

TOOL BOX FOR VOLUNTEERING

Alianza por la
Solidaridad

act:onaid

EU Aid Volunteers
We Care, We Act



UNION AID VOLUNTEERS INITIATIVE EUROPEAN - EU AID VOLUNTEERS INITIATIVE

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Coordination:

Silvia de Benito Ruiz de Azúa
Sandra Victoria Salazar
Alianza por la Solidaridad

Texts and illustrations:

Elena López-Maya Asís

Translation:

Teresa Ibáñez Jiménez

Design and layout:

Valentina Zuluaga

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¹ Rotter (1966) defines locus of control as the degree to which a person perceives an outcome as being contingent on their own actions or those of external forces, existing along a continuum from a more internalized orientation to a more externalized orientation.

1. INTRODUCTION

The tools collected here are designed to accompany and support your volunteering process in the field with Alianza-ActionAid. While there are three specific and clear phases of volunteering as they are; deployment, the process in the field and closure or farewell, we encourage you to use this toolbox in a way that more and better accompanies your own volunteering and your needs associated with it.

2. PREMISES

These tools and strategies for self care are not magic recipes. This tool box pretends to be your support, it nurtures itself from the experience of people who worked in this kind of volunteering, of those who accompany them on their way and from different global work experiences. Take this premises always as a reference for its use:

- Each volunteering process is different and unique.
- The way you feel is only yours, even in similar contexts.
- Not all the tools are meaningful for everybody. You can adapt the tools and exercises to your circumstances, especially with your mentor/tutor support.
- The intention you put in using these tools is what will generate a process.
- This box is for your support. You decide how to use it and the best way to do it.
- The skills and potential for volunteering is in you, and these tools allow you to take advantage of your abilities in the best way.

Self-care is to devote time to oneself to look at oneself, to listen to oneself, to feel oneself, to respect oneself, to accept oneself, to ask oneself, to question oneself, to trust oneself and, above all, to love oneself.

SELF CARE

It's an act of reciprocity.
To heal and shoulder responsibility, Our sorrows, our
cries, Our rages,
But above all our hopes and dreams;
We're not destined for suffering and sickness,
Each one of us should be able to recognize her pains
And work with them,
To put a name to our sadness, to know what's hurting
us.
We should be able to get closer to the sadness,
Without fear and with the strength
To let it behind us.

Let's not carry with that weight
It's not ours, the system
Wants us weak, sad, apart,
But from feminism I learned that personal is political
And we must politicize our feelings and emotions
But above all, our healing.
Healing is an act of
Tenderness with ourselves.
Let's always advocate for selfcare.

Yadira López
Plants for sadness

3. TOOLS TO STRENGTHEN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCES IN VOLUNTEERING

The competencies chosen to build these tools, they've been selected considering that they're going to allow you to develop your potential to the maximum during your volunteering period along its different phases.

Professional and personal development should be together to reach balance. Therefore, in this guide you'll find the tools to accompany your personal, collective and professional process during your time on field.



a. Building collaborative relationships

i. Assertiveness and communication skills

ASSERTIVENESS

ASSERTIVENESS OR PERSONAL COHERENCE: assertiveness is defined as the ability to express our opinions, feelings, attitudes and wishes, and claim for our rights , at the right time, without anxiety and in a way that doesn't affect the others rights.

Have you ever heard, "Monkey see, monkey do". In fact, sometimes and as a result of group/ social pressure, we end up doing what other people want or expect. This happens when we're scared of saying "no". Other times, what leads us to not being coherent with ourselves is what we think people want or expect from us. That's the moment when we already are scared of saying "no", and we give more importance to what we supposed, than what we think.

It's not bad if we act as other people or say "yes", obviously. What makes the difference is if that makes us feel bad, or if we feel our identity signs disappear. The words, actions and relationships we establish with the people in our social circles are part of our learning and socialization, that's why it is important to identify which of them are ours and which don't.

We say that a person is assertive when is able to say "no" and defend what thinks, although when the other could disagree. An assertive person says what he/she wants even though he/she may have a bad time when he/she does it, and also uses the best way to say it so that the other feels the less bad possible. That is to say, it's a way to communicate in which we respect our rights and beliefs the same as we respect the rights and beliefs of the people we're communicating with.

In this volunteering process you're going to collaborate in a foreign context for you and your adaptability and flexibility is essential. Assertiveness is going to be the key tool that will allow you to communicate appropriately, defend your ideas and points of view, always taking others' position into consideration.

Some examples of what can happen on your volunteering period:

1. Training phase: someone from Alianza's team explains something to you, but you don't understand or you see the subject in a different way, but you don't ask or express your idea because you think it's not important.

Assertive communication proposal: "Excuse me, I think I'm not understanding properly the idea and it's important for me to be sure that I'm understanding well, I would like to clarify xxx point or xxx idea".

2. Deployment phase: You get to a new context, and with the idea of trying to satisfy others, you don't propose something because you think that being new in this context you don't have authority to express your opinion.

Assertive communication proposal: "I know that I've just arrived, and perhaps I don't have all the information to have a global context idea, but the idea arises if xxxx would be possible or could be an option in this situation".

3. Closing phase: Para la despedida quiero expresar algunas ideas sobre momentos que siento que han sido difíciles o complicados durante mi proceso de voluntariado, pero me da vergüenza.

Assertive communication proposal: "There are some things about my time here that I'd like to comment on, since, although my experience have been positive and gratifying, in my opinion they should be considered to take advantage of volunteering for people who came in the future".

SOME TECHNIQUES TO EXPRESS MYSELF ASSERTIVELY

| “GIVE AN ALTERNATIVE” | EXAMPLES |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>If you disagree with what is proposed to you or what you're asked for, you can give alternatives that seem interesting. If you know what the others are interested in, you can propose options that may interest or please them.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you think if, instead of going to xxxx, we stay in xxxx and chat serenely? - Why don't we say this to XXXX instead of talking behind his back? - And what if we do your plan next week? <p>Today I'm really exhausted.</p> |
| “THE MIRROR” | EXAMPLES |
| <p>The mirror is a technique to reflect to the other person what's he transmitting to make him see the impact of his message.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If they say: It's all bad! What a disaster! - Using "The mirror" is: "Do you think that all is wrong and a disaster?" |
| “IT COULD BE” | EXAMPLES |
| <p>Giving the reason under the umbrella of doubt, avoids the risk of confrontation, since we don't oppose on what is said, asked or offered.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you say so, maybe you're right.... - Maybe I'm wrong, I don't know... - Perhaps everybody says so, but I disagree. |
| “BROKEN RECORD” | EXAMPLES |
| <p>This skill involves always repeating the same argument. It's useful when it's hard to say your opinion.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We're going to have a great time - I really appreciate it but I'm tired. - But this is going to be fun. - I really appreciate it but I'm tired. - This is the last time I ask you something. - I really appreciate it but I'm tired. <p>.....</p> |

ii. Nonviolent communication for voluntary work

Non-violent communication (abbreviated as **NVC**) it's an approach to communication developed by Marshall Rosenberg at the beginning of the seventies². There are three primary modes of application: self empathy (involves compassionately connecting with what is going on inside us), receiving empathically (involves connection with what's alive in the other person and what would make life wonderful for them) and expressing honestly (involves expressing yourself authentically in a way that make more probable to be understood). It is based on the idea that all human beings have the capacity for compassion, and only resort to violence or behavior that hurts others when they do not recognize more effective strategies to satisfy their needs.

NVC proposed that, if we can identify our needs, others needs and the feeling involved in these needs, we can reach harmony. It transmits us a vision of the world and a language aimed at connecting human beings. It is a way of communicating from an assertive model in which I identify my feelings and needs and also recognize and value those of the people in front of me. We try to communicate on a deep level and not through the thoughts and judgments we are having, noticing our feelings, and most critically, connecting to the needs that are affecting us. We try to connect with others' needs and feelings, opening communication channels to understanding.

Communication style changes from one country to another, culture, social rules, body language, it differs in several aspects. Something that is acceptable in one place, could be inappropriate in another. Among other things, it's crucial to know and ask about these codes before you get to your destiny. Try to read and ask all that you can about cultural and social rules in the country you're going to visit (for example: what's the best way to greet somebody or if physical closeness is appropriate). This can free you from a misunderstood or awkward situation. Some recommendations for a non-violent communication are:

1. **Know the social and cultural codes of the country you're going to**, traditional customs, what they like, what they don't, the religion they profess or even gastronomy.
2. **Observation:** look at how local people communicate and interact. Pay special attention to non verbal communication, the language, the tone, the distance between them, and especially everything that gives you clues about what is nonviolent communication in this place.
3. **Don't force communication styles that you don't feel comfortable in.** These situation can generate discomfort (for example; if in my culture there is little physical contact but in this new country they prefer contact, don't force it if it makes you feel uncomfortable).

² Gates, Bob; Gear, Jane; Wray, Jane (2000). Behavioural Distress: Concepts & Strategies. Bailliere Tindall.

4. Never stop learning Don't expect to know everything about a new place only because you've spent three months there. Try to keep your attention on these patterns and rules of communication during your volunteering.

Virtuality often difficulties communication processes and tangles them. Nowadays virtuality has become an alternative communication channel and sometimes it would be necessary.

Some advices for online meetings are:

1. Establish clear objectives, times, and facilitations for meetings.
2. Respect turns to speak.
3. Use active listening with your five senses connected, we're missing some information without presencial communication so we must pay maximum attention.
4. If you can, use your webcam to ease connection and approach.

Non violent communication invites us to:

- Identify what unites us.
- Put care and strength in relationships as a priority in our lives.
- Keeping connected with what's happening around us and how we feel when we communicate (Example: How am I? What emotion am I communicating from?).
- Priorice active listening, respect and empathy.
- Changing assumptions and fundamental principles about human nature and the way we communicate, that is, it helps us avoid judgment and negative predisposition when communicating, eg: "thinking in advance that a xxx person is not going to understand what I mean".



REMEMBER THAT, essentially:

1. Human beings share the same basic human emotional needs.
2. The great part of human actions arise from the attempt to satisfy a need.
3. Conflicts arise, not from our needs but from the strategies we use to satisfy these needs. The way we communicate this need or the way we try to satisfy it, it's not working.
4. It's important to always express ourselves from the needs and not from the strategies, to establish the right connection with the person we are communicating with.

**IF YOU'RE IN DOUBT, ALWAYS ASK: WHAT DO I NEED?
HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT IT? WHAT IS HAPPENING TO
ME? IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN DO?**

There are two main exercises we can work with in Communication related with self empathy (it'll allow you to increase your self-knowledge) and empathy with others (it'll allow you to understand and connect with others needs and what's going on with the people around you).

a. SELF EMPATHY EXERCISE

| AUTO CONNECTION (SELF EMPATHY) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OBSERVATION: When I hear or see xxxxxx |
| FEELING: I feel xxxxxx |
| NEED Because I need xxxxxx |
| REQUEST: I would be willing to talk about it at another time. |

b. EMPATHY WITH OTHERS EXERCISE

| CONNECT WITH OTHERS (EMPATHY) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| OBSERVATION: When I hear you saying xxxxxx. |
| FEELING: I get the impression that you feel xxxxxx. |
| NEED: Maybe do you need xxxxxx? |
| REQUEST: Would you like if we try xxxxxx? |

i. Teamwork tools

Teamwork is basic and key to be able to develop a good volunteering and accompany on field. For it, we should not wait for conflicts to arise or discomforts to be present. Instead, we should work collectibly from the beginning, nourishing the common ground, to prevent complicated situations and to have the right tools when conflicts arise.

Whereas volunteering work is different from paid work, and is bounded by time; the role and contributions expected from volunteering is key. The energy, enthusiasm, and willingness to learn and share are vital to sustain the process on the field, so teamwork is really important for the final impact we're expecting for.



Firstly, it's important to understand conflict from a new point of view. Not as something negative, but as intrinsic to human relationships. In each team there will be moments, conditioned by the context, personal differences, decisions making or the aggregate of them, when conflict will occur. Understanding conflicts from a constructive point of view, will allow us to address them with motivation and desire to grow and build collectively.

To build a solid team we need:

1. To know each other.
2. To know our needs.
3. To know what each one of us contribute to the team.
4. To allow us spaces for exchange and knowledge.
5. To understand that a team is more than the sum of its parts.
6. To communicate assertively, clearly and constantly.

A proposal for a fortnightly activity for teams that can manage internally is as follows:

1. ROUND OF FEELINGS

We can do a round of sharing how we feel and how we've been this week.

HOW DID WE TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES IN MOMENTS OF MORE STRESS?

The point in this exercise is knowing what care practises have been working for each one of the members depending on their tools and needs to maintain their wellbeing in the more stressful moments at work. Each person answers for himself.

Next, there is an example of how you can collect all these feelings on your team. The idea is that somebody can lead and facilitate the space. If you consider to need external support, remember that you can ask your mentor

| PERSON 1 | PERSON 2 | PERSON 3 | PERSON 4 | PERSON 5 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <p>E.G.: "This week I've been feeling emotionally exhausted because of the misunderstanding that happened last Tuesday"</p> <p>The strategies I've used were: going running, calling my family and talking about it with X from the team.</p> | | | | |

This exercise can help you to identify your partners and team needs, and to empathize with their situations experienced on a day-to-day basis while volunteering. On the other hand, you can also get to know some new strategies and value if they can help you in similar stress moments.

A team building exercise you can use mid-term of volunteering is related to sharing each person valorations about the others contributions.



Steps:

Establish a space of two hours to carry out the exercise. We begin the exercise by placing a card with the name of each person on the team.

HOW EACH PERSON CONTRIBUTE TO THE TEAM? For this we're going to see ourselves in the eyes of each member of the team. We place the cards distributed in a common space and, while we walk through them, we add on the cards the capabilities we think this person brings to the team.

SELF CARE IN A COLLECTIVE CARE PLAN

What exercises/spaces could we adopt for self care in a collective workspace? Make a list with your proposals and try to put them on your schedule.

CLOSURE ROUND

We close this space reading our card with all the positive things our partners wrote down about our team work. We sit down in a circle with our cards. In order, we will turn our card over and read it in the first person: "I am ... and all the adjectives that they put about me on the card."

b. Cope in a changing and high-pressure environment.

i. Manage my expectations

For work and addressing your expectations, it's important to focus and balance yourself from your own self-care. Why? Because lots of the frustrations that we've got on a daily basis come from unfulfilled expectations.

Before beginning this volunteering accompanying process, you should reflect about your own expectations.

1. Allow you the space and time to reflect about your expectations³.
2. What do you expect of your volunteer in the Field? How do you imagine your day to day? Let out your wants and needs.
3. Make a draw, collage or text to summarize all this.
4. Now, try to identify which of your expectations are under your control. To meet these expectations, what can you do? Make a list with attitudes, actions and facts that you're going to carry out and in what way.
5. Think about the possible scenarios that can take place during volunteering. Once you've identified them, think about alternatives or steps to follow in each one of these scenarios. In this way you can minimize the gap between expectations and reality.

³ You can refer to what you planned and thought from the initial moments of volunteering in the deployment phase.

ii. Frustration tolerance

Once you've been able to identify your expectations, and what you can do, it's important for you to understand the other side of the coin. Try having this conversation about your expectations with your tutor. Express them and work to adjust them to reality to avoid undesired surprises. It's positive to have expectations, but it's key to adjust them to the reality you live or you're going to live. If this doesn't occur, you can end up frustrated and without understanding the reason for your volunteering. Frustration tolerance involves understanding, assuming and internalizing that sometimes things don't go as planned and this is part of life itself. Accepting it, allows you to walk with greater calm and temperance the different paths, allowing you to adapt in a healthier way to the environment that surrounds you.

Ask yourself in conjunction with your tutor: What would happen if this expectation was not fulfilled?

**ACCEPT, DON'T RESIST:
relaxation to connect and walk with your emotions.**

The essence of this practise is to become aware of what is predominating in our experience of the moment. This way, if your mind tends to go from one place to another -with particular thoughts, feelings or emotions -, we're going to bring it in gently but firmly, deliberately and intentionally to the here and now. This is the first step.

The second step is to notice, the best we can, how we relate -how we live it or experience it- with what is taking place here and now. Sometimes we find ourselves having a thought, feeling or emotion from the body to which we react without accepting it. If we like the thought, feeling or emotion, we tend to cling to them, we fear losing them and we suffer anticipating pain or discomfort at the thought of them fading. If we do not like it because it is painful, unpleasant or uncomfortable, we tend to contract it, to reject it because of fear, irritation or anger. Each of these answers is the opposite of acceptance.

The easiest way to relax is, before you do anything, to surrender to the evidence that things are what they are right now, that is, to stop fighting what they are now. Accepting an experience means simply leaving a space for whatever is happening, rather than trying to create another state. Through acceptance we settle into the awareness of what is in the present. We let it be -we simply notice and observe what is already present. This is the way to relate to experiences that draw our attention. For example, if you notice that your consciousness keeps moving away from the breath (or other focus of attention) and is directed toward particular sensations in the body associated with physical discomfort, emotions, or feelings, the first step is to pay conscious attention to these physical sensations, to deliberately shift the focus of your consciousness to the part of the body where these sensations are strongest. Breathing

provides a useful vehicle to do so -just as you did during the body scan⁴ you can bring a conscious and kind attention to this part of the body by “inhaling” in this part during inhalation and “exhaling” from it during exhalation.

Once your attention has passed to the sensations of the body and you have the element in the field of consciousness, say to yourself “Okay. Whatever it is is fine. Let me feel it, “using each exhalation to soften and open up the sensations you have become aware of.

Acceptance is not resignation: acceptance is a decisive first step, it allows us to become fully aware of the difficulties and then, if appropriate, respond in a skillful way instead of reacting viscerally using any of our strategies (which often help little) to deal with difficulties.

Frustration will change throughout the volunteer cycle. Some situations that may happen to you:

1. Training phase: a frustration that can appear is that of not feeling prepared for volunteering. To think that we won’t be able to share our potential to the fullest.

Proposal: to analyze where this frustration comes from. Remember the automatic negative thoughts tab (you can see it on page xxx of this booklet) and check if you are not falling into the “fortune-teller error”.

2. Deployment phase: The language and the difficulty in communicating generates great frustration.

Proposal: Ask someone on the team who has more ease with the language to spend some time practicing with you. Establish rules such as that in the day to day only the language of the place where the volunteering takes place is used.

3. Closing or farewell phase: towards the end of our period you may feel at some point that you have not done everything you wanted or put into practice the ideas you had before arriving.

Proposal: Make a timeline, place in it all the facts, contributions and key situations that you have lived during the volunteering time. Analyze the impacts of all that livings and shared experiences.

iii. Possible scenario design

⁴ This exercise can be found in the Tutor Manual. If you have not done the exercise yet, contact your supervisor to put it into practice as soon as possible!

To face your fears and insecurities, you can work to have all the certainties you can adjust at your disposal. For this, in the face of uncertain moments, it is advisable to make an exercise of possible scenarios. Doing that exercise will allow you to have before you some scenarios that can happen and how you could act before them.

It's an individual work for you to reflect on some possible situations:

| FEARED SITUATION | What is the worst possible scenario, the worst that could happen? | What resources do you have in front of that stage? Is there anything in your hand? | What are the chances its real? | Alternative scenarios |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ex: Not getting along with my teammates | Someone on my team stop talking to me | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish private and collective spaces to address the situation. - Ask for support from tutors if necessary to mediate. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask the organization if such a situation occurs frequently. - Establish a real percentage (e.g.: 15%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish good relations. - Create affective bonds in the team. - To have intercultural friendships. |
| Example: There are clear power relations in the team | Someone on the team takes the leadership position unilaterally and that generates discomfort | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set this point to work in team meetings. - Design proposals for shared leadership and consensus decision-making. | | |

iv. Internal-external Locus of control

In general we believe that we have control of everything that happens around us and, of course, of ourselves. However, there are things that are beyond our control and do not depend on us as much as we want to control them. The fact of trying to control things that are out of our reach can generate immense feelings of guilt and frustration for what happens, although in reality it did not depend in any case on our actions.

**Before an obstacle that is
impossible to overcome,
stubbornness is something
stupid**

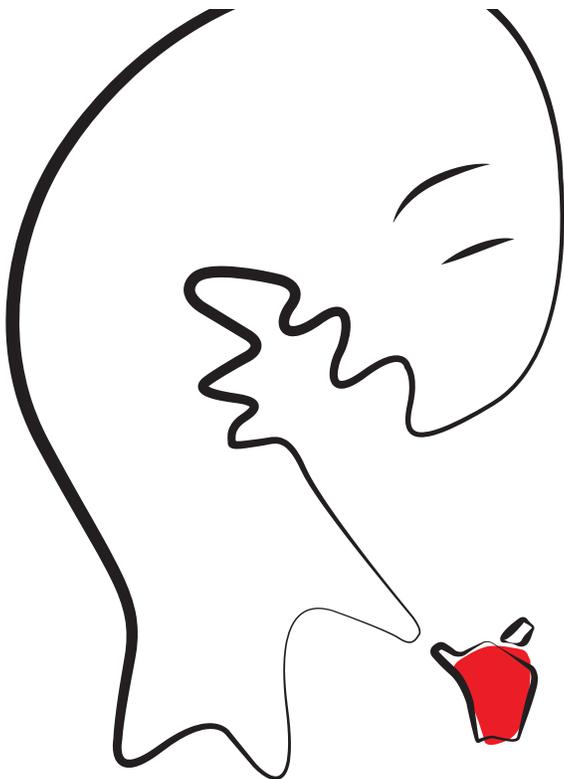
Simone de Beauvoir

Fear

Fear is an emotion, with others. It is one of the emotions that focuses on protection and our care. Sometimes fear is activated in situations where we don't need it, or when we can't properly identify what we're afraid of, and that can make it hard for us to understand what's happening to us.

A small phased exercise can help us clarify what are those things we fear, and what we can do to face them.

- 1. Recognize.** All people are afraid, it's natural and it's positive. We shouldn't hide or block it.
- 2. Identify.** Name it. The fear of the unknown, of the ambiguous, we cannot face it. We need to name it and be as specific as possible.
- 3. Analyze.** Rethink the path that has made that fear. Where it comes from, identify the ways in which it expresses itself in us and make a complete analysis of it. It's like getting an X-ray and seeing everything that makes it up in you.
- 4. Socialize.** Understand that narrative, what we tell, is a way to elaborate and process complex fears and situations. This makes us see that we are not alone and that we can rely on other people, recognize ourselves in others and understand and collectivize the experience lived.



- 5. Break down.** To look for the concrete parts that compose this fear, beyond the generalities to be able to think about how to face each of the small parts.
- 6. Action options.** Here you will put all the analysis into practice. Define concrete actions for each part where you have broken down your fear.

Working on compassion

When we talk about self-care and mutual care, especially for women, it is often clear how to support and care for others. The care, that unpaid work of which Silvia Federici speaks, is also a social construct very linked to the feminine gender (focusing from a binary and very basic vision). Caring is one of the “tasks” traditionally associated with women. We take care of our children, sons, brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers when they are older, friends, neighbors, and anyone who shows us weakness, need or vulnerability. We are the ones who are linked to work in the social area, those who volunteer, those who traditionally renounce their professional life to take care of the family. And all this has something of identity, because we have been socialized with these collective constructs and imaginaries. So what happens when we don't care? How do we feel when we're not there for that friend who we know is going through a bad time? How do we feel when we say no? These situations can happen in your day-to-day volunteer work. On the other hand, one thing we can reflect on is: How are the care burdens shared across the team? What things do men and what do women do? Is that distribution equitable? What if you say no to something?



On many occasions it is difficult to say no, we are afraid of what the person in front of us will think of us, that he or she will not understand our position or that he or she feels bad or inadequate. If this happens to you, remember what you worked on in the assertiveness toolbox and **REMEMBER: IT'S BETTER TO SAY THE THINGS THAT HAPPEN TO US AND WE FEEL BEING CAREFUL AND RESPECTFUL, THAN NOT EXPRESSING YOUR FEELINGS AND LETTING FEELINGS OF DISSATISFACTION OR DISCOMFORT GROW.**

This can easily happen in the places where you volunteer, because in many cases, conditions are extreme and you have to face injustices, inequalities and inequities. If this happens to you, remember the difference between the internal and external control locus and everything you've worked out about expectations and acceptability and try to **focus on what's in your hand**. You can't change the reality of the territory you're in, but there are small gestures and changes that you can see the impact of. In these, it is where you should put the focus, because if you put it into the structural and what does not work, the frustration can be atrocious. This does not mean that the structural is not important. It's obviously the basis of many of the injustices and inequalities you'll have to deal with during your volunteer period, but it's a context to understand your position. You're not going to save anyone. Solidarity among peoples is born of empathy and mutual respect. And for there to be respect, you must bear the responsibility that belongs to you, but not with any additional burden.

One exercise you can do is keep a small record:

| Frustrating or worrying situation | Is it up to you? | Is there anything you can do? |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| For example: Machismo in the country where I volunteer. | No, it's a social process. | Within the team, you can have equitable and egalitarian practices and, without interfering in the culture of the country in which you are, can show the community another way of doing things. |
| | | |
| | | |

c. Work in safe, secure and operational conditions.

i. Understanding protection in a comprehensive manner.

The level of risk is changing and depends on several things:

1. The context.
2. The threats.
3. The capabilities.
4. Vulnerabilities.
5. Factors such as gender, age or ability.

In order to make volunteering as safe as possible, you must take into account that while the risk analysis part is done by the organization itself, each person must be individually responsible, to facilitate the safety and protection as comprehensive as possible.

To do this, you can do a small individual and even team-level analysis in which you analyze your vulnerabilities and capabilities and thus be very aware of each team's strengths and weaknesses.

Just note that vulnerabilities and capabilities are two sides of the same coin. Therefore, for each vulnerability you identify you can think about the capacity that would supply it (e.g.: if a vulnerability is not knowing how to swim and in the day to day you are near rivers or beaches, a capacity can be learning to swim).

In addition to this, there will be additional capabilities that do not respond to a specific vulnerability, but are capabilities that we have developed and that can generate better risk management.

Some examples can be found in the following table:

| Who? | Vulnerabilities | Capabilities |
|----------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Person 1 | Limited proficiency of the language. | Daily practice and reinforcement between the team. |
| Person 2 | | |
| | | |
| Team | Little knowledge of the context. | Analysis of the weekly context. Consult Alianza and request additional context information. |
| | | Team with good communication and solid. |

ii. Before, during and after

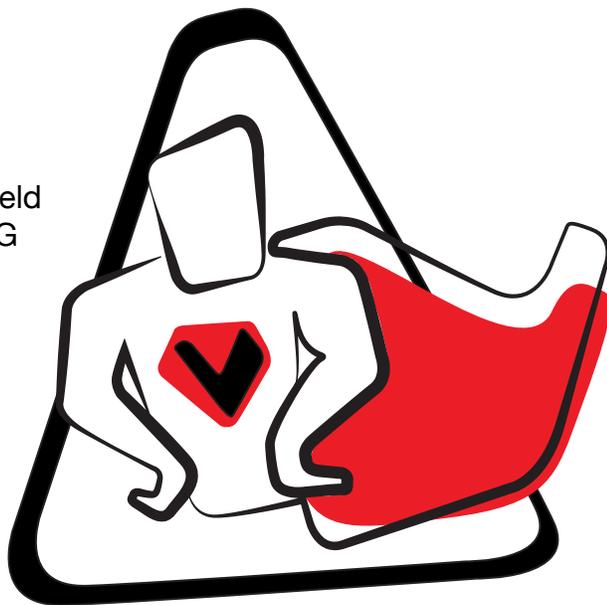
For the construction of protocols and/or measures in field trips, you should think in three times: BEFORE, DURING and AFTER, taking into account not only aspects of physical security, but of emotional and digital security.

It is essential to have three clear premises before field trips:

1. **Harmless action⁵ as a solid basis.** All voluntary action on the field generates impact. There is no action without impact. The goal is that volunteering does not become a generator of harm, for example, generating dependency, or unfulfilled promises. That is why it is important to always define and understand the limits of work and to measure well the impact of actions.

2. **The Superheroes/ Superheroines complex.** In the volunteers sometimes it happens that comes that feeling of saviors of the world. That feeling of wanting to change everything and end the injustices of the world. This attitude is highly frustrating, but it can also involve action with harm, since the limits of what we are doing are lost. It is important to remember the objectives of volunteering, its duration and to try not to exceed those limits.

3. **The principle of acceptance:** it means recognizing and approving our emotional experience, our thoughts or our feelings, as well as those of the people I have in front of me. It is certain that we will collaborate in contexts where people or communities have realities very different from ours, so their experiences and social constructions can be totally different.



Remember:

Accept without judgment the reality of the other!

⁵ About the harmless approach to action, you can find more information and broaden your vision by reading a module developed by the Avre Corporation in Colombia that further develops the approach. www.corporacionavre.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/modulo1.pdf

| MEASURES/ MOMENTS | AFTER | DURING | BEFORE |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PHYSICAL | E.g.: Make sure you are healthy. Have the cell phone with battery | E.g.: Hydrate well (ensuring it is pure water) | Ex: Team meeting to communicate important aspects and extract future learning (e.g.: in this area we must bring more water). |
| EMOTIONAL | E.g.: Exercises on expectations and stress management prior to departure. | E.g.: Ensure pauses and use of stress management techniques (review that section of the toolbox). | E.g.: In regular meetings with the tutor share the emotional impacts of some outings. |
| DIGITAL | E.g.: Secure sharing of sensitive information | E.g.: Use of signal or infoencrypt for communications | Ex: Do not have pictures or project information on my personal devices |

iii. Protection in leisure time

It should be remembered that protection is a comprehensive strategy. We cannot apply all the existing protocols during voluntary work and in free time not to take any kind of protective measure.

Keys to take into account in free time:

- The places you decide to spend your free time.
- The companies you choose for your free time.
- Personal measures (carry documentation, cell phone with battery, enough money... etc when you leave home).
- Recognize and be aware of the cultural differences in the countries where you volunteer and respect them.
- When doubts arise about whether or not to do something, it is always best to take the most conservative position to avoid unnecessary risks.
- Intercultural relations as a source of possible conflict.

- Your expectations can play tricks if your ideas about what your free time would be like are not met.
- It's key to understand at the context level how people around you see you (e.g., in some places being a foreign person reads like a person with money and great financial ability). You must know the subtleties of where you volunteer.
- Making local friends can be complicated, you can't expect relationships and ties to be established in the same way and at the same pace as in your home country.
- Some risks can arise from cultural differences (ways of saying things that can be aggressive to another culture) or gestures that can be read as violent (caressing the heads of children who approach or taking photographs without consent).

4. EMOTION AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

a. Identification of emotions

When we talk about identifying emotions, first of all, we have to think about what emotions are. If you had to define them, how would you do it? Beyond naming one you know or think about, the question is, what is an emotion?.

AN EMOTION IS

If we think about the origin of the word emotion comes from movement. In this sense, emotions move us, they drive us, they shake us and somehow they push us towards something. Emotions come for a reason. If we think from the capitalist point of view, we would say that they have a function, a utility. However, if we go a little further, from feminisms we would consider that they are here to travel with them, to let them invade us, to flood us, to impel us and ultimately to accompany us in different moments, situations, decisions and paths.

An important reflection is to stop to look at how much you identify the emotions you feel in the day to day and to what extent you give them the space they have to occupy. If you compare it to a constellation, for example, when some element is not in its place it moves all the other elements of the system. The same goes for emotions. When you don't give them their rightful place, when you don't let them emerge, you are somehow blocking a movement and thus driving readjustment in the system, and making everything move and fall out of place.

In addition, in the specific case of women we have a historical burden in relation to emotions that are well received or that fit socially in terms of gender stereotypes and others that do not. Therefore it costs more work and effort to express certain emotions such as rage, or any emotion we identify as strong, or associated with more masculine roles. In that sense, we are

“choking” some emotions, not letting them surface and not giving the opportunity to know ourselves at a deeper level, knowing how we are when we live certain situations. Also, when we do not let the emotions we are feeling come to light, they find another way to show, show and show us what we are hiding in some way. They can manifest through pain in the body, an impact on the social, family level... etc.

At a general level we could talk about basic impacts related to emotions untravelled or blocked.

i. What happens to me?

REFOCUSING MY EMOTIONS:

What do I think? What do I feel? What do I do?

AWARENESS: observe-take the focus of consciousness to your inner experience and notice what is happening in your thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations. Describe, recognize, identify-express experiences in words, for example, if in your mind “a feeling of anger is arising” or “there are self-critical thoughts here”.



REDIRECT ATTENTION: gently redirect your full attention to the breath. Follow the breathing throughout the process of inhalation and exhalation. Try to observe “with a background awareness”, “inhaling... exhaling” or counting “inhaling, one... exhaling, one; inhaling, two... etc.”

EXPAND ATTENTION: allow your attention to extend to the entire body-especially to any feeling of discomfort, tension, or resistance. If these sensations are there, take your consciousness there by taking your breath to them in inspiration. Then exhale from these sensations, softening and opening with exhalation. Say to yourself in exhalation, “Okay. Whatever it is is fine. Let me feel it”. Become aware of your posture and facial expression and adjust them. Do everything you can to bring your broadened consciousness with you to the next moments of the day.

The guest house

The human being is like a guest house.

Every morning, a new tenant arrives.

A joy, a sadness, an evil,
who comes as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome them and welcome them all!
Even if they are a chorus of hardships that
violently empty your house.
Treat every guest honorably,
he may be creating space for you for some
delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
receive them at the door smiling
and invite them in.

Thank whoever is coming,
because each has been sent
as a guide from far away.

*Extracted from Barks and Moyne. Copyright 1995
in favour of Coleman and Barks and John Moyne.
Originally published by Threshold Books*

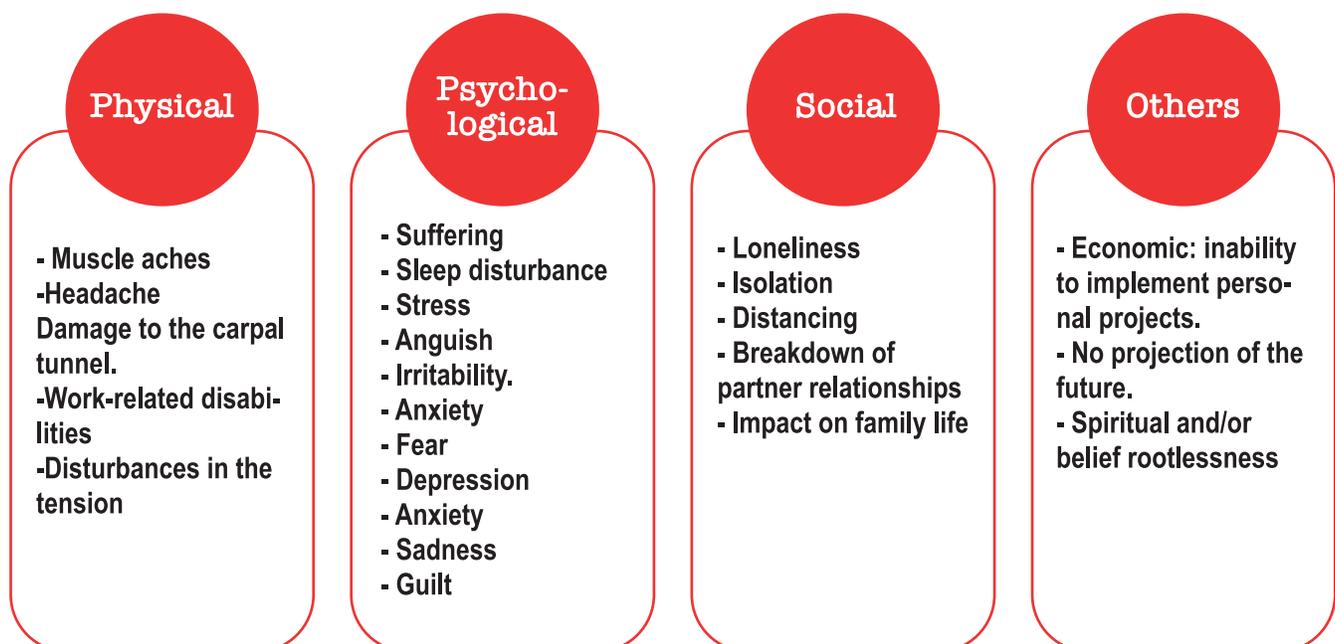
ii. What impacts does what happens to you, your team and your environment?

Generally people who volunteer in social organizations, linked to human rights and/or political activism, understand that process as a bet of life and therefore also a political bet that involves dedicating and placing this work in a very central space of your life, your action and your thinking. It can sometimes cause an imbalance or a lack of basic needs at the individual, family, collective and social levels.

Care is not productive, so betting on care at the organizational level means challenging and overthrowing the system that is held up by the alliance between capitalism and patriarchy.

Therefore, it is essential that during volunteering processes pay attention to the protocols of care and self-care, focused on the stressors that each process in the field can generate. There are no general recipes to apply to all volunteer processes or environments. However, there are some signs/symptoms or alerts that can serve as a wake-up call to check if care and self-care is being neglected on your(s) team(s).

An example of some impacts in different areas may be:



When we think about the impacts of volunteer work on organizations linked to the social, human rights or working in contexts of socio-political violence, sometimes we tend to imagine super heroines or super heroes with superpowers, that they can do anything and that they do not decay or give up on anything. This image is the first one you should discard if you want to contribute to self-care and mutual care as a strategy of protection and political commitment during our volunteering process.

On the other hand, it is important to be clear that choosing this type of voluntary activity does not make you responsible for the impacts derived from carrying out this activity. Therefore, the second thing you should rule out is guilt. The feeling that you have exactly what you deserve from choosing a type of volunteer, a specific organization, or a specific area or country is an idea you should discard. This thinking generates an individualization of the impacts and can lead you to forget and stop sizing the real responsibilities that are behind those affects and therefore diverts attention on where we should work or put the focus.

b Identifying needs

Usually the rhythms of life you lead, the stress and especially the way you prioritize leave time for yourself in the background. That time to stop, reflect, observe yourself and around and be able to realize what is happening to you.

What needs do you have right now?

REMEMBER that these are YOUR needs, try to think about them in first person, they are not needs for my family, nor for my environment (although I may influence them) are needs in FIRST PERSON!

We identify needs in:

- The immediate On a day-to-day basis?
- Medium term in a few days?
- Long term in a few months?

c. And now that I know what's wrong with me, what do I do?

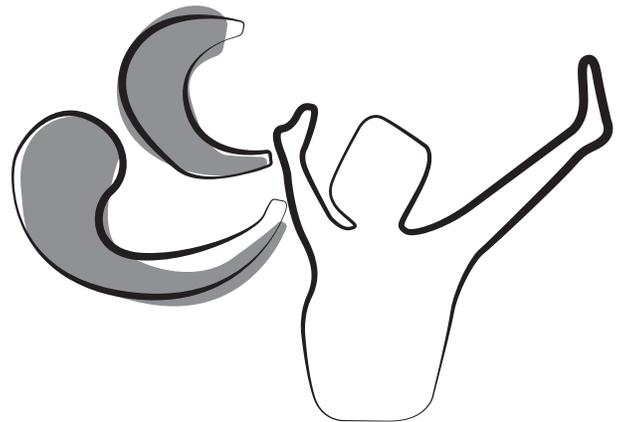
i. Identification of strategies used

When we think about strategies we're already using, we can do it introspectively by asking ourselves how do you take care of yourself? What are those things you do in your daily life or in other volunteer processes that you've identified as ways to take care of yourself?

In trying to answer this question, you most likely come up with a previous question that would be, what is taking care of yourself? This question is the one you have to answer first to then know how to do it.

Caring minimally involves three steps paraphrasing María Bonet in her book "Therapeutic Feminism", which would be; connecting(to) or listening(to), (to) learning and moving forward.

These steps always have to be accompanied by something very basic to which we usually do not pay as much attention, as is BREATHING. For this, it is key to perform a conscious exercise by beginning to pay attention to the breath, initiating daily exercises of conscious breathing and everything that allows us to attend (us) to our body. Remember that in the xxxxx link you have access to several daily breathing/connection exercises in audio format.



BE HEARD

NOURISH
(Feed all the bodie
that make us up)

- Energetic
- Social
- Emotional

ii. Analysis of used tools (which work, which do not)

Stand up and make a list of those strategies you've identified that you generally use to take care of yourself. It also indicates when recently you remember using it and how it worked.

ANALYSIS OF USED TOOLS

WHAT TOOLS DO
I HAVE?

1

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____



WHICH ONES
MIGHT WORK
BETTER?

2

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____



d. What else could I do?

i. Working on the identification of new strategies

When we think about the new things you could do to take better care of yourself, you can also focus on recovering things that you did at some point and that helped you get better.

From the sum of the analysis at all levels (personal, family, social and organizational) you will have before you the first elements for the construction of a personalized self-care plan to follow up to see its results and progress gradually.

a. Personal level

On a personal level, there are a lot of things you can do for your self-care, to refocus and from your center, in balance, then be able to look outside and work with and for others. Without this step, the only thing you can push are imbalances, conflicts and/or physical discomfort that can be symptomatic of something else going on.

| Activity | Periodicity | Is there a cost? | Benefits |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| E.g.: Physical exercise | Daily | No | Relaxation and well-being |
| Propose others? | | | |
| E.g.: Balanced diet | Daily | Yes | Physical balance and general well-being |
| E.g.: Establish sleep routines (strict rest schedules) | Daily | No | Greater general well-being and energy for volunteering |

b. Family level

At a family level, to think a little bit about what new things you might be able to do, you can ask yourself some previous questions related to the things you've been doing throughout your life and identify to what extent those activities were aimed at satisfying the family.

We can quickly think of these three basic questions:

1. In your childhood, did you do any leisure activities with your family? Which?
2. How do you remember it? If they stopped doing it, when and why was it?
3. Did you ever seek family approval when choosing leisure activities or just the opposite? What memories do you have?

| Activity | Periodicity | Is there a cost? | Benefits |
|------------------------|-------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| E.g.: Call with family | Weekly | No | Greater tranquility, feeling of belonging and connection. |
| | | | |
| | | | |

c. Organizationally

| Activity | Periodicity | Is there a cost? | Benefits |
|---------------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E.g.: Team meetings | Fortnightly | No | Better knowledge of the team Stronger Creation of a support network. |
| | | | |
| | | | |

ii. Designing individual and collective emotional management strategies

Based on the previous exercise and in relation to the context in which you develop volunteerism, design a roadmap or action plan of what strategies you might start using and how you would prioritize them.

It's as if you're running a strategy schedule. Make a list of them and contact your companion to share your roadmap.

ROAD MAP

STRATEGIES FOR EMOTIONAL
MANAGEMENT

| | |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A | ACTIVITIES: WHAT ACTIVITIES CAN I DO? YELLOW (INTERMEDIATE) AND GREEN (-PRIORITY). |
| P | PERIODICITY: DETERMINE HOW OFTEN YOU CAN PERFORM THIS ACTIVITY. |
| C | COSTS: WHAT IS THE COST, IF ANY. |
| B | BENEFITS: WHAT BENEFITS WILL THIS ACTIVITY PROVIDE ME? |



e. Knowing and practicing tools for managing emotions and stress

i. Meditation and relaxation as a key tool to cope with stress

Breathing and meditation exercises are key as tools to properly manage our stress. One proposal you can make is to record the exercises in audio format to be able to carry them out, or ask someone else to record it for you, if you find it weird to listen to yourself. Remember that your tutor also has a manual with strategies and tools in that regard.

ii. Habits and routines to return to calm

“Switching” is a very beneficial exercise to calm down and focus; to use before meditation to focus, to relieve depression or anxiety; and to focus the mind and spirit. When working with individuals or groups, the practice can be used to calm someone down before therapy or to focus the energy of children or students after school break, before an exam, or before the start of class.

We invite you to do it by following these simple steps:

- Sit comfortably and take a deep breath.
- Cross the left ankle over the right ankle.
- Extend your hands to the front. Make a turn with your hands with your thumbs pointing towards the ground.
- Cross the right hand over the left. Interlace the fingers of the hands forming a fist.
- With a fist of hands touch the center of the sternum.
- Close your eyes, take a deep breath, and relax your whole body. Imagine that you can go down to a place in the center of your being. (you can imagine under the navel in the center of your abdomen).
- Relax your tongue and let it touch behind your upper teeth.
- Breathe deep and let go of all thoughts. Rest deep in peace and deep silence for a few minutes.
- After two or three minutes, relax your hands above your legs. Breathe deeply and slowly open your eyes.
- Stretch hands and arms. Gently tap your fingers over your head to stimulate your head and energy.

TOOL BOX FOR VOLUNTEERING

Alianza por la
Solidaridad

act:onaid

EU Aid Volunteers

We Care, We Act

