

IN THEIR SHOES

A SPACE FOR ACTIVE EMPATHY



CLASSROOM MANUAL

SPECIAL EDUCATION ANNEX

INTRODUCTION



The contents of the following document are specific for implementing the program “In Their Shoes: A Space for Active Empathy” (ITS) among Special Education students.

This annex will complement the Classroom Manual for the “In Their Shoes” program to facilitate the adaptation for special education classroom teachers, after they have received the necessary training.

The following sections only include the chapters that will be adapted for these students; the rest of the chapters remain unchanged from the original Manual. Therefore, this annex will cover the socio-emotional learning facilitated by ITS, which for special education students is expected to be 8, instead of 10. Additionally, it will include the different content of each session to be conducted in the classrooms. For any other consultation, the Manual will be used as a reference.

The proposed number of sessions for Special Education students is at least six, similar to other students. However, experience tells us that for each session, it may likely require two sessions, depending on the developmental age of the students. Thus, it is expected that “In Their Shoes” will last a minimum of 12 sessions or more. It is recommended that each session lasts between an hour and a half to two hours, just like with the other students.

Therefore, each teacher or educator **will have to adapt the content to their students, according to their abilities and needs.** To do this, they will always maintain the opening and closing dynamics. What will vary in the sessions is the explanation in action and the theatrical exercises. That is, the content addressed in the explanation in action and the number of students participating in the theatrical exercises.

Suppose the session dedicated to anger lasts for two sessions. In this case, we will maintain in both sessions the circle of expression and trust, the warm-up and body connection, the heart connection, and the final friendship circle, just as we always do at the beginning and end of a session. The central part will also be maintained, that is, we will carry out an explanation in action and a theatrical part. However, we will divide the contents of the explanation in action into two parts or repeat the content of the first session in the second session. Regarding the theatrical exercise, we will divide the students between the two sessions. It is likely that special education students will need more time for theatrical representations, and it should be noted that they generally enjoy it a lot, so it is advisable to give them the necessary time. Therefore, it is proposed that part of the students perform in the first session about anger - following this example - and the rest in the second session.

This example used for the anger session is valid for the rest of the emotions. It also applies to the preparation of the final play.

It is important that each teacher has the flexibility to adapt the method to their students, ensuring that learning occurs in a timely manner, without rush.

THE 8 SOCIO-EMOTIONAL LEARNINGS FACILITATED BY ESZ

The sessions of the program “In Their Shoes: A Space of Active Empathy” are designed to gradually incorporate, through experience and theatrical play, socio-emotional learnings that will contribute to improving the classroom atmosphere, as well as the personal well-being of the students.

The learnings we expect among the students must have been previously integrated by the teacher in order to also transmit them through their example and modeling. Therefore, it is expected that the person using this manual has been previously trained by an accredited facilitator in the “In Their Shoes” method.

For special education students, it is expected that, through the sessions, they can integrate **these 8 socio-emotional learnings**. These correspond to all the emotional education learnings expected of the rest of the students, except for those specifically related to conflict resolution. These, in any case, and depending on the developmental maturity of the students, could be addressed in a second edition.

These 8 learnings will be given according to the methodology described in this manual, but also by working on them **outside the sessions**. That is, they can and should be used by teachers and educators in daily life so that they are fully integrated by the students. **It is not recommended to limit these learnings only to the “In Their Shoes” sessions.**

8 Socio-Emotional Learnings

1. Recognize, name, identify, and become aware of one's own EMOTIONS and the emotions of others.
2. Understand that emotions want to express themselves through our actions, speak through our THOUGHTS, and we can choose whether or not to let them dominate us.
3. Understand that painful emotions create EMOTIONAL PAIN, and that emotional pain will tend to create more pain in others or in oneself when it is not recognized or managed.
4. STOP before carrying out a harmful action driven by emotional pain.
5. CALM DOWN first to be able to think and act without harming others or oneself.
6. Place yourself In Their Shoes. Practice Active Empathy.
7. Differentiate between TRUE FORGIVENESS and FALSE FORGIVENESS, opting for the former.
8. Feel, express, and receive GRATITUDE.

THE 6 SESSIONS, ONE BY ONE

The sessions will follow the same structure as for the rest of the students:

1. Circle of expression and trust
2. Warm-up and body connection
3. Conscious breathing and heart connection
4. Explanation in action
5. Theatrical exercise
6. Circle of friendship



While the opening and closing dynamics will be exactly the same for all students, the dynamics of explanation in action and the **theatrical exercise** have been modified for special education students. Therefore, only points 4 and 5 will be developed in this document. For the rest of the dynamics, it is suggested to continue working with the Classroom Manual. However, depending on the physical conditions of the students, teachers or educators may also need to adapt these dynamics.

Additionally, as explained in the previous sections, depending on the maturational level of the students, it may be decided to extend the time of each session, for example, turning one session into two.

It is recommended that sessions do not exceed two hours and that groups do not exceed 12/15 people.

To ensure "In Their Shoes" reaches students in the best way, it is suggested that teachers and educators make the method "their own" in the sense that they can adapt it to their group. Therefore, it is important that teachers and educators are trained by the facilitator and can prepare before bringing it to their classrooms. In this sense, **it is recommended that they work in pairs**. Experience shows that if two teachers work with a group, it works better for them and for the group itself. Also, if several teachers in a center carry out "In Their Shoes," it is suggested that they prepare together, sharing materials and experiences.

Regarding the materials, all the posters of the method will be used – except for the conflict resolution one – as well as the masks and capes. Depending on the physical needs of the students, other masks may be made.

Other complementary materials, such as murals, **can also be created** to facilitate the transversal integration of socio-emotional learning every day.

SESSION 1

It can be divided into as many sessions as the teacher or educator deems necessary, according to the needs of their students.

1. Circle of Expression and Trust

2. Warm-up and Body Connection

Include: the dynamics of the vowels of your name and the names of your classmates in the body.

3. Conscious Breathing and Heart Connection

4. Explanation in Action

To prepare the specific contents of this section, it is recommended to use the previous sections, related to the learnings corresponding to this first session, as well as the section related to emotions and each of their masks.

Learning 1: Recognize, name, identify, and become aware of one's own emotions and the emotions of others.

Learning 2: Understand that emotions want to express themselves through our actions, speak with thoughts, and we can choose whether or not to let them dominate us.

REMEMBER TO INCLUDE TRANSVERSALLY THROUGHOUT ALL SESSIONS

Learning 6: Put Yourself in Their Shoes. Active Empathy.

Learning 7: Differentiate between true forgiveness and false forgiveness, opting for the former.

Learning 8: Express and receive gratitude.

In this session, students are introduced to:

- ✓ What emotions are
- ✓ Basic emotions and their masks: anger, sadness, fear, and joy
- ✓ Emotional pain is composed of emotions that hurt: anger, sadness, and fear
- ✓ When there is no emotional pain, we feel the emotion of joy
- ✓ When emotions control us, they hijack us, and we do what they want.

The explanations should be brief and not very deep, as the idea of this first session is for them to take a first contact with emotions and understand the methodology that stages them through the Theater of Awareness. It is not so much about cognitive understanding, but about experimenting instead.

It is recommended that in this session the four masks (without the cape) and the Emotional Pain poster are used.

5. Theatrical Exercise

We will use this part to help them understand how the Theater of Awareness works and to show how emotions can hijack us through the masks.

It is recommended that the teacher already has four situations in mind to give instructions to the students who will represent them. It is suggested that these situations be based on their realities; common situations in their daily lives (in the classroom or outside of it), as it is important for them to feel identified with them.

The session will start by explaining to the students what emotions are and what emotional pain is (using the poster). Then, when explaining how emotions win the battle over us, the Theater of Awareness and the masks will be used.

First, a group of 2 or 3 students will be asked to represent the situation thought out about anger. Then the same will be done with the situation about sadness, also fear, and joy. Always using the mask.

After each representation, they will be asked to line up and receive **applause**.

Simple questions are recommended after each situation to highlight the lessons explained and intended in this first session. For example:

- Did you like it?
- How did you feel?
- What emotion did the main character feel?
- What did this emotion make the character do? Was it something good?
- Who does this mask represent?
- Has it ever happened to you? Do you want to talk about it?
- Who was winning the battle over the central character? Can it happen?

6. Circle of Friendship



SESSION 2

It can be divided into as many sessions as the teacher or educator deems necessary, according to the needs of their students.

1. Circle of Expression and Trust

2. Warm-up and connection with the body

3. Conscious Breathing and connection with the heart

4. Explanation in action

Explanation in action Sessions 2, 3, and 4 will have the same structure and will provide the same learnings, as each one will serve to deeply address anger, fear, sadness, and their initial management through the tree and traffic light techniques.

Learning 3: Understand that painful emotions create emotional pain, and that emotional pain tends to create more pain in others or in oneself when it is not recognized or managed.

Learning 4: Stop before carrying out a harmful action driven by emotional pain.

Learning 5: Calm down to be able to think and act without harming ourselves or others around us.

REMEMBER TO INCLUDE TRANSVERSALLY THROUGHOUT ALL SESSIONS

Learning 6: Place yourself In Their Shoes. Active Empathy.

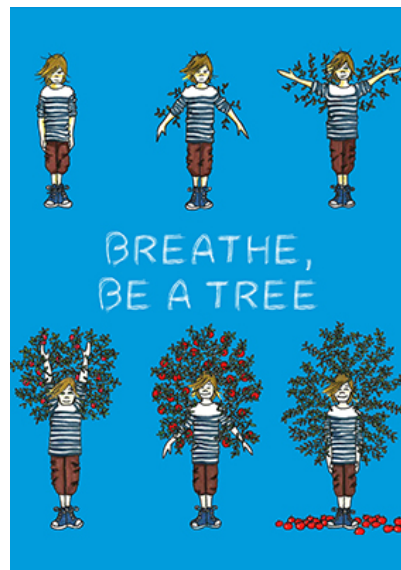
Learning 7: Differentiate between genuine forgiveness and false forgiveness, opting for the former.

Learning 8: Express and receive gratitude.

In this session, the following will be presented:

- ✓ That emotions can be managed and that they do not always have to win the battle against us.
- ✓ Firstly, we need to stop when we realize we are about to hurt ourselves or others, and then we need to calm down.
- ✓ To calm down, we can use the tree and traffic light techniques. We will use posters to explain these two techniques.
- ✓ What happens if an emotion wins the battle and if it doesn't win is very different, and we see this with the plays and their two endings. In this session, we start with anger.

To conduct this session, it is suggested to use the mask of anger, as well as the cape, and teach all students the tree technique, using the poster as a guide.



The explanations will be brief, and then we will quickly move on to rehearsing the plays about anger, based on situations that the teacher will have prepared, representing the students' daily lives.

5. Theatrical Exercise

Students will be divided into groups of 3 to 4. It will be emphasized that it is very important to be with different classmates in each session. Each group will have to perform a Consciousness Theater play, meaning it will include a breakdown of the central character and the character representing the emotion or emotional pain, and it will have two endings. Additionally, a **moderator** character will be introduced, who will be responsible for cutting off the first ending, asking some questions to the audience, and introducing the second ending. (Depending on the students' maturity level, the moderator role can be performed by the teacher or educator).

The play will be created by the students with the help of the teacher or educator, based on everyday situations that allow them to identify with what they will represent.

Therefore, the play they create will have three parts:

1. A play with the first ending, where emotional hijacking occurs and the emotion controls the central character.
2. Moderator who addresses the audience to invite them to reflect
3. Play with an alternative ending: the situation is the same as the first, only the ending is different because the central character manages to calm down – using the tree or traffic light technique – and control their emotions.

In other words, in one of the endings of the play, we will see how **ANGER**¹ is responsible for what happens; it speaks and controls the central character, leading them to harm others or themselves. In the first ending, we will see anger acting until its ultimate consequence, meaning it makes the central character attack others or themselves. It's a first ending where emotional pain – in the form of a battle – takes over emotionally and wins the internal struggle.

The moderator will say **"stop"** when aggression is shown on stage, and the rest of the actors will freeze. Then, the moderator will ask the audience about what they are seeing and to identify the characters' emotions. They will also propose that there is another ending and ask if they want to see it.

After that, the play will resume with the second ending; the actors may rewind or start from the beginning. In the same situation, this time the central character recognizes their ANGER and does not let it take over but manages it instead. This emotional management will be very clear if the central character uses the tree or traffic light technique, and while doing so, the audience will see the emotional pain – masked as anger – diminish (the actor portraying it will gradually crouch down), and the central character can decide how to act without harming anyone. Once the central character has acted differently, the actor portraying the emotional pain of anger will remove their hood and switch to the mask of joy.

For this theatrical exercise, the character representing the emotion will wear the ANGER mask and the emotional pain cloak.

NOTE: The second ending is NOT a continuation that corrects the first ending, but an alternative ending to the first. That is, the first and second endings have the same beginning, the same story, but different outcomes. With the second ending, we model another way to resolve situations. It is also worth remembering that in the second ending, emotional pain will ALWAYS transform into joy when another beneficial resolution for both is achieved.



1 In future sessions, instead of Anger, we will do this with sadness and fear.

The role of the moderator: this can be a student or the teacher/educator.

This role is very significant because it is the one that will invite the audience to reflect during the final performance. Additionally, it is required that the student who represents this role can maintain their stage presence and lead the speaking turns. If the maturity level of the students does not allow any of them to assume this role, then it will be taken on by the teacher or educator.

The moderator can also be responsible for giving the “3, 2, 1... Action” cue (inviting the entire audience to join in at the start of the scene - and for each of the two endings).

Furthermore, the moderator will be the one to say “stop” to pause the play at the moment an aggression occurs to resolve a conflict and invite the audience to reflect and put themselves in the shoes of the protagonists they are watching through questions like:

- Did you like this ending? Why?
- What does this character feel? (referring to each one of them)
- Who is this character? Who do they represent? (referring to emotional pain)
- Who has control over this central character? Why?
- Has this ever happened to you?
- Have you ever seen a situation like this? Can it be avoided?
- Do you think there could be another ending to this play? What could it be like?
- Do you want to see it?

Preparation and Performance

It is recommended that time be dedicated first for the groups to create and rehearse their plays². Afterward, a space for the performance in front of an audience will be opened.

It is important to remember the “3,2,1... Action” dynamic to start the play, and especially the importance of the final bow so that all students can receive applause for their theatrical performance.

After each play, a few minutes can be dedicated to reflecting together with questions such as:

- ✓ Which ending did you like the most?
- ✓ In the second ending, who wins the battle? How do they manage to overcome emotional pain?
- ✓ What emotion does emotional pain transform into in the second ending? Why?

6. Circle of Friendship

² Each educator or teacher is encouraged to decide how many groups will work in each session based on the needs of their students. They may choose to have only one group prepare and present their play in each session. This way, they will conduct as many sessions on anger as there are groups in their classroom.

SESSION 3

It can be divided into as many sessions as the teacher or educator deems necessary, according to the needs of their students.

1. Circle of Expression and Trust

2. Warm-up and Connection with the Body

3. Conscious Breathing and Connection with the Heart

4. Explanation in Action {Demonstration}

This part will be the same as in the previous session, but working on the emotion of FEAR. Therefore, using its mask and cape.

5. Theatrical Exercise

This part will be the same as in the previous session, but working on the emotion of FEAR. Therefore, using its mask and cape, and the mask of JOY at the end of the second finale.

6. Circle of Friendship



SESSION 4

It can be divided into as many sessions as the teacher or educator deems necessary, according to the needs of their students.

1. Circle of Expression and Trust

2. Warm-up and Connection with the Body

3. Conscious Breathing and Connection with the Heart

4. Explanation in Action {Demonstration}

This part will be the same as in the previous session, but working on the emotion of SADNESS. Therefore, using its mask and cape.

5. Theatrical Exercise

This part will be the same as in the previous session, but working on the emotion of SADNESS. Therefore, using its mask and cape, and the mask of JOY at the end of the second finale.

6. Circle of Friendship



SESSION 5

It can be divided into as many sessions as the teacher or educator deems necessary, according to the needs of their students.

1. Circle of Expression and Trust
2. Warm-up and Body Connection
3. Conscious Breathing and Heart Connection
4. Preparation for the Final Consciousness Theater Play



In this session, the process of creating the final Consciousness Theater play begins so that it can be performed in front of an audience composed of students from other classes or families.

The theater play which will be shown will include one of the plays created for Session 2, another from Session 3, and one from Session 4. Thus, the final play will present theater works on managing anger, fear, and sadness; demonstrating that when managed properly, joy always appears.

Additionally, a first scene will be dedicated to presenting each of the four emotions. This scene can be performed as creatively as desired, with the goal of teaching the audience the four basic emotions and which mask represents each one. It is also a scene to help the audience understand that in the following plays, they will see the emotions turned into characters. And of course, it is a scene that will also present emotional pain. It can be done with several children, each wearing the mask of an emotion and talking about it, while another child can act as emotional pain, wearing the cape, and another can be the central character.

The different groups will prepare and rehearse the plays as much as necessary. Therefore, this session can extend over several weeks. It is recommended that before the final performance, a dress rehearsal is conducted at the location where the play will be performed, as if it were the premiere. If our center does not have a theater, we will need to use creativity to create a stage space where it is very clear which area is the stage, which is the audience space, and which is the area for storing clothes, masks, and props (it is recommended that these three spaces are clearly separated). Additionally, we will need to decide where the actors who are not performing will stay, and if they do so among the audience; we will then need to rehearse how they enter and exit the stage in an orderly manner while respecting silence.

It is suggested that during rehearsals, the actors practice their entrance and exit from the stage, as well as the final bow, meaning the position they need to take on stage to **receive the audience's applause** after they have finished performing. **THEY CANNOT LEAVE THE STAGE WITHOUT RECEIVING THE APPLAUSE FROM THE AUDIENCE.**

Makeup, costumes, and props can be used if deemed necessary to help give credibility to the theater plays created and that will be performed.

STRUCTURE OF THE FINAL CONSCIOUSNESS THEATER PLAY

This structure outline for the final Consciousness Theater play is recommended for use.

The final play will combine 4 independent theatrical scenes (or short plays), which come together to form a single play because the presenters (who can be students or the teacher/educator along with a student) appear between each scene to give some explanations about the lessons discussed. The outline is as follows:

1. **Presenters:** Welcome the audience, introduce the play, and explain the "rules" of the theater.
2. **Scene 1:** Presentation of **emotion masks** and emotional pain. The **emotional pain monster poster** can be used.
3. **Presenters:** Introduce the **tree poster** (they can invite the entire audience to participate) and explain that it will be seen in all the scenes from scene two and onwards.
4. **Scene 2:** Play with two endings and a moderator for the emotion of Anger.
5. **Presenters:** Introduce the traffic light poster and explain that it will be seen in all scenes and that it was already seen in the previous one.
6. **Scene 3:** Play with two endings and a moderator for the emotion of Fear.
7. **Presenters:** Reiterate the importance of calming down to manage emotions and win the battle against them.
8. **Scene 4:** Play with two endings and a moderator for the emotion of Sadness.
9. **Presenters:** Thank the audience and bid farewell.
10. **Open Forum** discussion between the actors (all sitting on the stage floor) and the audience (managed by the teacher/educator).

It is considered important to emphasize that ALL students in the class will participate. If there is someone who does not want to (rare but possible), they will be in charge of lights, curtains, or helping behind the scenes...

5. Circle of Friendship

SESSION 6

It can be divided into as many sessions as the teacher or educator deems necessary, according to the needs of their students.

1. **Circle of Expression and Trust**
2. **Warm-up and Body Connection**
3. **Conscious Breathing and Heart Connection**
4. **The Final Performance**



And this day also arrives, the one that marks the end of a learning process and simultaneously the beginning of another. This event is a very rich experience for the students who have prepared for it, but also for the students who will be spectators.

The final performance aims not only to showcase the conscious theater pieces but fundamentally, to demonstrate the learnings to extend them to the entire school and the entire educational community.

In this session, it is advisable for the educator or teacher to take into account:

Very important for you, tutor:

- ✓ **TRUST** the students and their abilities
- ✓ All groups **GREET** in a straight line and receive **APPLAUSE** at the end of their scene – it is advisable to also rehearse the greetings.
- ✓ **STAY CALM AND HELP THEM STAY CALM** with your tone of voice, your gaze, your encouraging and confident words, and your proud smile.
- ✓ **CONGRATULATE** them for having come this far and for how well they are going to perform (before going on stage) and for how well they have done (after performing).
- ✓ **NOTICE** all the good things they do, let yourself be **SURPRISED** by them.
- ✓ **REMEMBER** that the goal of this play is not to do it perfectly, but to integrate the {literacy learnings} and to create a collective, creative work. as a class.
- ✓ **VALUE** the inner battles that each of them is fighting and help them overcome them.

"TIPS" FOR THE PERFORMANCE

Here are some important aspects that might go unnoticed on the day of the performance. Make sure to keep them in mind beforehand:

- ✓ Ensure that all plays in the final seconds include joy or transform emotional pain into joy.
- ✓ Ensure that after each play/scene, the presenters ask the audience which of the two endings they just saw they liked best and why. They can also ask for examples from the audience's own lives that are similar to what they just saw and that they would like to share.
- ✓ Ensure that the presenters use the posters to explain the lessons learned from each play/scene.
- ✓ Ensure that the presenters or actors bring up volunteers from the audience to {create the tree}.
- ✓ Ensure that the audience feels engaged by the presenters and moderators.
- ✓ Ensure good audibility. If the students cannot project their voices much, perhaps a couple of fixed microphones on the floor can be used.
- ✓ Ensure that everyone knows how to enter and exit the stage and that they are supposed to receive the final applause.
- ✓ Ensure that moderators or presenters do the "3, 2, 1... Action" with the audience to start all the scenes and the {second endings/ alternative endings}.



5. Forum with the Audience

At the end of the performance, and after the actors and presenters have received their final applause, it is suggested to add a Reflection Forum with the audience.

The objective of this session, as we have seen, is not only to perform the consciousness-raising plays created by the students but also to teach the audience some basic {emotional literacy} skills. Therefore, the reflection space will help integrate these better. It is recommended that this forum be entirely led by the educator or teacher, with students able to participate in some of the reflections if they wish to do so.

Below, a guideline is included that can help you moderate the forum.

GUIDELINES FOR MODERATING THE OPEN FORUM WITH THE AUDIENCE

At the end of the theater performances presented by the students, they are invited to sit together on stage. The audience can then ask the actors and actresses questions about what they have seen.

The teacher/educator becomes the moderator of the open forum between the students. This means they will open the forum with questions, ensuring that children from the audience participate by answering questions and also asking other questions. Additionally, they make sure that the children who performed also participate by answering the audience's questions.

Some of the topics that can be invited for discussion, reflection, and dialogue among the participants are:

- Did you like the plays? (NEVER COMPARE THE PLAYS: AVOID THE QUESTION "Which play did you like the most?")
- How many emotions did you see?
- How did you feel?
- Are the situations that were shown, situations that can happen? Have you experienced something similar? Would anyone like to share their experience with us?
- What are the emotions that lead us to hurt others?
- Have we ever hurt other people when emotional pain has overwhelmed us? Would anyone like to share their story?
- Can we overcome emotional pain?
- How did the characters in the plays do it? How did they feel afterwards? What emotion always appeared in the second endings? Have you ever felt that way?

Can you differentiate between a "genuine apology" and a "false apology"?

ALL QUESTIONS CAN BE ACCOMPANIED BY INVITATIONS FOR STUDENTS IN THE AUDIENCE TO EXPLAIN THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES OR PROVIDE EXAMPLES.

6. Circle of Friendship

THIS CIRCLE IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT AS IT IS THE CLOSING CIRCLE. IT IS A CIRCLE OF GRATITUDE AND CELEBRATION. DEDICATE THE NECESSARY TIME TO IT.

In this final session, the students integrate the emotional literacy skills we have worked on in previous sessions because they feel responsible for having to teach them to younger students. Additionally, it is a moment of enjoyment for them; generally, they love the experience of performing theater. It is an important moment for the students individually, but it is also an important moment for the whole class group. In the final performance, they all unite into one. This experience is very significant for building group self-esteem and establishing a solid foundation for coexistence in the classroom. It is recommended that you congratulate each student individually, but also show the entire group that you are proud and satisfied with them.

Again, it is not so important if the final result has been very “beautiful” or if they perhaps made mistakes in some parts or forgotten something. No, the most important thing is that they have achieved it, that they have done it together, and all the battles they have won to make it happen, along with all the agreements they have reached to be able to carry it out. It is an experience that has strengthened their bonds with each other, and also with you. There are many reasons to celebrate.

Therefore, **we recommend that you do something special with them as a way of celebration.** It can be on that same day or another day. Maybe sharing some candies with them, or giving them a craft you made with a motivational and beautiful message that they can always remember...

Thank them for their effort and encourage them to continue like this. Remind them that you trust them and that they can increasingly trust themselves because the experience shows them that they are capable of achieving what they set out to do.

The process with the “In Their Shoes” method would not make sense without this final performance, as it is the moment of the outcome of a process and the moment when we allow the experience, plus the emotion it entails, to create the habitat for permanent cognitive learning. Remember, they have been able to carry out this process thanks to your commitment to emotional education and theater.

So, don't forget to **congratulate yourself: you are a key part of their achievement!**

Congratulations!



Teatro de Conciencia



More information:

www.programaensuszapatos.org

www.teatrodeconciencia.org

info@teatrodeconciencia.org