CASE STUDIES

June 2025

EMERGE YOUTH

Empowering the Next Generation of Entrepreneurs through Stress Management Education in Youth

CASE STUDIES - ENTREPRENEURSHIP STORIES



Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+ Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

CASE STUDIES

June 2025

CASE STUDIES - ENTREPRENEURSHIP STORIES

Lead Author: VANILLEA INTERNATIONAL
Co-Authors: AKLUB, MIND THE GAME, TREBAG, ATU, AKNOW
Text Review in English: ATU
Translation in French: VANILLEA
Translation in Greek: AKNOW & MIND THE GAME
Translation in Hungarian: TREBAG
Translation in Czech: AKLUB

Copyright
© Copyright the EMERGE Youth Consortium
2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097
All rights reserved.

Stress Management Case Studies and Entrepreneurship Stories © 2025 by EMERGE Youth Consortium is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International

Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+ Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

ELLADA

Cyprus



About me

My name is Ellada, I am 47 years old and originally from Cyprus, where I am still based. I became an entrepreneur at 30, working in theatre and culture. If I had to describe my personality in three words, I would say I am **energetic, impatient, and driven**, and those are the same words my close friends and family would use to describe me.

What stresses me

One situation that has caused me a lot of stress during my entrepreneurial journey is **working on group projects** where people have their own personal agendas and are focused on their own interests rather than the team's goals. This kind of conflict can be very challenging and frustrating.

How do I cope

To cope with this stress, I try to **stay rational and communicate openly** with the team. Talking things through and addressing misunderstandings early on helps me reduce tension and keep the project moving forward. Over time, I have developed better interpersonal skills, which means I get less stressed in these situations now.

My advice

My advice to young people who feel blocked by stress is to understand that stress itself can't be stopped, but **you can channel it in a creative way**. Collaboration is key, working with others and sharing ideas can turn stress into something positive.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

IACOVOS

Cyprus



About me

I'm Iacovos, 32, from Nicosia, Cyprus. I became an entrepreneur at 29 and now work as a self-employed personal trainer. I'd describe myself as **ambitious, a dreamer, and chill**. According to my friends and family, though… grumpy, pessimistic, and a people-hater might be more accurate (haha).

What stresses me

Dealing with public authorities, in any form, stresses me out. The bureaucracy, lack of clarity, poor communication…it often feels like you're expected to know invisible rules in a system that's designed to confuse. It's especially frustrating when working in a field like social enterprise.

How do I cope

To be honest, I haven't yet figured out how to reduce this particular stress, because it's built into the nature of my work. But in general, I try to **maintain balance through travel breaks** for inspiration, a routine I enjoy, my cats, a great partner, and time spent cooking and baking. All of that helps me reset.

My advice

Just start. Try things, meet people, mess up. Explore. Passion and energy go a long way - and even if stress shows up, it doesn't have to block you. Let it fuel your curiosity instead.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

ADAM

Czech Republic



Photo by @schrejbrowski

About me

At 22, while still a university student, I opened **a sourdough bakery** with my boyfriend. I see myself as emotional, brave, and spontaneous — though my friends would probably call me unpredictable, caring, and a little indecisive.

What stresses me

I have a tendency to leave things until **the last minute**, which has often led to stressful and overwhelming situations.

How do I cope

I've been making an effort to create **an action plan** to tackle my responsibilities in advance. By focusing on **one task at a time,** I try to reduce the feeling of overwhelm and avoid unnecessary stress. Interestingly, when faced with last-minute challenges, I often manage to think of people in my social circle who might have **useful knowledge or experience to help me find a solution** — something I tend to overlook when I have more time and try to handle everything by myself.

My advice

Don’t believe that problems are impossible to overcome — most challenges can be resolved with **time, effort, and the right support**. Often, the people around you are willing to help if you simply reach out. Remember, no difficulty is too big to handle when shared and addressed together.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

DANIEL

Czech Republic



About me

I’m 28 years old, and I became an entrepreneur at the age of 20. I’m self-employed across **multiple fields:** I’m a musician, singer, language teacher, and travel guide. You can check out some of my work here:

YouTube Video 1
YouTube Video 2
YouTube Video 3

How do I cope

The only thing that has really helped me manage stress is exposure, going through stressful situations repeatedly until I simply got used to them. Over time, the same types of challenges became less stressful.

What stresses me

One of the most stressful situations I experienced was early in my entrepreneurial journey. I received an official-looking letter asking for a registration fee for an association of entrepreneurs. It turned out to be **a scam,** but since I was new to business, I paid it. That mistake caused a lot of stress and frustration.

My advice

Take care of your **body and mind**, sleep well, eat well, and move your body through sports or exercise. Stressful situations will always come up in business, but you’ll be much more resilient if you feel good physically and mentally.

EMERGE YOUTH
Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

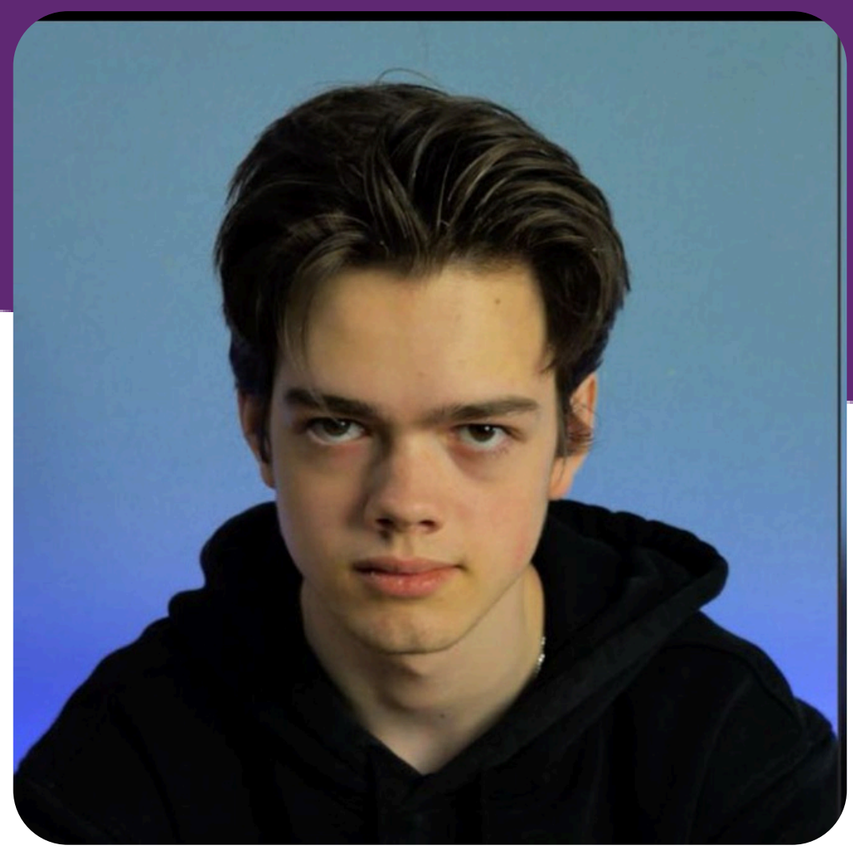
Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

LUKAS

Czech Republic



About me

I started my entrepreneurial journey at the age of 15. If I had to describe myself in three words, I'd say: creative, entrepreneurial, and ADHD. According to my friends and family, I'm a Sigma, an entrepreneur, and a cool guy (as my brother puts it). I run a business in video production and social media advertising. You can find my work on Instagram: @flek.visual

What stresses me

One of the most stressful situations I've faced was when a client didn't pay the full amount for a service.
Another big challenge was when I started **hiring people for my team**. Organising and managing them was very stressful for me.

How do I cope

I deal with stress by stepping back and **handling the situation calmly**, without emotions. Although stress hasn't really boosted my creativity, as it usually demotivates me, I've found that meditation helps a lot. Just sitting down, closing my eyes, focusing on my breath, and letting my mind rest really helps me switch off.

My advice

To young people who feel blocked by stress: **meditate**. It's a simple but powerful way to calm your mind and regain focus.
I also recommend setting clear boundaries between work and rest time, and sticking to that schedule.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

CORENTIN

France



About me

I'm Corentin, 24, living in France. I started my entrepreneurial journey at 23 as an event project manager and virtual assistant. I'd describe myself as **lucid, curious, and a bit of a dreamer**. Those around me often say I'm calm, attentive, and precise.

What stresses me

Managing multiple clients at once can be a real source of stress. Sometimes, everyone needs something at the same time, and **it becomes a challenge to stay organised and present** for each of them without stretching yourself too thin.

How do I cope

What's helped me most is staying methodical. I make sure to prioritise tasks carefully and communicate clearly with clients about realistic timelines. **Being transparent about what's doable, and when**, relieves a lot of the pressure and creates mutual trust.

My advice

Talk it out. Start by having honest conversations with yourself to figure out the best path forward. Then, communicate openly with others - whether to share your ideas, clarify expectations, or simply avoid misunderstandings.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

EMMANUELLE

France



About me

My name is Emmanuelle, I'm 30 years old and currently based in France. I started my entrepreneurial journey at the age of 25, working in transformation, innovation, and impact-driven projects. If I had to describe myself in three words, I'd say: outgoing, generous, and creative. **I love connecting with people, sharing ideas, and building things that have a positive impact.**

What stresses me

One of the situations that has stressed me the most in my entrepreneurial journey is **dealing with clients who always want more**, more revisions, more meetings, more outcomes, and all of that on increasingly tight deadlines. It can start to feel like there's never a break, that you're constantly expected to overdeliver.

How do I cope

To handle that kind of stress, **I've turned to professional support** - I've had coaching at different times and also done some work through psychotherapy. Both helped me take a step back and reconnect with myself. Understanding my limits and learning to say no, or simply to pause, has been essential.

My advice

If I could speak to someone younger who's feeling paralysed by stress in their professional journey, I'd tell them this: **your thoughts aren't facts**. Stressful thoughts can feel very real and urgent, but that doesn't mean they're true.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

JESSIE

France



About me

My name is Jessie, I'm 30 and based in France. I started my entrepreneurial journey at 24 while working as an employee. I now support indie solo game developers by providing a dynamic online ecosystem with coworking spaces, events, training, and community. I'm caring, curious, and passionate. My friends say I'm free-spirited and empathetic, **someone who listens and follows her heart**.

What stresses me

One of the biggest sources of stress for me is delivering work to clients. I constantly wonder: **is this good enough?** Did I meet their expectations? That pressure makes me question myself a lot, and it can really wear me down. What's hard is not just the work itself, but the weight of external expectations.

How do I cope

To deal with that stress, I started **writing down all the positive feedback I received in a notebook**. It helps me remember that I'm doing something right, especially on difficult days. Still, the deeper shift came when I realised I didn't want to work that way anymore. Instead of constantly adapting to others' needs, I now focus on **creating what feels meaningful to me**.

My advice

When I feel blocked by stress, I try to **break it down**: what exactly am I afraid of? What's the real risk? Often, it's not as bad as we imagine. Also, no matter where we are in life, we're all still learning. Even the most "successful" people have doubts.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

JULIEN

France



About me

I’m Julien, a 35-year-old solopreneur based in Reunion Island. I’m the founder of Scheduled.so, a tool to scale content creation on social media directly from Notion. Before this, I co-founded a fast-growing startup that went through Y Combinator. I’m generally **calm and grounded, but also stubborn and determined when it matters**. My friends say I’m curious and patient.

What stresses me

One of the most stressful periods I’ve experienced was during the early days of our startup. Things moved extremely quickly, we raised money, hired a team, joined an accelerator, all in a matter of months. I went from being a salaried employee to a co-founder with **real responsibilities and expectations**.

How do I cope

I’ve learned that **physical activity is an incredible outlet**. Sport helps me release emotional weight and clears my mind like nothing else. The trick is to treat it as a non-negotiable ritual, not something to cancel when a meeting pops up. It has to be something you enjoy too - not a punishment.

My advice

Entrepreneurship is stressful. And that stress usually stems from fear: fear of failure, fear of losing clients, fear of not selling enough… One book that really **helped me shift my perspective** is *Make Time: How to Focus on What Matters Every Day*.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

JUSTINE

France



About me

I'm Justine, 43, from the North of France. I became an entrepreneur at 41 and now support organisations in their transformation through sustainability, carbon assessments, training, and awareness. I'd describe myself as cooperative, rigorous, and passionate. Those close to me would say I'm enthusiastic, professional, and always thinking of others.

What stresses me

What stresses me the most is **the pressure to adopt commercial strategies that don't reflect who I am**. In today's entrepreneurial world, there's a lot of focus on sales tactics, prospecting, and aggressive competition. That clashes with my values and my natural way of working.

How do I cope

I'm lucky to be part of **a cooperative that offers real support**. The *Cercle Soin* provides listening spaces and co-development workshops, which are precious moments to connect, share, and realise I'm not alone. That collective care makes a real difference.

My advice

Ask for help early. Whether it's through coaching, professional support, or simply a safe space to talk, taking care of yourself is not optional. Stress is also linked to our emotions, and **learning to welcome them is part of the process**.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

NAÏM

France



About me

I’m Naïm, 38, originally from Lille. I started my entrepreneurial journey at 32 and now help businesses boost their revenue by training their sales teams. If I had to describe myself in a few words: **spontaneous enthusiast**. Friends and family would probably say I’m helpful, hardworking, and courageous.

What stresses me

One of the most stressful parts of being an entrepreneur, for me, has been managing **the unpredictable nature of income**. The ups and downs of cash flow can be brutal - one month everything looks great, and the next you're scrambling to cover costs. It creates a kind of pressure that doesn’t go away easily.

How do I cope

I just worked hard. I kept showing up, day after day, even when things felt uncertain. There’s something about pushing through and staying committed that helps you stay grounded. I didn’t necessarily have a perfect plan - **I just kept moving forward**, kept learning, and kept adapting. Over time, I realized that action beats overthinking. Doing the work helped me regain a sense of control and confidence.

My advice

You won’t find out what you’re good at until you let yourself try things. Stress is part of the process. Don’t let it freeze you. **Move. Try. Fail.** Try again. You don’t need to have it all figured out to begin. But you do need to begin if you want to figure things out.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

NiNA

France



About me

I'm Nina, 31, originally from Nancy, France. I started my entrepreneurial journey at 26, and work as a business and mindset coach for entrepreneurs. If I had to sum up who I am in three words: **determined, resilient, and always up for a laugh**. My friends would probably add that I'm a good listener with a sharp mind and a touch of dry humor.

What stresses me

One particularly stressful situation was working with a high-profile entrepreneur whose **values clashed deeply with mine**. It created tension, especially with people I genuinely liked on a human level. It was difficult to stay aligned with myself while navigating those relationships.

How do I cope

I chose to **step away quickly and transparently**. I ended the collaboration and expressed my perspective honestly to the people involved. Being upfront, even when it's uncomfortable, helps me stay in integrity - and that's more important to me than any opportunity.

My advice

Take it one step at a time. Slowing down isn't failing - it's breathing, realigning, and building something solid. **Even small, consistent steps can lead you somewhere incredible.** Stress isn't the enemy. Sometimes it's just trying to tell you something.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

YANN

France



About me

My name is Yann, I’m 50, originally from France and now based in Reunion Island. I became an entrepreneur at 46 and have been helping others with business creation, legal status, administration, and more ever since. I’d describe myself as passionate, funny, and **always on the move**. People who know me best say **I live life at full speed** and care deeply about what I do.

What stresses me

One of the things that has caused me the most stress is **people’s judgment** - the way others look at you and comment when you take a different path. In the early days of my entrepreneurial journey, that pressure weighed heavily on me. It can feel like every move you make is being scrutinised, and that can shake your confidence.

How do I cope

Honestly? I gave myself **a serious wake-up call**. At some point, I realized I couldn’t let other people’s opinions define my choices or stop me from moving forward. That internal shift, a bit of tough love from myself, helped me push past the fear and get back on track with clarity and focus.

My advice

Just go for it. Don’t let a few, or even many, failures stop you. Whether it’s your first try or your twentieth, **keep showing up**. You’ll learn, you’ll grow, and you’ll get closer to what you want. Stress is part of the game, but so is resilience.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

ALEXIA

Greece



About me

I am Alexia from Greece, and I am 28 years old.
I am a preschool education teacher through my studies. By profession, I am a nail artist and a dance teacher.
My journey as an independent professional started when I faced exclusion from my professors at university, which urged me to quit my studies while being unemployed at the same time (NEET).
As a character, I am very persistent in my goals and very creative.

What stresses me

The stressful experience I had during my university studies led me to a situation where I felt like I was in the middle of nowhere. Quitting my studies because of a professor's aggressive behaviour and exclusion had a huge impact on my mental health. I felt unable to even pass outside of the department.

How do I cope

I decided to step away and quit my studies. I had nothing to do and no work. I felt unqualified to even search for a job since I hadn't finalised my university studies. At that moment, I mobilised my creative spirit and decided to enroll in a nail creation seminar for my own use. I started feeling motivated and practising, and then, through word of mouth from friends and family, I began to have clients. As a self-employed person, I felt much more independent and strong. Some years later, I decided to go back, face my fears at the university, and finish my studies.

My advice

Creativity was my way to gather my pieces, get out of the stressful situation I was in, and build something that makes me happy. Even if other people put obstacles in your way, take a step back and give yourself space. At a certain point, you will be ready to face your fears and succeed in your initial goal.

EMERGE YOUTH
Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

MARINA

Greece



About me

I am Marina from Greece, and I am 27 years old.
I studied Interior Architecture and completed my degree at 22. After graduation, I was declined by jobs for numerous and often unreasonable reasons. During that time, my family was facing serious financial difficulties and debt, which added extra pressure. I didn’t have the resources to continue studying or the experience to start something on my own, so I ended up being a NEET for nearly two years. During this period, I only participated in volunteer work to gain some experience.

What stresses me

Those years were extremely stressful and emotionally exhausting. The lack of opportunities and the pressure from my family’s situation made me feel trapped and powerless. At one point, I decided to step away from everything, friends, social media, and city life and move to the island where my grandfather lived to find peace and clarity.

How do I cope

Living close to nature helped me reconnect with myself and my creativity. I began collecting natural materials and crafting handmade decorative items. When I started selling them and earning some income, I slowly regained confidence. I then attended several seminars on becoming a digital nomad, combining my creativity with digital skills.

My advice

Taking time away to reflect and rebuild yourself can be the best way forward. Even when things seem impossible, creativity and patience can open new paths. Today, I work as a digital content creator, using my experience to inspire others to believe in second chances and new beginnings.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

ANNA LINDA

Hungary



About me

I’m Anna Linda, 43 years old, originally from Hungary and now based in Portugal. I became an entrepreneur at 35, with extensive experience in behavior analysis and international training programs. I see myself as **energetic, positive, and growth-oriented**, while those close to me would say I’m bold, loving, and spiritual.

What stresses me

One of my biggest challenges has been **separating personal life from work**, especially since becoming a mother. It’s tough to set clear boundaries and switch off from work. On top of that, managing a growing team and handling HR responsibilities adds its own kind of stress.

How do I cope

I try to keep moving forward. I listen to podcasts, practice yoga, play sports, and **lean on my support network** - family, friends, coaches, and psychologists. A spiritual mindset helps me put things in perspective, and I’ve learned to let go and reprioritise when needed.

My advice

You can’t avoid difficulties, so **prepare for them**. Develop a mindset that allows you to stay positive and strategic — that way, when challenges come, you’ll be ready to learn and grow from them.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

DOROTTYA

Hungary



About me

I’m Dorottya, 47, from the Lake Balaton region in Hungary. I became an entrepreneur at 29 and now lead a company focused on project and innovation management. I’m hard-working, open to new things, and **always ready to multitask**. My family and friends would describe me as part of a loving, active, and supportive family, with open communication and shared strength.

What stresses me

Four years into my business, shortly after the birth of my third child, **my marriage ended - right when the business was starting to grow**. It was a deeply stressful moment, and looking back, I wish I had made different choices.

How do I cope

I focused on surviving, step by step. **I prioritised what mattered most**, leaned on my family and friends, and held on to my belief that things would eventually get better.

My advice

Time is your friend. When you're in a stressful or painful period, don’t rush. Give yourself time to reflect and choose wisely. If something doesn’t feel resolved, it’s not the end yet.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

MARIE

Ireland



About me

I'm Marie, aged 49, and I am from Galway, Ireland. I am a Registered Nutritionist (RNutr). At the age of 44, I started a company called Ciall Health. We offer bespoke health, wellbeing, and nutritional advice for employers and their employees. We provide tailored programmes for all types of business ranging from small, medium to large corporate entities. I consider myself to be **self-motivated, true to myself, and strategic.**

What stresses me

I felt stressed about **leaving a full time well paid role and starting my own business in a completely different area.** I felt there was so much risk, so much to take on and learn.

How do I cope

I learned to manage the risk by planning and understanding the tasks I needed to do to set-up a business. Understanding how I could mitigate some of the risks (not all!) and realising that **there is significant personal development and learning in doing something new**. Also that the skills I had developed in my previous role were still relevant and a great support to me.

My advice

Stress is normal and part of every role. **Seek to understand it and what's driving it, then explore what can you do to help minimise it** or its effects. E.g. what's the worst thing that could happen, then what would I do....so you have a plan for the worst, but remember the worst never usually happens!

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

SIOBHAN

Ireland



About me

My name is Siobhan and I am from Galway. I'm 63 years old and I first became an entrepreneur at 40. I am the owner of a business called Foods of Athenry, and we are a family bakery specialising in vegan and gluten-free food. My family would describe me as **creative, hard-working, and pragmatic**.

What stresses me

On an entrepreneurial journey, every day is a learning day and yes there were many things to learn. The key is to remain positive and know that these can be transient. We had a **fire in the bakery in 2011 where the facility burnt to the ground.** It was catastrophic, and all consuming; and the journey back was hard.

How do I cope

With the support of family and friends. **Emotional support is as essential as practical support.** Support from Enterprise Ireland and Bord Bia were also essential for practical entrepreneurial support.

My advice

Every day is a learning day, taking the positive from it (however small and insignificant) turns what could have been a bad day, into a good learning day. **Try flip your mindset.**

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

JANIS

Ireland



About me

My name is Janis, I'm 40, and I have been an entrepreneur since I was 22. I started ECOFUEL™ in 2014 with a second-hand van and a simple idea: firewood could be better. Cleaner, drier, more honest. I'd describe myself as **grounded, curious and intentional.**

What stresses me

Cash flow is the lifeblood of any business and something every entrepreneur must obsess over, yet it can also be one of the biggest sources of stress. In my own journey, there were **moments when cash was tight, and the pressure to meet payroll or pay suppliers felt overwhelming**. It forces you to think fast, stay calm, and get creative, but it also teaches you discipline. New challenges can also be stressful, but for me, the real stress comes not from taking action but from leaving critical tasks unfinished.

How do I cope

I've learned that sales solve many problems, and you don't have a business without sales. What helped me manage stress was understanding my costs, margins, and planning cash flow properly. **Good financial advice is worth the investment**. Quality accounting support can be expensive, but it pays off by giving you clarity and control. Surrounding myself with other entrepreneurs also helped me share challenges and lessons with people who truly understand the journey.

My advice

Stress is part of growth and it means you care. **Don't try to avoid it, just learn to move through it.** Start with what you know, ask questions, and take one clear step forward. Momentum builds confidence. For me, having good sleep hygiene, meditation, and regular physical exercise keeps me grounded, focused, and sharpen my vision for what truly matters ahead.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

RONAN

Ireland



About me

I'm Ronan, I'm 33 years old, and I am from Galway. I am a co-founder of Dough Bros, alongside my brother Eugene. We started our business in 2013 in a pizza truck and have progressed into the No. 1 Pizzeria in Ireland two years running, as well as being ranked as the 15th best pizzeria in the world. We now have two permanent locations in Galway City, as well as our food truck and have also expanded into retail selling our pizza bases. I'd describe myself as **positive, outgoing and driven.**

What stresses me

On our very first night in business, in our food truck, we got into our local league of Ireland stadium, Terryland park, home to Galway United. The entire stadium was full and we were a roaring success. Upon finishing the gig, we hitched our beautiful new food truck to our van and pulled out of the stadium heading for home. Unfortunately we went under a bridge and **our food truck was too big for it and we crashed it!** Our dream was literally in pieces on day 1!!!

How do I cope

We shed a few tears that night! We had our family around us and we got up the next day determined to get our food truck fixed and back on the road. With the **help of our friends and family** we got some money together and in 3 weeks we were back on the road.

My advice

Stress and worry is a big part of the journey. It shows you care! Open up and share your thoughts, issues, worries or fears with good people around you, that you trust. Don't let stress set in for too long, take action on what's worrying you. **Action breeds confidence.**

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

CHRISTIAN

Germany



About me

My name is Christian. I'm 30 years old, originally from Germany, and currently based in Cyprus. I became an entrepreneur at 23. I'm the founder of HipHop4Hope Athens, a project that promotes youth development through hip-hop culture. If I had to describe my personality, I would say **I am positive, visionary, and simple**. My peers would describe me as energetic, free, and communicative.

What stresses me

One situation that really stressed me was when I felt a project was heading in the wrong direction and **team members started to fight**. This kind of conflict can be very draining and makes it hard to keep the focus on the goals.

How do I cope

To overcome this stress, I focused on **improving my soft skills and project management abilities**. I learned that it's not always about being right or pushing a certain objective at all costs. Sometimes, maintaining team harmony and good communication is even more important for long-term success.

My advice

Stay consistent and **keep the bigger picture in mind**. Trust the process and remember that you can manage things even during tough times. Sometimes, you just have to push yourself to go the extra mile. Better times are ahead, so don't give up.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

FRANCESCO

Italy



About me

I’m Francesco, 21, originally from Italy but now living in Belgium. I started my entrepreneurial journey at 19 as co-founder of Fitto Fatto, a property management company. I’d say I’m **sociable, sensitive, and sporty**, and people who know me best would probably call me kind, open-minded, and honest.

What stresses me

At the beginning of my journey, I often felt like **the entire weight of the company was on my shoulders.** One of the hardest moments was meeting with much older property owners - I was worried they’d judge me for being too young and not take me seriously. That fear of being overlooked was really frustrating.

How do I cope

Over time, I started closing deals. That’s when I realised: **people were judging me on my knowledge, not just my age**. That shift gave me a real confidence boost and helped reduce the stress. It might sound strange, but **I actually work better with a bit of stress**. When I have a lot to juggle, like studying and managing my business, it pushes me to organise my time better and be more responsible.

My advice

There’s a quote by Jeff Bezos that says **stress comes from avoiding things you know you need to address**. So my advice is: divide your work well, don’t postpone, and make sure you stay in control of your time and priorities.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

MARCELLA

Indonesia



About me

I’m Marcella, 21, from Indonesia. I’ve been creating things since I was 9, and officially **launched my Virtual Assistant business** at 20, supporting purpose-driven professionals. I see myself as ambitious, empathetic, and visionary, and those around me often describe me as supportive, passionate, and resilient.

What stresses me

Starting my company brought a lot of pressure. I struggled to manage people, define my leadership style, maintain service quality as we grew, and **balance everything with a full-time job in Europe.** I also questioned my pricing strategy and often wondered if it would take me decades to become the leader I wanted to be.

How do I cope

I’ve learned to face stress by being open - with my team, my clients, and myself. I talk to people I trust, like my grandfather, and **seek guidance from fellow young entrepreneurs around the world**. I stay curious by reading, watching content online, joining communities, and attending mentoring events. When things felt really heavy, I also worked with a psychologist and turned to mindfulness and daily affirmations to rebuild my confidence.

My advice

Don’t walk away just because something feels hard. Every challenge is a chance to grow into the version of yourself that’s capable of more. Stress can be a signal that you're stretching into something bigger - stay with it, and let it shape you.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

MIDORI

Japan



About me

I’m Midori, 48, based in Japan. I became an entrepreneur at 46, working as a communication instructor, international education consultant, and counsellor. I’m active, easy-going, and full of ideas. People close to me say I’m energetic and powerful - **someone who doesn’t stand stil**l!

What stresses me

Before starting my business, I worked in a company where I was often **told to do things I didn’t agree with**, especially when it came to client work. I had no real say, and that lack of freedom became very stressful. It pushed me to think: maybe it’s time to start something of my own.

How do I cope

At the time, there wasn’t much I could do - I voiced my disagreement, but it wasn’t taken seriously. Still, **that tension became the first spark for change**. For me, stress always pushes me forward. It’s how I generate momentum, make decisions, and act. That’s how things move!

My advice

Stress isn’t the enemy. Sometimes, it’s just a sign that something needs to shift. One idea can change everything. And ideas often come when you connect with people - especially those outside your usual circle.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

ASHLEY

Malaysia



About me

I’m Ashley, 24, based in Malaysia. I became an entrepreneur at 18 with my mum and sister - none of us had a business background, just **a strong desire to create something of our own**. I lead various aspects of the business, from client meetings to overseeing staff and developing online learning strategies. I am a go-getter with grit and a big heart. My friends say I’m funny, reliable, and always pushing forward.

What stresses me

At first, we were just figuring things out as we went - stress didn’t really hit me. But after our business became official, I started **feeling the pressure** of our lack of structure. Our systems, especially in management and finance, were all over the place. Rebuilding from scratch was intense and overwhelming.

How do I cope

I’ve learned to **embrace the process**. I stay curious, ask for help, and keep researching. I try to identify exactly what support I need and go looking for it - even if I hear “no” or get no answer. Bit by bit, I’m building my network and growing from experience. Stressful moments often push me to think faster, act smarter, and get creative.

My advice

Stress is a sign you’re moving. Don’t wait to feel fully ready - take one step and then the next. **You don’t need to have it all figured out.** Let stress push you forward, not hold you back.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097

SEONAID

South Africa



About me

My name is Seonaid, I'm 28, originally from South Africa, now based in the UK. I became an entrepreneur at 23 and work as a copywriter and marketing strategist. If I had to describe myself in 3 words: **ambitious, creative, fun**. Friends and family would say I'm funny, hard-working, and kind.

What stresses me

Whenever I start a new project, I often feel overwhelmed because I worry that I don't have enough skills or knowledge to do it well. **It's a classic case of imposter syndrome** - where I doubt myself and feel like I'm not really ready or qualified, even though I actually am.

How do I cope

To cope with stress, I always try to take things **one small step at a time**. I focus on what exactly is causing the stress and work on minimising those feelings bit by bit. Breaking tasks down into manageable parts helps me feel more in control and less anxious, so I can keep moving forward without getting stuck.

My advice

Always start small! Break things down and handle one piece at a time. And don't be afraid to ask questions or admit when you don't know something.

EMERGE YOUTH

Unlocking Potential, One Breath at a Time

08/2025

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Project number: 2023-2-FR02-KA220-YOU-000175097