

THE WALKING WAY

AS AN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

FOR MINORS AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN PROBATION PROJECTS



**A pilot project
immersed in the territory**
DESIGNED AND MADE BY SETTING IN CAMMINO ONLUS

In collaboration with:



Dipartimento di Scienze della Formazione

With the financial contribution of:



THE PROJECT INVOLVED THREE ACTIONS



1. Realization of an **educational experience in the Walk Setting** along the via Francigena in Lazio region for **3 minor offenders inserted in Probation Projects by the Rome Juvenile Court**, accompanied by highly trained operators specialized in helping relationships along the Way (4-10 October, 2019, 7 days, from Bolsena to Rome, 140 km).



2. Realization of a **qualitative assessment of the effects of the Walk** on the young participants (by the Department of Educational Sciences of Roma Tre University).



3. Realization of a final **“Study Day”**.

THE METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the Walking Way which inspired our activity has been developed in Italy by dr. Luca Ansini, starting from the PhD thesis in Pedagogy centered on the Walking Way as an helping setting and training setting for operators (L. Ansini, 2008). *“Opening the traditional setting, the helping relationship is placed in a new fluid, full immersion and itinerant setting. The transformative dimensions of the helping relationship integrate with transformative processes of the Walking Way and give rise to a helping feeling that touches cognitive aspects together with bodily ones”*.

THE NETWORK OF INVOLVED INSTITUTIONS

The organization activated collaborations with:

- Ministry of Justice – USSM of Rome (identification of the minors)
- Rome Juvenile Court (competent judicial authority)
- Department of Educational Sciences of Roma Tre University (project evaluation and educational outcomes)
- Lazio Region (funding body)
- Confraternità di San Jacopo di Compostella and ONLUS “Inventare Percorsi” (co-funding bodies)



SETTING FEATURES



Full immersion

Operators and youths are in contact 24 hours on 24.



Prolonged over time



Itinerant

It involves a slow flowing process through intermediate goals, in view of the final goal.



Ritual

The experience traces that of "rites of passage": separation (departure), transformation (concrete walking experience), re-aggregation (back to your own context)

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE WALKING WAY

- **Time and space:** along the Walk, time and space don't represent "background elements" with only a quantitative value, but they are central elements of the helping experience and contribute to the construction of a "walk experience" with specifics qualitative characterizations.

- **Experience of the "itinerant" body:** self-care, contact with nature, perception of own limits and resources, adaptation to unusual stimuli, global sensory stimulation, adhesion and connection with reality through the body.

- **The group:** fluid conformation, "multi-form", stretched (during the walk) and traditional (in circle during the evening process group).

- **Listening to yourself:** contact with your feelings and emotions, also through the experience of silence and connection with your personal walking pace.

- **Listening to the other:** ability to be in relationship with the other, sharing a profound and symbolic experience, which requires tune in to the pace of the other.

WALKING WAY AND "PROBATION PROJECT"

The Walking Way project involves 3 young people with pending criminal proceedings at the Rome Juvenile Court and inserted in **Probation Projects** (art. 28 DPR 448/88 and 27 DLG 272/89).

WHAT IS A PROBATION PROJECT?

A probation project is a benefit granted to minors who have admitted their responsibilities and expressed the desire to start an educational/reparative path. For these young people (if there are the preconditions), the Rome Juvenile Court can suspend the criminal trial and charge the Social Service Office of the Ministry of Justice (USSM of Rome) to elaborate a project which foresees different activities: socially useful activities, volunteering, criminal mediation with the victim, educational and psychological paths, detoxification routes, etc. These paths last from 4/6 months to 3 years based on the type of crime and they can foresee the placement of the young man/women in an education Community. If the young man/women completes positively the project, the Juvenile Court pronounces a sentence of extinction of the crime and the criminal record remains clean. Through the Probation Project, the young people intend to demonstrate that the crime is an isolated episode, a result of a mistake or a difficult period and they intend to redeem themselves.

WALKING WAY AND PROBATION PROJECT

The walking experience we offer fits well into the Probation Projects developed by the USSM. It can represent for the youth the opportunity to take on a new perspective on himself. In the eyes of the young person, of the family and of society, the experience can highlight the transition that the young person is carrying out from one condition (having committed a crime, being involved in a trial...) to a new one (overcoming the criminal problem and closing the criminal trial).

The experiences of "slow flowing", silence, contact with the beauty are typical of the Walking Way and they promote the possibility of a "new contact" with himself in the young person. Thus, a pacification and reconciliation with oneself is necessary for a loyal and relational reconciliation and reparation with the offended party, the society, the "world".



GOALS FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED

- Improve self-perception
("I can be different from what I thought I would become")
- Strengthen self-esteem.
- Experience relationships characterized by empathy, confidence, collaboration and cooperation.
- Develop ways of helping and mutual support.
- Familiarize yourself with your body.
- Increase motivation and persistence towards reaching a goal.
- Put yourself at the centre of your life path.
- Develop concrete practical skills and skills related to autonomy.
- Knowing how to choose what is essential, discarding what constitutes an "unnecessary burden".
- Experiment in a new context, free of pre-established and homologating judgments.
- Experience the satisfaction of earning your well-being "step by step".
- Experience the experience of belonging, in the dimension of a small itinerant community.
- Confirm and / or discover your resources and limitations, in a context of continuous change.
- Become aware of your emotions and learn to manage them.
- Make contact with your inwardness through direct body experience.

PILOT PROJECT MANAGER

DR. LUCA ANSINI - PRESIDENT OF "SETTING IN CAMMINO" ONLUS



THE RICHNESS OF "WALKING EXPERIENCES": THE GUYS' VOICE THE OPERATORS' ACT

Methodological notes

by the Department of Educational Science

Department Director Prof. Massimiliano Fiorucci

Research Manager Prof. Elena Zizioli

How to evaluate the educational activity of the Walk in a Probation Project?

The strong pedagogical value of this experience, which allows those who live it to measure themselves with their physical effort and with the emotional commitment to meet the other to share the Walking Way with, requires to be monitored and evaluated with a new approach. In fact, this approach must give account of educational outcomes in individual and collective terms, investigating the possible conquest of a new self-image, the enhancement of the hidden potentials and resources of both each participant and the group, by cultivating one new look on oneself, one's life, on the world. Also, it must give account of the "emotional traffic" that inevitably accompanies those who complete a Walk and decide, precisely through the succession of steps, to give a new pace to their lives.

Therefore, in this case we have chosen a qualitative methodology, creating small focus groups that would thematise the fears, the perplexities, the anxieties, the desires, of both the young people involved and the operators. Walking together has required two distinct moments of listening and discussion. Guys and operators were in fact met at different times: before the departure and on return.

The aim was not to measure the experience, but through the analysis of the "Walking experiences" to try to systematize it, highlighting its strengths and critical points within a delicate process such as that of Probation Project.

The educational strength of the journey in this case and for this type of measure has made it not a simple experience, but a device capable of simulating the process of empowering young people and enriching the professional action of the operators.

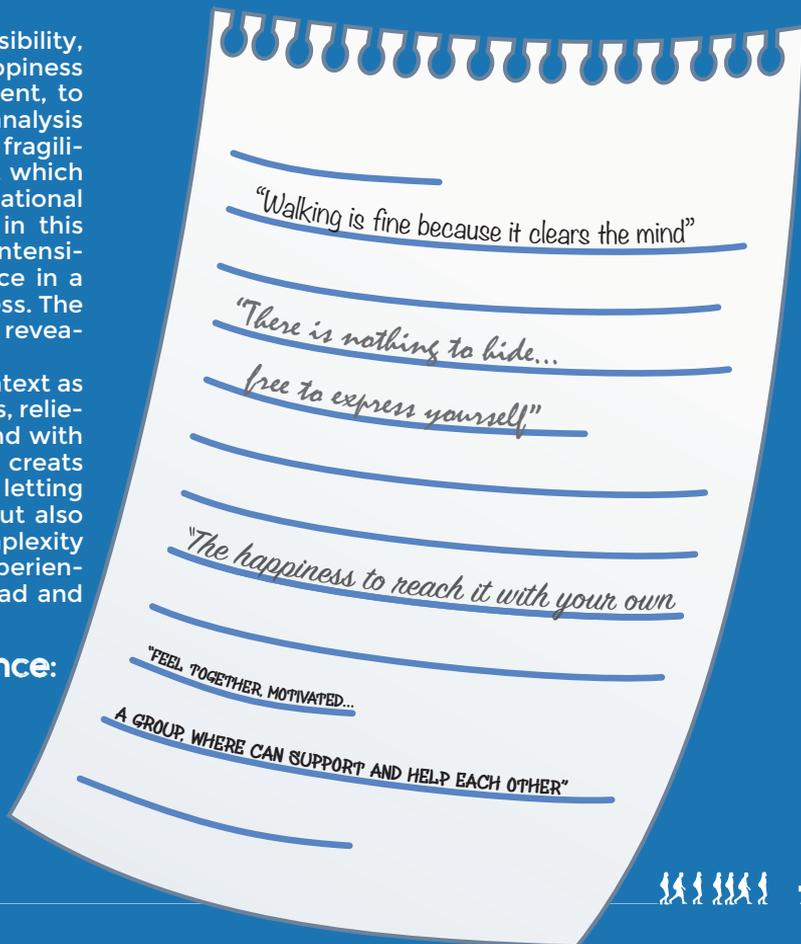
On the way back, in the focus groups with the young people, the feedbacks have been immersive and exciting: the agitation the night before departure was mixed with the surprise in discovering themselves free to experiment during the various stages, and strong in getting to know the new whole. The daily time with its rules and boundaries was sometimes hard to be tackled, but never with renouncing attitudes, aware that life is a struggle, a path not free of falls, but that supporting each other makes all the evidence available, therefore the solidarity is an indispensable value.

In collective narrative, they used terms such as possibility, satisfaction, confidence, even happiness: the happiness of feeling able to face the world and to experiment, to return to life or in community with new looks. The analysis of the emotional traffic also revealed weaknesses, fragility, in some moments the effort of "not giving up", which suggest the importance and the need for an educational care that operators never made the guys miss in this dense experience. Richness was such also for the intensity of that helping relationship that you experience in a Walking Way in all its concreteness and effectiveness. The narration of many small episodes of the daily time revealed it.

Accompanying the young people in a "neutral" context as it is the natural one rich in sensory stimuli, provokes, relieves, and calls to the challenge with themselves and with the group that has decided to share this test. It creates strong bonds, maybe non hoped and unexpected, letting you discover not only the beauty of educating, but also the surprise, wonder and the same time, the complexity of putting yourself in the glove, with your own experiences and your dreams for the future, with your head and your heart.

The words to describe the Walk Experience:

- STRONG
- PHENOMENAL
- UNIQUE
- SENSATIONAL
- SUGGESTIVE
- BIG EMOTION





ABOUT US / OUR MISSION

The "Setting in Cammino" ONLUS is a non-profit organization which **promotes helping and training experiences in "non-traditional contexts"**, along cultural and historical itineraries such as the Via Francigena and Via Appia Antica, with a high symbolic content.

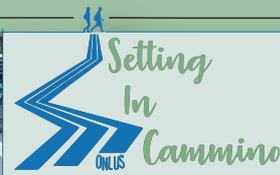
The intervention is aimed at people in conditions of social, cultural and economic fragility with the aim of promoting well-being, health, social and educational inclusion. For these people, the Walk can represent a life chance. This setting is also used in training paths for operators in helping relationship. The experiences are based on precise theoretical references according to Transactional Analysis theory (E. Berne), applied to educational, organizational and counselling fields.

Our projects take place in traditional context too, with the aim of promote social solidarity, learning processes, social and school inclusion, reduce social and cultural disadvantage, promote active citizenship and legality for disadvantage people.

We also offer training paths to the Organizations to prevent stress situations, placing the person at the center of the intervention, empowering cooperation, promoting dialogue with a view to mutual recognition, care of relationships and well-being of the group.

The staff is made up of a multidisciplinary team of professionals with training in different areas: pedagogy, education, psychology, anthropology, philosophy. The association it also makes use of external consultants and collaborators.

The non-profit organization has an agreement with the "Department of Educational Science"- University of Roma Tre.



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