

The EMPROVE Approach

Contents

1. The EMPROVE Counsellor.....	2
2. Empowerment	3
3. Online Platform based on the Theory of Gamification.....	4
4. Main tools.....	5

Goal of the following pages:

WE, the EMPROVE team, know that every professional, working with domestic violence (DV) survivors, joins our project with his/her own experience – and we value this and *thank you* for including the EMPROVE Approach in your rich repertoire. By combining both science and practice, we have created an approach, that steps on two main pillars – online learning based on the Theory GAMIFICATION and EMPOWERMENT – in order to increase the long-term motivation of your clients in their journey of self-development towards increased economic and social independence and wellbeing.

With the current outline we want to make sure that you have felt the EMPROVE-drive, *becoming fully aware of all benefits of this innovative approach.*

And because we know that including a new tool/method in one's work requires a good dose of self-motivation, we've also synthesized *the most important recourses* you could rely on in the implementation of the EMPROVE approach.

Remember that the EMPROVE team is at your full disposal at any time! Contact us at hello@olgamineva.com for any questions or ideas! Thank you for becoming part of this innovation in the support of domestic violence (DV) survivors!

1. The EMPROVE Counsellor

Core Principles:

There are a number of key soft skills competences, that we could list in this section like active listening skills, empathy etc. but we know that *if you are holding this Handbook in your hands, you are already a trusted part of an Association or Organisation, a partner of the EMPROVE consortium or other qualified professional, and you possess these foundation elements for successful work with Domestic Violence (DV) Survivors.* What we'll share with you are these TOP 4 principles, that lie in the backbone of the EMPROVE approach and make all other parts of it really WORK. Here they are:

Self-awareness

- Being aware of your own strengths and weaknesses.
- Recognising your emotions and the way they influence your decisions and perception.
- Try to catch your own limiting beliefs about you and about the people you are working with.

CURIOSITY and PLAYFULNESS

- Gamification is a method that brings us back to the way we learn best when we are kids and forget about when we grow older - through PLAY.
- Showing your Client that you value the playful element, expressing genuine interest in the progress in the game they are making or teasing them to reach a higher level is just an example of playfulness that you could use.
- Another special power, that kids possess and grown-ups seem to forget is being curious. Interestingly, it is also rooted in being empathising and listening effectively, all very relevant for the success of our approach.

Belief in the Client's capacity and resources

- Think about the powerful phenomenon called *self-fulfilling prophecy*. If you believe, that your Client will not be able to master a certain task, you'll probably transmit this insecurity in your communication or even worse - maybe you'll not even dare to challenge your Client at all.
- Believe in the hidden potential of the woman you are working with and dare her to show it to you, herself and the world!

Optimism

- Being optimistic and having a bright view for the future is a key competence in the Empowering Leadership approach, that is shown to directly influence the perception for empowerment of the person you are communicating with.

Aims of the EMPROVE approach:

- I. Empower – support your Client become aware of all their strengths and resources
- II. Encourage economic independence
- III. Motivate your Client and encourage further self-motivation
- IV. Support in job search



2. Empowerment

Our understanding of empowerment is recognising the **inner strength and power** of women, supporting them in **identifying and realising their own capacity** and **believing** in their ability every step of the way, **daring to visualise and work towards** a better reality for themselves.

We believe, that Empowerment works with the internal desires of the people and helps them use their internal power towards successful change. It gives the feeling that a person has a control over their life.

Furthermore, there is evidence of the link between Empowerment and

- o *Increased motivation;*
- o *stronger task commitment;*
- o *greater initiative in carrying out role responsibilities;*
- o *greater persistence in the face of obstacles and setbacks;*
- o *more innovation and learning;*
- o *stronger optimism.*

Empowerment in its nature is related to four main components: **meaning**, feeling of **competence**, **self-determination** and **impact**,

1. **Meaning** is seen as the “engine of empowerment” and is linked to the feeling of personal importance.
2. **Competence** on the other hand relates to the confidence in one’s abilities and skills and confidence, that one is able to find the solutions needed.
3. **Self-determination** refers to the degree to which one feels freedom in choosing how to initiate and complete a certain task. A level of autonomy and a feeling of independence and control.
4. **Impact** concerns the belief in one’s ability to influence the task outcomes. The perception of control over what happens in their environment.



(See also Spreitzer, 1995)

Therefore, the EMPROVE approach is strongly aligned towards the empowerment of the DV survivors and seeks to increase their individual perception of meaning, competence, self-determination and impact.

3. Online Platform based on the Theory of Gamification

- Games have the unique ability to **engage people for long periods of time**, develop their potential and **build meaningful relationships between people** and groups of people.
- Games focus on improving **productivity** and **behaviour change**.



Gamification is usually described as the use of game elements and game-design techniques in non-game contexts.

In the case of the current project, gamification and its powerful effects are used in an online platform **to engage the DV survivors in a long-term journey of empowerment**, that combines solving different online or live missions and achievements, in addition to the face-to-face sessions with a counsellor, using also the power of the own self-confidence.

The success of Gamification lies in its main principles, linked to motivational drives, which are common for most people:

- Epic Meaning and the feeling for a bigger, inspirational purpose;
- Development and Accomplishment;
- Empowerment of Creativity;
- Ownership and Possession;
- Social Influence and Relatedness;
- Unpredictability and Curiosity;



Yu-Kai Chou (2015)

The EMPROVE project entangles the power of Gamification into its training process in order to **increase the level of continuous engagement, intrinsic motivation and empowerment of the counselled women**.

The benefits of this innovative approach are as following:

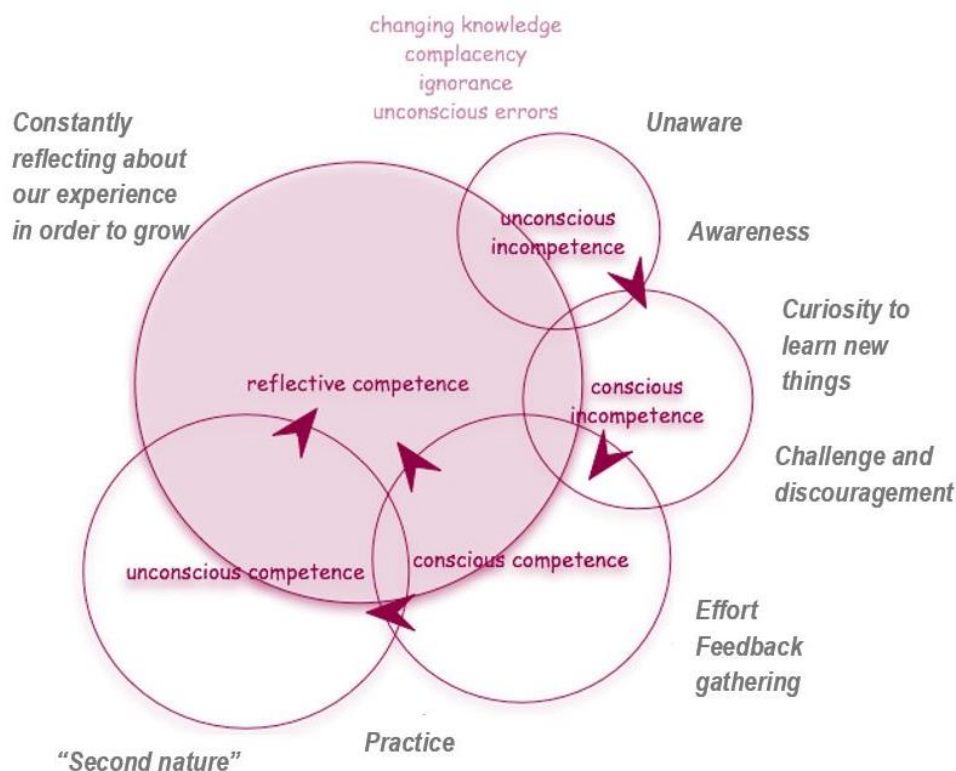
- ✓ Increased long-term engagement;
- ✓ Improved interpersonal relations;
- ✓ Increased collaboration, performance, knowledge and satisfaction;
- ✓ Improved innovation and creativity;
- ✓ Accelerated learning;

4. Main tools

A. INTERNAL

The **EMPROVE** approach is intuitive and easy to implement. The most important resources you need for that are within you.

- Self-reflection
Only by implementing a reflective competence – for you and with your Client – you'll be able to move through the different levels of changing knowledge and competences and escape from unconscious errors.



- Own empowerment
EMPOWERED PEOPLE ARE EMPOWERING! (Spreitzer, 1995)
In order to successfully empower others, you need to be confident in your own competence and impact, aware of the meaning of what you are doing and self-determined to achieve it.

- Minimising own cognitive biases

It is shown that by simply becoming aware about the biases your brain makes while processing information, you are already increasing the probability for “catching” such situations and not allowing such biases to influence your attitude and decisions. This is especially relevant given the fact that by working with a survivor you not only have to be aware about your own cognitive biases, but you also are trying to “catch” theirs and eliminate them.

Give a glimpse at these self-learning cognitive biases flashcards:

<https://medium.com/tradecraft-traction/flashcards-to-learn-168-cognitive-biases-4c37f3418f15>

- PLAY! Here is some science, to help you in the self-motivation for more playfulness in your life:
https://www.ted.com/talks/steve_keil_a_manifesto_for_play_for_bulgaria_and_beyond/transcript

B. EXTERNAL

Our team of psychologists and counsellors from all over Europe has gathered efforts and expertise and collected relevant materials to support you in the implementation of the EMPROVE approach.

- 1) The First Aid Kit – available for free download at www.emproveproject.eu
- 2) The EMPROVE Online Platform based on Theory of Gamification:
 - a) Gives access to online training missions
 - b) The place for the EMPROVE Online Community
- 3) The Training materials on the platform with missions, covering topics like:
 - a) Self-esteem
 - b) Goalsetting
 - c) Communication skills
 - d) Emotional Intelligence
 - e) Personal Mindset
 - f) Labour Market