



# MENRE

Strengthening the mental resilience  
of youth in dealing with crises  
presented on social media

## Pedagogical Practices and Practical Activities



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## Table of Content

1 Introduction .....	1
1.1 What is Crisis Content on Social Media? .....	1
1.2 Why are young people particularly affected? .....	2
1.3 Importance of media literacy and resilience .....	3
1.4 Trauma-sensitive facilitation and safe space principles .....	3
1.5 How to Use These Pedagogical Practices? .....	4
2 Module 1: Emotional Awareness.....	4
2.1 Practical Activity.....	5
3 Module 2: Fake News Literacy .....	7
3.1 Practical Activity.....	7
4 Module 3: Emotional Well-being and Emotional Regulation .....	9
4.1 Practical Activity.....	9
5 Module 4: Digital Empowerment.....	14
5.1 Practical Activity.....	15
6 Conclusion .....	17
References.....	18



**MENRE**

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# 1 Introduction

This educational toolkit has been drafted for the project MENRE – STRENGTHENING THE MENTAL RESILIENCE OF YOUTH IN DEALING WITH CRISES PRESENTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA, 2024-3-DE04-KA210-YOU-000294460, which has been co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

Project partners from Germany, the Czech Republic, and Hungary explored within this small-scale partnership how young people’s resilience can be strengthened in dealing with crisis-related content on social media. This paper summarises the pedagogical practices and practical activities developed and piloted throughout the project.

The aim of this toolkit is to reduce emotional overload, promote responsible and critical media use, and empower young people to engage with digital environments in a more conscious, confident, and resilient way.

More specifically, the toolkit demonstrates how young people can be supported in coping with crisis-related content on social media. It focuses on strengthening resilience through emotional awareness, fake news literacy, emotional regulation strategies, and active digital empowerment. By presenting practical pedagogical approaches, the toolkit provides educators, youth workers, teachers, and facilitators with adaptable methods for supporting young people in navigating emotionally challenging digital environments.

## 1.1 What is Crisis Content on Social Media?

Crisis content refers to material shared on social media, such as posts, images, videos, articles, or stories, that presents, discusses, or reacts to events involving significant danger, disruption, or distress. This may include natural disasters, wars, pandemics, violence, political unrest, mental health struggles, or personal tragedies.

Crisis-related content is often emotionally intense and can evoke feelings such as fear, grief, anger, or anxiety. It can be particularly impactful because it reflects events that challenge emotional, social, and psychological stability. Due to its emotionally engaging and often disturbing nature, such content spreads rapidly across social media platforms, frequently without proper verification or contextualization. In many cases, graphic images, videos, or emotionally framed personal stories are used to increase emotional engagement and maximise audience attention.

In the context of this educational toolkit, the term psychosocial impact refers to the combined psychological and social effects that crisis-related content on social media can have on young people. Continuous exposure to such content may affect mental health, emotional well-being, behaviour, social relationships, and overall functioning in everyday environments such as school, family, and peer groups.



# MENRE

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## 1.2 Why are young people particularly affected?

Due to the emotional intensity and constant availability of crisis-related content online, young people are particularly vulnerable to its psychosocial effects. Research (e.g. Kaman et al. 2025) highlights that the COVID-19 pandemic placed significant psychological strain on young people. At the same time, children and adolescents have had little opportunity to recover, as they continue to face ongoing crises such as wars, economic uncertainty, and the climate crisis. These developments may contribute to increased anxiety, frustration, hopelessness, sadness, and concerns about the future. Social media further intensifies these effects through constant exposure to crisis-related content.

Young people increasingly rely on social media as a source of information. According to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report (Behre et al. 2023), 35% of 18- to 24-year-olds identify platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, or Facebook as their main source of online news. At the same time, algorithms on these platforms continuously promote emotionally engaging and personalized content, encouraging prolonged scrolling and repeated exposure to crisis-related topics (Nigratschka 2025).

Findings from the MENRE project show that many young people spend several hours per day on social media, including significant exposure to crisis-related content. Wars and armed conflicts, personal crisis stories, migration, climate crisis, and mental health-related issues were among the most frequently viewed and emotionally concerning topics.

According to previous research, young people in the three countries studied in the MENRE project are burdened by broadly similar crises, primarily war, the climate crisis, and livelihood issues. In Germany, young people are most concerned about war, the poor economic situation (e.g., inflation), climate change, housing, and social polarization (Albert et al. 2024; Schnetzer et al. 2024). Young people also tend to view global developments with increased concern. Those most at risk include adolescents without a stable family environment, children and young people living as refugees, and young people who are socially marginalized due to poverty or other factors (Peter and Asbrand 2025). In the Czech Republic, young people are increasingly exposed to crisis-related content on social media, particularly in relation to recent global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, climate change, and growing social and political tensions. In Hungary, a 2022 study found that the consumption of social media content related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war increased young people's feelings of hopelessness and isolation, caused sadness due to the loss of balance and predictability, and called into question their belief in the world, society, and security. Feelings of fear and anxiety, negative thoughts, and depression were common among them (Guld - Balázs 2022:35).

The MENRE surveys also revealed that many young people consume crisis-related content because it frequently appears in their feeds, because they want to stay informed, or because the content affects them emotionally and personally. These findings demonstrate that constant exposure to crisis content on social media can strongly influence young people's



**MENRE**

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of youth in dealing with crises  
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emotional well-being, stress levels, and perception of the world. These developments highlight the importance of strengthening young people's media literacy skills and resilience.

### 1.3 Importance of media literacy and resilience

In the context of pedagogical practice, media literacy is an essential skill for helping young people cope with crisis-related content on social media and strengthen their resilience. Many young people are regularly exposed to emotionally intense information, misinformation, and distressing images through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook. Without the necessary skills to critically assess and emotionally process such content, they may become overwhelmed, anxious, or emotionally exhausted.

For this reason, the project focuses on four key areas that support resilience-building in the context of social media use. The first area, *emotional awareness*, helps young people recognize and reflect on emotions such as fear, anger, sadness, or helplessness that may be triggered by crisis-related content. The second area, *fake news literacy*, aims to strengthen critical thinking skills and support young people in identifying misinformation, manipulative content, and unreliable sources online.

The third area, *emotional well-being and emotional regulation*, focuses on developing healthy coping strategies for dealing with emotional overload, doomscrolling, and constant exposure to distressing information. This includes promoting digital well-being, self-care, and conscious media consumption habits. Finally, *digital empowerment* encourages young people to move from passive consumption to active and responsible participation online. It supports them in using social media in constructive ways, engaging critically with online content, and contributing positively to digital communities.

### 1.4 Trauma-sensitive facilitation and safe space principles

In the context of this project and toolkit, it is essential to create a respectful, supportive and trauma-sensitive learning environment when discussing crisis-related content on social media. To achieve this, facilitators should establish a safe space in which participants feel able to contribute without fear or mistrust, while making clear that sharing personal experiences is always voluntary. Participants should be informed from the outset that they may pass, pause or step out of an activity at any time, without having to explain why. Facilitators should avoid asking participants to disclose personal traumatic experiences. The workshop should focus on crisis-related content on social media and its impact, rather than on processing personal trauma.

The facilitator should clearly explain that the activity is educational, not therapeutic. If strong emotions arise, the facilitator should acknowledge them respectfully, offer a pause and, where relevant, refer the participant to appropriate support, such as a school counsellor, psychologist, youth worker or helpline.

Based on our experience, it is advisable to avoid graphic, shocking or highly realistic images. Where examples are needed, it is safer to use anonymised, fictional or carefully selected non-graphic examples.

## 1.5 How to Use These Pedagogical Practices?

Within the framework of this toolkit, four key areas were developed as practical pedagogical modules focusing on emotional awareness (Module 1), fake news literacy (Module 2), emotional well-being and emotional regulation (Module 3), and digital empowerment (Module 4). The modules can be used individually or combined into a comprehensive workshop programme. They are designed to support educators, youth workers, and facilitators in addressing the psychosocial impact of crisis-related content on social media with young people aged 12 to 25 in a practical, participatory, and reflective way.

Each module includes background information and practical activities that encourage critical reflection, emotional awareness, active participation, and healthier media consumption habits. To support the implementation of the activities, learning objectives and learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) are provided for each activity. The activities can be adapted according to the age group, learning context, and available time.

In the case of implementing the modules as one comprehensive workshop programme, we recommend keeping the presented order of the modules to maintain the thematic structure and learning progression throughout the workshop.

## 2 Module 1: Emotional Awareness

Emotions play a central role in the way social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram function. Emotional content increases user engagement and keeps users connected to platforms for longer periods of time (Nigratschka 2025). As a result, young people are constantly exposed to emotionally intense and often distressing crisis-related content.

Continuous exposure to negative news and crisis-related material can lead to emotional overload, news fatigue, and, in more severe cases, news burnout (Kramp and Weichert 2022). Many young people report feeling overwhelmed, emotionally exhausted, or mentally drained by the constant stream of information on social media. Exposure to violent or disturbing content may further contribute to stress, anxiety, sadness, irritability, sleep problems, and emotional exhaustion.

Young people who already experience psychological stress are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of social media. Unreflective or excessive media consumption may intensify feelings of insecurity, hopelessness, social withdrawal, or low self-esteem (Arand 2025). At the same time, emotional responses to crisis-related content differ depending on personal experiences, emotional skills, social support, and coping strategies.

Research also shows that emotional reactions to crises are not exclusively negative. While crisis-related content may trigger fear, anger, sadness, frustration, or anxiety, it can also create feelings of empathy, solidarity, hope, and motivation to take action (Peter 2023). The SINUS youth study (Calmbach et al. 2024) highlights that many young people transform emotional concern into proactive engagement and a desire to contribute positively instead of remaining passive.

## 2.1 Practical Activity

This part of the workshop helps participants process emotional responses to crisis-related content on social media and creates a safe space for sharing experiences and coping strategies. Through storytelling, reflection, and creative facilitation methods, participants explore emotional regulation techniques, mutual support, and self-care strategies for dealing with emotionally intense online content.

It is important to clearly frame the focus of the workshop from the beginning. The workshop does not address crises in general or participants' personal crises but specifically focuses on crisis-related content encountered on social media and its emotional impact on young people. Establishing this shared understanding helps maintain the thematic focus of the workshop, supports a psychologically safe learning environment, and ensures that participants can engage fully in the activities and achieve the intended learning outcomes.

## Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Define crisis-related content on social media and name at least two examples.</li> <li>- Recognize different forms of crisis content, such as wars, natural disasters, violence, or cyberbullying.</li> <li>- Describe at least two different emotional reactions to crisis-related content.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify and express emotions triggered by crisis-related content.</li> <li>- Reflect on their own experiences with social media content.</li> <li>- Practice respectful listening and sharing within a group discussion.</li> <li>- Name one way in which their own social media use affects their emotions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Show willingness to listen respectfully to different emotional reactions.</li> <li>- Foster openness and willingness to discuss emotional reactions.</li> <li>- Acknowledge that different people respond differently to crisis-related content.</li> <li>- Promote respect for different perspectives and emotional responses.</li> </ul>



## Required Materials and Resources

- Prompt cards or slide with prompts
- Comfortable seating in a circle

## Structure of the Activity

Total duration: approximately 30 min

Part	Activity	Duration (approx.)	Description
1	Introduction	5 min	The facilitator introduces the topic of crisis-related content on social media by presenting a definition and providing examples such as wars, natural disasters, violence, or cyberbullying.
2	Activation of Prior Experiences	5 min	Participants are asked whether they have already encountered such content on social media. They respond by raising their hands. This helps create a shared understanding of the topic and encourages participation.
3	Reflection and Sharing	10 – 15 min	Participants are invited to share examples of crisis-related content they have seen online and reflect on how this content affected them emotionally. They are encouraged to describe emotions such as fear, sadness, anger, helplessness, or stress.  The facilitator ensures a psychologically safe atmosphere and reminds participants that sharing personal experiences is voluntary.
4	Group Discussion	5 min	The facilitator moderates a short discussion about common emotional reactions to crisis-related content and highlights that emotional responses can differ from person to person.
5	Conclusion and Emotional Support	5 min	The activity concludes with a brief reflection on the importance of emotional awareness and self-care when engaging with distressing content online.



**MENRE**

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## 3 Module 2: Fake News Literacy

Fake news literacy is highly relevant to these pedagogical practices because crisis-related content on social media is often spread quickly without verification and may contain misinformation, manipulation, or emotionally misleading narratives. Young people are frequently exposed to such content through social media, where algorithms prioritize emotionally engaging material and rapid sharing.

In the context of crises, misinformation can intensify fear, insecurity, anger, confusion, or hopelessness. False or manipulated information may shape young people's perceptions of social and political events and negatively affect their emotional well-being.

Strengthening fake news literacy therefore supports resilience-building by helping young people critically assess online information, identify unreliable sources, verify content, and reflect on emotionally manipulative narratives. Developing these skills enables young people to engage with crisis-related content in a more informed, critical, and self-aware way, reducing the risk of emotional distress and misinformation-driven reactions.

### 3.1 Practical Activity

This part of the workshop introduces participants to crisis-related media content and teaches them to identify fake news, disinformation, and emotional manipulation in digital communication. Through an interactive quiz, short presentation, and creative challenge, participants experience the critical analysis of crisis content.

The preparation of the Kahoot quiz requires careful planning. As Module 2 works directly with examples of crisis-related fake news, social media posts and videos, facilitators should avoid using graphic, shocking or highly distressing material. The aim of the module is to help participants recognise manipulation, misinformation, unreliable sources and emotionally charged narratives, not to expose them to content that may be shocking, overwhelming or potentially retraumatizing. Examples used in the Kahoot quiz, presentations and group tasks should therefore be age-appropriate, carefully pre-screened and pedagogically justified. Wherever possible, facilitators should use fictional, anonymised or adapted examples rather than real graphic material. If real social media examples are used, they should be carefully selected, and disturbing images or highly distressing content should be avoided.

The learning objectives of this module are to raise awareness of manipulative and false crisis-related content, to strengthen critical thinking when consuming online information, and to build an understanding of how media systems, ownership structures, algorithms, and artificial intelligence influence the creation and spread of crisis narratives. Learners will develop the ability to recognize emotional manipulation, assess the credibility of sources, and identify AI-generated fake crisis content.



## Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain what fake or misleading crisis-related content is.</li> <li>- Describe two ways emotions can be used to manipulate online audiences.</li> <li>- Recognise that algorithms influence what users see.</li> <li>- Know that media content can be influenced by political, economic, or social interests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify at least three indicators of misleading or manipulated content.</li> <li>- Check the source, date and evidence of an online post before deciding whether it is trustworthy.</li> <li>- Identify emotionally manipulative content and AI-generated fake content such as deepfakes or fake images.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Show greater caution before sharing crisis-related content.</li> <li>- Express willingness to verify content before believing or reposting it.</li> <li>- Strengthen responsible and conscious social media use.</li> </ul>

## Required Materials and Resources

- Laptop + projector + internet
- Example posts/videos/presentations
- Flipcharts, markers, post-its

## Structure of the Activity

Total duration: approximately 1 h 20 min

Part	Activity	Duration (approx.)	Description
1	Kahoot Quiz: Crisis Fake News	20 min	Interactive quiz with approx. 10 examples of crisis-related fake news (social media posts, videos).
2	Joint Discussion	30 min	Joint discussion of the solutions to the Kahoot crisis fake news quiz using a PowerPoint presentation containing the solutions with detailed explanations. Joint discussion of recurring signs of fake and real crisis content on social media. A brief presentation on



			the media system and the specific features of the algorithm.
3	Group Task	30 min	Groups collecting signs of fake and real crisis content (e.g., war, climate, natural disaster) on social media. Present and reflect together.

## 4 Module 3: Emotional Well-being and Emotional Regulation

One of the dangers of crisis content spreading on social media is that young people are exposed to crises more intensely than ever before, without filters, often without context and without proper interpretation. This can have a significant impact on their mental well-being, sense of security, and optimism about the future (Schnitzer et al. 2024; Kixmüller 2024). A growing number of studies point to a link between increasing psychological stress and the growing use of digital media, as problematic and ill-considered use of social media can have a negative impact on young people's mental well-being (WHO 2024).

Continuous exposure to crisis-related content can lead to stress, emotional overload, anxiety, helplessness, or feelings of exhaustion. For this reason, it is important to support young people in developing simple and accessible self-regulation strategies that help them manage emotional reactions and protect their emotional well-being.

This activity introduces participants to basic emotional regulation and grounding techniques that can be used when they feel emotionally overwhelmed by crisis-related content online. Through short practical exercises and peer exchange, participants are encouraged to reflect on their own emotional needs, strengthen self-awareness, and explore healthy coping strategies in a supportive and psychologically safe environment.

### 4.1 Practical Activity

This module introduces participants to practical emotional regulation and grounding techniques that can support them in coping with emotional stress caused by crisis-related content on social media. Through guided exercises, reflection, and peer exchange, participants are encouraged to better understand their emotional reactions and develop healthy self-care strategies for dealing with emotionally intense online content.

The module aims to strengthen emotional awareness and resilience by helping participants recognize and manage emotional stress, reflect on the impact of crisis-related content on their well-being, and practice supportive communication in a psychologically safe



environment. At the same time, participants are introduced to simple and accessible techniques that can help them regulate emotions and respond to distressing online experiences in a healthier and more self-aware way.

This module presents two activities that can be implemented to strengthen emotional well-being and emotional regulation:

## Activity 1

The facilitator introduces three simple emotional regulation techniques that can help participants manage emotional stress and feelings of overwhelm caused by crisis-related content on social media. The techniques are briefly explained and demonstrated together with the group. This activity aims to strengthen emotional awareness, introduce practical self-regulation strategies, and support mutual understanding and the sharing of coping strategies within the group.

## Learning Outcomes of Activity 1

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Understand how crisis-related content on social media can affect emotional well-being.</li><li>- Know basic emotional regulation and grounding techniques.</li><li>- Understand the importance of self-care and emotional boundaries in digital environments.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Apply simple emotional regulation techniques such as breathing exercises, grounding methods, and emotion labelling.</li><li>- Reflect on their own emotional reactions to crisis-related content.</li><li>- Practice respectful peer sharing in a psychologically safe environment.</li><li>- Identify personal self-care strategies for managing emotional stress online.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Show openness to trying at least one self-regulation technique.</li><li>- Express respect for peers' coping strategies and boundaries.</li><li>- Foster a mindful and reflective approach to social media consumption.</li><li>- Acknowledge self-care as a valid response to emotional overload.</li></ul>

## Required Materials and Resources

- Comfortable seating in a circle



## Structure of the Activity 1

Total duration: approximately 30 min

Part	Activity	Duration (approx.)	Description
1	Breathing Reset – Box Breathing (4– 4–4–4)	5 min	Participants practice controlled breathing by inhaling for four seconds, holding for four seconds, exhaling for four seconds, and pausing again for four seconds. This exercise helps calm the nervous system and reduce stress.
2	Physical Grounding – 5–4–3–2–1 Technique	10 min	This grounding exercise helps participants reconnect with the present moment and reduce emotional overwhelm. Participants identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 things they can see</li> <li>- 4 things they can feel</li> <li>- 3 things they can hear</li> <li>- 2 things they can smell</li> <li>- 1 thing they can taste</li> </ul>
3	Emotion Labelling	5 min	Participants practice naming and expressing emotions using simple phrases such as “I feel stressed,” “I feel anxious,” or “I feel overwhelmed.”  This technique supports emotional awareness and emotional processing.
4	Safe Sharing Circle	5 min	Participants are invited to briefly share coping strategies using the prompt: “One thing that helps me when I feel overwhelmed online is...”  The facilitator emphasizes the importance of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mutual support,</li> <li>- respectful listening,</li> <li>- sharing personal coping strategies rather than giving “fixing advice,”</li> <li>- and respecting personal boundaries.</li> </ul> The activity aims to create a psychologically safe



			environment in which participants can exchange experiences and supportive strategies.
5	Reflection	5 min	<p>Participants individually reflect on self-care and emotional well-being in relation to crisis-related content on social media.</p> <p>Reflection Prompt</p> <p>“Name one thing you will do this week to protect your emotional well-being when seeing crisis-related content online.”</p> <p>The facilitator closes the activity by emphasizing that emotional reactions to crisis-related content are normal and that practicing self-care is a sign of strength rather than weakness.</p>

## Activity 2

This activity encourages participants to reflect on how crisis-related content on social media can affect their emotional well-being and everyday media consumption habits. Through collaborative mind mapping, participants identify common stressors connected to crisis-related content and develop practical media hygiene strategies that can help reduce emotional overload and support healthier social media use.

The activity combines reflection, group discussion, and problem-solving in order to strengthen emotional awareness, self-care, and critical media consumption skills. At the same time, it creates space for participants to exchange personal coping strategies and learn from one another’s experiences.

This activity requires careful preparation to ensure that it can be carried out effectively and that learners clearly understand what they are expected to do. To achieve this, facilitators should prepare a clear explanation of what is meant by a “stressor”: a factor related to crisis content on social media that may cause pressure, worry, confusion, emotional overload or fatigue. Facilitators should also prepare a few neutral examples of stressors, such as repeated negative news, misinformation, fear of missing out, constant notifications or difficulty knowing which sources to trust.

In addition, they should prepare a simple model of the mind map structure: the centre reads “Crisis Content on Social Media”; stressors are added around it in one colour; matching coping or media hygiene strategies are added next to each stressor in another colour. It is also useful to prepare a few example pairs of stressors and strategies, such as “constant notifications” → “turn off push notifications” or “misinformation” → “check the source before sharing”.



## Learning Outcomes of Activity 2

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand how crisis-related content on social media can affect emotional well-being and stress levels.</li> <li>- Understand how social media mechanisms such as algorithms, virality, and engagement loops amplify crisis-related content online.</li> <li>- Recognize the importance of media hygiene and self-care in digital environments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify personal stressors related to consuming crisis-related content on social media.</li> <li>- Develop practical self-care strategies and healthy content boundaries.</li> <li>- Apply simple emotional regulation and resilience strategies to reduce emotional overload.</li> <li>- Reflect critically on personal media consumption habits and online behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased awareness of personal emotional needs and digital boundaries.</li> <li>- Greater openness to applying self-care strategies and healthy coping mechanisms.</li> <li>- Increased confidence in managing emotional stress related to online content.</li> <li>- Stronger sense of self-efficacy in making healthier choices in digital environments.</li> </ul>

## Required Materials and Resources

- A3 or A2 paper for group mind maps
- Post-it notes (different colours for stressors and strategies)
- Markers or thick pens for drawing and writing
- Regular pens for notes
- Tape to display mind maps
- Flipchart or whiteboard for the facilitator’s mind map

## Structure of the Activity 2

Total duration: approximately 45 min

Part	Activity	Duration (approx.)	Description
1	Group Formation	5 min	Participants work in groups of 3–5 people. Each group receives paper and markers and creates one shared mind map focused on the topic:



			“Crisis Content on Social Media”
2	Stressors Mind Map – Centre: “Crisis Content on Social Media”	10 min	Groups create a mind map around the topic “Crisis Content on Social Media.” Each participant adds 1–2 stressors connected to crisis-related content, such as repetition of negative news, misinformation, graphic images, emotional overload, update fatigue, fear of missing out (FOMO), or constant notifications.
3	Identifying Media Hygiene Strategies	5 min	For each identified stressor, groups develop matching coping or media hygiene strategies using a different colour. Examples include: checking news only twice a day, blurring sensitive content, stopping scrolling after a certain time, using summary newsletters instead of live feeds, or following verified information sources.
4	Group Presentations	10 min	Each group briefly presents its mind map and shares one or two important stressors and coping strategies with the larger group.
5	Facilitator Summary	5 min	While groups present, the facilitator creates one large collective mind map that combines all identified stressors and strategies. This final overview serves as a shared resource and strategy pool for the entire group.

## 5 Module 4: Digital Empowerment

This module is particularly relevant because crisis-related content on social media can trigger not only fear, anger, sadness, frustration, or anxiety, but also empathy, solidarity, hope, and motivation to take action (Peter 2023). The SINUS youth study (Calmbach et al. 2024) highlights that many young people transform emotional concern into proactive engagement and a desire to contribute positively instead of remaining passive.

Building on this potential, the module encourages participants to move from passive consumption toward active participation and peer empowerment. Through collaborative brainstorming, idea development, and small-scale project design, participants explore how they can use their voices, creativity, and social influence in constructive ways. The activities strengthen agency, self-efficacy, collaboration, and responsibility while highlighting how even small actions can positively influence peer groups, online spaces, and local communities.



By focusing on empowerment and participation, the module contributes to resilience-building by helping young people experience themselves not only as affected by crises, but also as capable of responding, supporting others, and creating positive change.

## 5.1 Practical Activity

This activity supports young people in developing ideas for meaningful and constructive engagement within their peer groups and communities. Through guided brainstorming, collaborative clustering, and a hands-on mini-challenge, participants reflect on how they can positively influence their environment, both online and offline. The session encourages creativity, peer support, active participation, and the development of small but realistic actions that strengthen supportive and resilient communities.

## Learning Outcomes

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Explain why small peer-led actions can make online and offline spaces more supportive.</li><li>- Name at least two ways young people can contribute positively to digital communities.</li><li>- Understand that small actions and initiatives can positively influence peer groups and communities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Design a simple mini-project including aim, target group, one action step and one resource needed.</li><li>- Generate and develop ideas for positive peer and community engagement.</li><li>- Work collaboratively in teams to design a small initiative or micro-project.</li><li>- Apply creative thinking and problem-solving skills in the context of digital empowerment.</li><li>- Present and communicate ideas in a group setting.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Express willingness to take part in positive peer or community action.</li><li>- Show openness to collaborative problem-solving and peer support.</li></ul>

## Required Materials and Resources

- Post-it notes (large quantity)
- Thick markers
- Flipcharts / whiteboards



- Masking tape or sticky wall
- Timer
- Space for movement and group work
- Optional: printed inspirational examples

## Structure of the Activity

Total duration: approximately 55 min

Part	Activity	Duration (approx.)	Description
1	Introduction	5 min	Facilitator introduces the activity.
2	Individual Brainstorming	10 min	Participants individually reflect on ways young people can move from passive consumption of crisis-related content toward active and positive engagement. Each idea is written on a separate post-it note. During this phase, participants work silently without discussion or evaluation in order to encourage creativity and independent thinking.
3	Clustering	10 min	Participants place their post-it notes on the wall and collaboratively group similar ideas into thematic clusters. Afterwards, the group discusses the emerging themes and assigns a title or keyword to each cluster. This process helps participants identify shared interests, common concerns, and possible areas for positive action and engagement.
4	Mini-Challenge: From Idea to Action	25 min	Small groups choose one cluster or idea and develop it into a simple mini-project or action plan. The projects may focus on peer empowerment, awareness-raising, community support, positive social media campaigns, or other constructive initiatives. The facilitator supports the groups throughout the process and records key ideas and project elements on a flipchart.
5	Reflection and Sharing	5 min	Each group briefly presents its mini-project to the others. Participants discuss key takeaways, feasibility, challenges, and possible next steps. The reflection



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Strengthening the mental resilience  
of youth in dealing with crises  
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			focuses on the idea of becoming active contributors and creators rather than passive consumers of online content.
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## 6 Conclusion

Young people today are growing up in a digital environment in which crisis-related content is constantly present and easily accessible through social media platforms. Wars, climate crises, violence, personal tragedies, misinformation, and emotionally intense content are not only shaping how young people perceive the world, but also influencing their emotional well-being, stress levels, and sense of security. As highlighted throughout this paper, continuous exposure to such content can contribute to emotional overload, anxiety, hopelessness, and emotional exhaustion, while at the same time also creating empathy, solidarity, and motivation to take action.

The findings and pedagogical approaches developed within this project demonstrate the importance of supporting young people not only in critically understanding online content, but also in emotionally coping with it in healthy and resilient ways. Strengthening emotional awareness, fake news literacy, emotional regulation skills, and digital empowerment can help young people develop healthier media consumption habits, critically assess information, recognize emotional manipulation, and actively shape supportive online and offline communities.

The practical activities presented in this paper aim to provide educators, youth workers, and facilitators with accessible and adaptable methods for working with young people aged 12 to 25. Each activity was piloted with diverse participants regarding age, academic performance, and sociocultural background in transnational settings, which further strengthened the adaptability and transferability of the presented activities across different educational and youth work contexts. By combining reflection, emotional learning, critical media literacy, peer exchange, and active participation, the modules contribute to resilience-building in a participatory and empowering way.

Ultimately, resilience in the digital age does not mean avoiding difficult emotions or crisis-related content altogether. Instead, it means equipping young people with the skills, awareness, support, and confidence needed to engage with digital environments critically, consciously, and constructively while protecting their emotional well-being and contributing positively to their communities.



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**MENRE**

Strengthening the mental resilience  
of youth in dealing with crises  
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# MENRE

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