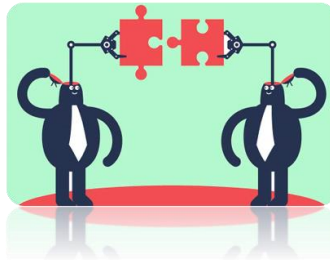


IMPROV(E) YOUR START AT UM!

Using improvisational theater to enhance resilience and connection

IMPROVISATION



Idea behind the project

- Study skills are crucial for your academic journey, but ...
- ... our complex, fast-paced and globalized world has made social skills ever more important (Pereira & Costa, 2017)
- As a faculty, we want to support your growth and help you successfully master your learning experience as well as the challenges in society at large

What is improvisational theatre?

*A form of theatre in which most or all of what is performed is created **spontaneously** and **collaboratively** by the performers as the improvisation unfolds*

Two principles

- Embracing failure
- Yes, and ...

Improv theatre and personal growth

- Mirrors real life challenges (i.e., dealing with uncertainty, collaborating with others)
- Increases interpersonal attentiveness, trust in oneself and others, and spontaneity and flexibility
- Creates a positive, playful, and socially oriented atmosphere
- Allows you to explore, embrace mistakes, learn and grow together

Fun AND evidently effective

- **Experiential learning** has been evidenced to ...
 - promote students' metacognitive abilities, self-directed learning, and their capacity to apply newly learned skills and knowledge to real-life problems (Kolb & Kolb, 2006)
- **Improv theatre** has been shown to ...
 - reduce students' stress & uncertainty tolerance and improve their affective well-being (Felsman et al., 2020; Seppänen et al., 2020)
 - increase students' creativity, communication, & deep learning (Berk & Trieber, 2009; Felsman et al., 2020; Lavik, 2020; Toivanen et al., 2011)
- **Universities** and **businesses** have recognized that ...
 - flexibility, creativity and resilience are important virtues that are possible to train with improv theatre (Giardella, 2015; Madson, 2010; Rimbey, 2017; Vera & Crossan, 2004)

Improv theater and mentoring

- 4 group sessions with your mentor
- Newly developed app with “improv dailies”
- IMPORTANT: We keep things fun and easy – Games are based on improv principles, but typically do not involve playing a full scene (in front of audience)
 - explicitly also for people who are not familiar with improv or not particularly fond of playing theater!

The Improv App – Improv Dailies

- short, easy and fun little games based on principles of improv
- designed to stimulate flexibility, creativity, empathy, perspective taking, and learning
- individual and partner+ improv games
- six different categories
 - be creative, get energy, let go, feel connected, have fun, be positive

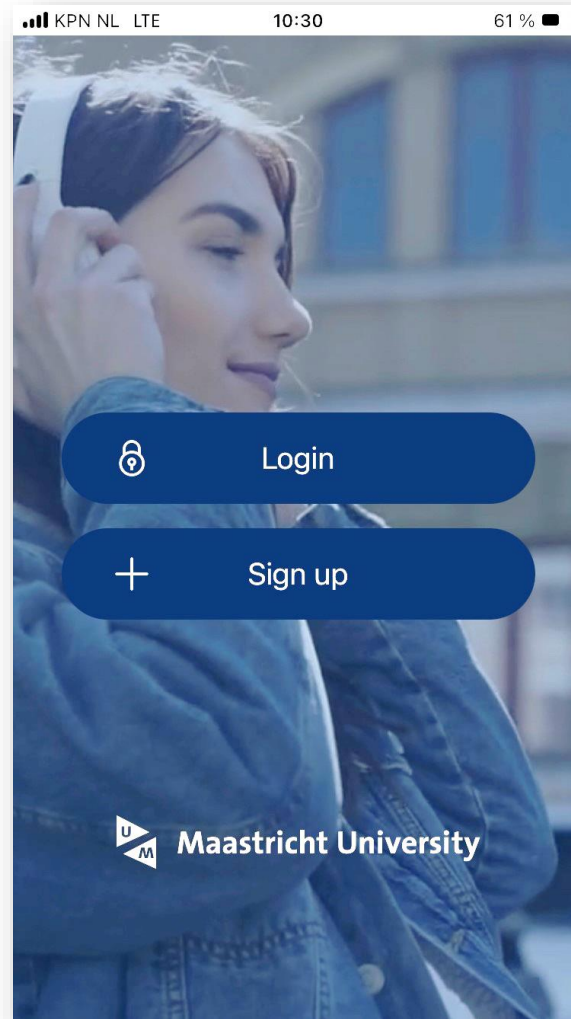
The Improv App - Reflections

- 5 thought provoking reflections that invite you to think about your experiences so far
- allow you to view things from a different perspective and challenge you to do things differently in future
- focus is on
 - two life skills: resilience and ability to connect
 - three life outcomes: well-being, social integration, and academic achievement

The Improv App - Surveys

- 5 short surveys about your personal attitudes and experiences at university
- Track your personal growth!
- Earn 1 SONA credit!
- Help us to improve our mentoring program!
- **IMPORTANT: Fill in the survey within the next 5 days! Deadline is *this Sunday!!!***

The Improv App - Demonstration



Work in progress!

Data privacy

- FPN's ethics committee and data privacy team have approved this project and data collection via the app
- Your use of the app is completely voluntary and you can withdraw from your participation at any time
- Data (survey responses, use of dailies) will be stored confidentially and cannot directly be traced back to you (**SONA ID**)
- Notes that you take within the reflections will not be stored and stay private!

The Improv App - Procedure

- Know your SONA ID!
- Register for the study in SONA @ <https://maastricht-fpn.sona-systems.com>
- Click on URL provided in the study → app stores
- Download the app “**Improv(e) your start at UM**”
- Sign up with your SONA ID (create own password)
- Problems signing up? Late enrollment?



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