

MENTORSHIP JOURNEY

STEP BY STEP



SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN
YOUTH NETWORK

SEEYIN

South East European Youth Network

This guide is created and produced by **South East European Youth Network** as result of Methodology Development Hub activity of the Erasmus+ project "Youth Work in Progress". The publication is composed and edited by facilitator and expert **Ajša Hadžibegović**.

The main idea, final editing and design is developed by SEEYN training manager **Marinela Šumanjski**.

Special thanks to valuable project partner contributors:

Cihan Kılıç **SAUSEM Turkey**

Giulia Degortes Caivano **Associazione Interculturale NUR**

Milena Šćepanović **Association for Democratic Prosperity - Zid**

Emir Karamujić **Omladinski resursni centar (ORC) Tuzla**

Zoran Milošević **Vojvodina Environmental Movement**

Giedrė Valčiukaitė **Creativitas**

Nikoleta Theodoridou **Association of Active Youths of Florina - OENEF**

Ilija Jovanović **Educational Center Krusevac**

Biljana Vasilevska Trajkoska **Youth Cultural Centre Bitola**

Simona Atanasova **Ideas Factory**

Jurij Matkovič **Youth Centre BIT, social enterprise**

Xhevahir Doçaj **Beyond Barriers Association**

Ivana Volf **South East European Youth Network**

Meris Bećović **South East European Youth Network**



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



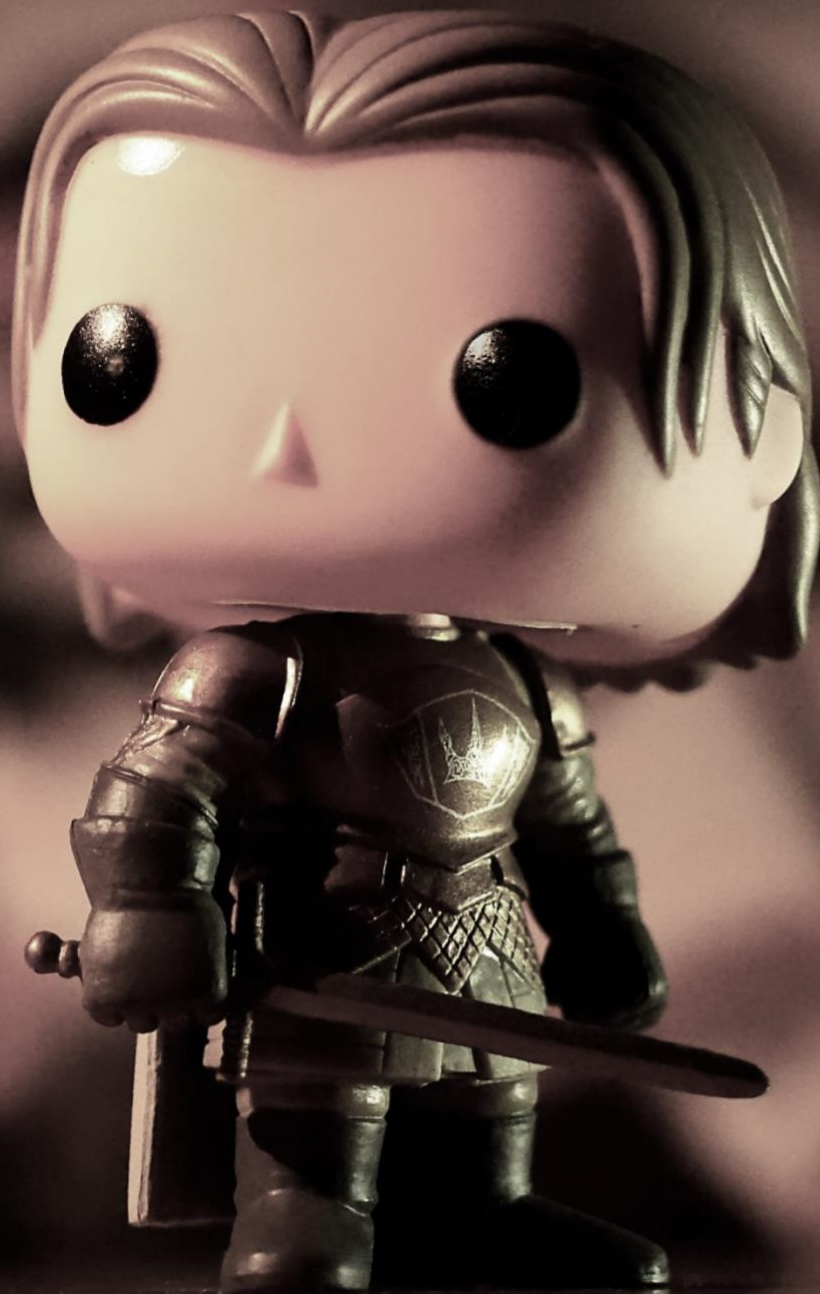
WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Mentoring process in youth work is about meaningful journey for mentee leading them to advance in areas of choice. For mentor this process is about provision of vigilant and expert support throughout the process primarily navigated by mentee.

Now, we, partner consortium of the project **"Youth Work in Progress"**, have realized that the youth organizations and their youth workers could use a methodology framework that will help them organize and follow the progress, learning and life-changing experience in different learning processes or initiatives, consolidate, recognize the competences of young people and help them take ownership of their own development in fun and creative way. shaped in a set of tools and methods which aim to raise quality of work of youth workers on personal and professional development of young people.

It should give a clear, but flexible system that will help youth workers to practically support their youngsters to go through different learning and experiential process while engaging in different activities, educations or experiences. It follows learning cycle approach and connect it to "Hero's journey" methodology. So, here it is, the step by step **MENTORSHIP JOURNEY GUIDE**.

FIRST THINGS FIRST



Every story has a beginning, a middle and an end. In the beginning you setup your hero/ine and their story, then you throw something at them that is a great source of conflict or challenge. After facing many foes and overcoming various obstacles the hero/ine wins the final battle, saves the day and gets the prize. In order to finish the adventure, they return back home to the same place where everything started, but although place is the same, the hero/ine is not anymore. They are changed, full of new knowledge, experience, allies, achievements and they see things in a different way now.

In his work [The Hero with a Thousand Faces](#), Joseph Campbell, who popularized this observations of common patterns in plots of heroes' journeys from different myths and stories, described the basic narrative pattern as follows:

“A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.”

When we thought about the young people’s development process that is happening in the youth work settings, we realised that it is very easily comparable to the journey of a character in a story. This gave us the idea to take a “Hero’s Journey” model and try to apply it to the mentorship support process that youth workers are doing with the young people in their organisation, youth club or community. To make this process more clear, easy to follow, empowering and more fun for everyone.

For mentor, this process is about provision of vigilant and expert support throughout the process primarily navigated by mentee.

What can you as a youth worker, or potential MENTOR in youth work find in this Step by Step Guide?

- Information about **mentoring process** in general and different phases the process has.
- Where the **entry points** are for starting mentoring process and which boundaries are crucial?
- What are the **areas of development** of young person that you could potentially focus on during mentoring?
- Information about where and how to find **relevant resources** and support for mentoring in youth work!

The graph that follows, shows the Mentee's meaningful Journey through mentorship process based on the Hero Journey model. This outlines the process so that mentee knows how it will look like once they are deciding to do something different in their **Every Day Life** and embark into journey that will lead them to advance in the areas of their choice. The graph shows the outline of the journey where you as the mentor will provide support, and mentee is the one that sets the story and is the Hero that navigates through the path until reaching the **Finale!** Show this graph to your mentee and explain the journey metaphors through the steps.

** The outline of the process is developed collaboratively by young people that were mentees and mentors in different youth work settings.*

the
MENTORSHIP JOURNEY
in youth work



THE MENTORSHIP JOURNEY PHASES FOR MENTEE

AND HOW THEY RELATE TO MENTORING PROCESS

THE ORDINARY WORLD with a twist

- You are showing interest/initiative to work on self-development!
- Start exploring mentoring process as a structured way of self-development.
- First meeting with the potential mentor.
- Introducing yourself and areas you would like to advance at.
- Sharing the thoughts, previous experiences, needs, expectations, etc.

CALL FOR AN ADVENTURE

- The Mentor is there and you have built the relationship of trust
- Mentor helps you get familiar with the steps of the mentoring process.
- Together with mentor you set the rules for the process
- Together with mentor you set the goals you want to achieve during the process.
- Jointly you create a plan for yourself and of the mentoring process

ENTERING THE UNKNOWN

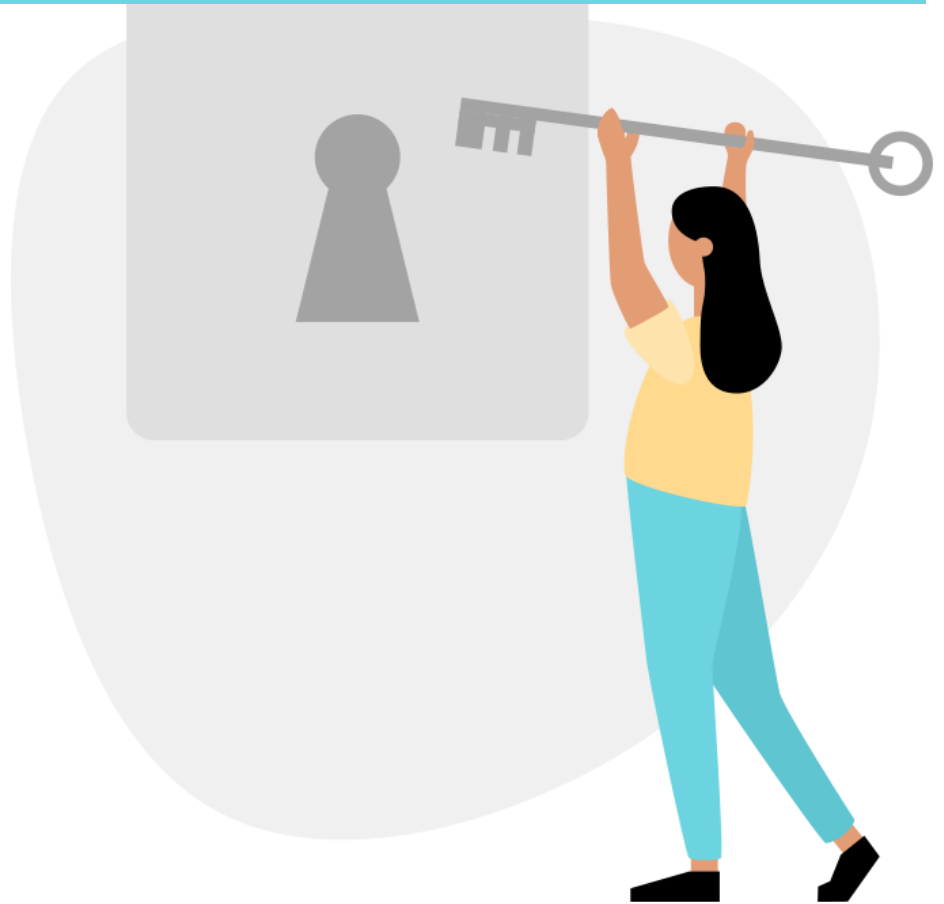
- Now you start realising your plan!
- You are having evaluation meetings with the mentor where you receive constructive feedback
- You are also:
 - meeting different people during the process
 - facing different obstacles and challenges, and overcoming them
 - acquiring new competences (skills, knowledge and attitudes)
 - actively seeking for support and advices
- You may find additional goals that appear during the process.

THE FINAL CHALLENGE

There will be moment in the process where you will have to either implement the activity you have been preparing for, pass the exam, or face the biggest obstacle in your development and this is your final battle where you will be most challenged and after you overcome it, you will be rewarded with new knowledge, experience and achievements.

RETURNING

- **You have made it!**
- Now it's time to celebrate success, acknowledge the achievements, reflect and review:
 1. lessons learned
 2. goals achieved
 3. new competencies developed
- It's also time to end the relationship with the mentor.



HOW IS MENTORING IN YOUTH WORK DONE?



Having in mind that mentoring process in youth work is about meaningful journey for mentee and that for mentor this process is about provision of vigilant and expert support it is necessary to understand major phases of the process and when in their journey mentee needs different kinds of support. The mentoring process is primarily navigated by mentee and it follows their needs and desires for development. Thus, in order to provide expert support mentor needs to be aware of how mentoring process is usually evolving and what is their responsibility and role in the process.

There are five main phases:

- 1. Building relationship between Mentee and Mentor**
- 2. Setting Goals and Plan for Mentee to work on**
- 3. Realisation of Plan mainly by Mentee and as agreed supported by Mentor**
- 4. Supporting Mentee to face and overcome major challenge set in the Plan as key**
- 5. Closing the Mentoring process**

In each of those phases, the role of mentor is very specific and unique. Exploring following graph will provide important insights for youth workers that want to embark into mentoring adventure and understand better how the mentoring process, based on Hero Journey template, should actually evolve. Never forget, mentee is in the centre of process and they are the Hero in this unique Hero Journey that mentoring is. Also, please consult this graph only as orientation, because in reality the borders between phases may not be completely obvious and some phases might take more time than others – all of that is ok as long as it follows the desired and realistic pace of mentee's development in specific area of choice.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MENTEE AND MENTOR

- Create safe space to understand context
- Establish power-equal relationship with clear boundaries

SETTING GOALS AND PLAN FOR MENTEE TO WORK ON

- Support Mentee to define and prioritize needs
- Set jointly the Goals addressing the needs, with timeline and indicators of success

REALIZATION OF PLAN MAINLY BY MENTEE AND AS AGREED SUPPORTED BY MENTOR

- Monitor progress and provide constructive feedback

SUPPORTING MENTEE TO FACE AND OVERCOME MAJOR CHALLENGE SET IN THE PLAN AS KEY

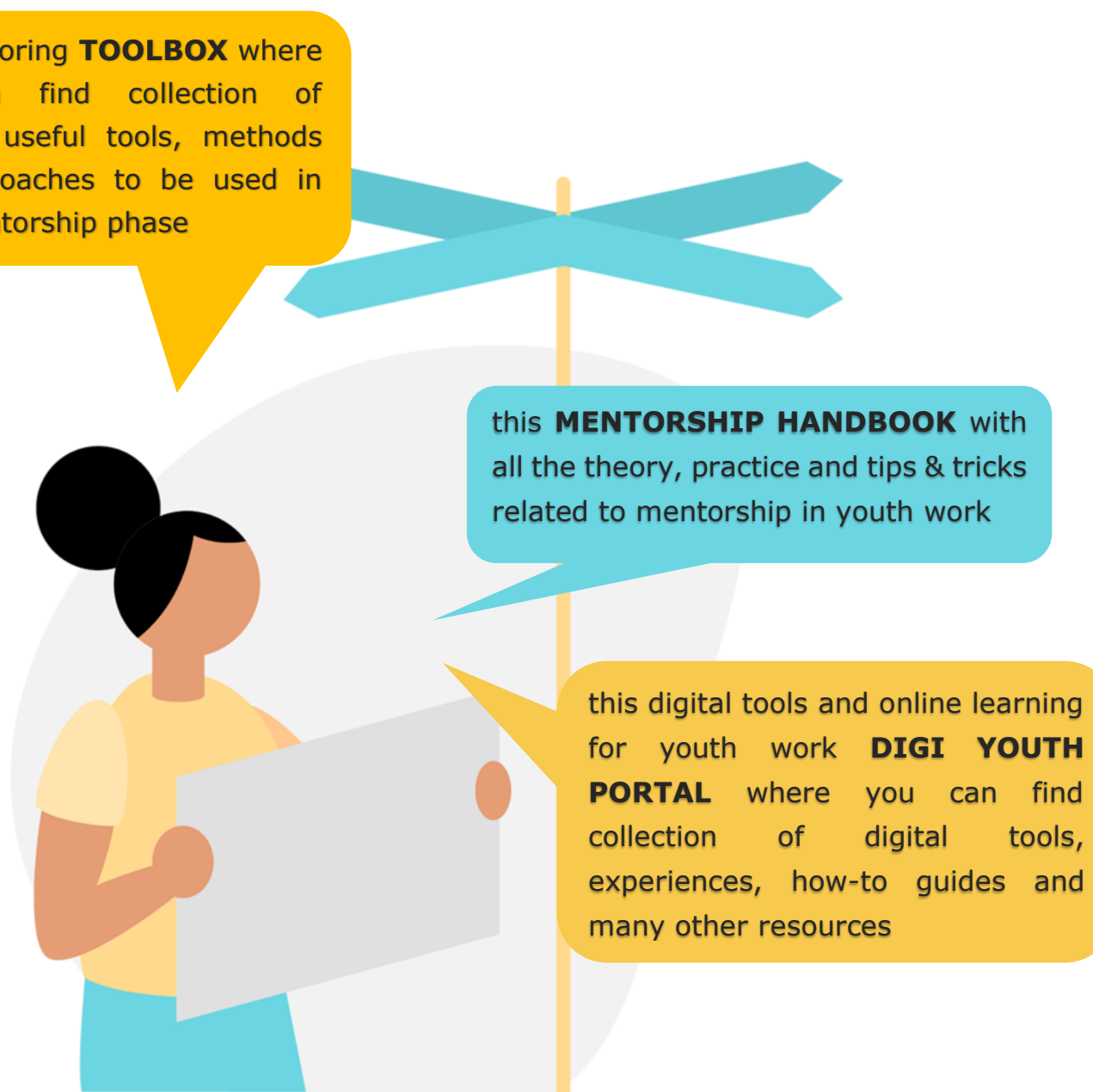
- Make sure mentee is challenged enough and ready for specific task

CLOSING THE MENTORING PROCESS

- Reflect, Evaluate and Celebrate success
- Close the process and end the relationship

SUPPORTING MENTORS

There are number of different tools that can help mentor to suggest way forward in each of the phases. They can be found in:

An illustration of a woman with black hair in a bun, wearing a yellow shirt and blue skirt, holding a grey tablet. Three callout boxes are connected to her by lines. A yellow box is at the top left, a light blue box is in the middle right, and another yellow box is at the bottom right. In the background, there is a light grey circle and a wooden post with two crossed teal arrows.

this mentoring **TOOLBOX** where you can find collection of different useful tools, methods and approaches to be used in each mentorship phase

this **MENTORSHIP HANDBOOK** with all the theory, practice and tips & tricks related to mentorship in youth work

this digital tools and online learning for youth work **DIGI YOUTH PORTAL** where you can find collection of digital tools, experiences, how-to guides and many other resources

SO, WHERE TO START?



Usually there are **two ways** to initiate any mentoring process:

- Mentee approaches someone that they meet in youth work activities that they believe they can learn from and “pick them up” to be their Mentor
- Youth work project and/or organization assigns mentor to Mentee or group of Mentees

Either way, you always need to start with steps necessary to **build relationship** – connection, trust, understanding of what process would entail for both Mentee and Mentor – and only then should you consider mentoring relationship established and process starting. Even if mentee and mentor know each other from before, it is still good idea to take seriously the first step of building the specific mentoring relationship, because it is different from other relationships that you had through youth work.

Note for Mentor: It is always an option to refer Mentee to another Mentor or other professionals for whatever reason you have for not feeling you are just not the right fit to support mentee in this specific journey they have to undergo.

Note for Mentee: If for whatever reason it doesn't work with this Mentor, it is perfectly ok to look/ask for other, you don't need to stay in relationship that is not supporting your development.

Then, the mentoring journey starts!



EXPRESSING NEEDS Once the mentoring relationship is established you can consider that the journey has started. Now it is all about supporting mentee. You could start first by going deeper into expressed needs and helping mentee discover what it is that they really need and want to focus on.

SETTING GOALS Once this is established it should be easier to support mentee to set the goals they want to reach.

PLANING The goals in itself are not enough of course, thus the logical next step would be to support mentee to figure out the steps in order to achieve the goals – and that’s how the plan will be created. This is another major phase completed – you may recognize it from one of graphs above – **the adventure is taking its shape!**

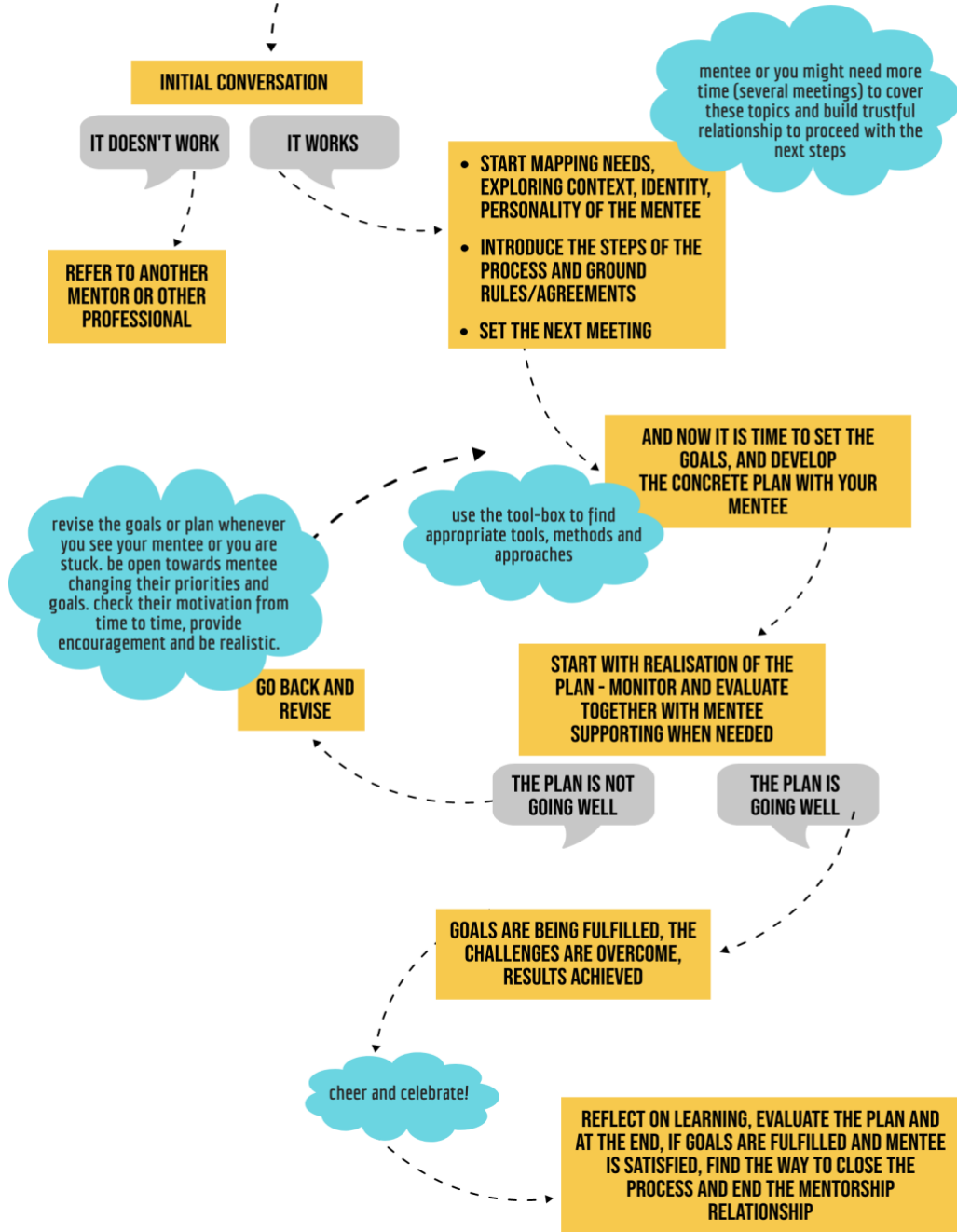
DOING The next steps are particularly challenging because now it is not about discovering, planning, reflecting and discussing – now it is all about doing! And Mentee is really completely in charge, if possible even more than until this moment. Supporting mentee in this phase can be very challenging and sensitive. However, there are good news – you have already built the trusting relationship and the mentee is the one who set the goal and designed the plan – thus the chances are they really also want to realize it. Your role is to support, which means not to lead the process, but also not to leave it entirely. The mentee needs you, and if that might mean completely (or partially) revising the plan, the goal, redefining the way to provide support – then that is what might need to happen before this phase can really end. Because now we are in **the area of unknown** and all that happens carry potential for learning, self-discovery and growth.

FACING CHALLENGE Specific stage in mentee's journey is when they are well of with the realization of their plan and there is a final challenge awaiting them that will test them. Now, all that is accomplished until that moment is at test. And the way the final challenge is handled is just perfect indicator of whether the journey can come to its final stage or some steps from previous phases still need to be revisited (also bear in mind that even at this stage it is possible to discover that perhaps mentoring is not the best framework for kind of support mentee needs in that specific area). During this period mentee might need and ask for support, or they might need to be as independent as possible while facing the final challenge. By now, mentoring relationship has endured through good and rough times and thus you will both definitely know what is the best (though note that you might disagree on this, and then it is, of course, important to take into consideration the reasons for disagreeing, but ultimately the mentee is the one to lead the process). **The final challenge** is faced and dealt with in one way or the other, and it should be discussed and reflected upon.

FINALISING Finally, after all the important steps it is up to mentee, supported by mentor, to asses if the plan is achieved and if the goal is met. The final challenge may provide crucial evidence for such assessment. If the assessment is not completely to the satisfaction and showing that the goal is achieved the process can go back to revisiting the goal, plan, final challenge...or understanding that at this stage that is what could have been reached within mentoring process. Once the assessment is completed it is really important to close the mentoring relationship officially and possibly also in symbolic manner. This doesn't mean "breaking down" – it rather means that **one important journey is finalized** and that set goal is achieved, and mentoring process that provided framework can also end. Of course after that new mentoring relationship can be established as found needed and agreed upon.

MENTORSHIP JOURNEY

this scheme will help you navigate through the mentorship process



WHAT TO FOCUS ON?



The mentoring process is all about supporting Mentee to achieve their goals and advance in the chosen areas. However, Mentor should be aware that there are areas in which Mentee might need to advance and will do through the process even if they are not aware and/or completely convinced at the beginning of the mentoring process. Mentor should be observant about different relevant elements in the 5C development areas: **Connection, Competence, Care/Compassion, Confidence and Character.**



CONNECTION

- Support mentee to improve communication skills (assertive communication, active listening, etc.), conflict transformation competences, intercultural learning/awareness, etc.
- Learn about the mentees expectations about people they would like to befriend and get to know
- Include mentee in projects/events where they can interact with other people (organization of the event)
- Give mentee opportunities to take risks and responsibilities in social situations
- Introduce volunteering opportunities for the mentee
- Invite the mentee to some events with you, to accompany you
- Inform mentee about different relevant social events and support them to search/attend them
- Support mentee to map allies and support points
- Provide mentee with your own professional and personal contacts (if relevant)

COMPETENCE

- Develop mentee's competence for reflection and learning to learn (including understanding experiential learning cycle)
- Work on mentee's self-awareness
- Map mentee's current competencies and interests (**different competence framework** exist that could be helpful starting point)
- Create the learning plan based on current competencies and interests to develop their potentials
- Reflect on learning achievements with the mentee
- Evaluate gained competences and assess together with mentee whether they are ready to demonstrate the acquired competencies

CARE/COMPASSION

- Support mentee to understand the background of what they cares about (including also about self and others)
- Show your capacity for care and compassion towards mentee, to enable them to learn from example
- Together with mentee find common understanding of the terms "care and compassion"
- Raise awareness of mentee about interconnectivity and own impact on others/on global issues
- Have in mind different factors that affect young people's capacity for care and compassion (society, context, family, education, culture, etc.)
- Discover what would make mentee care about something or someone
- Support mentee to care about themselves and be compassionate towards themselves

CONFIDENCE

- Build trust and include mentee as equal partner in the process of mentorship
- Be aware of the challenge/stretch zone for mentee (based on concept of [learning zones](#))
- Use health motivation, focus on strengths of mentee... and do not overstimulate mentee with confidence
- Support mentee understand what they are good at and what are their weak points, so the mentee can decide to develop more in certain areas or focus on the things they are good at
- Encourage mentee to take responsibility (step-by-step approach - start with little things and then go bigger)

- Encourage mentee to reflect critically and constructively on self and discuss with them potential mistakes, failures, weaknesses in productive and positive way
- Provide/build a safe environment for mentee to dare to fail and learn from failure
- Focus on progress
- Cheer, provide positive reinforcement, and encourage mentee to celebrate achievements
- Encourage the mentee to take care of their mental health
- Teach mentee how to give and receive feedback
- Be a (positive) role model

CHARACTER

- Encourage mentee to be aware of pluralism of opinions
- As mentor be aware of own personal values and values of youth work
- Support mentee to explore personal values and values they want to have as foundation for personal behavior and connection with universal human values (also explore boundaries; understand mentee's role models)
- Question mentee's attitudes and values, particularly stereotypes and prejudices.
- Support mentee to develop critical thinking
- Work on values such as trustworthiness, responsibility, fairness, caring, as well as being humble in achievements
- As mentor be aware of basic of character types and explore the context in which mentee was/is developing own
- Support mentee to recognise the way they interact with surroundings and how that influences him/her
- Encourage mentee to get out of the comfort zone and have challenging experiences
- Jointly with mentee discuss and define what is character

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

Now, if you went through this step-by-step guide you have a general understanding of the mentoring process and what it entails for both mentee and mentor. However, this alone is not necessarily enough even for experienced youth workers to embark into mentoring adventure. Therefore we recommend that you really take some time and explore further resources and ideas gathered by mentees and mentors in youth work. Some ideas on how to support mentee to develop in the areas of 5Cs you can find listed here and more concrete tools in connection with different stages of mentoring process can be found in the [MENTORING JOURNEY TOOLBOX](#) and in the [MENTORSHIP HANDBOOK](#) in youth work.

If you would like to enrich your mentoring methods with some digital tools, in [DIGI YOUTH PORTAL](#) you can find many of them.

If you are learning better with others and from others you can also search for capacity building opportunities (trainings, seminars, other activities...) for mentors or contact organizations that advance mentoring in youth work!

At the end, bear in mind that mentees and mentors are human beings and as such we are never perfect and processes and journeys we embark into might as well not be perfect. However all the difference is in the shared attitude of mutual support, and striving for learning and growth.

KEEP CALM AND MENTOR ON!

