Training programme for parents of adolescents
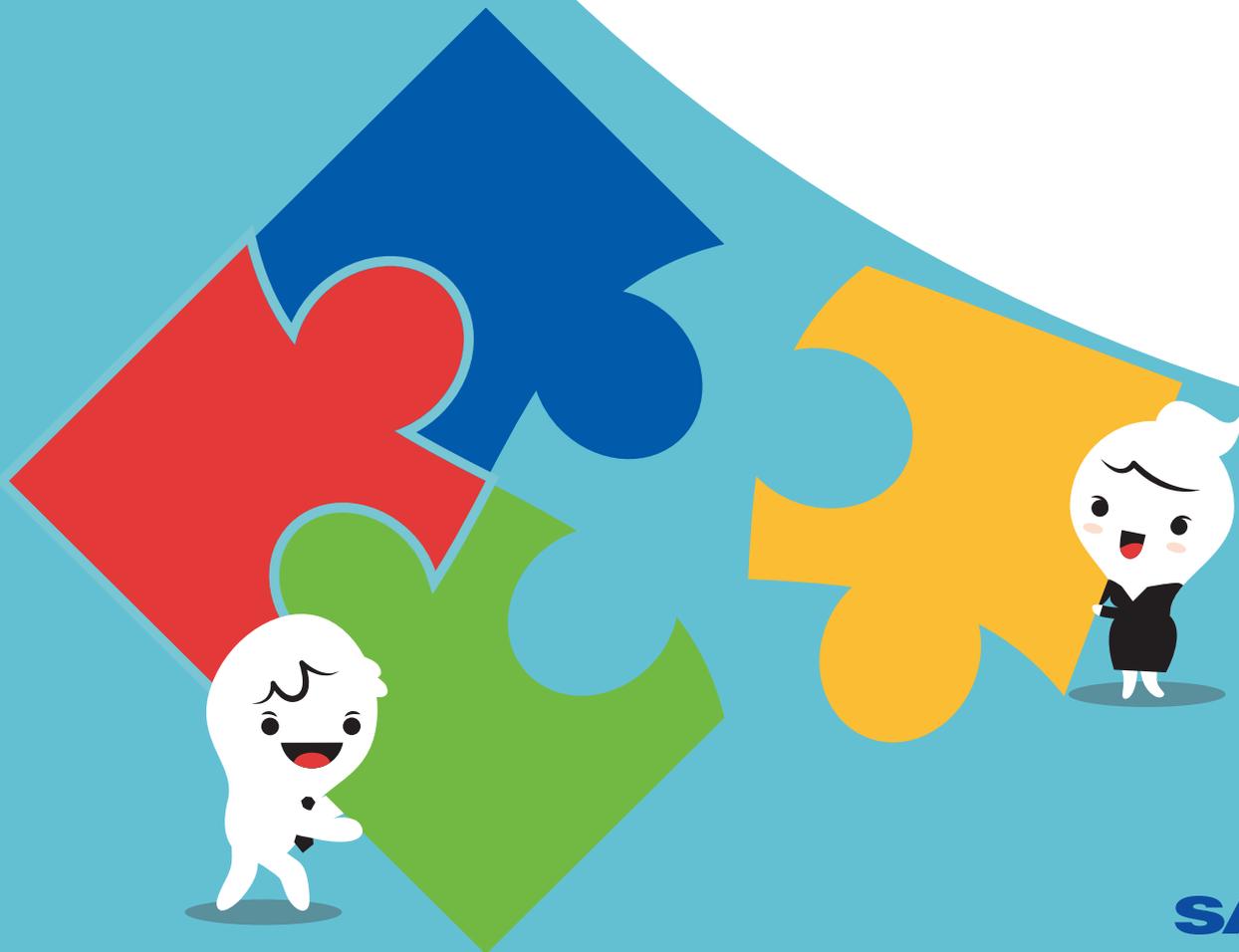
Training programme for parents of adolescents

EMPOWERING
THE CHILD'S
STRENGTHS

Project „Empowering the child's strengths for violence prevention"

OAK
FOUNDATION

SAPI

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND PRACTICES INSTITUTE

www.sapibg.org

Sofia, 2017

Contents

Dear parents,

Numerous studies prove the fact that the parent's role is vital in children's life and development. From their early childhood, children, by reason of their physical and mental immaturity need secure environment, continued human presence, most often defined as a parent who will meet their needs in an appropriate manner, who will guide them skilfully to getting to know the world around and to integrating in it; to trust them and encourage their strengths with a view to their future development. Going through the various age stages, children pose numerous challenges and questions to us as parents. "How to interpret the child's behaviour?, How to help them?, Do we cope alright or make mistakes." Challenges and questions during the period of adolescence increase with great intensity.

Numerous and various authors define adolescence as one of the difficult periods in a child's life. Adolescence serves as the transition from childhood, care-free times full of emotions, to maturity and the responsibility of adults. Experiences and emotions are too strong. Friends and peers are important. It is namely during this process of growing up that young people make sense of their experience and dreams and develop their life project, which will enable them to enter the world of the adults.

Guided and influenced by those views and ideas, we developed a training programme for parents of children who are at the stage of adolescence. The purpose is to create a protected space, where you, parents will actively participate on the basis of your experience. In addition to the experience that you share, we will present some theoretical constructs, techniques and practical advice in order to expand the perception of the adolescent and the key role of the family and the parent.

Regardless of the views of the authors that we are going to present, we have to inevitably acknowledge that each child's way to go through adolescence is different and the theoretical views do not exhaust all possible repertoires of good behaviours of the children and the parents. They will only enrich you as parents to enable you to perform your most vital role – to raise your children in such a way so that they develop their potential and feel satisfied and happy. These goals are shared also by us and the authors.

From the team of authors

Introduction

Introduction to the programme

Programme goal

This programme's goal is to develop the parenting skills of parents of adolescent children by supporting them in performing the role through self-reflection, presentation of theoretical constructs and sharing of personal experience in a group of other participants.

Working methods applied in the programme

The programme is based on the psychodynamic knowledge and concepts of a person's psychological development, which is both a theory and a method of work.

Participants

The programme is designed for parents of children aged 12 to 18, experiencing difficulties in the relationship with their children or asking themselves questions about their behaviour and that of their grown up children. The groups are intended to comprise between 12 and 18 participants, which will ensure better efficiency and an opportunity for each member to engage.

Programme timeframe

The programme is organised in 7 two-hour long sessions. The meetings are intended to be taking place once every two weeks.

Content of the programme

Session No 1

Introduction, presentation of the programme, introductions and setting the group rules; starting the topic of adolescent-parent relationships.

Session No 2

My family – expanding the concept and the explanatory models of the family by introducing the systematic approach ideas. Circularity of relationships, types of communication among the family members. Adolescence within the context of family life cycle stages. Reorganisation of structures and roles, renegotiating family rules during the child's teenage period.

Session No 3

My child's adolescence, what we know about puberty, what we do not know about puberty. The views of various authors: goal of the development, normal development, disturbed development, measures recommended to the parents.

Session No 4

Being a parent through the eyes of the parents and from the perspective of psychodynamic theories: the parent's role, the role of the super-ego according to Sigmund Freud, the good enough mother, the true and false self, according to Donald Winnicott; Melany Klein: Being a mother and a father of an adolescent.

Session No 5

Can we make children more resilient? Believes and ideas about the parent's role as influenced by a new approach to the knowledge about the human being – resilience-based approach.

Session No 6

I know that you can cope, an interactive session. Through simulations, various proposed techniques, methods, response to the children's challenging behaviour.

Session No 7

Summary and end of training. Discussion of important issues, not touched upon, left on the parking. Feedback from the participants, what they will take with them, what they will leave in the group. Practical advice to parents of teenagers.

Contents
of the training
programme
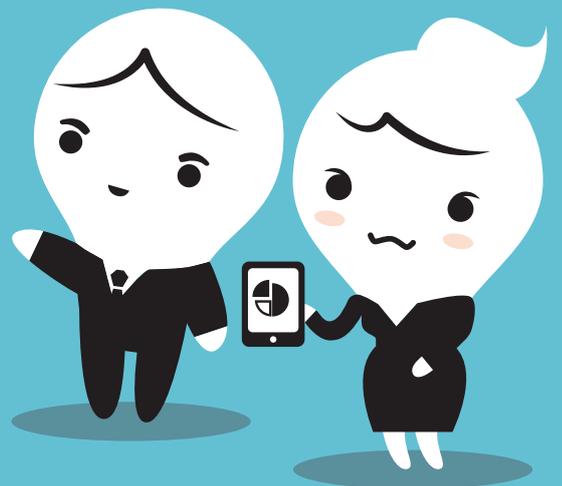
Session No 1
Introduction to the programme

Objective:

The first session's main objective is to introduce the participants to the programme's goal, to create group work environment.

Tasks:

By the end of the session the participants will:

- be familiar with the progrmme's goals and format of programme delivery
- introduce themselves and meet everyone
- have shared their expectations from the training
- have adopted the group rules and working rules
- have improved their skills to express themselves and to share

Session plan:

1. Introduction of participants to each other - „my business card" – 15 minutes

Objective: Introduction of participants

The facilitators invite the participants to introduce themselves to each other by dividing them in couples and each one of them tells 5 most important things about themselves:

- What is my name
- Where was I born and raised
- What do I do and where I work
- What is my family like
- What are my strengths and weaknesses

Each participant presents their partner to the group.

2. Presentation of the programme – 10 minutes

Objective: the participants to learn about the programme, the topics, how they will be delivered, duration.

The facilitators introduce the participants to the programme by presenting generally the programme's idea and framework: goals, modules, duration.

The facilitators seek feedback from the participants: "How do you feel about what you have heard?, What do you think about our ideas, does it sound intriguing, interesting to you?, Do you still want to participate – alone or with someone else?

3. Sharing of group expectation – 10 minutes

Objective: to identify participants' expectations

One of the facilitators invites the participants to share their expectations: "What are your expectations upon joining the course?, What would be useful for you?, What would you like to understand? The facilitators want to summarise by conducting a brain storming, they seek answers to the questions and write them down on a poster:

What is most difficult about dealing with an adolescent

What are your worst fears?

What are your hopes?

What helps you?

What are the obstacles?

The expectations are written down on a poster and displayed in plain sight, available throughout the training. One more poster is displayed, which is defined as a parking lot, where important questions will be put down, when their discussion has been postponed.

The programme, printed out in advance, is then distributed among the participants. The discussion on the expectations is based on going through the programme, which topics can cover which expectations.

4. Drafting and adopting preliminary group work rules – 10 minutes

Objective: agree on a group contract for participation

The facilitators justify the need of group work rules and invite the participants to come up with proposals. "Everyone can propose what is important to you and what would make you feel comfortable in the group." In case the participants are passive, the facilitators guide them by proposing some ideas, for example:

- All participants are equal
- Everyone can have an opinion
- All ideas area valuable
- There are no right or wrong ideas
- Whatever participants share in the group, remains here / confidentiality

- Everyone behaves in such a way so that they do not hurt the others, neither verbally, nor by using gestures

- No yelling, no offensive language

- Everyone speaks on their own behalf – I think...

- We come on time and we turn our phones off, etc.

The rules remain open and can be added to in the course of work.

Break – 15 minutes

5. Parent – adolescent relationships – 35 minutes

Objective: Based on everyone's personal experience, to identify the most important things which are favourable for the parent–adolescent relationships.

The facilitators introduce the topic of the delicate parent–adolescent relationships. They remind of the subject of this course: seeking answers to questions, explanation of thoughts and feelings and presentation of techniques for better communication between parents and children.

Applying the brain storming technique, the facilitators seek the answers to a number of questions:

Question 1: What are the important things, according to you – principles and behaviours, which determine the good relations between parents and adolescents?

The participants give quick answers.

If the group is passive, they can be guided:

- understanding

- trust

- good intentions

- respect for the child

- respect for the child's unique nature

- recognition of the changes taking place in the teenager's personality

- not being judgmental about the change

- re-negotiating the rules of the relationship with the grown up child

Question 2: Which of the things listed do you achieve easily in communicating with your children?

Question 3: Which of the things listed cause you difficulty?

The answers to the question are written down on three posters. Holding a discussion, the group identifies those principles and behaviours which most often pose difficulties to the acceptable re-

lationships between parents and children. A participant is invited to share, based on their personal experience, what helps in such situations. The discussion is guided to focus on what can be done to enhance the effect of the answers to question 2 and to reduce the impact of the answers to question 3. The exercise concludes with the message that the adolescent is a personality and has rights, individuality, goes through the most difficult period of transition from childhood to independence and during this period they need the care, understanding and attention of their parents.

The session concludes with a summary of the work done during the session.

Conclusion

In conclusion, each participant completes the sentence: "If I were a colour, then now I am…."

Session No 2
Our family

Objective:

The main objective of Session 2 is to introduce ideas from the systematic approach to expand the perception of the family as a system, the roles that family members take on, ways of communication, circularity of relationships

Tasks:

By the end of the session the participants will acquire knowledge about:

- circularity of the relationships within the family system

- ways of communication within the family

- the roles taken up within the family system

- adolescence within the context of the family life cycle stages

- re-negotiating the relationships with the adolescent

Session plan:

Session opening: The facilitators greet the group and present the objective and topics which will be discussed in the course of today's session with the explanation that the family is central in a child's life and the child can be best understood within the family context. The child's behaviour is determined not only by their individual traits but also by those of the family system they belong to.

Warm up exercise

All participants are encouraged to make a circle in the middle of the room, with one of them standing in the middle of the circle. All participants are given the task to act like a united, harmonious family. The participant in the middle passes the ball to the other participants in the circle and asks them to pass it back to them and name a step leading to the goal.

1. My family – 30 minutes

Objective: based on their personal experience, the participants identify the circular relationships in the family.

Introduction

We often think that we know the members of our family well, the character and temperament of our spouse, the interests and habits of our children and therefore sometimes, without realising how, we end up in situations where we experience difficulties in communicating with them and sometimes we are even involved in conflicts. A widespread reaction in such a situation is to blame

the other person: "He is always so short tempered, he is a bad person, he does not understand me, does not respect me, I am always patient…" The other person needs to change. In many families, as if the spouses and the children have roles assigned to them: "one is inherently good, the other one is always bad, one child is successful and gifted and the other one is lazy most of the time", regardless of the difficult context of the situation. This picture gives us reasons to think that most people explain the relationships in the family based on cause and effect/linear relations: one event preceding another one is the cause; for example, the child steals because their parents are divorced. In this case, only one of the objects has an impact on the other but not vice versa.

There is something else beyond the cause and effect relationship.

For example, the parents are in the process of getting divorces and are in a constant fight, the child begins to steal, the parents are concerned and start talking calmly to each other because even though they are getting divorced, they do care about their child.

Applying the ideas and views of the systematic approach, attempt will be made to expand the perception and the explanatory models of the family."

Following the introduction, the facilitators begin working with the group by asking questions and seeking feedback from the participants.
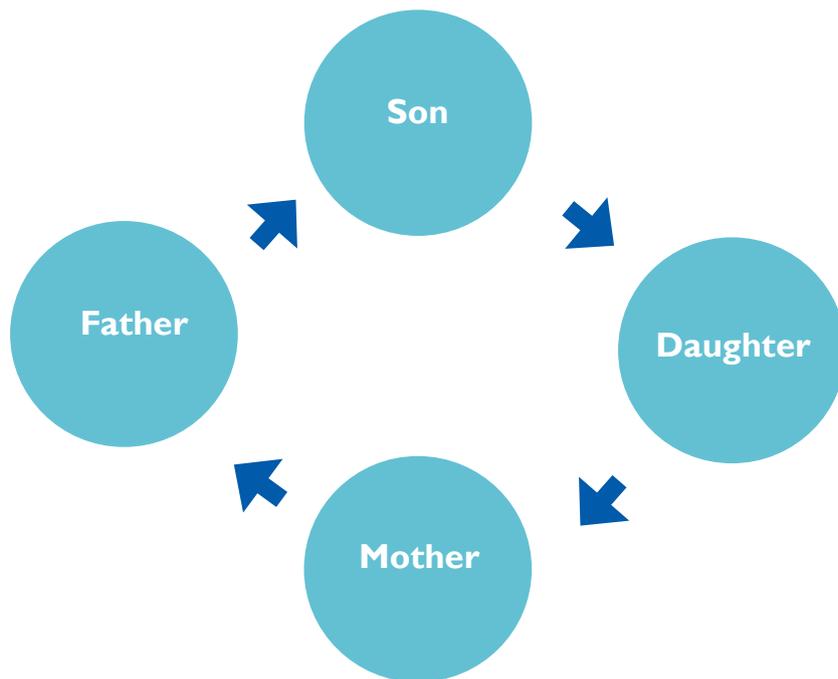
One of the facilitators writes down on a poster.

Who are the typical family members?

Based on the participants' answers, a conclusion can be drawn that the family consists of children and parents.

How can we arrange them in the space – in a straight horizontal line, vertically, in a circle or in some other way?

Figure 1

The facilitators present the main characteristics of the family as a system:

- The family is a functional entity, made up of its members, who are interrelated

- The family has boundaries, which are characterised by certain permeability

- The family system seeks to achieve relative but not full stability

- The family system develops and grows, influenced by the environment or the needs of its members

- Circular causality of events

- The family system is purposeful

- The family system consists of sub-systems

My real situations

A volunteer among the participants tells about their family, replying to the questions of the facilitator: Who are your family members? What does your family believe in? What are the rules that you observe? Give an example of what is it that you do most often, what does your wife/husband do when the spouse does the thing that they do, what does the child do. Does your family let people in easily, who succeeds to do it? Who do you share with the things that happen in your family? Who takes the decisions concerning your children? What are those things outside your family, including people, who can make you angry and cause a quarrel with your wife/husband and your children? Are there cases when you change the rules and the actions in the family, when does this happen?

Attention is drawn to the circularity of family members' behaviour. For example, when the mother cooks, the father waits for the dinner and listens to the news, then the children go to him, they seek attention and want to play with him; the father says to them: " Be quiet, I am listening to the news, go to your mommy." The children go to their mother and ask her to spend some time with them. The mother tells them to leave the room because she is busy at the moment and is in a hurry to cook the dinner; the children leave and start screaming and fighting, the mother and the father start arguing whose fault this is.

Facilitator materials

Appendix 1

2. How do we talk to each other -10 minutes

Objective: familiarize the participants with the various levels of communication

Presentation

We humans are social beings and we are meant to communicate among ourselves. Every time we communicate with the others, we expect to be noticed, acknowledged, respected and recognised. When this does not happen or there is a hint of ambiguity, we feel rejected and hurt. To express ourselves on a given topic and to share our feelings, we resort to two main levels of communication: verbal (focused on content) through language and words and non-verbal (focused on the process) through intonation, mimics, gesture, body posture.

The facilitators present the types of communication.

Facilitator materials

Punctuation: This is the way to point out what is most important from our point of view. The main question here is who started this? Accepting circular causality eases us from the need to seek the original cause for a given situation and to proceed from the assumption that all participants have their point of view about how it came to be. We have to respect each point of view, which gives us an opportunity to use the information in order to build a full picture of the situation, and the differing opinions as a resource of change.

Symmetric communication is based on the principle of sameness. Both parties involved want to have identical achievements, care and love, as well as in other spheres – sickness and misery. This leads to a rivalry for superiority and often results in conflicts and arguments. No one is willing to give in.

Complementary communication is based on being different and complementing each other. However, when it is always one of the partners who has the right answers and who dominates, and the other one accepts and gives in, there is a growing sense of superiority and inferiority respectively and this could result in detachment and one partner losing interest in the other.

Double bonding – whatever the second participant does (the inferior one), to enable the other one to dominate, they will make a mistake and will be punished.

Break – 15 minutes

3. The adolescent within the context of the stages of family life cycle – 40 minutes

Objective: the participants learn about adolescence as a stage of the family life cycle

The facilitators present the stages and crises of the family life cycle.

All families go through periods of transition in their life cycle, which requires reorganising the structures and roles and renegotiating the rules.

Facilitator materials

Appendix 2

An example based on experience:

The Petrovs family believe that the dinner time is the time when all family members get together and communicate with each other. The roles and responsibilities are distributed based on their concepts of the husband and wife's participation in the family, concepts they inherited from their families. The father does the shopping, the mother cooks the meals and lays the table. The strict rule observed by the family is that dinner is served at 8 pm and the parents and children have dinner and share what

their day was like, what made an impression on them and what they found interesting. The elder son of the Petrovs has already turned 16. He is sometimes late, he phones home to let the parents know that he will not be back for dinner, he often spends time with friends and classmates, they chat and go to interesting places, to the cinema, pastry shop, bookshops.

What is the parents' reaction

If the parents do not take into account the change taking place for their son, they will continue sticking to the firm rule, which is more appropriate for a family with younger children. The boy will continue meeting with his friends and will start being late as a way of demonstration; this will result in arguments and possibly even in the boy running away from home physically or mentally.

But the parents understand the situation. They talk about the fact that their boy is already 16 years old and that other children who are his age also act like this. They review the rule "Everyone having dinner together at 8 pm." They speak with the boy and allow for other options when the boy might be late – he can have dinner on his own or the family can wait for him.

The participants are invited to share their own experience of communicating with their grown up children, are there cases when the family changes their habits and behaviour. The information shared by the participants is discussed.

Summary of the most important messages of this session.

Conclusion

Before leaving, all participants complete the sentence: "If I were an animal, today I would have been…."

Homework is assigned "Each participant to describe a situation from a rest day – what do the family members do and how this affects the other participants in the family system

Session No 3
Being an adolescent

Objective:

The third session's main objective is to raise the parents' awareness and self-refection with relation to their adolescent children.

Tasks:

By the end of the session the participants will:

- be clear about the changes that happen to children during puberty
- learn about various theories concerning the psychological development of children during puberty
- find out what helps their communication with their grown up child

Session plan:

The facilitator explains how the session will run.

They ask the participants to define two kinds of feelings each that they start their participation in the meeting with.

The facilitators invite the participants to share what they have written in their homework, they draw conclusions about the circularity of relationships.

1. What do we know about puberty – 20 minutes

Objective: participants to share their idea of puberty, what changes happen to children during this period

A memory

The participants split in couples. They share what they know about puberty based on their experience. Each of them has to remember of a situation from their own time as adolescents, which is not typical and is different from their behaviour as a child. The participants share their memories to their partner in the couple – how they felt, what they were thinking, what they were doing or wanted to do.

Then some volunteers share with the group and this is followed by a discussion. The different behaviours, thoughts and feelings are written down on a flipchart.

The list can expand while searching an answer to the question: What did you learn from your child about puberty? The answers are written down on the same flipchart.

2. What we do not know about puberty? – 20 minutes

Objective: to widen the participants' perception of puberty

Everyone watch together the documentary "What are the things we do not know about puberty"

After the documentary is over, the facilitators encourage a discussion by asking the following questions: How do you feel about what you watched? What thoughts and feelings did this documentary provoke in you? Did you see anything you did not know? Would you like to share anything personal with relation to this?

Break – 15 minutes

3. Presentation of various authors and their theories about puberty – 30 minutes

Objective: to familiarise the participants with the tasks of this age

The facilitators summarise in an easy to understand manner the points of view of some authors about the tasks of the child's age period 12 – 18 years and present in detail the stage of puberty as an identity confusion, as described by Erik Erikson.

According to Donald Winnicott *"The foundations of psychological health are laid down from the age of one to five years. New emotional development begins at the age of 10 or 11, depending on the emotional development model, created during early childhood, however, this time accompanied by physical development of the genitals and also by the power generated over the years to fulfil in real life what the child can only do in their imagination or while playing".*

The facilitators present the stage of puberty as described by Erik Erikson

Appendix 3

Each participant writes down on a piece of paper questions that they ask themselves about their child's behaviour. The questions are shared in the big group and are written down on a poster. The facilitators encourage the participants to seek solutions, while sharing their experience – who coped in such a situation, what helped them. The facilitators offer answers, while giving a different perspective of the discussion, offering alternative solutions.

Conclusion

Before leaving, each participant completes the sentence: "What did I benefit from today's meeting.."

Session No 4
Being a parent

Objective:
to identify the parent's key role for the child's behaviour and experiences

Tasks:

By the end of the session the participants will:

- learn about the parent's key role during early childhood period
- be introduced to the views of leading authors about what it is being a parent of an adolescent
- connect to their parents through self-reflection.

Sequence:

Each participant completes the sentence in front of the group: "If I were a colour, then now I am…."

1. The parent's role for the child, based on experience – 30 minutes

If it is true that children, by reason of their physical and mental immaturity need to be cared for by a significant person, the role of this person, most often referred to as a parent, is vital.

Applying the brain storming technique, the participants propose an answer to the question: "What does a parent do for their child?". The answers are written down on a poster.

The facilitator summarises what participants have shared by presenting an instrument, applied in psychoanalysis and revealing that the human being's psychic apparatus comprises three parts:

Superego leaves a lasting imprint of the parenthood or this is the parent in me, who ensures moral principles are observed, introduces the law, rules, orders, bans.

Ego – the adult, reality, social environment.

Id/it – the child, emotional, passions, impulses, desires
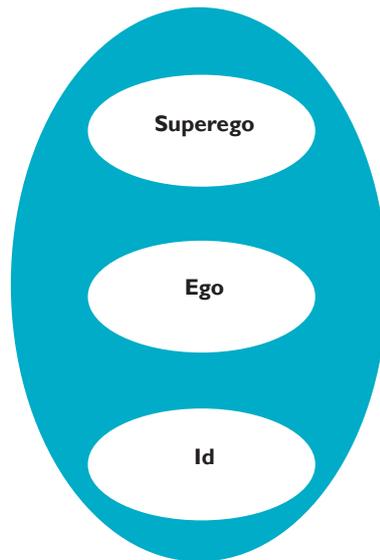
The facilitator keeps probing: "How do you come up with these ideas?"

Is it possible that this comes from the experience you have with your parents or with your children? He sets a task.

The participants split up in couples and everyone needs to share what their parents' raising and upbringing methods were; how do they feel about those today as adults; what they took and what they refused to apply in their approach to their own children.

A discussion is held in the big group on: **To what extent do parents manage to leave behind the unacceptable methods of upbringing used in their family, and not apply them with their children?**

Summary:

Parents' attitude to their children is based on a model they are familiar with. There are cases when the parents reproduce the full set of relationship and behaviour models inherited from their family; there are others who do not want to be like their parents, for example, rude, aggressive, violent. But there are also parents who do not want to be like their parents but cannot help it. A father, who was beating his child the way he was beaten by his mother, shared "I don't want to be like this, I hate myself for doing it but this is stronger than me."

The mother has the ability to model the caring behaviour of her mother, even though she may be doing it without being aware of it, without really remembering this period of her life, she does it on a process level because we all know that some things are done subconsciously. Some parents have a limited set of behaviours and do not interact much with their children; they are doomed to resort only to the methods they have experienced. The example of children who have been raised in an institution, in collective care, ever since they were babies is indicative.

Break – 15 minutes

2. The parent's role in the life of the child from the perspective of the psychodynamic theories – 30 minutes

Objective: to assist parents in identifying more reasons for their behaviour and for their child's respectively.

Presentation is delivered on The Good Enough Mother based on the ideas of Donald Winnicott

Theoretical notes for the facilitators

Appendix 4

Being a parent: being a mother, being a father

The facilitators present also the views of Melanie Klein

Melanie Klein is another author who examines the role of parents in the articles *Being a parent: Being a mother, Being a father.* She looks at the true relationship between the mother and her child – one that is developed if the mother is an accomplished personality with maternal instinct. There are many things in common between the relationship of the mother with her child and the one she had with her own mother. A key factor in the mother's attitude to the child seems to be her ability to put herself in their shoes and look at the situation through their eyes. Some mothers use their relationship with the child to satisfy their own desires, i.e. desire to keep the child in her control and delight at the fact that someone is fully dependent on them. Such mothers prefer that their children stick to them and wish that they never grow up and develop their own personality. The mother's ability to love and understand her children is put to test most of all when they reach the age of adolescence. At this time, they are likely to withdraw from their parents and to an extent free themselves from the childhood attachment to the parents. The adolescents' desire to seek new objects of affection creates extremely painful situations for the parents. If the mother has strong maternal feelings, her affection will not waver and she will continue being patient and understanding, giving advice and being of help, when necessary and despite that she will let her children solve their problems themselves and what is more, while doing this it is likely that she will not seek anything in return. However, this would only be possible if her ability to love had developed in such a way, enabling her to identify herself with both her own child and her wise mother, whom she treasures in her heart. The nature of maternal feelings changes when children grow up and create their own life and free themselves from the old relations. Then her affection can be displayed in many different ways. It may turn out that no major role has been assigned to her in their lives. She might take pleasure in the fact that her love for them is preserved for the moment when her children would need her. Thus she has this subconscious feeling that she gives them sense of security and she will always be the mother from the early years, whose bosom has given them the first delights and has satisfied all their needs and desires.

Even though children do not mean that much for the father as they do for the mother, still they have an important role in his life, especially if he lives in harmony with his wife. He takes pleasure in being a good father to his children. Here we witness again identifying himself with the good father, be it his own father or his perception of a father. Another aspect of his relationship with his children is his

ability to identify himself with them – in his mind he is able to fully share their joys. In addition, when he helps them overcome difficulties and encourages their development, he is as if bringing back to life his own childhood.

The facilitators seek feedback from the participants by asking questions: *What did you hear in these presentations? How do you feel about them? What did you find most impressive? Do you have any questions?, Did you find anything of importance to you today?*

Closing the session

Before leaving, the participants complete the sentence:

I am obliged to......

Session No 5
Making the children more resilient

Objective:

to present the resilience approach to the parents

Tasks:

By the end of the session the participants will:

- form a view of the human ability to become stronger as a result of hardships and traumatic experiences
- learn about the three sources of resilience
- make sense of Resilience theory notions through personal stories and experiences

Session plan:

An exercise for getting in a working mode

Objective: to get the group in a positive mood and prepare them for work

Facilitator instructions: Use the Fruit salad exercise. The facilitator stands in the middle of the group. He/she asks the participants to choose one of the two types of fruit: a banana or an orange. When the facilitator says the name of one of the fruit, e.g. banana, everyone who chose banana stand up and change places. Whoever remains in the circle sets the rules. If he/she says an orange – all oranges change places, if he/she says fruit salad, all participants change places.

The facilitators ask the participants if they are familiar with the concept of resilience.

The participants make comments about how familiar they are with the notion, what they know or they have never heard of it.

1. Presentation of main postulates of the Resilience approach – 25 minutes

Each day, children all over the world are faced with various situations: some are faced with stress because of their parents' getting divorced or because one of them is ill or has passed away, while others experience disasters such as war, famine, epidemics, floods. How those experiences will affect a child – whether they will hurt them or make them stronger – depends on their resilience. What we perceive as resilience is the human beings ability to become stronger as a result of hardships in life. The meaning of the word in English is associated with the strength of the body or of the character. In psychology, it is used to describe human being's ability to develop when faced with major hardships. This ability is not a permanent trait; it is affected by the particular conditions and the various stages

of a person's life. When our child goes through a grave life event, we, as parents try to help them but we do not always know what exactly to do. When as parents we try to make a child resilient, i.e. resistant and coping with the difficulties, it is very important not to focus on the problem they are faced with but to try and identify both their strengths and those available in the environment and the given social situation. It may sounds as a paradox, but those resources can be identified even in the child's negative and unacceptable behaviour. For example, we can say: "Your behaviour is unacceptable and I cannot approve of it. Despite that, I can see that you use resources in a positive way". Depending on how they react to their children's behaviour, parents can either encourage resilience or hamper the ability to cope.

The facilitators seek feedback from the group. How they feel about the presentation, what associations it provokes in them.

By using the brain storming technique, the facilitators identify together with the group what standard or extraordinary situations children are faced with, and what children's needs are in the context of the resilience approach.

Facilitator materials.

Appendix No 5

Break – 15 minutes

2. Which are the three sources of resilience: - 30 minutes

The facilitators present the three sources of resilience

I have

- People around me I trust and who love me, no matter what
- People who set limits for me so I know when to stop before there is danger or trouble
- People who show me how to do things right by the way they do things
- People who want me to learn to do things on my own
- People who help me when I am sick, in danger or need to learn

I am

- A person people can like and love
- Glad to do nice things for others and show my concern
- Respectful of myself and others
- Willing to be responsible for what I do
- Sure things will be all right

I can

- Talk to others about things that frighten me or bother me

- Find ways to solve problems that I face

- Control myself when I feel like doing something not right or dangerous

- Figure out when it is a good time to talk to someone or to take action

- Find someone to help me when I need it.

A resilient child needs all of these features in order to be resilient, one feature is not enough. For example, a child may have a high self-esteem /I AM/ but if they do not know how to communicate with the others in order to solve problems /I CAN/ and has no one to ask for help /I HAVE/, they cannot be resilient. You may think that these aspects of the child's ability to cope with crisis situations are easy to acquire, but this is not the case. Many adults do not know how to stimulate their child. Children themselves cannot acquire these abilities on their own, they need adults' assistance.

The facilitators encourage the participants to give examples from their own experience in support of what was presented about resilience. This is followed by working on particular examples and a discussion.

The conclusion arrived at is that going through the various age stages, children resort to a different extent to each of the groups: I have, I am, I can. The more they grow up, the more they shift the focus from external support to their own abilities I CAN. The child's response is the criterion of how efficient the parent or the caregiver is in supporting the development of the child's resilience.

The facilitators summarise Resilience Criteria

- Ability to socialise and establish harmonious relationships with the peers

- Ability to cope with the studies at school and acquire job skills

- Ability to construct during adolescence without any serious problems of anxiety and sense of guilt or other behavioural indications.

- Ability when becoming an adult to enter parenthood without recreating the traumatic model from their childhood and to manage to build a satisfactory life with someone else in terms of their sexual relations.

Before leaving, all participants complete the sentence "I coped because ....

Session No 6

I know that you can cope

Objective:

to familiarise parents with various techniques, methods, advice on interacting with their children

Tasks:

By the end of the session the participants will:

- develop together responses to adolescents' challenging behaviour
- try to put themselves in the shoes of their children

Session plan:

The facilitators present the session which is interactive, fully focused on self-reflection, communication methods, use of various techniques enabling one to put themselves in someone else's shoes.

Warm-up exercise – 10 minutes

The facilitator arranges chairs in a circle, no chair for him/herself and stands in the middle of the circle. The chairs are one short so all the time there will be one participant with nowhere to seat and who will stand in the middle of the circle. He/she determines the criteria for reshuffling: e.g. "everyone wearing black shoes". Then they start the game by clapping hands and all participants meeting the criteria have to change places. In the meantime, the person standing in the middle is trying to find a seat. The next one to remain without a seat starts over and sets the criterion.

1. Adolescents' challenging behaviour -20 minutes

Objective: by simulating various situations, to identify the possible responses of the participants to the children's challenging behaviour.

Case presentation

The Angelovs family have two daughters: Ani, who is 8 years old and Petya, 15 years old. The family relations are characterised by good communication and agreement on most issues. One of the most pleasant experiences for all of them is spending their summer holiday at the seaside. This year, as usual, the parents discuss with the children the preparations for the summer, they choose together the place where they will spend their holiday. Both children are excited and happy. A month before the summer holiday, surprisingly, Petya declares: "I don't like going to the seaside so I will stay home and will not join you."

The participants work on the case study in small groups and have to answer the questions:

What does Petya imply by saying this to her parents?

What are the parents' options for reaction in this situation?

This is followed by sharing and summarising in the big group. Communication is identified as being of key importance for resolving the case.

The facilitators propose methods for improved communication with the children.

The message "I" comprises three elements, describing our feelings about a particular type of behaviour or action on the part of the child and revealing the consequences for us from this situation.

I........./ feeling

When you.........../specific type of behaviour

Because.............../specify the consequences, clarify the reasons for the experiences

Break – 15 minutes

2. Techniques, enabling the parents to put themselves in the shoes of their children – 30 minutes

Simulation of the empty chair technique – dialogue is provoked between parents and children, who take the empty chair.

The facilitators present the simulation exercise and choose a volunteer. They divide the group in two and task group 1 with observing the child and group 2 – observing the parent. The volunteer can be given the following guidance: *"Imagine that your child is sitting on this chair facing you. Please, take a sit and speak the way your child would. Tell us what your child would have told you, if they were here now. And now, please, sit on your chair and reply to the child on your behalf." The dialogue continues till when something important is said.*

Group 1 shares what types of behaviour and feelings they observed while the child was talking; group 2 talk about the behaviour and feelings of the parent.

The facilitators summarise and interpret.

Use the method of "mommy always says, daddy always says …."
The method reveals the parents' values and how the children perceive those values associated with various topics.

The facilitators invite the parents to put themselves in their children's shoes and to share how they would continue the sentences "mommy always says, daddy always says …." in various fields.

For example:

Money

Mom always says "save money for a rainy day".

Dad always says „use your money to bring you pleasure".

Sex

Mom always says „ you are too young for this".

Dad always says „you have to have fun making it „

Work

Mom always says „I don't think you are big enough to start work"

Dad always says „I don't think you are big enough to cope."

Family

Mom always says „we have to spend more time as a family".

Dad always says „we have to spend more time together."

Parents share about their families – what are the things that mom always says and dad always says. Discussion is held on the issues that they think the children would disagree with.

The discussion continues with the parents making association with their parents.

Conclusion

What do you find useful when you put yourself in someone else's shoes?

Session No 7
What we find useful

Objective:

to close the training and share the things that the participants and the facilitators went through during this training

Tasks:

By the end of the session the participants will:

- be familiar with the important summarised topics and messages of the facilitators
- share what they will take with them and what will leave in the group
- learn about new techniques for good relationships within the family and more specifically with the children
- receive some practical advice

Session plan:

1. Summary by the facilitators

Objective: to provide a systematised summary of the main messages of the training to the parents

The facilitators summarise the training, remind of the main messages, give feedback on the group dynamics, share how they felt about this group format and training.

Each participant gives feedback on what they found useful and what should not be part of the training. How they feel about leaving. The parents' expectations are also touched upon, to what extent did the training meet these expectations.

Practical proposals are made for work in the family:

Having a ritual

Special attention is paid to the social ritual – a system of activities that the family has, following a strict order and timing. They facilitate the internal functioning of the system, co-ordinate everyone's behaviour for the fulfilment of the common goals. The suitable ritual replaces the existing dysfunction.

Example:

Every evening, after dinner, the front door is closed. Each family member, starting from the eldest one, has fifteen minutes to share their feelings, impressions and remarks on the other family members' behaviour. The others are not allowed to say anything, they are silent until it is there turn to speak

for fifteen minutes. In the meantime they have to keep silence and pay attention. Then the next one takes the floor, etc.

Writing a letter

The parent can write a letter to say something important to their child, which they find difficult to say in person. The big question about the letter is whether it will reach its addressee. Therefore, the parent can be accompanied by a professional, to share what they have written, why they want to say it, why they cannot say it in person while having a conversation, do they want someone else to read it, what do they think will happen when the child reads it.

Practical advice for parents:

- Listen and try to understand what the adolescent tells you
- Try to find an explanation about the child's behaviour
- Do not accuse the child
- Encourage their decisions
- Give them positive feedback
- Be modest, remember things that happened in your childhood
- Be there for the grown up child
- Do not give them full freedom, they do not have the social experience to use it sensibly
- Strike the balance between your interference and more responsibilities for the adolescent
- Acknowledge their personal space and the opportunity to communicate with friends

Before leaving, the parents write down on two pieces of paper what they took from the training and what they left in the group. The piece of paper saying what they left, is put in a box and the other piece of paper they take with them.

The facilitators and participants make a group photo, which they can take with them to remember this shared experience.

The facilitators conclude the training by providing information about the opportunities available and the contacts of the consultative centres run by SAPI.

Appendixes

Appendix I

The family as a system

The scientific postulates of L. von Bertalanffy's general system theory are used in that sense.

***The system** is a functional entity made up of individual interrelated elements, organised in a particular order.*

*If we make an analogy with the above statement, we can say that the family is a living system, made up of its members. It is an open system, **which exchanges information with the environment.***

The family is not some static and independent structure. It is influenced by the context/the environment where it exists. Getting to know the context, which surrounds and affects the family's life, will provide important information about the current situation and the prospects for future development.

***The relationship system / environment** provides a context for making sense of the system's behaviour and that of its members.*

*That part of the system, which serves as a filter, ensuring flow of information to and from the environment so that the system keeps functioning, is **called boundaries.***

*The boundaries can be **blurred** /in terms of the human systems, this means unclear, often changing rules/, rigid /relationships are determined by **rigid** rules, which do not change/, **semi-permeable** /flexible, rules change to reflect changes within the system or the environment/.*

***Patterns – a feature of the system** /describes repeated models of interaction among the system's components, which put a limit to its behaviour and make it result-oriented.*

***Circularity / circular causality** of the relations between the system's components.*

Part of the product returns to the system as information about the product and affects the system's behaviour.

***Homeostasis** – relative stability of the system.*

The family system strives to attain relative but not full stability.

The family system develops and grows as influenced by the environment or the needs of its members.

***Negative feedback** comes into play when the family reacts to disturbance of balance in such a way so as to restore stability.*

***Positive feedback** – the outcome of a preceding action is compared to some undesired effect, which leads to system destruction.*

Family functions are varied

- *Setting up a community of two for mutual assistance and comfort*
- *Legitimate context for expression of human sexuality*
- *Having and raising children and their socialisation*
- *Satisfying the members' material needs*

*According to Salvador Minuchin **the family develops structures** /i.e. transactional codes and patterns subject to regulation/ in order to perform functions and roles. To describe the family organisation and style of interaction, the therapist uses concepts such as subsystems, boundaries, hierarchy and unions.*

Subsystems *are smaller units within the family, which are organised by generations, gender, function and interests. A person can belong to numerous subsystems and to perform numerous roles and enter into numerous interactions. For example, marital, parental, sibling subsystems, etc.*

Boundaries *are drawn between the subsystems and between the family and the external world. Clear boundaries are needed to enable the subsystems to perform their specific functions, to develop autonomy and to increase their sense of belonging. Minuchin considers that families can be perceived as existing in a continuum, with its two poles being the two extremes of diffuse and rigid boundaries. In the case of diffuse boundaries, which are very permeable, family members maintain very close relationships and there is high likelihood of "enmeshment". They have a sense of belonging but not one of autonomy and independence. In the other case, when boundaries are too rigid, there is a high level of emotional disengagement among the family members, they have no sense of belonging although they have one of autonomy.*

*Minuchin also considers **hierarchy** to be an important aspect of family structure. He relates the term to the power or authority of family members. The therapist makes the assumption that in a normal family, the parental subsystem has supposedly a leading function and is higher in the hierarchy than the child or the sibling subsystem.*

Another aspect of the structure is the grouping: alliances and coalitions. These concepts describe an interaction pattern, which comes into play when two or more family members form an alliance for the fulfilment of a common task.

Within this context, Minuchin believes that it is important that therapists differentiate between functional and dysfunctional families. According to him, functional families need to have clear boundaries, appropriate hierarchy and grouping, to be flexible enough, to adapt to change and to encourage a person's differentiation.

Appendix 2

Family life cycle

As a living organism, the family develops and changes, with the various stages of its development being marked by periods of crises.

Life cycle stages

A couple with no children

Differentiation from their own parents

- *Relationship cycles*
- *Creating rules*

Most often, couples are formed on the basis of sexual attraction. This is a stage of intimacy, when the couple is inseparable. Intimacy is achieved through sacrifice of personal and individual interests in return for love and security. However, when the partners start feeling secure enough, they go back to their neglected interests and needs and their requirements to each other grow. The partners learn about each other all the time, while working out rules for interaction between themselves and with the external world. The rules are based on the views they inherited from their families.

- ***Families with a child under three years of age***
- *Subsystem mother – baby*
- *The father's role*
- *Assistance by the extended family required*

The birth of the baby is a challenge and a test for the family system, which needs to adjust its rules so as to ensure enough psychological space, attention, love and care are available to the infant. A temporary subsystem is set up during this period: mother – baby. In order to be able to identify and respond to the child's signals, the mother has to go back, even if instinctively, to her own experiences from early childhood. Initially, the father's role is to provide for the mother and the child, create peaceful atmosphere and give them enough space. At a later stage, it is him that interferes and breaks the boundaries of this subsystem by helping the mother and the child to detach and set up clear boundaries between them. Since this is a tough period for the young family, the assistance of the grandparents is often required.

- ***A family with a child at pre-school age***
- *Socialisation of the child*
- *Enhanced role of the father*
- *The mother goes back to work*

During this period, the child begins to detach from the parents, joining the circle of his/her peers. The mother has to return to her profession in society. The role of the father enhances and he has to take over more of the care and to become closer with the child due to the child's growing interest in him and the growing need of control.

- ***A family with a child at early school age***
- *The child in a structured and competitive environment*
- *Clash between the child's real potential and parents' plans*
- *Increased need of control*
- *Building of independence*

This stage is characterised by increased expectations for the child in terms of growing responsibilities, the need to have certain achievements in a structured and competitive environment, which assesses their learning potential. Parenting is a hard to achieve and fine balance between the need to ensure that on the one hand, the child has your love, protection, security and support and on the other, to teach them to observe rules, to control them and gradually detach them from you.

- ***A family with an adolescent***
- *Forming an identity*
- *Developing an autonomy*
- *Issues about building a career are raised*

The adolescent's task is to form their identity: who they are, how they look, sexual attitudes and preferences, interests, goals, what their strengths and weaknesses are, what their abilities are and what they want to do in the future, which group of the class they want to belong to. The family needs to give the adolescent an opportunity to gain autonomy, i.e. to move away from the family and engage much more with their peers. This requires reviewing the rules for exercising control. Parents have to cope with the crisis of maturation, the disappearance of the good child, the clash with the budding sexuality and most of all, with the thought that they will remain alone soon.

- ***A family with young people***
- *The young person is launched in the community by the family*
- *The married couple seeks new intimacy and common goals*
- *Building new relationships between parents and children*

This is the last stage before the young people leave the family finally – they pursue studies and sometimes come back home, where they are given care and support. The married couple prepares for the next stage, seeking new intimacy and new common goals in the marital subsystem.

- ***The empty nest***
- *The couple is on their own*
- *Desire to fill the nest*

The couple is again on their own. They need to look for resources outside the child raising, to strengthen it and make its existence possible. This is the time when they are tempted to fill the nest with grandchildren and other children.

- ***An old couple***
- ***Sickness, old age, dependence***
- *Issues related to the loss of the partner and loneliness, own death*

Issues related to sickness, old age, need of help and dependence on the others. Issues related to the loss of the partner and the loneliness. Preparation for own death.

Appendix 3

Erik Erikson *looks at the development of identity as a continued cycle throughout one's life. He examines the development of a personality from birth to old age and divides it in 8 distinct age stages and calls it a "Life cycle".*

The fifth stage, occurring according to him from the age of 12 till the end of puberty, is defined as identity vs role confusion

Puberty is a period of sexual development but also a time of huge progress in the development of thinking, time when the adolescent asks themselves the fundamental questions of "Who am I?", "What do I aspire to?" – questions about their own place in the world and society. A desire to re-examine their own identity emerges, criticism of authority. Everything acquired during the previous periods is resorted to for resolving the crisis, triggered by the numerous existential questions raised by everyone and left unanswered. The good social models of the family and school can facilitate the solving of the crisis. The transition from childhood to maturity, taking place during puberty, is a huge leap and a hard period. There are many changes that need to take place but no social experience. The indiscriminate criticism and the desire to oppose ethical and moral norms can lead to extremely negative consequences. It is of key importance to maintain the dialogue parents – children in order to resolve the crisis.

Development task

You establish who you are and what your place in this world is

Normal development

Important physical changes

Necessity to defend their independence from the family – to establish significant relations out of the family

Getting used to strong emotions, especially sexual ones

Questioning the values of adults and change in the world outlook

Change in the perception of the self

Disturbed development

Insecurity

Low self-esteem

Confused identity

Inability to establish lasting friendships

Greater emotional intensity

Behaviour

Violence / aggression

Isolation from the adults

Challenging the authority all the time

Seeking attention in an unacceptable way, e.g. theft

Skipping school

Running away, physically and emotionally through use of alcohol and drugs

Measures - what can parents do to help

Set boundaries

Improve the ways of communication

Talk to the young people about the issues of sexuality and inform them about the risks

Prepare them for independence by teaching them life coping skills

Use upbringing methods, which build self-respect rather than resort to punishments and violence.

Find ways to develop a positive sense of identity.

Appendix 4

*Winnicott considers that **emotional development is an interpersonal process,** involving the child's innate potential and aspiration to grow up and the environment ensuring the development of this potential. Infantile dependence goes through three stages:*

Absolute dependence *till the first 6 months of the child's life and the mother takes the leading role. During this period the infant is not able to realise the mother is taking care of them. They cannot control anything that happens to them – good or bad, they can only benefit or suffer any disorders.*

Relative dependence *from 6 to 24 months. At this stage the child is able to realise their need of various types of maternal care and to increasingly associate them with their own impulses.*

To independence *- starts at the age of 24 months and continues through to puberty and adolescence. The child develops ability to cope without immediate care.*

*In 1940, during a scientific meeting of the British Psycho-Analytical Society, Winnicott makes a surprising statement: "There is no such thing as an infant", meaning that **whenever one finds an infant, one finds maternal care, and without maternal care there would be no infant.** In other words, the **infant and the maternal care together form a unit.** At birth, there is a total psychic unity between infant and mother as a continuation of the prenatal total physical unity. The mother engages in this unity by way of her **"primary maternal preoccupation".** This is a state of heightened sensitivity, gradually developing during and especially towards the end of the pregnancy and continues for the first weeks after the birth of the infant. When the mother is "released" from this state, they hardly remember it. The memory of it is pushed away. This normal disease enables the average dedicated mother to adapt, to identify herself empathically with the infant's needs and to ensure the preconditions for the emergence of child constitution, for their initial development and to let the child "experience spontaneously their movements and take in the usual for this stage of life sensations. **"Only when a mother is sensitised, can she feel herself into her infant's place and so meet the infant's needs.** These are at first body needs and they gradually become ego needs as a psychology emerges out of the imaginative exploration of physical experience. **We can now say why we think the baby's mother is the most suitable person for the care of that baby; it is she who can reach this special state of primary maternal preoccupation without being ill. The primary maternal preoccupation is a state of identification of the mother with the infant,** which is in essence projective identification. Soon after conception, the woman begins to be concerned with the changes that begin to be taking place within her and hence she is interested in herself. The mother shifts some of her sense of self on to the baby that is growing within her. By identifying herself with the baby, the mother knows how the baby could be feeling like and therefore she is able to imagine almost exactly what the baby needs. Without such an identification, she is not able to provide what the infant needs in the beginning, i.e. **live adaptation to the infant's needs.***

*Winnicott holds that the healthy and creative self may develop only in a **"facilitating environment", which is provided by the good enough mother. This is the mother who gives enough to the child to ensure their good start in life, meets their specific needs at every stage, adapts and changes depending on these needs and gradually allows the infant to become more and more independent.** The good enough mother provides the infant with an opportunity to experience the "continuity of being", based on which their innate potential gradually develops and creates the personality*

of the child. If the mothering is not good enough, the child does not gain a sense of continuity of being and their existence is not real. Instead, the personality becomes built on the basis of reactions to environmental impact and impingement. The need of good environment, initially an absolute need, soon transforms into a relative one. Normal development requires both gratification and frustration.

The overly caring mother *keeps the infant at the primary narcissism stage.*

The mother's failure to provide "perfect environment" is necessary and if she is good enough, the child learns to use frustrations to their benefit. The child compensates the mother's deficit with their own psychic activity.

It is possible that the mother provides good care in the beginning but she is not consistent all the way through, yielding to the desire to stay in the mother-infant unity. *"In any case, the mother finds it difficult to detach from the child as quickly as the child needs to detach from her".*

Being a good enough mother requires tranquil and secure environment and this is where the father steps in, who enables the mother to dedicate herself to her baby.

An important aspect of being a good enough mother is the mother's **holding behaviour. T***his involves most of all physically holding the infant, which is a way to show affection and to protect from physical injury.* **Holding is an important prerequisite for the establishment of the first object relationship and first experiences of instinctual gratification. It enables the establishment of a basic connectedness of the ego between the mother and the infant, a relationship between two people, the presence of each one of them being important to the other.**

The gradual development of the infant's ego organisation, the emergence of the infant's self depends on the holding environment. It can provide two types of experiences: **continuity of being and annihilation / destruction of the infant's self.**

In the first instance, the development of the real self is stimulated, along with the sense omnipotence and creativity. **Therefore, it is important how the mother presents the world to the infant and how she mirrors the infant's self.** *Since the child has no contact with the reality, they create their own world, using the material available to them, i.e. they create the object. Fantasies and hallucinations constitute a certain part of this material. When the child is disturbed by instinct tension, for example, when they are hungry, they may develop readiness to hallucinate an object and have the magical expectation that such an object exists. It is very important that the mother transforms into reality the sensory hallucinations, offering the hallucinated object /the breasts/ in the very moment of hallucination and magical expectation. Winnicott holds that when the infant is excited, they come to the breasts ready to hallucinate. At this particular moment the real nipple arrives and the infant may feel that it is the nipple that they have hallucinated. Thus their perceptions are elaborated with actual details from what was seen, touched, smelled; next time, the infant uses this material in their hallucination.* **Thus the baby develops the ability to create magically what is indeed available. The mother is to constantly provide the child with this type of experience.** *This is a critical moment in the infant's development marked by two tendencies:* **the infant's needs and the environment's reactions are as if coming from two opposite directions.** *When they meet, the infant experiences the illusion that what exists was actually created by them;* **they have feelings of being omnipotent, a creator of the world. This feeling is at the basis for the healthy development of a sense of self. The good enough mother attunes to the infant's impulse, allows them to dominate and thus maintains this illusion for them.** *The mother's successful attunement to the infant's gestures and needs promote their feeling of omnipotence and makes them believe*

that there is external reality, which they by magic cause to appear the moment they wish and which is under their control. **Gradually, the child develops the ability to evoke what they need "I can create anything I need, and to have everything when I need it".** *Thus not only are instincts satisfied but also* **the emotional contact with the mother** *and the contact with reality.* **When this contact is good enough, the infant may be allowed to gradually relinquish the feeling of omnipotent and their illusions.**

These processes are further supported **if the mother mirrors the infant's self** *as if the infant sees themselves in a mirror. Looking at the mother's face, the infant sees their face alone, sees her joy and the feeling that they themselves are well and joyful. When the mother is able to resonate the infant's gestures and needs, they become attuned to their bodily functions and impulses and this improves their ability to integrate their own self. The mother's failure undercuts the infant's sense of hallucinatory omnipotence, constricting their belief in their own creativity and powers and driving a wedge between the evolution of the psyche and its somatic underpinnings.*

The environment, ensuring the continuity of being, encourages the child to develop the ability of **being alone.** *According to Winnicott, the mother is not only to attune the world to the infant's requirements, but also to be available for the infant without making demands when the infant themselves do not make any.* **Then the child has the opportunity to experience "comfortable solitude", i.e. to feel alone is someone else's presence.**

The mother's non-demanding presence gives an opportunity to the infant to experience their true self.

The unfavourable conditions of the holding environment hamper the development of the infant's innate potential into continuity of existence. The mother can be unsuccessful in performing her functions in two aspects: **to prove unable to revise the infant's hallucinations and needs; to fail to provide non-demanding presence when the infant is tranquil.**

In both cases the mother's failure is experienced as impingement and the infant is forced to relinquish their own needs and react the way they are expected to, i.e. to comply with the mother. *This compliance lays the foundations of* **the false self.**

In other words, the self responds to the threat by fragmentation into true and false self, with the function of the false one being to shield and defend the true one. **The infant complies with the image that the others expect of them.**

Appendix 5

Children need skills and resources when they are faced with many ordinary and unusual situations. When the international resilience project asked children and their parents what hardships they had experienced, there was a wide range of answers. Among the difficult situations in the family, the more common answers were the following:

- *Death of parents, grand parents*
- *Divorce*
- *Separation*
- *Illness of a parent or other family member*
- *A disabled family member*
- *Murder of a family member*
- *Job or income loss of a family member*
- *Poverty*
- *Moving of family or friends*
- *Incidents, which have led to injuries*
- *Harassment, including sexual abuse*
- *Abandonment*
- *Suicide*
- *Remarriage*
- *Homelessness*
- *Poor health and hospitalisation*
- *Fire*
- *Forced repatriation of the family*

In addition, the children and their parents point also the following problems outside the family environment:

- *Robberies*
- *War*
- *Fires*
- *Earthquakes*
- *Floods*
- *Road accidents*
- *Immigration*
- *Property damage incidents as a result of storms, floods, cold weather*
- *Political persecution*
- *Famine*
- *Murder incidents near the residential address*
- *Unstable government*
- *Drought*

Needs of the children taken out of Resilience Therapy

Belonging – *the child needs to find their place in the world, to establish secure relationships, to know their home, determine what gender, ethnicity, city, state they belong to.*

Studies – *good performance of the child, accept the school as a good environment, work out a career, life project; to make personal choices and not be forced. Acknowledge the child's achievements, encourage them accordingly for diligence and development.*

Life skills development – *coping, development of social confidence for coping with daily tasks, skills for interaction with the existing environment, optimal adaptation.*

Building up the core – *working in the depths of the character, instilling sense of hope, teach children to understand other people's feelings, to get to know themselves and take responsibility.*

Self-control/ self-regulation – *support children in developing strategies for managing their own lives.*

Acceptance – *look at negative events from a positive perspective. The children who accept support for understanding their life story with the idea to see some meaning in their life events, they can find strength and resilience. Understanding and acceptance of boundaries.*

Courage – *It is important that the caregivers balance their interference, that they facilitate and not dictate.*

Rose tinted glasses – *present past experience in the best possible light.*

Encourage interests, without trying to identify a particular talent.

Calming down – *Anger: Boxing a punch bag; writing a letter and tearing it up to pieces; talking to oneself in a calm voice; Anxiety: relax, breathing, drawing, cooking, etc.*

Resilience Therapy – Ordinary Magic

The ingredients of this potion are the basic needs:
Sufficient financial resource
Security
Healthy way of living
Time for play and fun

Coping:
this potion helps children cope with everyday life. It helps them:
Understand the boundaries and comply with them
Be brave
Solve problems
Remember that tomorrow is a new day
Rely on others

Learning:
This ingredient does not include only learning at school but also the development of skills and interests
Promote academic achievements
Find mentors
Develop career plans
Develop life skills

Building up the core – the magic here is:
working in the depths of the character
instilling sense of hope
teaching children to understand other people's feelings
helping children to get to know themselves
helping children take responsibility of themselves

Belonging:
We use this potion to help children develop fruitful relationships
Its ingredients are:
Finding a place where the child feels they belong to
Experiencing good influence
Maintaining relationships
Getting together the people who children rely on
Focusing on good experience
Helping children find good friends
Helping children find their place

MAGIC BOX

accepting   conserving
commitment   enlisting

EMPOWERING
THE CHILD'S
STRENGTHS

Project „Empowering the child's strengths for violence prevention"