



EARTHE

Activity 2

Digital toolkit for innovative curriculum and methodological development

Module – Empathy and resilience

Method – Personal Story

Case study

Module 6 - Empathy & Resilience

Case study - Sharing Stories, Building Resilience

Related Method and Module

Personal Story – Empathy & Resilience

Context and Background

Organisation: Community education centre supporting unemployed adults and recent migrants.

Target Group: Adults 25–55, mixed gender, unemployed jobseekers, and adults returning to education after long absences.

Scope: Build confidence, empathy, and resilience through non-formal education

Problem / Challenge Presented

Participants struggled with low self-esteem, limited communication confidence, and isolation. Migrants faced cultural barriers, while long-term unemployed felt discouraged. Learners often lacked opportunities to practise authentic, empathetic dialogue.

Actions Taken / Method Applied

The centre implemented the **Personal Story** method as part of an Empathy & Resilience module. Activities included:

- Story Circles where participants shared experiences of overcoming challenges.
- Paired exchanges focusing on listening and empathy.
- Reflection sessions linking stories to resilience strategies.

Facilitators emphasised confidentiality, respect, and voluntary sharing, ensuring a safe learning environment.

Outcomes and Results

Learners reported feeling validated and proud when telling their stories.

Participants became more attentive listeners and expressed greater understanding of peers' challenges.

The activity fostered trust and solidarity among a diverse group.

Learners reported using empathy and listening skills in family and workplace interactions.

Lessons Learned

- Creating **safe, respectful spaces** is essential for storytelling.
- Story prompts must be open but non-invasive.
- Reflection is as important as sharing—helping learners connect lessons to their lives.

Key Success Factors



Clear ground rules for respect and confidentiality.
Facilitator modelling vulnerability by sharing a story first.
Balanced group size (8–15) for trust-building.
Reflection questions that link stories to resilience.

Challenges Encountered and How They Were Addressed

Addressed with paired sharing before group circles.
Facilitators allowed breaks and follow-up support for sensitive participants.
Stories were framed broadly to respect diverse backgrounds.

Applicability / Recommendations for Educators

Use storytelling early in programmes to build group trust.
Always include structured reflection to link stories with resilience skills.
Start with pairs or small groups for shy participants.
Combine storytelling with mindfulness or journaling for deeper self-reflection.