

VUC^it Methods

1_Experience instead of knowledge for learning success

Insights from educational sciences show that by taking part in experiential activities (i.e. focused on the learner's experience), instead of just focusing on retention of information, a person is far more likely to engage actively in the learning process ([Grant, 2001](#)). Using an experiential education framework means using specific steps in education process:

- 1) adventures and challenges,
 - 2) observation and reflection,
 - 3) abstract thinking and
 - 4) application to life ([What is Experiential Education?](#))
- and all those are covered in the VUC^it app.

2_Transformative skills to deal with constant change and uncertainty

The world is in a constant state of change. Uncertainty and complexity are on the rise, which raises the question of how to deal with them. According to the OECD learning compass, the answer lies in “transformative skills”, such as agility, flexibility, responsibility, creativity and critical thinking ([OECD](#)). Transferring those skills to young people will create a generation well equipped to cope with challenges put in front of them.

3_Personal support with a digital coach triggers motivation to hang on

A good bond between a coach and a coachee is one of the most important aspects of a coaching process ([O’Riordan & Palmer, 2021](#)). And the fact that the coach is not a human does not mean the support and trust are gone! In fact, the digitalized approach may even offer some benefits. According to research findings in similar fields, using a personal device has the potential to make the process of the disclosure and sharing more comfortable for young people, as it offers additional levels of safety and control ([Bradford & Rickwood, 2015](#), [The digital age: Does digital technology work in youth mental health settings?](#)). At the same time, it offers personal support serving as a motivator and improving engagement, adherence and outcomes of interventions ([McQuilin et al., 2021](#)).

4_Emotions first for intrinsic motivation and readiness for change

Rooted in the knowledge that both positive and negative emotions are an important part of human experience ([Kashdan & Biswas-Diener, 2014](#)), VUC^it does not ignore one in favor of the other. By normalizing existence and fostering acceptance of negative emotions, VUC^it supports positive psychological health ([Ford et al., 2018](#)). At the same time, by focusing on promotion of positive emotional experiences, it facilitates an upward spiral, i.e. broadens the learners’ thought-action repertoires and leads to more positive emotions ([Fredrickson & Joiner, 2018](#)), which are correlated with higher intrinsic motivation for continuing doing the work ([Vandercammen et al., 2014](#)).

5_Nudging and regularity for learning success

Nudging is a way of designing environments to guide certain behaviors by making elements of environments easily noticeable ([Thaler & Sunstein, 2008](#)). The same principle can be applied to digital environments, and one way of doing that is using push notifications ([Özdemir, 2019](#)). VUC^it will help you to keep investing in yourself by only sending you notifications when it's needed, ranging from once per week to, at most, once per day, and that type of non-invasive and non-intrusive nudges has been shown to help the person get the most of the intervention ([Bakker et al., 2016](#)).

6_Positive Psychology as a principle for personal development

As a scientific discipline that has emerged from humanistic traditions focused on developing the full potential of individuals, communities and societies ([Houge Mackenzie et al., 2014](#)), positive psychology and its findings on topics such as strengths, well-being, resilience and happiness ([Snyder et al., 2021](#)) are a good foundation for personal development. It is also the most frequently used approach among coaching psychologists (63%) and coaches (57%) ([Whybrow & Palmer, 2018](#), pp 10).

7_Hybrid training formats are promising

Although still in a state of development, digital training programs are proving to be effective in diverse areas, such as behavioral interventions ([Stockwell et al., 2019](#), [Castro Sweet et al., 2018](#)), distance learning ([Smith & Brame, 2014](#)) and e-therapy ([Digital Tools Are Revolutionizing Mental Health Care in the U.S., 2021](#); [Ribbers & Waringa, 2015](#)). These findings are significant since the coaching process draws from e-learning and e-therapy by using written exercises, behavioral experiments and knowledge transfer ([Ribbers & Waringa, 2015](#)). By using new technologies, coaching is becoming more flexible, more available and more convenient to use for clients ([Chatterjee et al., 2021](#)), giving them autonomy, which is known to raise intrinsic motivation ([Ryan & Deci, 2000](#)). Additionally, face to face support in the form of workshops and personal exchange is important, as it facilitates human connection and offers a way to create a learning environment in which interactive and supportive atmosphere can build on knowledge gained through the app ([EDHEC Online, 2021](#), [Hasenbein & Kraiss, 2021](#)).