

## HAPPINESS IN PRACTICE: POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY & COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Erasmus Project N° 2025-1-IT02-KA210-ADU-000350376  
Small-scale Partnerships in Adult Education

# Newsletter 02

January – March 2026

“Well-being is not an abstract concept: it is an embodied, relational and situated practice, built through the body, emotions, culture and territory.”



### THE PROJECT IN NUMBERS - JANUARY / MARCH 2026



## INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP 1 · ITALY · JANUARY 2026

### Modena: “Building the Foundations”

The first international workshop of the project brought together 10 educators and facilitators from the three partner organisations for three intensive days in Modena. Organised by SOLIS Srls with the support of the Municipality of Modena, the meeting established the methodological, relational and conceptual foundations of the transnational training pathway.

#### Laughter Yoga

An experiential session combining conscious breathing (pranayama) with induced laughter, demonstrating how brief practices can lead to real stress reduction, increased vitality and strong group cohesion. A transferable tool for community contexts.

#### Empathy Circles

A guided simulation and practical experience of empathetic listening. Participants experienced the difference between listening to respond and listening to understand. The circular format, with a speaking turn and no judgment, reduced defensiveness and fostered authentic expression.

#### Acetaia Barbieri

Visit to a historic balsamic vinegar producer — requiring 12 to 25 years of patient craftsmanship — as a living metaphor for well-being: not an immediate state, but a competence built gradually through care, time and intergenerational transmission.

*“The process of balsamic vinegar — long cycles, constant care and respect for natural rhythms — was the perfect metaphor for well-being: not an immediate state, but a competence built day by day through everyday practices and meaningful relationships.”*

### Key Outcome: Methodological Alignment

The final session produced a shared synthesis document outlining the agreed working principles, identified practical challenges and recommendations to guide all future activities. Participants were invited to read *The Door* by Magda Szabó in preparation for the next meeting in Valencia.

### DAY 1 — Positive Psychology, Body and Community Perspective



The day began with a body-based introductory activity that, through shared gestures, activated listening, attention and fostered a climate of trust from the outset.

Then, Ana María Solís (SOLIS Srls) presented the project’s methodological approach, based on co-creation, experiential learning and the use of multiple languages to address well-being from a non-therapeutic perspective.



### Positive Psychology Activities — Angela Giacovelli

The activities, facilitated by Angela Giacovelli (SOLIS Srls), combined individual reflection and group work. Emotional needs and their level of satisfaction were explored, as well as relational positions through Transactional Analysis, fostering greater awareness to build more balanced relationships.



### Art, Community Health and Processes of Renewal — Salvador Espert (ESA)

The session, facilitated by Salvador Espert, approached health from a holistic perspective, highlighting the role of art and culture as tools for care and social cohesion.

Well-being was presented as the capacity of individuals and communities to rebuild, reframe their experiences and care for one another.

### Cultural Visit — Acetaia Barbieri

The day concluded with a visit to Acetaia Barbieri, a historic balsamic vinegar producer in Modena.

The experience offered a reflection on the value of time, patience and the transmission of knowledge, presenting well-being as a gradual process built over time.



## DAY 2 — Holistic Well-being, Body Practices and Culture



The day explored well-being from a holistic perspective, combining emotional, bodily and social dimensions through positive psychology activities.

The central moment was **Laughter Yoga**, facilitated by **Ana María Solís**, which fostered well-being and connection through brief and accessible practices.

In the afternoon, **Salvador Espert (ESA)** presented **Receta Cultura**, highlighting the value of culture as a resource for health and community participation.

The day concluded with a **guided tour of Modena** led by **Alessandro Pelligra (SOLIS Srls)**, connecting heritage, territory and citizenship.

## DAY 3 — Autobiographical Narrative, Empathy Circles and Synthesis



The day, coordinated by Domingo Ferrandis (ESA), began with body-based exercises to foster presence and prepare for relational work. Through **autobiographical narrative** and **collaborative writing**, the group transformed individual experiences into shared stories.

**Empathy Circles** promoted deep listening and connection, highlighting the value of being heard without judgment.

The closing session combined **reflection, group work, and collective synthesis**, coordinated by **Celia Rodriguez (PFE)**, highlighting strong methodological alignment among the participants.

Learn more about the workshop: [Modena – January 2026](#)

## PROJECT TOOL

### “The Happiness Calendar”

A daily compass for well-being · September 2025 – August 2026

#### The Calendar and the International Day of Happiness

On 20 March 2026, International Day of Happiness, the project published a blog article on Happiness in the Age of Social Media, proposing three practical steps: Choose (a conscious pause before opening an app), Connect (replacing scrolling with a real conversation), and Cultivate (treating your feed as your own garden). The March calendar invites reflection on what makes us and those around us happy on that same day.

Learn more: [Day of Happiness](#)



The **Happiness in Practice Calendar** brings together 12 months of well-being micro-practices, one per day (September 2025–August 2026), with thematic focuses that connect the project to everyday life.

It is both a training and dissemination tool, designed to be shared across different contexts.

Based on positive psychology, it promotes small daily habits as a pathway to well-being.

**SEPTEMBER  
2025**

*Learning throughout life keeps our inner energy alive.*

**JANUARY  
2026**

*Every new beginning is an opportunity to cultivate well-being.*

**MAY  
2026**

*Happiness flourishes when we share experiences and learning.*

**OCTOBER  
2025**

*Gratitude helps us recognize the value in each day.*

**FEBRUARY  
2026**

*Kindness, even in small gestures, can transform a day.*

**JUNE  
2026**

*Taking time for what makes us feel good is also a way of caring for ourselves.*

**NOVEMBER  
2025**

*Strong communities are built on empathy and collaboration.*

**MARCH  
2026**

*Active listening is a profound way of connecting with others.*

**JULY  
2026**

*Laughing together strengthens bonds and makes the journey easier.*

**DECEMBER  
2025**

*Looking back at the journey reminds us of everything we have learned.*

**APRIL  
2026**

*Curiosity opens paths to new ways of learning and growing.*

**AUGUST  
2026**

*Rest is also part of wellbeing.*

Learn more about the calendar: [Happiness Calendar](#)

## INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP 2 · SPAIN · MARCH 2026

### Valencia: “Literature, Empathy, and Art as Medicine”

23–25 March 2026 · Pilar Faus Library · History Museum · Museum of Fine Arts · Convento de Jerusalén Auxiliary Clinic

The second international workshop expanded the project from professional training to direct work with the community. 36 people from Italy and Spain — 32 participants (aged 35 to 60) and the project team — shared three days focused on three main topics: literature as a meeting space, empathy as a tool for care, and art as universal medicine.

#### Collaborating institutions for the Valencia workshop

##### Valencia Public Library (Pilar Faus)

Main workshop venue · Days 1 and 2 Host space for the reading circle and the Empathy Circle. It provided the institutional framework for the Valencia Municipal Libraries network.  
Carrer de l'Hospital, 13 · Valencia

##### Convento de Jerusalén Auxiliary Clinic

Health Center · RECETA CULTURA Project Community health center where the RECETA CULTURA cultural activities take place. It provided the nurses for the Empathy Circle and hosted the Women's Day exhibition.  
Valencia · Director: Salvador Espert

##### Regional Government of Valencia

Institutional support Regional Ministry of Universal Health and Public Health (Conselleria de Sanitat Universal i Salut Pública). Institutional support for the project within the Valencian context of community health and wellbeing.

##### Valencia Museum of Fine Arts

Day 3 Venue · Thematic visit and closing hosted the light-shadow guided tour, the reflection session with Teatres de la Llum in the Ambassador Vich Courtyard, the project catering, and the certificate ceremony.  
Carrer de Sant Pius V, 9 · Valencia

##### Valencia History Museum

Valencia History Museum Cultural visit · Day 2A tour through the historical layers of Valencia — Roman, Arab, and Christian — focusing on the role of women in the city's history.  
Part of the RECETA CULTURA project.

##### Valencia Municipal Libraries

Library network · Institutional support The public library network of the Valencia City Council. Collaboration with the Pilar Faus Library as a meeting space and for cultural activities for adults.

#### Professionals who participated in the Valencia workshop

- **Salvador Espert**

Director of the Convento de Jerusalén Auxiliary Clinic-ESA · Coordinator of the Empathy Circle

- **Paco Inclán**

Pilar Faus Library -ESA- Co-facilitator of the "La Puerta" Reading Club

- **Marisela Ríos**

Pilar Faus Library -ESA- Red Thread Activity

- **Estrella Rodríguez Roncero**

Valencia Museum of Fine Arts · Light and shadow thematic guide

- **Daniela Bertini**

SOLIS Srls · Adult Educator

- **Angela Giacovelli**

SOLIS Srls · Adult Educator

- **Alessandro Pelligra**

SOLIS Srls · Adult Educator

- **Irene Colomer Agulló**

Nursing student · Convento de Jerusalén Auxiliary Clinic · Empathy Circle

- **Vega Gracia Chiva**

Nursing student · Convento de Jerusalén Auxiliary Clinic · Empathy Circle

- **Mariola Ponce**

Teatres de la Llum · Puerto de Sagunto · Dramatized reflection Day 3

- **Vicent Ortolá**

Teatres de la Llum · Puerto de Sagunto · Dramatized reflection Day 3

- **Ana María Solís**

SOLIS Srls · Facilitator and General Project Coordinator

- **Domingo Ferrandis**

ESA · Lead facilitator for the three days and host of the international workshop

## DAY 1 — Fiction as a meeting point

More than 30 participants over the age of 50, from Italy and Spain, gathered at the Pilar Faus Library for a day of reading, dialogue, and self-discovery. Based on *The Door* by Magda Szabó, they explored themes such as betrayal, dependency, power, and dignity. The novel, centered on the complex relationship between a writer and her housekeeper, opened up a reflection on boundaries, love, and the difficulty of understanding others. The word “betrayal” emerged in both languages as the core of the debate, leading the group to question what it truly means to hurt someone, even when acting out of love.

*“You can destroy someone by loving them.” This phrase, which emerged in more than one group, captures everything the book leaves unresolved — and that life also leaves unresolved.”*



Learn more: [Day 1](#)

## DAY 2 — Empathy as care

Vega Gracia Chiva and Irene Colomer Agulló, nursing students, presented the home care model in Valencia, highlighting empathy as the core of care and contrasting it with the Italian system. The reflection showed how this approach influences the relationship with patients. Through personal testimonies, it became clear that empathy is not only a human value but also a key professional competency in the quality of care.

### The Red Thread — Marisela Ríos

Before the museum visit, Marisela Ríos facilitated the “Red Thread” activity, one of the most symbolic moments of the workshop. The participants crocheted a heart together, creating a tangible representation of the bond and connection built within the group.

### RECETA CULTURA: Culture as medicine

During the visit to the Valencia History Museum, the Spanish participants shared something concrete and powerful: since joining RECETA CULTURA's activities, they are taking less medication. Culture as medicine — it is not a metaphor. It is their lived experience.



Learn more: [Day 2](#)

### DAY 3 — Art, shadow, and community

The day began with a visit to the **Convento de Jerusalén Auxiliary Clinic**, where the group toured an exhibition of artworks created by patients, reflecting art as a form of expression and a personal process.

At the **Museum of Fine Arts**, a guided tour linked the artworks to the themes of the workshop, exploring dualities such as fragility and strength, or joy and pain.

The day concluded with a participatory reflection coordinated by **Domingo Ferrandis along with Teatres de la Llum**, focused on care, dignity, and human connection, where the participants were the protagonists of the experience.

#### **Teatres de la Llum**

*Valencian company based in Puerto de Sagunto, specializing in contemporary shadow theatre, black light theatre, and projections. Founded by Mariola Ponce and Vicent Ortolá, their presence in the workshop added a unique artistic and community dimension to the closing of the gathering.*



*“In the museum courtyard, while enjoying the project catering, Domingo invited everyone — Italians, Spaniards, and guests — to recite and sing together the poem Mediterráneo by Joan Manuel Serrat. A song that speaks of the sea, of connection, and of what unites people. It was a beautiful and moving finale that no one will forget.”*

Learn more: [Day 3](#)

## PROJECT MILESTONE

### Launch of the “International Community of Practice”

March 25, 2026 · Valencia Museum of Fine Arts

On March 25, 2026, the International Community of Practice between Italy and Spain was officially launched, coordinated by SOLIS Srls from Valencia. This community is not a formal structure: it is a shared commitment to continue working together — exchanging experiences and methodologies, developing local Happiness Labs, and collectively building the Happiness Toolkit.

The launch officially confirmed what had already been formed informally during the workshop: a real community, made up of people who have met, shared readings, stories, and a common thread, and who now do not want to stop. The 32 participants closed the workshop not as strangers, but as a community: with songs, laughter, and hugs between people who had met on Monday and were now saying goodbye like old friends.

## NEXT STEPS

- Development of local Happiness Labs in Italy and Spain.
- Creation of the Happiness Toolkit: a practical and transferable resource for educators, healthcare professionals, and community workers.
- Dissemination of the Happiness Calendar in educational and community settings.
- Consolidation of the Italy–Spain International Community of Practice and expansion of the transnational network.

## Project Blog

All articles from the Valencia workshop, the International Day of Happiness features, and project updates are available on our Website.



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