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„A MODEL OF SUPPORT FOR HIGHLY SENSITIVE CHILDREN IN PRESCHOOL AND EARLY SCHOOL AGE”

A preventive program supporting the development of highly sensitive children in preschool and younger school age

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Structure

Introduction

Prevention strategies

Scenarios

Support for highly sensitive children

- Planning support for highly sensitive children is **not about modifying their personality traits**.
- When training adult carers in providing an adequate level of support for highly sensitive children, attention should be paid to the developmental tasks of preschool and early school age.
- We should provide support ‘in something’.
- According to the assumptions of the project, developmental tasks that are appropriate for the child's age should be supported.

Support for highly sensitive children

- The broadened knowledge concerning the SPS in children may be utilized to plan new and possibly restructure the ongoing prevention programmes.
- The effectiveness of providing dedicated support to highly sensitive individuals has been confirmed by, i.a. M. Pluess and I. Bonniwell (2015)

Support for highly sensitive children

- Considering the potential difficulties experienced by HS children (knowledge from FGI of parents and teachers conducted in the E-MOTION project, as well as other research) mindfulness, meditation practices, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) , as well as somatic education seem to match the needs of support and could be an approach to over-ride the effects of negative environment or stress experiences

(cf. Bratholm Wyller, Bruun Bratholm Wyller Crane, & Gjelsvik, 2017; Bakker, & Molding, 2012; Acevedo, Jagioellowicz, Aron, Marhenke, Aaron, 2017).

Areas of work with ...

E. N. Aron, mentions four main pillars of work with the highly sensitive child.

It may be assumed that the training of parents and teachers in the following areas:

- work on the development of adequate self-esteem for the child (strengthening Self-esteem);
- reduce the child's feeling of shame (shame reduction);
- discipline the child wisely (wise Discipline);
- encourage the child to talk about their own sensitivity (Knowledge How to discuss Sensitivity),

may provide support in the provision of adequate conditions for the child's development.

Prevention strategies



The basis for the construction of the program was the cognitive-affective approach, which that appropriately high and stable self-esteem, problem-solving and parenting skills help to avoid dysfunctional behavior.



Strategies under this approach are aimed at improving life and educational skills and are carried out in the form of educational initiatives.



The scenarios combine the assumptions of information and education strategies. The preparation uses the assumptions of a Temperament-Based Intervention (including self-regulation methods), mindfulness, understanding others, and learning about one's own diversity.

Areas of work with ...

- The program cover six areas:
 1. strengthening / stabilizing self-esteem,
 2. self-regulation,
 3. mindfulness - building mental resilience,
 4. reducing the sense of shame,
 5. the ability to talk about sensitivity and wise discipline (functioning in a group, protecting personal boundaries).

Tasks take into account humanistic conditions for development: empathy, authenticity and acceptance.

Scenarios

A set of 12 scenarios designed to conduct a series of activities in a preschool group, with children aged 3 - 6, and school age children aged 7-10 aimed at improving the functioning of highly sensitive people in the natural environment

Each class is scheduled for 45 minutes.

It is recommended to maintain the indicated order of classes.

12 scenarios = 12 weeks

Scenarios

- The sequence of scenarios allows you to gradually expand knowledge and practice new skills based on what is already known to the child.
- At the beginning, the children get to know Grześ [Gregory/Greg], whose character will accompany them through all lessons. The structure of the scenarios is such that at the beginning of each class, the teacher reads a letter from Greg, who tells about himself and his experiences.
- The children then complete story-related tasks.
- Cooperation with practitioners - with experience in working with children: Małgorzata Bojanko i Aleksandra Świdzikowska <https://iweztusiedogadaj.pl/>

Scenarios



Prepare letters from Greg in advance, print them and pack them in envelopes.



Each scenario contains sample questions that can be used to guide children to the most important issues related to the topic in question, and appendices to facilitate the exercise.



Due to the short attention span of children of this age, you may consider dividing each activity into two parts:

reading a letter from Grześ [Greg] and discussing the content with the help of auxiliary questions
complete tasks related to the topic of the letter

Meet Greg!
Grzegorz/Grześ
Gregory
Григорий
Gregorio
Grigorie





1. This is the way I am
2. Taking advantage of difficulties
3. Self-awareness
4. Emotions are required
5. Everyone is different, everyone is important
6. A helping hand
7. A walk through the regulation zones
8. Charging the internal batteries
9. I experience, feel, need
10. Myself in a group
11. Myself in the world
12. The positive brain



In two
versions

1. This is the way I am

Area: strengthening/maintaining self-esteem

The aim of the class:

Increasing the awareness of natural differences between people.

Building an adequate sense of self-esteem and reinforcing it.

Integration of the group.

Outcomes of the class:

The children realize that differences between people are something natural and innate to a great extent.

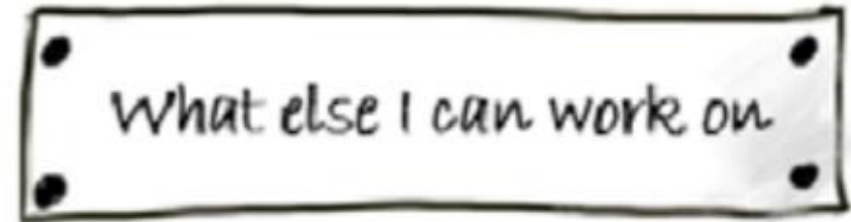
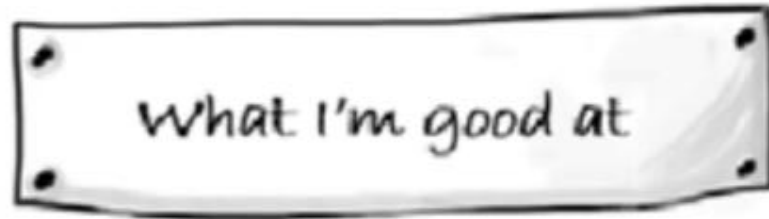
The children are able to display their accomplished strengths and skills, as well as those they are still working on.

The children learn about what strengths their peers have and what they still need to learn.

The children experience acceptance and understanding from their peers and the teacher.

This is the way I am





2. Taking advantage of difficulties

Area: strengthening/maintaining self-esteem

The aim of the class:

Developing an attitude of mutual acceptance among children.

Familiarizing students with the basic dimensions of high sensitivity.

Learning to regard diversity as a resource.

Outcomes of the class:

The children get to know that everyone has their own individual characteristics and predispositions.

The children learn how to find resources in diversity.

The children understand that a first impression may be misleading.

The children experience the fact that they can find their place in a group regardless of the way they are.

Cześć

by M.Baryła-Matejczuk

Tu ja – Grzes. Dziękuję Wam serdecznie za Wasze rysunki. Bardzo się ucieszyłem, gdy zobaczyłem wielką paczkę od Was w skrzynce na listy. Potraficie świetnie rysować! Obejrzałem Wasze prace z mamą. Swoją pracę powiesiłem w pokoju nad łóżkiem, by ciągle mi przypominała o moich mocnych i słabszych stronach. Dzięki Wam zobaczyłem, że każdy z nas jest w czymś dobry i każdy ma coś, nad czym może jeszcze pracować. Może nie jestem tak śmiały jak Karol, ale on nie potrafi wymyślać i rysować tak super komiksów jak ja! Moi koledzy już widzieli moje komiksy i mówią, że bardzo im się podobają. Janek nawet poprosił mnie, bym zrobił dla niego komiks o piłkarzach. W weekend spotykamy się u mnie w domu i będziemy razem rysować. Chyba będę miał nowego dobrego kolegę!

Wiecie, to fałne, że każdy jest inny. Dzięki temu w naszej grupie nie jest nudno! W Waszej na pewno też nie brakuje przygód.

W tym tygodniu bardzo dużo się działo w naszym przedszkolu. Udało nam się rozwiązać kilka trudnych spraw. Ciekaw jestem, czy uda Wam się zgadnąć, który z moich kolegów tego dokonał.



pozdrawia Grzes

3. Self-awareness

Area: self-awareness - building up mental resilience

The aim of the class:

Developing an awareness of our own and other people's emotions.

Familiarizing students with the physiological symptoms of emotions.










Building an attitude of understanding and acceptance of different ways of experiencing emotions.

Outcomes of the class:

The children know that every person experiences similar emotions, although the ways of experiencing and showing them might be different.

The children are able to recognize the physiological manifestations of basic emotions..

The children experience the fact that they can find their position in the group regardless of their ways of experiencing emotions.

Rozszerzone źrenice 	Bładość 	Przyspieszone bicie serca 
Przyspieszony oddech 	Drżenie ciała 	Pocenie 
Włosy stają dęba 	Niespokojone nogi 	Czerwienienie się 
Ból brzucha 	Krzyk 	Brak sily 
Zastanianie oczu 	Grymas na twarzy 	Zaciśnięte usta 
Jąkanie 	Zaciśnięte usta 	Napięcie ciała 

4. Emotions are required

Area: reducing the feelings of shame

The aim of the class:

Learning to name and recognize basic emotions.

Provide knowledge about the function of emotions in human life.

Developing an attitude of acceptance towards all emotions that the child experiences.

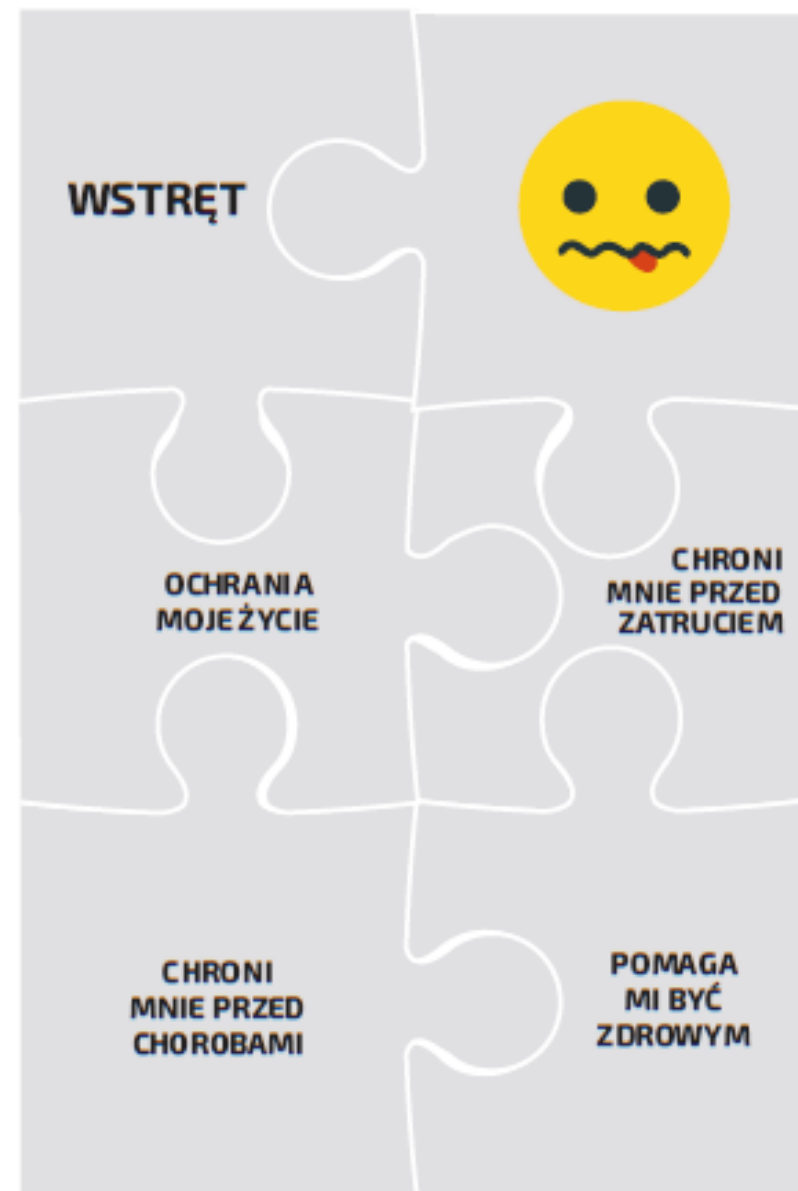
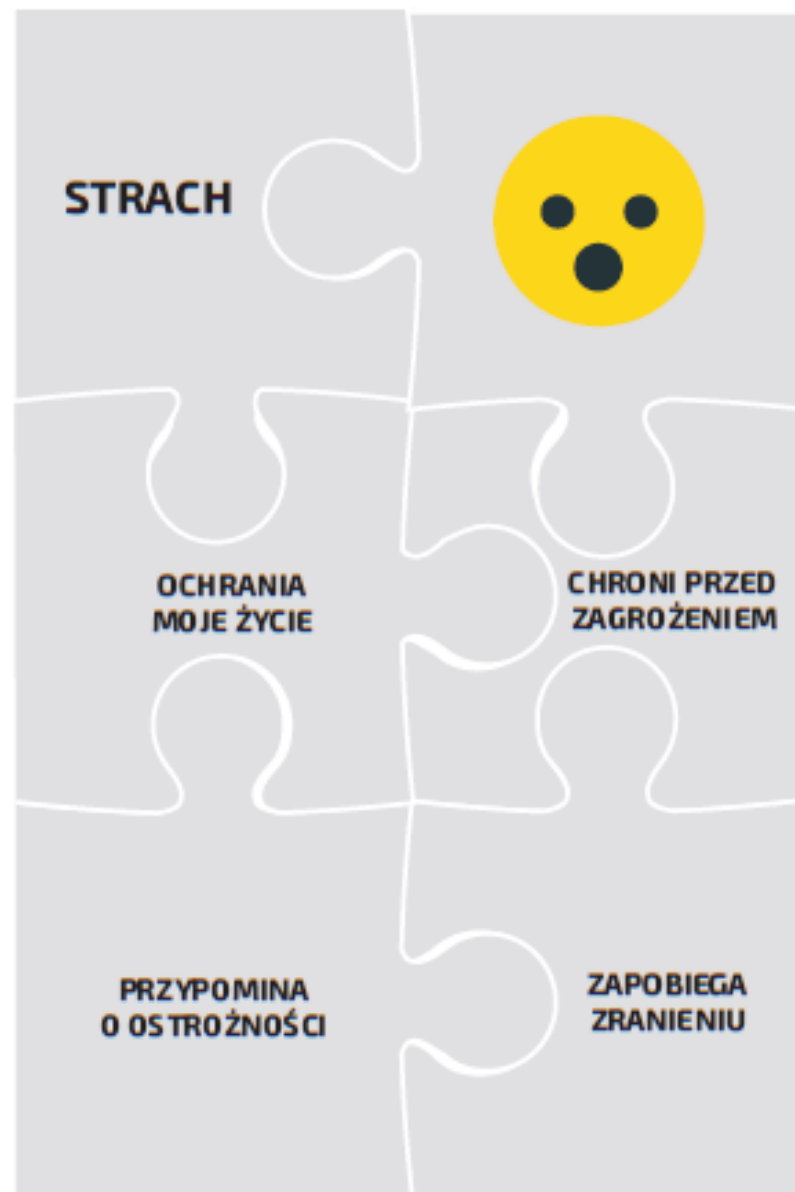
Outcomes of the class:

The children know that all emotions are good and necessary.

The children are able to recognize and name basic emotions.

The children understand that emotions may provide valuable information (about what is good/bad, pleasant/unpleasant, safe/dangerous for them).

The children can indicate the functions of several basic emotions.



5. Everyone is different, everyone is important

Area: ability to talk about sensitivity

The aim of the class:

Developing an attitude of empathy towards the personal difficulties and other people.

To provide knowledge about individual differences in stress susceptibility and sensitivity to stressors.

Encouraging children to move away from the habit of being judgmental in favour of an attitude of trying to understand the behaviour of their peers.

Outcomes of the class:

The children realize that people differ in their vulnerability to stress and sensitivity to stressors.

The children are informed about the factors that may upset them and others.

The children understand that different people can react differently to the same situations and stimuli.

Hej

Tu Grześ. W jakim jesteście dziś nastroju? Bo ja jestem niezwykłe pod-ekscytowany! Ostatnio przygotowaliśmy z klasą przedstawienie w szkole. Szykowaliśmy się do niego przez cały miesiąc. Mialismy próby z naszą panią wychowawczynią. Uczyliśmy się długich tekstów, zrobiliśmy stroje i dekoracje. Pracy było przy tym bardzo dużo. Wszystko szło dobrze, aż do próby generalnej. Pobawiłem się trochę w detektywa i poobserwowałem moich kolegów. Chcecie posłuchać co zauważyłam?





















Kasia, nasza narratorka, tak się zestresowała, że nie chciała w ogóle wyjść na scenę. A gdy już wyszła, głos jej się tak dziwnie trząsł, a ręce dygotały jakby było jej bardzo zimno. Natalia natomiast, która odgrywa główną rolę w naszym przedstawieniu, w ogóle się nie stresowała i pięknie powiedziała swój tekst. Zgłosiła się nawet jako chętna, by wręczyć kwiaty po przedstawieniu pani dyrektor. Jeremi stwierdził, że nie wytrzyma w swoim kostiumie, bo go wszystko draپی. Przez to parę razy pomylił swój tekst i wiercił się przez całą próbę. Kornel, który był w takim samym kostiumie, stwierdził, że jest tak super, że mógłby w nim chodzić na co dzień. Gdy pani puściła muzykę, przy której tańczymy, Julka i Patrycja zatkały uszy i szybko uciekły jak najdalej, a Zuzia, Hania i Kasia tańczyły tuż przy głośniku. Za to Tobiasz zaczął nagle krzyczeć, płakać i zupełnie nie chciał z nikim rozmawiać. Nawet z panią. Ale przyznam, że nie wiem o co chodziło, bo akurat byłem zajęty nakładaniem swojego kostiumu.

Mozecie mi powiedzieć o co tu chodzi? Dlaczego moi koledzy zachowują się w tak różny sposób? A może chcecie też się pobawić w detektywa i odgadnąć jak ja się zachowywałem w trakcie próby? Ciekaw jestem, czy zgadniecie. A Wy jak zwykle zachowujecie się, gdy występujecie przed publicznością?



Niezwykłe podekscytowany
Grześ



Lubię, gdy jest zimno 	Lubię, gdy jest ciepło 	Lubię, gdy jest gorąco 
Lubię wstawać bardzo wczesnie rano przed innymi domownikami 	Wstaję zazwyczaj wtedy, gdy reszta moich domowników 	Lubię bardzo długo spać, dłużej niż moi domownicy 
Nie lubię się przytulać 	Lubię, gdy ktoś mnie lekko przytula 	Lubię, gdy ktoś mnie mocno przytula 
Lubię spokojne zabawy, przy których nie trzeba się dużo ruszać 	Lubię zarówno zabawy ruchowe i stolikowe 	Lubię zabawy przy których trzeba się bardzo szybko ruszać 
Lubię bawić się sam 	Lubię bawić się z 1-2 osobami 	Lubię bawić się w dużej grupie 
Najlepiej czuję się w zupełnie cichym i spokojnym miejscu 	Lubię, gdy wokół mnie dźwięki są niezbyt głośne 	Najlepiej czuję się, gdy jest głośno i dużo się dzieje 

6. A helping hand

Area: reducing the feeling of shame

The aim of the class:

The development of an attitude of empathy towards the experiences of their peers.

Delivering knowledge concerning individual differences in preferred strategies for coping with difficulties and the need for cooperative help.

Broadening the scope of available strategies for handling stressful situations.

Outcomes of the class:

The children realize that people take different actions to cope with difficulties.

The children understand that different people may handle their difficulties in different ways.

The children are able to specify some strategies for coping and supporting others.

**Rady dla Jeremiego, który nie mógł
wytrzymać w kostiumie:**



Wyrzucić kostium do kosza i udawać, że nie wiesz co się z nim stało.

Powiedz komuś dorosłemu co Ci przeszkadza. Pomyślcie razem co można zmienić żeby było lepiej.

Zakładaj swój kostium codziennie na chwilę. Spróbuj wytrzymać jak najdłużej. W końcu przestanie Ci tak przeszkadzać bo twoje ciało się przyzwyczai.

Zrezygnuj ze swojej roli.

**Rady dla Julki i Patrycji, które
nie mogły znieść głośnej muzyki:**



Powiedzcie nauczycielowi, że trudno wam wytrzymać w hałasie. Poproście, by muzyka grała trochę ciszej, a wasze miejsce było z dala od głośnika.

Krzyczcie głośno za każdym razem gdy robi się zbyt głośno. Podobno własny hałas znosi się łatwiej.

Porozmawiajcie z nauczycielem o możliwości używania zatyczek do uszu lub słuchawek wyciszających. Niektórym to pomaga.

Schowajcie się w łazience i poczekajcie aż będzie zupełnie cicho.

7. A walk through the regulation zones

Area: self-regulation

The aim of the class:

Delivering knowledge about the regulation zones.

Improving self-awareness in the area of individual reactivity to stress factors.

Broadening the scope of the available strategies for returning to balance.

Outcomes of the class:

Children will realize that a person may, even over the course of one day, move between different regulation zones.

Children are able to describe themselves as being in a balanced and unbalanced state.

Children are able to discuss the situations and factors that drive them away from the state of balance.

Children can emphasize selected strategies that may be helpful in returning to a state of mental balance.

Tu narysuj siebie,
kiedy jesteś spokojny i skupiony



STREFA RÓWNOWAGI

Co sprawia,
że tracisz
równowagę?



Co sprawia,
że odzyskujesz
równowagę?



Tu narysuj siebie,
kiedy jesteś niespokojny, trudno ci się
skupić i/lub tracisz panowanie nad sobą



STREFA WALKI, UCIECZKI
LUB ZAMROŻENIA

8. Charging the internal batteries

Area: self-regulation

The aim of the class:

Providing knowledge concerning the factors that affect one's well-being.

Increasing self-awareness with regard to individual differences concerning the optimal way to look after oneself and rest.

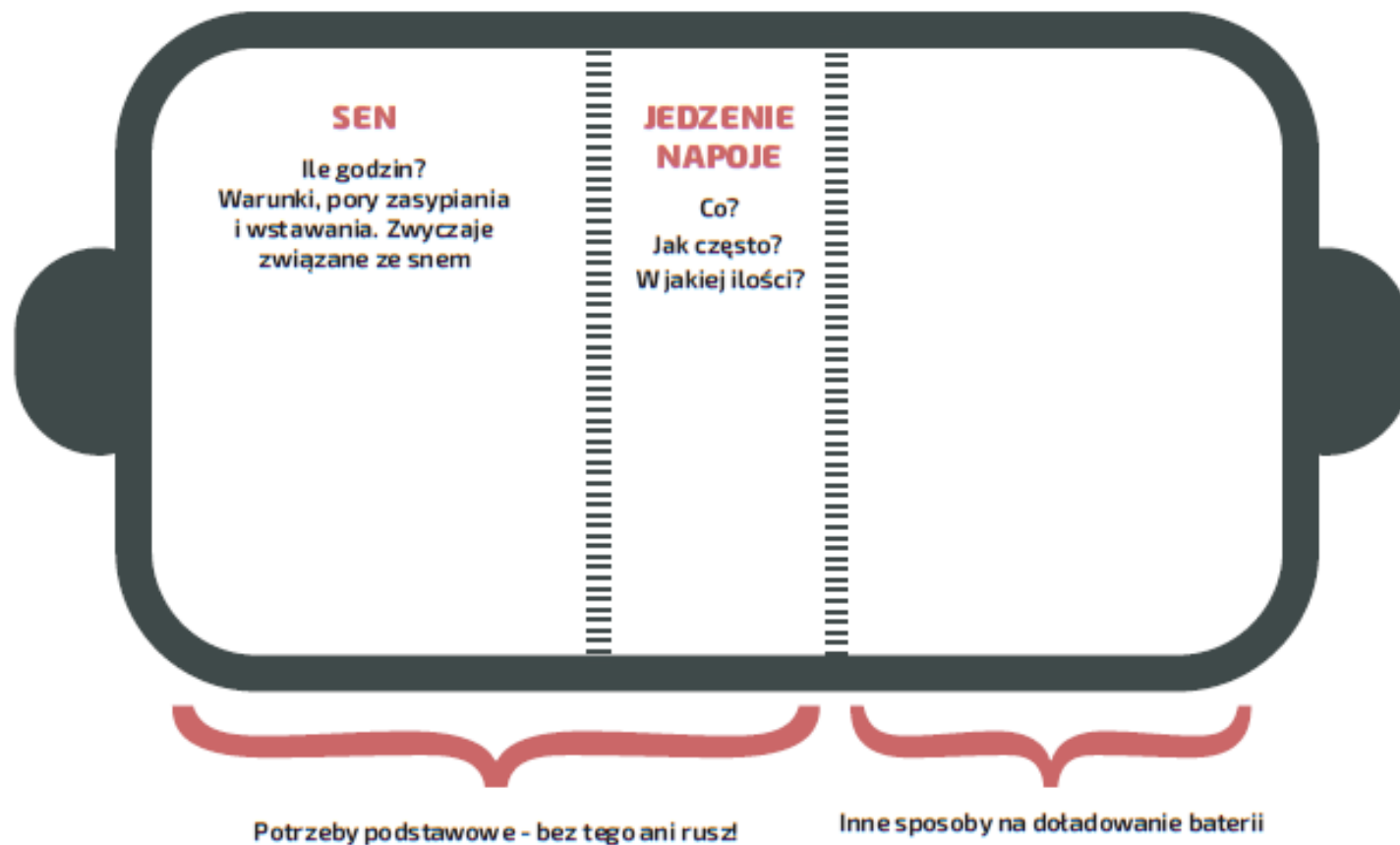
Broadening the scope of the available strategies for recharging one's batteries.

Outcomes of the class:

Children know that everybody requires some time to rest – time to charge the internal batteries.

Children know that a good rest allows one to maintain balance for a longer time.

Children can indicate selected strategies for looking after oneself.



9. I experience, feel, need

Area: ability to talk about sensitivity

The aim of the class:

Providing knowledge about the general rules of formulating “ME” messages.

Increasing self-awareness in the area of our emotions and needs in different situations.

Expanding the scope of the available communication strategies.

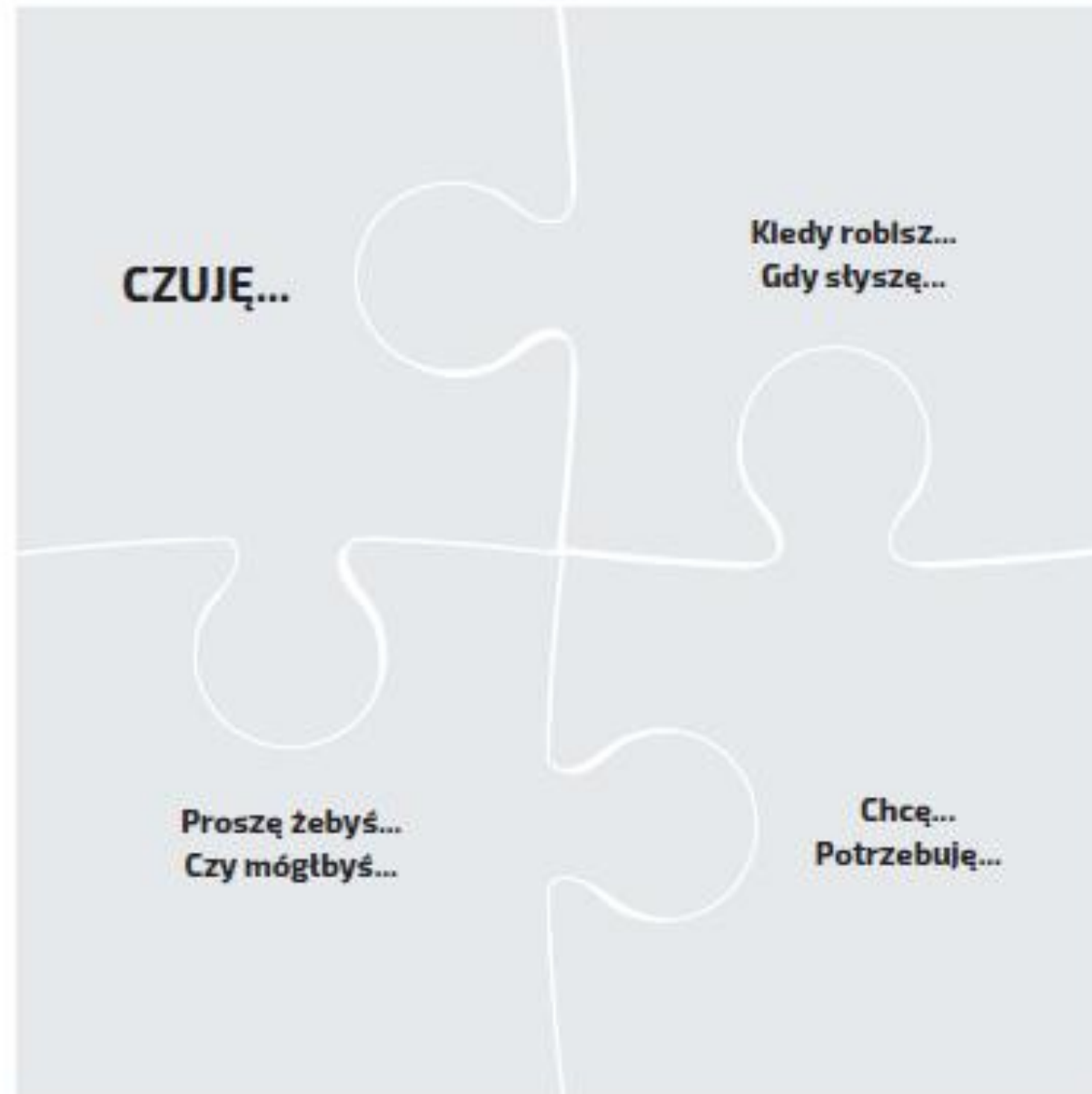
Outcomes of the class:

Children know that a “ME” message is a method of formulating requests that contains information about personal feelings/needs/preferences or a personal plea.

Children are aware of the fact that their approach to communication has an impact on the perception of them by others.

Children can name their emotions and needs in different situations.

Children are able to speak about what is going in a non-judgemental way.



10. Myself in a group

Area: wise discipline (functioning in a group, protecting personal boundaries)

The aim of the class:

Providing knowledge concerning personal boundaries and their importance.

Increasing self-awareness in the area of our own emotions and needs in various situations.

Extending the scope of the available strategies for the protection of our personal boundaries.

Developing the skills of recognizing and respecting other people's boundaries.

Outcomes of the class:

Children know that each person should be aware of and protect their personal boundaries.

Children have an understanding of the fact that unpleasant emotions are signs of the violation of boundaries.

Children are able to handle the situation of personal boundaries being broken.

Children understand that other people have their own borders that should not be crossed.

Hypothetical situation	Ways of coping
Your aunt stubbornly gives you hugs and kisses each time she greets you and you dislike this.	You greet your aunt by saying: "Hello auntie, nice to see you." And when she wants to hug you, you can say <i>"I only hug my toys."</i>
	You say: <i>"I feel uneasy when you hug and kiss me, I prefer to say hello from a distance, let's greet each other by saying hello if you don't mind."</i> (You may ask your parents for help.)
	Hide behind someone and tell your aunt that you don't like her. She won't bother you again

11. Myself in the world

Area: wise disciplining (functioning in a group, protection of personal borders)

The aim of the class:

Providing knowledge concerning the topic of personal boundaries and their protection in the context of their relationships with adults.

Increasing self-awareness in the area of own emotions and needs in various situations.

Extending the scope of the available strategies for the protection of personal boundaries with regard to forming relationships with adults.

Developing the skills of recognizing and respecting the boundaries of adults

Outcomes of the class:

Children know that each person should be aware of and protect their personal boundaries.

Children can handle situations where their personal borders are being crossed by adults.

Children know who they can depend on in a situation where their personal borders are being violated.

Children understand that others, including adults, have their own borders that should not be crossed.

Hypothetical situation	Ways of coping
Your aunt stubbornly gives you hugs and kisses each time she greets you and you dislike this.	You greet your aunt by saying: "Hello auntie, nice to see you." And when she wants to hug you, you can say <i>"I only hug my toys."</i>
	You say: <i>"I feel uneasy when you hug and kiss me, I prefer to say hello from a distance, let's greet each other by saying hello if you don't mind."</i> (You may ask your parents for help.)
	Hide behind someone and tell your aunt that you don't like her. She won't bother you again

12. The positive brain

Area: awareness – building mental resilience

The aim of the class:

Providing knowledge concerning the meaning of positive feedback in building successful relationships.

Boosting self-esteem.

Summarizing the work that the group has completed, commenting on any notable positive changes.

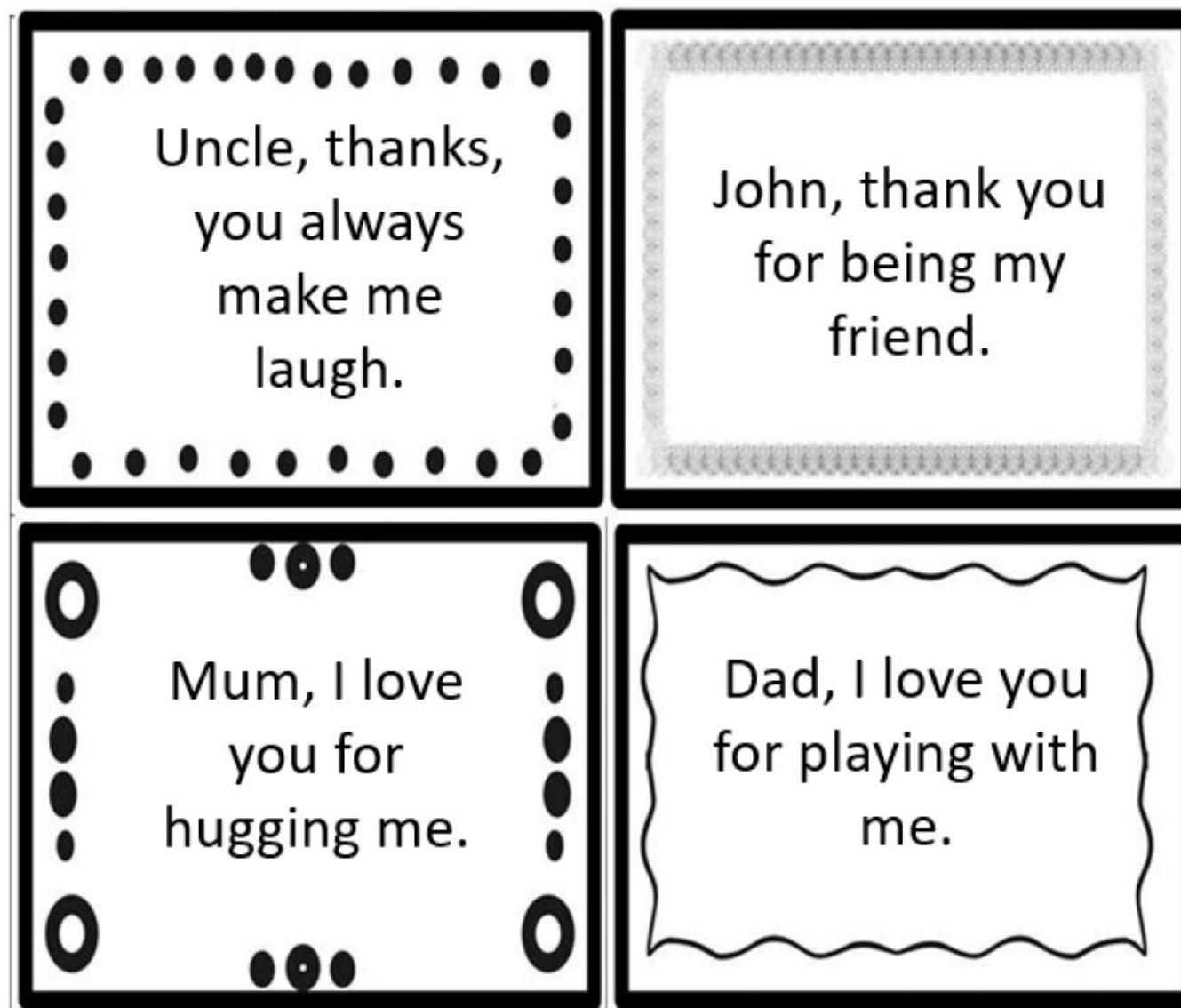
Outcomes of the class:

Children know that there is something worth appreciating in everyone.

Children are able to communicate positive feedback to their colleagues.

Children are able to receive positive feedback from their colleagues.

Children understand that what we say and how we say something about others and to others has an impact on the atmosphere of our mutual relationships.





by M.Baryła-Matejczuk



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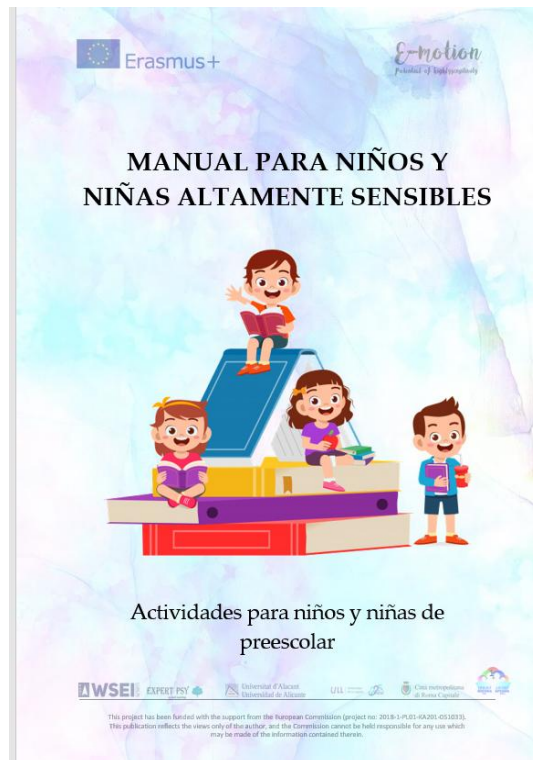


by M.Baryła-Matejczuk





And in different languages





WYŻSZA SZKOŁA
EKONOMII I INNOWACJI
W LUBLINIE



Universidad
de La Laguna



Città metropolitana
di Roma Capitale



Universitat d'Alacant
Universidad de Alicante



Thank you for attention!

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