



Co-funded by
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ERASMUS+

My Life Matters

A story-based method for emotional resilience and
mental health

A methodological toolkit for social, educational and
mental-health professionals

Project “Emotional Resilience and Mental Health through
Storytelling and Gamification” (E-MOTION)

2024-2-LT01-KA210-ADU-000277875



WHY THIS MATTERS

1 in 3

Europeans face a mental-health difficulty at some point in life

Isolation, the pandemic, and war have deepened it. Ordinary support doesn't always reach the people who need it most.

These people need a way in that is safe, accessible, and doesn't ask them to explain themselves.

Older adults

Loneliness and withdrawal that slide into depression.

Trauma and war

Anxiety, stress, and experiences that are hard to process.

Addiction

Long-term barriers to engaging with support at all.

WHAT IT IS

A structured, low-threshold way to organise personal experience as a story.

It creates a safe, predictable space to record experience, without analysing, explaining, or interpreting it.

≠ not psychotherapy

≠ not diagnosis

≠ not evaluation

THE METHOD RESTS ON FOUR PRINCIPLES

Four principles, any age



Structure

A clear, fixed sequence. Less to hold in mind, and a sense of where you are.



Boundaries

Voluntary. Pause or stop anytime. No need to explain. No evaluation.



Repeatability

A stable form, not fixed content. Easy to return to; lowers tension.



Completion

Every action has a clear end. Acknowledged, never judged.

THE DIGITAL TOOL

A digital table where the story stays human



A table

Space to lay the story out.



A lamp

Everything visible, calm.



A blank sheet

Start anywhere, any form.



A toolbox

Shapes, colours, marks.



A cabinet

Saved, ready to return to.

Not digital therapy: it holds the frame, regulates tempo, works online, and stores stories.
Paper works just as well.

SELF-REGULATION, NOT THERAPY

Agency in one click



Breathe

20-40 seconds of calm breathing.



Blur

Soften an image when it feels too sharp.



Fold

Hide something personal, safely away.



Grayscale

Drain the colour, or bring it back.



Burn or crush

Symbolic release. You can shield the parts you keep.



Counter-image

Lay a positive drawing over a hard one.

Small mechanisms that keep a person in contact with the process. Never scored, never interpreted. They work especially well with teenagers and tired participants.

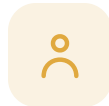
WHO IT'S FOR

Same actions, different perspective



Adolescents

Moving forward, forming their own ways of acting.



Adults

Participation without pressure or assessment.



Older people

Preservation, dignity, a sense of continuity.



Intergenerational

Equal terms. No teacher, no learner.

migrants and displaced people

social adaptation

community programmes

WHERE IT FITS

Drop it into what you already run



Education

Non-formal courses and modules for youth and adults.



Social work

A safe, predictable format with diverse groups.



Community

Intergenerational and community initiatives.



Erasmus+

Inclusion, participation, social cohesion.

As a single session or a whole series:

30-60 min session

series of sessions

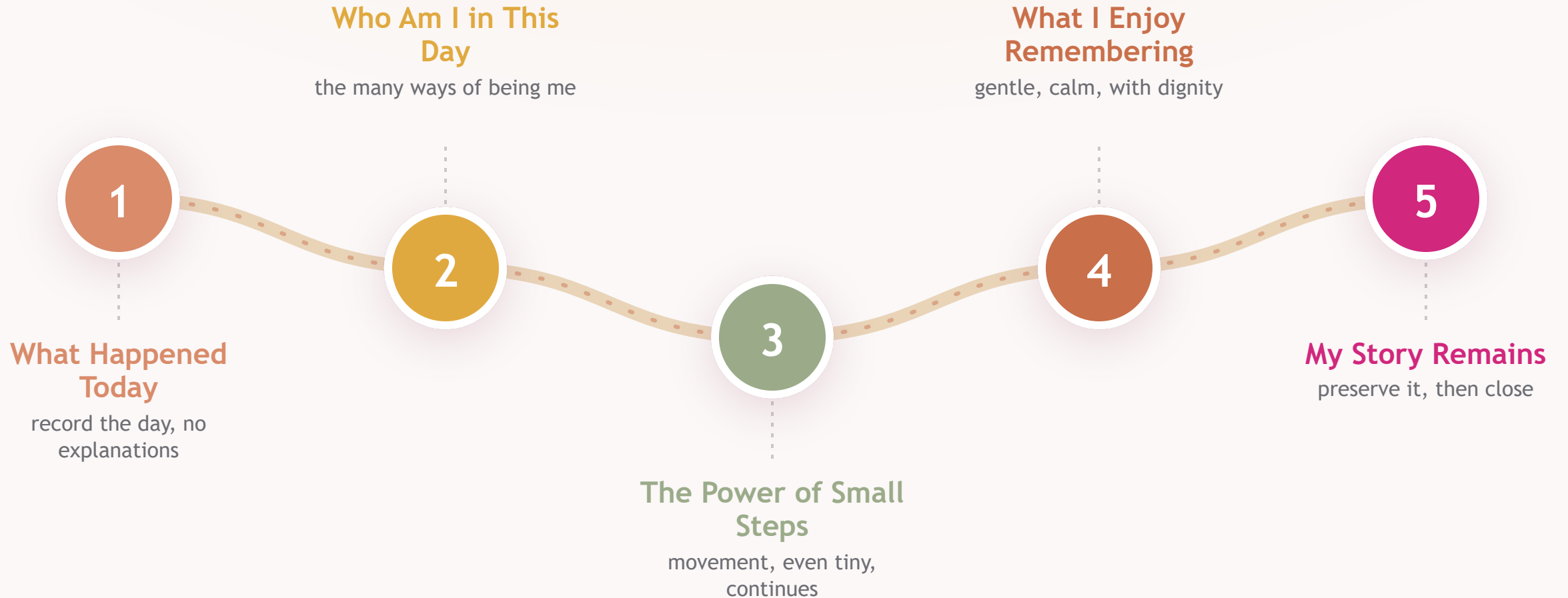
online or blended

paper or app

THE FIVE SCENARIOS

The path to the saved story

Use the whole cycle, or any single scenario on its own.





SCENARIO 1 • BASIC STABILISATION

What Happened Today

AGE

Adolescent • Young Adults • Old People

DURATION

15-25 min

Record the day as part of your story, with no explanations, analysis, or evaluation.



1

Set the frame

“We won’t analyse — we’ll simply look at how today went.”



2

Choose parts of the day

“Name two or three parts of today.”



3

Record each part

“A sign that this part existed. Any mark works.”



4

Check the sequence

“The day had a beginning, a middle, and an end.”



5

Close

“This is where we stop. Today’s story has a form.”

WHAT THE FACILITATOR SAYS

There are no right or wrong options here.

Even one dot is enough.

You can save this work — or simply set it aside.

2 SCENARIO 2 • WAYS OF BEING

Who Am I in This Day

AGE

Adolescents • Young Adults

DURATION

20-30 min

Notice the different ways of being yourself. Each one is a character in your story.



1

Set the frame

“We’re not looking for who you are ‘really’.”



2

Choose versions of ‘me’

“Choose 3-5 versions you recognise yourself in.”



3

Record the characters

“A sign that this way of being exists.”



4

Short labels (optional)

“Add one word — or leave it without labels.”



5

Close

“Different characters — all can exist side by side.”

WHAT THE FACILITATOR SAYS

You can start with the words: ‘me, when...’

Any mark works. Even one is enough.

This is not a test and not an assessment.

3

SCENARIO 3 • MOVEMENT

The Power of Small Steps

AGE

Adolescents • Young Adults

DURATION

20-30 min

Record the experience of movement, however small, as a sequence that continues.



1

Set the frame

“About how something in life can move forward.”



2

Choose a situation

“One situation where something changed a little.”



3

Build the sequence

“It was like this → something helped → it continues.”



4

Place and review

“Can you see that this is a sequence?”



5

Close

“This is your story of movement.”

WHAT THE FACILITATOR SAYS

You can choose a very simple example.

We won't evaluate decisions.

It can be a very small step.

4

SCENARIO 4 • CALM INTERGENERATIONAL

What I Enjoy Remembering

AGE

Older People

DURATION

20-30 min

Gently record pleasant, easy-to-recall fragments that support calm and dignity.



1

Calm frame

“We’ll recall a few moments that are easy to remember.”



2

Choose fragments

“Pleasant and easy for you to remember.”



3

Record fragments

“A drawing, a symbol, or a simple sign.”



4

Naming (optional)

“Give each fragment a name — or leave it.”



5

Close

“These are parts of your story.”

WHAT THE FACILITATOR SAYS

We don’t have to hurry.

We’ll work at a pace that’s comfortable for you.

You can start with one moment. That will be enough.

5

SCENARIO 5 • PRESERVING AND CLOSING

My Story Remains

AGE

Adolescent • Young Adults • Old People

DURATION

15-25 min

Preserve the created story as coherent, complete, and worth keeping. Then close.



1

Set the frame

“A way to preserve your story.”



2

Choose what is kept

“Choose the parts you want to keep.”



3

Organise the story

“Place the elements however works for you.”



4

Title or mark

“Give it a title — a word, a phrase, or a sign.”



5

Close

“This story is now preserved.”

WHAT THE FACILITATOR SAYS

There is no right choice here.

It can be all of them — or only some.

You can return to it whenever you want.

THE PROFESSIONAL'S ROLE

Hold the frame, not the content

You hold the procedural framework: structure, boundaries, pace.

You never work with the content of what the person creates.



YOU DO

- Explain the sequence of actions
- Create a safe, calm atmosphere
- Maintain the pace
- Hold the participation boundaries
- Close each stage clearly



YOU DON'T

- Analyse the content
- Interpret what is said
- Evaluate the result
- Give advice
- Steer toward conclusions

Watch your words

One wrong question turns recording into interrogation. Keep your language neutral and focused on the process, never on the content.

✗ AVOID

- “What did you feel?”
- “Why did it happen?”
- “What does it mean?”
- “Is it good or bad?”
- “How would you explain it?”
- “Tell me more about...”

≠

✓ USE INSTEAD

- “Any mark works.”
- “You don’t need to explain.”
- “This is enough for now.”
- “You can change colour, shape, or size.”
- “You can stop at any time.”
- “Your way is as valid as any other.”

WHEN THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENS

Gotchas, and how to respond

Hold steady. For each one, a ready line, and always the option to slow down or stop.

Silence

THEY SAY NOTHING

- “You don’t have to say any words.”
- “Stay in silence as long as you need.”
- “Just leave marks, if you want.”

“I don’t know what to do”

STUCK AT THE START

- “Start with something very simple.”
- “Even one mark is enough.”
- “It’s normal not to know where to start.”

“I can’t do it”

FEAR OF DOING IT WRONG

- “There’s no task to do correctly.”
- “What is there is already enough.”
- “You can leave it exactly as it is.”

Strong emotion

IT SURFACES SOMETHING

- “We can slow down a little.”
- “You can take a pause.”
- “Try a slow inhale and exhale.”
- “We can return to this later.”

OPEN GENTLY

“We’ll do a simple exercise. There’s no assessment and no analysis. You choose how and what to do.”

CLOSE GENTLY

“This is where we stop. What you’ve done is complete. Thank you for taking part.”

START THIS WEEK

Try one scenario

1

Pick one scenario

Begin with “What Happened Today.”
Fifteen minutes is enough.

2

Open StoryTileCraft

Or just paper and a pen. Both are
equally valid.

3

Hold the frame

Stay neutral, keep the pace, close
gently. That’s the whole job.

**You don’t need certification. Holding the frame is the only skill,
and you already have it.**

Drawing Tools Guide: storytilecraft.com/en/guide-tools

Your story matters

Download PDF Handbook: <https://em.storytilecraft.com/>

Application: <https://storytilecraft.space/>

Drawing Tools Guide: <https://storytilecraft.com/en/guide-tools>

Scenarios Hub: storytilecraft.com

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Thank you

Your life matters.

Your story matters.

“We tell ourselves stories in order to live.”

— Joan Didion