

## **SHORT SUMMARY OF VOLUNTEERING PROJECT "FUTURE IN OUR HANDS"**

**by Ganna Mariya Lomakova**

I was a teenager when the first time I heard about volunteering and christian missions and I always felt like it's one of the things that I wanted to try one day. But not as a main reason for living, but completing the main purpose of my life that isn't quite about helping people, but to find myself - professionally and what is my identity.

Helping others, or participating in collaborations such as working in cultural center during this project is just one of many things that I need to experience in order to feel complete or to learn more from life.

I grew up and lived in a few different countries, travelled to many more, met many people through my life, and it is completely natural for me to be around different nationalities or in another country. Of course, it's not the case of being in some new country for volunteering, because I spent already many years in Poland, many years before this project. I think I applied for Suchowola, but was redirected by coordinator Oguzhan to Michalowo. After the interview with him and the director of cultural center in Michalowo we came to agreement that I would fit in there, as well as I thought that "this is it - cultural center, I'm an artistic soul so here I can find the purpose in this project - a right working comfort zone to be useful. And beside the personal difficulties, mainly beside my mental health, I risked to try to do it. Also, there was a little some pressure from my family as I wasn't being very useful there in Ukraine since I came back from EU. So, I headed to Poland, I was almost sure that I will do it right and good, because I know the language almost like natives and because I grew up here.

Unfortunately, I wasn't quite well enough to come to collaborate with others. In the past happened some really bad things in my life, and it was continuous, and this winter I started to feel irritated by the history of my life. Because I still haven't learned how to hide it and just go on with daily tasks, I kept feeling bad and bad, sometimes I hated me. And this affected a lot my punctuality, mostly because I couldn't sleep before certain hour at night and because I was afraid to leave the home, and generally I don't feel I'm worth any positive change. What makes it even harder to change for a better.

Regardless of the situation of my health, I did the best I could while living such mental hardcore in my mind. I was late, almost every day, but still completed most of my tasks. It was hard for me to communicate with others, I was all the time afraid that people might think about me badly. Every time I failed I tried to give some explanations, like defending me, what was just making it worse, but unfortunately my mechanism for accepting fails is to try to excuse it, what I'm not proud of at all.

I think the competences I gained are a bit about what I was doing here, and mostly about how it affected my search for myself. I learned how to be a little faster with making video lessons. Also I enjoyed doing my radio auditions, beside my fear of talking to others publicly, even if it's recorded before it gave me confidence to later announce my and Agata Mytych concerts live. I liked a lot giving lessons of the piano to one boy that really liked it and practiced, and helping with english confidence to one 19-year old girl. I didn't like giving piano and guitar lessons to the kids who weren't interested in it, it was really stressful to try to attract them to listen what I say to them, I felt like a clown trying to gain their attention. So what I learned about giving lessons from this volunteering is that I don't really like teaching but if it evolves a student who really wants to learn I'm ready to help with that without a pain on my chest. Also, I learned that when you're not perfect it's better to be quiet, cause some of people can really be angry with your attitude, no matter what the background of it is. No one will listen to your ideas, or answer your questions when you constantly fail with punctuality. And some will even laugh at you, what I completely understand.

Moreover, the balance for the bad was a good relationship with other volunteers and one local person who I think is a friend to me. Also, I was able to resolve one issue here in Poland, an issue from the past that affected my present and can decide whether I'll have a future or not. The nature in Michalowo is pretty good. It's calm here, definitely worth coming here at least for some relax in the woods or in the lake sometimes. And the winter is precious here. It's cold and fresh air freezing you, very good to provoke some logic thinking. I'm just sad that I haven't used this opportunity all 100 % for the both sides, mine, organization, cultural center and the community. I understood the biggest thing about searching for myself - I don't fit for a role of a teacher or a leader because it will mean I have to fake a grown up person that knows something what is so difficult for someone who haven't learned quite a lot and haven't enjoyed yet the process of growing because there was never one. I feel a big hunger for the studying, for completing tasks as a student, not as a mentor. I'd love myself to be the people who came to learn something in this cultural center. Also, there's only one kind of a leadership that I enjoy and was happy to lead here - when I show my art. I liked the concerts and the exhibition. Every

concert and exhibition for me is like a small light of hope. The more I can show more confidence I grow.

Conclusion: It was a worth trying experience, and I thank a lot to Anna Sophia and Pawel Oziablo to invite me here. Even more thanks for the brave patience that they had while having me here. I'm sorry, deply sorry for not being as normal as others. And I hope that regardless of this experience, it will not mark out our following connection, cause I hope to come back sometimes and give another concert or show some exhibition one day.