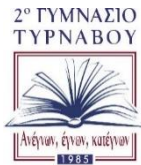


## “Creating inclusive learning environment for students with special needs”.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
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### MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES

#### "UNDERSTANDING FRIENDS"

A program to educate children on individual differences and cultivate mindfulness

The activities below are from Catherine Faherty's "**Understanding Friends**" program.

In this activity, a part of the activities from the general program will be used.

#### **Experiential Activity Centers: Team Rotation**

We divide the students into 4 groups of four. We have 2 tables with the activity materials ready.

We do a short introduction for each center, holding up the materials of each table. E.g. for the activity related to fine motor difficulties, we say: “When you go to this table, you will put on these big gloves.... they are too big for you, but that's ok. When you put them on, you need to string these beads and thread the nut on the screw while wearing the gloves. You will find out what it would be like if your hands worked differently than they do now” (fine mobility). We reassure students that they are allowed to have fun with the activity, but at the same time think about what things might have been difficult to do if their fine motor skills were like this. We ask what might have been different for each. What would their work look like to others? Would they need any special form of assistance?

We ring a bell when it's time to switch groups from one activity center to another (about 4-5 minutes in each center). We make the change quickly to keep the kids interested. When all the groups have gone through all the centers, a discussion takes place.

### **MATERIALS AND DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES**

For a group of about 16 students:

#### **1. Fine Mobility Activity**

4 pairs of large cloth gardening gloves

4 pairs of shoelaces and beads. Place them in 4 small boxes

4 sets of screws

Table with 4 chairs

## 2. Visual Activity

4 pairs of protective glasses covered with kitchen film

4 pencils and 4 pages of lined paper

Books corresponding to the class

Table with 4 chairs

Every child wears glasses (he can't see well because of the film). They try to write on the paper, on the lines and read something from a book.

**Attention:** they are not allowed to take off the glasses before the activity is over.

## 3. Perceptual Activity

Duct tape and binoculars: Tape the floor in a line and ask the children to take turns walking along that line, looking through the binoculars but upside down. This distorts the perception of the line.

## 4. Visual and verbal activity

2 handkerchiefs to blindfold the students.

Chairs, large boxes or tables or a bag or anything that can be placed as an obstacle.

This activity is done in pairs. We blindfold one student and instruct the second student to guide the blindfolded student around the room, but without speaking. As soon as we blindfold the student we place obstacles in the space (we don't put them in from the beginning so he doesn't know). In two minutes the students switch roles.

At the end of the activities, we talk with the students about how they felt, what made it difficult for them, what would make it difficult for them in their daily life, what would be difficult to do, if they would need some form of help, etc.

We explain that we are all different and that these activities were done to develop empathy (the ability to understand the behavior, feelings and motivations of another person, without there being a complete emotional identification of the two people).

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