YOUTH in ROUTE

Routes for fostering sense of initiative and active citizenship among disaffiliated youth

Train the trainers – Level 1 – BAO-Jeunesse Citizen Academy

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Level 1 focuses on theoretical contextualisation.

The Youth in Route project aims to strengthen the initiative, civic engagement and future prospects of young people at risk of dropping out of school and society in Belgium, France, Portugal and Serbia.

Inspired by the work of sociologist Robert Castel on disaffiliation, this project is based on **an in-depth understanding of the mechanisms that lead** to young people **dropping out** and becoming isolated.

This training course offers supervisors the opportunity to **engage** with Robert Castel's **key concepts in a theoretical and participatory manner**, enabling them to better analyse the situations encountered in the field and adapt their support practices.

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Castel’s schema

Level 1 – Session 2

Session2

Familiarizing oneself with Castel’s theoretical model

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Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants will be able to :

- Knowledge:

Identify the 2 axes and 4 zones of disaffiliation according to Robert Castel

- Skills:

Apply this model to some young people's concrete situations

- Attitudes:

Be aware of warning signs: tipping points and/or levers for re-affiliation)



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	Relational integration		Social isolation
Work (integration)	Integration zone		
		Vulnerability zone assistance zone	
Non work			Disaffiliation zone

Integration zone: ■ + ■

Stable job
Followed training + strong social connections = material and relational security
Regular schooling

Vulnerability zone : ■ + ■ ou ■ + ■

Precarious work/academic difficulties or relational fragility = fragile balance, risk of tipping over

Assistance zone: ■ + ■

Strong dependence on social assistance
Academic failure + weak social ties = survival thanks to aid programs
(insuffisant results or dismissal)

Disaffiliation zone : ■ + ■

Non-work
Stop training
School breakdown + relational isolation = accumulation of ruptures and great precariousness
Loss or non-recourse
to social assistance

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Let’s play from a zone to another !

For each projected picture, define together, within each national group, the zone in which the character is living

You will get 2 minutes for reflection

Then, show the card that represents the zone you have chosen for the character.

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Sofia, 17 years old: dropped out of school 1 year ago, family breakdown, living in a youth home, small undeclared jobs, casual boyfriends, irregularly monitored by a youth support service

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Karim, 22 years old: long-term unemployment, precarious shared accomodation, irregular contacts with his mother and his neighborhood friends, being monitored by a local employment agency

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Léa, 19 years old: work-study program, bakery option, lives with her parents, good family relations, member of an amateur theatre group.

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Dylan, 18: on a qualified training course in mechanics; lives in a squat; has cut ties with his family; gets on well with teachers, tutors and fellow students on the course.

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Inès, aged 20: receiving financial assistance and social housing; a single mother with a six-month-old baby; no close family; occasional contact with a social worker.

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Tom, 25: on a three-month fixed-term contract in logistics, single, has little contact with his family, and is active in a neighbourhood association.

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Key concept: integration

Definition: a situation in which a person has stable resources (employment, income, housing) and sufficient social connections to participate ‘normally’ in society.

Practical explanation: a ‘well-integrated’ young person is, for example, someone who is in education or training, has a few trusted relationships (friends, adult mentors), takes part in activities (sport, youth organisations) and can make some plans for the future (studies, employment). Their daily life is sometimes difficult, but overall they are doing well, as they have both resources and support.



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Key concept: vulnerability

Definition: an intermediate stage in which a person begins to lose certain resources or connections. This situation makes them vulnerable and at risk of slipping into forms of marginalisation or disaffiliation.



Practical explanation: a ‘vulnerable’ young person is, for example, someone whose academic performance is declining, who is accumulating absences, experiencing significant family tension, has a precarious part-time job or a very limited income, and is beginning to withdraw or drop out of their usual activities. They are not yet completely ‘on the outside’, but one more event (a break-up, failure, loss of income) could tip the balance.

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Key concept: assistance

Definition: a situation in which a person is no longer able to meet their basic needs through their own resources and is largely dependent on support schemes (income support, social assistance, intensive monitoring).

Practical explanation: a young person or adult ‘on assistance’ is, for example, someone who has been unemployed for a long time, lacks sufficient resources, lives on social security benefits, and whose daily life is structured around appointments with professionals (social worker, youth worker). Important decisions are often made through these support services, and the individual’s scope for autonomy is limited.



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Key concept: disaffiliation

Definition: a situation in which a person has lost both their ties to the world of work (or education) and their main social support networks, finding themselves in a state of severe isolation and on the long-term margins of society.



Practical explanation: a “disaffiliated”’ young person is, for example, someone who has not been in school for a long time, has no training or employment, has no regular contact with support services, is cut off from their family or in serious conflict with them, and whose social network is reduced to a few peers who are themselves in very precarious situations. Ties to institutions and communities have largely broken down, and the person is gradually becoming invisible within society.

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interactive question

1. How can we identify the warning signs that indicate a young person is moving from one category to another?

→ a series of breakdowns (within the family, at school, at work or in their social life), a lack of a social support network, and long-term financial hardship



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interactive question

2. What factors might help young people ‘move up’ from one group to another?

→ rebuilding relationships (with peers, educators and organisations), access to practical support (housing, employment, training), and high-quality relational support



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Assessment quiz: true or false ?

1. “The integration zone is characterised by stable employment and a supportive social network.”

→ Answer: **True**
Explanation: In this category, the person has a relatively secure job and strong social ties (family, colleagues, friends), which protects them from the risk of disaffiliation.

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Assessment quiz: true or false ?

2. “The vulnerability zone refers to people who are completely excluded from the labour market.”

→ Answer: **False**
Explanation: Vulnerability often involves precarious employment (part-time, fixed-term contracts, temporary work, odd jobs) and/or fragile social ties, but not total exclusion as is the case with social disaffiliation..

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Assessment quiz: true or false ?

3. “In the support zone, people rely mainly on social welfare schemes (benefits, social services) to meet their needs.”

→ Answer: **True**

Explanation: The assistance zone is characterised by low levels of employment but a degree of protection provided by social welfare systems (social assistance, unemployment benefits, etc.).

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Assessment quiz: true or false ?

4. “The disaffiliated zone is characterised by a lack (or near-lack) of employment and significant social isolation.”

→ Answer: **True**

Explanation: Disaffiliation, as defined by Castel, refers to a break from both work and meaningful social ties, which can lead to severe precariousness and social exclusion.

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Assessment quiz: true or false ?

5. “You can move from one zone to another, but these zones are fixed and do not change over the course of a person’s life.”

→ Answer: **False**
Explanation: These zones are fluid: individuals may move in either direction depending on circumstances (job loss, separation, illness, social support, training, etc.). This fact is central to planning preventive measures and educational interventions.

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Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants will be able to :

- **Skills**:

Apply the theory to a practical example

Identify the turning points and key stages in a process of disaffiliation and re-affiliation

Consider the impacts and prospects for young people

- **Attitudes**:

Be aware that the Castel model needs to be extended to current European realities



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Let’s play and discover Malik’s trajectory

Here is Malik !

Malik is 19 years old. Suffering from a learning disability, he left school at 16 without any qualifications. He has held a series of odd jobs (deliveries, manual labour) and is currently unemployed. He cut ties with his parents when they divorced and lives alone in a precarious single-room apartment. He is in regular contact with his brother and a few friends. A social worker tells him about the ‘Youth in Route’ project …



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1. Decide together which zone Malik is in at the start of the game.

2. Whenever something positive or negative happens to Malik, consider how it affects his zone.

3. Move him to a different zone as many times as necessary.



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YOUTH in ROUTE

Integration zone

Vulnerability zone

Assistance zone

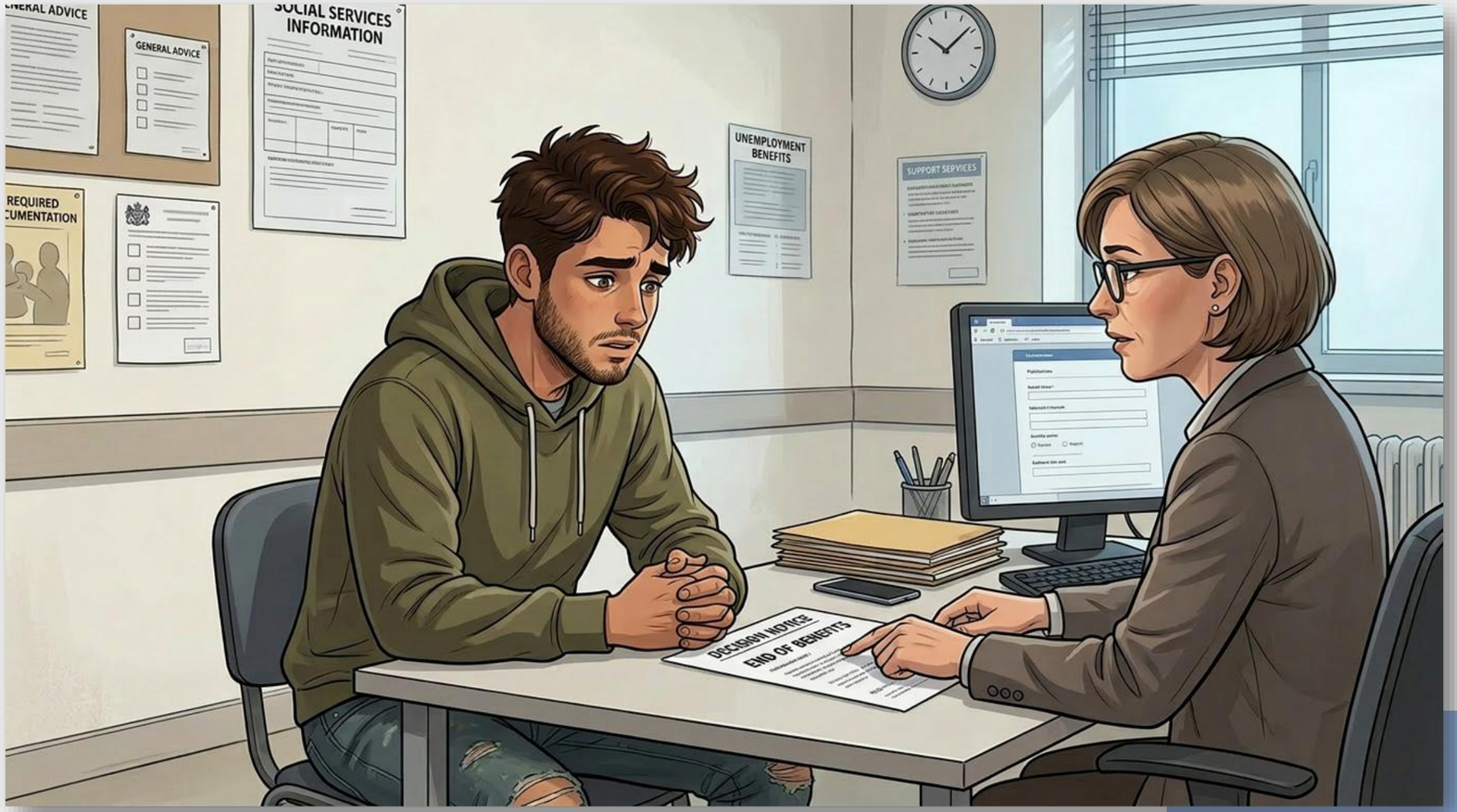
Disaffiliation zone





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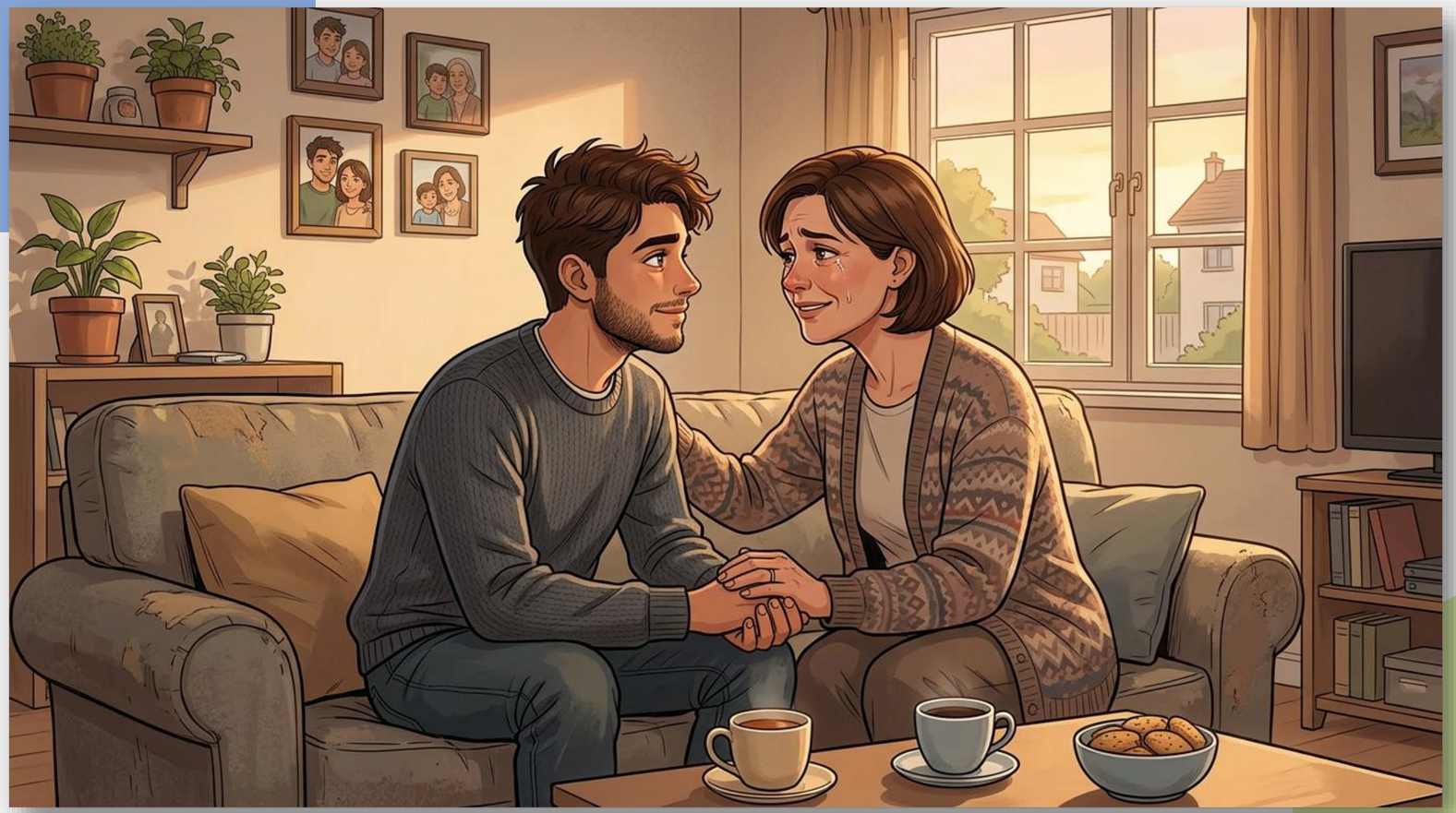
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Malik loses his entitlement to social benefits

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Malik reconciles with his mother

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Thanks to the support of his social worker, Malik obtains social housing with a long-term lease.

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Malik is getting into online gaming competitions and spending more and more nights on his game console.

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Malik ends social support

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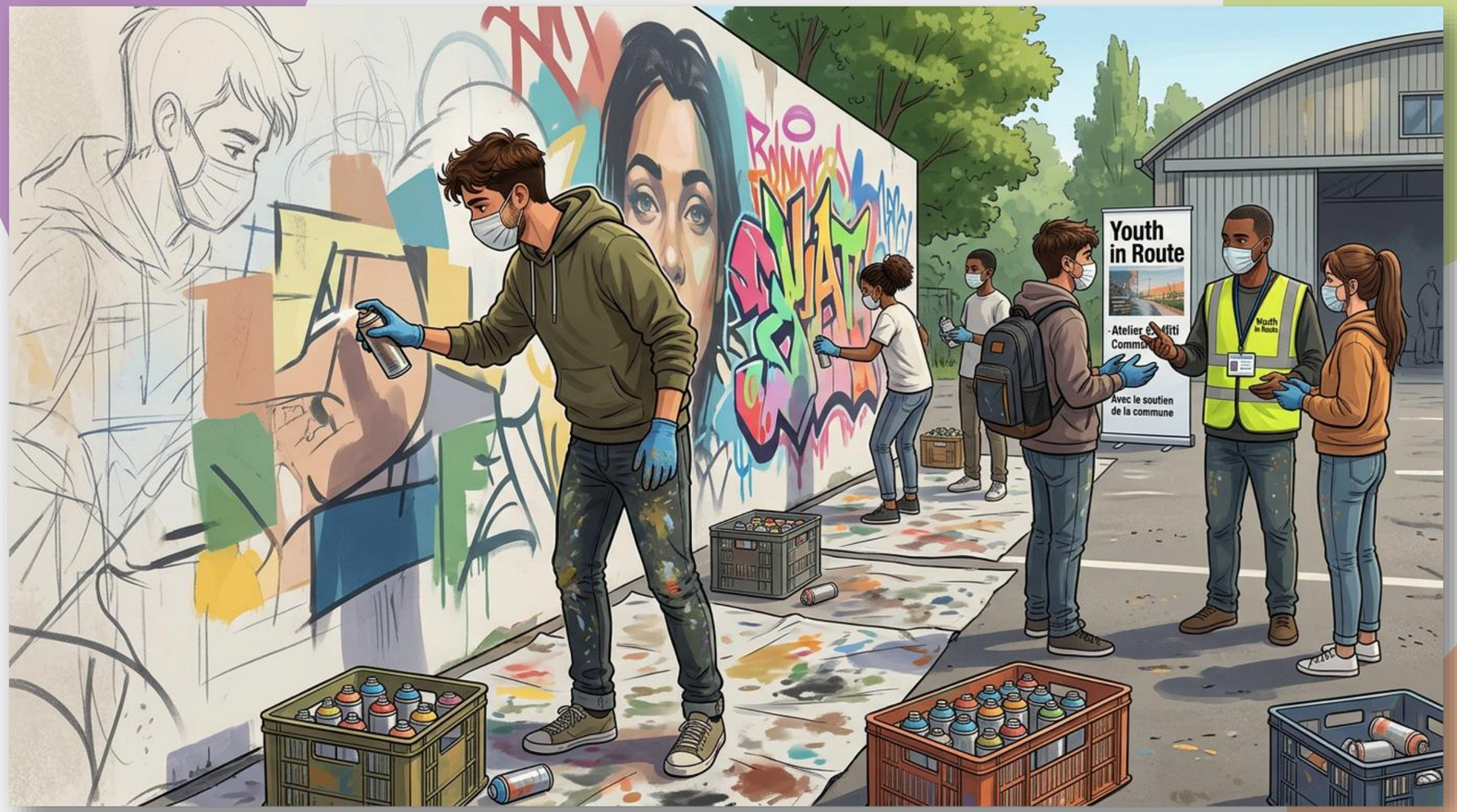
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Malik has been offered a professional integration contract

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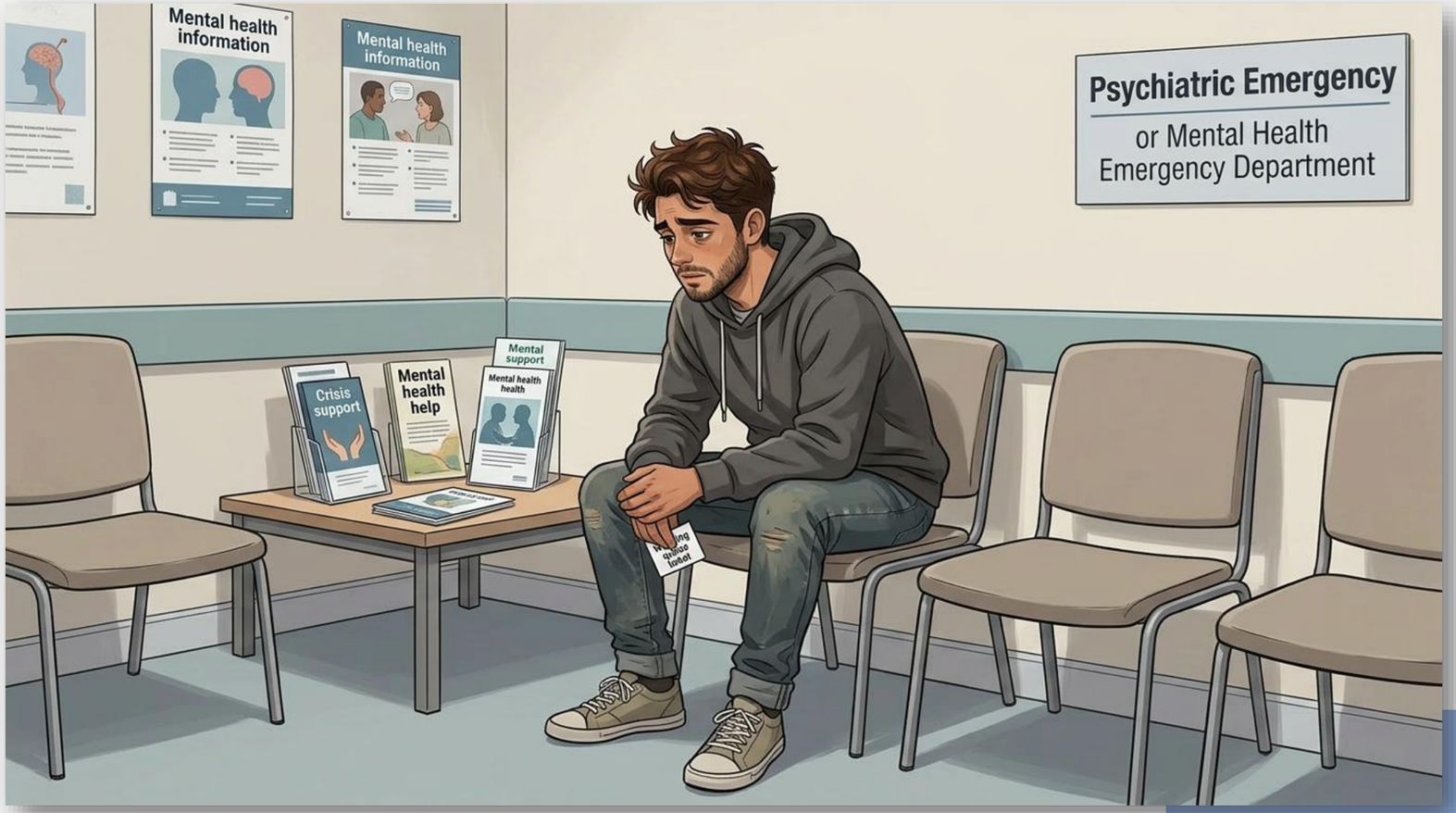
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Malik is participating in a graffiti workshop subsidized by the local authorities.

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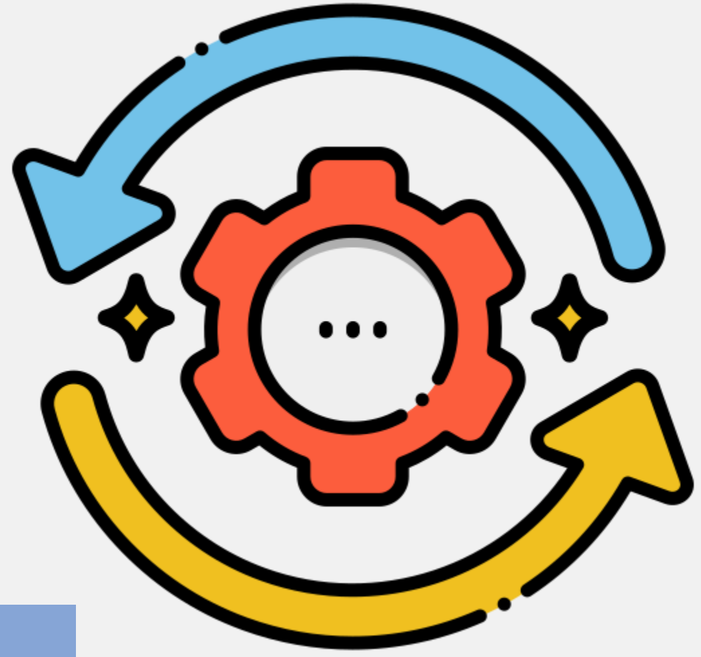
Malik attempted suicide

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An update of the Castel model

Disengagement, scattered vulnerabilities and fragmented trajectories…



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