

If you want to go fast, walk alone. If you want to go far, walk together.

African proverb

SOURCE: <http://www.govint.org/english/main-menu/good-practice/publications/if-you-want-to-go-fast.html>

This handbook offers theoretical insights, glimpses of background information and practical tools on a variety of topics related to mentoring. It is meant for people who have taken up the demanding yet rewarding task to become a mentor to a European Voluntary Service volunteer who is spending some time of his life in another country and cultural context. The handbook is intended to be a daily guide for an EVS mentor in supporting the volunteer's personal development path.

The topics covered in the handbook include what is mentoring, the roles of an EVS mentor and a volunteer, how to build trust in a mentoring relationship, how to deal with cultural differences, manage conflicts and the learning processes of an EVS volunteer. It takes a deeper look in a variety of tools useful in mentoring: counseling, coaching, active listening and feedback. Also, the well-being of an EVS mentor is of importance and time and stress management, dangers of a mentoring process and rewarding for accomplishments have their place in the practical guide.



Erasmus+



Youth  
in Action  
Programme

# Be the Hero, be an EVS Mentor!

**PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR EUROPEAN  
VOLUNTARY SERVICE MENTORS**



**Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.**

John Crosby

This practical guide is an outcome of a follow-up training „Baltic TC for EVS Mentors“, which was carried out for the second time on February 8<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in Sigulda, Latvia. The guide provides an easy-to-read and convenient everyday manual for any European Voluntary Service mentor responsible of coaching a foreign volunteer living in a different cultural context.

The training was carried out in cooperation with Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian National Agencies for the EU Youth in Action program. Its aim has been to support the quality of European Voluntary Service (EVS) hosting projects by developing the competencies of the EVS mentors in a variety of project-related topics and raising their awareness about being a mentor.

The objectives of the training course included offering the participants a better understanding of a mentor's role in the EVS cycle, raising their awareness of different approaches to mentoring and coaching, improving their abilities to organize volunteer's learning process and providing them with tools in order to support better their volunteers.

#### Acknowledgments

Special thanks goes to the participants of the training course, who came with very diverse backgrounds and experiences in mentoring and their contribution to the training process and the compilation of this practical guide made it very exciting and enjoyable experience.

Also, great acknowledgements to five Latvian mentoring and coaching experts, who were also invited to the training course to share their knowledge and practices: Uldis Pāvuls, Liene Jurgelāne, Lāsma Novika, Andra Šulce, Daiga Ozoliņa-Punāne.

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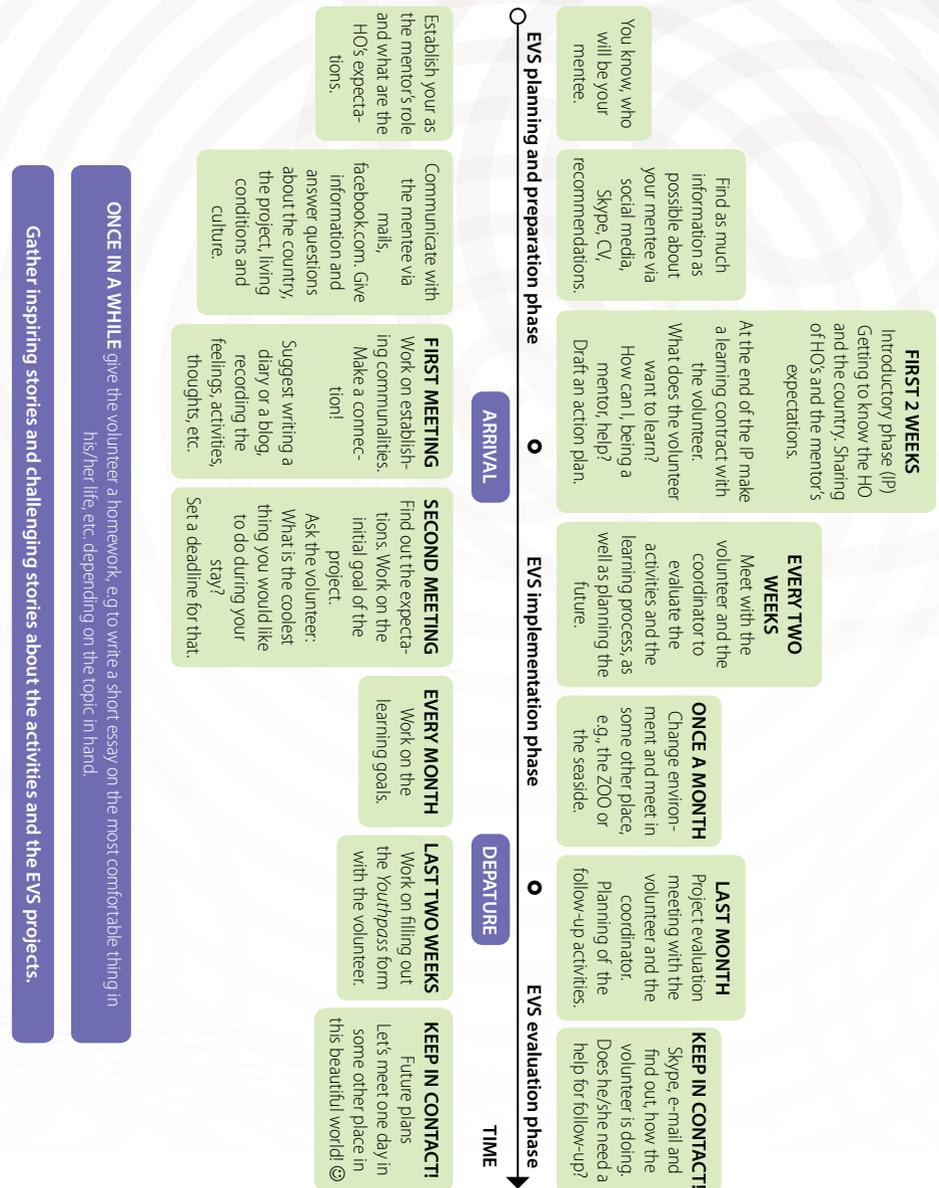
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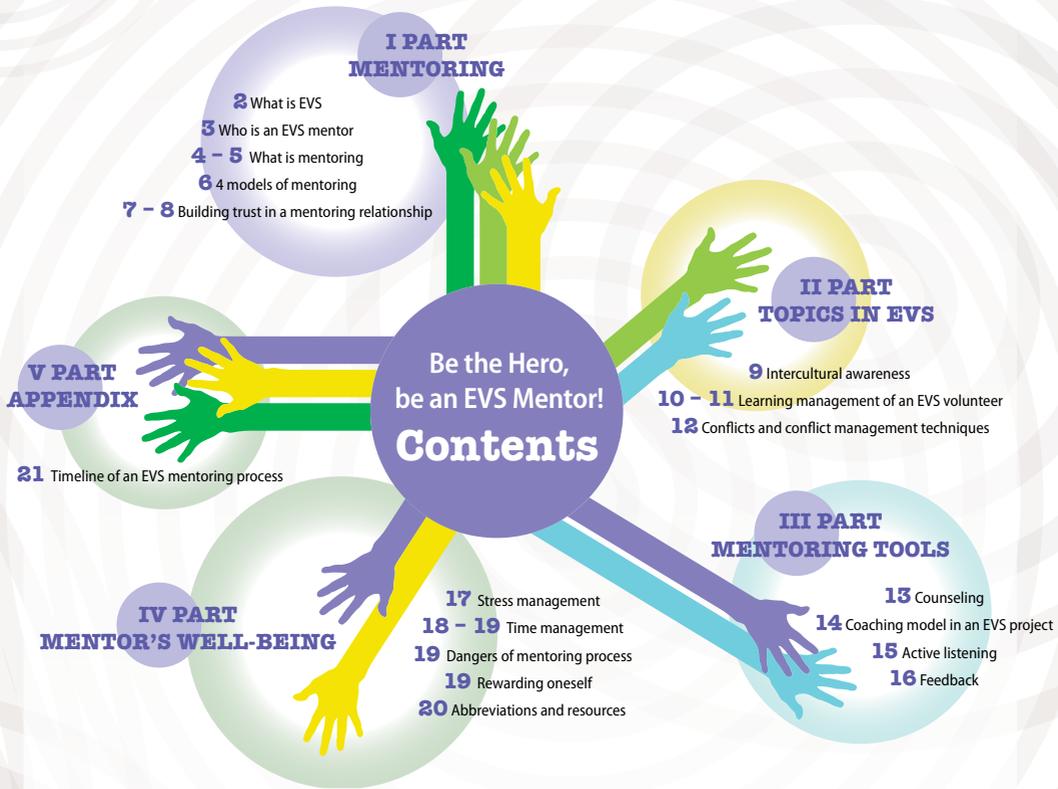


## PART V: APPENDIX

### Timeline of the mentoring process

The chart below offers a suggestion for the mentoring cycle during an EVS project.





## Symbols

On various pages of the guide you will find these symbols, which are there in order to make the manual easier and friendlier for the user. Bear in mind their meanings!



Information box, adding theoretical or practical info to the rest of the text



Good idea or brilliant advice! Also, nota bene!



Good thought, story or quote relevant to the topic



Task for an EVS mentor in order to get some food for thought and challenge oneself



Advice for the self-development

## PART I: MENTORING

### What is EVS

European Voluntary Service (EVS) is a programme activity financed by the European Commission (EC) under the Erasmus+: Youth in Action (Erasmus+: YiA) programme. EVS is a „learning service“: through experience the volunteer can improve or develop skills that help towards personal, professional and educational development.



#### ERASMUS+: YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

Erasmus+: Youth in Action programme of the European Commission is an important tool of the European Union to support the youth in Europe and in the world. It is a citizen education programme for young people aimed at non-formal learning through mobility and intercultural dialogue.

#### What is EVS?

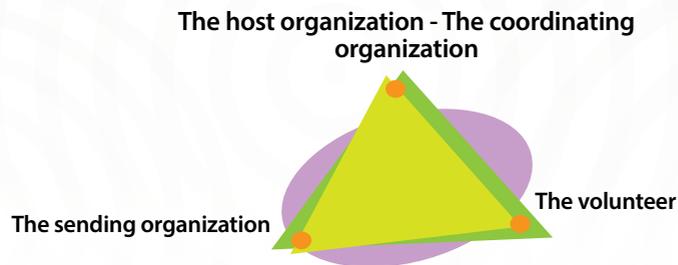
- the agreed and approved EC Erasmus+: YiA project;
- the voluntary work;
- 2\*-12 months long service;
- full time service (activities+language course+trainings) should take up at least 30 and not more than 38 h/per week;
- participant can be 17 - 30 years old;
- *Youthpass* Certificate describe and validate learning outcomes.

#### What is not EVS?

- occasional, unstructured, part-time volunteering;
- an internship in an enterprise;
- a paid job and it must not replace paid jobs;
- a recreation or tourist activity;
- a language course;
- exploitation of a cheap workforce;
- a period of study or vocational training abroad.

\* EVS Service involving young people with fewer opportunities can be lasting between 2 weeks and 12 months.  
SOURCE: [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf)

### A successful EVS project requires close co-operation among at least three key players:



Each volunteer has the opportunity to participate in a series of trainings (on-arrival, mid-term) as well receive language training and have a mentor who will support the volunteer throughout the volunteering period.

Programme Erasmus+: Youth in Action is about

**Non-formal learning, Cultural diversity**

### Who is an EVS mentor

An EVS mentor is a „crazy“ person who likes to work with youngsters, is familiar with non-formal education and programme Erasmus+: Youth in Action. It is a person who is motivated to support the volunteer in his/her learning process and as a guide in the unknown world of the hosting country.



#### What is the role of an EVS mentor?

A mentor is responsible for

- providing personal support;
- learning process support, helping to draft the learning plan;
- discussing the learning achievements with the volunteer;
- helping to organize the learning achievements in view of the *Youthpass* certificate;
- participating in the meeting with the coordinator and the volunteer to evaluate the project and adapt the activities accordingly.

#### Note this!

The mentor must be identified in the hosting organization!

A mentor cannot be the person who assigns and supervises the tasks of the volunteer!



#### A mentor has to be aware of

**the hosting organization (HO) and the coordinating organization (CO)** –

the target group, the volunteer's role in the HO, attitude towards conflict management;

**the volunteer** – age, gender, motivation, expectations;

**the work** – competences, activities, working plan and time management;

**the role** – position in the HO or the CO, relation with the volunteer, obligations within the project.



#### Think through!

How do you see your role as an EVS mentor?

How do you want to develop?

**A mentor is like a shadow – invisible, but always there, helping to put various pictures together and see larger perspectives.**

**Sanita** (The Netherlands, 12 months)

A mentor is the one who can help and support all in all in the project but also in everyday life – finding the information and the important places, possibilities where to spend the free time, helps to set the goals, and set apart the everyday issues. And with helping I mean that the mentor is free to support and not do it instead of me. The mentor is a sort of a night-watch. Always there and ready to support.

# What is mentoring

Different sources define mentorship and different concepts related to it in a somewhat different way. In the framework of the EVS, the training „Baltic TC for EVS mentors“ and throughout this book we follow these definitions that we developed in the framework of the training and in the form of Map of Mentoring



## – ROLE OF THE MENTOR

A person who is experienced either in EVS or guiding, coaching, leading people (preferably in both) and whose role is to support socially, emotionally, culturally and learning-wise a foreign volunteer; he guides the volunteer to analyze his actions more in depth, gives a feedback, makes him doubt in himself (if needed) and encourages in finding solutions to different situations



## – AIM OF EVS MENTORSHIP

Refers to a relationship between an EVS volunteer and his/her mentor which aims at supporting the volunteer in coping with the everyday life and culture of hosting country, acknowledging his/her learning process during the service, helping to set and follow the learning goals during the service



## ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER

A person who has decided to spend 2-12 months of his/her life abroad in the framework of EVS, gets the support from a knowledgeable mentor during his/her EVS project



## – EVS MENTOR

### CHARACTERISTICS

Enthusiastic, flexible, open-minded, responsible, trustworthy, skilled in feedback, setting boundaries and solving problems, supportive, good listener, experienced, self-motivated, good in social and communication skills

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Integration, encouragement, evaluation of learning processes, creating supportive atmosphere, help and support in goal-setting



## – HOW IS MENTORING DONE

Using a variety of techniques (such as counseling, coaching, active listening and feedback), but also simple walks, talks, meetings, planning the activities and learning process and taking up joint free time activities



## – EVS VOLUNTEER

### CHARACTERISTICS

Motivated, responsible, open to cultural differences, challenges and new experiences, creative, entrepreneurial, independent, not afraid of making mistakes or looking stupid, social, self-aware

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Fulfilling his tasks, willingness to evaluate his own work and learning process, take an interest in his project and participate actively, responsible for one's own actions, decisions and learning outcomes



## – DANGERS (if not done effectively)

Looses interest, is upset, quits, takes too much responsibility, misses important things about the volunteer, has too much free time



## – IMPACT (if done effectively)

Self-development for both sides, practice and improvement of foreign languages, new contacts and experience, rise of self-confidence and satisfaction, new skills, widened horizons



## – DANGERS (if not done effectively)

Looses interest and motivation, quits; not listening to his mentor, always waiting for help (not being proactive), being a closed person, goes home, gets bored, wrong self-perception, falls back to comfort zone, panics, self-confidence crashes



## Origins of the word „mentor“

In Greek mythology, Mentor was the son of Alkimus or Anchialus. In his old age Mentor was a friend of Odysseus who placed Mentor and Odysseus' foster-brother Eumaeus in charge of his son Telemachus, and of Odysseus' palace, when Odysseus left for the Trojan War.

When Athena visited Telemachus she took the disguise of Mentor to hide herself from the suitors and go abroad to find out what happened to his father. When Odysseus returned to Ithaca, Athena appeared briefly in the form of Mentor again at Odysseus' palace.

Because of Mentor's relationship with Telemachus, and the disguised Athena's encouragement and practical plans for dealing personal dilemmas, the personal name Mentor has been adopted in English as a term meaning someone who imparts wisdom to and shares knowledge with a less experienced colleague.

SOURCE: [http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/help/students/student\\_network/origin.html](http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/help/students/student_network/origin.html)



**I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.**

Maya Angelou

SOURCE: <http://www.ocbenji.com/blog/2008/08/04/quotes-10/>

## Sandra (Romania, 10 months)

Once when I felt really down my mentor told me a story which is one of my favorite right now.

The story is about the God and the Man. In the end of his life the Man met the God and together they were looking on the foot prints they had left on the way of the Man's life. In one period of it there were only one foot prints left on the ground, so the Man asked the God: „Why did you left me when I needed you the most?“ The God answered: „I didn't left you – I took you on my hands and carried through this time.“

## Terje (Romania, 9 months)

I liked that my mentor was able to left me a feeling that even if we do not have everyday contact I felt that she is always there. And the most I liked that she really followed my learning process and helped me to notice it much better also. I did not have very close relationship with my mentor. But she was always there for me if I needed. And she was really helpful if needed. It was OK for me and worked for me like that.

## 4 models of mentoring

There are different models of mentoring and which model is used depends greatly on the needs of a mentor, the aims of mentoring in a particular situation, programme and the individual characteristics of a mentor and a mentee and the relationship they have. In this context we present the following four models of mentoring. They are based on 2 larger theoretical approaches – one is done by Wang and Odell in 2002, 2007 *SOURCE: [ftp://ftp.math.ethz.ch/EMIS/proceedings/PME31/3/201.pdf](http://ftp.math.ethz.ch/EMIS/proceedings/PME31/3/201.pdf)* and another one by Nicholls in 2006.

### 1. Humanistic model

The aim of a humanistic model (Wang & Odell 2002, 2007) is to support mentee in building self-confidence and self-awareness in order to enable him cope with problems, challenges he is facing. The main focus of a mentoring is mostly for supporting emotionally and motivating mentee as a person in order to be able to manage different life situations.

### 3. The competency model

The competency model (Nicholls 2006) is based on the principle that the skills that are needed for working a particular field are defined in the competencies of the professional standards of this profession. The aim of mentoring here is to support the acquiring and developing of these competencies that are described in the competency standards. The role of the mentor is to be both a trainer and a coach who is monitoring the activities of a mentee, gives feedback to him and coaches the mentee in order to guarantee the acquiring of the needed competencies. So, there are certain written rules (by some outside source) which have to be met.

### 2. The apprenticeship model (the pupil/student model)

The apprenticeship model (Nicholls 2006) is also called the behavioristic model (Wang & Odell 2002, 2007). In this case a mentor is like a role model for mentee, there is a one-way relationship, where the mentor transfers his social knowledge and skills to the mentee. In apprenticeship model the mentee is working side by side with the mentor. During the process when the self-confidence and skills of mentee are growing also his responsibilities are increasing. So the role of the mentor becomes less and less important and the role of the mentee increases.

### 4. The reflective model

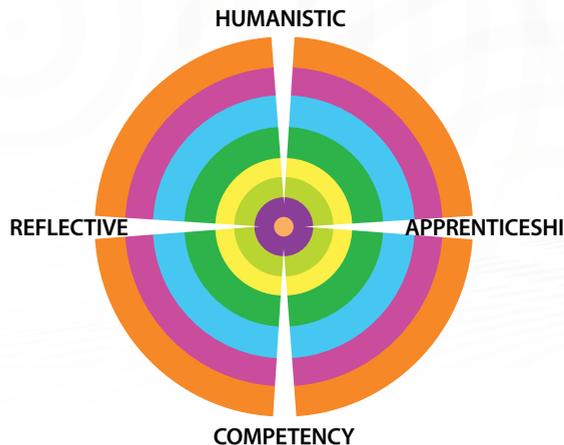
The reflective model (Nicholls 2006) is also called as critical-constructive model (Wang and Odell 2002, 2007). Given model assumes from the mentor not only to be role-model or instructor, but also a co-explorer/-researcher. The aim of mentoring is to critically analyze the existing knowledge and ways of action and using the results of analysis for further development of the mentee. Mentor here is a change agent, a person who challenges the mentee. It is important here that the mentor is open and willing to question both – his own and the mentee's personal values, beliefs and change them if needed.



### PUT YOURSELF ON THE MAP OF THE 4 MODELS OF MENTORING!

#### Guiding questions to consider:

- 1 What kind of mentoring models do you use? Evaluate yourself and put on the map.
- 2 What kind of mentoring models should an EVS mentor use? Evaluate it and put on the map.
- 3 How does ideal mentoring look like in your opinion? Put on the map.



## How to build trust in a mentoring relationship

Building and maintaining a safe and trustful relationship throughout the service between the EVS volunteer and his/her mentor will take time. Nevertheless, it usually leads to a unique learning experience for both sides, offering them a possibility to take a step on personal development path.



The glue that holds all relationships together – including the relationship between the mentor and the mentee is trust, and trust is based on integrity.

Brian Tracy

*SOURCE: [http://www.selfgrowth.com/experts/cecile\\_peterkin.html](http://www.selfgrowth.com/experts/cecile_peterkin.html)*



### Definition of trust

~ a feeling of confidence in someone that shows you believe they are honest, fair, and reliable. (Macmillian dictionary)

Normally, trust is like a feeling. Emotions associated with it include friendship, love, agreement, comfort and relaxation.

*SOURCE: <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/>*

An EVS project is a long-term relationship, therefore it is **important to work on the so-called rapport** – having a two-way connection, feeling the same way. If there is no connection, it is very complicated to work with the person.



### Human needs

As a mentor one will have to find out, what needs are important for the volunteer. It will help to make a better connection with him/her and find out joint values that bring these 2 people on a common ground.

**Anthony Robbins has brought out six core human needs that drive one's behaviour.**

**Certainty.** This is a need for comfort and security. People want to avoid pain and unexpected situations.

**Uncertainty.** At the same time there is a need to be uncertain enough to have some spice and adventure in life.

**Significance.** It is about having a feeling of being important, unique and special, worth to be loved.

**Connection.** Each person wants to have a connection - it does not matter if it is a negative, neutral or an empowering one. People want to be part of the community and cared for or about.

**Growth.** Constant emotional, intellectual and spiritual development gives a person a feeling of becoming a better person, of improving oneself.

**Contribution.** If a person grows it has a will to feel alive and make a meaningful impact, to make the world a better place.

**The difference between people depends on which of these needs do they appreciate the most!**

*SOURCE: [http://www.ted.com/talks/tony\\_robbins\\_asks\\_why\\_we\\_do\\_what\\_we\\_do.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/tony_robbins_asks_why_we_do_what_we_do.html)*



### Try to learn about your mentee as much as possible!

Who is he/she?

Where does he/she come from?

What does he/she like?

What are his/her hobbies, favourite food, goals for life?

What are your communalities?



### Tips for building trust

Before the first meeting look up as **much information about the volunteer** as possible, e.g about his/her career, hobbies, values, family, pets, etc. Use social media, skype. Check the CV. Establish **communalities** during the first talk.

**Do things together!** Mix different methods. Use talking, going to the field and helping with activities, going to the Zoo or cinema, etc.

Use **terms and ideas** that are understandable for both sides.

**Share responsibility.** Ask the volunteer his/her opinion on various situations.

**Be fair and honest** according to your plans and involvement in an EVS project – fulfil your promises!

### Marta (Denmark, 12 months)

Her special sense of humour that is what I will not forget. It helped to make our relationship more closer.

### Madara (Italy, 6 months)

Most of all I appreciate the fact that she did not see our relationship as a duty and obligation, and I felt real interest from her when she tried to involve me in varied activities and events (both formal and informal). So we both gained a useful experience. It was a nice interaction between giving and taking.

### Hannele (UK/Scotland, 12 months)

My both mentors were great in terms of prevention and letting me know it is safe to talk about stuff. Both were open-minded and well-experienced making me feel like I had very smart friends who I can always come to. I appreciated their work ethics and that they set certain rules during the first meeting.

### Food for thought (write down)

**What is my role in HO or CO?**

**How can I make his/her stay in the hosting country more valuable?**

**What can I give to the volunteer?**

**How much involved do I want to be in the life of the volunteer?**

## PART II: TOPICS IN EVS

### Intercultural awareness

**Intercultural communication and awareness is something that is deeply rooted in the EVS. It is its core value and whole essence – the volunteer puts himself on trial in a different cultural setting receiving thereby a unique learning possibility for developing understanding towards the differences in the hosting culture.**



#### What is culture?

Culture is a shared system of beliefs, attitudes, values, expectations and norms of a behavior. Members of a culture often have similar beliefs and theories on how people should behave, think and communicate, and they all tend to act on those beliefs in much the same way.

From group to group, cultures differ considerably. As a result of basic cultural differences, misunderstandings could easily occur, and often do so.

#### What is culture shock?

People usually experience many emotions while adapting to foreign culture, changing from excitement and interest in the new culture to depression and fear of the unknown. The difficulties that one experience as he integrates into a new society can be a result of what is termed „culture shock“.

**The process of culture shock can be illustrated by a model known as W-curve and it looks like this.**

SOURCE: [my.ilstu.edu](http://my.ilstu.edu)



### Maris (Spain, 6 months)

Sometimes the issues can be very small, but living abroad we need much more help to solve them. For example, simple information on local life, practical things like where to find a hairdresser or which mobile company to use.

## Learning management of an EVS volunteer

**EVS is called by EC a true „learning service“. What is meant by this is that beyond benefiting the local communities, by participating in voluntary activities, young volunteers can develop new skills and, therefore, improve their personal, educational and professional development.**



### What is formal, informal and non-formal learning?

The concept of learning has shifted over the last century. When it used to be a process with a specific timeframe, usually done while young, then today we talk about **lifelong learning**. Basically, it is no longer of importance at what age you start studying or in what way you decide to get the learning experience. In European educational field we talk about the **3 whales of learning: formal, informal and non-formal**.

Formal education	Informal education	Non-formal education
Takes place in school environment	Takes place in everyday situations (e.g. in the family, shop, working place, free time, etc)	Takes places in different kinds of environments, even in the nature
Organized on basis of a curriculum	Doesn't have a curriculum, is an unconscious process	Has been taken up consciously by the learner with a clear aim to get new knowledge and develop oneself
Learning process has clear learning objectives, however these are mainly set not by the learner himself	From the point of view of learner informal learning doesn't have set aims	Has clear aims, what the learner identifies his learning needs, can be changed during the process if needed
Is carried out by professionals, who have got specific training and who have the authority in a classroom	Is carried out by people we meet in everyday situations, only they are not aware of it	Can be carried out either by professional trainers or volunteers or peers
The learning process is monitored and evaluated by grades	The results of informal learning are not directly visible for the learner	The learning process is monitored by the educators and evaluated by the learners themselves
Up to a certain age or level, formal education is usually compulsory	Is unconscious and everybody experiences throughout life	Is voluntary, based on learner's motivation to learn

## Youthpass

**Youthpass is a tool for participants of projects funded by the Erasmus+: YiA Programme to describe what they have done and to show what they have learnt.** At the moment it is the only non-formal and European-wide recognition tool of non-formal education. *Youthpass* is web-based (generated via [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu) webpage), easy to use and easily accessible.

**It aims to** assist employers, and educational and vocational institutions, in recognizing skills young people and youth workers have developed through participating in an international non-formal educational project. It increases young people's self-confidence and gives them an additional evidence for their portfolio of achievements.

### No, Youthpass is not!

- A magic trick that helps you to stay young forever
- A license of free entrance to all night-clubs in Europe
- A waste of time, another boring paper to fill

### Yes, Youthpass is!

- A formal certificate that lists your learning experience during the service
- A recognition of non-formal learning
- A tool for self-analysis organized by 8 Key competences of EU lifelong learning
- Read more: [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu)



## 8 Key competences

The learning components of *Youthpass* are based on the Key competencies of Lifelong Learning in Europe developed by European Union. All the types of education can refer to the same framework, so it is done in Erasmus+: Youth in Action.

### These Key competencies include:

- |                                    |  |  |                                       |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 – Communication in mother tongue | 2 – Communication in foreign languages | 3 – Mathematical skills and basic skills in science and technology | 4 – Digital competence                |
| 5 – Learning to learn              | 6 – Social and Civic competence        | 7 – Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship                       | 8 – Cultural awareness and expression |

It is one of the vital **roles of an EVS mentor** to guide the volunteer through this learning process and help him acknowledge what has been learnt during the process where different ways of learning intertwine.



### How can a mentor guide the volunteer through his learning process?

- In the beginning of the service agree on the timeframe and methods of analyzing the volunteer's learning experience
- Introduce and explain the framework of 8 Key competences and *Youthpass*
- Ask the volunteer to keep a regular diary on his learning achievements
- Agree on regular meetings related to analyzing volunteer's learning experience
- Use guidelines and tools provided here to facilitate the analysis



### What are the different things an EVS volunteer can learn?

- Think of yourself, how can formal, informal and non-formal learning take place throughout EVS?
- Think of yourself, what are the different skills, knowledge and attitudes an EVS volunteer can learn under each key competence?

### Eva (Spain, 9 months)

At the beginning we both worked on my plan and goals I needed to reach during my Service. Every day I also wrote diary with the things I have learnt and done. It helped to see the progress I had made.

### Terje (Romania, 9 months)

She was meeting with me every month and she had worked out questions for the different periods what she asked and every month she wrote about it a little report. So we had clear view of how far we are from my goals.

**Hannele** (UK/Scotland, 12 months) We went through my learning goals every other week at the meetings and wrote down even the tiniest bit of information I thought I had learned. When my time was coming to an end, we went through the notes again and summed them up in the 8 categories suggested in the *Youthpass*. It really helped to have a systematic approach and having my mentor there summing it up with me was the key!

## Conflicts and conflict management techniques

Before coming to a host country every volunteer has to undergo a preparation phase during which he/she is prepared for various situations that he/she will face during the service. However this is no guarantee for a conflicts-free service.



**Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage. The human spirit is to grow strong by conflict.**

William Ellery Channing SOURCE: <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/w/williamell132566.html>



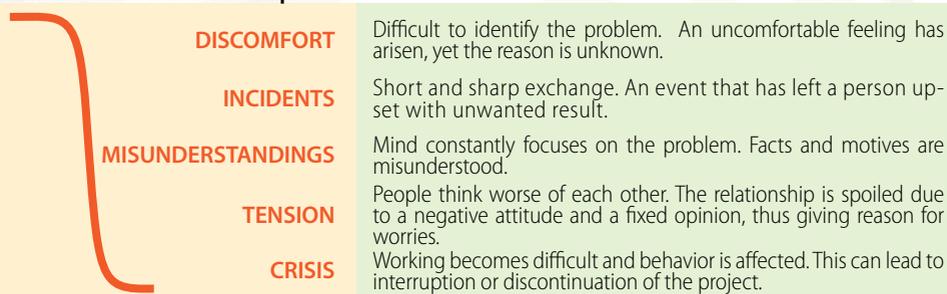
### Different types of conflict

There can be a different types of conflicts: **people-focused** (based on emotions and feelings, personal attack), **issue-focused**, **personal differences** (values, perceptions, expectations), **informational deficiencies** (misinterpretations, no communication, conclusions based on past experience), **environmental stress**.

All of these types can be on different levels. A lot of frustration can be avoided by bringing **conflicts into the open at an early stage**.

SOURCE: <http://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1414/NoOffence.pdf>

### How a conflict winds itself up?



### Why conflicts cannot be resolved quickly?

- Conflicts are influenced by emotions.
- Illusion of being a winner or a loser. The idea that both cannot benefit from the situation.
- Focusing on the persons bad characteristics and trying to eliminate those.
- Illusion of a dead end. There is no other solution than mere acceptance of the fact that no solution can be found.

### Tips for conflict management

- Find an environment, in which the volunteer can speak freely.
- Be an active listener and do not offer solutions immediately.
- Posing questions helps the volunteer find the roots of the conflict.
- Ask if you can help somehow.
- Do not impose your personal norms, but help the person clarify the situation.
- Encourage to talk with the other party, meet in a neutral, fearless atmosphere.
- Develop skills like communication, problem solving and negotiation.

FIND MORE: <http://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1841/Booklet%20Building%20Bridges%20in%20Conflict%20Areas.pdf?>



### What is your best tool to solve conflicts?

Once the fear of personal danger is lessened, a person can start seeing the solutions.

### Malin (Estonia, 12 months)

When I had some problems regarding the communication in the organization, mentor gave me some advices on how to deal with it. Also when I was stressed and upset sometimes she let me understand that she would always be there for me and that she could help me to talk to my organization about it.

## PART III: MENTORING TOOLS

### Counseling

Counseling can occur in situations people work together towards understanding and resolving a problem or a difficulty. It is a way to empower a volunteer. During an EVS project a mentor can apply five different approaches to counseling, all of which can be used and are effective, though effective in different ways.

Punishment/reward	Guilt	Buddy	Monitor	Success counselor
The volunteer learns that his/her behavior results in a reward or punishment, yet does not learn ways to change the behavior in order to meet the needs and objectives. This approach can close the door to communication and encourage fear of authority.	It is easy to make the volunteer feel guilty, by giving him/her a silence treatment and a look of disapproval. An internal conversation can be an effective solution, yet it does not teach the person ways to change his/her behavior.	A pleasant approach, as the mentor can become a friend quite soon and form a friendly relationship, yet it can lead to dependency. A mentor can be friendly and nice with the volunteer, but still should be respected.	The volunteer accepts the natural consequences or makes some kind of repayment. If the volunteer compensates without any external pressure then he/she has learned a lesson. However, if the mentor tells him/her what to do then it leads to hierarchy, which even slows the learning process down.	The aim is to give the volunteer a fishing-rod instead of a fish. This approach aims to change the volunteers' mind, which, in its turn, will change his/her behavior. During this process the volunteer assumes responsibility for his/her actions, which leads to choices and empowerment.

**All of these approaches are effective, but effective in different ways**



### Tips for counseling

**Prepare.** Before meeting the volunteer recall the previous session: topics, agreements and plans.

**The volunteer is responsible** to benefit from the meeting with the mentor.

**Use open questions** to encourage the volunteer to reflect his/her experience, problems.

**Give support.** Do not forget to give positive feedback, encourage taking challenges.

**Confront.** Tell the truth if the volunteer avoids understanding it. Give facts and share your opinion of the situation/problem. Identify the negative consequences and feelings that result.

### Madara (Italy, 6 months)

Throughout the project my mentor helped me to become more involved in a local life, enjoy the project time. Her human qualities, such as empathy, sensitivity, openness and interest in my problem, helped me in the most difficult moments. She helped me to see things from another point of view.

### Klinta (Croatia, 8 months)

My mentor was an EVS volunteer in UK so she knew what problems can appear. I think it is great that mentor is experienced, good listener, friendly and positive.

## Coaching model in an EVS project

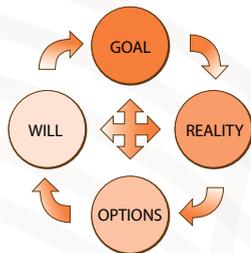
At the beginning of an EVS project it is important to establish the reasons and goals for being a volunteer in a specific country and project. A useful model that is often used in coaching for defining goals, finding solutions and organizing the activity plan to attain these goals is the IGROW C model.

An effective mentor can use it by improving skills to ask questions. The good questions are easy and simple, create energy, focus on exploring and empower thinking. Using the GROW model **focus on the future and the options** and do not stay long discussing the past and the issue.



### Why is it important to define a clear initial goal of the project?

At the very beginning of the project the volunteer must answer two very important questions: Why are you here and what do you want to achieve?



### Stages of the GROW model

Step	Aim	Example questions for the volunteer
I – Issue	Establish the issue, which is important to the volunteer. Define the topic of the conversation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you want to learn during the EVS?</li> </ul>
G – Goal	Define the goal of the project or the specific situation. NB! It has to be positive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why are you in the EVS project?</li> <li>What do you want to bring back home?</li> <li>Why is the goal important to you and what are the outcomes?</li> </ul>
R – Reality	Check the reality. NB! The mentor can give additional facts and test the understanding of perception and knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where are you now in your lifeline?</li> <li>What do you know about the country?</li> <li>What are your expectations from the project?</li> <li>How far are you from achieving your goal? (in scale 1-10)</li> </ul>
O – Options	Explore the options. NB! The mentor can propose options and help choose one to take action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What can you do?</li> <li>What would you do now?</li> <li>What are the steps you have to take?</li> </ul>
W – Way forward	Choose one (option, opportunity) that will forward the volunteer towards his/her goal and make an action. NB! The mentor can help choose the option, however the volunteer is to make the final decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When do you want to do it? (Define a concrete deadline)</li> <li>Who can help you achieve the goal?</li> <li>How will we work together?</li> </ul>
C – Celebration	The first step is especially important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How will you celebrate the decision making?</li> <li>What gives you pleasure?</li> <li>Can we celebrate together?</li> </ul>

FIND MORE: [http://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-938/coaching\\_guide\\_www.pdf](http://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-938/coaching_guide_www.pdf)



### QUESTION and ANSWER: How do you know that questioning works?

If a person has sparkling eyes, is thankful and says „Thank you!“, then you have done a good work! Gratitude of the mentee is a sign of a successful coaching.



### Ask yourself the important questions as well!

Before the initial talk on the goals the mentor should be clear about his/her role and contribution during the project. Do you want to be a mentor 24/7?

## Active listening

Being a mentor to somebody is a demanding responsibility. One vital skill that is required here is being able to actively listen to the other person and draw conclusions based on what is actually hidden behind the words said out loud.



**Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listen to us are the ones we move toward. When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand.**

Karl Menninger SOURCE: <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/k/karlmen143978.html>



### What is active listening?

Active listening is a communication technique that **requires the listener to feed back what they hear to the speaker**. The ability to listen actively **demonstrates sincerity**, and that nothing is being assumed or taken for granted. Active listening is most **often used to improve personal relationships, reduce misunderstanding and conflicts, strengthen cooperation, and foster understanding**.

Active listening involves the listener observing the **speaker's behavior and body language**.

Below, an overview of different active listening techniques is presented together with examples.

<b>Clarifying</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to identify what was said</li> <li>to help speaker see other points</li> <li>to untangle unclear interpretation</li> <li>to get more information</li> <li>E.g: <i>Let's see if I understood it correctly...</i></li> </ul>	<b>Summarizing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bring together major ideas, facts and feelings</li> <li>to establish basis for further conversation</li> <li>to give a sense of movement and accomplishment of change</li> <li>E.g: <i>So it sounds to me as if...</i></li> </ul>	<b>Offering encouragement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use brief, positive prompts to keep the conversation going</li> <li>to show that you are listening</li> <li>E.g: <i>I understand...; Oh?; Then?; And?</i></li> </ul>	<b>Emotion labeling</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>putting feelings into words will often help a person</li> <li>to see things more objectively to help the person begin, use "door openers"</li> <li>E.g: <i>I am sensing that you're feeling frustrated... worried... anxious?</i></li> </ul>
<b>Probing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ask questions to draw the person out</li> <li>to get deeper and more meaningful information</li> <li>E.g: <i>What do you think would happen if you...?</i></li> </ul>	<b>Validation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>acknowledge the individual's problems, issues and feelings</li> <li>listen openly and with empathy</li> <li>respond in an interested way</li> <li>E.g: <i>I appreciate your willingness to talk about such a difficult issue...</i></li> </ul>	<b>Effective pause</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>deliberately pause at key points to emphasize</li> <li>this will say to the person that you are saying something that is very important to them</li> </ul>	<b>Redirecting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>if someone is showing signs of being overly aggressive, agitated, or angry</li> <li>this is the time to shift the discussion to another topic</li> </ul>
			<b>Asking questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>leading questions</li> <li>open-ended questions</li> <li>closed-ended questions</li> <li>reflective questions</li> <li>power questions</li> <li>E.g: <i>see below</i></li> </ul>



### Types of questions

The way how a question is asked determines to large extent the response.

#### Different types of questions include:

- Leading questions:** e.g: *What happened then? Would you like to talk about it?*
- Open-ended questions:** W-questions to expand further discussion, e.g: *How? What? Where? Who? Which?* (but not Why?, it is too attacking)
- Closed-ended questions:** to prompt for specifics, e.g: *Is? Are? Do? Did? Would? Could?*
- Reflective questions:** e.g: *It sounds like you would like someone help remembering?*
- Power questions:** thought-provoking questions that give power to your conversations, e.g: *Where do you see yourself in 20 years?*

Where do you see yourself in 20 years?

## Feedback

Knowing how to give and how to receive a feedback plays important part in a mentoring relationship. Well-managed feedback urges a person to improve, drives for more and leads to a true self-development.

What is feedback?	What does feedback offer?	What feedback is not?	How to receive feedback?
a message to another person which informs the person about how their behavior is perceived, understood and seen by others	the possibility to systematically compare one's self-perception with the perceptions of others and get to know the impact of one's own behavior, which hasn't been conscious till now	a criticism or judgment; if a person would like to judge, it should be „wrapped“ in feedback; for the criticized person it would not be possible to react properly	the person who gets feedback should first not argue and defend himself, but should listen and ask for clarification; you shouldn't accept more feedback than you can cope with



### What are the characteristics of a good feedback?

- \* **descriptive** – not (moral) judging and interpreting; focusing on behavior (that can be changed) not on a personality (cannot be changed)
- \* **specific** – not general (e.g no description of characteristics like „dominant“, but from concrete experienced situation and behavior)
- \* **direct** – the aim of the feedback is clearly brought out
- \* **appreciated** – not obtained by force
- \* **formulated clearly and specifically** – not long and diffuse
- \* **adequate** – to the needs and acceptance of recipient
- \* **good timing** – (i.e very soon after the behavior happened or waiting for the moment in which the recipient is attentive to receive feedback)
- \* **thoughtful** – well thought through, not impulsive, emotional
- \* **measurable** – in the meaning that the other participants can also make their statement
- \* **supportive** – given in an encouraging way
- \* **helpful** – useful and valuable for the other person



### How should I give feedback to others?

Use this five-step model for feedback:

- 1. Ask for permission to give feedback** – You would be surprised how much of a difference this makes. A simple „Hey, do you have a minute for some quick feedback?“ can help the receiver of feedback be mentally ready for it, be it positive or negative.
- 2. State what you observed** – Where possible, use specific examples and avoid being judgmental. „You don't give off a lot of energy in meetings“ is not as helpful as „In the meeting with Tina yesterday, I noticed that you were using passive body language.“
- 3. Explain the impact** – Point out the direct impact that resulted from this behavior, again trying to be as specific as possible. Saying „When you said X, it made me feel upset“ or „I noticed that the customer became more irate“ is much more effective than „When you say X, you sound stupid.“ It's much more difficult to argue with „it made me feel“, „I noticed that“, or „I think that...“ and using those phrases will keep the feedback session from devolving into a debate.
- 4. Pause and ask for the other person's reaction** – Give them time to think through what you've said and react to it.
- 5. Suggest concrete next steps** – Give a small number (we suggest only 1-2) of actionable suggestions that the other person can take in the future, to change this behavior. They will appreciate that you are giving them the first step to improving the situation.

### Malin (Estonia, 12 months)

My mentor supported my projects and gave me a feedback on how to achieve them properly. We also discussed about the goals in general and how to make most out of my time at the project.

## PART IV: MENTOR'S WELL-BEING

### Stress management

EVS mentors are humans like any other, thus it is quite normal that sometimes stress level go up when being involved in a mentoring relationship. However, all stress isn't bad. Stress can indicate change in us; help us focus on the task at hand, and in some cases even save our lives. Yet, when stress builds up, it can result in the opposite – and cause us to spin our wheels, keep us from concentrating, and cause bodily injury and even loss of life. The first tip in managing stress is to recognize your stressors. The next step is to put each of them in their place.



### How to deal with setbacks and challenges in EVS mentoring?

- **Carry out personal reflections.** Have a conversation with yourself. Ask power questions.
- **Have a mentor or coach for yourself.** This is a good way to exchange ideas and get an extra outlook on situation you are facing.
- **Step out of your comfort zone.** Do things you have never done before, take up a challenge.
- **Take care of your own emotional energy.** Get positive experiences, do sports.
- **Think that there is always a new day,** when it is possible to start from a new page.
- **Draw a line** on how far do you want to be involved in volunteer's personal life and how much do you want him or her to be involved in your life.
- **Make yourself a book of tips and tricks** what has worked and what has not worked for you in the face of challenging and demanding situations.



### 3 main ways of dealing with stressful situations

#### 1 – Take a deep breath and count to ten!

Taking a deep breath or two adds oxygen to your system, which almost instantly helps you relax. In addition, taking a moment to step back can help you maintain your composure, which in the long run, is what you need to work rationally through a stressful situation.

- **Start with „take deep breath“** and count to ten.
- **Stand up and smile.** Try it! You'll feel better!
- **Do something that changes your focus.** When you come back to the problem, chances are it won't seem nearly as insurmountable.

#### 2 – Stop and smell the roses

„Things happen“ and sometimes „bad things happen to good people“. If we let them, stressful events can build up, wall us in, and eventually stop us from enjoying the good things in life.

- **Take time.** Too often we put the pleasant things of life on the back side, telling ourselves we don't „have time“, or can't „make“ for them. However, actually time is the only thing we do completely own. While we can't „make“ a day that longer than 24hrs, each of us starts the day with exactly the same amount of time. Take a part of your time to recognize the good things in your life.
- **Sleep on it.** Every coin has two sides and every issue has both pros and cons. List them both, then put the list away and take a second look tomorrow. Sometimes „sleeping on“ a situation changes the minuses to the pluses.
- **Every cloud has a silver lining.** After all, rain makes things grow! Find the good in your stressful situation by listing the negative surges and determining what it will take to make them into positive charges!

#### 3 – Know your limitations!

Knowing yourself and your limits may be the most important way to manage stress effectively.

- **Dare to say no.** One more little thing may be the „straw that breaks the camel's back“. It's okay to say „No“, „I can't“ or „Later“.
- **Go easy on yourself.** Sometimes events really are out of control and you are really „Not Guilty“. Stop blaming yourself.
- **Be pro-active in finding peace.** There're some things we cannot change, best to do is to accept them.
- **When you need help, get help.** Even Atlas couldn't bear the weight of the world on his shoulders forever. Getting the help you need is in itself a major stress management tip!



**I can't think about that right now. If I do, I'll go crazy. I'll think about that tomorrow.**

Main character Scarlett O'Hara in the book "Gone with Wind"  
SOURCE: <http://www.imdb.com/character/ch0006053/quotes>

**Malin** (Estonia, 12 months)

I would definitely take some time off to reflect and to come back as an even better mentor. Also to allow myself to rest from the mentorship for a while is good sometimes in order to have some energy-catching and maybe to gain some new perspectives. It's easier to do that when you stand a bit aside.

## Time management

Time management is not only issue for an EVS volunteers, but also can become a challenge for their mentors as usually they are quite occupied people with several tasks and responsibilities in hand.



**Let's see how good you are in managing your time!**

- Are you usually punctual or late?
- Do you finish things within the time you are supposed to?
- Do you hand in your reports/work on time?
- Are you able to accomplish what you want to do before deadlines?
- Are you a good time manager?

**If your answer is „no“ to any of the questions above, that means you're not managing your time as well as you want.**

Below you'll find some tips on **how to be a better time manager**. To get started, choose one of these strategies, try it for two to four weeks and see if it helps.



**How to manage your time more effectively?**

- **Create a daily plan.** Take 30 minutes to plan your day before it unfolds. Do it in the morning or the night before you sleep. Stick to the plan as best as possible.
- **Use an organizer.** It's your central tool to organize information, to-do lists, projects, and other miscellaneous items.
- **Know your deadlines.** Mark the deadlines out clearly in your calendar and organizer so you know when you need to finish them.
- **Learn to say „No“.** Don't take on more than you can handle.
- **Prioritize.** Since you can't do everything, learn to prioritize the important and let go of the rest.
- **Delegate.** If there are things that can be better done by others consider delegating. This takes a load off and you can focus on the important tasks.
- **Cut off when you need to.** Number 1 reason why things overrun is because you don't cut off when you have to. Don't be afraid to intercept in meetings or draw a line to cut-off.

## Dangers of mentoring process

Even though mentoring relationship involves two people where one is supporting or guiding the other and in case of good mentoring they both get a unique self-development experience.

Mentoring is an agreement, more focused in helping one of them rather than teaching, then both are equally responsible for the outcomes of this relationship. It is a false understanding that the mentor is 100% responsible for the results. This is probably the most common mistake made in a mentoring relationship – the mentor starts to feel 100% responsible for the outcomes and if things don't go as planned, it certainly does taste bitter.



**How to get into good grounds with yourself already in the beginning of a mentoring relationship? Consider the following:**

- What is that you need to agree on already in the beginning of mentoring?
- What helps to build trust in this relationship?
- What is important to you as a mentor? Why do you do it and what do you want from this experience?



**We are here for a reason. I believe a bit of the reason is to throw little torches out to lead people through the dark.**

Whoopi Goldberg  
SOURCE: <http://www.looktothestars.org/celebrity/whoopi-goldberg>

**Sanita** (The Netherlands, 12 months)

Creating the safe atmosphere and the feeling that volunteers can trust you, so they can turn to you every time of the day. Clarity and agreements on our work – to set expectations from each other, from the cooperation and each other's commitments helped to set the working ground. Keep up with promises and tasks, otherwise you will lose the trust and it will be harder to support volunteers.

**Hannele** (UK/Scotland, 12 months)

Sometimes it might be a good idea to have a little quiet time after mentoring, maybe reflecting on what happened and what you did.

## Rewarding yourself

Being an EVS mentor is a demanding task and one should never underestimate its importance and value. When you have encouraged the volunteer to take a positive step to self-improvement, you deserve to feel proud of yourself, celebrate and give yourself a treat or reward.



**Create your own personal rewards basket to motivate yourself!**

Here is how you do it. Make a list of things you enjoy. For each little success, reward yourself with choices from your basket. Each person's satisfaction varies. Consider what would really please you. For a change, put yourself first. Spoil yourself. You have conquered yourself. You deserve it!

**Suggestions:**

**Ann** (Ukraine, 12 months)

I would reward myself with a great party or a massage/ trip to somewhere where I have not been.

**Maris** (Spain, 6 months)

Later a mentor can always visit a volunteer in their home country!

**Terje** (Romania, 9 months)

Free training courses to become more professional mentor.

# Abbreviations and resources

## Abbreviations

- EC** – European Commission
- EVS** – European Voluntary Service
- HO** – Hosting organization in EVS
- CO** – Coordinating organization in EVS
- Erasmus+: YiA** – EU programme Erasmus+: Youth in Action

## Online resources

- Information about programme Erasmus+: Youth in Action [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm)
- EVS info KIT [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/programme/action2\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/programme/action2_en.php)
- Information about *Youthpass*: [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu)
- Information about insurance for volunteers: [www.msh-intl.com/global](http://www.msh-intl.com/global)
- Resources for international youth work: [www.salto-youth.net/inclusion](http://www.salto-youth.net/inclusion)
- Ideas and talks by remarkable people: [www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com)
- How to mentor the creative voluntary project: <http://prezi.com/j8n6zwhp4rax/how-to-mentor-creative-voluntary-project/>
- Video about 6 human needs [http://www.ted.com/talks/tony\\_robbins\\_asks\\_why\\_we\\_do\\_what\\_we\\_do.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/tony_robbins_asks_why_we_do_what_we_do.html)
- Five love languages <http://www.5lovelanguages.com/>
- Conflict solving techniques <http://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1841/Booklet%20Building%20Bridges%20in%20Conflict%20Areas.pdf?>
- Coaching in European youth work [http://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-938/coaching\\_guide\\_www.pdf](http://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-938/coaching_guide_www.pdf)



## Are you ready to be an EVS mentor?

Tick the ones you agree!

I collect success stories of other volunteers and mentors and train myself to tell the stories in order to work with an EVS volunteers.

I believe that joint action in mentorship is important.

I believe that the list of the most typical problem situations will help me to be prepared.

I know that sharing tasks and responsibilities with the volunteer will help me to build a good mentoring relationship.

I believe that the mentor is not a God and does not know all of the answers.

I believe that the mentor is not the volunteer's mother.



**Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.**

John Wesley

SOURCE: <http://quotationsbook.com/quote/22029/>