perception

3.1. Essence of the phenomenon

Self-perception represents the way a person perceives and evaluates himself. It is a complex combination of beliefs, convictions, emotions and evaluations that form an individual's self-image. Self-perception affects almost all aspects of a person's life, including personal relationships, professional success, physical and mental health. Self-perception is a function of the level of self-awareness and self-esteem.



Purposeful and thorough self-knowledge is a prerequisite for the formation of correct self-perception and self-acceptance. Self-acceptance is a positive attitude toward oneself, with all the positives and negatives and a positive feeling about the things of one's past life. It is key to setting realistic, achievable and measurable goals, which in turn minimizes disappointments and negative experiences, and achieving results generates satisfaction and optimism. Knowing oneself well is a prerequisite for adequate self-assessment and level of entitlement, as well as for identifying areas for development.

Self-esteem is an important controller of an individual's behaviour and relationships with the environment. Adequate stable self-esteem gives a positive nuance to all aspects of a person's life and personality.

Self-perception is a dynamic process and can change over time under the influence of various life events, external evaluations and internal reflections. Positive self-perception is associated with improved well-being and the achievement of personal and professional goals. At the same time, a negative self-perception can lead to problems such as lack of confidence, depression and giving up on challenges. It is important to take care of our self-perception and work to improve it if necessary.

Our self-evaluation can be both general (how you evaluate yourself in general) and specific (how you feel in specific roles and areas of your life, for example as a parent, as a professional, as a partner....). The more meaningful and important an area of life is to us, the more it impacts our overall self-esteem. Our self-esteem changes every day and hour. We tend to think of our self-esteem as good or bad, but things are much more dynamic. We are constantly moving up and down based on the internal feedback we give ourselves and the external feedback we receive from our environment.

High self-esteem is not necessarily better. Ideally, it's nice to have enough self-esteem, but not too high. People suffering from narcissism tend to have high self-esteem, but their self-confidence is fragile and unstable. Even small "slights" can make them feel very "hurt." Low self-confidence makes us resistant to compliments and positive feedback that could improve our self-esteem. This is why people with good, stable self-esteem are generally happier and healthier mentally, suffer less from stress and anxiety, experience rejections and failures less painfully, and recover from them more quickly. Thus, self-esteem works like an emotional immune system that protects us from emotional and psychological trauma. If there is indeed a program that can do wonders for our self-esteem, it is to let go of excess self-criticism and negative self-images.

The self-perception of novice teachers can be significantly influenced by a variety of factors related to their professional role, interactions with students, parents, and the community.

According to self-determination theory, there are four developmental stages in the formation of a conscious positive self-concept regarding personal and professional performances. These stages are viewed as a path from a minimally to a maximally internalized (internally accepted and meaningful) stance about the realized behaviour: 1) extrinsic motivation: “Because I have to”; 2) introjection: “Because it is desirable”; 3) identification: “Because I chose to”; 4) intrinsic motivation: “Because I want to”.

3.2. Benefits of developing a positive self-perception

- ➔ Greater confidence in yourself and your abilities
- ➔ Better interpersonal relationships in different social contexts
- ➔ Higher performance and motivation to face challenges and achieve goals
- ➔ Better physical and mental health
- ➔ Greater openness to new ideas and experiences, willingness to improve
- ➔ More effective stress management

3.3. Barriers to positive self-perception

- ➔ Negative social influence in the environment - frequently encountered criticism or disapproval
- ➔ Striving for perfectionism
- ➔ Traumas, setbacks or other negative life events
- ➔ Constant comparison to other people, especially on social media

- ➔ Lack of support and recognition
- ➔ Fear of failure, rejection and insecurity

3.4. Strategies for the development of positive self-perception

The self-perception of novice teachers is a process that develops with experience and reflection. Openness to learning and a willingness to adapt help build a positive self-perception and a successful start in the teaching profession.

It is appropriate for novice teachers to become aware of and work to develop a positive self-perception by:

- ➔ Forming realistic expectations of themselves and the learning environment, recognising that the early years of teaching can be challenging.
- ➔ Developing their ability to seek, accept and analyse feedback from students, colleagues and parents.
- ➔ Maintain optimism and determination, facing difficulties with a smile.
- ➔ Reduce self-criticism and negative self-images.
- ➔ Take care of their professional development by participating in training and pedagogical forums, exchanging ideas and collaborating with other teachers.
- ➔ Maintain a healthy lifestyle and use coping strategies to manage stress.
- ➔ Build positive relationships with students and parents based on trust and responsibility.
- ➔ Develop their own professional identity and maintain work-life balance.

In order to know themselves better and to systematize this knowledge, it is appropriate for the junior teachers to periodically answer the following questions:

- ➔ What do I want to do but I don't?
- ➔ What am I forced to do but don't want to do?
- ➔ What does this bring up in me?
- ➔ In what situations do I not control my emotions?
- ➔ What is the prejudice I have that is getting in my way?
- ➔ What about what people say about me amazes me?
- ➔ What am I afraid people might say about me that will be true?
- ➔ What do I desire most?

Reflection on these questions will guide the novice teacher towards knowing himself better and forming a realistic self-assessment and expectations, distinguishing the things that depend only on him from those that are more or less resistant factors of the external environment and becoming aware of his needs for change. Several concrete ways to improve self-esteem:

Change the physical position of the body. In moments of insecurity, despair, we have a tendency to bend, tilt, lean, lock our body. Now imagine how in such a situation you stand up, open your shoulders, smile, get up and walk around, direct your gaze boldly forward. Your body will react to the change and start producing other hormones - of happiness, strength, joy - and you will feel it.

Change your emotions through your thoughts. If you can think of a time when you felt abandoned and hurt or humiliated - remember what happened, how you felt, what people said to you, maybe you cried or were sad and humiliated.... And when you remember a moment of complete

happiness - with a loved one, out in nature, or with your child-how bright and beautiful, peaceful, quiet it is.... what you are saying or just being silent and enjoying... When you feel that you are in despair, that you are angry or upset with yourself, that you are blaming yourself for something you did or didn't do, say, accomplish - remember these moments and smile, make yourself aware of your breathing and trace it a few times, concentrate on your good traits, what accomplishments you have and call up the emotion of love, joy and gratitude.

Make a diary of your achievements. Everyone has done, achieved, created things to be proud of and happy about. Even at the moment of reading, remember a few such things from your life. Make a diary in which for a certain period of time (1 month) write down every day what achievements you have during the day or that you can think of. This will train your brain to focus on accomplishments instead of frustration, resentment, self-blame, and anger, and show yourself love, respect, and esteem.

The development of positive self-perception affects a person's psychological well-being. Positive self-perception gives us a sense of our own value, abilities and capabilities. This requires knowledge of one's own assets, interests, strengths and weaknesses, successes and difficulties and acceptance of oneself as I am. Setting and achieving realistic but inspiring goals strengthens self-esteem. Learning from mistakes improves adaptability and stimulates improvement. A positive environment encourages us in our development efforts. Seeking interaction with people with similar interests to our own enables us to share ideas and reach our potential. Focusing on the positive aspects of one's own personality and environment provides a sense of satisfaction and gratitude.

Developing a positive self-perception is a process that takes time, self-directed work and commitment. It is important to realize that no one is perfect and that every experience, even a negative one, can be seen as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

Incorporating the following tools and techniques for developing a positive self-perception into daily life can support the process of self-discovery and strengthening self-worth:

1. Keep a Gratitude Diary in which you write down three things each day that you are grateful have happened to you.
2. Use positive affirmations/ axioms/ mantras for inspiration each day.
3. Use a SWOT analysis to explore your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, focusing on opportunities to build on and positively evolve your situation.
4. Ask yourself questions that encourage you to reflect on your accomplishments, goals, and skills. Celebrate successes and reward yourself for them.
5. Hone your ability to transform negative thoughts into positive ones, to rediscover the positive aspects in negative events.
6. Visualize yourself achieving your goals.
7. Practice meditation and mindfulness regularly to strengthen your emotional status.
8. Use stress management techniques /such as deep breathing, yoga or relaxation/.
9. Treat yourself as you would treat and talk to your best friend, especially in difficult situations.
10. Love yourself, give yourself pleasure with things you enjoy.
11. Avoid comparing yourself to other people, appearances and achievements - everyone goes their own way, and the best and fairest basis for comparison is your own personality from a previous day or period.
12. Communicate with people who support and acknowledge you.



Co-funded by
the European Union

These tools and techniques can be adapted to personal preferences and needs. Experiment with different approaches and discover which ones work best for you. It is important to be patient and consistent in your exercises to develop positive self-perception.

Sources

https://www.ted.com/talks/sheryl_lee_ralph_a_3_step_guide_to_believing_in_yourself?user_email_address=cbd7793ba03d5cd3e3a38cf5d2017964<g=62d1aaf91c794c328cdc7b55

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/12942-fostering-a-positive-self-image>

4. Planning and organising pedagogical work

4.1. Essence of the process



Planning and organising are essential elements of the management cycle of any activity. They are naturally linked to the professional context and reflect on the effectiveness of implementation. But they also relate directly to the quality of modern people's personal lives and use of leisure time.

Good organizational skills and work planning are undoubted prerequisites for the fruitful use of working time, achieving sustainable and quality results in

conditions of less conflict, ambiguity, misunderstanding and stress. The application of these skills ensures a balance between work and rest and minimises stress in the workplace.

In general, planning defines what needs to be done, while organising reflects the way in which the activity is to be carried out. For novice teachers, the activities of planning and organizing their professional commitments play a key role in achieving a successful and satisfying start to their careers. Planning forms an essential part of a teacher's work both before the start of the school year (lesson planning and curriculum implementation, planning of extra-curricular activities) and before the preparation of each lesson. Planning, as part of the process of managing classroom activities, includes: the process of designing learning tasks for the class, anticipating any difficulties students may have with the material, tailoring activities to the level of the students in

the class (especially if there is a student with special educational needs in the class); planning activities related to communication and information exchange between the teacher and parents, as well as between colleagues; planning and allocating time for school administrative tasks; maintaining administrative and technical documentation and ensuring own professional development and improvement.

The organization of the learning process includes activities and skills to attract and retain the attention of students, to stimulate their active participation in the learning process, forms and methods of teaching the learning material, of checking and assessing knowledge, organizing the sequence of class tasks, managing the classroom and the behaviour of students in class. By managing the moods, attitudes and relationships in the class, a good teacher is also able to create a supportive inclusive environment for a student with special needs (if any in the class).

The development of this competence includes skills in formulating and achieving goals, identifying and allocating the resources needed to do so, prioritising, dealing with tasks in a timely manner, coordinating different aspects of the work process, time management, forethought and creativity.

4.2. Benefits of planning and organising

- ➔ Saving time / providing more time for favourite activities
- ➔ Systematizing tasks and being able to have an overview of the things that need to be done, as well as the sequence of their execution
- ➔ Creating a routine
- ➔ Greater self-discipline
- ➔ Better adaptability and flexibility

- Higher efficiency and effectiveness
- Higher satisfaction

If you spend 10 minutes on planning each day you can save up to about 2 hours and still get the job done!

4.3. Barriers to planning and organising

- Negative individual attitude towards planning.
- Excuses and apologies.
- Deficit of knowledge and skills on how to plan properly and unfamiliarity with techniques that can facilitate the process.
- Destructive environmental influences.
- Lack of information and/or lack of other resources.
- Force majeure of all kinds that overwhelm our preconceptions and expectations and do not allow adequate foresight in the unfolding of events.

4.4. Strategies to improve planning and organising

Today there are many digital and analogue tools that can be useful in developing planning and organising skills.

The following digital applications and software products allow synchronization with multiple devices:

- **Google Calendar**, which can be used to create events, tasks and reminders.

- ➔ **Microsoft Outlook** integrates calendar, email and tasks into one application.
- ➔ **Todolist** is an application for managing and completing tasks with priorities and deadlines.

The following techniques are appropriate for improving planning and organizing:

- ➔ The **SMART** approach to formulating specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound goals.
- ➔ The **Eisenhower matrix** for breaking down tasks according to their importance and timeliness and setting priorities.
- ➔ The **Mind Map** for generating ideas and solutions.
- ➔ **SWOT analysis** for decision making.
- ➔ **Action plan** with description of all implementation activities, resources needed, sources of support, timelines and expected results.

When planning a specific lesson, it is appropriate to ask the following sample questions:

- ➔ Why is it important to have a lesson objective?
- ➔ What makes an objective effective?
- ➔ How does the objective help us determine the content of the lesson?
- ➔ How do we know if the lesson objective has been achieved?
- ➔ How can the objective help us understand what students have learned?

It is necessary to focus on the principle of sequencing, according to which each activity should build on the previous one and be a clear and concrete step towards achieving the goal.

Planning and organising activities require the refinement of time frames and the allocation of time to complete goals and tasks. It is useful to consider the following Time Management Rules:

- ➔ **Prioritize** tasks.
- ➔ **Plan time** - when and how much time you will spend on a particular activity. Write the plan down and after you complete a task, make a note of it.
- ➔ **Do not interrupt your activity** - try to work on the task for a longer time. If you interrupt or get distracted from the work, you will have to spend time and effort to "get back into it".
- ➔ **Group similar tasks together** and try to complete them in a 'block' and sequential manner.
- ➔ **Divide the big task into subtasks** with specific deadlines.
- ➔ **Estimate the duration** of individual activities.
- ➔ **Check your plans.** Your plans and performance should be evaluated periodically to know if you are "moving" in the right direction, at the expected pace, and if tasks will be completed on time.
- ➔ **Set time buffers.** It is not possible to plan every minute and anticipate all details, bottlenecks or unexpected events. Therefore, when planning, add extra time that you will be able to use to deal with unforeseen circumstances.
- ➔ **Delegate!** Allow others to do the things they can.

The most important thing is to choose the tool or method that suits you best and that helps you improve your planning and organising skills. Experiment with different approaches and gadgets until you find the ones that best suit your style and needs.

Task performance is often tied to interaction with other people. The keys to good group work are:

- ➔ direct and open communication
- ➔ team collaboration

- ➔ clear and unambiguous understanding by all of the task/objective, the context of the work
- ➔ implementation of improvements in the execution process

For optimal group work, it is important to prioritize the task. Usually time is perceived as the most important factor and not enough attention is paid to preparation, to clarifying the instruction or following the processes and rules. It is important that the strategy is discussed in the group. Processes need to be planned, coordinated and controlled.

It is necessary to establish a spirit of proactivity - all participants to work as a team and actively to complete the task, to support each other, to use all resources; to be open to new experiences and already proven strategies; to observe the work of others and be motivated by their enthusiasm and success.

Everyday tips:

1. Start your day positively! (positive thoughts and messages, energizing music, movements)
2. First look at your agenda/plan for the day.
3. Don't put off important tasks - complete them as quickly as possible so they don't burden you more.
4. Prepare your work well.
5. Avoid things that distract you.
6. Be consistent and strive to finish what you start.
7. Report periodically on the results achieved.
8. Learn from your mistakes.



Co-funded by
the European Union

9. Take time for yourself and for analysis - review priorities, re-order them if necessary, try to calm down and dampen your emotions.
10. Find a way to get a few minutes of rest during the work day.

The plan we draw up to achieve a goal is useful and organizes all our resources to reach it, but we also need to accept that it is not a rigid dogma, but can be changed according to the context of what is happening and depending on our creative abilities.

Priority and timing, resources and personal responsibility are key terms in planning and organizing any activity.

Sources

<https://csu.edu/humanresources/empdev/documents/PlanningandOrganizing.pdf>

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/unveiling-importance-teacher-planning-organization-pauline-9mesc/>

5. Self-reflection and self-awareness

5.1. Essence of the phenomenon

Reflection is the mirroring of the surrounding reality in one's mind. What one sees, or perceives, is not objective reality, but only its reflection. Self-reflection is a person's ability to analyse what is reflected in him. All events and external stimuli elicit a response from the human brain. These are thoughts, feelings and sensations. The conscious observation of our internal processes, their analysis, change in behaviour - this is self-reflection.



The development of self-reflection is an important element of novice teachers' professional development. This process helps them become more effective in teaching and classroom management.

The concept of self-reflection as conscious self-knowledge emerged in ancient Greece. Socrates believed that self-knowledge is the most important human task. Plato links the concept of self-reflection with prudence. Later, John Locke defines reflection as the basis of life experience that helps a person develop.

Self-reflection involves being present with yourself and intentionally focusing your attention inward to examine your thoughts, feelings, actions, and motivations, says Angeleena Francis, executive director for AMFM Healthcare. Reflecting inward allows you to know yourself and continue to get to know yourself as you change and develop as a person. It helps you understand

and strengthen your self-concept as you evolve with time. It is the ability to look at our actions, feelings and emotions from the side and draw conclusions based on them in order to proceed in a better and constructive way. Attention to the body and the sensations in it is also self-reflection.

Active self-reflection can help grow your understanding of who you are, what values you believe in, and why you think and act the way you do. It helps you recognize and understand your own emotions, as well as the impact of your emotions on your thoughts and behaviours.

As we develop the skill of self-reflection, we increase our self-awareness, which enables us to better control our thoughts and therefore our emotions and behaviour. Self-awareness is a key component of emotional intelligence.

5.2. Benefits of developed self-reflection skills

- Greater sense of control: Self-reflection involves practicing mindfulness and being present with yourself at the moment. This can help you feel more grounded and in control of yourself.
- Improved communication skills: Self-reflection can help you improve your communication skills, which can benefit your relationships. Understanding what you're feeling can help you express yourself clearly, honestly, and empathetically.
- Deeper alignment with core values: Self-reflection can help you understand what you believe in and why. This can help ensure that your words and actions are more aligned with your core values. It can also help reduce cognitive dissonance, which is the discomfort you may experience when your behaviour doesn't align with your values.
- Better decision-making skills: Self-reflection can help you make better decisions for yourself. Understanding yourself better can help you evaluate all your options and how they

will impact you with more clarity. This can help you make sound decisions that you're more comfortable with.

- ➔ Greater accountability: Self-reflection can help you hold yourself accountable to yourself. It can help you evaluate your actions and recognize personal responsibility. It can also help you hold yourself accountable for the goals you're working toward.

Self-reflection is critical because it contributes to your self-concept, which is an important part of your identity. Your self-concept includes your thoughts about your traits, abilities, beliefs, values, roles, and relationships. It plays an influential role in your mood, judgment, and behavioural patterns. Being able to evaluate your strengths and weaknesses, or what you did right or wrong, can help you identify areas for growth and improvement, so you can work on them.

Self-reflection is a healthy practice that is important for mental well-being. However, it can become harmful if it turns into rumination, self-criticism, self-judgment, negative self-talk, and comparison to others. When anxious thoughts and feelings come up in self-reflection it's important to practice self-compassion and redirect your focus to actionable insights that can propel your life forward.

We all have faults and room for improvement. Reflect on the behaviours or actions you want to change and take steps to do so. Focus on what you can control. If you are unable to calm your mind of racing or negative thoughts support from a trusted person in your life or a mental health professional.

5.3. Barriers to self-reflection

- ➔ lack of time
- ➔ willingness to avoid criticism/self-criticism

- ➔ lack of clear goals
- ➔ dominant negative thoughts
- ➔ lack of a systematic approach to developing self-reflection
- ➔ resistance to change
- ➔ stress and exhaustion
- ➔ lack of a conscious need for self-development

5.4. Strategies for developing self-reflection and self-knowledge

Self-reflection is an ability that novice teachers can develop by applying certain techniques, including:

- ➔ Formulating clear professional goals /both long-term and short-term/
- ➔ Planning the implementation of these goals
- ➔ Sharing experiences with colleagues, both new and more experienced teachers
- ➔ Involvement in professional training
- ➔ Participation in professional communities
- ➔ Seeking mentoring support
- ➔ Asking yourself open-ended questions:
 - “Am I doing what makes me happy?”
 - “Are there things I’d like to improve about myself?”
 - What could I have done differently today?”

- “Am I taking anything or anyone for granted?”

Notice what thoughts and feelings arise within you for each question and then begin to think about why. Be curious about yourself and be open to whatever comes up.

- Keep a journal: Journaling your thoughts and responses to these questions is an excellent vehicle for self-expression. It can be helpful to look back at your responses, read how you handled things in the past, assess the outcome, and look for where you might make changes in the future.
- Try meditation: Meditation can also be a powerful tool for self-reflection and personal growth. Even if it’s only for five minutes, practice sitting in silence and paying attention to what comes up for you. Notice which thoughts are fleeting and which come up more often.
- Process major events and emotions: When something happens in your life that makes you feel especially good or bad, take the time to reflect on what occurred, how it made you feel, and either how you can get to that feeling again or what you might do differently the next time. Writing down your thoughts in a journal can help.
- Make a self-reflection board: Create a self-reflection board of positive attributes that you add to regularly. Celebrate your authentic self and the ways you stay true to who you are. Having a visual representation of self-reflection can be motivating.
- Seek feedback from other people and try to reflect on it critically without going to extremes of accepting or rejecting the opinion expressed.
- Pay attention to your senses: Sensory input is an important component of self-awareness. The application of Mindfulness techniques and exercises is conducive to building an authentic presence, an openness of the senses. Mindfulness techniques can help you become more present with your thoughts and emotions. For instance, instead of yelling at

someone when you're upset, you might use a deep breathing technique to buy yourself some time, rethink your strategy, and react with more understanding.

- ➡ Dedicate time to it: it's important to dedicate time to self-reflection and build it into your routine. Find a slot that works for your schedule - it could be five minutes each morning while drinking coffee or 30 minutes sitting outside in nature once per week.

Self-Awareness

If self-reflection is the process, then self-awareness is the outcome. Remember it is not about beating yourself up, it is about the opportunity to learn how you can be even better next time.

Psychologist and author Daniel Goleman (2004) identifies self-awareness as one of the key components of emotional intelligence. Self-awareness involves the ability to recognize moods, emotions, and feelings. Part of self-awareness also involves being aware of how your emotions and moods influence other people. This ability to monitor your own emotional states is a basic requirement for emotional intelligence.

According to Tasha Eurich (2018), self-awareness can be divided into two categories or types: internal self-awareness and external self-awareness.

Internal self-awareness is about how well we see ourselves and our strengths, weaknesses, values, etc., while external self-awareness is understanding how others view us with those same factors (Eurich, 2018). Good teachers need both to perform well in their roles.

In fact, only 10–15% of those in Eurich's study displayed self-awareness, although most of us believe we are self-aware.

To improve self-awareness, Eurich recommends introspection, but with a focus on asking oneself the right questions. She notes that asking "why" might not always be effective, as many of our

internal processes remain shrouded in our subconscious or unconscious minds; instead, asking “what” may lead to better introspection.

For example, instead of asking, “Why do I fail at this task so often?” you might ask yourself, “What are the circumstances in which I fail at this task, and what can I do to change them?” It’s not a foolproof method, but it can aid you in improving your self-awareness and increasing your alignment with your standards on certain activities.

Reflection is executive functioning. True courageous reflection galvanizes your willpower. It promotes continuous self-awareness, empowers you, ensures you are valued, and gives you the self-awareness you need to quicken achieving your potential.

If you are looking for more information, you may use a few popular and proven reflections toolkits that may help guide your reflection practice. For example:

Daily self-reflection questions

- What can I do to take better care of myself mentally?
- What can I do to create a positive outlook on life?
- What areas of my life do I feel satisfied with? Which ones need attention?
- Am I taking anything in my life for granted?
- What fears or worries keep me up at night?

Questions to jumpstart self-reflection

- What are my concerns about the future?
- What do I want my loved ones to remember about me?
- What matters most to me?

- When was the last time I left my comfort zone?
- Who is the person that's had the most significant impact on my life?
- What is an act of kindness I have received that I will never forget?
- What can I live with: failure or never trying?
- What aspect of my personality would I change, if anything?
- Do I genuinely care what others think of me?
- Is there anyone I would entrust with my life?

Self-reflection journaling prompts

- List 30 things that make you smile.
- What have you discovered about yourself during your self-talk?
- What are the words you live by?
- Describe what unconditional love looks like for you.
- What's the one thing you can't imagine living without?
- What does "enough" look like to you?
- What changes have you discovered in yourself since beginning self-reflection exercises?
- What piece of advice would you give your younger self?
- What 10 words would you use to describe yourself?
- What words do you need to hear the most right now?



Co-funded by
the European Union

Sources:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle>

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/what-so-what-now-what>

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/the-integrated-reflective-cycle>

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/5r-framework>

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/self-awareness>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/self-reflection-importance-benefits-and-strategies-7500858>

6. Managing workplace stress

6.1. Essence of stress and its management

Stress is an integral part of modern human life and will continue to be present in the future, regardless of the space and time of occurrence. By its very nature, stress reflects the interaction between the individual and the environment, mediated by the individual's mental perceptions and evaluations. This also determines the different dimensions of stress manifestation in the same person placed in different conditions and therefore in different people present in identical environments. The



process that takes place in the mind of a person almost automatically when a change in the environment occurs comprises: first, the perception and evaluation of the situation as containing a risk, threat or loss of something valuable and significant to the individual, and second, an evaluation of the resources available to cope. Depending on these appraisals, the level of stress is increased or decreased and the coping responses in the situation are modelled accordingly.

Workplace stress is a common phenomenon that affects many people in different professions and industries. It is most often triggered by one or many of the following factors: excessive workload, poor relationships, unclear expectations, mixing of roles, lack of support, disturbed balance between work and leisure.

Novice teachers often face similar challenges at the beginning of their careers. For their adaptation to the work environment and retention in the profession, it is key to improve their

stress management skills and to enhance their resilience. Resilience has various definitions, the commonality of which is the successful and rapid coping with a variety of negative situations and events of different nature, strength and duration. It also involves learning from previous coping. Resilience can be learned and developed through the management of thoughts and behaviours.

The seven pillars of resilience are: building an optimistic attitude; accepting the situation; focusing on possible solutions; taking responsibility for one's own life; refusing to take on the role of victim; building a support network; and planning a flexible strategy to deal with future challenges.

When talking about stress management, it is necessary to take into account, on the one hand, the preventive actions through which the individual builds resilience and prepares to cope when a stressful situation arises, and, on the other hand, the reactions that the individual takes immediately in the face of intense stress. And accordingly, as a management process, to be effective, stress management actions imply activities of planning, organizing, executing, controlling, and correcting, i.e., stress management does not happen by itself, but requires purposeful and conscious efforts to maintain personal resilience. Furthermore, the outcome of these activities cannot be expected to be achieved at a specific point in time as concrete and sustained as permanent over time, but manifests as a condition that depends on the actions that sustain it. The good news is that each of us, when we have the purpose and will to take care of ourselves, can invest in managing our experience of stress.

Novice teachers often experience difficulties related to the performance of diverse tasks in the course of their adaptation to the profession and the school environment. Here again, it is the mental perceptions and appraisals of the environment's resources that are key in determining the level of stress experienced by the teacher. Most often, the basis of a novice teacher's high levels of stress is the perception of the environment as hostile (a new role, with unfamiliar or unpractised tasks, students who are poorly motivated and quite challenging in their behaviour,

demanding parents, etc.) and the assessment of one's own knowledge and skills as insufficient. Coping reactions are accordingly directed either towards active action to overcome problems arising in everyday life or towards mastering emotional experiences and accepting things that are beyond personal capabilities.

6.2. Benefits of stress management

- ➔ Improves physical and mental health
- ➔ Increases productivity
- ➔ Positives relationships
- ➔ Increases sense of control
- ➔ Encourages a healthy lifestyle

6.3. Barriers to stress management

- ➔ Poor allocation of time and commitments
- ➔ Limited relaxation and entertainment activities
- ➔ Inability to recognize symptoms of stress
- ➔ Use of inadequate coping strategies
- ➔ Poor/unhealthy work environment
- ➔ Unfavourable life events
- ➔ Health problems

6.4. Stress management strategies

Prevention strategies related to building resilience and coping skills to withstand stress:

1. *Plan and organize personal and professional activities:*

- Create realistic schedules and work plans. Good preparation can help reduce feelings of chaos and uncertainty.
- Divide large tasks into smaller and achievable parts.
- Plan the sequence of their completion in the day according to your own levels of work capacity.
- Use short breaks during the working day to relax. Even short periods of relaxation can improve your concentration and efficiency.
- Create time zones for relaxation in your work time and space.
- Formulate your expectations realistically and give yourself time to adapt.

2. *Set priorities:*

- Set your priorities and focus your attention on the important tasks.
- Don't give in to unnecessary perfectionism.
- Don't overload yourself with unnecessary tasks.

3. *Take control in the situations:*

- Define the limits of your capabilities and exercise control over situations accordingly.
- When things are out of your control, focus on the things you can influence and the ways you can respond.

- ➡ Be aware of your negative thoughts that you are using to influence the development of the situation and your own motivation to act. Also look for positive aspects in the situation and what is happening.
- ➡ Focus on the successes and positives in your learning process. This can keep you motivated and confident.
- ➡ Acknowledge your achievements and progress. Allow yourself small rewards after successfully completed tasks.

4. *Practice regular physical activity:*

- ➡ Physical activity is an excellent way to relieve stress and maintain good health. Exercising releases endorphins that improve mood and reduce feelings of stress.
- ➡ Practice yoga, swimming, walking or any other form of sport that brings you pleasure and relaxation.

5. *Healthy lifestyle:*

- ➡ Stick to a healthy diet and regular sleep. Healthy eating provides energy and promotes good physical and mental health. Regular, high-quality sleep is key to body and brain recovery. Try to aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night.
- ➡ Avoid excessive consumption of sugars and caffeine, which can exacerbate stress.
- ➡ Limit alcohol consumption.
- ➡ Set aside time for relaxation and activities that make you happy. Personal time is important for maintaining mental health.
- ➡ Practice self-reflection - regular self-reflection can help you analyze your lessons and interactions with students. Identify successful practices and areas for improvement.

- ➔ Laughter is an excellent way to release tension and improve mood. Watch funny movies, join fun events, or just have fun with friends.

6. Seek social support:

- ➔ Share your feelings and concerns with close friends, family or colleagues.
- ➔ Build a supportive community and be open to help.
- ➔ Find a mentor or colleague with whom you can share your experiences.
- ➔ Attend trainings and workshops that provide you with additional skills and knowledge. This can increase your confidence and reduce stress.

7. Seek professional support:

- ➔ If the stress becomes too overwhelming, consider consulting a professional psychologist or therapist.

6.5. Coping strategies in acute stress

1. Deep breathing and relaxation:

- ➔ Practice deep breathing and relaxation techniques to reduce physical tension and stress.
- ➔ Use meditation or relaxation audios.

2. Change in the body's biochemistry:

- ➔ Drink water in small sips.
- ➔ Have something sweet - chocolate or a candy bar - to boost adrenaline, the hormone that gives you the energy to act.
- ➔ Take a relaxing drink - peppermint tea, lemon balm, lavender.

3. *Muscle relaxation:*

- Exercise muscle tightness/relaxation consistently all over the body.
- Move in the space - change physical positioning.

4. *Visualization techniques:*

- Practice visualization for protection.
- Practice meditation.

Try out different strategies and discover what works best for you. It is important to combine several of these elements into your daily routine to maintain an optimal level of stress resilience.

Sources:

Zarbova, B. "Stress and well-being in a high-risk environment", 2019, dissertation, Sofia University

McGonigle, K. "Stress - friend or foe", 2023, The Nest

Seaward. B. "Managing Stress: Principles and Strategies for Health and Wellbeing", 1997, Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Canada

Cartwright S. and Cooper C." Interventions in Stress and Health", 2011. Palgrave Macmillan, New York

https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend?language=bg

Conclusions

We conducted a survey to find out to what extent the structure, thematic and terminological content of the Resource Guide is in line with the objectives. The views of both mentees and mentors provide guidance on the direction of refinement of the Resource Guide.

Participants in the survey are 47 teachers from Bulgaria (36.2%), North Macedonia (44.4%) and Slovenia (23.4%), direct participants in the project, of which 14 (29.8%) are mentors and 33 (70.2%) are mentees.

100% of the participants responded positively to the direct questions about how the information is presented and the structure of the Resource Guide. No significant differences were found in the responses of participants from different countries and between the two groups of respondents - mentors and mentees.

The vast majority of participants felt that all elements of the guide are important and useful. All factors relevant to the impact of the mentoring process are presented in the document.

The survey data show that the Resource Guide as it stands is highly consistent with the objectives set. The Resource Guide comes as an extension of the self-training and self-improvement mentoring-coaching process novice teachers go through when they are introduced to the profession. The Resource Guide is enabling novice teachers to benefit more from the induction process by developing their self-knowledge, identifying their strengths, learning more about the importance of social competence in school life and forming a proactive attitude towards their career.

The developed content is not only relevant to the needs of new teachers. It is useful to any teacher who is seeking to improve and advance professionally.