

Teacher Wellbeing and Green Education: Nature-Based Approaches in Schools

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Language used for the training: **English**

Target group:

Middle school teachers, secondary school teachers, adult education providers, VET teachers, head teachers, deputy heads, future head teachers, trainers, councilors, librarians, researchers, NGO workers, volunteers serving in the education sector.

Description:

“Return to Yourself – Wellbeing Through Connection with Nature” is a Erasmus+ teacher training course in Poland designed for educators who wish to slow down, restore balance, and reconnect with what truly matters in education: presence, relationships, and authentic human connection.

In today’s fast-paced and overstimulating educational environment, teachers often experience stress, overload, and disconnection. This course offers a space to pause, reflect, and rediscover personal and professional meaning through direct experience with nature. The programme is deeply experiential and grounded in simple, practical activities that can be easily transferred into everyday classroom practice. Participants engage in nature-based learning, creative expression, and reflective processes that support both personal wellbeing and professional growth.

Learning objectives:

- To understand the importance of teacher wellbeing and its impact on students’ emotional and social development.
- To experience nature-based practices that support stress reduction, emotional regulation, and mindfulness.
- To reconnect with personal motivation, values, and purpose in the teaching profession.

- To learn how to use simple, natural materials and creative activities (e.g. stone painting, nature journaling, forest experiences) in educational settings.
- To develop practical strategies for reducing overstimulation and limiting digital distractions in the classroom.
- To adapt nature-based and art-based activities to the needs of students with diverse disabilities and developmental abilities.
- To design simple, ready-to-use activities that support wellbeing, inclusion, and positive relationships in school environments.

Methodology and Assessment:

The course is based on experiential learning, with a strong emphasis on practice, reflection, and personal experience rather than theoretical input. Participants engage in nature-based activities, creative workshops (such as stone painting), forest experiences inspired by shinrin-yoku, and individual and group reflection.

Learning takes place through direct experience, sensory awareness, storytelling, and guided reflection. Activities are designed to be simple, accessible, and easily adaptable to different educational contexts and students' needs, including those with special educational needs.

Participants document their learning process through nature journaling and by contributing to a shared digital board (Padlet), where they upload photos and reflections. Continuous peer exchange and reflection circles support deeper understanding.

Assessment is informal and ongoing, based on active participation, engagement in activities, and the development of practical ideas. By the end of the course, each participant prepares simple, ready-to-use activities to implement in their school environment

Materials, digital tools & other learning resources:

Participants are required to bring a mobile phone with a camera. All other materials are provided, including natural resources (stones, leaves, wood), art supplies (paints, paper), and simple tools for creative work. Digital support includes a shared Padlet where participants upload photos and reflections. Additional resources include handouts, sample activities, and materials based on original educational and therapeutic programmes.

DETAILED COURSE AGENDA

Day 1: Arrival & Introduction

Time: 13.00 – 18.00

1. Welcome coffee and slow arrival.
2. Ice-breaking activities – getting to know each other.
3. Participants' presentations (schools, countries, expectations).
4. Introduction to the course: *Return to Yourself – wellbeing through connection with nature.*
5. Group discussion: Why are we here? What do we need as teachers today?
6. Short sensory walk in the surroundings – first gentle contact with nature.
7. Reflection circle – first impressions, one word for today.
8. Closing moment – simple welcoming ritual.

Day 2: Stones, Story and Meaning

Time: 09.00 – 14.00

1. Welcome circle – intentions for the day.
2. Introduction to the idea of **stone hiding (global kindness project)** – meaning, origin, and educational value.
3. Presentation of the book “*Forset of Power Stones*” – concept, structure, and monthly pathway.
4. Storytelling session – working with one selected chapter/month from the book.
5. Creative workshop: **Stone Painting – creating personal stones of meaning** (participants prepare 2–3 stones).
6. Reflection: Choosing the purpose of each stone:
 - one for myself;
 - one to give to someone;
 - one to leave in the world;

Group sharing and discussion: how to use this activity with students.

Day 3: Connection and Exploration

Time: 09.30 – 14.30

1. Morning circle – setting intention for the day.
2. Introduction: “Leaving a trace – small acts that matter”.
3. **Cultural exploration / city experience**
Participants explore the city individually or in small groups.
4. Activity in practice:
 - leaving one painted stone in a chosen place;
 - offering one stone to another person (optional);
 - keeping one stone as a personal reminder;
5. Optional reflection task:
 - take a photo;
 - write one sentence: *What did I experience?*

Closing sharing (short, optional).

Day 4: Forest, Senses & Inner Connection

Time: 09.00 – 14.00

1. Welcome circle – arriving and grounding.
2. Introduction to the idea of **forest experience (shinrin-yoku)** – presence, slowing down, sensory awareness.
3. Presentation of the book “*Forest Paths*” – concept of seasonal pathways.
4. Storytelling session – working with one selected month/season from the book.
5. **Guided forest experience:**
 - slow walking and silence;
 - sensory activities (sight, sound, touch, smell);
 - individual tasks inspired by the selected month from the book;
 - “finding my place” in nature;
6. Personal activity: **choosing a natural object as a forest amulet** (symbol of the experience).
7. Closing circle in nature – sharing reflections.

Day 5: Reflection, Expression & Sharing

Time: 09.00 – 14.00

1. Welcome circle – gentle arrival after the forest experience.
2. Introduction: why reflection is essential in the learning proces.
3. **Nature journaling session:**
 - drawing, colours, single words;
 - prompts: *I felt...* / *I noticed...* / *I take with me...*;
 - combining image and simple written reflection;
4. Creative activity:
 - intuitive painting inspired by the forest experience;
 - expressing emotions without the need for perfection;
5. Sharing in small groups – personal reflections (optional).
6. Creating a shared resource: participants upload photos of their work (stones, journal pages, paintings).
7. building a **common Padlet / digital board** with ideas and inspirations
8. Group discussion:
 - how to use journaling and creative reflection with students;
 - adapting activities to different educational needs.

Day 6: Integration, Practice & Closing

Time: 09.00 – 14.00

1. Welcome circle – arriving and grounding.
2. Gentle reflection: *What has changed in me during this week?*
3. Integration session:
 - revisiting key experiences (stones, forest, journaling);
 - identifying what was most meaningful;
4. Practical workshop:
 - designing simple, nature-based activities for school;

- choosing 1-2 ideas each participant wants to implement;
 - adapting activities to different students' needs.
5. Sharing circle: participants present their ideas (informal, supportive space).

Afternoon: Closing

- Final reflection circle:
What do I take with me? What do I leave behind?
- Closing ritual (symbolic – e.g. holding the stone or forest amulet).
- **Certificate ceremony.**

Farewell and goodbyes

Day 7: Integration, Practice & Closing

Time: 09.00 – 14.00

1. Optional morning circle – gentle closing for participants who are still present.
2. Open sharing space – informal conversations and final reflections.
3. Revisiting personal symbols (stone / forest amulet) – what do they mean now?
4. Exchange of contacts and networking.
5. Time for individual goodbyes.

While a standard indicative daily program is in place, the course is flexible and can be personalized based on the participants' needs.

Costs:

The 560 EUR fee covers the course tuition, issuing the required Erasmus+ documents, coffee breaks, and a guided tour around city.

Course package content

The package includes tuition, training materials, workshop equipment, cultural excursion, and certification. Accommodation, meals, and travel are not included and must be arranged individually.