

FLEXIBILITY

Activity 1: Mind stretching

Activities to promote adults' personal, social and learn to learn skills

Description of initiatives comprised in this handbook.

Title/name	Mind stretching (How to develop your flexibility)
LifeComp Skill approached	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-regulation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flexibility <input type="checkbox"/> Well-being <input type="checkbox"/> Empathy <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Growth mindset <input type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Managing learning
Duration ¹	45 minutes
Type of activity	Self & group reflection
Short description	This activity is better performed with small groups (6-12 participants). The activities performed through a metaphor aim to identify a situation of change, to pinpoint flexibility competences and strategies and encourage their development.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define flexibility • Think about how people can recognize situations where they need to react and be flexible. • Keep track of people's skills to adapt to change and decide how it is needed and improve them. • Identify situations or activities and plan the use of some flexibility techniques. • Look for opportunities to grow through the changes.
Setting ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Facilitator • 1 cozy meeting room For face-to-face implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color markers
Facilitators' Tips ³	The Jelly Baby tree (Cotton, 2016) is a great exercise to encourage communication and help individuals identify where they are in life in a certain matter and perhaps where they would like to go and

¹ It can be continuously.

² Materials and resources needed to implement it, including financial, human resources and spaces. In case is needed a worksheet, please use the following document to prepare it.

³ What a person needs to know to implement the activity.

	how they could go from their current position to the desired one. It could be used for steps 4-6.
Step by step	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The facilitator presents the definition of flexibility as determined in biology (please see the Material for facilitators). 2. The facilitator divides the participants into groups (for online implementation create separate rooms) and ask them to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What does it mean to be flexible in everyday life situations? ● Give an example where someone or you showed flexibility. ● What could encourage flexibility, how could it be trained? 3. After the discussion in small groups, each group choses a leader to present, to the whole group: 1) the definition of flexibility; 2) the examples they found; and 3) situations that could encourage flexibility 4. To end the activity, the facilitator asks participants to reflect on how flexible they think they are and how flexible they would like to be. For these steps, facilitators can use the Jelly Baby Tree (Connon, 2016) 5. Facilitator asks participants to show with a blue color where they position themselves in the tree in terms of flexibility and ask them to explain 6. The facilitator asks them to show with a green color if they would like to change position in the tree in the near future to consider themselves more flexible.
Debriefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How can flexible behavior help you to adapt to new situations? ● What can I do to become more flexible in the near future?
References	<p>Flexibility definition retrieved from: https://health.ucdavis.edu/sports-medicine/resources/flexibility</p> <p>Cotton, D. (2016). <i>The Smart Solution Book. The: 68 Tools For Brainstorming, Problem Solving and Decision Making, 1st edition.</i> FT Publishing International (Original work published 2016)</p>



Mind Stretching (How to develop your flexibility) – Material for facilitators

Worksheet – Flexibility

- **Definition**

The ability to manage transitions and uncertainty, adapt to changes, consider new ideas and points of view, face challenges, compromise and find solutions.

“Flexibility refers to the ability of muscles, joints, and soft tissues to move through an unrestricted, pain-free range of motion. It involves the capacity of these structures to stretch, lengthen, and contract without limitations, allowing for smooth and efficient movement’ (UC Davis, n.d.).

- **Why is it important?**

Change and uncertainty are inherent characteristics of our everyday life, especially in these times of rapid change due to changing socioeconomic contexts and technological advances. Therefore, the ability to adapt to, or even better, to thrive in response to, these changes is an important skill.

From changing schools, moving house to making contact with new ideas and cultures, flexibility is one of the most important skills for mental, socioeconomic and professional development.

Flexibility is also described as the competence to make decisions when the result of that decision is uncertain, when the information available is partial or ambiguous, or when there is a risk of unintended outcomes (EntreComp).

According to the Lifecomp framework, in 2019, flexibility /adaptability was the most requested skill in online job advertisements. Employers want to hire individuals that are able to “modify one’s attitude or behaviour to accommodate modifications in the workplace”, whereas NACE (2020) identified flexibility/adaptability as one of the personality skills most wanted by employers from students.

