



# Freedom Programme

**Freedom** I ♥  
and understand!

Educational programme supporting  
the social reintegration of incarcerated individuals



2024-1-PL01-KA210-ADU-000251324



**The Freedom Program is a modern educational tool designed to support adult educators in preparing convicted individuals for reintegration into society after release. It was developed within the framework of the project Freedom I Love and Understand (No. 2024-1-PL01-KA210-ADU-000251324), co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of Adult Education. Project consortium: Foundation for Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration TULIPAN (leader, Poland) and Eurosuccess Consulting (expert partner, Cyprus)**

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## Introduction

**We are pleased to present to you the Freedom Programme.**

This publication has been developed within the framework of the international partnership project Freedom I Love and Understand (No. 2024-1-PL01-KA210-ADU-000251324), co-funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of Adult Education.

The partnership focused on working with a group requiring a particularly sensitive approach - convicted individuals. The development of the Programme drew upon the extensive expertise of the partner organisations and their specialists: the Foundation for Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration Tulipan (Poland) – project coordinator, and Eurosuccess Consulting (Cyprus) – expert partner.

The content of the Programme is the result of joint work by the expert team, which included two study visits to the partner organisations (Poland/Cyprus), regular working meetings, as well as pilot testing of the model in penitentiary institutions in both countries.

This cooperation and exchange of experience enabled the creation of a tool that effectively prepares convicted individuals for reintegration into society. The Programme has been tested in practice. Evaluation results confirmed that its implementation: strengthens motivation, fosters a sense of responsibility and enhances readiness for a conscious and responsible life after release.

At the same time, it serves as a valuable resource for professionals – educators, counsellors, psychologists, trainers, and others working with people deprived of liberty. It is equally useful for organisations and institutions delivering rehabilitation and reintegration activities.

The Programme consists of six modules which guide both the educator and the participant step by step through the process of preparing for freedom:

- **Module 1** – Guidance for the Educator: Practical information on planning sessions, communication, and responding to challenging situations.
- **Module 2** – Getting to Know Each Other: Building relationships and trust through exercises that encourage self-reflection and openness.
- **Module 3** – Prisoners' Expectations: Identifying needs and goals using simple tools such as 5 Whys or the Decision Tree.
- **Module 4** – Local Environment Analysis: Exploring the environment in which the participant will live after release, considering both risks and available resources.
- **Module 5** – Individual Action Plan: Developing a concrete plan based on the participant's motivations, values, and capabilities.
- **Module 6** – Language and Communication: Developing communication skills, including expressing emotions, active listening, and engaging in constructive dialogue.

Each module contains a set of exercises, worksheets, and evaluation tools. The Programme has been designed to be universal – it can be adapted both to the conditions of a specific penitentiary institution and to the individual needs of each participant.

We hope that the Freedom Programme will make the process of preparing for life after prison simpler and more coherent. Both the educator and the convicted individual will gain confidence that everything possible has been done to ensure that the moment of release is easier, safer, and offers a genuine sense of a new beginning.

TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE!



## Communication strategies in the Freedom Programme

**From our experience, observations, and the piloting of the Freedom Programme in Poland and Cyprus, one conclusion is clear: communication is the foundation.**

**It determines whether the programme is delivered meaningfully, whether the exercises hold value, and whether the participant will place their trust in the educator. Every meeting, every activity, and every tool – from simple worksheets to complex simulations – depends on the way in which the educator conducts the conversation.**

- Acknowledging progress – recognising effort and offering positive feedback that builds motivation.
- Role modelling – the educator serves as an example of constructive communication and healthy emotional management.
- Working with emotions – teaching participants to recognise, name, and safely express their feelings.
- Flexibility – adapting methods, language, and pace to individual needs.
- Confidentiality – clear rules of discretion that foster trust.

### Communication strategies

The first contact is always crucial. The educator should demonstrate empathy and genuine interest, conduct an interview regarding the participant's life circumstances, identify their needs, and indicate possible forms of support.

All of this should take place in an atmosphere of respect and openness.

Within the Freedom Programme, particular emphasis is placed on:

- Motivational dialogue – open questions, attentive listening, and paraphrasing instead of ready-made advice.
- Clarity and simplicity – using plain language, explaining step by step, and avoiding jargon.
- Emotional safety – maintaining a calm atmosphere, responding empathetically to emotions, and allowing silence as a space for reflection.
- Empowerment – highlighting that decisions belong to the participant, and that every step forward is evidence that change is possible.

These strategies are embedded in every module of the programme and determine the overall effectiveness of the process.



## Fundamental principles of communication in the Freedom Programme

At the heart of the Freedom Programme lie the values that guide the educator's work:

- Listening and communication – active listening, creating space for the expression of feelings, thoughts, and concerns.
- Respect for personal values – every person deserves respect and dignity, regardless of their past.
- Individual approach – every life story is unique and requires tailored methods.
- Non-judgement – the educator's role is to support and accompany, not to evaluate.

In the Freedom Programme, communication strategies are not an addition – they are the backbone of the entire model. They ensure that the programme's modules function cohesively and lead the participant step by step towards their goal. Every exercise, every worksheet, and every meeting between educator and participant

is grounded in communication. It is the way the conversation is conducted that determines whether the tool becomes effective support or remains an empty form.

This is why it is so important for the educator to remember: the Freedom Programme provides ready-made solutions, but their effectiveness depends on how they are applied in practice. Communication – clear, empathetic, and authentic – is the element that brings the entire model to life and gives it real transformative power.

By applying the communication strategies of the Freedom Programme, the educator not only fulfils their professional role but, above all, creates a space in which the participant has the opportunity to prepare for life after prison – consciously, responsibly, and with hope.







## Methods and working techniques

The Freedom Programme is not based on random tools. It is a coherent set of methods carefully selected to foster reflection, strengthen motivation, and prepare participants for practical functioning after release from prison. Their purpose is to develop responsibility, a sense of agency, and social and communication skills – everything needed for life in freedom.

Methods applied in the Freedom Programme include:

- Individual reflection – pausing to consider one's own experiences and analysing what works well and what requires change. Exercises and questions guide the participant towards understanding emotions, decisions, and their consequences. Reflection strengthens both agency and personal responsibility.
- Motivational dialogue – based on the principle that the best reasons for change come from the participant themselves. The educator does not judge but instead asks open questions, paraphrases, and reinforces positive intentions. In this way, the prisoner moves from doubt to a decision to act.
- Facilitated conversation – a structured and safe discussion. The educator steers the process without imposing answers, enabling the participant to reach conclusions independently while feeling truly heard.
- Strengths-based dialogue – focusing on resources, achievements, and experiences rather than solely on problems. This perspective strengthens self-worth, hope, and belief in the possibility of change.
- Collaborative planning – goals and actions developed jointly by educator and participant. This partnership ensures that the plan is realistic, adapted to capabilities, and reinforces responsibility for implementation.
- Use of visual tools – maps, charts, templates, and diagrams that help organise thoughts, analyse problems, and plan solutions step by step. Visualisation makes the process easier to understand and remember.
- Simulations and role plays – recreating everyday situations, such as a job interview, to practise reactions in a safe environment, build communication skills, and increase confidence.
- Case studies – analysing the stories of others, both successes and failures. The participant learns to identify risk factors and enablers of change, and to apply these lessons to their own situation.
- Workshops and brainstorming – group work that stimulates engagement, creativity, and the sharing of experiences. Brainstorming shows that there is always more than one solution.
- Open and probing questions – rather than yes/no answers, the educator uses questions that prompt thought and reflection. This develops the participant's ability to critically evaluate themselves and their decisions.
- Active listening and paraphrasing – attentive listening and restating the participant's words in one's own way. This technique builds trust, shows respect, and ensures accurate understanding.

- Emotional regulation techniques – breathing exercises, short breaks, visualisations. These help participants regain calm, manage tension, and avoid impulsive reactions.
- Reflective journal and written work – recording thoughts and experiences, which organises them and deepens reflection. Notes also allow participants to observe progress and appreciate small steps towards change.
- Educator as communication role model – the way the educator speaks, reacts, and resolves situations serves as an example. The prisoner learns constructive communication and healthy ways of managing emotions.
- Positive reinforcement – highlighting even the smallest successes motivates further effort. Recognising the participant's work builds self-esteem and demonstrates that change is possible, step by step.

The selection of methods and techniques in the Freedom Programme is deliberate. Each serves a specific role, and together they create an integrated process in which the participant:

- learns reflection,
- develops communication,
- practises new skills and gradually incorporates them into daily life.

By applying these methods, the educator provides the participant with more than knowledge - they provide tools to build a new life independently. It is this combination of practical exercises with patience, empathy, and consistency that makes the Freedom Programme effective and truly prepares participants for social reintegration.





## MODULE 1 - Guidelines for Educators

**This module provides practical support for educators working within penitentiary institutions. It demonstrates how to deliver the Freedom Programme in a structured manner, grounded in effective communication, motivation, and ethical guidance of participants. It teaches how to engage prisoners, initiate positive change, and conduct sessions so that the entire Freedom Programme runs in a coherent and effective way. We provide simple tools and clear principles for working with prisoners – from first contact, through communication and safety, to documenting activities. The foundation is communication: clear, attentive, and empowering.**

**Upon completing Module 1, the educator will be able to:**

- consciously develop their professional role,
- build trust and ensure safety,
- provide constructive feedback,
- respond calmly to resistance and conflict,
- plan and deliver sessions ethically,
- use self-reflection to improve their practice.

## Who do You support? – A short description of the target group

Individuals preparing to leave penitentiary institutions represent a particularly specific group of clients. In prison isolation, they function in an environment of heightened restrictions: a rigid daily routine, regulations, constant monitoring, limited privacy, and high levels of tension. They are often accompanied by mixed emotions (relief, fear, anger, sadness), low self-esteem, difficulties with planning and decision-making, and distrust towards people “from the outside”.

The vast majority are overwhelmed by the prospect of building a new life after release, feeling stigmatised by their criminal past and the label of “offender”. On a daily basis, they experience a sense of lost connection with family and loved ones. They struggle with the awareness of having harmed others through their offences, grief over a life left behind, limited sensory stimulation, minimal direct contact, reduced living space, and the frustration of unmet needs (e.g. safety, belonging, autonomy).

Prisoners are often characterised by symptoms of “learned helplessness”, a lack of decision-making skills, and difficulty in responding flexibly to challenging situations. The consequences of long-term isolation frequently include lowered self-esteem, reduced psychological resilience, lack of life prospects, and an increase in aggressive behaviour. Rarely can they count on support from family or friends outside dysfunctional, criminogenic environments. As a result, the effects of isolation create adaptive difficulties and hinder effective functioning in society.

Nevertheless, even repeat offenders acknowledge that positive social reintegration is entirely possible – provided the prisoner adopts the right

attitude and receives support from relatives as well as institutions equipped with the knowledge and capacity to deliver such assistance. They emphasise that the preparatory stage before release has a profound impact on their first steps into freedom.

Conclusion for the educator: first build a safe relationship, communicate clearly, work in small and realistic steps and invite the participant to share in decision-making.

How to put this into practice?

- **Appearance and behaviour** – remain neutral; adopt an open posture, avoiding dominant gestures.
- **Language** – keep it simple, avoid jargon; explain step by step and use examples.
- **Questions** – use open questions, e.g. “Would you like to take part in the Freedom Programme?”, “What concerns do you have about life after release?”
- **Checking understanding** – ask the participant to summarise agreements in their own words. After each longer statement, summarise the key points yourself and ask whether everything is clear and how the participant understands the information provided.
- **Boundaries and safety** – explain the rules, the framework of confidentiality, and institutional restrictions; be assertive and mindful of your own safety.
- **Consistency** – do not make promises you cannot keep. If you are unsure, say “I will check and come back with an answer” rather than “I will sort it out”.

## Attitude and boundaries – clear from the start!

- Scope of competence – explain what you can do within the programme, what you cannot, and why – referring to regulations and procedures. If something lies beyond your capacity, indicate a clear pathway within the institution (e.g. department, contact person).
- Shared decision-making – plans are developed together, which increases the prisoner's sense of responsibility and agency.
- Realism – set small, achievable steps adapted to the schedule and restrictions of the institution.
- Assertiveness and collaboration – uphold rules and ensure the safety of both sides, maintain professional distance, and cooperate with prison staff without undermining the participant's trust.



## Skills and competences of the educator

- strong psychological resilience and self-awareness,
- ability to cope with aggression and tension,
- empathy combined with assertiveness,
- patience and consistency,
- conflict resolution and working with resistance,
- experience in workshop-based work with excluded or at-risk groups,
- discretion and ethics,
- creativity and flexibility in responding,
- sense of humour.

Practical note: The qualities listed above are not a “set of requirements” but a direction for development. This module supports them through tools such as self-analysis, checklists, work journals, and language scenarios.



## The educator through the eyes of practitioners – What matters most in first contact with a prisoner?

### ⇒ Authenticity

Authenticity is the foundation of working with prisoners. Honesty and openness are essential for accurately identifying needs. It is important to talk about needs, plans, and realistic actions that can bring benefits to both sides. Awareness of real needs is crucial.

### ⇒ Atmosphere

Ensure predictable, safe conditions for meetings. At the outset, prioritise individual work; introduce group work gradually and only after understanding the dynamics (subcultures, conflicts, dependencies). Always check whether potential group participants are in conflict — safety takes precedence over speed.

### ⇒ Safety and rationality

Respect boundaries in contact and take care of your own professional wellbeing (time, availability, communication rules). Establish together the channels of contact and schedules in line with regulations. Remember: empathy ≠ 24/7 availability. Clear boundaries increase trust and reinforce the seriousness of the process.

### ⇒ Flexible approach

The prison environment is burdened with restrictions (timetables, escorts, administrative decisions). Adapt your methods as needed: replace a conversation with a simple exercise, insert a break, use a visual tool. The goal is more important than an “ideal” scenario.

### ⇒ Adequate preparation

Know the institution’s rules, basic prison slang, and the differences between units, regimes, and procedures. Be aware of what programmes, training opportunities, and resources are available here and now, and what may be

accessible at the pre-release stage. Have a referral map ready (within the prison and with external partners, e.g. NGOs supporting first steps into freedom).

### ⇒ Understanding

Listen without judgement, acknowledge effort and small steps forward. Use motivational dialogue where possible. If you feel something is outside your expertise, be honest and direct the participant to another specialist. Such honesty builds authority.

### ⇒ Motivation

Refer to real examples of successful change (anonymously, without sensitive details). Work with the participant to explore questions such as: “What would need to change for this to make sense?”

### ⇒ Recognition

Many prisoners have low self-esteem. Notice effort, not only results. Short acknowledgements (“Good job”, “That was an important step”) act as fuel for further progress.

### ⇒ Readiness to collaborate (support network)

Work as part of a team: psychologist, educator, vocational adviser, probation officer, cooperating NGOs. Establish shared goals and clear referral pathways to avoid “passing the person around”. This is especially important at the transition from prison to freedom.

### ⇒ Time

This is a process, not a sprint. Small victories and consistency matter. Adapt methods when they do not work; return to the main goal and adjust the steps.

## Key information for the educator

- **Communication is the foundation** – the same worksheet or role-play will work differently depending on how the conversation is conducted.
- **Small, realistic steps** – fewer declarations, more achievable actions.
- **Consistency and boundaries** – clear rules, no promises that cannot be kept.
- **Shared decision-making** – a jointly developed plan leads to greater responsibility and motivation.
- **Safety and simplicity** – clear language, predictable structure, confidentiality within the limits of law and regulations.
- **Acknowledge effort** – even the smallest progress contributes to change.
- **Educator's self-awareness** – take care of yourself: self-analysis, checklists, work journals – these strengthen both effectiveness and resilience.
- **Competence profile** – resilience, empathy combined with assertiveness, ability to work with resistance and conflict, discretion, flexibility, creativity, and a sense of humour.

The Freedom Programme works when applied with clarity, consistency, and empathy. This module provides the language, framework, and tools – the rest is strengthened through your attitude and daily practice.

## Educator's self-analysis

A tool for identifying and reflecting on one's own values, working style, emotional triggers, and personal boundaries. Its use is recommended at the beginning of the programme, on a regular basis (e.g. once a month), as well as after particularly demanding sessions. Regular application of the worksheet supports the development of self-awareness and helps maintain more stable and appropriate responses in situations of tension.

### Procedure:

1. Complete the self-analysis sheet individually (M1\_H1\_Self-analysis sheet).
2. Reflect on your strengths, limitations, and emotional "triggers".
3. You may return to this sheet whenever you feel the need.



## Communication with sentenced individuals

You must be aware of the various situations that may arise and prepare yourself for the possibility of their occurrence. This means being ready to face confrontations and unsettling behaviours that a prisoner may display. Bear in mind that someone seeking help may be exhausted by the difficult experiences of long-term isolation, as well as struggling with the challenges of regaining independence.

The person may not listen to you, may be demanding, aggressive, or attempt to pressure you into meeting their needs. They may appear lethargic, resigned, or highly emotionally strained. To deal with such situations effectively, you must demonstrate exceptional understanding and patience.

- Do NOT go beyond your professional competences.
- Do NOT start with negatives.
- Do NOT lecture.
- Do NOT give in to difficult emotions.
- Do NOT become overfamiliar.



## Positive communication

In the work of an educator or specialist supporting individuals preparing for release from prison, careful attention to communication style is essential. There are twelve characteristic errors, known as Gordon's Dirty Dozen, which can significantly hinder the building of trust and relationships. It is important to be aware of them – and to consciously avoid them.

- **Criticising, judging, blaming.** Pointing out mistakes and failures is demotivating, discourages action, and increases the risk of aggression.
- **Name-calling, labelling.** Referring to someone as a “criminal” and seeing them solely through the lens of their past provokes hostility and resistance.
- **Analysing, interpreting, diagnosing.** Offering diagnoses without the proper competences not only undermines credibility but may also cause harm.
- **Praising, judging, agreeing.** Praise coupled with evaluation can be perceived as manipulative. It may trigger mistrust or even a reaction of denial.



- **Ordering, directing, commanding.** A commanding tone may be necessary in crises but, in the long run, solutions should be developed collaboratively.
- **Threatening.** Intimidation weakens relationships and motivation. It is more effective to highlight the positive consequences of change.
- **Moralising, preaching.** Phrases such as “you should” place the educator in a parental role, often provoking resistance and aversion.
- **Interrogating, excessive questioning.** Asking too many questions at once, or intruding into intimate areas, creates the feeling of an interrogation rather than cooperation.
- **Advising, suggesting.** Offering advice without fully understanding the situation may do more harm than good. Before advising, first learn the context.
- **Avoiding, distracting, ignoring.** Overlooking the participant’s perspective signals a lack of active listening and obstructs relationship-building.
- **Overly logical reasoning.** Strong emotions block the reception of rational arguments. Before explaining, acknowledge the participant’s emotional state.
- **Reassuring, comforting.** Phrases such as “don’t worry” invalidate the other person’s feelings. What matters more is empathetic support and recognising their emotions.

In communication with prisoners, it is helpful to use phrases such as:

- If I have understood you correctly...
- From what you are saying, I understand that...
- So you are saying that...
- Am I right in understanding that...
- In other words...
- That means that...
- Could you give me an example...
- I understand that this is important to you, but what do you intend to...
- Could you tell me what is most important to you in all of this...
- What do you mean by that...?
- Please tell me more about this...
- What does that mean to you...?



## Responding to conflict – practical language

You must be aware of the different situations that may occur and prepare yourself for the possibility of their emergence. This means being ready to face confrontations and unsettling behaviours that a prisoner may display.

Keep in mind that a person seeking help may be exhausted by the difficult experiences of long-term isolation and may also be struggling with the challenges of regaining independence. The individual may not listen to you, may be insistent or aggressive, may attempt to pressure you into meeting their needs, or may appear lethargic, withdrawn, or highly emotionally tense.

**To deal effectively with such situations, you must demonstrate exceptional understanding and patience.**

### Attuning to an upset person

- You look very upset. How can I help?
- I can see that you're upset.

### Ask problem-solving questions. Use phrases such as:

- I'll be able to help you better if I can get answers to a few questions...
- Could you tell me what happened?
- Please talk me through what happened, step by step, so I can understand the situation better.

### Avoid phrases that can escalate anger, e.g.:

- You must...
- Don't get so worked up.
- Those are the rules; there's nothing I can do.
- You're wrong.

### Channel hostility into cooperation by inviting collaboration:

- Let's see what we can do together.
- I know you're upset, but I'm glad we can work together to resolve this.
- Let's do this...
- This is the best thing we can do.
- Please tell me what happened.
- Here's how we'll proceed, step by step.

When working with a prisoner, always keep your own safety in mind. Stay alert. Ensure all agreements are clearly understood. As highlighted earlier - be assertive.



## Educator's checklist – pre-session ritual

M1\_H2\_Educator's Checklist (to use it before each session)

A short preparatory ritual designed to set intentions consciously, check emotional state, and ensure practical readiness for the session. Used before every session (2–3 minutes), it supports focus, helps manage time and energy, and increases the consistency of actions. Its primary aim is to maintain balance, clarity of purpose, and full readiness to lead the educational process.

Steps:

- Define the session goal – write down one sentence (e.g. Supporting the setting of reintegration priorities).
- Emotional self-assessment – rate your state on a scale of 1–5, complete the sentences: Today I feel..., I need....
- Readiness list – go through practical points (yes/no). If something requires adjustment, note what could help.



## Educator's work notebook – continuity and reflection

M1\_H3\_Educator's work notebook

This tool is designed for systematically documenting agreements, observing participant reactions and changes in engagement levels, as well as planning next steps and reflecting on one's own facilitation style. It is recommended to complete the journal after each session (a short note of up to half a page) and to carry out a monthly review of entries. Regular journaling ensures process continuity, enables progress tracking, and makes it easier to adapt methods to the individual needs of the prisoner.

How to use it?

- General information – at the beginning, record key details such as the place of sessions, participant information, etc.
- Session sheets – one page per meeting: module delivered, participant's reactions, changes in engagement and needs.
- Progress and challenges – note breakthroughs and obstacles in order to plan the next steps.
- Reflections and recommendations – after each session, write down observations concerning the process and your own role.

## Handouts to module 1



M1\_H1\_Self-analysis sheet – a self-assessment and reflection tool, designed to prepare you emotionally and professionally for delivering the Freedom Programme in a penitentiary environment.

M1\_H2\_Pre-session checklist – this checklist supports your daily preparation – both emotional and practical – before each session. It helps you define priorities, assess your emotional state, and ensure that you are ready to conduct sessions with attentiveness and structure.

M1\_H3\_Educator's work notebook – a structured tool for documenting sessions, monitoring inmate engagement, and reflecting on your own facilitation style. It supports continuity of work, the educator's personal responsibility, and the adaptation of methods to participants' needs throughout the programme.





## MODULE 2 - Let's get to know each other!

**This module focuses on building trust and respect, as well as gaining a deeper understanding of the prisoners' life circumstances and emotional state. Simple tools — Situation Map, Emotion Drawing, Wheel of Life, Case Study — help participants to name emotions, identify resources, and define areas requiring support. The educator uses active listening, open-ended questions, and an individualised approach to support prisoners in strengthening their sense of agency and planning their future after release.**

After completing Module 2, the educator will be able to:

- Familiarise themselves with the prisoner's situation and quickly collect key information before–during–after (using the Situation Map, Wheel of Life, Emotion Drawing, and a short Case Study).
- Initiate the reintegration support process and clearly communicate the step-by-step approach.
- Define 1–2 realistic “here and now” goals that can be achieved within prison conditions.
- Identify the prisoner's life and emotional situation — naming resources, needs, and barriers - without judgement.
- Analyse work priorities together with the prisoner and justify the choice of where to begin.
- Translate goals into action — plan one specific step (what, who, by when) and set a time for progress review.
- Create an atmosphere of trust and safety.
- Document conclusions with a short note in the Educator's work notebook.

After completing Module 2, the prisoner will be able to:

- Briefly describe their situation before–now–after (based on the Situation Map and Wheel of Life).
- Identify emotions and tensions, and apply a simple calming technique (e.g. drawing or breathing exercise).
- Point out their own resources and areas for change.
- Express needs clearly and calmly, without accusations (simple “I” statements).
- Select 1–2 realistic goals and explain why they are important
- Define the first concrete step: what they will do, with whom, and by when.
- Communicate more calmly and clearly: listen, ask follow-up questions, and summarise in their own words.
- Take away a short summary (one page: situation, priorities, first step) as a basis for further work.
- Feel a stronger sense of agency and readiness to continue with the programme.

Remember



- Start with a short goal for the meeting and simple ground rules (confidentiality within regulations, clear language).
- Accept silence and emotions; do not rush the pace.
- Gather only essential information, without judgement.
- End with a small step: “What are you taking away from this meeting?”

## Exercise 1 – Short introductory questionnaire

Objective of the exercise is to gain an initial understanding of the sentenced person's attitude, motivation, and previous experiences with similar programmes. This allows the educator to assess the relevance of further participation and the best way to encourage engagement.



**Handout:**  
**M2\_H1\_Exercise**  
**1\_Questionnaire**

Steps:

1. The educator introduces themselves, the organisation, and clearly explains the purpose of the programme.
2. They provide a short questionnaire (M2\_H1\_Exercise 1\_Questionnaire) with introductory questions.
3. They ask the questions, checking the participant's understanding of the programme and readiness to take part.
4. They encourage the participant to express their views and opinions freely.
5. Together, they analyse the responses and determine the appropriateness of continuing.

## Exercise 2 – Profile of the sentenced person – situation map

Objective of the exercise is to create a profile of the sentenced individual by gathering information about their life before, during, and after serving their sentence. This facilitates an understanding of their social and emotional situation and supports the planning of rehabilitation activities.



**Handout:**  
**M2\_H2\_Exercise**  
**2\_Situation map**

Steps:

1. The educator clearly defines the purpose of the conversation.
2. They introduce the working tool Situation Map (M2\_H2\_Exercise 2\_Situation map) and explain its use.
3. They conduct the conversation using open-ended questions, encouraging reflection.
4. They listen actively, record key information, and refrain from judgement.
5. Together with the sentenced person, they summarise conclusions, identify areas for further work, and plan the next steps.

### Exercise 3 – Drawing emotions

Objective of the exercise is to enable the sentenced person to release tension and express emotions in a non-verbal way. The exercise encourages openness to conversation and helps to overcome emotional barriers.



Steps:

1. The educator explains the purpose – the drawing is intended as a relaxing activity and will not be evaluated.
2. The sentenced person may draw any image or shape that best reflects their emotional state.
3. The colours chosen by the participant symbolise different emotions and moods (e.g. red – strong emotions, green – calm, black – fear).
4. The participant discusses the drawing, explaining their choice of colours and related associations.
5. The educator emphasises that the exercise is not about art but about communication and releasing tension; they encourage repeating the exercise during the programme.
6. The educator should familiarise themselves with materials on drawing analysis and the symbolism of colours to better interpret the outcomes.

### Exercise 4 – Wheel of life

Objective of the exercise is to reflect on one's life so far, assess the level of satisfaction in key areas, and define developmental goals.



**Handout:**

**M2\_H3 Exercise 4 Wheel of life**

Steps:

1. The educator introduces the Wheel of Life tool ([M2\\_H3 Exercise 4 Wheel of life](#)) and explains its purpose.
2. The sentenced person rates their satisfaction in specific areas (e.g. finances, family, health, work, relationships, personal development) on a scale of 1–10.
3. The educator helps interpret the results – highlighting strengths and areas requiring improvement.
4. The sentenced person selects 1–2 areas for change and defines possible actions (e.g. learning a trade, financial planning, physical activity).
5. The educator emphasises the importance of small steps and encourages identifying the first actions that can realistically be taken.



## Exercise 5 – Case study

Objective of the exercise is to gain a deeper understanding of the sentenced person's situation by analysing their experiences, difficulties, and coping strategies. The exercise helps to identify key problems and areas requiring support.

### Steps:

1. The educator explains the purpose of the case study, assures confidentiality, and emphasises that the conversation is not evaluative in nature. **Case study** is a method based on analysing descriptions of selected, specific events from a given area. The knowledge gained through case analysis can serve to better understand phenomena similar to the one being studied – and, on this basis, to improve real-life actions.
2. The conversation is guided by open-ended questions regarding:
  - sources of problems and their impact on life and relationships,
  - attempts to cope and to seek help,
  - awareness of difficulties and contributing factors,
  - coping strategies in stressful situations,
  - motivation, goals, and plans for the future.
3. Examples of open-ended questions can be found in the attachment M2\_H4\_Exercise 5 Case study.
4. The educator analyses the responses, identifies key problems and strategies, and jointly with the sentenced person determines priority areas and initial developmental steps, and, if necessary, suggests additional forms of support.



### Handout:

M2\_H4\_Exercise 5 Case study



## Closing module 2 – Evaluation in two simple steps

1. M2\_H5\_Inmate – The participant completes a short questionnaire (scale 1–5) and rates: knowledge, engagement, and understanding of the material.
2. M2\_H6\_Educator – The educator makes brief notes on the participant’s engagement, activity, and reactions, and records 1–2 immediate conclusions and recommendations.

Then, you briefly compare both evaluations, agree on one specific step for the next meeting (what, who, by when), and make an entry in the Educator’s Work Journal.

Evaluation supports the process – it does not “judge” the person. Low scores are a signal of where support is needed.



## Handouts to module 2

M2\_H1\_Exercise 1\_ Questionnaire – a tool designed to collect basic information about the sentenced person. It enables the educator to assess the relevance of continuing with further stages of the programme. It may also indicate how to effectively motivate the participant to continue and help determine their level of motivation to take part in the programme.

M2\_H2\_Exercise 2\_ Situation map – a tool for the educator to gather key information about the sentenced person’s life at three crucial stages: before, during, and after imprisonment. Its purpose is to create a comprehensive picture of the individual’s social, family, and professional situation, as well as to understand their needs and capacities. A set of supporting questions is attached to this exercise.

M2\_H3\_Exercise 4\_ Wheel of life – a diagram in the form of a wheel divided into eight equal sections, with a scale from 1 to 10 marked in each area. Space is provided for short notes in each section, where the participant can record reflections and ideas for improvement.

M2\_H4\_Exercise 5\_ Case study – a collection of open-ended questions that serve as supportive prompts. It is not necessary to ask all of them during one session. Based on their own observations and the identified difficulties, the educator selects those questions that will deepen understanding and facilitate the planning of adequate forms of support.



## MODULE 3 - Expectations of sentenced individuals

**This module represents a turning point: the participant learns to transform general expectations into specific, realistic goals and first steps. What was once only a dream begins to take the shape of an action plan. The role of the educator is to accompany this process — without judgement, without correction, but with patience, calmness, and the conviction that every step matters.**

**Many prisoners experience a sense of helplessness. They may repeat phrases such as “nothing can be done”. This module helps to overcome such thinking: it demonstrates that there is always at least one small step worth beginning with.**

After completing Module 3, the educator will be able to:

- Conduct conversations in which the prisoner articulates their own needs and goals (using simple language and open questions).
- Strengthen agency and responsibility: moving from declarations to small, achievable steps.
- Recognise signals of entitlement or helplessness and respond calmly and constructively.
- Link goals with the institution’s offer (activities, training, support) and organise them into an action plan.
- Document agreements with a short note and plan the next steps.

After completing Module 3, the prisoner will be able to:

- Clearly state what they need “here and now” and explain why it matters.
- Clarify motivation (using the 5 Whys method) and select 1–2 realistic goals.
- Compare different pathways (Decision Tree), anticipate outcomes, and choose the safest option.
- Create a simple meta-plan: problem → current state → desired state → why it isn’t achieved → what next.
- Write down the first concrete step, with a deadline and a designated supporter.

Remember



1. Begin the meeting with a short message: *“Today we are choosing a goal and the first step.”* During the session, use one tool (maximum two).
2. End each part of the work with the question: *“What will you do first?”*
3. Record only key words; avoid lengthy protocols.
4. Follow the principle: less writing, more questions – it is crucial that the prisoner formulates their own needs.
5. When statements such as *“I can’t”* or *“It’s impossible”* appear, pause the process and look together for alternatives.
6. Do not rush the choice of goal – it is essential that the decision belongs to the prisoner, not that it results from your suggestion.

## Exercise 1 – Identifying current needs

Objective of the exercise is to help the sentenced person recognise their current needs and to learn how to express them constructively. The exercise serves as an introduction to developing assertive communication and building healthier relationships.



**Handout:**  
**M3\_H1\_Exercise**  
**1\_Needs table**

Steps:

1. The educator reminds the participant of the purpose of the meeting and the ground rules.
2. They introduce the tool – the Needs Table (M3\_H1\_Exercise 1\_Needs table).
3. The conversation is guided by open-ended questions related to respect, acceptance, and support (available in the attachment M3\_H1\_Exercise 1\_Needs table).
4. The educator listens actively, recording key information without judgement.
5. Summary – together they highlight how awareness of needs supports communication, personal development, and planning for the future.

**Tip for the educator:** This is a good moment for the prisoner to feel that their voice truly matters. Do not correct their language or suggest answers – what counts are their own words, even if they sound chaotic.

## Exercise 2 – The 5 whys

Objective of the exercise is to help the sentenced person clarify their goal and uncover deeper motivation by gradually asking probing questions.

Steps:

1. The prisoner writes down their goal in one sentence.
2. You ask successive “why?” questions (naturally, 3–5 times).
3. Record the short sequence of answers.
4. Together, identify the underlying goal, which you will return to later.

**Tip for the educator:** Remember that sometimes the prisoner may stop at the second “why” - and that is fine. Do not turn it into an interrogation; treat it as an engaging conversation.

**Example:**

**Goal defined by the sentenced person at the start:**

***“I want to find a permanent job after release.”***

- Why? – *“Because I need money to support myself.”*
- Why is this important? – *“Because I don’t want to be dependent on others.”*
- Why does that matter to you? – *“Because when I was dependent, I felt powerless and humiliated.”*
- Why do you want to avoid that feeling? – *“Because then I made bad decisions.”*
- Why do you want to avoid making bad decisions? – *“Because I want to live peacefully and not return to prison.”*

Root goal: *“I want to live peacefully, independently, and not return to prison.”*

**Tip:** It is not about sticking rigidly to five questions, but about gradually reaching deeper motivations in an atmosphere of attentiveness and respect.

## Exercise 3 – Decision tree

Objective of the exercise is to develop the ability to analyse different courses of action, anticipate consequences, and make conscious decisions that support change and help avoid reoffending.

Steps:

1. The educator explains the purpose of the exercise in the context of future planning.
2. The prisoner, on the worksheet (M3\_H2\_Exercise 3\_Decision Tree), writes down the main goal (identified in the previous exercise).
3. They indicate possible ways of achieving it.
4. They analyse the potential consequences of each option – both positive and negative.
5. They assess feasibility and possible difficulties, along with strategies to overcome them.
6. They select the most realistic and safe pathway.

**Tip for the educator:** This exercise can be challenging, as it requires thinking about consequences. You can help by asking: “And what will happen if...?” – but do not suggest answers.

Example:

- Goal: “I want to live peacefully and not return to prison.”
- Possible options:
  - Take up legal employment → plus: financial stability, minus: difficulty finding a job.
  - Return to old acquaintances → plus: quick money, minus: risk of returning to crime.
- Analysis: legal work is more difficult at the beginning but offers a chance for long-term stability.
- Choice: focus on finding employment, with a plan to use the support of career advisors.



**Handout:**

**M3\_H2\_Exercise 3\_Decision tree**

## Exercise 4 – Metaplan

Objective of the exercise is to structure thinking around a chosen problem, define realistic goals, and identify the actions needed to achieve and sustain them.

Steps:

1. The educator introduces the Metaplan diagram (M3\_H3\_Exercise 4\_Metaplan), consisting of five fields:
  - Problem
  - How is it? (current situation)
  - How should it be? (desired state)
  - Why is it not as it should be? (causes)
  - What next? (specific actions)
2. The educator facilitates reflection with probing questions, which are available in the attachment M3\_H3\_Exercise 4\_Metaplan.
3. The sentenced person completes the Metaplan and together with the educator, formulates an initial action plan.



**Handout:**

**M3\_H3\_Exercise 4\_Metaplan**

## Closing module 3 – Evaluation in two simple steps



M3\_H4\_Evaluation\_Prisoner – Each prisoner assesses their progress after completing the module, using a simple scale (1 to 5) to rate their knowledge, engagement, and level of understanding of the material.

M3\_H5\_Evaluation\_Educator's Observation Sheet – The educator makes brief notes on the participant's engagement in the module, their activity, and their reactions to the educational content.

## Handouts to module 3



M3\_H1\_Exercise 1\_Needs table – a tool supporting the educator in gathering information on how the sentenced person defines their needs in the areas of respect, acceptance, and support. It helps to better understand the participant's perspective, even if it differs from that of the facilitator. The handout also contains a set of guiding questions to facilitate the conversation and formulation of responses.

M3\_H2\_Exercise 3\_Decision tree – a diagram-based tool that helps the sentenced person analyse possible paths leading to the achievement of a defined goal. At the top of the form there is space to write the main goal; below that, space to indicate the available paths; and under each path, fields for notes, ideas, and reflections on potential consequences, risks, and opportunities. It facilitates logical structuring of thoughts and making conscious, well-considered decisions.

M3\_H3\_Exercise 4\_Metaplan – a diagram consisting of five fields corresponding to the key stages of analysis: problem, current state, desired state, causes of difficulties, and possible solutions. The tool supports the participant in clearly formulating an action plan.





## MODUŁ 4 - Analysis of the local environment of sentenced individuals

**The module supports sentenced individuals in understanding the role of the local environment in the process of social reintegration. Through exercises such as community mapping, role plays, and case analyses, participants learn to identify community resources, make use of support networks, and build an individual reintegration plan. The module develops communication, problem-solving, and self-reflection skills, all of which are essential for functioning after release from prison.**

After completing Module 4, the educator will be able to:

- recognise social and environmental factors influencing reintegration,
- apply mapping and analysis tools in individual work,
- develop competences in supportive conversations and mentoring.

After completing Module 4, the prisoner will be able to:

- identify elements of the local environment important for reintegration,
- assess the availability of institutions and support programmes,
- understand the role of family and social networks,
- create their own strategies for building a support system after release.

Remember



Ensure that the prisoner does not focus solely on risks. Help them to discover resources and opportunities as well – these provide hope and a real foothold for life after release.

## Exercise 1 – Analysis of the local environment (resource map)

Objective of the exercise is to help the sentenced person identify key social resources and create an individual support map that facilitates reintegration after release.



**Handout:**

**M4\_H1\_Exercise 1\_Resource mapping sheet**

1. Steps:
2. The educator explains the importance of being aware of one's environment and the role of support systems, and introduces the working tool Resource Mapping Sheet (M4\_H1\_Exercise 1\_Resource mapping sheet).
3. The educator presents the map scheme: a central "ME" surrounded by categories (housing, work, health, legal aid, education, family, and social networks).
4. The sentenced person creates their own map, writing down 2–3 institutions, people, or services under each category that could be helpful after release.
5. Together they discuss priorities and potential difficulties (e.g. availability of institutions, alternatives).
6. Summary – identifying the three most important resources and planning preparatory actions for making use of them.

## Exercise 2 – Role play scenarios: job seeking

Objective of the exercise is to develop communication and problem-solving skills related to reintegration, e.g. during conversations with an employer or an employment office.

Sentenced individuals do not have to act out roles. If this causes resistance or discomfort, the educator may instead present example dialogues and analyse possible responses together with the participant.



**Handout: M4\_H2\_Exercise 2\_Scenario sheet – includes sample characters, dialogues, and questions for discussion.**

1. The educator explains the purpose of the exercise and introduces the conversation scenarios available in the attachment M4\_H2\_Exercise 2\_Scenario sheet (e.g. a visit to the employment office, a conversation with an employer).
2. The participant reviews the prepared dialogues and discusses them with the educator – what could work, what might be challenging.
3. The joint analysis covers:
  - which questions are the most difficult,
  - how to respond constructively,
  - how to remain calm and credible.
4. Reflective session – identifying strengths, areas for improvement, and lessons to be applied in the future.
5. The sentenced person writes down 2–3 things they have learned and one personal goal to practise before release (e.g. preparing how to talk about their past).



## Exercise 3 – Case study analysis - successes and failures of reintegration

Objective of the exercise is to understand the factors that facilitate or hinder reintegration through the analysis of two stories – one ending in success and the other in failure. The exercise encourages reflection and the transfer of insights into one's own life.

### Steps:

1. The educator emphasises that returning to life outside prison is a difficult process and invites reflection on what helps and what hinders reintegration. Opening questions:
  - What do you think is the most difficult after leaving prison?
  - What situations can support a fresh start, and which can make it more difficult?
2. Reading the cases – the participant receives two stories:
  - Andreas – an example of successful reintegration ([M4\\_H3\\_Exercise\\_3\\_Case\\_Study\\_Andreas](#)).
  - Giannis – an example of failed reintegration ([M4\\_H4\\_Exercise\\_3\\_Case\\_Study\\_Giannis](#)).
  - Task for the sentenced person: highlight/indicate the passages that seem crucial from the perspective of successful and unsuccessful reintegration.
3. Case analysis – with the educator's support, the sentenced person completes the Case Study Analysis Sheet ([M4\\_H5\\_Exercise\\_3\\_Case\\_study\\_analysis\\_worksheet](#)).
4. Summary – the educator summarises the exercise and then asks the participant whether they see elements in the stories that resemble their own experiences, and which aspects were most surprising to them.



### Handouts:

- [M4\\_H3\\_Exercise\\_3\\_Case\\_study\\_Andreas](#) (success)
- [M4\\_H4\\_Exercise\\_3\\_Case\\_study\\_Giannis](#) (failure)
- [M4\\_H5\\_Exercise\\_3\\_Case\\_study\\_analysis\\_worksheet](#)



## Exercise 4 – Developing an Individual Reintegration Plan

Objective of the exercise is to support the sentenced person in creating a realistic reintegration plan based on strengths, anticipated difficulties, and available support systems. The exercise strengthens the sense of agency and preparedness for life after release.

### Steps:

1. The educator emphasises that reintegration begins already in prison and depends on the decisions made here and now.
2. The educator introduces the working tool Brainstorming Sheet: Challenges and Solutions ([M4\\_H6\\_Exercise 4\\_Challenges & solutions brainstorming worksheet](#)). The sentenced person writes down their strengths, potential difficulties, and possible solutions. The educator may provide an example (e.g. challenge: lack of work → possible solution: contact the employment office, attend a training course).
3. Review of local resources – the educator presents a pre-prepared list of support institutions and encourages the participant to identify first steps after release, indicate people or institutions that may provide assistance, and then select at least three resources to include in the individual plan.
4. Creating the reintegration plan – the participant completes the sections of the Individual Reintegration Plan Template ([M4\\_H7\\_Exercise 4\\_Individual Reintegration Plan](#)), covering: personal goals (such as housing, work, or family relationships), identification of challenges and possible solutions, actions to be taken before release, actions planned after release, and elements of the support network.
5. The educator encourages the sentenced person to identify the most important element in the developed plan and to specify which changes they already feel ready to make at this stage.



### ZHandouts:

- [M4\\_H6\\_Exercise 4\\_Challenges & solutions brainstorming worksheet](#)
- [M4\\_H7\\_Exercise 4\\_Individual Reintegration Plan](#)

## Closing module 4 – Evaluation in two simple steps



M4\_H8\_Evaluation\_Prisoner – Each prisoner assesses their progress after completing the module, using a simple scale (1 to 5) to rate their knowledge, engagement, and level of understanding of the material.

M4\_H9\_Evaluation\_Educator's Observation Sheet – The educator makes brief notes on the participant's engagement in the module, their activity, and their reactions to the educational content.

## Handouts to module 4



M4\_H1\_Exercise 1\_Resource mapping sheet – the tool contains a central circle (“ME”), six categories of resources, and space to record relevant contacts, institutions, and services. The incarcerated person may use the sheet as a planning and reference tool throughout the entire reintegration programme.

M4\_H2\_Exercise 2\_Scenario sheet – the document contains sample dialogue prompts and reflection questions following role-play scenarios. It supports the learning process through simulations of real-life situations after release from prison.

M4\_H3\_Exercise 3\_Case study\_Andreas – a story of successful reintegration, showing the actions and decisions that led to a positive return to society.

M4\_H4\_Exercise 3\_Case study\_Giannis – an example of unsuccessful reintegration, highlighting mistakes, obstacles, and lack of support that contributed to a return to the penitentiary system.

M4\_H5\_Exercise 3\_Case study analysis worksheet – this sheet guides the incarcerated person through key questions that connect the content of the case study with their personal goals, decisions, and attitudes towards reintegration.

M4\_H6\_Exercise 4\_Challenges & solutions brainstorming worksheet – used in Step 2 as an exercise supporting self-reflection before developing the reintegration plan. It helps identify strengths, difficulties, and possible forms of support.

M4\_H7\_Exercise 4\_Individual Reintegration Plan – a structured sheet that guides the incarcerated person through setting goals, analysing challenges, planning actions before and after release, and identifying key elements of their support network.



## MODULE 5 - Creating an Individual Action Plan

**The module supports the incarcerated person in preparing an action plan for both before and after release. It covers goal setting, barrier analysis, and the identification of solutions in areas such as employment, housing, health, education, family, legal obligations, and personal development. The educator accompanies the participant in the planning process, using dialogue, reflection, and worksheets to strengthen the sense of agency and responsibility for the future.**

After completing Module 5, the educator will be able to:

- Conduct individual conversations and work together with the participant to create an Individual Action Plan (IAP).
- Use motivational dialogue and ask reflective questions to strengthen responsibility and a sense of agency.
- Help translate the participant's values and motivations into concrete goals and actions.
- Combine the planning of practical steps with fostering hope and a sense of purpose.

After completing Module 5, the prisoner will be able to:

- Develop their own personalised Individual Action Plan (IAP).
- Break down large goals into smaller, concrete, and achievable steps.
- Understand the importance of personal values and intrinsic motivation in the process of change.
- Build a sense of agency and responsibility for their future.
- Create a personal reference point to return to during times of difficulty.

## Exercise 1 – Individual Action Plan (IAP)

Objective of the exercise - the sentenced person develops a realistic action plan that includes priorities, goals, first steps, and a support network.

Steps:

1. Review reflections, goals, and actions from the previous modules.
2. With the educator's guidance, the sentenced person completes the Individual Action Plan Sheet ([M5\\_H1\\_Exercise 1 Individual Action Plan](#)), step by step.
3. Summary – the participant gives the plan their own title (e.g. My Freedom Plan) to strengthen their sense of responsibility and agency.



**Handout:**

**M5\_H1\_Exercise 1 Individual Action Plan**

## Exercise 2 – Values and motivation – supporting the Individual Action Plan

Objective of the exercise - the sentenced person strengthens their sense of meaning and inner motivation by linking the Individual Action Plan with their own values and sources of strength. The exercise can serve as the conclusion of the planning process or as a point of reference in difficult moments.

Steps:

1. The educator summarises the work completed so far and invites reflection on why the Individual Action Plan matters.
2. Together with the educator, the sentenced person completes the Values and Motivation Sheet ([M5\\_H2\\_Exercise 2 Values and motivation](#)), recording their sources of strength and motivation, priorities, and a personal message to themselves.



**Handout:**

**M5\_H2\_Exercise 2 Values and motivation**

## Closing module 5 – Evaluation in two simple steps



M5\_H3\_Evaluation\_Prisoner – Each prisoner assesses their progress after completing the module, using a simple scale (1 to 5) to rate their knowledge, engagement, and level of understanding of the material.

M5\_H4\_Evaluation\_Educator's\_Observation\_Sheet – The educator makes brief notes on the participant's engagement in the module, their activity, and their reactions to the educational content.

## Handouts to module 5



M5\_H1\_Exercise\_1\_Individual\_Action\_Plan – a structured worksheet including the sentenced person's goals, action timeline, first steps, support network, and resources needed for the reintegration process.

M5\_H2\_Exercise\_2\_Values\_and\_motivation – a worksheet supporting the sentenced person in exploring their personal values, sources of strength, and motivation. It contains short reflective questions and space for writing a personal message to oneself.





## MODULE 6 - The culture of language

**The module develops the ability of sentenced individuals to communicate consciously and constructively. Practical exercises support the recognition of emotions, the expression of needs, and the improvement of communication style. Participants learn to distinguish between different communication styles (assertive, aggressive, submissive), to use “I” statements, to paraphrase, and to listen actively. The module prepares them for effective communication in personal relationships and in interactions with institutions after release from prison.**

After completing Module 6, the educator will be able to:

- Deliver sessions adapted to the communication level of prisoners.
- Explain the three communication styles – assertive, aggressive, and passive.
- Teach assertiveness and support the change of unhelpful communication patterns.
- Model appropriate communication behaviours using clear and respectful language.
- Apply active listening, paraphrasing, and “I” statements.
- Respond to difficult emotions while safeguarding participants’ wellbeing.
- Provide individual support in developing communication skills across different social contexts.

After completing Module 6, the prisoner will be able to:

- Recognise communication styles and their consequences.
- Use “I” statements and techniques of assertively expressing emotions and needs.
- Paraphrase and listen actively by asking supportive questions.
- Adapt language to the audience and situation.
- Replace aggression or manipulation with language of respect and cooperation.
- Understand the impact of communication on relationships and functioning after release.

## Exercise 1 – Emotions table

Objective of the exercise is to recognise communication styles (assertive, aggressive, submissive), the emotions associated with them, and their consequences for relationships.

Steps:

1. The educator discusses the three communication styles with the sentenced person, presenting their main characteristics:
  - Aggressive – loud, imposing, leading to conflict and isolation.
  - Submissive – giving up one's needs, avoiding confrontation, feeling powerless.
  - Assertive – clear, calm self-expression while respecting others' opinions, building relationships based on trust.
2. The educator presents the handout Emotions table (M6\_H1\_Exercise 1\_Emotions table) as a tool for assigning behaviours and emotions.
3. The sentenced person analyses sample situations, assigning them to the corresponding communication styles and related emotions. The educator may use two versions of the Emotions Table: the first involves cutting out and arranging elements according to the scheme situation–response–emotion–communication style, while the second requires the participant to independently assign the correct communication style to a described situation.
4. The educator may refer to emotions experienced by the sentenced person in their interactions with others, and to the communication style they most often use and its consequences.
5. The sentenced person identifies their dominant communication style, and the educator emphasises the importance of assertiveness as the most constructive way of communicating.



**Handout:**

**M6\_H1\_Exercise 1\_Emotions table**

## Exercise 2 – Creating an “I” Statement

Objective of the exercise is to develop the ability to express emotions, needs, and opinions clearly, calmly, and without blame. The sentenced person learns to use “I” statements, which support constructive conversation and reduce the risk of conflict.

### Procedure:

1. The educator explains what an “I” statement is.
  - An “I” statement is a way of speaking in which a person describes their own feelings and needs instead of judging or blaming others (e.g. “I feel angry when you interrupt me during a conversation because I need to be heard,” instead of “You never listen to me”).
2. The sentenced person receives a set of elements of the statement (situation, emotion, need, proposal) included in the handout M6\_H2\_Exercise 2\_I statement and arranges them into a logical whole.
3. The educator supports the participant by using guiding questions focused on identifying emotions related to the situation and clarifying the message the participant wishes to convey.
4. The sentenced person discusses the created statement and its possible reception.
5. Finally, they formulate their own “I” statement, referring to a real situation from everyday life.



### **Handout:**

**M6\_H2\_Exercise 2\_I statement**



## Exercise 3 – Paraphrasing

Objective of the exercise is to develop the skill of active listening through paraphrasing the speaker's statements. This technique supports better understanding of the other person, demonstrates attention and respect, and helps build relationships and resolve conflicts.

### Procedure:

1. The educator explains what paraphrasing is.
  - Paraphrasing means restating the speaker's words in one's own way while preserving the meaning and acknowledging the emotions. It is not about repeating word for word, but about reflecting the intention and showing that the speaker has been heard.
2. The educator provides an example:
  - Inmate: "I'm stressed because I don't know what I'll do after leaving prison."
  - Educator (paraphrase): "You're worried because you're uncertain about how you'll manage after release."
3. The sentenced person receives a set of short statements (from the handout M6\_H3\_Exercise 3\_Paraphrasing) and formulates their own paraphrases, ensuring they keep the meaning, emotions, and appropriate tone.
4. The educator discusses with the participant which types of paraphrasing were easier and which were more difficult, and encourages them to identify situations in which this technique could be useful.
5. Finally, the educator emphasises that paraphrasing builds trust and reduces the risk of misunderstandings – both in prison and after release.



### Handout:

**M6\_H3\_Exercise 3\_Paraphrasing**

## Exercise 4 – Active listening



### Handouts:

- M6\_H4\_Exercise 4\_Active listening\_Educator
- M6\_H5\_Exercise 4\_Active listening\_Inmate

Objective of the exercise is to develop the ability to listen consciously, which strengthens trust, facilitates understanding of the speaker, and supports relationship-building.

### Procedure:

1. The educator explains what active listening is.
  - Active listening means full focus on the speaker, maintaining eye contact, using non-verbal signals, paraphrasing, and asking clarifying questions. It is described as listening “with both head and heart.”
2. The sentenced person takes part in a short conversation about their future plans. The educator practises active listening by using paraphrasing and open-ended questions, followed by a role reversal.
3. Next, the educator and the sentenced person work with sample conversation scenarios (from the attachments M6\_H4\_Exercise 4\_Active listening\_Educator and M6\_H5\_Exercise 4\_Active listening\_Inmate). The sentenced person practises techniques such as maintaining eye contact, paraphrasing, asking open-ended questions, and using short verbal signals (“I see,” “I’m listening”).
4. After each conversation, the educator provides feedback – pointing out strengths and areas for improvement.
5. Finally, the educator emphasises that active listening helps to resolve conflicts and improve relationships both in prison and after release.

## Exercise 5 – Developing vocabulary

Objective of the exercise is to develop the ability to express thoughts, emotions, and needs more precisely, to avoid verbal aggression and oversimplification, and to adapt language to the situation and the listener.

### Procedure:

1. The educator explains the importance of vocabulary development in everyday relationships. As a warm-up, the sentenced person looks for synonyms (words with a similar meaning) and antonyms (opposites) of a chosen word.
2. The sentenced person practises different ways of expressing emotions (e.g. “I’m angry” → “I’m irritated” / “I’m upset”).
3. Next, the sentenced person describes an object or situation chosen by the educator in three styles: colloquial, poetic, and formal.
4. The following task involves working with short scenarios (from the handout M6\_H6\_Exercise 5\_Developing vocabulary) – the sentenced person formulates responses in different real-life situations, such as a conversation at a public office, asking for help, or a job interview.
5. The educator emphasises how changing words and tone of voice can influence the way a message is received. The sentenced person learns to formulate neutral and constructive sentences instead of emotional ones, e.g. “I’ve had enough!” → “I need a break because I’m tired of this situation.”



**Handout: M6\_H6\_Exercise 5\_Developing vocabulary**

## Closing module 6 – Evaluation in two simple steps

M6\_H7\_Evaluation\_Prisoner – Each prisoner assesses their progress after completing the module, using a simple scale (1 to 5) to rate their knowledge, engagement, and level of understanding of the material.

M6\_H8\_Evaluation\_Educator's Observation Sheet – The educator makes brief notes on the participant's engagement in the module, their activity, and their reactions to the educational content.

## Handouts to module 6

M6\_H1\_Exercise 1 Emotions table – a worksheet in table format supporting the identification of communication styles and the emotions associated with them.

M6\_H5\_Exercise 4 Active listening Inmate – a supporting material for the participant (sentenced person), containing descriptions of conversation situations and instructions for applying active listening techniques. The handout indicates what to focus on during the dialogue: maintaining eye contact, paraphrasing, asking open-ended questions, and using verbal signals. Its aim is to support the participant in consciously developing communication skills.

M6\_H2\_Exercise 2 I statement – a cut-out activity prepared by the educator to create word puzzles for the sentenced person, aimed at practising the construction of “I” statements in different situations.

M6\_H3\_Exercise 3 Paraphrasing – a supporting handout for the sentenced person, designed to develop paraphrasing skills in response to statements made by others in various real-life situations. It contains simple and realistic examples of sentences, to which the participant is asked to respond with their own paraphrase, preserving the meaning, intention, and tone of the original message. The exercise strengthens active listening, empathy, and effective communication skills.

M6\_H6\_Exercise 5 Developing vocabulary – a supporting handout fostering the development of skills in expressing emotions, needs, and opinions in a calm, polite, and linguistically varied way. It includes situational scenarios in which the participant practises formulating responses to emotional or inappropriate remarks, learning to build constructive and respectful reactions.

M6\_H4\_Exercise 4 Active listening Educator – a supporting material for the educator containing detailed conversation scenarios for practising active listening. Each scenario describes the context of the situation, defines the educator's role, and provides sample lines for role-play. The handout enables realistic communication exercises and helps guide observation and feedback for the participant.



## Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to explore the Freedom Programme. We hope that the materials provided will serve as valuable support in working with prisoners and will contribute to their more effective preparation for life in freedom.

We believe that by investing in a second chance for an individual, we secure not only their future but also that of society as a whole – reducing the risk of reoffending and strengthening the sense of safety.

The ultimate goal of the Freedom Programme is not only to prepare participants for release from prison but also to strengthen their self-belief and their conviction that it is possible to live in accordance with values, with dignity and responsibility. It is an investment in a future where every participant has the chance to regain freedom – not only in the legal sense, but also in a personal and social one.

**Together we can achieve more – by giving a second chance and building a safer tomorrow.**





## Supplementary materials



## Literature and publications

Motivational Interviewing: Helping People Change – William R. Miller & Stephen Rollnick (4th edition, 2023) - A foundational book on motivational interviewing, outlining its philosophy, principles, and techniques. Widely used in practice with individuals facing ambivalence and change.

<https://bluepeteraustralia.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/motivational-interviewing.pdf>

Building Motivational Interviewing Skills: A Practitioner Workbook – David B. Rosengren= A hands-on workbook offering exercises, case studies, and tools to practise and refine MI skills. Designed for practitioners who want structured learning.

<https://cdn.mednet.co.il/2017/11/Building-Motivational-Interviewing-Skills.pdf>

Motivational Interviewing in Social Work Practice – Melinda Hohman - Focuses on applying MI in social work, with examples and practical tips for

working with vulnerable groups, including those in correctional or reintegration contexts.

[https://www.academia.edu/56378873/Motivational\\_Interviewing\\_in\\_Social\\_Work\\_Practice](https://www.academia.edu/56378873/Motivational_Interviewing_in_Social_Work_Practice)

Impact of Motivational Interviewing by Social Workers on Service User Outcomes – Systematic Review (2019) - A scientific review highlighting the effectiveness of MI applied by social workers, showing improved motivation, engagement, and intervention outcomes.

[https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1049731519827377?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1049731519827377?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Together we can do more! (Tulipan Foundation, Erasmus+, 2024) - An Erasmus+ guide presenting a model of working with former prisoners and their families, developed in partnership with organisations from Poland and Germany. Aimed at adult educators, it provides practical guidance and tools.

<https://fundacjatulipan.pl/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Fundacja-TULIPAN-Together-we-can-do-more.pdf>



## Free online courses

Erasmus+ project online course Communication without Borders (also available in English) – a course designed to develop competences for working with individuals undergoing social reintegration. It combines motivational interviewing (following Rollnick and Miller) with coaching tools, teaching strategies of partnership, acceptance, and compassion in supporting rehabilitation.

<https://szkolenia.zafos.pl/course/view.php?id=5>

Basics of Motivational Interviewing – Alison - A free course introducing the fundamentals of Motivational Interviewing (MI). Covers principles developed by Miller & Rollnick and practical tools such as OARS (Open-ended questions, Affirmations, Reflective listening, Summarising). A good starting point for educators new to MI.

<https://alison.com/course/basics-of-motivational-interviewing>

Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, and Small Groups – University of Michigan (MOOC) - A free online course providing insights into social work methods, with a strong focus on communication, relationship building, and supporting change processes. Relevant for educators working in reintegration and resocialisation.

[https://www.my-mooc.com/en/mooc/social-work-practice-individuals-michiganx-sw521x?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.my-mooc.com/en/mooc/social-work-practice-individuals-michiganx-sw521x?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



## Spoty i filmy

From Inside, Out: Rebuilding a Life After Incarceration - A documentary telling the stories of individuals after release, the challenges they face, and how they rebuild their lives.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4opBp2l0ViQ>

The Barriers to Reentering Society After Prison - Explores social, political, and systemic barriers to reintegration and how they impact former inmates.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DczkGbD7JkQ>

Confronting Reentry Challenges: Supporting Reintegration - A video presentation showing strategies and programmes that support reintegration after imprisonment.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mDZn7RXVV8>





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# Freedom Programme

**Freedom** I ♥  
and understand!

Educational programme supporting  
the social reintegration of incarcerated individuals



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