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Dear readers,



Change is part of every journey. Sometimes we welcome it with excitement; at other times, we would rather hold on to what is familiar. Change can challenge us, surprise us, and even make us question what lies ahead. Yet it is often in these moments that God invites us to grow.

There is a difference between change and transformation. Change happens around us — new circumstances, new opportunities, new people and new seasons. Transformation goes deeper. It invites us to ask not only, “What is changing?” but also, “Who am I becoming?” As followers of Jesus, transformation is the lifelong journey of being shaped more and more into His likeness.

At Youngstars International we see transformation in many ways. We see it when a teenager discovers its purpose, a leader chooses to invest in others, a team finds a new way forward or when someone has the courage to step beyond what is comfortable. Often, the deepest transformation begins with one small step of faith.

As you read this issue, I invite you to reflect on your own journey. What is changing around you? And perhaps more importantly: What might God be transforming within you? As Paul reminds us in Romans 12:2, “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” May we remain open to that transformation, allowing God to renew our minds and shape us more and more into His likeness.

Viktoria Rüdiger

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Cosmin Tamas,
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Called to Rebuild

One camp. Ten years of transformation. A life shaped to help others rebuild.

Leonardo Rodrigues, Radicais Brazil



Radicais Team presenting the ministry in Brazil on the last day of the training

Hello Youngstars International, my name is Leonardo Rodrigues. I am 28 years old, one of the leaders of Radicais in Brazil, and I am very happy to share part of my experience at the ICT held in Romania in August 2026. To share this experience, I need to go back 10 years.

In January 2016, I had the privilege of being one of the participants in the first Radicais camp in Brazil. I was only 17 and had no idea that this camp would open the door to something much greater. It was there that I first encountered Radicais in Brazil and understood my pastoral calling, which I since have had the privilege of exercising in my local church. The spiritual concept at the ICT was the same: the story of Nehemiah. I can say with complete conviction that everything started there.

Over the years, I became increasingly involved in the vision of Radicais in Brazil, serving with children and teenagers and at summer and winter camps. I went through all the previous trainings — BT, LST, GLT, and TLT — and now I am completing this cycle with the ICT.

Each training gave me opportunities to grow in leadership, learn, and connect with people from different states and countries. An international instructor and

coach training, especially in another country, was something I could never have imagined experiencing. It seemed far too distant from my reality.

I grew up in a simple community in the far south of São Paulo, Brazil. I experienced family struggles and great challenges related to fatherhood. Yet today, I am convinced that none of these things could prevent what God, in His infinite grace and goodness, has prepared for me as a purpose for my life. The “Back to the Roots” activity at the ICT made me look back at each year of my life and I realized that God does much more than we ask or think, according to His will.

God has given me the courage to fight my insecurities and fears. As we constantly say: “Get out of the comfort zone!”

The ICT, for me, was more than a training. I feel that I completed a cycle within Radicais in Brazil: a 10-year cycle that began by teaching me about rebuilding in my own life, first of all, and now I have the opportunity to help others rebuild their own lives, until the whole of Brazil is rebuilt.

It was a great joy to be with people from five other nations: to listen to their stories, learn a little about their cultures, and see what God is doing in their respective countries.

Personally, I return to Brazil with a heart full of hope and with the certainty that a new cycle will come with even greater things. My gratitude belongs to the entire Youngstars International team for their dedication and commitment to all the work carried out around the world. My gratitude also belongs to the Radicais Association in Brazil, which sent me to be one of the participants in this training and has invested in my life in a very special way. May God bless you.



Leadership workshop during the Basic Training.

The Labyrinth of Transformation

A world is turned up-side-down with God in the centre.

Dorka Pertis-Beker, National Coordinator Hungary

It is around three in the morning. I am lying on my mattress in the tent and cannot sleep. My brain is working in overdrive; it feels endless.

Suddenly, I hear noises from outside: people are approaching and then stop at the tent to talk. I need a few seconds to realise that they aren't just talking: they are praying. After they finish, they go to sleep. Then I start praying too. My brain slows down, my thoughts clear. At the last moment, a question occurs to me before I finally fall asleep: how are we going to get out of this labyrinth?

There have been a lot of changes at Horgony Organisation lately. From the very beginning, our system was upside down in a way: first, we organized camps, then the trainings started, and only after that were local clubs opened. No wonder those clubs no longer exist. We definitely needed transformation.

For more than ten years, one couple organized the camp every year, from building showers in the woods to packing the last box away. They were the leaders of Horgony as well, which was a lot of work, as you can imagine. The load became unbearable, so they started transforming the system and dele-

gated the responsibility for leading the camp to a separate team. The hardest part was finding capable people for the board of the organization. Many don't see the process or the countless working hours behind the "product" of our ministry. They look at a camp as a delicious pie and think, "Finally, it is done." What they don't see is that we haven't even



Basic Training participants building their project (chill zone).

mixed the eggs and milk yet: the process has just started, and we still need their help in the long run.

I believe that the ability to change is a great blessing because it creates time and opportunities to grow and improve. Having people with the spirit of service is a huge gift from God.

Our vision is to build a network of local clubs that have a transforming impact on Hungarian society. That is why we need to strengthen our connections with local churches, so that a new system can be built for this ministry. This base would give us a chance not only to open teen clubs, but also to involve more volunteers in the Youngstars vision and work. Thus, our focus could shift towards multiplication among volunteers and at the highest level of leadership as well.

At the moment, we have seven active members whose first priority is to stabilize the leadership of Horgony. Our mission is to help churches create local clubs through which children can be reached with the gospel, by providing easily available resources (such as materials and training) from Youngstars International.

“Never before have I had this incomprehensible feeling of being loved ‘just because’, being cared for not only physically, but spiritually as well, or feeling so safe.”

It is so wonderful how the impact of transformation can make God’s work more valuable and visible.

One leader, Lilla Z., shared her first experience with our Youngstars-style camp as a teenager: “Never before have I had this incomprehensible feeling of being loved ‘just because’, being cared for not only physically, but spiritually as well, or feeling so safe. Over time, I came to understand that this loving atmosphere was due to God’s presence and not because the volunteers were the best people in the world. Today, I am a leader in Horgony, and I have just completed the ICT in order to continue this ministry. Youngstars taught me not only what the word ‘ministry’ means, but also how to be a part of



Hungary at a glance

Population

Around 9.5 million people live in Hungary, with most of the population concentrated in urban areas. Hungarian culture is shaped by a distinctive language, rich traditions and a diverse Central European heritage.

Religious Background

Catholic: 29.2%
Protestant: 11.6%
Other Christian: 1.7%
No religious affiliation/Atheist: 16.1%
Other religion: 1.3%
No answer: 40%

Main Challenges

Hungarian children and young people face loneliness and increasing anxiety connected to politics and the future, while smoking is becoming a national pandemic in this age group.

Horgony History

The first camp (BIKA) was held in 2010, but Horgony Association was not founded until 2019, when we joined the Youngstars network. The first training was organized in 2020.

Key Focus Areas

Building a strong Horgony leadership and volunteer base is key to fulfilling our mission: to build a network of local groups in Hungary.

something much greater than me: how to take part in God’s transforming work by showing teenagers how He changes lives for the better.”

Overall, if I had to choose one word to describe transformation, I would choose “labyrinth”. In a maze, every step brings change: you change your perspective and your direction. Sometimes we can see the way forward for a while, and then it disappears. Hebrews 13:8 says: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever!” He is stable and never changing; we already have our way out with His constant guidance. We only need to pray, be patient and trust that God will lead us. That is how we get out of this labyrinth.

Crossing Boundaries

What Standing on a Cliff in Switzerland Teaches Romanian Leaders About Trusting God.

Emanuele Omuşoru, Executive Director YoungstarsWiki



Beni is rappelling down the cliff near Aarau, Switzerland. He is one of the participants who will bring the new knowledge to Romania.

At the edge of a 15-meter cliff, everyone is secured. Simona is standing right at the edge, holding tightly to her safety rope. She needs a clear head – fighting through her emotions, she has to set up the rappelling station on her own and lower someone down. Every instruction and tip reaches her solely through me as her translator. A foreign country, an unfamiliar culture, and a huge challenge: overcoming fear and putting freshly learned skills directly into practice.

I had the privilege of accompanying a group of eight Romanians to Switzerland for the BESJ Pioneering Module. While my work at YoungstarsWiki usually focuses on helping Youngstars leaders around the world connecting online, this project allowed me to bring that mission to life in person – perhaps on a smaller scale, but with even greater depth. Serving as a translator meant stepping into multiple roles at once: I wasn't just bridging two languages, but also translating between two cultures – in both directions.

Two organizations came together: BESJ and Micii Exploratori. The real challenge went beyond crossing boundaries and reaching out to one another – it was about understanding why the Swiss take certain details so much more strictly than we are used to. And then you are standing there at the cliff, responsible for every single detail and safety protocol. One oversight, and things could get dangerous for the person on the rope.

Simona made it. Reflecting on the experience, she shared how she learned a vital lesson about courage, trust, endurance, and pushing past her limits: “More than that, I learned that when troubles come and we go through trials, God can give us the strength to keep going, as long as we trust in Him.”

The openness of everyone involved allowed us to put the Youngstars value of “Multiplication” into practice across international borders. At the same time, it gave the participants from Switzerland a taste of international youth ministry. Who knows – maybe one of them will stand at a cliff in Brazil one day, training a local participant through a translator on how to safely lower someone down.



Besides the technical part, we learned a lot about the twelve disciples and their character. Every single one of them had something to offer. Benkerjoch, Switzerland.

Around the Fire: Finding a Path of Wisdom

In the middle of an event with more than 3,000 teenagers, a small group of Finnish boys found a place for honest questions

Cosmin Tamas, Managing Director Youngstars International

The heat was intense, 36–37°C during the day, and on the first evening at TeenStreet, I almost decided not to light the fire. But I did. Despite the heat, teenagers gathered around it, and conversations began. Among them was a group of boys from Finland. What started as a simple conversation would become something much deeper throughout the week.

Being part of an event with more than 3,000 teenagers is exciting, but it can also make personal spiritual growth, devotional time, and meaningful friendships more difficult. This is why small groups matter. For a teenager, a small group can feel like another family for a week, and sometimes for years afterward. It creates a space where questions can be asked, friendships can grow, and faith can become personal.

That first evening, I asked the Finnish boys about their path: What path were they choosing, and how were they walking on it? Their answers were honest, but mostly superficial. I wondered what the rest of the week would bring.

The next evening, the heat was just as strong, so I decided not to light the fire. But when I arrived, the boys were already there, gathered around the fireplace and waiting for me. This time, they had questions.

They wanted to know how Youngstars is starting in different countries, how the ministry can be active in so many places, and who makes it happen. When they discovered that people serve because of their heart for the Gospel, rather than because they are paid to do it, their curiosity grew.



People around the fire making marshmallows

They came back to the fire every evening for the rest of the week. The conversations became deeper, and I could see a change taking place as they thought more seriously about their faith and the path ahead of them.

On the final day, one of the boys, just 16 years old, shared something that moved me deeply. With tears in his eyes, he spoke about his desire to follow the path he believed God was calling him toward. He wanted to go to Congo one day and serve there as a missionary. Then he said, "I'm too young for this." I encouraged him that being young does not mean he cannot prepare. He decided to pray more about it and start learning French, so that he could be ready if God calls him to go.

The boys returned to Finland at the end of TeenStreet, but they left with more than memories of a week together. Around a simple fireplace, a small group became a place where questions grew into courage, and where a 16-year-old began to consider how God might transform his future.

Events

September

09/01–09/04 | Micii Exploratori RO
Camp youth

09/05–09/06 | BESJ Switzerland
Module: Outdoor for all leaders

09/05–09/11 | Radicais no Brasil
Basic training, Nordeste

09/11–09/12 | Youngstars Ukraine
Hiking with teenagers

09/11–09/13 | Perlas del Caribe CU
Introductory training

09/19 | BESJ Switzerland
Module teensleaders

09/19 | BESJ Switzerland
Module «ant» leaders: Child–developmental psychology

09/19–09/26 | Youngstars Int.
Kids camp Cuba

09/25–09/27 | Micii Exploratori RO
Prayer & Fasting weekend

October

10/02–11/29 | Youngstars Polska
Leadership training (3 weekends)

10/03–10/10 | BESJ Switzerland
Basic leaders training

10/04–10/11 | BESJ Switzerland
Leaders training

10/05–10/12 | BESJ Switzerland
Module: for campleaders (special training)

10/09–10/19 | Youngstars Int.
Team leaders training Brazil

10/23–10/25 | Perlas del Caribe CU
Introductory training

10/30–11/01 | BESJ Switzerland
Instructor training for BESJ training leaders

10/31 | BESJ Switzerland
Module: for teensleaders

November

10/02–11/29 | Youngstars Polska
Leadership training (3 weekends)

11/13–11/15 | Perlas del Caribe CU
Introductory training

11/14 | BESJ Switzerland
Training for «ant» leaders

11/14 | BESJ Switzerland
Training for teensleaders

11/15–11/21 | Radicais no Brasil
Groupleader training

11/20–11/22 | BESJ Switzerland
Module devotion

11/20–11/23 | Youngstars Int.
S-board meeting

11/25–11/27 | BESJ Switzerland
BESJ team retreat

December

12/04–12/06 | BESJ Switzerland
Module for BESJ leader trainer

12/18–12/20 | Perlas del Caribe CU
Christmas camp

12/27–12/30 | Radicais no Brasil
Tree House

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