

The purpose of this material is to support the professional preparation for helping conversations in the frame of “Filmteràpiàs Filmklub” (Film-therapy - Filmclub). Its main goal is to help professionals start sensitisation, psycho-educational and self-reflective conversations with adolescents and young adults alongside the topics occurring in this film. One of the aims of this particular session is to examine the connection between the stressors occurring in the life of the target group and their psychological consequences along the 2022 film ‘Larry’. It also aims to make youngsters aware of their own coping mechanisms and recognise new alternative and adaptive strategies that can be integrated in their lives. However this is a story of a vulnerable young man with multiple risk factors, the psychological topics appearing (taking control over fate or channeling tension into constructive activities) not only occur in extreme situations but also connected to the developmental characteristics of adolescence and young adulthood. The overall goal, therefore, is to help students express their own emotions, identify stress reactions and recognise possible coping mechanisms in their own lives. This material offers thematic aspects and questions for conversations. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that the boundaries between these topics might be blurred, therefore it is not necessary to stick to the given structure, but to adapt it to the needs and dynamics of the group.

### 1. Tuning In - First Impressions And Emotional Resonance

The first phase of the processing conversation is tuning in which aims to make the participants aware of the emotional imprints of the cinematic experience and bring these into a shared space for deeper exploration. It is often hard for people to access their own inner world or to find the suitable words to express emotions. This introductory phase helps students build a connection to the film and themselves and start forming a community through shared emotions and experiences. The short, open questions offer an opportunity for an individual connection to the film without having to dive into deeply personal or critical topics right away. Creating emotional safety is crucial for encouraging an open and honest discussion. The awareness of emotional resonance is not only important for self-reflection but also supports the development of emotional intelligence. The participants are able to experience that the expression of their emotions is legitimate and is a valuable part of the communication. They can also see how others experience similar or different feelings which helps them build empathy and the feeling of belonging to a community. Thus this phase is not only tuning in processing the film but also is the first step toward creating a safe space where sharing and accepting personal emotions and experiences are encouraged. This helps the group build the foundation of processing deeper issues related to self-awareness and psychology.

Possible questions:

What would be one word that describes your cinematic experience?  
Were there any scenes that spoke to you or made you think? Why?  
What feelings did you have during or after the film?

### 2. Character Analysis - Identification, Understanding, Empathy

This phase of the discussion aims to make the participants understand the multi-layered structure of the protagonist’s personality, the inner processes driving his behaviour and his

relationship to the outside world. The questions during the dialogue focus on the underlying psychological aspects of his actions. Recognising these is crucial for this age group since they are in the phase of finding their identities. They often struggle with understanding and expressing their own emotions and thoughts. Larry's complex personality that includes anger, insecurity, creativity, vulnerability and a desire for connection, helps students experience the complexity of human behaviour that cannot be described simply in terms of good or bad. Understanding this aspect not only improves empathy but also encourages greater cognitive sophistication. However, Larry's story is set in an extreme life situation, his internal struggles show multiple psychological issues, such as the feeling of taking control, question of autonomy, desire for self expression or the strategies of managing stress or tension. These issues are closely related to the developmental challenges of adolescence and young adulthood. Therefore, character analysis is much more than simply understanding the challenging circumstances. It creates an opportunity for the participants to reflect on their own internal processes, dilemmas and to recognise similarities that make identification easier. The character of Larry thus becomes not only an object of observation but a psychological mirror that helps youngsters explore their own feelings and experiences, therefore more complex psychological processes can be triggered. Through the story of Larry the participants get closer to their own feelings, relational patterns and coping mechanisms.

Possible questions:

How would you describe Larry?

What are his strengths?

What are his points of vulnerabilities?

What do we know about his past, present and how do they influence his behaviour?

How does he see himself?

What is his relationship to the outside world like?

What emotions does he experience?

In what aspect can you identify with him?

### 3. Stress, Trauma, Crisis - Psycho-education And Self-reflection In the Light of the Film

The purpose of this phase is to give a clear definition of stress, trauma, crisis and their possible psychological effects. The film provides a perfect starting point since extreme situations and their imprints can be observed through Larry's character. Considering the film, it is beneficial to reflect on the variety of stressors Larry is exposed to. The family background, social exclusion, poverty, abuse, challenges of the talent show or his struggle for self assertion are situations that represent a significant emotional burden. Analysing Larry's behaviour, such as his aggression or shyness, creates an opportunity for collective thinking about the different types of stress and the potential underlying causes. The goal is to make the participants recognise the different forms of stress appearing in Larry's life and the responses to them. This helps them start thinking about their own stressors and responses, however, it is very important not to direct the discussion towards highly painful

and personal traumas. Processing these requires a safer and more private environment. Therefore, it is suggested to formulate everyday stress situations that everyone can relate to. It is important to make clear that sharing personal experiences in detail is not required. In order to keep the environment safe, the moderator can list some general stress situations that are relevant for the target group, for instance pressure at school, family expectations, peer conflicts. The participants must also be encouraged to share just as many details of their experiences as they feel comfortable with. This part of the conversation is also helpful for adolescents and young adults because they are in a developmental phase where their perception of the world is portrayed as unpredictable and distressing. They often struggle to express stress and to find appropriate strategies to relieve tension and anxiety. This part is not only for defining these key terms but also for the participants to experience and understand that their reactions are not distinctive or “weird” for that matter but completely normal human responses. In this context, psycho - education is not just about knowledge transfer but also a useful tool for normalisation and emotional self - reflection. The awareness of personal patterns for experiencing and managing stress can be the first step towards recognising and reinforcing more targeted coping strategies later on.

Possible questions:

What stressors are presented in Larry's life?

Can any of them lead to a crisis?

Did he experience traumatic stress?

What is his response in these situations?

When was the last time you experienced stress? What was the reason?

How can you recognise the signs of stress?

How does it affect your behaviour?

What emotions do you experience?

Where exactly do you experience stress in your body?

What thoughts do you have in stress situations?

#### 4. Adolescence, Emerging Adulthood - Challenges and Crises

Thematisation of the age-specific identity crises, interpersonal conflicts and insecurities helps students with self - acceptance and make them recognise their own resources. The focal point of this part of the discussion is the age-specific characteristics of the participants. Adolescence and young adulthood are marked by intense internal and external changes, insecurities, transformation of social relationships and the process of identity exploration. The aim is to make youngsters aware of the challenges they face during this particular developmental phase and to normalise them internally. Students should be encouraged to express their dilemmas and concerns. This helps them understand themselves better and reduce the feeling of loneliness and being lost. Larry is exactly in this phase trying to find his place in society while struggling with his past and present circumstances. He is just desiring a deeper bond with others and the sense of purpose about what lies ahead. However, Larry is in an extreme situation, his struggles, conflicts and emotions (eg.: feeling like an outsider,

desire to prove himself, urge for self expression, fear of social exclusion) can be familiar to this age group. The leading questions encourage collective thinking about real life situations presented in the lives of the participants. Through sharing, students can recognise similarities that help with normalisation and reduce the feeling of isolation. This part of the discussion encourages students to express the struggles they are going through in their lives (studies, orientation, roles) and it helps to improve their self awareness. The realisation of internal and external changes facilitates self acceptance and trust. Through this they can build a more realistic picture of themselves, their resources and possibilities.

Possible questions:

What do you think is the biggest challenge for the youth these days?

How do you feel different now compared to your past self?

What expectations do you have to face every day?

What roles do you have to live up to in school, at home or among peers?

How did your relationship to your teachers, friends, parents change?

## 5. Coping - Strategies, Possibilities, Awareness

The focal point of this part of the discussion is coping. It helps students to recognise different responses to stress situations, crises and negative emotions. Giving them coping strategies is crucial for developing resilience which is one of the most important skills in this age group. Larry displays multiple ways to respond to tension. There are examples of destructive behaviour, such as drug abuse, aggression or social and emotional withdrawal but we can also see him looking for social connections, support and creative self expression, setting boundaries and the need of self reflection. The variety of these forms of coping mechanisms creates an opportunity for the participants to decide whether these strategies are destructive or constructive. This makes it easier to separate adaptive and maladaptive strategies later on. It is important to draw attention to both 'good' and 'bad' strategies by emphasising situations where Larry is trying to make a connection and channel his tension into creative forms of self expression such as music. The questions about personal experience facilitate self reflection but it is essential to emphasise that there are no good or bad answers. The goal is not the evaluation but to show that there are strategies that might ease the tension temporarily but in the long run they fail to resolve the problem while others can contribute to the solution, such as discussion, sport, writing, humour and other creative forms of self expression. Students often lack a wide enough range of strategies to deal with occurring problems so the methods offered by the film help them broaden their toolkit.

Possible questions:

What does Larry do when he is experiencing tension?

Which strategies seem to be helpful and which doesn't?

Where do you think he could find support?

What do you do when you are in a difficult situation?

How can difficult emotions be dealt with?

Is there any activity that helps you switch off after a stressful day?  
Which one is destructive and which one is constructive?  
Who do you turn to when you are in trouble?  
Is it easy or hard to ask for help?

#### 6. Closing round

This round helps with integration and closes the process. The discussed topics are emotionally demanding especially when students are personally affected. That is why it is crucial to take enough time for reflection and create an opportunity for them to share their thoughts and experience about the session. They should be given time to articulate the lessons they learned, to connect to their feelings in order to close the session successfully. This closure supports psychological integration and emotional security. The moderator must inform the participants about further possibilities to get help if it is needed (school psychologist, trusted adult, etc).

Possible questions:

What was the most memorable thing you heard today?  
What feelings arouse during the day?  
What is it that you take with you from today's session?