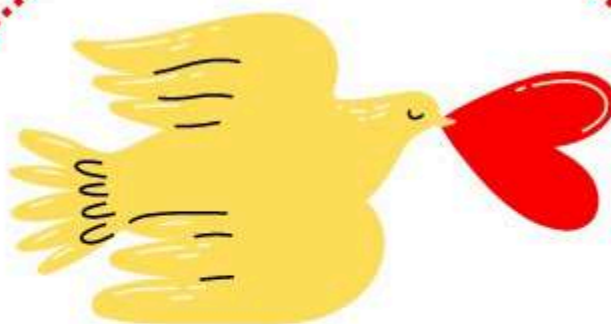




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Authentic Erasmus+ Youth Exchange Relating

29.08. - 06.09.2025

Drugan, Bulgaria

Arrival date: 29.08.2025 by 6 pm

Departure date: 06.09.2025 after 9 am

[Apply](#) before 15.07.2025

Summary

A 7-day youth exchange based on experiential learning to explore and practice Authentic Relating for personal growth, conflict transformation and community building.



Context

As loneliness spreads far and wide, cultivating authentic relationships has become challenging for so many of us. There seem to be so many conditions and obstacles interfering with our basic human need for connection. We want to be known, and yet we don't want to reveal much. We crave contact outside of the virtual world, and yet we rely on likes, swipes and follows instead of direct, face-to-face communication. We try to "turn off" our emotions as a way to protect ourselves from hurt and ridicule, thereby giving up our aliveness and our humanity.

Imagine a world where you are empowered to notice and feel what's going on inside of yourself without having to hide it. A world where you don't need to pretend and are welcome as you are. Such worlds exist, and it is humans like us who create them.

What is Authentic Relating?

Authentic Relating (AR)¹ is a mindfulness practice in which we express our moment-to-moment experience in the company of others. It is about revealing **what is** - feelings, thoughts and observations in the moment - instead of hiding or changing ourselves to appear different, more socially acceptable or else.

Authentic relating is a practice that aims to cultivate better, healthier, and more meaningful relationships. At its heart, authentic relating is about getting in touch with your true nature and manifesting your authentic self in daily life.

AR uses games and experiments to teach the skills necessary to quickly create deep, meaningful human connection². By learning Authentic Relating skills you can learn to relate with yourself and others from a deeper more authentic expression of your truth, as well as support others in revealing more of who they really are, as well.

This will be the 4th edition of this program for a third consecutive year! Check out this [heart-warming video](#) of some of last year's participants in the program sharing about their experience.

More resources: [Introduction to the practice video](#) | [What is and isn't AR?](#) | [Circling Documentary](#)

Program Goals

We invite you to join us in exploring and growing our power to show up authentically in communication through the courageous acts of vulnerable sharing and allowing ourselves to fully experience whatever is. Importantly, in practicing Authentic Relating we commit to stay in contact, and maintain respectful acceptance of different experiences and realities.

In this experiential program, we will practice Authentic Relating in order to:

- Welcome our whole selves into relationships and let our guards down
- Practice taking emotional risks in a safe environment

¹ <https://www.authrev.org/what-is-authentic-relating>

²

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2017/11/the-club-where-you-bare-your-soul-to-strangers/545786/>



- Grow our capacity to be vulnerable
- Communicate more openly and effectively
- Learn and test tools to encourage deeper intimacy
- Have difficult conversations without falling apart
- Discover healing in relationship and community
- Connect to ourselves and others in a deep, honest, and compassionate way
- Attune to our body senses and express whatever arises in the moment: excitement, attraction, anger, fear, etc.
- Experience being fully present and grounded in the moment
- Practice asking for what we want in a direct, non-manipulative way
- Expand our awareness and reclaim our energy, aliveness and sense of purpose
- Apply Authentic Relating in our communities.

Importantly, we are envisioning this experiential program as a **no alcohol and drugs** space (excluding nicotine).

Daily Flow

We will start every day with movement and meditation to gently awaken our bodies and minds. During the morning and afternoon sessions we will practice Authentic Relating through teaching, sharing circles, group and paired exercises with guidelines and structure designed to elicit intimacy. During lunch break we will have time to relax and explore the village of Drugan, as well as engage in experiments outside of our group space. After dinner we will continue to get to know each other and our cultures through activities organized by the participants.

9 - 9.45 am	Body Awareness Session
9.45 - 10.30 am	Breakfast
10.30 - 1 pm	Morning Session
1 - 4.30pm	Lunch Break
4.30 - 7 pm	Afternoon Session
7 - 8 pm	Dinner
8 - 8.30 pm	Community Service
9 - 10.30pm	International and Participant-led evenings

Profile of participants

Participants in the youth exchange will be:

- Young people between 16 and 30 who reside in Bulgaria, Spain, Palestine or Georgia
- With intermediate or advanced English proficiency
- Willing to share information about the project and the Erasmus+ program with peers after the project



- Comfortable with shared accommodation and mindful consumption of water.

In accordance with the inclusion and diversity aims of Foundation “SolidarityWorks” 10 of the 20 available participant spots in the youth exchange will be filled with participants who are low-income, disadvantaged or first-time participants in Erasmus+ mobilities.

Program team



Maggie Nazer (Project coordinator and Facilitator) is a social entrepreneur and a domestic violence prevention activist. Maggie studied Sociology in the United States, as well as History of Women and Gender at Sofia University, and is a Gestalt therapist in training. Maggie cares about creating bridges between individuals and groups from different backgrounds, as well as learning and teaching healthy and authentic communication and relationship skills.



Silvana Paneva (Assistant Facilitator and Bulgarian group Leader) is a clinical psychologist, trained in Compassionate Inquiry (CI), the body-oriented and trauma-healing approach by Gabor Maté. Silvana believes that we are interconnected, and that when we are kind and compassionate to ourselves, we are more capable of compassion towards others, towards animals and plants, and towards the Earth itself. Thus when we take care of ourselves, we are ultimately contributing to a world filled with solidarity and love.

Venue & Accommodation

The project will be hosted in SolidarityWorks’ Center for Learning, Sharing, and Exchange (CLSE), located in the village of Drugan³, 10 kilometers away from the town of Radomir. CLSE consists of a newly renovated rural house transformed with the help of countless volunteers. The house has two bathrooms with access to hot water through water boilers.

The house has 3 bedrooms with shared sleeping arrangements, fit to host 14 people. Sleeping assignments in the hostel house will be done according to the gender of the program participants with females and males sleeping in separate rooms to ensure everyone’s comfort. Bedsheets, pillows, and blankets will be provided.

There will also be an option to sleep in tents in our spacious and birdsong-filled garden. Each camping participant will receive a 2-person blackout tent, equipped with a mattress, a tent lamp, a pillow and an extra warm sleeping bag (as well as additional blankets if needed). If you desire to be placed in a tent, please, let us know in the application form. We encourage participants who value privacy and alone time to select the camping sleep arrangement.

³ The Village of Drugan is located in the South-Western region of Bulgaria. The permanent population is about 280 people. [Google maps link](#)



Please review our [SolidarityWorks Values and Rules](#) document which covers important information about our expectations from you in relation to the use of our Hostel House (we request that you familiarize yourself with the document even if you will be camping in the garden).



Food

We will have breakfast at the house, and home-cooked meals two times a day. The food will be vegetarian, but we'll also be served fish. All vegetables and fruits we will consume will be organic and obtained from local farms.

If you know that you like late-night snacks, or have a sweet/salty tooth, you can buy snacks from the nearby shop during your free time every day. Local shops in the village work daily until 9 pm.

Traveling information

You are expected to arrive in Radomir on 29th of August by 6pm the **latest**. You can follow these [directions on how](#) to reach the town of Radomir from Sofia (the bus ride takes about 45 minutes). We will pick you up from Radomir and bring you to our [CLSE in the village of Drugan](#). On the 6th of September starting at 9 am we will take you back to Radomir from where you can take a bus or train to Sofia. **Please, coordinate your travel and don't buy tickets before discussing your travel options with your group leader.**



Financial conditions

Food, accommodation, international and local travel costs (only during the youth exchange dates) will be covered by Foundation “SolidarityWorks” through the support of the Erasmus+ Program. Foundation “SolidarityWorks” will reimburse **100% of participants’ travel costs** (Using cheapest means of transportation, economy class within the limits set by the Erasmus+ Programme. No taxi.) upon presentation of original tickets, invoices and boarding passes. All documents should have the price, currency, name of the passenger and date of purchase clearly visible on them, otherwise we will be unable to reimburse the costs.

If you want to explore Bulgaria, you can arrive/leave up to two days before/after the official dates of the youth exchange. Please, consult with us prior to buying your tickets, so that we are able to reimburse you afterwards!

Participants will receive reimbursements by bank transfer **after the youth exchange** and upon sending of return travel documents, international bank details, and dissemination activity reports. No exception to this rule will be done. Reimbursement will be done in EUR, regardless of the currency indicated on the ticket and receipt/ invoice. Any tickets purchased in a local currency other than EUR, will be converted and calculated according to the exchange rate of the official European Commission website⁴. SolidarityWorks is not responsible for, and will not cover bank charges administered by receiving banks.

Health insurance

Health insurance for participants from non-EU countries has to be provided by the participants themselves. Participants from EU-countries are encouraged to use their [European health insurance card](#).

⁴ www.ec.europa.eu/budget/infocore/index.cfm?Language=en



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**Foundation “SolidarityWorks”
Drugan, Radomir municipality, Bulgaria**

[Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Youtube](#) | [Website](#)

Our goal is to promote, encourage and support the sustainable development of individuals and communities through solidarity and collective action for social change. At SolidarityWorks we work tirelessly to promote intergenerational and intercultural dialogue, empower marginalized groups, as well as youth, women and the elderly. We use art, storytelling, advocacy and self-development to prevent domestic and intimate partner violence, and are continuously learning how to create healthy and fulfilling interpersonal relationships as well as nurture solidarity between and among diverse groups of people.

Reach us at: hello@solidarityworks.eu



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Contacts



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