

SUSTAINABLE LIFE IN 21ST CENTURY FOR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

EDITOR: PROF. DR. HAKAN SARI



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HOW TO BECOME A MODERN PERSON IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Hakan Sari¹, Hamza Kaynar²

Being a modern person in the 21st century requires adapting to the fast-paced, constantly developing and changing world we live in. It also includes a combination of self-awareness, continuous learning and adherence to core human values while at the same time absorbing technological advances. This process is a journey of self-discovery and growth, and with consistent effort one can successfully overcome the chaos of the modern World (Kaufman, 2023; Malik, 2018).

In this study, we will examine a modern person in the 21st century under two headings. These; personal and life competencies, self-management, self-esteem and problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Personal and Life Competencies

Personal and life competencies, also known as life skills or social skills, are essential skills that enable individuals to navigate their personal and professional lives successfully. These competencies are not specific to a particular job or academic field, but they play a crucial role in personal growth,

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relationships, and general well-being (Redding, 2014). Here are some basic personal and life competencies (Boyatzis, 2008):

1. **Communication Skills:** The ability to express oneself clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing. Good communication skills are essential for building strong relationships and collaborating with others.
2. **Emotional Intelligence:** Emotional intelligence, which expresses the ability to recognize, understand and manage one's emotions effectively and to empathize with the emotions of others, is one of the important competencies that a modern person should have in the 21st century.
3. **Creativity:** thinking outside the box, generating innovative ideas and finding unique solutions to problems. In the rapidly changing modern world, people who can produce creative ideas are always one step ahead.
4. **Conflict Resolution:** The ability to deal with and resolve conflicts constructively and peacefully. It is extremely important to be able to produce constructive solutions to conflicts between increasing competition and dense population problems in all areas of life.
5. **Empowerment:** Encouraging and supporting others to achieve their potential and achieve their goals. In order to create a collaborative working environment, the motivation of each individual should be increased, and he should be encouraged about the task he has to do.
6. **Cultural Awareness:** Being open-minded and respectful towards different cultural perspectives and practices. In today's increasingly multicultural society

structure, individuals need to respect and be tolerant of individuals with different cultures in order to live in peace and cooperation.

7. **Collaboration:** Working effectively with others in a team environment is harnessing a variety of strengths and skills. Cooperation, which is one of the most prominent competencies among 21st century skills, is very important in order to be able to work in harmony in both our business and personal lives and to benefit from differences.
8. **Networking:** Building and maintaining relationships with a wide variety of people, both professionally and personally. As a social being, human beings need to establish good relations with their environment and live in harmony.
9. **Awareness:** Understanding the awareness of the present moment and being fully engaged with the present experience. Being aware of the moment and experiencing it in a fast-paced time is one of the most important criteria for a person to be mentally healthy at an intense pace.
10. **Public Speaking:** Communicating effectively and confidently in front of an audience. A self-confident individual is one who is comfortable in front of the society and can influence and drag this society behind him or her.
11. **Initiative:** Taking proactive steps and seizing opportunities to get things done. As time progresses rapidly, individuals who can take the right and fast decisions and take initiative without exceeding their authority can approach the problems more solution-oriented.

- 12. Gratitude:** Developing a sense of appreciation for the positive aspects of life and giving thanks to others. Those who can thank those around them for their efforts or apologize when they make a mistake are individuals who can establish positive relationships with people and make them feel good.

It is important to remember that personal and life competences are not fixed characteristics; learning, practice and self-awareness can be developed over time. Constantly working on these competencies can lead to personal growth, improved relationships, and success in various aspects of life.

Self-management

Self-management is a skill that involves individuals to somehow manage and control their own powers, uses, and effective officials. Self-management plays an important role in personal development and success and helps people reach them (Kanfer & Gaelick-Buys, 1991).

What makes self-management important is that it ensures the achievement of goals. If the individual can manage his (her) own time and behavior, the probability of reaching his goals will increase accordingly. Also, self-management can help the individual avoid making mistakes that could set him (her) back. Finally, self-management can also improve overall performance by helping to stay focused and motivated.

Some key aspects and features of increasing self-management skill are (Grady & Gough, 2014; Hoff & DuPaul, 1998):

- 1. Time Management:** It is the effective management of people's time, determining their motivation and using them efficiently. Time management is important in terms of raising jobs, ensuring the transition between

work and private life, and reducing stress.

2. **Goal Setting:** It is important to set clear and achievable goals and take a step towards achieving that result. Goals increase motivation and become a force that leads to success.
3. **Self-Discipline:** It is the ability to motivate and focus on oneself. Self-discipline is very important to keep up with tough conditions, stay away from bad habits and work efficiently.
4. **Emotion Management:** It is the authority to understand, accept and direct oneself. It is important to control emotions and express them appropriately, and to establish healthy interpersonal relationships.
5. **Stress Management:** Developing healthy strategies to cope with stress and taking precautions against negative effects. Stress management improves overall fitness and mood swings.
6. **Self-monitoring:** Self-evaluation is one of the most important steps in the development of the individual. Self-monitoring promotes personal growth by identifying strengths and areas that need to be consolidated.
7. **Motivation:** To increase intrinsic motivation and to make the necessary effort to achieve it. Motivation is the key to being able to keep going in tough times.
8. **Self-Acceptance:** It is the process of understanding and accepting oneself. Self-acceptance creates a positive sense of self and a strong belief.
9. **Self-Interaction:** The ability to communicate effectively with other people. Self-interaction is important for success and harmony in work and social relationships.

- 10. Adaptation:** The ability to adapt to change and be flexible. Adaptation is essential for success under the circumstances.
- 11. Behavioural Control:** It refers to having control over impulses and demands. It helps us to protect ourselves from the negative consequences of our wishes.

Self-management plays an important role in personal development. It helps people to be more successful and live a happy lifetime. By developing relevant skills, people become captains of their own lives and can move forward more effectively.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem refers to the general view and evaluation individuals have about themselves. It is the subjective perception of one's self-worth and worth. Self-esteem plays a crucial role in shaping a person's beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Healthy self-esteem is essential for general well-being and success in various areas of life (Orth & Robins, 2014).

What makes self-esteem important is that it has a powerful effect on situations such as motivation and success in life. Low self-esteem in a person may prevent him or her from being successful in social environments (school, work, etc.). Because a person who feels this way may not believe that they can achieve anything. Therefore, these feelings are reflected in his works and actions. In addition, having a healthy self-esteem helps in achieving success (Pyszczynski, vd, 2004). Individuals with this motivation can lead their lives in this way by displaying a positive and assertive attitude.

Having a negative and unhealthy attitude towards oneself means losing self-esteem. The individual's understanding of

this deficiency in himself (herself) is understood by the fact that the symptoms that occur in him are different. Measures where there is a lack of self-esteem can be observed with the following consequences:

1. Dislike of self
2. Thinking that you find other people weak or ugly
3. Don't be shy about sociability
4. Inability to express their needs
5. Not being open to innovations
6. Not respecting your own existence
7. Don't think you're not respected by the outside world

Here are some key aspects and features of boosting self-esteem (Heatherton & Wyland, 2003; Zeigler-Hill, 2013):

1. **Positive Self-Image:** People with healthy self-esteem generally have a positive perception of themselves. They recognize their strengths, talents and achievements, while acknowledging their flaws and areas of growth.
2. **Self-Acceptance:** Self-esteem involves unconditional acceptance of oneself, including both its positive and negative aspects. It's about being comfortable with who you are and not constantly seeking approval from others.
3. **Confidence:** Confidence in one's abilities and judgment is the hallmark of healthy self-esteem. This confidence gives individuals the strength to overcome difficulties and pursue their goals with determination.
4. **Resilience:** People with self-esteem are more resilient in the face of setbacks and failures. They are better equipped to bounce back from difficult situations and maintain a positive outlook.

5. **Boundary Setting:** Healthy self-esteem allows individuals to set and maintain appropriate boundaries in relationships. These individuals can say no when necessary and avoid being abused.
6. **Assertiveness:** Being assertive means expressing thoughts, feelings and needs in an open and respectful way. It promotes healthy self-esteem, assertiveness and effective communication.
7. **Less Fear of Judgment:** Individuals with healthy self-esteem are less preoccupied with what others think of them. Individuals who can break down social pressures to be innovative have usually written their names in history.
8. **Empowerment:** Self-esteem gives individuals the power to take control of their lives, make decisions, and take responsibility for their actions.
9. **Openness to Feedback:** People with healthy self-esteem are open to constructive feedback and use it as an opportunity for growth and development.
10. **Self-Compassion:** Having self-esteem includes being kind and compassionate to oneself, especially in times of failure or mistake. Individuals should have self-compassion skills in order to be affected by the stressful and intense pace of life at the lowest rate.
11. **Less Comparison:** Healthy self-esteem reduces the need to constantly compare oneself with others, recognizing that everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses. In order to be an authentic individual and create a healthy collaborative environment, one must accept himself and avoid comparisons.
12. **Positive Relationships:** Individuals with self-esteem tend to have healthier and more fulfilling relationships

as they bring a sense of trust and authenticity to interactions.

It is important to remember that self-esteem is not a fixed feature and may fluctuate over time. An individual can be affected by a variety of factors such as past experiences, social interactions, and personal achievements. However, self-awareness is a quality that can be nurtured and developed through taking positive actions to create self-compassion and a more positive self-concept. Developing self-esteem allows one to have greater overall life satisfaction and resilience in the face of difficulties.

Problem Solving, Decision Making

Problem Solving

To build a successful career, it is very important to develop problem-solving skills from childhood. With the beginning of social relations in the life of every individual, problems also begin. For this reason, in addition to social skills such as communicating and maintaining communication, problem-solving skills should be developed against the problems that may be encountered (Gick, 1986).

Human is a social being, therefore, social relations begin to be established from the first years of life and bring problems with it. In order to solve the problems in adult life in a healthy way, it is necessary for the individual to develop problem-solving skills from childhood.

Problem solving skill is the ability to think about the problem, decide what and how to do, use resources and reach a solution in this way. Before solving a problem, it is necessary to define what the problem is. Afterwards, information about the problem and its solution should be collected, then the appropriate solution should be put into practice and the result should be evaluated (Norman, 1988).

Problem solving is a fundamental life skill necessary for both the personal and professional world. Here are some of the reasons why developing problem-solving skills is important for every individual (Mayer,1999; Novick & Bassok, 2005):

1. They increase employability. Problem-solving skills are among the most important skills for companies in a variety of occupations. In short, companies are always looking for proactive thinkers who can overcome professional challenges.
2. They help you progress more easily in your career. If you can come up with creative solutions to different problems you will encounter throughout your career, you will be more likely to be promoted.
3. They can become an important part of the personal brand. Your current company, your colleagues, and your future company will see you as a creative, reliable and helpful person.
4. They emphasize a number of other valuable skills. When you prove to be a problem solver, you effectively say you pay attention to detail, are logical, creative, analytical, curious, and other things companies look for in their employees.
5. They increase creativity. The problem solving process requires creativity as it involves generating new ideas and approaches to challenges.
6. They increase self-confidence. Solving problems successfully builds self-confidence and helps individuals feel more empowered to overcome future challenges.
7. They develop critical thinking. Problem solving requires critical thinking that helps individuals

analyze and evaluate situations, making them more informed decision makers.

8. They improve teamwork and cooperation. Problem solving often involves collaboration, which helps develop teamwork skills and strengthens relationships.
9. They reduce stress. Effective problem solving can reduce stress as it offers solutions to challenges and facilitates conflict resolution.

Some methods for developing problem solving skills are (Baker & Baker, 2017; Lesgold, 1988):

1. **Critical thinking:** This involves objectively analysing a problem, evaluating the evidence, and considering different perspectives before coming to a conclusion. It requires logical reasoning and independent thinking ability.
2. **Creativity:** Problem solving often requires unconventional thinking and finding innovative solutions. Being able to generate new ideas and approaches is a valuable aspect of this skill.
3. **Analytical skills:** Problem solving involves breaking down complex problems into smaller, more manageable components. Strong analytical skills are helpful in understanding the root causes of problems and identifying patterns or trends.
4. **Decision making:** Making informed decisions is a crucial part of problem solving. It involves weighing the pros and cons of different solutions and choosing the best course of action.
5. **Resourcefulness:** Problem solving often requires efficient use of available resources. Being resourceful means finding alternative approaches and adapting to different situations.

6. **Collaboration:** Many problems in the 21st century are complex and multifaceted and require input from a variety of perspectives. Collaborative problem solving involves working effectively with others, valuing diversity, and leveraging a team's strengths.
7. **Flexibility:** Not all problems have simple solutions and setbacks may occur. Resilience helps individuals step back from failures, learn from experience, and persist in finding solutions.
8. **Communication:** Being able to articulate problem statements, share ideas, and explain solutions clearly is essential for effective problem solving.

The importance of problem-solving skills in the 21st century is due to several factors:

1. **Complex challenges:** Today's world is characterized by complex and interconnected challenges such as climate change, poverty, and technological advances. Effective problem solving is essential to addressing these issues.
2. **Rapid technological advances:** Technology is constantly evolving, leading to new challenges and opportunities. Problem-solving skills are necessary to adapt to these changes and make effective use of technology.
3. **Globalization:** As the world becomes more interconnected, individuals and organizations face challenges that cross geographic boundaries. Problem-solving skills are vital to navigating this global landscape.
4. **Innovation and entrepreneurship:** Problem solving is at the heart of innovation and entrepreneurship.

People who can identify and solve problems creatively are more likely to succeed in these areas.

- 5. Continuous learning:** Problem solving often involves seeking and acquiring new knowledge. In a world where learning is a lifelong process, this skill is invaluable.

To develop problem-solving skills, individuals can engage in activities that encourage critical thinking, work on real-world challenges, participate in group projects, and seek feedback to continually improve their problem-solving abilities.

Overall, problem solving is a core skill that empowers individuals to cope with the complexities of the modern world and to drive positive change.

Decision Making

Decision Making is a cognitive process in which individuals or groups choose a course of action from among various alternatives to achieve a specific goal or solve a problem. It is an essential skill that plays a crucial role in both personal and professional life. While good decision-making leads to positive results, bad decision-making can lead to undesirable results (Slovic, 1988).

Among the issues that affect indecision are “lack of self-confidence”, “not being able to choose among options”, “not being able to decide what is important”, “clinging to details”, “waiting for the other person to make the decision”, “inability to offend”, “inability to say no”, “inability to say no”. being confronted with a subject that they have no knowledge about”, “the dominant attitude of the other person” and “all kinds of decisions contain negative consequences”.

1. **Shyness / Shyness:** The most important reason why shy and shy people remain indecisive is the concern that their value will decrease in the eyes of others due to the decision they make. They worry that their decision may be disliked, criticized, misunderstood, and reacted to.
2. **Fear of Make a Failure:** Making a decision is partly making a choice. Rather, it is not risk-taking. Thinking that the choice they made might have been a mistake leaves many people undecided. Those who are afraid of making mistakes think that if they make a mistake, they may lose themselves or the possible reactions of other people and they exaggerate these.
3. **Fear of Losing The Love of The Other:** People who are trying not to lose the love and interest of the other person may be undecided while thinking about their own wishes and the wishes of the other person. They think that if they try to do their own thing, they will be deprived of the love they think they need. Most of the time they act as if they have no wants or needs; they either leave the decision to the other party or act according to their wishes and needs.
4. **Dependence:** People with dependent personality structure, who cannot decide on their own and expect someone else to decide for themselves, want someone else to decide on their behalf in every matter. Their expectations may seem indecisive from the outside.

There are three conditions for the realization of decision-making behavior:

- a. The individual's feeling of the problem that causes the need to make a decision.
- b. Having more than one option to solve the difficulty.

- c. The individual has the freedom to choose one of the options.

Here are some key points about Decision making (Eisenführ, vd. 2010; Eisenhardt & Zbaracki 1992):

1. **Process:** Decision making usually follows a systematic process that includes several stages, including identifying the problem, gathering information, generating alternative solutions, evaluating options, making decisions, and implementing and monitoring the chosen course of action.
2. **Intuition versus Rationality:** Decision making can be approached with a rational approach where individuals weigh the pros and cons of each option and choose the most logical one. Intuitive decision making, on the other hand, relies on instinctive feelings and past experiences to make quick decisions.
3. **Decision Types:** Decisions can be classified into different types based on factors such as risk level and time involved. Some common types of decisions include strategic decisions (long-term and high-level), tactical decisions (short-term and mid-level), operational decisions (daily and low-level), and scheduled decisions (routine and repetitive).
4. **Factors Influencing Decision Making:** Various factors can influence the decision-making process, including personal values, emotions, cognitive biases, social pressures, available resources, and the complexity of the problem.
5. **Decision Making Models:** There are many decision-making models and techniques such as Rational Decision Model, Bounded Rationality Model, Satisfactory, Intuitive Decision Making and Vroom-

Yetton-Jago Decision Model. Each model offers a different approach to decision making based on specific contexts and goals.

- 6. Group Decision Making:** When decisions involve more than one stakeholder or team member, group decision making comes into play. It involves collaboration, brainstorming and consensus building to come to a collective decision.
- 7. Risk and Uncertainty:** Decision making often involves an element of risk and uncertainty. Assessing potential risks and considering uncertainty is crucial to making informed decisions.
- 8. Learn from Decisions:** Whatever the outcome, every decision provides an opportunity to learn and improve future decision-making.

Improving decision-making skills can help improve problem-solving skills and make more effective choices in various aspects of life. It is essential that you remain open to new information, consider various perspectives, and continually improve your approach to decision making.

Like other skills, decision making can be developed over time through practice and learning from experience.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN TODAY'S LIFE

Dr. Nuray Öztürk¹

As social creatures, the diversity of the quality of relationships (e.g., spouse, friends, family members) and social networks of human beings in daily life brings critical outcomes in terms of health and well-being. Research on such findings has accelerated after an article titled “Social Relations and Health” was published in a famous scientific research journal in 1988. So much so that, according to this article, social ties were evaluated as an important antecedent of mortality and associated with physical and mental health (see House et al., 1988). Following such striking research results, analysis of data collected from hundreds of thousands of people showed that the chances of survival can increase by up to 50 percent through higher social integration (Holt-Luntstad et al., 2010). Holt-Luntstad, a scientist who researches social relationships, emphasized the importance of the link between social relationships and health outcomes, stating that weaknesses in social ties “pose a threat to health equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.” (Holt-Luntstad, 2017, s.128). Based on

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such research results, this section will discuss interpersonal relationship dynamics (e.g., communication, cooperation, conflict resolution, civic participation, and empathy) that may reveal important components of social relationships.

Interpersonal Skills: Communication, Collaboration, and Conflict Resolution

Social relationships allow people to form bonds with their families, friends, neighbors, and communities. These ties are important for emotional support, solidarity, and cooperation. Social relations integrate individuals into society and enable them to become a part of society. This helps people develop their identity and commitment and increases their sense of belonging. Love, support, and commitment in close relationships can increase people's happiness. Civic engagement enables individuals to become involved in social issues and strive for change. It also helps identify community needs and improve community services. In this way, community members can find more effective and original solutions by focusing on their own needs. Social relationships and civic engagement enable people to impact their communities positively. People can make their communities a better place through volunteering and community service. Social relationships and civic participation promote harmony within society. In this context, it can reduce social conflicts and create a just society.

Social relationships provide people with social support and security. This support allows individuals to feel safe in times of crisis or when faced with difficulties. To give an example from immigrants, who are a disadvantaged group, firstly, the integration process of immigrants begins with developing a sense of being a part of a new society. Having good and positive social relationships helps individuals feel a sense

of belonging to the new society. A sense of belonging is the key to integration. Secondly, social relationships contribute to individuals learning the language of the new country and better understanding the local culture. Communicating with local people improves language skills, and cultural interactions facilitate a better understanding of different cultures. Third, good social relations can make it easier for immigrants to find jobs. Connections with local people can open job opportunities and provide references. Additionally, social isolation and loneliness can negatively impact individuals' mental health. Good social relationships can alleviate these negative effects and make people feel better psychologically.

Civic participation helps disadvantaged groups better integrate into society, establish closer relationships with the local community, and actively contribute to social life (Ayyıldız & Karataş, 2022). For example, civic engagement allows immigrants to feel part of their new society. This helps individuals develop a sense of belonging. The community activities, volunteer work, or local organizations they participate in enable individuals to be at peace with their new identities. Second, civic engagement provides a platform for immigrants to make their voices heard. Individuals can discuss social issues, defend their rights, and contribute to improving their society. Third, they can contribute to social change with their experiences and perspectives. Additionally, people can simultaneously share their culture and interact with the local culture. This can reduce prejudices and increase tolerance.

This section will discuss interpersonal skills such as communication, cooperation and conflict resolution that people can use to increase their positive relationships and participation in social life. Communication skills help people express their feelings and thoughts clearly, understand the views of others, and empathize. Collaboration skills make

it easier for people from different cultures to come together and work towards common goals. Conflict resolution skills teach you to handle possible disagreements peacefully and constructively.

Communication Skills

In today's world, communication skills are vital for everyone. Language and cultural differences can make it difficult for individuals to participate in social life. Communication occurs through verbal, written, and body language. Verbal communication includes all the skills of speaking, listening, and understanding. Expressing words clearly and understandably and understanding what the other person says is important for social relationships. Written communication tools such as emails, messages, and notes are important to business and daily life. It is important to have access to resources to improve language skills and communicate in writing. Additionally, facial expressions, gestures, and body language are part of communication. Expressing your emotions with body language and understanding the other person's body language supports effective communication. We can list the important issues regarding correct communication as follows:

1. **Self-expression:** It means reflecting your feelings, thoughts, and ideas in a clear, effective, and understandable way. Being able to express yourself accurately strengthens your relationships, helps resolve conflicts, and provides clarity in communication.
2. **Listening Skills:** Communication is not just about talking but also about listening. Pay attention to active listening to show that you understand and care about what the other person is saying. Active listening increases meaning in communication, reduces

misunderstandings, and helps you connect better with the other person. Improving this skill can help you communicate more effectively in both your personal and professional life.

3. Empathy: Good communication skills help people understand each other's feelings and perspectives. For example, empathic communication between disadvantaged groups and community members accelerates the process of understanding and respecting cultural differences (Hynie, 2018).
4. Body Language: Express yourself using your body language and verbal communication. It is important to make eye contact, nod your head while listening, or create rapport and trust through your body language.
5. Be Open: Good communication skills allow people to express their thoughts and feelings clearly. Open communication allows both parties to share expectations and concerns.
6. Accept Criticism: Listening openly to others' opinions and feedback, evaluating them, and responding appropriately to that feedback improves communication.
7. Understanding Cultural Differences: Language includes vocabulary, grammar, and cultural context. Understanding local culture and cultural differences can help you communicate better (Kashima, 2008).

Collaboration

Cooperation in social integration can enable individuals to cope with challenges and adapt more quickly.

1. Social Solidarity: Solidarity and cooperation are critical in overcoming difficult processes. Solving common problems and a sense of solidarity strengthen

the psychological well-being of disadvantaged groups' members.

2. **Access to Employment Opportunities:** Communication and collaboration with local people can increase access to employment opportunities and facilitate economic integration.
3. **Social Participation and Integration:** Individuals need support and guidance in the integration process and social participation. Collaborating with other people plays a facilitating role in personal and business life.
4. **Health and Education:** Disadvantaged groups may have limited access to health services and educational opportunities. International cooperation can facilitate access to basic services.
5. **Non-Governmental Organizations and Government Supports:** Non-governmental organizations and government programs that assist disadvantaged groups provide opportunities for collaboration. These organizations provide support in areas such as education, employment, health, and housing and can help disadvantaged groups better integrate into society.

As a result, cooperation and social integration are important elements that make it easier for individuals to adapt better to society and contribute more to it. These concepts encourage people to make social connections, communicate, and collaborate with the local community while helping local communities accept diversity and differences.

Conflict Resolution

Conflicts are an inevitable part of human relationships and group dynamics. Conflict resolution skills are of great importance at personal, professional, and social levels. A

good conflict resolution approach helps people understand and respect each other and build trust. Conflict resolution skills contribute to resolving disputes more quickly and effectively. This results in better communication and lower levels of tension. Conflict resolution encourages cooperation and teamwork. This contributes to running the business more efficiently. Good conflict resolution skills help make better decisions. Listening to and evaluating different perspectives enables more balanced and well-thought-out decisions.

For example, workplace conflicts can reduce productivity and negatively impact the work environment. Good conflict-resolution skills minimize these negative effects. At the societal level, conflict resolution skills increase intercommunity understanding, the capacity to find peaceful solutions to conflicts, and promote social harmony. Conflict resolution skills can increase self-esteem, strengthen self-confidence, and help to communicate more effectively (Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011; Kelman & Fisher, 2003). Some important considerations regarding conflict resolution are:

1. Anatomy of Conflict: Conflict refers to a situation of disagreement or friction between different individuals, groups, or parties regarding interests, needs, opinions, or values. The anatomy of conflict is important for understanding the elements of conflict and how it can develop (Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011).
 - a. Parties: Parties may be individuals, groups, or organizations who experience conflict arising from their differences.
 - b. Interests: One of the main reasons for conflict is that the parties have different interests. These interests may relate to resources, power, status, ownership, or other issues.

- c. Needs: Needs may be deeper underlying causes of conflict. The basic needs of humans include security, respect, commitment, self-esteem, etc. These needs can help us better understand the causes of conflict.
 - d. Emotional factors: Emotional reactions can increase the intensity of the conflict and make resolution more difficult. Emotional factors such as anger, fear, frustration, and hostility can make conflict more complex.
2. Reasons for Conflict: Conflicts may arise due to varying factors (Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011; Kelman & Fisher, 2003).
- a. Different Interests and Goals: Conflict can occur when parties have different interests or goals. For example, conflict between two employees about promotion in a workplace may arise from different career goals.
 - b. Resource Scarcity: In cases where limited resources (money, time, materials, etc.) need to be shared, disagreements may arise between the parties on how to distribute resources. Such conflicts occur frequently in a competitive environment.
 - c. Values and Beliefs: Different values, beliefs, and cultural differences can lead to conflict between people (Kashima, 2008). Such conflicts may be related to personal, social, or religious beliefs.
 - d. Communication Problems: Lack of communication, misunderstandings, and communication problems can cause disputes between parties.
 - e. Past Experiences: Past negative experiences can cause people to develop a negative attitude toward each other and trigger future conflicts.

- f. **Stress and Pressure:** High degree of stress levels can cause people to become more emotionally sensitive and cause even small problems to escalate.
 - g. **Individual differences:** Some personal factors, especially emotional states and personality traits, can influence conflicts. For example, impatience or anger management problems can increase conflicts.
3. **Conflict Resolution Strategies:** Conflict resolution strategies help disadvantaged groups address problems effectively (Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011; Kelman & Fisher, 2003).
- a. **Diplomacy and Negotiation:** Resolving issues between two parties by talking and negotiating can encourage compromise.
 - b. **Empathy and Understanding:** Mutual understanding and empathy can create a strong bond between parties (Hynie, 2018). One person's understanding of the other's perspective can alleviate conflict.
 - c. **Mediatorship:** Having a neutral third party help resolve the conflict can help reach a fair agreement between the parties.
 - d. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Being aware of and respecting cultural differences can contribute to preventing and resolving conflict.

As a result, conflict resolution skills play a critical role in social relations and civic engagement. These skills can help people identify problems, understand their causes, and resolve conflicts effectively by applying appropriate strategies. Conflict resolution skills supported by cultural understanding and empathy can also create stronger bonds between societies and facilitate adaptation.

Civic Engagement and Empathy

Civic engagement is a term that encompasses many formal and informal activities. Examples include voting, volunteering, and group activities (Abbott, 2010). In short, defining civic participation in a single category is impossible. Rather, civic engagement activities can be categorized in a variety of ways. Civil participation can be discussed under three main headings:

1. Participation in Elections

One of the foundations of democracy is that societies elect their own rulers. Participating in activities to increase voting rates during election campaigns is an example of civic participation. Similarly, donating money to a supported candidate, spending time and effort to help a candidate win, or participating in an official function (e.g., presiding officer) on election day is a form of civic engagement.

2. Volunteering

Participating in activities that benefit other citizens, individually or in a group, is a type of civic participation. For example, donating food to food banks and volunteering for recycling and environmental cleaning efforts to reduce environmental pollution could be considered as volunteering.

3. Activism

This type of civic engagement focuses on bringing about political or social change by raising awareness of particular issues or practices. For example, participating in peaceful protests or boycotts or organizing meetings with elected officials to resolve a particular issue represents a different civic engagement process. It should not be forgotten that such activist initiatives aim to produce applicable and comprehensive solutions rather than creating more problems.

Thus, outputs for the common good of the society can be obtained.

Civil participation can bring about some positive outcomes for societies as well as individuals (Marquez vd., 2016). It has been stated that the higher the level of civic participation in a society, the richer social capital that society has (Putnam, 2000). Individuals in such societies have been found to report positive physical and mental health outcomes (Xue et al., 2020). For example, individuals who are members of a civic group may have larger social networks and, as a result, be more aware of opportunities to be physically active in their environment (Marquez vd., 2016). It was mentioned above that voting behavior is an important indicator of civic participation. In this context, studies have found that those who do not vote (an indicator of low civic participation) report poorer health. (Kim vd., 2015).

Similarly, people who participate in volunteer activities, one of the important behavioral indicators of civic engagement, have been shown to report better health outcomes (Burr vd., 2016). Based on these findings, it is possible to say that individuals have access to more social networks, are exposed to less social isolation, and thus have more sources of social support, thanks to high civic participation. People with a rich social support network have been found to report fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression (Burr vd., 2011). Moreover, it has been stated that beneficial social activities based on volunteering are physically and psychologically good for individuals of all age groups (Infurna vd., 2016).

The civic participation mentioned here does not emphasize a complex social belonging but expresses formal or informal group affiliations in daily life. Official memberships can be given as examples of memberships of a foundation, association, or local. Informal membership examples could

be book clubs, chess clubs, etc. While an association or foundation member carries out activities to find scholarships for successful young people in need, a chess club member can voluntarily provide training to an individual with talent and enthusiasm but limited opportunity. Examples like these are reflections of civic participation from daily life.

Civic engagement can be defined as a process. This process works in such a way that individuals can make a difference in civil life for the good of society by bringing together their knowledge, skills, values, and motivation. Civil participation activities aim to solve problems encountered in public spaces (e.g., homeless citizens, pollution, difficulty in accessing food). This concept, considered from a collectivistic perspective, aims to secure the common good of those living in the same society. Motivations to achieve this goal can only emerge when the individual sees himself as a common part of society. As a result, individuals who participate in materially and spiritually meaningful activities can develop a life purpose for themselves and maintain their current motivation consistently.

Empathy

One of the factors that can play an important role in the quality of interpersonal relationships is empathy. In its most basic definition, empathy refers to how one feels and responds to the emotions of others. Based on this definition, it would not be wrong to state that empathy is an important skill. This ability helps a person consider events from others' perspectives and understand others' emotions, which helps build strong social relationships (e.g., at work, at school, and in personal life). For example, seeing how stressed and sad a colleague who is being pressured by his superior at work and taking steps to support him is a kind of sign of empathy.

Similarly, a friend may show empathy by stating that he understands how another friend feels due to low grades in school. In short, in order to approach an event with empathy, a person does not need to experience the current negative situation himself in the past or present. The important thing here is to be able to observe those feelings well and ask questions such as “What would I feel or how would I act if it happened to me?” at the right time and interpret them correctly.

Moreover, the feeling of empathy is not an ability that can only emerge under negative conditions. For example, we can interpret that parents who understand how excited their children are about a new toy and share this excitement with them can also show a kind of empathy. In short, this concept, which refers to sharing the personal life experiences of others (positive or negative), would enable the enrichment of interpersonal relationships/social networks. For example, when many people are having fun at an entertainment event, going up to someone you see sitting alone and asking how he is and why he is spending time alone is about empathy. Such an initiative may offer the opportunity to meet a new friend and enrich your personal social network. The motivation to approach events from the perspective of others would also increase the likelihood of attempts to improve the current situation of others and reduce their personal stress. In this context, we can say that individuals who take an active role in the civic participation initiatives mentioned in the previous section have a high level of empathy.

One of the frequently encountered issues when discussing the subject of empathy is “Are empathy and sympathy the same thing?” Although these two concepts are sometimes used interchangeably, there is an important conceptual difference. Someone who shows empathy not only understands the other

person's emotions but can also experience those emotions. For example, when a person sees someone else crying, understands the reason for the event, and cries himself, this behavior reflects empathy. However, someone who only shows sympathy is not expected to share the same emotionality. That is, the person who sympathizes cares about the problem or negativity experienced by the other individual and may feel sorry for that person but may not fully share this pain. At this point, the level of social closeness to the other person may affect the degree of empathy or sympathy.

Another important distinction about empathy is the emphasis that this concept has at least two components: emotional and cognitive. Emotional empathy is the ability to understand what others feel. For instance, if a family member is unhappy, you can understand this and interpret the current feelings. Similarly, if a friend is happy, you can understand this and share the joy. Cognitive empathy refers to understanding the current psychological state of other people. For example, being able to understand that if a friend is upset, your joke would probably not be funny to him is a characteristic of the cognitive aspect of empathy. It would be mistaken to conclude that these two components are simultaneously low or high in every individual. For example, an individual may have a low level of cognitive empathy but a high level of emotional empathy. As a result, the ability to empathize is not a skill that everyone has universally and equally. Individual differences are high. If you are wondering whether you are an "empathetic" person, these tips may give you some insight:

- If people often share their problems with you
- People often contact you for advice
- If you are a good listener
- You understand what other people are feeling

- You often think about what other people think
- If you often feel sad in the face of tragic events
- You are trying to help people who are suffering for some reason

Moreover, empathy is neither a universal trait nor a fixed trait. As emphasized before, it is a skill that is possible to develop. We can list some communication strategies to improve empathy skills as follows:

Being a good listener is one of the primary communication skills to improve empathy. Listening to the other person effectively and making that person feel it (e.g., asking questions about details) is crucial. When asking a question, ensure the person completes the sentence; interrupting the conversation would also disrupt the experience of current emotions. As another indicator that you are listening to the other person, there are non-verbal signs in addition to verbal cues. The most important of these is body language. For example, maintaining eye contact during the listening process is an important indicator that you are paying attention to that person. In short, beyond pretending to listen, it is important to understand the current situation and emotions from the other person's perspective by listening. Even if there are situations you disagree with, avoid making direct judgments. First, focus with an open mind on the person's feelings and the reasons for these feelings. In this context, focusing on similarities with other people rather than focusing on your differences may increase the tendency to display more open-minded attitudes.

In order to engage in an effective listening process, you must block out the distractions around you. For example, if you are already in a stressful situation for some reason, it may not be possible for you to engage in an effective listening process. If possible, you should first interact with the other person by

eliminating this stressor or by being aware of the situation and regulating your emotions. Similarly, multitasking would distract you from listening effectively to the other person. For example, muting your phone during the conversation would be the right step if there is no potential emergency.

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HOW TO MANAGE MY FINANCES

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Use of information and financial services, management of finances

One important aspect of taking financial services is to have accurate and up-to-date information about our own situation and the instruments offered by the financial market. By using financial management software and online tools, we can track our financial situation, incomes and expenses, making it easier to identify areas where we can save money and adjust our budget.

In the digital age of today, there are several tools and resources available to help us manage our finances, make informed decisions and achieve our goals.

Another important aspect of using financial services is having access to different financial products and services. These might include savings accounts, investment accounts, credit card, loans and insurances. By comparing different financial products, you can find the ones that best suit your needs.

Effective management of cash and finances is not obvious to everyone, because we do not necessarily manage it with the right awareness and competence. We could say that the culture

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related to finance has not yet developed or has not developed to the right level. The impacts of the lack of appropriate financial decisions are constantly being felt. Think of the global events of the past decade, or even the smaller or bigger financial blunders in our own life.

Effective management of finances involves a range of strategies and techniques to help us keep our finances under control. Some key strategies for effective management are the following:

1. Savings

In all life situations, it is crucial that we have adequate savings. Many financial analysts recommend having at least 6 months' worth of savings, as this is usually enough time to be able to make a calm and considered decision and not to rush into a hasty rethinking of our strategy, if we need to. We should also choose a form of saving that allows us to withdraw and use the money at any time without incurring any particular financial loss.

The amount saved means a kind of security, as you will have something to fall back on in the event of an unexpected expense. Most bank loans are taken out to cover such expenses. If we prepare in advance, we can also prevent going into debt for several years. Saving is only in our own interest.

Saving means reducing our expenses. How can expenses be reduced? Each household has different conditions, but there are some generally valid tips. Saving by progressing in small steps will mean a much easier task. We might feel the financial change only after a certain period of time, so patience and persistence (perseverance, stubbornness) will make a big difference.

The following tips will help you to start saving money even today:

2. Investments

Things to know before investing

- We need to have enough savings. If we would like to invest during a recession, we have to make sure that we have a sufficient amount of money saved.
- We have to invest for the long term, minimum 5-7 years
- It is not recommended to check our portfolio frequently. In a crisis, prices are very volatile, so the value of our portfolio can fall a lot even in a single day. It's better to ignore this, as a fall in prices can make you feel insecure and panic. If we have invested for the long term, we should stick to this.
- The market cannot be scheduled. We can never tell when a market is at its lowest point, so it is not worth waiting for the perfect moment that would give us the highest profits. The best way to invest is to divide the amount into several parts and invest them on different days at specific intervals: this is called dollar-cost averaging.

When investing, it's important to diversify (spread the risk), i.e., that you do not invest your money in just one product! „Don't put all your eggs in one basket!“ You can greatly reduce risk by choosing several investments from different markets. The price loss of a product will therefore affect you to a lesser extent, as you will have more investments that can profit regardless.

Some ideas for diversifying our investments:

- different currencies
- estate
- land
- gold

- share
- bond
- start-up company
- cryptocurrencies
- investment into ourselves

3. Management of debt

Efficient management of debt is indispensable for maintaining a good financial health. It means paying off high-interest debts as quickly as possible, avoiding unnecessary debts and using credits responsibly.

4. Monitoring and analysing debts

Tracking and analysing spending habits can help to identify those fields, where you can save money. We can use financial management softwares to keep track of spending habits, but it's also good to regularly review bank and credit card statements. A budget shows you what you are spending too much money on, and also which costs you could cut. If you set out in advance how much you would like to spend in a month, it will be easier to stick to your limit. Before you choose a product, make sure that no cheaper alternatives exist. Don't always buy from the same shop, check out other options as well! Comparing prices is important not only when buying, but also when it comes to saving. Pension funds and bank deposits all have different returns and costs, so it definitely matters which financial institution you choose. Buy only the products you really need. With a shopping list, you can easily avoid buying something extra. Try organising your purchases for a month: the result may be surprising.

5. Planning for emergencies: Planning for unexpected expenses and emergencies is an important part of sound financial management. This means that we set up an

emergency fund, take out insurance or make a plan for how we will tackle unexpected expenses.

On the whole, efficient management of finances involves a combination of strategies and techniques that help individuals to keep their finances under control. By developing and sticking to a solid financial plan, individuals can build a secure financial future and enjoy greater peace of mind.

Financial institutions

Taking financial services involves the use of tools and resources provided by financial institutions to manage and optimise financial resources. These services can range from simple bank accounts to complex investment products, credit cards, loans and insurances. Here are some examples of financial services available to individuals:

1. **Bank account:** A basic financial service that allows individuals to deposit and withdraw money, pay bills and manage their finances online or in person.
2. **Credit card:** It allows individuals to make purchases and pay them off over time, charging interest and other fees based on the terms of the card.
3. **Credits:** They give individuals access to it for specific purposes, such as buying a car or financing university studies. Loans can be secured or unsecured, and interest rates and terms of repayment vary depending on the lender and the type of loan.
4. **Investment accounts:** They allow individuals to invest their money in stocks, bonds and other securities that provide opportunities for financial growth and gaining income over time.
5. **Insurances:** They provide financial protection against risks such as accident, illness or damage to property.

By having access to a wide range of financial products and services, we can choose the ones that best meet our needs and help us achieve our financial goals. It is important to check and compare different products and service providers to find the ones offering the best conditions and rates, and to read the small print carefully before stipulating a contract!

By using financial management software and online tools, you can better understand your finances, optimize your spending and achieve your financial goals. It's important to research and compare different tools to find the ones that offer the features that best suit your needs, and to read the small print carefully before signing up. With the right tools and resources, you can take control of your finances and build a secure financial future.

For example:

Menta: Like the free fund management and financial tracking and budget planning app.

The best free spreadsheet for anyone: Google Sheets.

The best free smartphone app for beginners: Goodbudget.

The best free smartphone app for investors: Personal Capital.

The best free desktop software for small business owners: GnuCash.

Using numeracy capabilities in problem solving and prediction

Numeracy capabilities are crucial for problem solving and forecasting in everyday life. Below, we can see how these skills help us to make good decisions.

Financial decisions: Numeracy capabilities can help you make financial decisions such as budgeting, scheduling loan or real estate loan mortgage repayments, managing

investments and savings. Accurate calculations make it easier to estimate how much we need to set aside in order to reach a specific target.

Let us give you some simpler examples:

- Preparing a budget to plan and accurately determine our incomes and expenditures.
- Borrowing loan: If someone wishes to take out a loan, it is important to calculate the interest rates and instalments to determine what the monthly repayments will be and how long the loan will have to be repaid.
- For investments, in order to be able to evaluate the investment options, calculate expected returns and risk.
- Calculation of taxes and allowances.
- Long-term planning, i.e., we have to estimate our spending and savings to prepare for future financial challenges.

Shopping and discounts: When comparing prices, discounts and promotions, the numeracy capabilities will help you work out which offer is the most favourable. For example, calculating the price of a product on sale, how much of a discount it represents compared to the original price, or determining the value of coupons and gift vouchers. If we perform well in this area, we can save a lot of money! Here are some tips for comparison:

- Product or service comparison: If we would like to buy several different products or services, it is worth to compare prices, the quality of products and services. We can use the internet, price comparison sites or shopping apps to check different prices and offers.
- Monitoring discounts and promotions: Many shops and online stores regularly offer discounts and promotions.

It's important to check regularly for special offers so we don't miss out on good deals.

- Use coupons and codes: many online and traditional shops offer coupons and promotional codes which can be used to get additional discounts or gifts. Using current coupons and codes allows us to save money.
- Price comparing apps: With price comparison apps available for smartphones, it's easy to compare prices and find the best deals in-store or online.
- Timing: the price of some products or services may vary from time to time. Timing can be important so that we buy when we get the best price.

In our everyday household life, we also use our numeracy skills. For example, in cooking, when following recipes: numeracy skills make it easier to make quantitative adjustments to a recipe to get it to the expected amount. With accurate measurements, we can also avoid over- or under-seasoning our food. We can calculate how much to buy if we are cooking for a household of 4 and also if we are preparing a festive lunch by inviting 20 guests. Our counting skill helps us not to cook too little or too much. If, let's say, we cooked too much, then the food thrown out is also financial loss for us at the same time. And we would like to avoid that, wouldn't we?

Travelling and itinerary: By calculating costs, itineraries and time schedules, it can be easier for us to plan a journey, whether by train, by car or by plane. We also need it when exchanging currencies if we travel abroad. Precise calculation and observing exchange rate will help us to avoid excessive spending. Scheduling our time also requires calculation in order to be able to plan the travelling time and the length of the route. It is a worth to review and check the invoices

and receipts collected during the trip to avoid mistakes and excessive costs. If we travel with family or friends, during the journey, we can easier divide the individual costs and payments with the help of counting skills.

Time management: Time-related numeracy skills help us manage our time efficiently, to schedule tasks and to work out how much time is needed to complete a given task.

Forecasts: In forecasts, we use numeracy skills to model and analyse past data to make predictions about future events. This can be applied in many areas, from financial forecasts and market trends to weather forecasts:

- Projections of population, population composition and demographic change are based on statistical analysis of age groups and data. Numeracy skills help us to interpret data correctly and make forecasts.
- In the health field, numeracy skills also help to analyse epidemiological data and predict health trends.
- In retail and marketing, numeracy skills help you identify sales and consumption trends, and help you manage stocks and meet market needs.

Monitoring our health state: numerical data, for example blood pressure values or body weight, BMI index, our blood sugar value are vital for tracking the changes of our state of health over time. But it is at least as important to calculate the essential amount and dispensing of medicines, vitamins and dietary supplements. If we are unable to calculate our calorie needs and calorie intake, then no diet or dietary change can be successful.

Sport and physical activity: Numerical data are used to measure development, to track changes and to set out targets during exercise and training. It's important to be able to

monitor, even in layman's terms, whether our progress is good or whether we need to change our training.

Checking reliability: With the help of numeracy skills, we can check the information and calculations communicated by others, and we can make sure whether the results received are correct.

- When fulfilling tasks at work, this ability will help us avoid incorrect data and information and we can achieve more accurate results in the working processes. Numeracy helps to interpret and critically evaluate data and reports at work.
- Risk analysis: If we are good with numbers, we can use them to assess and analyse risks, which is indispensable for the fulfilment of many jobs.

On the whole, numeracy skills are indispensable for efficient problem solving and forecasting in the everyday life. They help us to make more accurate decisions, manage costs and time more efficiently, and use data in a transparent and reliable way.

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HOW TO USE DIGITAL TOOLS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Inga Laurusone¹

Using digital tools every day has become increasingly important in the modern world due to the numerous benefits and opportunities they offer.

Digital acceleration has had a transformative impact on our modern society, shaping the way we live, work, communicate, and interact with the world around us.

While using digital tools offers numerous benefits, it's important to maintain a balance and be mindful of potential drawbacks, such as digital addiction, privacy concerns, and cybersecurity risks. Striking a balance between digital engagement and offline activities is key to maximizing the benefits of these tools while maintaining overall well-being.

In this module we will show the far-reaching implications of digital acceleration in our modern society.

Communication and Connectivity

Digital acceleration has revolutionized the way we communicate and connect with others. Social media platforms, instant messaging apps, and video conferencing tools have

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become integral parts of our daily interactions. People from different corners of the world can now easily connect and share ideas in real-time, breaking down geographical barriers. The speed and ease of communication have facilitated collaborations, strengthened personal relationships, and fostered a sense of global interconnectedness. For communication and connectivity, we suggest to use these digital tools in our everyday life:

Instant Messaging Apps:

Instant messaging apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, and Viber have become important for personal and professional communication. They offer real-time messaging, group chats, file sharing, and voice and video calls, making them convenient for staying in touch with friends, family, and colleagues.

Social Media Platforms:

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Z and LinkedIn have transformed the way we connect with others online. They provide a space for sharing updates, engaging in discussions, building communities, and following interests. Social media also plays a significant role in business and marketing

Video Conferencing Tools:

Video conferencing tools like Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams have become essential for conducting virtual meetings, online classes, and collaborative work sessions. They offer high-quality audio and video, screen sharing, and whiteboarding capabilities, enabling face-to-face interactions even when people are physically apart.

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Services:

VoIP services like Skype, Google Voice, and Discord offer free or low-cost voice and video calls over the internet. They

provide an alternative to traditional phone calls, allowing users to make and receive calls from anywhere in the world without incurring international charges.

Email:

Email remains essential for professional and personal communication. It's a versatile tool for sending formal and informal messages, sharing documents, and collaborating on projects. Email is still widely used in business and personal life.

Collaborative Platforms:

Collaborative platforms like Google Drive, Dropbox, and Microsoft OneDrive facilitate teamwork by enabling file sharing, real-time editing, and version control. These platforms are essential for projects involving multiple contributors.

Project Management Tools:

Project management tools like Asana, Trello, and Jira help teams organize tasks, track progress, and manage deadlines. These tools provide a centralized workspace for collaboration and ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Live Streaming Platforms:

Live streaming platforms like YouTube Live, and Facebook Live enable users to broadcast live video to a global audience. These platforms are popular for gaming, esports, music performances, and educational content.

Voice and Text Chatbots:

Voice and text chatbots are becoming increasingly common in customer service, marketing, and education. These chatbots can provide automated responses to frequently asked questions, schedule appointments, and offer personalized support.

Education and Learning

The traditional education system has undergone a significant transformation due to digital acceleration. Online learning platforms and educational resources have democratized education, making knowledge accessible to a broader audience. Students can now access lectures, tutorials, and study materials from top institutions globally. Digital tools such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are redefining the learning experience by providing immersive and interactive learning environments. This shift towards digital education has also proven invaluable during times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, where remote learning became a necessity.

People with learning disabilities can learn uniquely, thanks to assistive technology. Text-to-speech software (TTS) helps students with visual impairment read texts.

Let's mention these tools for education and learning:

Online Courses and MOOCs:

Massive open online courses (MOOCs) offer free or low-cost access to high-quality courses from top universities and institutions around the world. Platforms like Coursera, edX, and Udemy provide a wide range of courses in various subjects, catering to different interests and skill levels.

Interactive Learning Platforms:

Interactive learning platforms like Khan Academy, Duolingo, and Memrise utilize gamified elements, adaptive learning algorithms, and interactive exercises to make learning engaging and effective. These platforms are particularly well-suited for language learning, math, science, and other subjects that benefit from interactive practice.

Educational Games and Simulations:

Educational games and simulations provide a fun and engaging way to learn new concepts and skills. Platforms like Kahoot, Prodigy, and Minecraft Education Edition offer interactive games that incorporate educational content, making learning more enjoyable and memorable.

Virtual Learning Environments (VLE):

Virtual learning environments (VLEs) are online platforms that provide a centralized space for educational resources, communication tools, and collaborative activities. VLEs are commonly used in schools and universities to facilitate online learning, student collaboration, and communication between instructors and students.

Educational Apps and Productivity Tools:

Educational apps and productivity tools can enhance learning both in and out of the classroom. Apps like Evernote, OneNote, and Quizlet help students organize their notes, create flashcards, and study effectively. Productivity tools like Trello, Asana, and Google Calendar can help students manage their time, organize tasks, and stay on top of deadlines.

Educational Social Media:

Educational social media platforms like Edmodo, Flipgrid, and Padlet provide a space for students to connect with peers, share learning materials, and collaborate on projects. These platforms can foster a sense of community and facilitate peer learning.

Educational Robotics and Coding Platforms:

Educational robotics and coding platforms like LEGO Education, Sphero, and Scratch allow students to learn STEM concepts (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) through hands-on activities. These platforms encourage

creativity, problem-solving, and computational thinking skills.

Language Learning Apps and Software:

Language learning apps and software offer a variety of tools and methods for learning new languages. Platforms like Duolingo, Memrise, and Babbel use gamified elements, flashcards, and interactive exercises to make language learning engaging and effective.

Work and Productivity

The workplace landscape has been revolutionized by digital acceleration. Telecommuting and remote work have become more commonplace, allowing employees to be productive outside the traditional office setting. Cloud-based collaboration tools enable seamless teamwork, facilitating real-time document sharing and communication among team members. Additionally, automation and artificial intelligence (AI) have streamlined various processes, boosting productivity and efficiency across industries.

Here's an overview of some of the most widely used tools for work and productivity:

Productivity Apps:

Productivity apps like Evernote, OneNote, and Notion help organize notes, manage tasks, and track progress. They offer features such as note-taking, to-do lists, project management, and reminders, making it easier to stay on top of deadlines and commitments.

Project Management Tools:

Project management tools like Asana, Trello, and Jira help organize and plan projects by breaking them down into smaller tasks, assigning responsibilities, and tracking progress. These

tools provide a centralized workspace for collaboration and ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Time Tracking Tools:

Time tracking tools like Toggl, RescueTime, and Harvest help employees track how they spend their time, identify areas for improvement, and optimize their work habits. These tools can also help bill clients accurately and manage project budgets.

Communication and Collaboration Tools:

Communication and collaboration tools like Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Google Workspace enable seamless communication and collaboration among teams. They provide real-time messaging, video conferencing, file sharing, and task management capabilities, fostering productivity and engagement.

Presentation Software:

Presentation software like PowerPoint, Keynote, and Prezi allows users to create and deliver engaging presentations. These tools provide templates, animation effects, and interactive features, making it easier to convey ideas and information effectively.

Document Editing Tools:

Document editing tools like Microsoft Word, Google Docs, and LibreOffice Writer enable users to collaborate on documents in real-time. These tools offer features such as track changes, version history, and commenting, ensuring that everyone is working on the latest version of the document.

Cloud Computing Platforms:

Cloud computing platforms like Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure, and Google Cloud Platform provide on-demand access to computing resources, storage,

and software. They offer flexibility, scalability, and cost-effectiveness, making it easier for businesses to deploy and manage their IT infrastructure.

E-commerce and Retail

The rise of e-commerce has reshaped the retail industry. Consumers now have the convenience of browsing and purchasing products online, often with same-day or next-day delivery options. This has led to a shift in consumer behavior, with more people opting for online shopping rather than traditional brick-and-mortar stores. Retailers are also leveraging data analytics and AI to personalize shopping experiences, making recommendations based on individual preferences.

Technology has revolutionized the way we work and boosted productivity by providing a vast array of tools and platforms that streamline tasks, enhance collaboration, and foster efficiency. Here's an overview of some of the most widely used tools for work and productivity.

Productivity Apps:

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Spreadsheet Applications:

Spreadsheet applications like Microsoft Excel, Google Sheets, and LibreOffice Calc are essential for data analysis, organizing financial information, and creating charts and graphs. They provide formulas, functions, and data visualization tools, making it easier to analyze and present data effectively.

Content Management Systems (CMS):

CMS like WordPress, Drupal, and Joomla! allow users to create and manage websites without having to know how to code. These tools provide templates, plugins, and content management tools, making it easier to build and maintain websites.

Cloud Computing Platforms:

Cloud computing platforms like Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure, and Google Cloud Platform provide on-demand access to computing resources, storage, and software. They offer flexibility, scalability, and cost-effectiveness, making it easier for businesses to deploy and manage their IT infrastructure.

Healthcare and Digital Tools

Healthcare is an integral part of our everyday life. Technology and scientific knowledge have had a positive impact on the healthcare industry. It improves human life by improving hygiene, diagnosis, and treatment. As examples could be mentioned these digital tools used for healthcare

Telemedicine:

Patients can now consult with healthcare professionals remotely, reducing the need for in-person visits, and improving access to medical expertise, especially in rural or underserved areas. Wearable devices and health apps have also empowered individuals to monitor their health and fitness, leading to a more proactive approach to well-being. Telemedicine can also be used to monitor chronic conditions, provide follow-up care, and connect patients with specialists.

Mobile Health (mHealth) apps:

mHealth apps are designed to provide healthcare information and services to patients through smartphones and other mobile devices. These apps can be used for a variety of purposes, including:

- Self-management of chronic conditions: mHealth apps can help patients manage their medications, track symptoms, and connect with healthcare providers.

- Preventive care reminders: mHealth apps can remind patients to schedule appointments, get vaccinations, and perform self-exams.
- Health education and support: mHealth apps can provide patients with educational resources, support groups, and mental health resources.

Entertainment and Media

The digital revolution has transformed the entertainment and media industries. Streaming services have disrupted traditional broadcasting, allowing consumers to access a vast library of content on-demand. Social media platforms have become major sources of news and entertainment, allowing users to consume and share information quickly and easily. Additionally, virtual reality and augmented reality technologies are reshaping gaming experiences, bringing users into immersive virtual worlds.

Technology has transformed the entertainment and media industries by providing a vast array of tools and platforms that create, distribute, and consume content. Here's an overview of some of the most widely used tools for entertainment and media.

Content Creation Tools:

Content creation tools like Adobe Creative Cloud, Final Cut Pro, and DaVinci Resolve allow users to create various forms of content, including videos, images, and music. They provide advanced editing capabilities, effects, and templates, making it easier to produce professional-quality content.

Music Production Software:

Music production software like FL Studio, Ableton Live, and Logic Pro X allow users to create, edit, and mix music.

They provide tools for composing melodies, creating beats, and adding effects, making it easier to produce professional-quality music.

Podcasting Platforms:

Podcasting platforms like Anchor, Podbean, and SoundCloud allow users to create, host, and distribute podcasts. They provide tools for recording, editing, and publishing podcasts, making it easier to reach a wider audience.

Video Streaming Platforms:

Video streaming platforms like YouTube allow users to upload, stream, and monetize videos. They provide a global audience for content creators and enable viewers to watch videos on demand.

Social Media Platforms:

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Z allow users to share content, engage with followers, and promote their work. They provide a powerful tool for reaching a large audience and building a fan base.

Content Management Systems (CMS):

CMS like WordPress, Drupal, and Joomla! are used to create and manage websites for entertainment and media businesses. They provide a user-friendly interface for creating content, managing menus, and customizing the website's appearance.

Deciding when to use digital tools for everyday tasks can be a complex decision, as there are many factors to consider. We have to identify our needs: before using a digital tool, it is important to clearly define the problem or task you are trying to solve. What is the purpose of using the tool? What do we hope to achieve? Understanding our needs will help us to choose the most appropriate digital tool.

It is important to consider our goals: what are we trying to accomplish overall? Are we looking to improve efficiency, productivity, or creativity? Are we aiming to save time, reduce costs, or enhance communication? Our goals will help us to evaluate the potential benefits and drawbacks of different digital tools.

We should be also honest about our own technical abilities and comfort level with technology. Some digital tools require advanced skills or knowledge, while others are more user-friendly and accessible to beginners. Choosing a tool that aligns with our technical expertise will make it more likely that we will adopt and use it effectively. It is also important to evaluate the tool's features and capabilities. We should research the specific features and capabilities of each digital tool we are considering. What functionalities does it offer? Does it integrate with other tools or systems we use? Consider how well the tool meets our specific needs and preferences.

Some tools are easy to learn and use, while others may require more time and effort to master. If we are short on time or prefer user-friendly tools, we have to choose ones with a shallower learning curve. If we are considering paid digital tools, we should compare their pricing plans and features. It is important to consider the value we will receive for the cost and whether the tool is within our budget. It is possible to check online reviews and testimonials from other users to get an understanding of their experiences with the tool. This can help us to understand the tool's effectiveness, ease of use, and overall value. If possible, we should try out the tool for a free trial or demo to get a hands-on experience. This will help us assess whether the tool meets our needs and expectations.

If we are still unsure about which digital tool to use, we can consider consulting with an expert, such as a technology

specialist or productivity consultant. They can provide personalized guidance based on our specific needs and goals.

Nowadays it is necessary to protect our privacy while using digital tools is essential for maintaining control over our personal information and ensuring that it is not misused. Here are some key considerations for safeguarding our privacy:

Read the Privacy Policy: Before using any digital tool, carefully review its privacy policy. This document outlines how the company collects, uses, and shares our personal information. Understand what data they collect, how they collect it, and how they use it.

Choose Privacy-Focused Tools: Prioritize using digital tools that prioritize user privacy and provide clear transparency about their data practices. Look for tools that offer options to control our data sharing, such as opt-out and anonymization features.

Be Mindful of Social Media and Online Platforms: Social media platforms and online services often collect extensive amounts of data about their users. Use them judiciously and be cautious about sharing personal information that could be used to identify us or track our online activity.

Limit Data Collection: Minimize the amount of personal data you provide to digital tools. Use strong passwords and enable two-factor authentication whenever possible to protect the accounts. Consider using virtual private networks (VPNs) to encrypt the internet traffic and mask the location.

Be Wary of Cookies and Trackers: Many websites and online services use cookies and trackers to collect information about our browsing behavior. Adjust the browser settings to enable Do Not Track (DNT) and limit tracking cookies.

Use Secure Wi-Fi Networks: When using public Wi-Fi connections, be cautious about accessing sensitive

information or logging into accounts. Use a VPN or a secure browser extension to protect the data from interception.

Regularly Review App Permissions: Check the permissions that apps request when installing them. Only grant permissions that are necessary for the app to function properly. Be wary of apps that ask for excessive permissions or access to sensitive information we don't want to share.

Delete Old Accounts and Data: Regularly review and delete inactive accounts from digital platforms that we no longer use. This helps prevent companies from storing unnecessary personal information about us.

Be Discreet in Online Interactions: Be mindful of what we share online, especially on social media platforms. We should avoid posting personal information that could be used to identify us or compromise our privacy.

We have to educate ourselves and stay informed, to keep ourselves updated on the latest privacy issues and cybersecurity threats, learn about the latest privacy practices and tools available to protect our information.

Digital acceleration has undeniably become a driving force in shaping the modern world. It has revolutionized the way we communicate, learn, work, shop, and entertain ourselves. While the benefits of digital acceleration are numerous, there are also challenges, such as concerns about data privacy and cybersecurity. As we continue to embrace and adapt to these technological advancements, it is essential to strike a balance between leveraging digital innovations for progress while safeguarding the values and principles that underpin our society. Ultimately, understanding and harnessing the potential of digital acceleration will be key to your every day life.

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HEALTHY LIFE STYLE AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Metin Kılıç¹

Knowledge and Competencies to Take Care of Mental and Physical Well-Being

According to the World Health Organization (1946) definition, health is “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” From this point of view, physical and mental health refers to emotional, psychological, and social well-being. The impact on mental health determines what we think, how we feel, and how we act. The absence of a diagnosed mental illness may not necessarily mean good psychological health. In other words, the factors affecting mental health can sometimes suddenly affect the person’s mood rather than creating a long-term influence. The critical issue here is individuals’ perceived health and quality of life.

Self-care is one of the priorities among the knowledge and competencies that affect health outcomes. Self-care means creating time to take action to help improve health outcomes (both physical and mental). For example, through self-care, stress management can be strengthened, positive energy can

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be increased, and the risk of disease can be reduced (Myers et al., 2012). Self-care actions followed regularly in daily life can unexpectedly positively affect the quality of life.

Self-care strategies in the light of the knowledge and competencies required for physical and mental health can be diverse (Skovholt & Mathison, 2010). Considering this diversity, it may not be realistic to follow each knowledge and competency regularly at the beginning. However, trying to make these strategies a part of daily life step by step should be the main goal. The benefits of these strategies for each individual may vary. For this reason, sometimes, by trial and error, people can adopt the most beneficial knowledge and competencies. Although the recommendations mentioned here are not the only determinants of staying healthy, they can contribute significantly to people's health and well-being. It is important to remember that self-care is not the main factor for health and well-being. It should be noted that in severe and long-lasting symptoms (e.g., sleep problems, concentration disorder, etc.), professional support should be sought.

Self-care at home

Different healthy lifestyles can be adopted depending on the living conditions and may vary from person to person. Despite these differences, knowledge and skills for a healthy lifestyle that people can practice at a minimum level are available. For example, even small changes in the environments where the most time is spent (e.g., home, work) can contribute to a healthy lifestyle. The first step towards knowledge and competence in which a healthy lifestyle can be adopted can begin in the home environment. As the place where most of the time is spent, paying attention to cleanliness and hygiene at home is indispensable for a healthy lifestyle. Many harmful toxic substances can be in a dusty environment

that has not been swept for a long time. Excessive exposure to certain chemicals in household items and products can adversely affect physical health. Using products that could harm the body as minimally as possible at home would be beneficial. The use and consumption of ingredients that are known to be harmful, especially based on cleaning materials and food product codes, can be minimized as much as possible. For example, it has been shown (e.g., Trasande et al., 2022) that the phthalate chemical found in many products we use in daily life (e.g., shampoo, feeding bottle, storage containers, children's toys) is harmful to health (e.g., it can cause infertility, premature death).

Similarly, long sniffing of bleach, frequently used as a cleaning material, can cause serious damage to the respiratory tract and even cause poisoning. To prevent or minimize such a situation, bleach can be used after dilution with water. In addition to cleaning products, items such as cookware, shower curtains, and carpets can also contain potentially toxic substances. Being aware of such risks, attention should be paid to cleaning and hygiene routines. How much exposure to these potentially harmful substances is critical for health. For such matters, the product instructions should be carefully read and followed.

Since children are particularly vulnerable to these harmful chemicals, adults should not only take care of themselves but also take responsibility for the children and maintain their daily housework routines. For example, these risks may apply to children playing on the floor and putting their toys or fingers in their mouths. The important point here is to realize that the chemicals that can cause such harm are very close to us, to take responsibility, especially for young children, and to establish a life routine to reduce the exposure rate of adults to these chemicals much as possible. Sweeping the house regularly

with vacuum cleaners through high suction power and wiping the floors with a wet mop, increasing the circulation of fresh air by opening the windows during cleaning, and washing your own and children's hands regularly can be some of the easy and simple steps start health lifestyle at home. When choosing clothes, prefer cotton/wool clothes as much as possible, rather than products such as polyester, especially for children. Although it is not very realistic to get rid of it completely, it is useful to be aware of the presence of toxic substances and limit the exposure level as much as possible.

Emotional self-care

Another important knowledge and competency for a healthy life is the control of emotions. Our activities of daily living, social relationships, and general health are closely related to our feelings. From this perspective, emotional well-being is critical in coping with everyday stress and adapting to difficulties. In other words, it is necessary for individuals to gain the knowledge and skills to show mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adapt to negative experiences in daily life. These skills are called resilience (Pooley & Cohen, 2010). Psychological resilience is a competency that can be acquired against life difficulties (Zautra et al., 2010). Psychological resilience skills can be developed through social capital resources (e.g., family, society, culture). For example, having people who can provide social support in the face of negative experiences and the ability to communicate with these people is an important part of a healthy daily life. Thanks to such useful social networks, individuals can adopt a more adaptive emotion regulation process. Therefore, it is important to have social networks that can get as much support as possible and to be in close communication with our loved ones rather than living a socially isolated life (e.g., Berkman & Glass, 2000; Holt-Luntstad et al., 2010).

Stress is one of the most critical factors that threaten physical and mental health. Stress in the face of a negative stimulus affects the body and the brain. During stressful situations, a stress hormone (i.e., cortisol) is released from the adrenal glands, typically up to a certain stage. Such physiological reactions that occur are beneficial up to a certain stage because they keep the person psychologically awake and maintain motivation. However, such an alarm is expected to subside over time, and the body will return to normal functioning (Ross et al., 2020). Being exposed to stress too often or for a long time causes the stress hormones to accumulate in the body for a long time by preventing the aforementioned return to normal process and cause harm rather than benefit, and as a result of continuous activation in the nervous system, it creates a kind of both physiological (e.g., hypertension) and mental (e.g., anxiety, depression) burden on human beings (Spruill, 2010; Vedhara et al., 2003).

When faced with a possible stressor, it is critical how individuals can appraise this negativity and cope with it. At this point, people can cope with stress in two different ways (see Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). The first way is the problem-focused coping method. The main purpose here is to eliminate the problem/situation that causes stress. In this process, people's perceived control over events/situations is a fundamental factor because people with a low perception of control to eliminate the problem may fall into despair. Sometimes, due to the nature of the problem, it may not be possible to follow a problem-focused coping method. For example, let's consider exam stress, which a student often encounters in daily life. At this point, eliminating the perceived problem (i.e., exam) is not under the student's control. In such cases, talking about emotion-focused coping as a second option is possible.

It is important to have emotion regulation skills to focus on the emotions felt in conditions where there is no control over the situation/event, such as exam stress. Considering the exam example, first, it is necessary to identify the source of this stress before moving to emotion regulation. If the person has been exposed to this stress because he has not worked enough, the best thing to do is to accept it by taking responsibility. Thus, if there are subjects that the person has even a little knowledge of during the exam, s/he can focus on them, and the probability of getting a higher grade may increase. Comparatively, if the person is experiencing stress despite being well prepared, he or she may seek support to develop skills that can help with emotion regulation by consulting an expert. It should not be forgotten that these stressors are factors that everyone can encounter in daily life, and in such cases, seeking support from a specialist/professional is not a weakness; on the contrary, it is a very human and necessary step. Additionally, a stressful experience does not have to be negative; what you learned from that process for personal development or if there are positive outcomes, you can try to look at the bright side of things and write them down (e.g., keeping a diary) or share with a significant other. Such approaches would make it easier to acquire the skill of looking at things from different angles.

Mindfulness, which has an important place in the psychology literature, means focusing on the current work instead of focusing on multiple jobs simultaneously (Bishop et al., 2004). In other words, it is to focus on the work being done calmly, without rushing, by allowing time for oneself while doing the current job. It is known that being aware of what one does and feels positively affects health by reducing stress levels (Grossman et al., 2004). It has been determined that individuals unaware of their actions are also less happy

(Bajaj et al., 2019). Mindfulness practices should be taken seriously, considering the strong relationship between health outcomes and happiness.

For those who want to consolidate their mindfulness practices in daily life, making it a habit can be tiring at the beginning. A first step can be practicing for three to five minutes a few times a day. Additionally, mindfulness practices can be supplemented with breathing exercises. The effect of controlled breathing exercises for relaxation in stressful situations is well known. The most well-known of these controlled exercises is abdominal breathing. For example, in this breathing exercise, the person sits or lies in a comfortable position. One hand is placed on the chest, and the other is placed on the lower ribs. By taking a slow and deep breath through the nose, it is felt that the air fills the lower part of the abdomen. In the meantime, while the hand on the chest remains motionless, a breath should be taken in such a way that the hand on the stomach is lifted upwards. Then slowly exhale through the mouth. Practicing this exercise three to five times a day can significantly contribute to health by regulating breathing. Mindfulness and breathing exercises can reduce anxiety and depression, lower high blood pressure, and improve sleep quality (Su et al., 2021).

Other healthy habits

Another way to increase psychological resilience and keep physical health vigorous is to adopt healthy habits. The healthy habits that should be mentioned here are dietary habits (e.g., drinking at least two liters of water a day, consuming fruits and vegetables regularly, limiting carbonated and caffeinated beverages as much as possible) and regular exercise (e.g., walking for half an hour each day) (healthy eating habits will be discussed in more detail in section 5B).

Quality sleep is as important as eating habits and regular exercise and is indispensable for a healthy life. A day that starts after a quality sleep is followed by good mental performance and positive emotions. There are some important points for a night of quality sleep. For example, sleeping too much does not necessarily mean quality sleep. Experts state that adults should sleep at least 7 hours a day (Watson et al., 2015). It is important that sleep is not interrupted during this time. In addition, regular bedtime and wake-up times are critical for the body's biological functioning. Avoiding nicotine (e.g., cigarettes) and caffeine are among the factors that increase sleep quality (Jaehne et al., 2009).

An additional aspect that should be made a part of a healthy life is regular health checks. Regular health checks make it possible and easier to treat many health problems in the initial stage by early diagnosis. In addition to regular blood pressure measurements, some of the health checks that should be done at least once a year can be listed as follows: internal medicine (internal diseases) examination, eye examination, heart disease screening, skin examination, dental examination, pap smear test for women (a test for cervical cancer). screening) and mammography for breast cancer detection and PSA measurement for men (a screening for prostate cancer; Memorial Medical Editorial Board, 2022; Parkan, 2020).

Work-Life Balance, Nutrition in General

The working environment is one of the areas where the most time is spent in daily life. How successfully the work-life balance (WLB) is established is very critical for maintaining a healthy life. Given that WLB, it may mean time spent at work and time spent outside work is balanced. In other words, this balance represents the extent to which one can spend time with friends and family members or engage in a hobby in the

leisure time left over from work. One of the critical issues for a healthy lifestyle for working individuals is WLB. Serious physical (e.g., heart disease) and mental (e.g., burnout, fatigue, stress) health problems await those who cannot achieve this balance (Lunau et al., 2014). Conversely, having a good WLB can bring less stress, less risk of burnout, and increase individual well-being, resulting in positive outcomes for both employee and employer.

Unfortunately, some statistics showed that more than half of the employees could not establish a WLB (Baruffati, 2023). The deterioration of WLB may be due to more than one cause (e.g., having children, increased responsibility at home and/or work). It is possible to list some symptoms that indicate deterioration of WLB as follows:

- The person cannot stop thinking about work even though s/he is not at work.
- Problems occur in the person's social ties at and out of work. For example, there may be tendencies to feel disinterested or unimportant to everything outside of work. As a result, social invitations are often turned down, and a form of social isolation appears.
- The person may exhibit psychosomatic symptoms (e.g., unexplained pain).
- Low energy and problems while trying to focus on work.
- During the day, the person spends money unnecessarily to get others to do things that s/he can easily handle (e.g., laundry, dishwashing). So much so that when a person becomes ill, s/he may be negligent in taking the necessary steps for their own treatment (e.g., taking medication on time).

- In leisure time, the person cannot remember the last time s/he went on a vacation and does not intend to plan a vacation. For example, according to a study conducted by the American Travel Association (2018), it has been found that more than half of the employees have unused vacation days at the end of a one-year work schedule. In addition, even if the person is busy with another job in his leisure time, he may think he needs to do another job. Such considerations make it difficult to manage time and prioritize tasks.

Establishing a WLB is vital for individuals and institutions, as motivation and productivity decrease when a certain amount of time spent on work is exceeded. Such a decline will bring many problems. From a health perspective, for example, those who work more than 55 hours a week have been found to be more likely to have a stroke (World Health Organization, 2021). Moreover, such overtime can lead to anxiety and depression. Here are some answers to the question of how to build WLB:

- First of all, providing a clear chart of how the WLB will be set up may not be realistic, as the conditions for achieving this balance may differ from person to person. It is impossible for those who have problems establishing the balance in question to solve this problem in one day. Instead, making changes in lifestyle with small steps will make the process easier. For example, trying to balance for a single day can be difficult, while focusing more on the whole week can be convenient.
- Priorities need to be set first. For example, if there is a child, priority should be determined by realistically considering whether it is a child-related responsibility or an urgent job.

- If you have meetings scheduled in a row, try to keep the time between them as large as possible. You can put an activity you like to do in these in-between times, or you can organize an appointment with a friend you enjoy spending time with.
- You can do things that require mental effort as much as possible during the hours you think are the most productive. The chore works that do not require too much mental load can be collected in a separate time.
- Take care to plan to finish your work within a certain time. Make sure to save/archive and set aside all work-related files when the appointed time comes. For example, you can use a separate mobile phone for work if you work at a job with heavy phone traffic. So, when you're done, you can turn off the phone and disconnect from your business at the time you set.
- Establishing a WLB may not only mean setting precise working hours at certain time intervals. For example, workers may have a heavy work schedule the week before they go on vacation, so they can put work-related issues aside during the leave. In short, instead of trying to follow a rigid and monotonous work schedule, it is necessary to follow a realistic path.
- You can accompany your colleagues for lunch. It will be psychologically good to change the place and socialize during the break time.
- Try to finish the work that needs to be done as soon as possible before the deadline. Thus, you can find time to relax in case of possible disruptions. For example, you may have a time frame that allows you to focus on the moment and put work-related issues aside instead of

experiencing work stress in unexpected situations such as getting sick or losing a loved one.

- As long as circumstances allow, people should do what they enjoy. Undeniably, those who do a job they don't like will be unhappy, and this negative mood would also distort WLB.
- Mindfulness and breathing exercises, which are also mentioned in title 5A, can enable you to focus better on your instant feelings and thoughts and make healthier decisions about what you need. For example, you may need to rest or engage in a favorite activity. Through this awareness, you can return to work more efficiently and productively after taking the necessary break.

Whether or not these listed recommendations are applicable may often be independent of individuals. For these recommendations to be implemented consistently, some responsibilities belong to the managers in the workplace. Guidance for managers/leaders to prepare an environment that would facilitate the establishment of a WLB for people working at lower levels can be listed as follows:

- If you have meetings with employees on various topics, try to break up these meetings as much as possible. For example, you can plan one-hour rather than three-hour meetings so that they can be extended to the next day if possible. It should not be forgotten that there are problems in both motivation and attention after a certain time.
- If long meetings must be planned in such a way that there is no time in between, you can hold such meetings in different venues (e.g., cafe, restaurant). Alternatively, you can organize online meetings, allowing employees to attend the meeting from any location. You can even

arrange a meeting when going for a walk with your family as an example to them. Thus, employees will be encouraged to attend the meeting in a more comfortable and pleasant environment.

- Take care not to send messages/emails to employees at all hours of the day. Even if you send such messages, make it clear that notifications received after certain hours are not urgent, and employees do not have to respond immediately. Otherwise, an employee who feels compelled to respond to an unexpected message is unlikely to be able to set up a WLB.
- Make sure you do not organize meetings before or after working hours. If there are people who frequently work outside of working hours, contact them immediately to determine why this is happening.
- Try to create opportunities for your employees to socialize (for example, organizing a birthday party at work for another employee). Thus, even if there are employees who tend to be socially isolated, such organizations can be comforting for them.

Nutrition in general

In addition to the balance between work and life, establishing a balance in the diet is a very important part of a healthy life. The increase in processed foods and changes in lifestyle due to urbanization (e.g., intense work schedule) have brought about changes in dietary habits (World Health Organization, 2020). Healthy eating habits are important in preventing many serious diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer. Although health nutrition recommendations may vary according to individual differences (e.g., age, gender, physical activity level), some standards can be set in general. We can list the main

recommendations for daily eating habits as an important part of a healthy lifestyle (World Health Organization, 2020):

- At least 400 grams of fruit and vegetables should be consumed per day. In fruit and vegetable consumption, especially those grown in season and different varieties, as much as possible should be preferred.
- At least two liters of water should be consumed per day. The amount of fluid required for the body can also be provided by fruits such as melon and watermelon. A balanced diet and the required amount of fluid consumption can increase the daily energy amount and make it easier to focus on the work to be done during the day.
- Nuts, whole grains, and legumes should also be on the regular food list.
- Daily calorie intake and calorie expenditure should be balanced. The amount of fat taken should not exceed 30 percent of the total calorie amount.
- Sugar (e.g., honey, jam, juice, etc.) intake should also be limited (less than 10 percent of nutrients consumed in a day). The amount of salt consumed should be less than five grams per day, thus reducing the risk of heart disease.
- It is necessary to pay attention to how fatty foods are cooked. For example, steaming or boiling instead of frying will be more beneficial in nutritional value.
- Consumption of prepackaged junk food and carbonated and caffeinated beverages should be limited as much as possible.

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SUSTAINABLE LIFE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Ildiko Hanulikova¹

Environmental capabilities in individual life, household

Environmental skills include understanding the impact of our everyday activities to the environment and adopting environmentally positive behaviours in areas such as food and energy production and consumption, recycling and waste reduction (SAZP, 2020). Skills also include understanding the links between the environmental, social and economic components of sustainable development. Competence includes an attitude of critical awareness and curiosity, an interest in ethical questions, and the promotion of safety and environmental sustainability, with special regard to scientific and technological developments related to individual, family, community and global problems (ŠIOV, 2023).

It took more than 10,000 generations for the human population to reach 1 billion, and while it took 130 years to reach 2 billion, only 12 years passed between 6 and 7 billion (2011). Nowadays, the population of our planet already reaches 8 billion, which is more than two and a half times more than the figure in 1960 - back when there were only 3

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billion of us on Earth. According to the latest UN predictions, the world population will grow to 9 billion by 2050. The basis for explosive population growth is technological progress and better healthcare.

Human activity has a major influence on the climate of the Earth and most often has the following adverse effects:

- Greenhouse effect
- Depletion of the ozone layer
- Air pollution
- Water pollution and water scarcity
- The degradation of soil
- Downsizing of forests
- Waste production
- Noise
- Light pollution

Human society is unlikely to survive with the population growth, biosphere transformation (destruction of the natural environment) and the escalating exploitation of natural resources, production, consumption and waste generation of the last half century. A sustainable society respects biodiversity, works constantly and deliberately to keep human consumption in balance with the needs of other living creatures as well as with the regenerative capacity of ecosystems, and to preserve natural capital.

The ecological footprint

The ecological footprint expresses the extent to which we use or overuse our planet's resources. It shows how much land, water, air and other resources we need to survive. This includes industrial products, food production and waste management. The ecological footprint measures the impact

of human activity on the environment in six areas (footprints of forests for absorbing carbon dioxide, arable land, pasture, commercial forest land, water areas and built-up areas).

The human ecological footprint has many components. The most important of these are household energy consumption, the use of electricity, natural gas and other fuels, transport and holiday habits, and eating habits. This includes how much waste someone generates, how much packaging they use, what items they buy.

The ecological footprint is measured in global hectares (gha), which is equivalent to one hectare of biologically fertile land on Earth. Much of the Earth's surface is inaccessible to human beings. It is covered by the world ocean, deserts, rocks or ice. There are only 11.9 billion global hectares of biologically productive land available for us worldwide. This area provides us with all the resources and services we need.

In 2019, the size of the ecological footprint of the world was 1,75 global hectares. This means that the Earth's population lives as if it had 1.75 Earths at its disposal. So, at the current rate of consumption, we would need almost two planets to sustain our life.

Reducing the ecological footprint is an important task. This means changing our consumption habits. It is the responsibility of society as a whole and of smaller communities, but also of each individual.

Nowadays, mankind has to tackle following global environmental problems:

- increasing energy demand;
- population problems and their consequences;
- atmosphere problems;
- soil problems;

- the limitedness of natural resources;
- water problems;
- recognition of environment problems;
- deforestations and their consequences;
- waste management.

Nowadays, it is very important to have a positive attitude towards the environment, because in nature and in our own living space we are often confronted with inappropriate behaviour of individuals as well as irresponsible human activities. This social problem is not only regional and national, but it also has a pan-European, even global dimension.

Environmental skills can be developed by applying the following principles

1. Reduce unnecessary consumption!

Reduce consumption in the fields of food and other consumer goods! Don't be tempted by the media, awareness is very important, and we can even save money by adopting this attitude.

2. Don't use single-use products!

This small step can successfully reduce a lot of the waste accumulated in our homes, as nowadays there are plenty of alternatives to replace single-use packaging, shopping bags and other products.

3. Don't throw away your unnecessary items!

Find a new owner for items that have been used and become unnecessary, for example in social media, where we can upload items, clothes, technical devices that can be given away for free. Reusing, rethinking and transforming old objects can be a creative programme, even for the whole family. We can find new ideas for using our old objects on a number of websites

4. Buy quality, repairable, products that can be used several times!

An important part of a zero-waste lifestyle is buying better quality, reusable goods that can be repaired in case there is a problem.

5. Shop sensibly, pay attention to recycling opportunities!

Before buying anything, check the label to make sure the packaging is recyclable. This will prevent products from going to landfill.

6. Let's have an eco-friendly household!

Do not prepare more meal than what we can eat! Classify the waste accumulated in our home and use eco-friendly cleaning products! Choose household appliances that consume less water and energy!

7. Produce at home in an eco-friendly way!

In a house with a garden, it is a great opportunity to grow fruits and vegetables, especially if we use compost as well! From vegetable waste, we can get a medium rich in nutrients and humus within a few months. It is perfectly suitable for planting flowers, plants or just to improve the soil structure.

8. Think about the protection of animals and plants!

Buy local flowers or grow your own! They not only decorate the garden, but will attract bees and butterflies. Eat locally grown fruit and vegetables that are in season.

9. Let's travel in an eco-friendly way!

Instead of the car, for shorter distances, let's go by bicycle or on foot. If we have to travel longer distances, then let's use public transport.

10. Look around carefully, so that we find green opportunities!

Like rethinking everyday life, achieving zero waste requires a conscious effort! It's much easier to make new habits a natural part of our lives if we gradually build them into our daily routines.

The responsible consumption of the individual is a fundamental factor for society. This means conscious and critical consumption. It is based on two expectations:

On reducing consumption and making consumption sustainable.

When it comes to responsible consumption, the responsible shopping that precedes it is important: awareness - pre-considered shopping.

Less consumption is preceded by a few recommended forms of purchase:

- task-oriented shopping, the goal of which is to complete the task as soon as possible. In such cases, products important to the individual or the family must be purchased.
- smart shopping: in this case, the customer prefers a product with a price-value ratio that suits him.
- purchase of discount products: in this case, the customer can buy the product cheaper; in this case, it is recommended that the customer does not buy cheaper and excessive quantities at the expense of the quality of the product.
- constant hunting for good products: in this case, the customer constantly monitors the appearance of the product and its price.
- obtaining an individual offer: in this case, the customer can receive a separate price offer for the given product.

Critical consumption means that when buying, we critically review the quality of the product and whether it is worth the price.

Sustainability presupposes environmental awareness.

Sustainable development is achieved by taking into account the principles of environmental protection (environmentalism). This means the coordination of economic + environmental + social sustainability.

Saving electricity, heat, water and fuel improves the quality of life in our environment.

It is important to learn about the ecological conditions of the product's production and to buy healthy quality products.

Even before purchasing, the "green" consumer inquires about how the product was made and how environmentally friendly its production was. Products that are marked with a green mark represent some guarantee for environmentally conscious shopping. The best-known green (environmental) mark on products is "EU - Jour Europe". The list of the "Catalog of green products with environmental EU label" is used to guide the customer.

Having an environmentally friendly household is the first step towards the active protection of environment. The home is where we live and work every day, and it's the easiest place to start thinking eco-friendly. The environment is a much-debated topic these days, especially in relation to the need for sustainable development. Global warming, the greenhouse effect, deforestation of rainforests and general human-induced damage and disruption are leading to the gradual destruction, or even total destruction, of the environment. To eliminate humanity's negative impact on the environment, it is important that we all start thinking and acting in an environmentally

friendly way and incorporate this into our everyday practices. Only in this way can we ensure the sustainable development of society, giving future generations the opportunity to live in safety and harmony with nature.

Thoughtful shopping

In order to achieve a waste-free household, we have several opportunities to reduce the amount of waste. We can be the most successful if we apply these together in our everyday life.

Reduce: The key to zero waste is to prevent and reduce the production of waste itself (Reduce). In the framework of eco-aware product design (eco-design), responsible manufacturers take into account the environmental impacts at different stages of a product's life cycle, so that the given product ultimately has the lowest possible environmental footprint. When buying, it is worth looking at the product to assess its actual environmental impact, its so-called environmental footprint. We should only buy what we really need, and not throw out old, but useful items.

Reuse: Reuse of products can be an effective way to extend their life, as more and more products and packaging are designed and manufactured to be reusable again and again. One form of packaging reuse is when it is collected back from the consumer; for example, the return of coloured bottles for a deposit. But of course, it is also considered reuse if the jars are reused at home when making marmalade.

Recycling: Recycling is the reuse of the waste in terms of its material. In such processes, waste is processed as a secondary raw material, sorted by material, and they make a product - of either the same or a completely new function - from it. For example, PET bottles collected separately are

recycled in this way: the plastic is ground up and the resulting little balls are used for the manufacturing of new PET bottles. Recycling increases the lifespan of the plastic and, since using secondary raw materials, reduces the amount of primary raw materials needed, thus it reduces waste production. High-quality PET bottles can be used again to make bottles, foil or flower planters, or polyester fibre for clothing and carpets. Packaging or products in contact with food should only be made from waste with appropriate quality characteristics. The majority of products made from PET are still used in the textile industry.

Shopping

In Europe's less environmentally conscious countries, around half of the waste is packaging material. We buy too many wrapped products and use too many layers of packaging. But there are also products that do not need to be wrapped at all. For example, it is better to buy fruit and vegetables by the piece rather than by the kilogram. In general, plastic packaging is the worst because it is the least reusable, the slowest to degrade in the environment, and costs the most energy and pollution to produce. Therefore, when it comes to packaging, it is important to use as few layers as possible, reuse it as many times as possible and avoid plastic.

Washing up, washing, hygiene

By running a green household, we show our utmost respect for nature. The aim is to minimise the impact on the environment during and after consumption. It is therefore important that, in addition to the amount of water used in washing, dishwashing and cleaning, most of the materials used shall be made from purely natural ingredients and their packaging is generally 100% recyclable. Using eco-friendly

products therefore means fewer toxic chemicals, less plastic and less waste.

It is a good idea to find out about the water use of household appliances that use water (washing machines and dishwashers) before you buy. A water-saving washing machine uses between 35 - 60 litres of water per wash, while an older washing machine can use between 70 - 120 litres. You can also use vinegar instead of softener in the washing machine. Vinegar also descales the washing machine and brightens the colours of the clothes.

The term 'organic drugstore' often comes up in the context of environmental protection. Organic drugstore means organic and natural cosmetics that are also environmentally friendly and gentle to the skin and hair as well. ORGANIC cosmetics are made from ORGANIC quality natural products. The production uses raw materials grown according to the principles of organic farming (without using herbicides, pesticides and artificial fertilisers).

Workplace, society

Environmental protection at the workplace

We also need to protect our environment at work, as this is where we spend most of our time in our everyday life as adults. Sustainability needs to be a joint effort by the whole working community.

We don't need to spend millions to make our workspaces greener. Today, there's a wide range of products from biodegradable coffee cups to office furniture made from re-used materials. Choose the recycled one! They represent at most a minimal increase in expenditure, but in the long term, they can significantly reduce the ecological footprint of our workspace.

Offices are often over-air conditioned in the summer, or even overheated in the winter months. You don't have to cool your office to 18 degrees or heat it to 26 degrees because it's neither healthy nor environmentally friendly!

With the right amount of natural light, workers' moods and thereby also their productivity can be improved - besides this, we can also reduce our electricity bills, as the more light we get into our offices, the fewer lamps we need to turn on. And if already speaking about lamp: use energy-saving (LED) bulbs throughout the office. Turn off the lights when leaving the workplace!

Instead of document holders, let's have an office server or cloud. Instead of invoices, let's have e-invoices! Instead of a paper-based quote, let's have a PDF. The paper-free office is no longer the future. Also, when taking notes, don't take the untouched paper out of the printer, but use the backsides of documents that are no longer needed!

You can do a lot to protect our environment by taking the bus, tram or underground instead of getting into a car. But even installing a bike storage facility at work can do wonders to encourage colleagues to get to work by bicycle or scooter. But at the dawn of modern public transport (such as electric scooters for hire, bicycles that can be picked up at any time via an app), we don't even need to have a fleet of vehicles to make our commute to work more sustainable – although these are only available in the capital for the time being.

A workplace generates a lot of waste every day, but fortunately most of it can be recycled - as long as we collect it in the right place! Buying a selective waste bin is not a big expense. Get the most out of it!

Whatever the size of the building, one thing is certain: it will contain many "energy vampires". These devices use electricity even when they are not in use. Computers

and huge multifunction printers consume power 24/7, so it is worth nipping the phenomenon in the bud, starting with the distribution boards. The cheapest way to do this is to disconnect the power distributors, or unplug these devices, at the end of each day. The more advanced smart power strips and sockets can even be controlled remotely using an app!

Traffic damages the environment to a great extent. Travel alone is responsible for 14% of global emissions.

We can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by:

- Using public transport.
- Flying less often.
- Cycle or walk whenever we can.

In today's world, transport networks are being built in more and more places. We are trying to build connections with as many cities as possible by building new roads, thus simplifying our transportation. In the 21st century, our transport emits a lot of harmful substances.

Furthermore, our technological development in recent years has created the possibility for us to replace fossil fuel-powered means of transport. Little by little, the world is transitioning to electric means of transport. This can be perfectly seen in the spread of electric scooters and bicycles. Electric and other non-fossil-powered vehicles still have their drawbacks, but now there is more and more competition in this field, and these problems will be solved sooner or later. By using these tools, we can build a better future, so that less greenhouse gases enter the atmosphere.

Environmentally conscious transport and travel:

- If possible, choose public transport!
- If possible, choose a bicycle, skateboard, or other vehicle with a low ecological footprint instead of the car!

- If you can, try the electric scooters! The environmental impact of e-scooters is low compared to cars.
- If traveling by car is unavoidable, try not to travel alone! Let our relatives, friends and colleagues join us as passengers, so the fuel consumption per person can be reduced.
- When buying a new car, if possible, choose an electric car! The environmental impact of cars running on fossil fuels is more negative than that of electric cars!
- If you buy a car that runs on fossil fuel, try to choose a vehicle with low fuel consumption!
- Staycation - the combined expression of the English words stay and vacation means vacation at home. The essence of the movement is the discovery of the living environment as a tourist.
- Let's discover the joys of domestic tourism!
- The ecological footprint of our foreign roads can also be significantly reduced. If our destination can be reached by train, try to choose that!
- When buying a plane ticket, choose to pay the carbon dioxide emission fee! This amount is used to reduce the impact of natural damage caused by greenhouse gases emitted during flight!
- Couch surfing - private individuals make their homes available to strangers for free. In this way, we can reduce our ecological footprint, since private apartments with low harmful substance emissions operate as small hotels. Another advantage is significant savings and organic contact with local culture!

Our common interest is the protection of nature and our environment.

On various environmental protection days, we draw attention to the protection of our values:

- geological values
- hydrological values
- botanical values
- animals
- landscape values cultural-historical values
- protected areas.

Environmental protection days are celebrated almost everywhere in the world. These days mostly draw attention to environmental protection and how much we can do to make the environment around us more beautiful. On these days, different social organizations celebrate with different events and programs. It is important to celebrate these days and involve the local community in various activities, from children to adults, from preschoolers to the elderly.

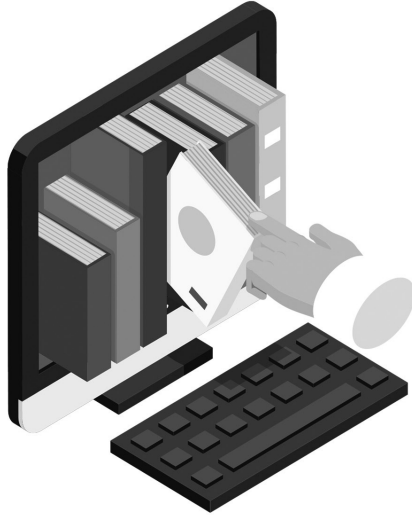
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