

## **“Cards of feelings and needs” – a tool to support young people in identifying, expressing and reflecting upon their own feelings and needs**

In our experience as trainers, youth workers and therapists, we have found that young people often have difficulty understanding and expressing their feelings and needs. They often miss being understood and can't even understand themselves. The current situation of pandemic and social isolation strengthens these difficulties which is rising the problem of depression, anxiety, tendency towards violent behavior, self-harm, difficulty coping with stress and communicating with others.

In this context, we believe that words are not always the most efficient way of reaching young people and helping to open up and express. Visual metaphors help us to go beyond words and culture into deeper levels of consciousness. That is why in our Erasmus + strategic partnership project “The colours of feelings and needs” we combined visuals with a Nonviolent Communication approach by creating the set of 256 cards of feelings and needs which consists of 4 different painting styles and 1 digital design. The art is a language by itself and by its variations and different styles we reach more people.

Thus, in our session we would like to share with you the idea of these cards, the process in which they were created and how to work with them to support people in acquiring and developing the ability to identify, express, interpret and reflect upon their own feelings and needs. From our experience, every person can find at least one card that may resonate with his/her own feelings and needs. The cards may be used to work in various contexts and with different topics, both with groups and individuals. They may be used as a main topic in a session or used as introduction, evaluation or other training course element, also online (with a digital version).

Already before our meeting, we invite you to our page: <https://cardsoffeelings.wixsite.com/cards> where you may watch the introductory movie, read the manual (with several tested ideas how to use the cards) research report (which also includes some ideas for the methods connected with visual expression of feelings and needs) as well as to see and download our cards under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 licence: <https://cardsoffeelings.wixsite.com/cards>.

The project “The Colours of feelings and needs” was financed by Erasmus+ strategic partnership, created and implemented by ARTE EGO Foundation in Poland and GrenzKultur/Cabuwazi in Germany.