

Educational Materials

New Senior 2025-2026

Erasmus+ Project | Small-Scale Partnerships in Adult Education



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Introduction

This handbook is the result of international collaboration within the framework of the “New Senior” project, carried out by the MOST Association from Katowice and the Czech organization KCS Ostrava. The publication was created out of a deep conviction that lifelong learning is key to maintaining health, independence, and a sense of community in a rapidly changing world.

Why is this handbook unique? The materials included in the publication are not purely theoretical. They were developed based on the exchange of good practices between Polish and Czech educators and the seniors themselves. Through direct observations and joint workshops, it was possible to select the most effective methods of supporting older adults in three key areas:

- **Safety in the digital world** – we focus on the practical and safe use of modern technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), to effectively counter digital isolation.
- **Cognitive and neurological activity** – we present fine motor exercises and techniques that support neurological functions, based on seniors’ strengths.
- **Intercultural openness** – in the face of social change, the handbook provides tools that support integration and relationship-building in multicultural communities, helping to break down barriers and prejudices toward refugees and migrants.

Who did we prepare these materials for? The handbook has been designed with two target groups in mind:

- **Seniors (60+)** – the content is presented in an accessible way, using simple language and clear graphics, which makes independent learning and adaptation to new realities easier.
- **Educational staff** – trainers, facilitators, and social workers will find ready-made lesson plans and recommendations that improve the quality of their activities and support the implementation of innovative working methods.

Our goal We want this handbook to become an inspiration for action in support of healthy and active aging. We believe that the solutions developed will contribute to improving seniors' quality of life, strengthening their sense of belonging to a modern and caring society.

This handbook is intended for trainers, occupational therapists, senior club coordinators, and everyone who works with seniors. The material can be used as a plan for one longer session or as the basis for a series of several meetings.



Safe Use of the Internet and Artificial Intelligence

This chapter covers the principles of safe internet use, an introduction to artificial intelligence and its practical applications for seniors, as well as a description of digital threats. At the end of the chapter, there are appendices: an information leaflet and links to educational videos.

Digital Security

Principles of cautious trust, methods of fraud, protection of data and passwords.

Artificial Intelligence

What AI is, what a PROMPT in AI is, its practical applications.

Threats

Fake messages, misleading information on the internet — learn how to recognize them and avoid being deceived.

Appendices

The “Golden Rules of Safety” leaflet and links to educational videos.

Cyfrowa mądrość:

bezpieczeństwo i AI dla seniorów

What is artificial intelligence (AI)?

Artificial intelligence is computer software that can "learn" and perform tasks in a way similar to humans: answering questions, recognizing images, and creating texts or recordings in a matter of seconds.

You do not need to be an expert to use it — a smartphone, tablet, or computer is enough. Today, when someone says they are asking artificial intelligence something, they usually mean so-called chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT or Gemini), which can be used both on a computer and on a phone (by downloading an app).

Tip for seniors: Don't be afraid of artificial intelligence! It is a tool meant to help you — just like a mobile phone or the internet. You can use it at your own pace.

What is a LLM?

LLM is short for the English words “Large Language Model”. It is a type of computer program that can talk to us — just like a person.

It learned by reading millions of books

Imagine that someone read millions of books, newspapers, and websites. That is how much this program “read” before it started talking with us.

It understands our questions

When we write a question to it, it understands it and answers in full sentences — just like a friend would.

It does not think like a human

The program has no feelings or personal opinions. It responds based on what it has “learned” from texts. That is why it is worth checking important information.

Example: You write: “Write birthday wishes for my granddaughter.” The program immediately creates a beautiful, ready-made text — you do not have to search for anything or come up with it yourself!

Popular AI Models and Tools

Text Chatbots



- **ChatGPT** – the most popular



- **Gemini (Google)** – closely connected with Google Search, makes working with documents easier



- **Claude** – appreciated for its simplicity and "human-like" responses

Creating Graphics



- **Nano Banana Pro (in Gemini)** – advanced easy to use image generator



- **Canva AI** – designs for flyers, posters, greeting cards, etc.



- **Midjourney** – generates beautiful images, but it is paid

Other useful tools



- **Perplexity** – answers questions while providing sources and explanations



- **NotebookLM** – summarizes long documents and videos



- **Gamma.app** – helps create presentations and simple publications

In summary: if you are looking for an answer to a question or want to create text or a simple image, choose Gemini or ChatGPT. If you need a summary of a long document or video, use NotebookLM. If you are creating a multimedia presentation, use Gamma. For a poster or flyer, use Canva.

Chatbots Using Gemini by Google

- With **Gemini**, we can use it on a computer by typing "Gemini" into the Google search engine, or on a phone — if we use an Android phone, we can download the Gemini app from the Play Store; if we use an iPhone, from the App Store.

Gemini app - user guide



In a chatbot, e.g. Gemini, **we do not have to limit ourselves to entering just one prompt** (question / instruction). After receiving an answer, **we can continue the conversation**. For example, if we asked the AI to write birthday wishes for our granddaughter, but we are not completely satisfied with the result, **we can ask the chatbot to revise the wishes** (e.g. shorten them, add more humor, or take our granddaughter's interests into account).

What can we ask ChatGPT or Gemini for? An answer to a question (e.g. how to make a Silesian roulade in a vegetarian version?), preparing specific content, such as birthday wishes, a children's fairy tale, or creating an image (e.g. "create an image of a blue elephant playing hockey").

How to create a good prompt?

"Prompt" is simply the wording of the instruction you type into the AI.

Basic rules:



Be specific

Instead of "write a poem," type "write a short poem for a 5-year-old about a dog chasing butterflies."



Add context

For example: "give a simple recipe for one person using potatoes, onion, and an egg."



Specify the style

For example: "explain in simple words for a senior" or "write an official letter to an office."



Ask for examples

The AI will provide several options, and you can choose the best one.

Prompt template for advanced users:

1. **Role** – “Act as...” (e.g. a history teacher, a cook, a technical advisor).
2. **Task** – “Your task is...” (e.g. explain a difficult concept, write a fairy tale, prepare a plan).
3. **Goal** – “I want the result to help...” (e.g. understand better, learn faster, create something creative).
4. **Context** – “This is for...” (e.g. for a senior, for children, for beginners).
5. **Response format** – “Present it in bullet points / write a short essay / prepare a table”.

Example of a ready-made prompt: “Act as a healthy lifestyle advisor. Your task is to prepare a simple daily exercise plan for a senior. The goal is to improve joint mobility. The plan should be safe and doable at home. Present it in a table: exercise, duration, and instructions.”



Fot. Agnieszka Budzyńska

How can AI help a senior?



Everyday life

Shopping lists, cooking recipes, ideas for exercises, tips on how to do something on a phone.



Relationships

Writing messages, translating languages, creating bedtime stories and rhymes for grandchildren.



Learning

Summarizing articles, explaining difficult concepts in simple words.



Creativity

Creating images, illustrations, poems, and music.



Organization

Preparing a travel plan, daily schedule.



Active citizen

Summarizing a municipal report, a proposal for the civic budget, a petition to the authorities.

Example prompt for an active citizen: "Help me write a simple proposal for the civic budget — a new bench and greenery in the park. Write in bullets: goal, benefits for residents, costs."

Risks and AI Safety Rules

Errors and falsehoods

AI can make mistakes. Always check important information in several sources!

Privacy

Do not enter personal data (ID numbers, passwords, bank accounts) into chats.

Lack of emotions

AI does not understand feelings; it only puts together sentences based on patterns.

Dependence

AI is a helpful tool, but it will not replace human contact.



AI is a **friendly tool** that can support you in learning, entertainment, and social activities. It will not replace a person, but it can make everyday life easier — just like a mobile phone or the Internet.

Digital safety - take care of your devices

Screen lock



Always set a **PIN** or **fingerprint** on your smartphone. This protects your data if you lose it.

Updates



When your phone or computer asks for an update, agree to it. It is like **patching holes in your home windows** — it improves security and protects against threats.

Downloading apps



Install apps only from **official stores** (Google Play Store for Android, App Store for iPhone). Check the ratings and reviews of other users.

Your password is your key

A password is the key to your digital doors. Make sure it is strong and hard to guess.

How do you create a good password?

12+ characters

Use at least 12 characters.

Different characters

Uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters (e.g. !@#\$).

Passphrase

Come up with a phrase that is easy to remember, e.g.
MyGrandsonIs5YearsOld!

Different passwords

Do not use the same password for your bank and email as you do for other sites.

Password manager

If you have trouble remembering passwords, use a password manager.

Watch out for suspicious messages

Scammers are getting smarter. They send fake messages by SMS, email, or messaging apps (e.g. WhatsApp, Messenger). They often pretend to be a bank, the post office, a courier, or even a loved one. Their goal is simple — they want to scare us or push us into acting quickly before we have time to think.

Remember: real institutions never pressure you or demand an immediate response. If something makes you uneasy, stop and don't rush. Here's what to look out for:

Suspicious links

If a message contains a link, don't click it right away. Scammers impersonate banks, postal services, or institutions. Instead of clicking, go to the website yourself by typing the address into your browser.

A sense of urgency and fear

Messages like "Your account will be blocked!", "You must pay immediately!", or "You've won a prize!" are classic scam tactics. They want you to act quickly and without thinking. Stop and think calmly.

Errors in the text

Fake messages often contain typos, odd wording, or unnatural sentences. Real institutions, such as banks, the post office, or official authorities, take care to use correct language. Errors are a warning sign.

Request for personal data

No bank or official authorities will ever ask you to provide your password, PIN, or ID card number via SMS or email. If someone asks you for this information, it is a scammer.



Golden rule: If a message makes you suspicious, don't rush! Call the relevant institution directly (for example, your bank) using the number listed on its official website or on the back of your payment card. Never use phone numbers provided in a suspicious message!

Additional tips: Stay one step ahead of scammers!



Phone calls

Never give out personal data over the phone. Scammers may call and pretend to be a bank, the police, or technical support staff, asking for your PIN, password, or credit card number. A real institution would never ask for such information during a call. If someone from your bank calls with an unusual request, hang up and **call the bank's official number**.



Wi-Fi access

Use only known Wi-Fi networks. Public, open networks (for example, in cafes or shopping centers) are not safe. Scammers may use them to track what you do online. Turn off Wi-Fi when you are not using it — it saves battery and protects you from accidentally connecting to unknown networks.



Social media and privacy

Privacy settings are your friend. Set your Facebook profile so it is visible only to friends. Limit the visibility of your date of birth or place of residence. Avoid posting information that you are away from home. If a friend asks for a loan on social media, **call them** — friends' accounts are often taken over.



Online shopping and payments

Shop at known and trusted stores. Read reviews. Before entering your card details, check that there is a **green padlock** and that the address starts with **https://**. Always check the transaction confirmation.

Beware of false information on the internet!

On the internet, on TV, and on our phones, we may come across information that looks real — but isn't. Someone made it up on purpose to scare us, deceive us, or push us to act. It's worth knowing how to recognize it.

- **Fake news**

These are false pieces of information that look like real articles or news reports. They often have shocking headlines, such as "A famous doctor has discovered a cure for everything!" or "The government is hiding the truth!" Their goal is to trigger fear or anger. Before you believe it and share it — check another source!

- **Manipulated videos and photos (deepfake)**

Thanks to computers, it is now possible to create a video or photo in which a well-known person says or does something they never actually did. It looks very realistic. If you see a shocking video of a politician or celebrity — don't believe it right away. Check whether other reliable media are reporting on it.

- **Misinformation – deliberate deception**

Disinformation is the deliberate spread of false information to mislead people. It can concern health, politics, vaccines, medicines, or disasters. Always check information on official websites before passing it on.

Remember: If a message triggers strong emotions in you (fear, anger, disbelief) — pause! This is often a sign that someone is trying to manipulate you. Ask someone close to you or check the information somewhere else.

How can you recognize suspicious messages?

Errors in the content

Content containing numerous spelling or stylistic errors often indicates a lack of a lack of professionalism on the part of the sender.

Time pressure

Scammers often force people to act quickly, using phrases such as "click now" or "last chance."

Requests for data

Stay alert when a message asks you to provide personal data, card numbers, or make a payment.

Promises

Content promising something extraordinary, free prizes, or unbelievably good deals is usually a trap.

Remember that on the Internet, just like in everyday life, **trust and caution** are key. If something seems too good to be true, it probably is.

Attachments

Below you will find links to educational materials: leaflets and educational videos worth watching during classes or independently at home.

Type of material	Title and description	Link to download the material
Educational leaflet (Polish)	"The Internet is a window to the world. Open it safely." A4 format file.	https://mostkatowice.pl/wp-content/uploads/Ulotka-Internet-to-okno-na-swiat.-PL.pdf
Educational leaflet (Czech)	"The Internet is a window to the world. Open it safely." A4 format file.	https://mostkatowice.pl/wp-content/uploads/Ulotka-Internet-to-okno-na-swiat.-CZ.pdf
Educational leaflet (English)	"The Internet is a window to the world. Open it safely." A4 format file.	https://mostkatowice.pl/wp-content/uploads/Ulotka-Internet-to-okno-na-swiat.-ENG.pdf

Educational video in Polish – "Artificial Intelligence for Seniors"	"Artificial Intelligence for Seniors." Discover how AI can make your everyday life easier.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3McT5dhZFg
Educational video in Czech – "Artificial Intelligence for Seniors"	"Artificial Intelligence for Seniors." Discover how AI can make your everyday life easier.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6vyEit-1sA
Educational video in English – "Artificial Intelligence for Seniors"	"Artificial Intelligence for Seniors." Discover how AI can make your everyday life easier.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayGjYD634D4
Educational video in Polish – "Digital Safety"	"Digital Safety." Practical tips for seniors.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oAkFwOhv-9E
Educational video in Czech – "Digital Safety"	"Digital Safety." Practical tips for seniors.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtuK-chDdcY

Educational video in
English – "Digital
Safety"

"Digital Safety."
Practical tips for
seniors.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzWYKuOQCw0>

Facilitator's tip: The videos can be shown on a projector during group sessions or shared with participants as material to watch independently at home.

Memory Training

This chapter discusses cognitive functions — memory, attention, thinking, and communication — and explains why it is worth exercising them regularly in older age. It includes exercise scenarios, practical tasks, and techniques for developing memory and logical thinking, intended for individual and group work. The materials can be used during classes in senior clubs, educational groups, or at home.

Particular attention is given to why developing memory in seniors is so important. Good memory supports independence, confidence, and makes daily functioning and social contact easier. Exercising memory and attention helps you remember information better, concentrate faster, participate more actively in community life, and maintain mental fitness for longer.



Cognitive Training

What is cognition and why is it important?

Cognition (from the Latin *cognoscere* – to know, to examine) is a collective term for all **mental processes** through which a person becomes aware of and understands the world and themselves. This concept is understood in psychology and neuroscience as a system that enables us to receive information from our surroundings and from within ourselves, process it, and then respond to it.

Receiving information

Through perception and attention.

Processing and storage

Includes thinking, learning, memory, and concept formation.

Using knowledge

It is expressed in problem-solving, decision-making, planning, and language skills.

In contemporary terms, cognition is not limited to “cold” logical thinking, but also includes **social cognition** – the ability to perceive and interpret the behavior and intentions of other people.

What are cognitive functions?

Cognitive functions are **basic mental processes** that enable us to perceive the world, respond to it, and cope with everyday tasks. There are 5 primary cognitive functions:

Memory

The ability to encode, store, and recall information.

Attention and concentration

Focusing on specific stimuli and ignoring distracting factors.

Speech and language skills

Forming sentences, understanding content, naming objects, speaking fluently.

Logical thinking

The ability to analyze information, look for relationships, and apply deduction and induction.

Visual-spatial skills

Spatial orientation, estimating distances, and mentally manipulating objects.

These basic cognitive functions are interconnected, and their mutual interaction leads to the emergence of higher, or **secondary cognitive functions**. These include, for example:

Executive functions

Complex skills of planning, organizing, problem-solving, and decision-making.

Thinking speed

The time it takes the brain to process information and respond to it.

Perception

Interpreting sensory stimuli, recognizing shapes, sounds, or faces.

Planning

Setting a future goal, determining the necessary steps, and arranging them in order. It helps manage time and resources effectively.

Why should cognitive functions be trained?

Prevention of cognitive decline

Regular brain stimulation helps slow natural aging and may delay the onset of conditions such as Alzheimer's disease or dementia.

Improving neuroplasticity

The brain has the ability to form new neural connections. Exercises strengthen this network, leading to faster learning and better information processing.

Increased concentration and attention

Memory training requires focus, which indirectly improves the ability to ignore distracting factors in everyday life.

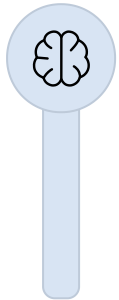
More effective learning

Practicing memory techniques (e.g., mnemonics) makes it possible to store information in long-term memory more effectively.

Cognitive training is key to maintaining mental fitness and overall quality of life.

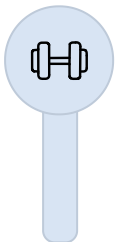
What is the relationship between our brain and cognition?

Cognitive functions allow us to cope with everyday life. The way we use our brain trains it to some extent — just as we maintain physical fitness, for example by walking instead of driving. There are 3 levels of cognitive strengthening:



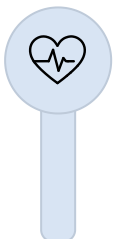
Cognitive stimulation

Unintentional, unplanned use of the brain — everyday activities (shopping, errands, commuting) as well as active rest and entertainment.



Cognitive training

Targeted activity for the "healthy" population — brain jogging, mental sports (e.g. chess), logic games and mnemonics.



Cognitive rehabilitation

Targeted activity for people with cognitive deficits — weakened functions due to injury or illness.

Why does our brain not function as well as it could?

There are many causes of a decline in our cognitive performance. We can divide them into 2 categories:

Internal (endogenous) causes

Aging, traumatic injuries (accidents, falls, blows to the head), chronic diseases (neurological, mental, neurodegenerative).

External (exogenous) causes

Fatigue, stress, inactivity, medications/alcohol/drugs, one-sided focus in professional work, information overload.

Cognition is a collective term for the ability to receive and process internal and external information. There are 5 basic cognitive functions: speech, memory, spatial imagination, attention, and logical reasoning. Cognitive performance can be impaired by illness, injury, or environmental stressors. Everyone needs brain training.

Summary

- cognition is a collective term for the ability to receive and process internal and external information
- there are 5 basic cognitive functions: speech, memory, spatial imagination, attention, and logical reasoning
- we all need to train our brains
- cognitive performance can be impaired by illness, injury, or environmental stressors

Cognitive Training - Exercises



Exercise 1: Elements of Group I.A of the periodic table

Try to come up with a memory aid to remember the elements of Group I.A of the periodic table of Mendeleev — create a logical sentence in which each word begins with the letter of a given element.

<

Solution: H, L, S, P, R, C, F (Hydrogen, Lithium, Sodium, Potassium, Rubidium, Cesium, Francium)

Example: Hungry Leopards Steal Pizzas, Running Clumsily Fast

Exercise 2: Memorize 16 elements from the image

You have one minute to memorize as many elements as possible from the image below. Then cover it and try to write down all 16.



 **Hint:** Break the elements into smaller groups (categories); that makes them easier to remember.

JOBS

house painter, nurse, firefighter,
garbage collector

SPORT

hockey, badminton, soccer,
fencing

KITCHEN

apron, grater, stove, cutting board

FOOD

cheese, apples, cucumber, eggs

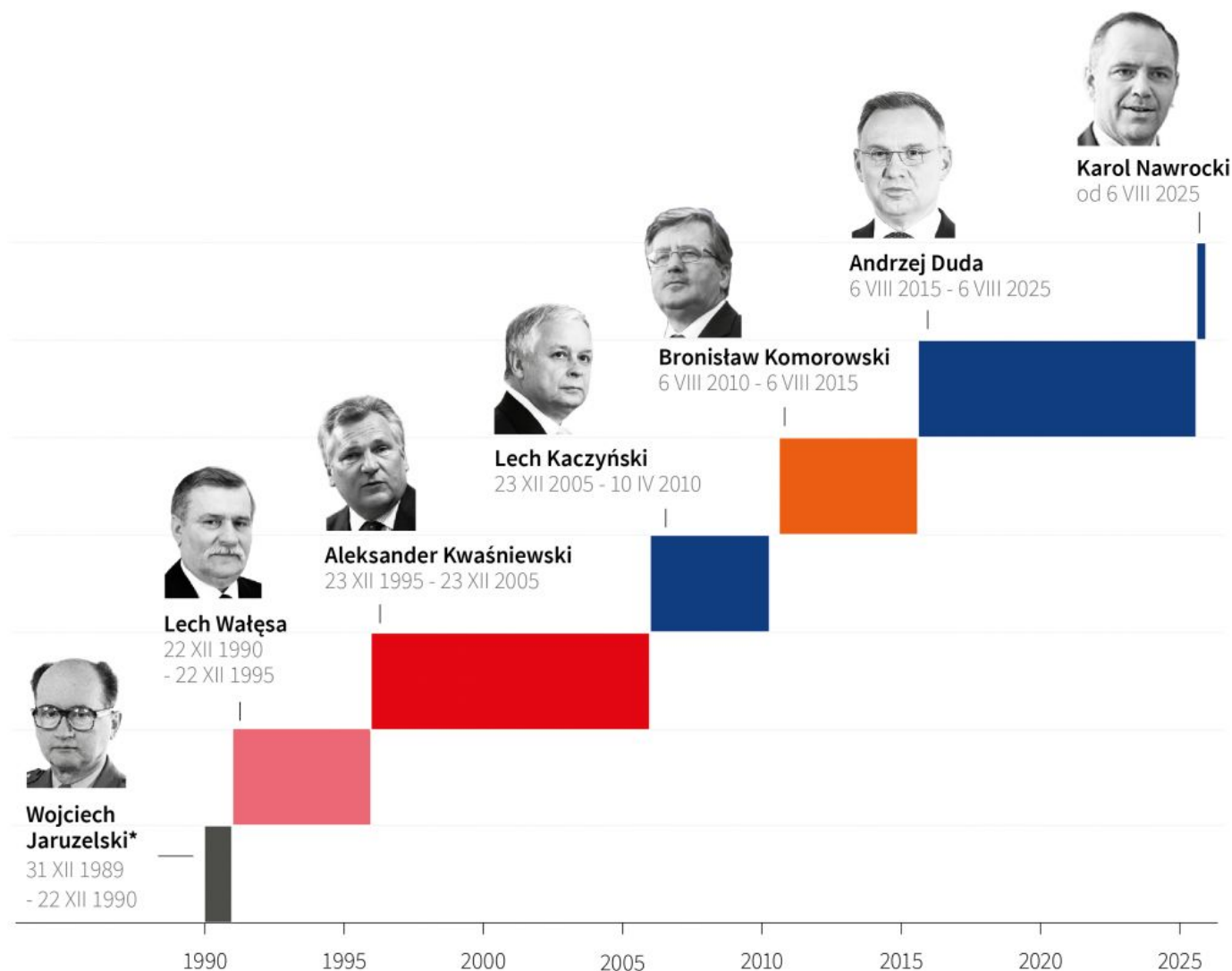
Exercise 3: Can you remember the presidents of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic in the order in which they succeeded one another?

Solution: Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, Edvard Beneš, Emil Hácha, Klement Gottwald, Antonín Zápotocký, Antonín Svoboda, Gustáv Husák, Václav Havel, Václav Klaus, Miloš Zeman, Petr Pavel



Exercise 4: Can you recall the names of all Polish presidents since 1989?

Solution: Wojciech Jaruzelski, Lech Wałęsa, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Lech Kaczyński, Bronisław Komorowski, Andrzej Duda, Karol Nawrocki



Cognitive Training - Memory exercises



Session – Memory

Memory is the brain's ability to receive, store, and recall information for immediate or later processing. People often associate cognitive difficulties with memory because this is where these symptoms are most apparent. However, it is true that problems with memory are often primarily caused by an attention disorder.

Types of memory by duration of storage:

Sensory

Lasts fractions of a second (stimuli from the senses).

Short-term (working)

Stores information for 15–30 seconds (e.g., a phone number before you write it down).

Long-term

Has a theoretically unlimited capacity and lasts for years. It is divided into explicit (facts, experiences) and implicit (skills, e.g., riding a bicycle).

Types of memory by encoding form:

Mechanical

Typically used in education, the least effective, and unmotivated.

Logical

Based on systematic procedures, often subconscious.

The memory process has 3 phases:

01

Encoding

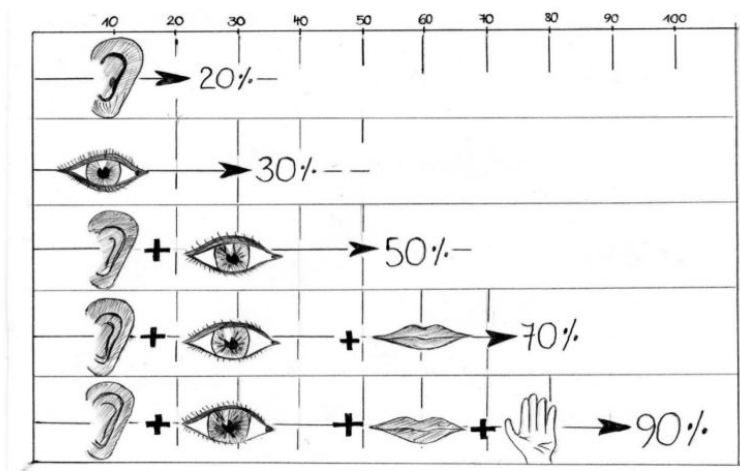
02

Storage

03

Recall

- ❏ The more senses we engage, the better the effect. That is why it is worth writing down information heard (hearing), recording it (touch), and reading it aloud (sight).



Based on scientific research using the latest functional magnetic resonance imaging equipment, there has recently been a fundamental shift in how brain development is understood.

- ❏ Research findings have shown that the brain is flexible — neuroplastic — and that developmental changes occur throughout life, meaning it can learn and improve even in old age. It only needs new stimuli to be delivered in a form that is familiar to it.

Link to display: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yt3GVbH_uuE

Exercise 1 (work independently): Can you remember the figures on Czech banknotes? (unintentional memory)



Solution: 5000 Kč: Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, 2000 Kč: Ema Destinová, 1000 Kč: František Palacký, 500 Kč: Božena Němcová, 200 Kč: Jan Amos Komenský, 100 Kč: Karel IV.

Exercise 2: Can you remember the figures on Polish banknotes? (incidental memory)



- Solution:** 500 złoty: Jan III Sobieski, 200 złotych: Zygmunt I the Old, 100 złotych: Władysław II Jagiełło, 50 złotych: Casimir III the Great, 20 złotych: Bolesław I the Brave, 10 złotych: Mieszko I

Exercise 4: Can you remember all the Czech regions? What about their regional capitals? (knowledge memory)



- i Solution:** Hlavní město Praha: Prague, Středočeský kraj: Prague, Jihočeský kraj: České Budějovice, Plzeňský kraj: Plzeň, Karlovarský kraj: Karlovy Vary, Ústecký kraj: Ústí nad Labem, Liberecký kraj: Liberec, Královéhradecký kraj: Hradec Králové, Pardubický kraj: Pardubice, Kraj Vysočina: Jihlava, Jihomoravský kraj: Brno, Olomoucký kraj: Olomouc, Moravskoslezský kraj: Ostrava, Zlínský kraj: Zlín.

Exercise 5: Can you remember all the Polish voivodeships? And their capitals? (knowledge memory)



- i Solution:** Lower Silesian Voivodeship - Wrocław, Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship - Bydgoszcz and Toruń, Lublin Voivodeship - Lublin, Lubusz Voivodeship - Gorzów Wielkopolski and Zielona Góra, Łódź Voivodeship - Łódź, Lesser Poland Voivodeship - Kraków, Masovian Voivodeship - Warsaw, Opole Voivodeship - Opole, Subcarpathian Voivodeship - Rzeszów, Podlaskie Voivodeship - Białystok, Pomeranian Voivodeship - Gdańsk, Silesian Voivodeship - Katowice, Holy Cross Voivodeship - Kielce, Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship - Olsztyn, Greater Poland Voivodeship - Poznań, West Pomeranian Voivodeship - Szczecin.

Meeting - Mnemonics

Mnemonics are mental tools that support memory. They use imagination, associations, and spatial orientation to make it easier to memorize abstract information. They work like “glue for information” — connecting new content with what is already familiar. This makes it easier to encode, store, and recall data, numbers, or lists. The effectiveness of mnemonics increases with practice.

They are based on three mutually interpenetrating pillars:

Visualization

Mentally creating images and scenes.

Association

Connecting new information with what we already know.

Imagination

Creative, imaginative thinking.

Number-shape system

Creating associations based on the similarity of shapes to other objects and then incorporating them into a coherent story. It should be mentally imagined and visualized.



Example – phone number 774 422 039

Two lawn mowers with scythes (7,7) were tired from working in the meadow, so they sat down on two chairs (4,4) and looked around. They saw two swans (2) floating on a lake (0) and a woman in a swimsuit with a full bust (3), who was playing badminton with a racket on the sandy shore (9).

Examples of number associations:

1

whip, candle, pencil

2

swan, snake

3

breasts, handcuffs, double chin

4

stool, table, yacht

5

hook, five fingers of a hand,
staple

6

elephant trunk, golf club

7

scythe, axe, fishing rod

8

snowman, hourglass

9

tennis racket, tadpole, flag

10

lake, egg, ball

Number association system

Creating associations based on your own meanings or values and then weaving them into a coherent story. By recalling a specific image linked to numbers, we reconstruct the entire information.

☐ **Example – phone number 603 321 153**

The Tatra 603 was a government vehicle that had 3 headlights in the front, 2 flag mounts on the fenders, and 1 "shark fin" on the rear of the body. The first model was produced in the year (19)53.



Fot. Agnieszka Budzyńska

Exercise 1: Together, come up with 9 things you cannot forget to take with you on vacation, and place them in specific spots on the bike



For example, sunglasses under the front tire, documents by the front white light, etc. After a while, try to recall these items using the Memory Path technique.

Place on the bike	Example item
1. Front tire	e.g. sunglasses
2. Front light	e.g. documents
3. Handlebars	e.g. sunscreen
4. Top frame	e.g. camera
5. Bike bag	e.g. wallet
6. Saddle	e.g. keys
7. Rear light	e.g. phone
8. Rear sprocket	e.g. charger
9. Pedals	e.g. sports shoes

Exercise 2: Use the number-shape system to memorize the phone number: 777 703 144

-  **Solution:** Boeing 777 circled the Earth 7 times, never crashed (0), and landed only 3 times. There was only 1 pilot, because he always had 4 flight attendants and 4 stewardesses around him .

Exercise 3: Try to memorize the following number: DDMMYYHHMiMiHHMiMi

e.g. 16122513001530

-  **Solution:** it refers to the date and time of the meeting, i.e. 16.12.25
13:00 - 15:30

Cognitive training - attention sessions and exercises

Another cognitive function of the brain is attention. In psychology, it is defined as a cognitive process that enables the selective focusing of consciousness on specific stimuli while others are suppressed.

Types of attention:

Involuntary (unintentional)

It occurs automatically in response to strong or new stimuli (e.g., a loud noise). It is a subconscious reaction to an unusual stimulus or a potential threat.

Voluntary (intentional)

It requires conscious effort and focus on a specific task or goal. It usually lasts up to 60 seconds

Selective

The ability to ignore various distracting factors and choose one stimulus from many (the cocktail party effect).

Divided (distribution)

The ability to handle several activities at the same time (e.g. driving a car and talking). Multitasking.



Measurable properties of attention:

Concentration

The strength or intensity of focus on a limited number of stimuli.

Capacity

The range of stimuli we are able to perceive simultaneously.

Stability

The length of time we can maintain attention (the highest level of focus usually lasts only 30–90 seconds).

Oscillation (fluctuation)

Regular short-term fluctuations in the intensity of attention.

Attention is a fundamental element of cognition, essential for perception, memory, and decision-making, and its dysfunction is reflected in all other cognitive components (e.g., because of impaired attention, we perceive information from our surroundings with insufficient accuracy, which leads to less effective storage of that information in memory, so it seems that the main problem is related to memory). That is why it is always worthwhile to first determine the nature of our cognitive difficulties—that is, which cognitive function is impaired and to what extent.

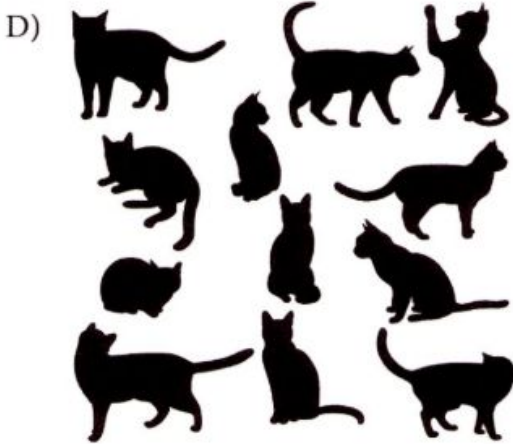
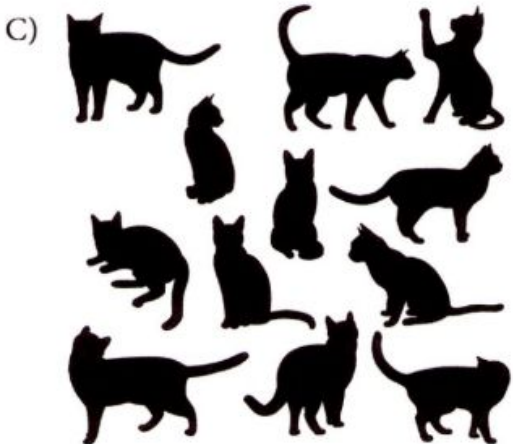
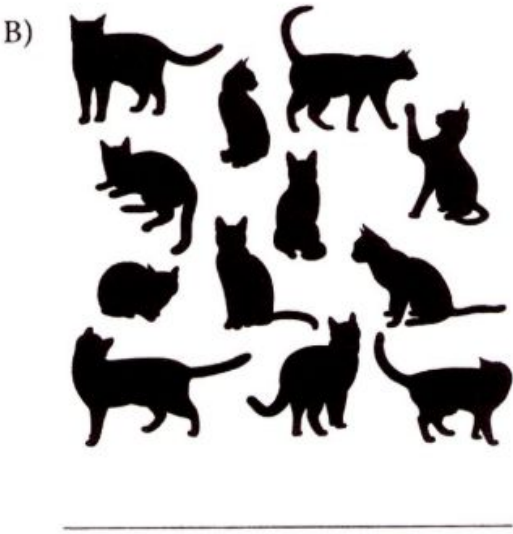
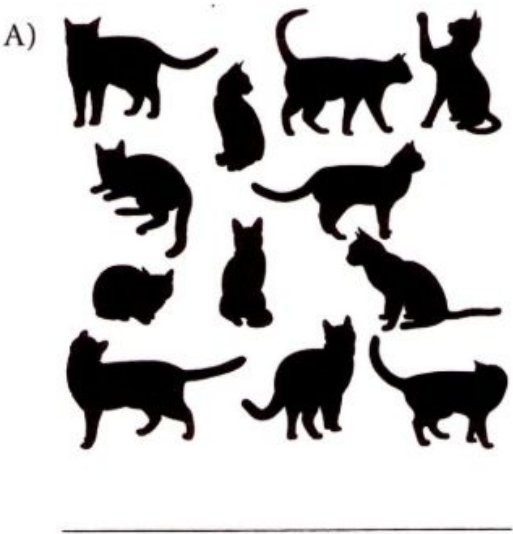
- The primary recommendation in the rehabilitation of our attention is so-called information detox = limiting to a minimum watching news on commercial TV stations, updates on social media, tabloid news websites, etc., because all of this distracts our attention and keeps it in a permanent state of readiness to process negative stimuli.

Links to display:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGQmdoK_ZfY&t=1s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bnnmWYI0IM

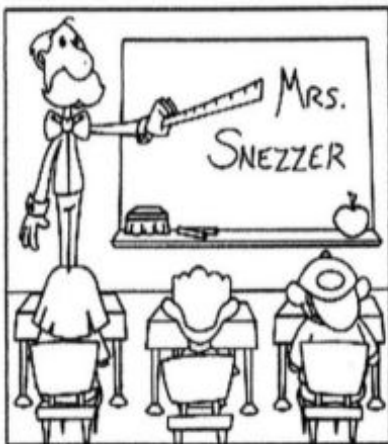
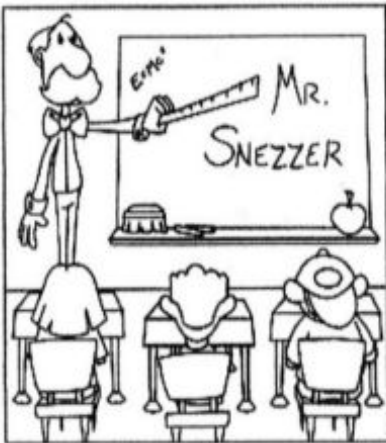
Exercise 1: Find, for each image, the missing cat that appears only in the other three.



 Solution:



Exercise 2: Choose the 2 identical images. Pay attention to the details.



① Solution: images B and F

Cognitive Training - Language Exercises



Functions of Speech

Speech is the articulated, usually audible expression of a person, serving primarily for mutual communication. In the context of cognitive rehabilitation, we understand this to mean not only active speech, but also the perception and comprehension of the information being communicated. In other words: speech is a verbalized stream of thoughts. When using language, we first convert thoughts into words and sentences and only then do we speak them. At the same time, we must be able to understand and process information communicated by others. This area therefore includes reading comprehension.

All speech-related activities are controlled by the brain. The speech center is located in the cerebral cortex, from where complex and coordinated signals are sent to the muscles of the lungs, larynx, tongue, and face; however, the brain is the primary determining factor.

In the case of problems with verbal functions, it is first of all necessary to determine their cause and, in the case of cognitive causes, to adapt further therapy accordingly.

In general, however, speech exercises are very popular in society. It should also be noted that regardless of whether they involve crosswords, word searches, fill-in exercises, etc., they must be highly challenging for the person solving them; otherwise, their rehabilitative effect completely disappears.

- ❏ For example, find a crossword in a foreign language and solve it using a dictionary. It does not matter at all if instead of 5 minutes you spend 5 hours on it — on the contrary, for your brain it will be a much more effective form of training.

- A simple exercise with scientifically proven effectiveness is also reading aloud. It is based on the fact that, when reading aloud, we connect in our brain a range of centers for complex functions: visual information (printed text) is transformed through sensory perception into the brain, where it is processed, understood, and then articulated. This is additionally accompanied by an intonational correction of the heard speech. As a result, the brain is very intensively engaged as a whole.

Language exercises:

Exercise 1 – The Letter P

Create a coherent and sensible story in which every word begins with the letter P.

Exercise 2 – City, Name, Animal...

The game "CITY, NAME, ANIMAL, THING, PLANT" in a version based on the last letter, e.g. the letter "n".

Exercise 3 – Country, City, Color...

The game "COUNTRY, CITY, COLOR, FILM, BIRD" in a version based on the last letter, e.g. the letter "r".

Exercise 1 – Letter P

Come up with a coherent story in which all the words begin with the letter P.

Example solution: Playful pandas proudly prepared a perfect picnic, packing pastries, peaches, and pineapple. In a peaceful park, people admired the view while pigeons performed funny pirouettes. Soon, the pigeons started pecking the pastries, so the pandas protested and chased them, causing pandemonium.

Exercise 2 – City, Name, Animal...

The game in a version based on the last letter, e.g. the letter “n”.

CITY	NAME	ANIMAL	OBJECT	PLANT

Exercise 3 – Country, City, Color...

The game in a version based on the last letter, e.g. the letter "r".

COUNTRY	CITY	COLOR	FILM

- ❏ Exercises 2 and 3 can be freely adapted to the needs of the group — any letter can be chosen, even at random. The items in the columns (categories) can also be selected as desired



Fot. Agnieszka Budzyńska

Cognitive Training - Logical reasoning Exercises



Logical reasoning

Logical reasoning, also referred to as executive functions, in the context of cognitive functions is understood as the thought process that leads to specific conclusions. In essence, it is a set of mental processes used in problem-solving, decision-making, adapting to changing conditions, or tracking sequences and processes.

Next steps in problem solving (executive function):

01

Define the problem

What is the problem?

02

Consider or gather all possible solutions alternatives

What can I do to solve the problem?

03

Select the best solution alternative

Is this chosen solution the best possible one?

04

Implement the action plan

Practical application of the selected solution to the problem.

05

Evaluate and monitor

Was my solution effective, i.e. was the problem solved?

- If executive functions are not working properly, this may show up as problems with time organization and planning, an inability to start or finish a task, difficulty maintaining attention, and emotional instability.

Logical exercises:

Exercise 1 – Parking

What is the number of the parking space under the car? Solution: Number 87 – just turn the image upside down.

Exercise 2 – Camping

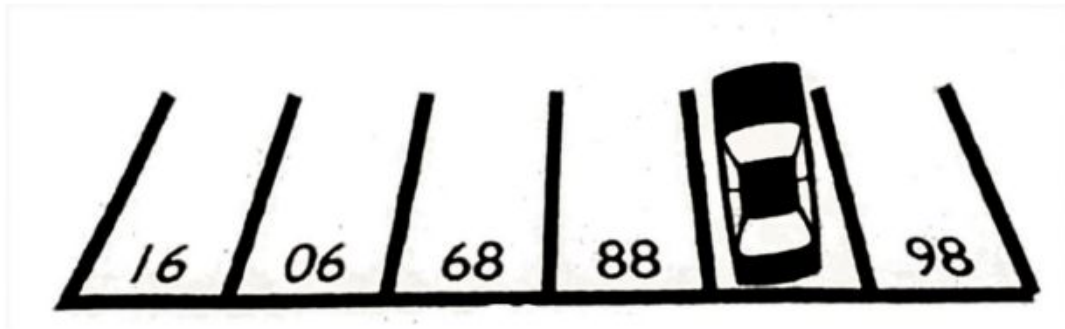
Look at the camping image and answer 8 questions about the details of the scene.

Exercise 3 – Dots

How many dots are simultaneously inside the circle and the rectangle? And how many dots are shared by all 3 shapes? Solution: 4 dots in the circle and rectangle, 1 shared by all 3 shapes.

Exercise 1 – Parking

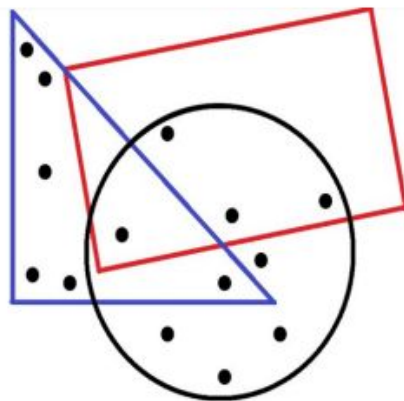
What is the number of the parking space under the car?



Solution: Number 87 – just turn the image upside down.

Exercise 2 – Dots

How many dots are simultaneously in the circle and the rectangle? And how many dots are shared by all 3 shapes? Solution: 4 dots in the circle and rectangle, 1 dot shared by all 3 shapes.



Solution: There are 4 dots simultaneously in the circle and the rectangle. There is one and only one dot shared by all 3 shapes.

Exercise 3 – Camping

Look at the camping image and answer 8 questions about the details of the scene.



1. How many people set up camp at the campsite?
2. Did they arrive today, or have they been camping for several days already?
3. How did they get to the campsite?
4. Is there a town or village near the campsite?
5. Is it morning, noon, afternoon, or evening?
6. What is Alex doing?
7. Who had duty yesterday?
8. Which day of the month is it?

 Solution:

1. There are 4 people at the campsite (4 teaspoons, 4 small plates)..
2. They have been camping for a while already (a spider web on the tent line)
3. They arrived by boat (oars leaning against the tree).
4. There is a village nearby (a hen in the lower-left corner).
5. It is noon (James's shadow is perpendicular, so the sun is highest).
6. Alex is catching butterflies (Peter is cooking, Colin is packing a backpack, James is taking photos).
7. Colin had duty yesterday (Peter is cooking today, according to the duty schedule, Colin's duty came before his).
8. Today is the 8th (because according to the schedule, Peter is supposed to cook on the 8th).

Cognitive Training - Spatial Imagination Exercises



Meeting – Spatial Imagination

Spatial visualization is one of the fundamental elements of functioning (survival) in the external world. In a broader sense, it is not only about physically determining position or direction, but also about recognizing one's place, meaning, or adopting an attitude. It is the ability to mentally manipulate two- and three-dimensional objects.

Psychologists include the following in spatial imagination:

Visual-constructive abilities

The abstract realm of diagrams, sketches, instructions, etc.

Visual-motor abilities

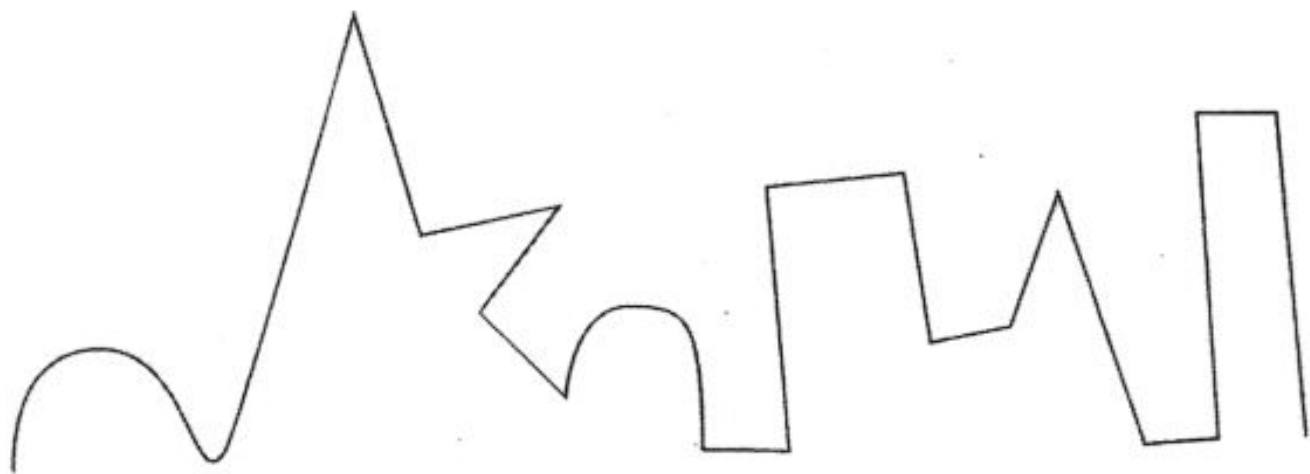
The physical aspect of handling objects, solid bodies, etc.

Perceptual abilities

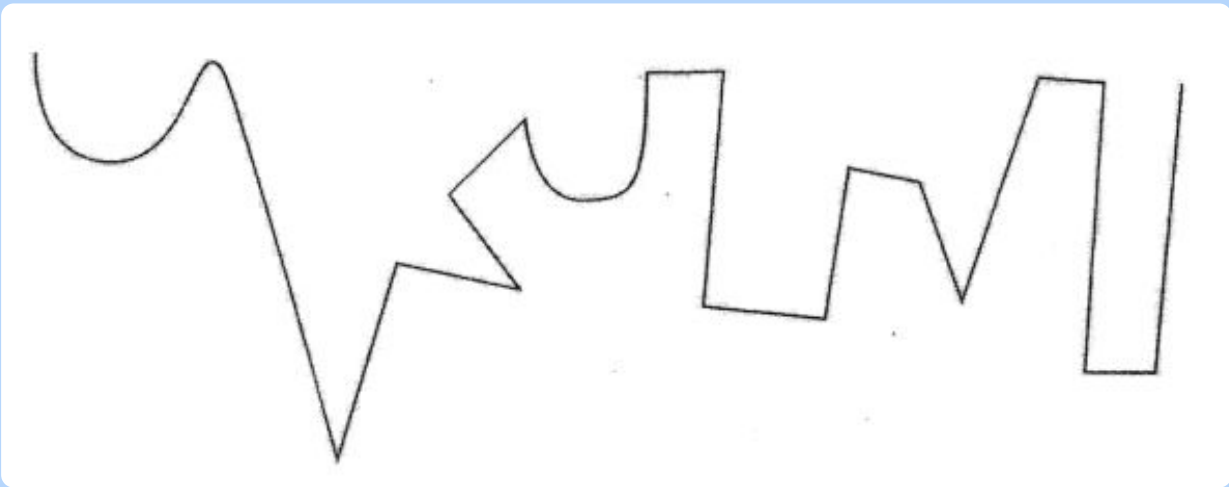
The ability to receive, organize, and process stimuli from the external and internal environment through the senses.

Exercise 1 – Mirror Image

Redraw the line below as its mirror image (as if you flipped it from top to bottom).



 Solution



Exercise 2 – Bicycle from Memory

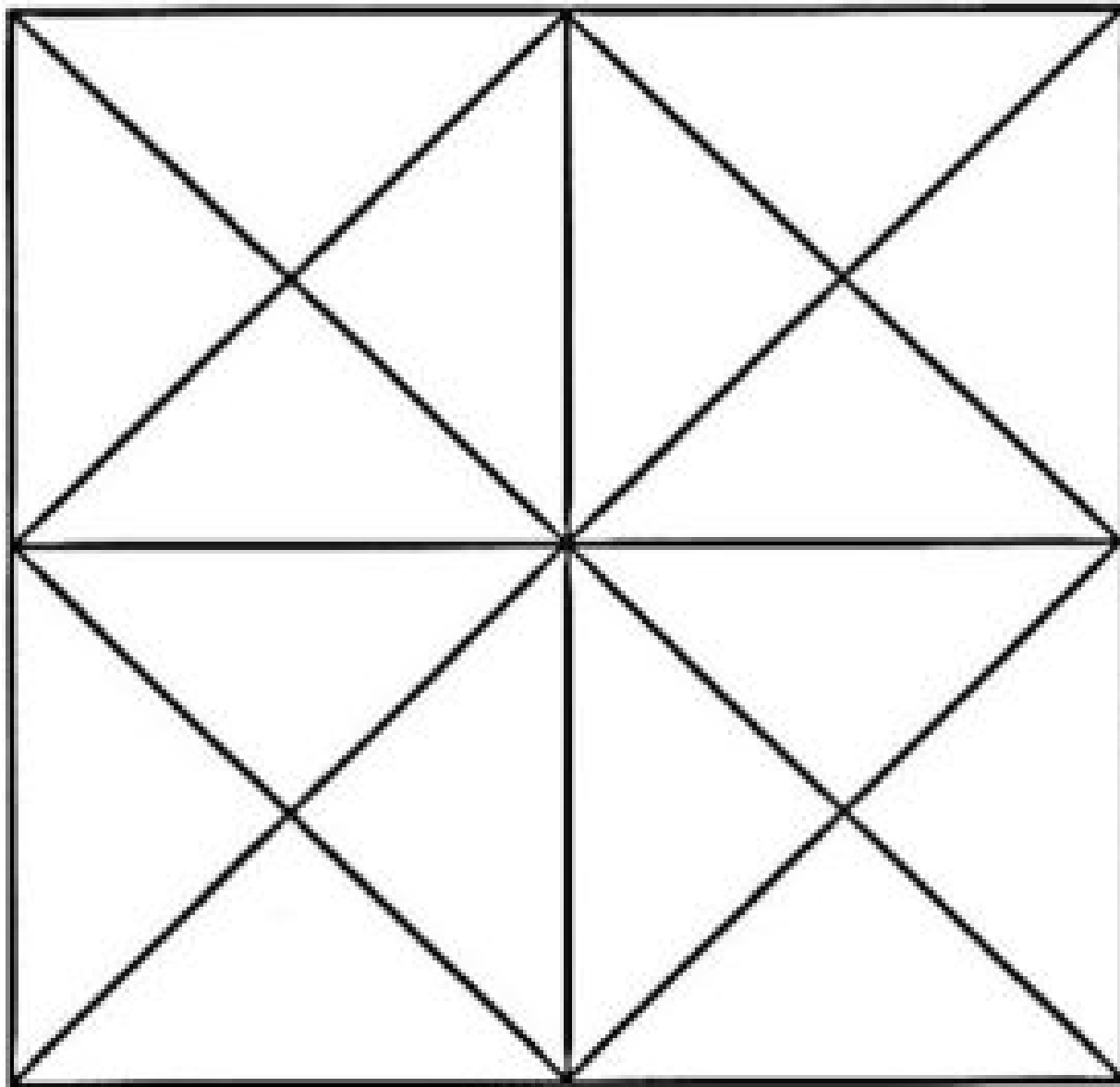
Can you draw a bicycle from memory? Just sketch it schematically — the frame, handlebars, and wheels.

 **Solution:**



Exercise 3 – Squares

Count how many squares are in the image below.



Solution: 9 squares (1 main outer square, 4 smaller ones, 1 main outer square rotated by 45° , 4 smaller ones rotated by 45°)

Memory Training

– Lesson Plan

This lesson plan is a ready-made guide for trainers, occupational therapists, and anyone leading activities for seniors. The material includes a detailed description of each exercise step by step, along with goals, outcomes, and required materials.

Main goal: Strengthening seniors' memory, concentration, imagination, and intellectual fitness through mnemonic exercises, association-based activities, and tasks that activate both hemispheres of the brain.



Welcome and Introduction

The first minutes of the session are crucial for the entire meeting. A good atmosphere at the start makes seniors more willing to engage in the exercises and less afraid of making mistakes. The facilitator should speak calmly, clearly, and with a smile — this builds trust and a sense of safety.

1 Welcoming participants

Greet each person by name, if possible. Make sure everyone feels welcome.

2 Presenting the session goal

Explain that **memory training is not about testing**, but about strengthening mental fitness. There are no wrong answers — participation and fun are what matter.

3 Explaining the benefits

Briefly present why it is worth exercising memory: slowing brain aging, improving concentration, boosting well-being, and increasing independence in everyday life.

4 Encouraging free participation

Emphasize that you are not evaluating the participants. Everyone works at their own pace, and the goal is shared enjoyment during mental exercise.

Session Flow

Below is an outline of the entire session.



Required materials

- Paper and pens
- Prepared word lists
- Photos of faces or character illustrations
- Whiteboard or flip chart

Additional aids

- Cards with numbers and symbols
- Dice, colorful pictures
- Computer or projector (optional)
- Boards with geometric shapes



Exercise 1: Memorize the order of the pictures



20 MINUTES



ASSOCIATIONS AND IMAGINATION

The facilitator shows participants 8 pictures one by one (Appendix 1). The task is to remember them in the correct order. Associations will help — connect each picture with the next one into one vivid, moving image!

The golden rule of memorizing order

- Look at the picture and create a vivid image in your mind
- Connect it with the next picture into one story
- The funnier and more unusual the association, the better!
- Repeat the sequence in your mind from the beginning

List of pictures to memorize (in order)

Apple

A red apple is riding on a miniature train!

Train

The train is pulling out from under a huge umbrella in the rain.

Umbrella

The umbrella is jumping over puddles like a giant frog.

Frog

The frog is sitting on a candle and warming its paws.

Candle

From the candle, like a magician, a hat pops out!

Hat

The hat falls into the water and a fish floats out of it.

Fish

The fish jumps out of the water and flies straight to the moon!

Moon

The moon shines brightly — the story ends!

- ❏ After showing all the pictures, the participants try to name them in order. Then we discuss together which associations helped the most!

Attachment to Exercise 1: Sequence of images to remember



Exercise 2: Memorizing Faces and Names

Difficulty remembering names is one of the most common complaints among seniors. The good news is that it does not result from poor memory — most often, the cause is simply a lack of concentration at the moment you meet a new person. This simple 4-step method effectively solves that problem.

1

Step 1: Listen carefully to the name

When meeting someone, focus solely on their name. Repeat it aloud: *"Nice to meet you, Adam."*

2

Step 2: Notice a visual feature

Find one distinctive feature: hair color, glasses, smile, or the way they dress.

3

Step 3: Create an association with the name

Connect the name with something you know: a word, a profession, a fairy-tale character, or a historical figure.

4

Step 4: Combine everything into one image

Create a vivid, colorful image that combines the name, the visual feature, and the association into one whole.

Results of the exercise: Improved attention, easier memorization of names and faces, greater confidence in social interactions, and less stress related to forgetting.

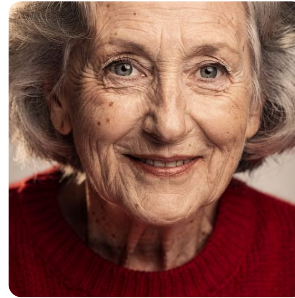
Example Characters for Practice

Below are example characters that can be used during the exercise. Each one has a distinctive visual feature and an association that makes the name easier to remember.



Adam – a tall man with a beard

Association: Adam from the Bible, wife of Eve. Image: tall Adam with a beard walks across the Eden garden.



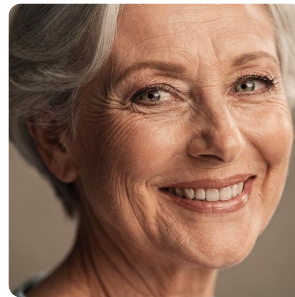
Thelma – a woman in a red sweater

Association: Thelma – a thermos, warm and red. Image: a woman in a red sweater holds a warm thermos and serves tea.



Charlie – a man with a cane

Association: Winston Churchill, popular British statesman who used a cane. Image: Charlie walks with a cane and a hat.



Greta – a woman with short grey hair

Association: Greta – grey. Image: Greta with short grey hair holds a photo of Greta Garbo and laughs.

Exercise 3: Digit symbols – memorizing numbers

Numbers are abstract and difficult to remember unless we give them a concrete, visual meaning. The digit-symbol method involves assigning each digit from 0 to 9 a simple, easy-to-imagine symbol. As a result, any number turns into a vivid little story that the brain is eager to remember.

Digit	Symbol	How to remember it?
1	 Candle	The number one is simple and thin like a candle
2	 Swan	The number two resembles a swan with its neck
3	 Heart	Three – love and the three words “I love you”
4	 Chair	The four legs of a chair like four strokes
5	 Hand	Five fingers on one hand
6	 Pipe	The number six with a loop looks like a pipe
7	 Knee-high boot	Seven looks like a knee-high boots
8	 Snowman	Eight is two balls stacked one on top of the other
9	 Balloon	Nine is a balloon with a string hanging down
10	 Ball	Zero is round like a ball

Example of applying Exercise 3:

Number symbols – learning to memorize numbers

Mark was born on February 7

- Digit 7 = knee-high boots
- Image: Mark is born in huge, funny knee-highboots that push him out of the crib.

Practice with your own numbers!

- Apartment number
- Your age
- Date of birth
- Bus number
- Phone number (simplified)

Exercise effects: Easier memorization of numbers, development of associative memory, enrichment of imagination, improved language skills, and greater independence in everyday life.

Exercise 4: Visual-motor coordination

This exercise activates the brain through imultaneous reception of visual stimuli and performing movements. Training reaction to signals improves reflexes, concentration, and coordination – skills in everyday life. The exercise is enjoyable and engaging for the whole group.



Circle

👏 Clap your hands



Triangle

🙋 Raise your hand up



Square

👣 Stomp your foot



Star

👉 Touch your shoulder

1

Discuss the signs and responses with participants

Show each sign and practice the response together before starting.

2

Start slowly, then gradually speed up

The pace increases gradually — never speed up too much.

3

Wrap up with a discussion

Ask which responses were easiest and which were more challenging. This conversation itself is an exercise in memory and reflection.

Difficulty levels and Exercise 4 variant: Image and sound – eye-hand coordination



Slowly, one by one

The facilitator shows the signs (circle, triangle, square, star) one at a time in a set order. Participants respond with the appropriate movement.



Changing the order

The facilitator changes the order of the signs. Participants must stay alert and respond to each sign individually.



Faster pace

The facilitator shows the signs increasingly quickly. Participants practice reflexes and concentration under time pressure.



Two signs at once

The facilitator shows two signs at the same time. Participants perform two movements one after the other!

Variant 2 – Participants with cards: Each participant receives a card with one symbol. When the leader claps, the participant with the matching card raises it. One clap = one symbol, two quick claps = two symbols at once.

Exercise effects: Improved concentration, enhanced reflexes and coordination, brain activation through simultaneous receiving of stimuli and action, a sense of success and engagement.

Attachment to Exercise 4: Images and Sound – Hand-Eye Coordination



Circle



Triangle



Square



Star

Exercise 5: The Art of Counting

This exercise stimulates both hemispheres of the brain through simultaneous counting and image recognition. Participants respond quickly to the cards shown — from simple to increasingly challenging.



Show the cards

The facilitator shows a card with colorful images or a dice.



Quick counting

Participants count: fruits in the image, dots on the dice, or shapes of a given color.



Several rounds

The exercise is done in several rounds — from easier to more difficult.



Group fun

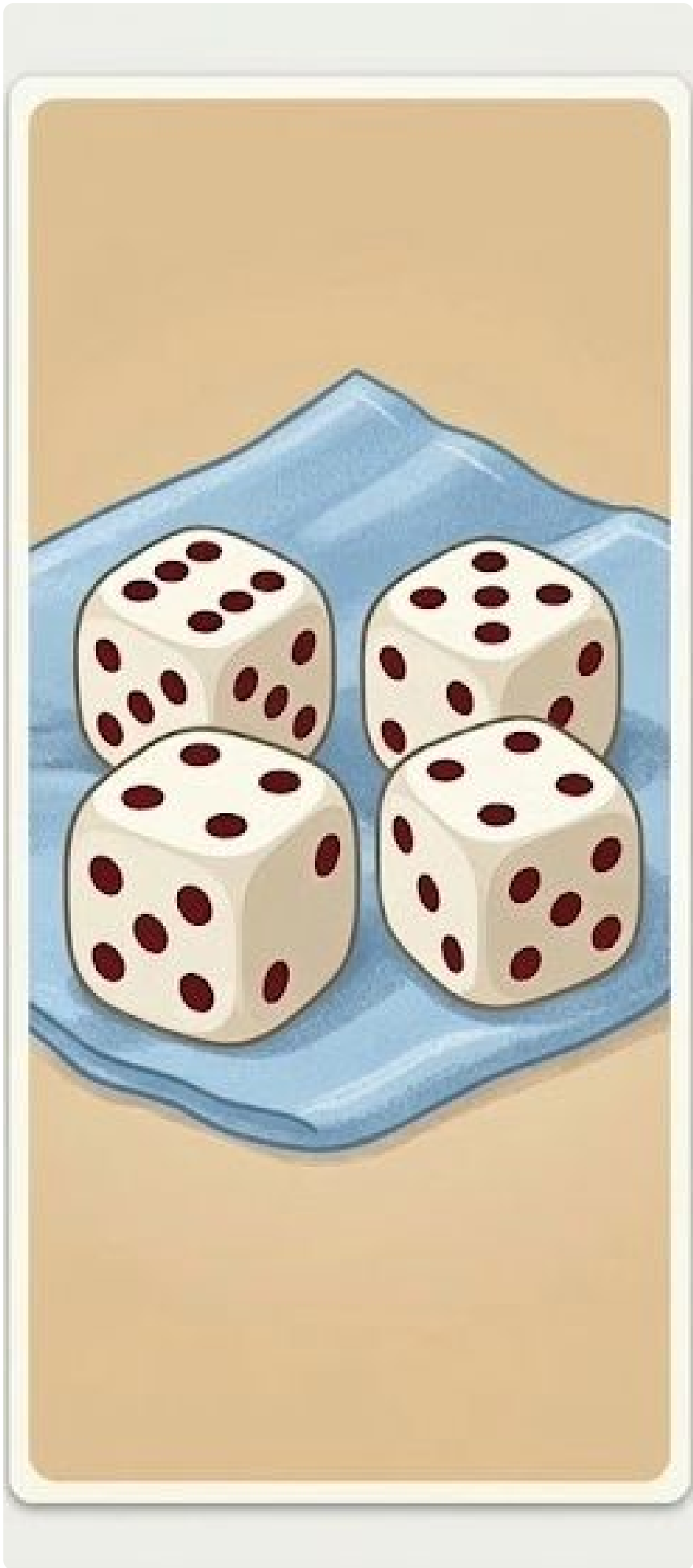
Whoever gives the answer first, counting in pairs, or a shared group answer.

Effects: Improved information processing speed, activation of the left and right hemispheres of the brain, better concentration and perception, and practice of working memory.

Attachment to Exercise 5: The Art of Counting – Fast Image Counting



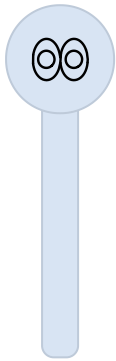






Exercise 6: Panther – spatial memory training

This exercise helps you remember the placement of objects and trains visual memory.



Step 1 – Observe carefully

The facilitator places 5–7 objects on the table, for example keys, a cup, a pen, glasses, and a book. Participants look closely at where everything is placed for about 1 minute. You can say the names of the objects out loud to help remember them better!



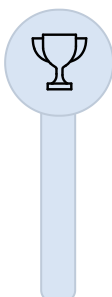
Step 2 – Cover them or look away

The facilitator covers the objects with a cloth or asks participants to close their eyes. Then they move a few objects or remove one of them. Participants must not look!



Step 3 – What changed?

Participants open their eyes and try to answer: Which object was moved? What is missing? Where was the cup — on the left or on the right? Answers can be given out loud or written down on a sheet of paper.



Step 4 – We check together

The facilitator uncovers the objects and checks the answers together with the group. Every correct answer is a success! The exercise can be repeated with different objects.

Facilitator's Guide for Exercise 6: Panther – Spatial Memory Training

Start with fewer

At the beginning, use only 3–4 objects. Gradually increase their number in later rounds.

Say them out loud

Encourage participants to name the objects out loud during observation – this really helps with memorization!

Praise the effort

Every answer is a good one! What matters is the exercise, not perfection. Create an atmosphere of fun and safety.

Everyday variants



Daily plan:

Remembering the sequence of activities planned for the day.



Medicines:

The order of taking medications and where they are placed at home.



Route to the store:

Remembering the route and the order of places passed along the way.

Everyday Variations

Exercise benefits: Regular practice of spatial memory helps in everyday life - it becomes easier to find keys, medication, or glasses. It also improves our concentration, attentiveness, and sense of orientation in space. Participants often say that after such exercises they feel more confident at home!



Session Summary

This is the time for a brief recap and consolidation of the knowledge gained. It helps participants remember the most important points, strengthens motivation to practice at home, and gives a sense of appreciation for taking part.

Which exercise was the most interesting?

Invite participants to share brief responses. Every answer is valid—the goal is for everyone to have a chance to speak and feel heard.

Which one was the easiest?

Recognizing your own strengths builds confidence. Emphasize that everyone has different aptitudes and that this is completely normal.

What can be used in everyday life?

Encourage concrete ideas: remembering a neighbor's name, a bus number, a shopping list without writing it down—small steps build big change.

Important reminder: Practice memory for 5–10 minutes every day to notice results more quickly.

Final effects: Consolidating the knowledge gained, increasing motivation for further practice, and building a sense of self-confidence and agency.

Expected Outcomes and Long-Term Benefits

Regular participation in memory training brings measurable benefits — both immediately after the sessions and in the long term. Below are the effects that participants should notice, as well as the benefits that come from consistent mental training.

After the sessions, participants:



Know memory techniques

They can create associations that make it easier to remember names, faces, and numbers in everyday life.



Have better concentration

They improve concentration and reaction time, which translates into greater safety and efficiency in everyday activities.



Train spatial memory

They navigate space more easily and plan the sequence of daily tasks, which increases their independence.



Strengthen self-confidence

They improve their well-being thanks to mental activity and the sense of success that comes from each well-executed exercise.

Long-term benefits

Slowing brain aging

Regular mental exercises support the formation of new neural connections and slow degenerative processes.

Better communication

Improved fluency and ease of recalling words, names, and dates in conversations with loved ones.

Stress reduction

Reduced anxiety related to forgetting — participants feel more competent and calmer.

Social activity

Maintaining social and intellectual activity, which is crucial for mental health and the well-being of seniors.

Integrational Meetings – Building Community

This chapter includes a scenario that will help include Ukrainian seniors in the club group. It contains proven exercises and guidance for facilitators.

Integration

We build strong bonds between participants from different countries.

Belonging

We make sure everyone feels at home in the club.

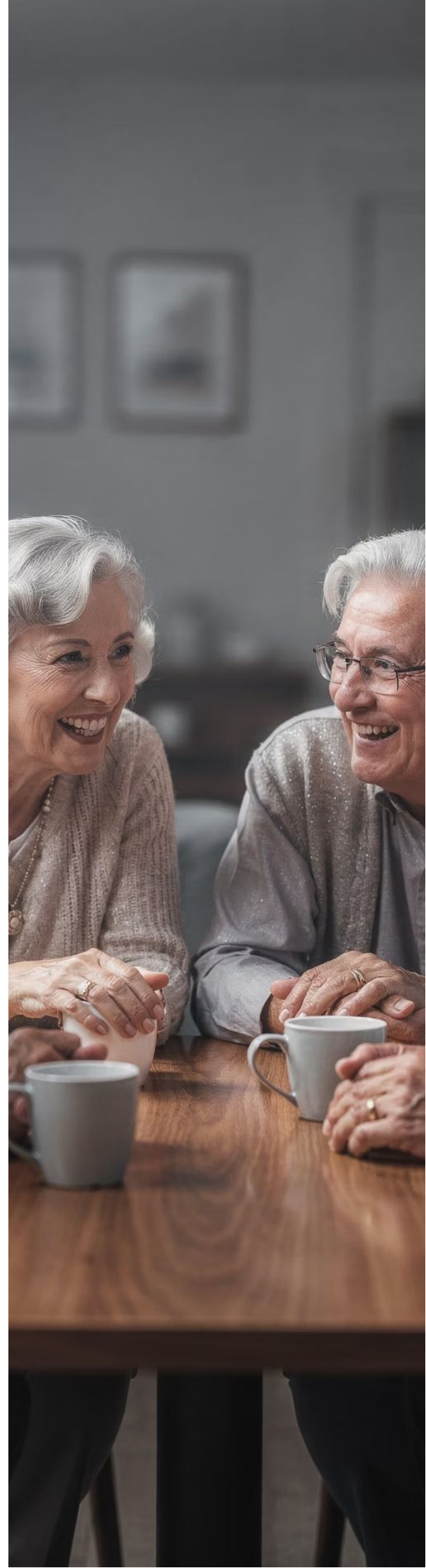
Mutual Enrichment

We share talents, traditions, and experience.

Communication

We break down language barriers with joy and humor.

Material for staff working with seniors prepared in collaboration with working groups from Poland, the Czech Republic, and Ukraine.





The role of the Buddy — integration mentor

Buddy, or integration mentor, plays a key role in introducing new participants from Ukraine to the senior club. This person becomes the first point of contact for the newcomer — a true guide to the new environment, helping to overcome feelings of loneliness and disorientation. A good buddy is patient, warm, and open — someone who understands that a smile and a kind gesture mean more than a thousand words.

The mentor's role does not end with a formal welcome. The buddy accompanies the participant throughout the entire adaptation period: from the first step into the club, through workshops, all the way to casual conversations over tea.

Buddy Duties

Orientation in the space

Welcoming the participant and showing them around the club — pointing out important places such as the restrooms, workshop area, relaxation corner, and dining area.

Language support

Translating important information and helping with communication — especially at the beginning, when the language barrier may be the biggest obstacle.

Help with activities

Assisting during workshops and activities — providing both practical and emotional support.

Answering questions

Being available to the participant at all times so that no one feels left alone with their doubts.

Building relationships

Actively supporting the participant in making contact with other group members, which speeds up the process of building genuine bonds.



Icebreaker Exercise 1:

"One world, many features"

This is a simple yet highly effective exercise that opens integration sessions. Its main purpose is to quickly break down initial barriers between participants and show that despite different languages, traditions, or life experiences, we have a lot in common.

Objectives of the exercise



Building the First Connection

The exercise helps participants who do not yet know each other — or are just getting to know one another — to build relationships.



Noticing Similarities

It helps participants notice shared traits, experiences, and interests among people from different backgrounds.



A Sense of Safety

It strengthens the sense of belonging and reduces tension and shyness within the group.



Encouraging Conversation

It supports communication in Polish-Czech-Ukrainian groups by breaking down language barriers through natural exchange.

Duration

Approximately 15–20 minutes,
with the option to extend

Number of participants

Groups of 3–5 people

Materials needed: colored 5×5 cm cards, markers, tables, and a wall or flip chart for presentations

Step-by-step process

Step 1. Group formation

The facilitator divides the participants into small, mixed teams. It is worth ensuring that the groups are as diverse as possible, while still being small enough for everyone to speak.

Step 2. Distributing materials

Each group receives colored cards (about 10–15 pieces) and markers. Different card colors can be used for each group, which will make the later presentation easier.

Step 3. Explaining the task

The facilitator explains that each group's task is to find as many answers as possible to the question: "What connects us?" They write one thing that connects them on each card, and then continue writing additional shared elements on the remaining cards.

Step 4. Group work

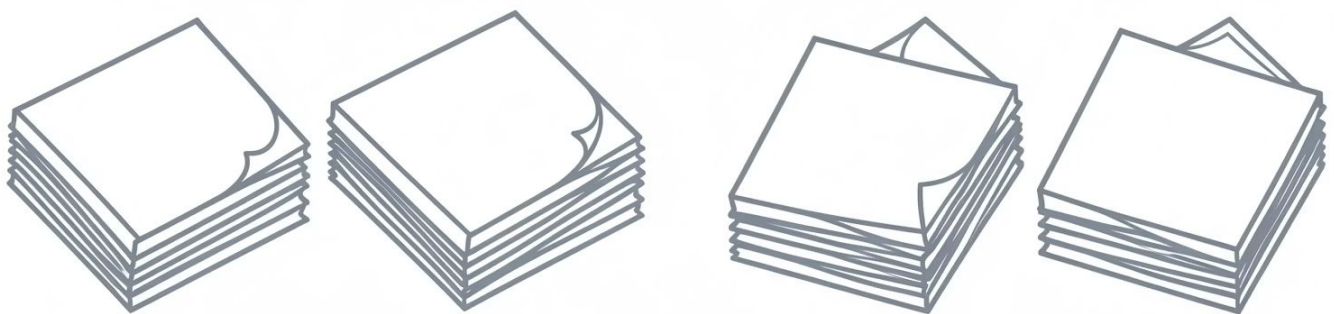
The groups talk and look for common points, e.g.: all the people are women, everyone likes to read, someone wears glasses, several people live in the same area, everyone likes walking, everyone has grandchildren, everyone likes coffee or tea, everyone attends classes at the club.

Step 5. Support from the facilitator

The facilitator walks around the groups, observes the dynamics, and supports the participants. Helpful questions: What do you like to do in your free time? Do you have similar interests? Is there anything that connects you in your appearance or clothing? Do you live near each other? Do you have similar family experiences? The facilitator's role is to support, not do the work for the group.

Step 6. Presentation of results

After finishing their work, each group presents its answers to the whole group. Participants read out the cards one by one and show what connects them. This moment often sparks additional conversations, laughter, memories, and mutual



Examples of Common Elements

Participants may find common elements in many different areas of life. Here are examples that came up during testing of the exercise:

Appearance and Characteristics

- All people in the group are women
- Someone wears glasses
- Several people have similar hair color

Everyday Life

- Everyone likes coffee or tea
- Everyone likes to go for walks
- Everyone attends activities at the club

Interests

- Everyone likes to read
- Several people like dancing or singing
- Everyone likes to cook

Family and Relationships

- Everyone has grandchildren
- Several people live in the same neighborhood
- Everyone values peace and family

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator plays a key role in creating a safe and open atmosphere that allows participants to express themselves freely and engage in conversation.

→ **Ensure a mixed group composition**

Each group should include people from Poland, the Czech Republic, and Ukraine. This arrangement increases the chances for contact, conversation, and mutual getting to know one another.

→ **Clearly explain the rules**

Explain the task calmly and clearly, making sure that everyone understands it — including people with language barriers.

→ **Observe relationships and engagement**

Pay attention to the group dynamics, the level of activity, and whether everyone has a chance to join the conversation.

→ **Support, don't do it for them**

Approach groups, ask guiding questions, but give participants space to talk independently and discover things for themselves.

→ **Make room for conversation**

It is worth remembering that sometimes the most valuable part of the exercise is not the answers themselves, but the conversations that emerge along the way.

→ **Respond flexibly to the group's needs**

Adjust the pace, working method, and level of support to the current situation and the participants' needs.



At the end, group the cards by theme

Emphasize that we have a lot in common — even if we come from different parts of the world and speak different languages.

Exercise outcomes

After completing the exercise, participants:

Get to know one another better

Find it easier to make first connections

Notice similarities instead of focusing on differences

Feel more confident in the group

Are more ready to take part in future shared activities



The exercise can be used as an opening for a workshop, an integration meeting, or a larger series of sessions.



Integrative Exercise 2: "Places That Shaped Us"

This is one of the most moving exercises in the entire scenario. A map is not just geography — it is a story about a person: about the places that shaped them, the memories they carry in their heart, and the tastes and scents associated with specific corners of the world.

The exercise "My Place on the Map" is intended to build relationships through conversation about important places, memories, and participants' stories. It begins with maps of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Ukraine, but the most important elements remain the personal stories, emotions, and experiences that help reveal similarities despite different biographies.

Goal of the exercise

The exercise aims to build integration through conversation about places, memories, and experiences, strengthen intercultural dialogue, develop empathy and a better understanding of other people's experiences, encourage participants to share their own stories, create a sense of community in the group, and show that despite the participants' different life stories, many things may connect them.

Time

40–50 minutes (can be extended)

Groups

Pairs or small mixed Polish-Czech-Ukrainian groups

Materials

Map of Poland, Czech Republic, and Ukraine, markers, paper

Exercise Procedure

"Today we will look at the map not only as geography, but as the story of our lives. Each of us has places that are important to us: a place of birth, a place of residence, a place of memories, travel, or dreams."

Block 1. My place of origin and my place now

Poland

People from Poland mark on the map of Poland:

- place of birth
- town or region of residence

Ukraine

People from Ukraine mark on the map of Ukraine:

- place of birth
- town or region with which they are most closely connected

Czech Republic

People from the Czech Republic mark on the map of the Czech Republic:

- place of birth
- town or region of residence

What do the participants talk about?

What is special about this place?

What does it remind them of?

What childhood memories do they associate with it?

What traditions, foods, and landscapes are connected with it?

Supporting questions for the facilitator:

What do you like most about this place?

What does this city/region remind you of?

What memory is associated with it?

What is worth knowing about this place?

Block 2. Places visited in another country

In the second part, participants mark places they have visited in the other person's country.

Poland → Czechia, Ukraine

People from Poland point out places they have been to on the map of Ukraine or Czechia.

Ukraine → Poland, Czechia

People from Ukraine point out places they have been to on the map of Poland or Czechia.

Czechia → Ukraine, Poland

People from Czechia point out places they have been to on the map of Poland or Ukraine.

Next, participants talk about:

- What they saw in this place
- What they liked there
- What interested or surprised them
- What story or memory they associate with this place

This part of the exercise helps show that both sides already have some experience connected to the other person's country. As a result, the conversation becomes more equal and based on real experiences.

Block 3. Looking for shared places and recommended places

In the third part, participants look together for places that connect them, as well as places they want to recommend to each other. A simple color system can be used:

Yellow

a place known only to one person in the pair

Green

a shared place, meaning one that both people have visited or both know

Red

a recommended place worth visiting

Examples:

- if a person from Poland or Ukraine has been to Prague, and a person from the Czech Republic also knows the city, it can be marked in green,
- if a person from Poland or the Czech Republic has been to Lviv, and a person from Ukraine also knows the city, it can be marked in green,
- if a person from Ukraine or the Czech Republic has been to Kraków, and a person from Poland also knows the city, it can be marked in green,
- if a place is known only to one person in the group, it is marked in yellow,
- if the Polish participants want to recommend interesting places in Poland to the Ukrainians and Czechs (e.g. Gdańsk, Wrocław, Zakopane), they mark them in red on the map of Poland,
- if the Ukrainians want to recommend important places in Ukraine to the Poles and Czechs (e.g. Lviv, Kyiv, Odesa), they mark them in red on the map of Ukraine,
- if the Czechs want to recommend interesting places in the Czech Republic to the Poles and Ukrainians (e.g. Prague, Brno, Český Krumlov), they mark them in red on the map of the Czech Republic.

After marking the places, the participants talk about:

Which places are shared by them,

What connected them in those places,

Which places are worth visiting and why.

Presentation

Each pair or group briefly shares:

- which places they marked,
- what they learned about the other person,
- which places turned out to be shared,
- which places the participants recommended to one another.

Summary

The facilitator summarizes the exercise, emphasizing that the map showed not only different places, but also many shared stories, experiences, and points of connection.

You can end with:

"Every place is not only a point on the map, but also someone's story. Today, those stories became part of our group's shared map. It also turned out that many places can connect us — through memories, travel, and mutual recommendations."

"Every place is not only a point on the map, but also someone's story. Today, those stories became part of our group's shared map."

Why is this exercise valuable?

The exercise brings memories, emotions, and natural curiosity about another person to the surface. It helps show that even if participants come from different countries, their stories often have similar elements: family, attachment to place, travel experiences, longing, curiosity about another country, and a desire to share what is important to them.

Dividing the activity into three blocks organizes the conversation and helps participants move from talking about themselves, through sharing the experience of getting to know another country, to finding what connects them.

"Every place is not only a point on the map, but also someone's story. Today, those stories became part of our group's shared map."

Effects of the exercise:

Participants get to know one another better

They develop empathy and understanding

They are more willing to talk about their story

They notice similarities despite different experiences

They strengthen their sense of belonging to the group community

They build a shared map of experiences and relationships

The role of the facilitator

The facilitator should:

create a calm and safe atmosphere

encourage people to speak, but without pressure

support participants with guiding questions

make sure that everyone has space to talk about themselves

pay attention to what connects participants, not just to differences

help organize the markings on the map and explain the meaning of the colors

For this exercise, use maps of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Ukraine found independently online and printed out — it is important that they are legible and large enough for participants to mark them freely.



Integrative-Artistic Exercise 4: "Painting with Coffee"

The "Painting with Coffee" exercise combines conversation, memories, and creative activities. The starting theme is coffee, which evokes everyday rituals, scents, and personal associations. The exercise works well with seniors because it activates memory, the senses, and emotions, while participants first get to know one another through stories and then move on to calm, creative work with coffee.

The exercise is integrative, relaxing, and artistic in nature. It can be carried out in pairs, small groups, or with the whole group at shared tables.

Purpose of the exercise

The exercise is intended to build relationships through conversation about everyday memories and experiences, awaken positive associations and sensory memory, create a calm space for creative activity, strengthen mindfulness, relaxation, and concentration, develop artistic expression without pressure for results, and support integration through shared creation and conversation.

Time

45–90 minutes

Character

Integrative, relaxing, and artistic

Materials

A4 sheets of paper (2), paintbrushes, instant coffee, a plate, water, cups, spoons for preparing the mixture, paper towels or tissues.

Conversation about memories

The exercise begins with a conversation about coffee, which awakens memories and introduces a calm, personal mood. The facilitator invites participants to share a story or association connected with coffee:

"What does the smell of coffee remind you of?
Family home,
mother,
grandmother,
work?"

"When was coffee an important part of the day? Who did you usually drink coffee with?"

"Is drinking coffee a daily ritual? What else accompanies that moment?"

Preparation

The facilitator prepares the workstations and art materials. At the beginning, it is worth explaining that coffee can be used not only for drinking, but also for creating pictures. It is a good idea to emphasize right away that the goal is not perfect painting, but experience, play, and the opportunity to express oneself.

Coffee for painting is prepared as a thick mixture. A simple ratio can be used: **3 teaspoons of instant coffee, 1 teaspoon of water.**

Mix everything until it forms a thick painting paste. If needed, you can add more water to achieve lighter shades.

Step-by-step process

Step 1. Introduction and conversation about coffee

At the beginning, the facilitator invites participants to a short conversation about coffee. The group can be divided into pairs or small teams and asked to share a story, memory, or association connected to coffee. These may be stories about what the smell of coffee brings to mind, when it was an important part of the day, or what memories it evokes. This part helps participants open up and creates a calm, personal atmosphere.

Step 2. Introducing the technique

The facilitator shows how to prepare coffee for painting and explains that different proportions of water and coffee produce different shades. It is worth explaining to participants: a thicker mixture gives a darker color, more water produces a lighter shade, and you can paint both thin lines and broader washes.

Step 3. First sheet practice

On the first sheet, participants test the technique. They check how the brush moves, what different strokes look like, what effects more or less water create, and how to achieve darker and lighter tones. On this sheet, they can paint freely: lines, leaves, flowers, simple patterns, or small practice images.

Step 4. Creative work on the second sheet

On the second sheet, participants create their actual artwork. They may paint any image of their own choosing, a simple plant motif, a cup of coffee, a house, flowers, a landscape, or use the previously prepared patterns and inspirations. They can use the pictures included in the attachment or other simple patterns selected by the facilitator.

Step 5. Quiet conversation and creating in pairs

While painting, participants may sit in pairs or small groups and talk quietly. This part of the meeting should have a calmer character. Creating together encourages further conversation and relationship-building. It is also possible to suggest that participants prepare a work with another person in mind — for example, they can paint a picture that they later give to the person sitting next to them or to their partner from the exercise.

Step 6. Presentation of the artworks

After finishing their work, participants may show their paintings and briefly explain what they depicted, why they chose that subject, and what emotion or memory is connected to their work. The presentation can take place in a quiet circle, so that everyone has a moment to show their painting and hear a kind remark from the group. The entire conversation should be accompanied by a warm, safe atmosphere of curiosity and mutual respect.

Step 7. Summary

At the end, the facilitator can emphasize that ordinary coffee has today become a tool for conversation, memories, and creating something together. It is worth appreciating both the participants' stories and their creative courage.

Modification options

- Working in pairs or small groups

- Limiting the discussion part to one question about associations with coffee

- Giving up prepared templates and painting purely from imagination

- Asking participants to create a work for another person

- Organizing a small exhibition of the finished paintings

"This exercise works best when the pace is calm and participants do not feel pressured. It is worth giving them space both for sharing stories and for quiet creating. It is also a good idea to prepare a simple visual inspiration for those who do not know what to paint."





Integration and Art Exercise 4: “Yarn Pictures”

The “Yarn Pictures” exercise is a calm integration and arts-and-crafts workshop in which participants create soft pictures from colorful yarn. The session can be run in pairs or small groups. A format that works especially well is one in which participants work in Polish-Czech-Ukrainian mixed pairs or groups and prepare a picture for one another.

This exercise combines hands-on creativity with conversation and learning simple words — participants talk about colors, choose a motif, and make decisions together.

An additional value of the exercise is the opportunity to prepare the work as a small gift for another person. On the back, a short wish or note of thanks can be added — in Polish, Czech, or Ukrainian. This strengthens the personal and warm character of the meeting.

Goal of the exercise

The exercise is intended to build relationships through shared creative activity, strengthen cooperation in Polish-Czech-Ukrainian pairs or groups, introduce simple vocabulary such as the names of colors and materials, support mindfulness, patience, and concentration, and create a personal work that can be given to another person.

Duration

about 60–90 minutes

Number of participants

pairs or small groups (recommended mixed Polish-Czech-Ukrainian groups)

Required materials

soft colorful carded wool, construction paper or stiff sheets, sample patterns, frames or transparent sleeves, scissors, adhesive tape, markers

Step-by-step process

Preparation

The facilitator prepares the materials, sample patterns, and workspace. At the beginning, it is worth explaining that participants will create wool pictures by arranging successive layers and shapes on a sheet of paper. It is a good idea to show a finished example or briefly demonstrate the technique.

If the group is working in pairs, you can suggest that each person prepares a picture for their partner from the session.

Pairing up and choosing a motif

Participants sit in pairs (Polish-Czech-Ukrainian) and choose a motif: flowers, leaves, landscape, heart, house, abstract pattern. They talk about what kind of picture they want to create and which colors they choose.

Language conversation about materials and colors

The facilitator encourages the use of simple words in Polish, Czech, or Ukrainian: names of colors, paper, wool, scissors. This is a good moment to learn simple workshop-related vocabulary from one another.

Preparing the wool

Participants choose the colors needed for their work. If a given element is meant to have a blended shade, two colors of wool can be combined, for example white and blue, and gently mixed together. The wool should be prepared so that it is light, fluffy, and easy to arrange. This is an important stage, because the softness and aesthetic quality of the work depend on it.

Laying out the background

First, participants lay out the background of the picture. Depending on the pattern and format of the work, the wool can be arranged horizontally or vertically so that it covers the surface of the paper and creates a base for the remaining elements.

Creating the main motif

They add flowers, branches, leaves, outlines, and decorative elements. The colors can be combined and layered.

Securing the work

After finishing, the picture should be secured very gently. It can be placed in a frame or carefully inserted into a transparent sleeve.

If the picture is placed in a sleeve, it is worth doing it very gently so as not to disturb the arranged wool. It is best if the sleeve is slightly larger than the work — then the excess can be trimmed and secured with tape on the back.

Adding a message or wishes

On the back of the artwork, you can add a short wish, a note of thanks, or a kind message for the person who will receive the picture. For example, it could be:

- "Thank you for the time we spent together,"
- "It was nice to work together today,"
- "With warm regards,"
- "As a keepsake from our meeting."

You can suggest that:

- the person from the Czech Republic writes the message in Czech,
- the person from Ukraine writes the message in Ukrainian,
- the person from Poland writes the message in Polish,
- or that the partner helps write a short sentence in the other language.

This further strengthens integration and supports language learning in a practical, heartfelt way.

Presentation of the works

At the end, participants can show their pictures and briefly say:

- why they chose that motif,
- which colors they used,
- who they want to give their work to,
- what they wrote on the back.

If there are more participants, you can also set up a small exhibition of the works on a table, windowsill, or bulletin board so everyone can calmly look at the pictures one by one. This format allows people to appreciate the variety of ideas and provides an opportunity to talk about the details, colors, and emotions that accompanied the creative process.

Effects of the exercise

- They get to know each other better while working in pairs
- They learn simple words and color names from one another
- They develop patience and concentration
- They experience calm, creative activity
- They build warm relationships through exchanging works and wishes
- They leave the meeting with a ready-made personal keepsake

Why is this exercise valuable?

The exercise combines creativity, gentleness, and relationship-building. Participants talk, choose colors, and learn from one another, which makes getting acquainted feel natural and calm. Giving the finished work to another person adds a personal dimension to the meeting and leaves a pleasant memory.

Role of the facilitator

show how to work with wool

encourage conversation in pairs

support participants in choosing colors and composition

maintain a calm, friendly atmosphere

remind participants of simple vocabulary in Polish, Czech, and Ukrainian

help with writing short messages

assist people who do not feel confident with manual activities



Integration and Art Exercise 5: “The Funny Self-Portrait”

The “Funny Self-Portrait” exercise combines humour, self-expression, and getting to know one another in the group. Each participant draws their own self-portrait without looking at the paper — the point is not artistic talent, but smiles and natural contact with others. The exercise works well as a warm-up at the start of a meeting, as it relaxes the atmosphere and encourages laughter.

The exercise is introductory, integrative, and relaxing in nature. It can be run individually with a presentation in a circle, or in pairs.

Purpose of the exercise

The exercise is designed to break the ice and relax the atmosphere within the group, build a sense of humour and mutual goodwill, encourage participants to talk about themselves in a light and undemanding way, create a space where everyone can express themselves without pressure to produce a result, and foster integration through shared laughter and presentation.

Exercise Details: “The Funny Self-Portrait”

Duration

15–25 minutes

Nature

Introductory,
integrative, and
relaxing

Materials

A4 sheets of paper,
markers or pens,
and optionally tape
for displaying the
works on the wall.

Introduction and Instructions

The exercise begins with a brief set of instructions that immediately sets a light mood. The facilitator invites participants to draw a self-portrait without looking at the paper — it is important to emphasise that the goal is fun, not artistic quality.

“Draw your face —
eyes, nose, mouth,
ears, and hair —
but without looking
at the paper!”

“Do not lift your
pen from the paper
until you have
finished.”

“Sign the paper
with your name
and, optionally,
your place of
residence.”

Preparation

The facilitator prepares sheets of paper and markers for each participant. It is worth demonstrating the exercise on yourself first — this immediately relaxes the atmosphere and shows that the goal is shared fun, not evaluation.

Step-by-step process

Step 1. Distributing materials

Each participant receives an A4 sheet of paper and a marker or pen. The facilitator briefly explains the rules: draw your face without looking at the paper, do not lift your pen from the paper, draw eyes, nose, mouth, ears, and hair.

Step 2. Drawing the self-portrait

Participants draw their faces without looking at the paper. The drawing time is approximately 2 minutes. The facilitator encourages calm drawing and reminds participants that the result is meant to be funny — that is precisely the point!

Step 3. Signing the paper

Each participant signs the paper with their name and, optionally, their place of residence or country of origin. This makes it easier to get to know one another afterwards.

Step 4. Presentation in a circle

One by one, each person shows their self-portrait and says a few sentences about themselves, answering the questions: What is my name? How am I feeling right now? What mood did I come to the meeting in? Where am I from or where do I live? (optional)

Role of the facilitator

The facilitator plays a key role in giving the exercise a light and safe character. It is important to show from the very beginning that the goal is fun, not evaluation.

→ **demonstrate the exercise on yourself first**

This immediately relaxes the atmosphere and shows that the result is meant to be funny.

→ **encourage laughter and goodwill**

Emphasise that the funnier the drawing, the better — that is precisely the point.

→ **maintain a calm pace during the presentation**

Give each participant time to speak without rushing.

⇒ **support shy participants**

Encourage gently, but do not pressure anyone to say more than they wish.

Modification options

Asking participants to describe their drawing in one word

Organising a small exhibition of self-portraits on the wall

Working in pairs — each person draws their partner's portrait without looking

Adding a question about a favourite hobby or interest during the presentation

„This exercise works best when the facilitator is the first to laugh at their own drawing. Participants immediately see that there is no room for judgement here — only room for joy and getting to know one another.“

Effects of the exercise

- Participants quickly learn the names and faces of others in the group
- Shared laughter builds a sense of safety and openness
- Everyone can express themselves without pressure to produce an artistic result
- The exercise breaks the ice within the very first minutes of the meeting
- Participants leave with a ready-made keepsake — their funny self-portrait

Why is this exercise valuable?

The exercise shows that integration can begin with laughter. Participants immediately see that in this group it is perfectly fine to be yourself — imperfect, funny, and authentic. As a result, subsequent exercises and conversations take place in a much more open atmosphere.

Schedule

Introduction and instructions – 3 min

Drawing – 2 min

Presentations in a circle – 10–15 min

Summary – 3 min



Exercise 6: Culinary Workshop – “Food as a Code of Trust”

Food is a universal language that builds trust and brings together participants from different countries.

Ukrainian Flavours

Dumplings (pierogi), potato pancakes (deruny), cheesecakes, Ukrainian borscht — participants demonstrate and share stories about the culinary traditions of their country.

Polish and Czech Traditions

Poles and Czechs present their own dishes — each country has its specialities, which become the subject of warm conversation and comparisons.

Sharing Stories

Everyone shares how their mother used to cook, which dish reminds them of childhood, and what they loved to eat when they were young.

A Shared Dish

Participants try to come up with a shared dish that combines elements of Ukrainian, Polish, and Czech cuisine — creativity is very welcome!



Culinary Workshop – Reflection and Tasting Questions

Differences

What differences did participants notice in the cuisines of the individual countries? What surprised them?

Similarities

What common ingredients appeared in dishes from different countries?
Where do the flavours meet?

A Shared Dish

Can we invent a dish that would combine elements of all three cuisines?
What would it be called?

- At the end of the workshop, all participants take a group photo around the table — a symbolic "family circle" that reflects the newly formed bonds. This photo is worth displaying in the club as a keepsake and a symbol of the community's openness.



Practical Tips for Staff

Start with a conversation, not procedures

Before the first meeting, find out what the participant needs, what they are afraid of, and what they enjoy. The form is important, but a warm conversation is even more important. Ask: "What would you like to do at the club?" — that immediately builds a relationship.

Choose a buddy with heart

The buddy should be patient, open, and have similar interests to the new participant. A pair like "retired teacher and retired teacher" or "cooking enthusiast and cooking enthusiast" will naturally find common ground.

Use visual aids

Pictograms, photos, simple drawings — all of these help with communication when words fail. Prepare a set of simple cards with illustrations showing the most important information about the club and its rules.

Celebrate small successes

When a participant asks about something in Polish for the first time on their own, when they choose a workshop by themselves, or when they smile in the company of others — acknowledge it. Positive reinforcement works wonders and builds confidence.

Speak slowly and clearly

People from Ukraine may have difficulty understanding when you speak too quickly. Try to speak calmly, clearly, and in short sentences.

Engage the whole group

Integration is not only the responsibility of the buddy and coordinator. Encourage the whole group to be open and supportive. Short workshops for regular club members about Ukrainian culture will help build mutual understanding.

Important: Do not assume that the participant will speak up on their own when they do not understand something or need help. Regular, discreet check-ins — “How are you feeling today? Is everything okay?” — are key to effective support.

Educational Materials

New Senior 2025–2026

This handbook was created as part of an 18-month international educational project **"New Senior"**, project number 2024-2-PL01-KA210-ADU, implemented from 1 March 2025 to 30 August 2026 in cooperation between **MOST Association** from Katowice and the Czech organization **KCS Ostrava**.

The publication is based on the belief that lifelong learning is key to maintaining health, independence, and a sense of community in a rapidly changing world. More than 40 people took part in the activities, including seniors from Poland, the Czech Republic, and Ukraine, as well as educational staff from Poland and the Czech Republic.

The handbook contains comprehensive educational materials, including leaflets and instructional videos, supporting the development of seniors' cognitive and digital skills. Its goal is not only to improve skills, but also to enhance quality of life by encouraging activity and strengthening independence.

The materials developed provide lasting support for educators, trainers, and seniors themselves, promoting the idea of lifelong learning.



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