



EARTHE

Activity 2

Digital toolkit for innovative curriculum and methodological development

Module – Empathy and resilience

Method – Personal Story



Module 6 – Empathy & Resilience

Method 1. - Personal Story

Soft skill focus

This method develops empathy, emotional awareness, and resilience by encouraging learners to share and reflect on personal experiences. Through storytelling, participants practise vulnerability, active listening, and constructive dialogue, which strengthens both self-understanding and interpersonal trust.

Learning outcomes

Share personal experiences in a safe and structured way.

Practise active listening when others tell their stories.

Identify emotions and coping strategies expressed in personal narratives.

Use storytelling as a tool for empathy, resilience, and community-building

Target group

Age: Adults 20–55

Gender: Mixed

Level of studies: Secondary education and above (adaptable for mixed literacy groups)

Status: Employed, unemployed, or job-seeking

Fewer opportunities: Particularly suitable for adults with limited social support, migrants who benefit from sharing intercultural experiences, or learners overcoming adversity.

This method is designed for learners who need to strengthen self-expression, empathy, and resilience through structured sharing of life experiences. It creates a safe space where participants can reflect, connect, and learn from each other's strategies for overcoming challenges.

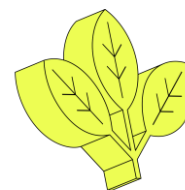
Method description

“Personal Story” invites learners to tell short stories from their own lives, focusing on moments of challenge and resilience. Facilitators guide the process to ensure safety, structure, and mutual respect. By listening and responding empathetically, participants develop stronger bonds and greater emotional awareness.

Implementation instructions

Timeline: 60–75 minutes per session

Number of participants: 8–15 (small groups to ensure safety and sharing opportunities)



EARTHE

Necessary materials: Story prompt cards, timer, observation/feedback sheets, comfortable seating in a circle

Space: Quiet, safe environment conducive to sharing (classroom, community centre, or online breakout groups)

Implementation in 5 steps

Step 1 – Introduction & Ground Rules

Facilitator introduces the activity, emphasising confidentiality, respect, and voluntary sharing. Ground rules for safe participation are agreed upon as a group.

Step 2 – Story Prompt & Preparation

Learners receive a prompt (e.g., “A time I overcame a challenge,” “A person who inspired me,” “How I handled stress in a difficult moment”). They take a few minutes to reflect or jot notes.

Step 3 – Story Sharing Each participant shares their story (2–3 minutes each). Peers listen actively, with no interruptions. Facilitator ensures timing and emotional safety.

Step 4 – Reflection & Group Dialogue

Group reflects on shared stories: What emotions came up? What coping strategies were heard? Learners discuss common themes of resilience and empathy.

Step 5 – Consolidation

Facilitator links stories to resilience-building strategies and highlights empathy as a bridge to understanding others’ struggles. Participants identify one takeaway for their own life.

Practical tips

Tip 1: Always set clear rules of confidentiality and respect before sharing begins.

Tip 2: Offer the option of fictionalised or anonymised stories for participants uncomfortable with personal disclosure.

Tip 3: Use prompts that are open but not overly invasive, gradually increasing depth as trust grows.

Debriefing questions

1. How did it feel to share your story in a supportive group setting?
2. What did you notice while listening to others’ stories?
3. What strategies for resilience can you take from today’s stories into your own life?

Practical description sheet

Title: Personal Story

Purpose: To build empathy, self-awareness, and resilience through structured storytelling.

Duration: 60–75 minutes



EARTHE

Format: Story prompts, group sharing, reflection

Core Steps: Ground rules → Prompt & prep → Sharing → Reflection → Consolidation

Materials: Prompt cards, timer, feedback sheets

Target Group: Adults 20–55, diverse backgrounds, especially those facing adversity

Learning Outcomes: Strengthen empathy, active listening, and resilience strategies

Key Benefits: Builds trust, validates experiences, and fosters mutual support