

Session 06

Self-worth

Material/wall

Objects that can be used for an obstacle course (straws, tape, pieces of fabric/textile...),
 Traverse with many holds and steps

Goal of the day

Experience self-efficacious doing/acting and the effects on self-worth, experience the positive effect of the group on self-worth, perceiving/becoming aware of one's own patterns of behaviour.

Exercises

Body Scan, Warm-up, Obstacle course, The mountain

Starting phase

- | | | |
|-------|----------------------|---|
| 00:00 | Mindfulness exercise | Body scan |
| 00:10 | Checking in | <i>How am I today?</i> |
| 00:30 | Topic: Self-worth | Self-worth comes from values and expectations, and validations/judgements of others (friends, family, colleagues), and judgement/validations of oneself, in different roles; negative judgements lead to a lower sense of self-worth, positive judgements lead to an improved sense of self-worth and self-image. |

Active phase

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|-------|---------------------|--|
| 00:35 | Warm-up | Warm-up in the group, group ritual optional |
| 00:45 | Bouldering exercise | Obstacle course
in two small groups
<i>What went through your mind, when you were tearing through an obstacle? Which self-judgements did you make? ("I am a failure.." vs "it was fun, because everyone made mistakes, and it was not too bad to make mistakes")</i> |

Final phase

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|-------|---------------------|--|
| 01:35 | Final round | <i>What are you taking with you today? What experiences have you made in relation to self-worth?</i> |
| 01:50 | Relaxation exercise | The mountain |

Body scan

Therapist version

Preparation

Self-responsible "arrival" of the participants:

If you are still stuck in your daily routine, please quietly do the [5-4-3-2-1 exercise](#) for yourself to fully arrive here.

Additional tips

For the first reading, it is useful to read the whole text during the introduction of the exercise and take a break whenever a body part is named. In the course of the program, fewer prompts to this guided body scan can be used, for example, after the introduction only body parts can be named.

Description

Find a comfortable, upright sitting position.

Feel where your body meets the chair/the floor. Feel your feet touching the ground.

Take time to settle into a comfortable sitting position.

Relax all muscles you don't need to maintain your upright position (shoulders, face, etc.).

Close your eyes or direct your gaze to the floor in front of you.

Throughout the exercise, the point is not to change or achieve anything. It is about simply observing what is and accepting it as it is.

Now turn your attention inward. Breathe deeply in and out. Observe your breath, how your abdominal wall rises and falls, all by itself, without having to do anything. Just observe: In and out and pause.

Now feel into your body and take time to notice the whole body.

Now direct your attention to your toes. Observe what you can sense in the toes:

Temperature, touch, a tingling sensation, the position of the joints, something else, or maybe nothing at all. That's okay, too, just to consciously feel nothing. For some people, the idea of directing the breath there, breathing in and out of the toes, as it were, is helpful.

For a short time, return your attention to your breathing. Then turn to the soles of your feet, the heel, the ankle. And as you consciously breathe in and out of these parts of your body as well, notice all the sensations.

As soon as you notice that thoughts arise, bring your attention back to the breath and the respective body region.

Inwardly feel your way up through the legs in this way, from the ankle to the calf and shin, the knee, the kneecap, through the entire thigh to the surface and inward to (the loin and) the hip.

The focus of your attention then slowly moves through the entire lower abdomen, touching the hips once again, then the buttocks, the small of the back, the abdomen. From there it continues through the torso, the back, the rib cage (and the ribs to the breasts, to the lungs and the large blood vessels located in the rib cage), continuing to the shoulder blades to the collar bone and the shoulders.

From the shoulders you move to the arms, from the fingertips through the fingers, the ball of the hand, the palm and the back of the hand, through the wrist, the forearm, the elbow the upper arm and the crook of the arm again to the shoulders.

Then move on to the neck and throat, and finally move your attention through the face and skull.

Meanwhile, keep your attention on the breath and the various sensations in the different areas of the body. Breathe consciously in and out. Let go of sensations and thoughts as you do so.

Now finish the exercise by slowly deepening your breath and moving your body again. Notice your surroundings and give yourself a smile :)

Topic - Session 06

Self-worth

Background information

An individual's sense of self-worth can be influenced by values, expectations, judgements of others or self-judgements when performing different roles (colleague, parents, partner, friend, team member).

Negative judgements and self-criticisms when experiencing failure can harm self-worth and lead to low confidence (especially if the self-criticism is internal and generalising, e.g. "I am a loser" instead of external and relating to the situation "it did not work out this time"). Positive judgements and experiences of self-efficacy facilitate a positive self-image and increase self-worth (for example "I have achieved this with my own capabilities and skills").

Being critical with oneself and having expectations that are impossible to achieve reduce self-worth (for example "I should really be able to do this").

The goal of this session is to collectively explore possibilities of regarding oneself in a fair way and practice a positive and compassionate relationship to oneself (as if talking to a friend or someone who is close). To achieve this, participants should become aware of internal judgement processes, and question negative self-talk. Self-regard and self-compassion should be consciously used to replace a negative, self-critical inner dialogue (e.g. "While it has not worked like I wanted, I now know that next time I have to be mindful of", "The situation is what it is. I do whatever is helpful in the moment and good for myself.")

Key questions

What is self-worth? What makes self-worth important?

Where do I establish or receive a sense of self-worth? (work, family, friends)

How do I judge myself? How do I judge others? Do I use the same measurement for me vs. others?

Am I compassionate and friendly with myself, can I take care of myself well?

Does bouldering affect my sense of self-worth? How?

Learning goals

Subjective judgements are not reality, but are based on individual assumptions and attitudes.

Teaching two conscious ways of increasing one's sense of self-worth:

Thinking – positively about oneself, not having hard judgements of others (a "fair" perspective) and

Behaving – being compassionate to oneself (self-care & compassion: What do I need now to feel well?)

Requirements: mindfulness, awareness of inner judgement/self-evaluation, awareness and acceptance of one's own capabilities (self-efficacy, self-efficacious acting).

Warm-up and cool-down

Individual exercise

Description

Participants are inducted to warm-up before starting to boulder and cool-down at the end.

The warm-up consists of 3 parts:

1. Cardio warm-up: starjumps, jumping jacks
2. Mobilisation: open and close fists (with arms outstretched or at an angle), wrist turns, move arms to side and flip palms up and down, move head to each side, circle arms back and forth, cat-cow pose on all fours, stretch sideways, stretch hands down to the toes while standing, twist and stretch ankles.
3. Warm-up climb: climb 3-4 easy routes below your own level to warm-up.

Cool down consists of stretches to all muscle groups that were used.

Material/wall

Free room or space on mats

Key questions

Which exercise did you like last time? How did it go?

Variations

Due to time constraints and depending on the content of the lesson, the warm-up climb may be omitted.

Tips

Increasingly involve participants to encourage initiative.

Obstacle course

Individual exercise

Description

In two small groups participants create an obstacle course on the bouldering wall with different materials, such as scarves, straws, tapes, ropes etc. The group can decide for themselves, what everyone has to do when the obstacle comes up on the route. It is important that every participant is able to climb the route. At the end, participants present their obstacle group to the therapists and the members of the other group.

Material/wall

Objects to create an obstacle course (straws, tape, scarf)

Traverse with many holds and steps that can be mastered by all participants

Therapeutical themes

Group cohesion, body sensation, selfworth/pride, cooperation and communication, capability

Key questions

Does a group process emerge, that fosters creativity? How are ideas exchanged and accepted? What is in the foreground – the task or having fun? Was anybody annoyed because they touched an obstacle, or was it possible for all participants to enjoy themselves and be present? How does the group talk about their obstacle course, are participants proud of it?

Variations

If there is time-pressure, the obstacle course can also be built by the therapists (in advance).

It becomes more difficult if the participants also have to boulder with one arm, one leg or backwards or if they have to cover one eye while bouldering (e.g. with a pirate's flap).

Tips

The obstacle course should be presented by the group and should receive positive feedback. A theme can also be picked, optionally, such as rain forest, waves, James Bond etc.

The mountain

Therapist version

Additional tips

This exercise is done while sitting. Leave enough time between paragraphs and read slowly in a meditative voice.

Description

Close your eyes and let the image of the most beautiful mountain you can imagine arise in your mind's eye. It can be a mountain that you already know or a mountain from your imagination. Now let this image become clearer and clearer.

Look closely at the shape of your mountain - its rock, its peak rising into the sky, and its foundation resting in the earth.

Consider its steep or gently sloping sides. Also notice how massive your mountain is - how solid - how motionless and how beautiful! Seen both from a distance and up close - a beauty that comes from its unique shape and form.

Perhaps the top is covered with snow; and its lower slopes are forested; perhaps it has a particularly lofty peak or even several peaks or a high plateau.

The mountain is deeply anchored in the earth, standing firm and secure. And even when clouds obscure it, when a storm rages around it, the mountain is always the mountain. Just sit here and breathe and become aware of the qualities of this mountain.

And you are the mountain.

You are the mountain with all its features and characteristics - with all its beauty! Sit like a mountain! Dignified and silent. Your head becomes the towering peak or the vast plateau, just as you imagined your mountain peak. Your shoulders and arms, your front are the slopes, your buttocks and legs form the solid base - rooted to the chair, cushion or ground.

Deep within your own body along the spine, experience the ascending quality of the mountain. And now, as you sit here, with each breath become a little more like this breathing mountain. Centered, present and unshakably resting in your stillness - completely what you are - beyond words and thoughts.

Become aware that the mountain is simply sitting there as the sun moves across the sky and light and shadow and color change from moment to moment. Day is followed by night and night is followed by day again! The mountain experiences constant change and yet always remains itself. It remains still while the seasons merge and the weather changes from day to day and from moment to moment.

See how the mountain embodies the stillness that outlasts all change. It just sits there and is itself.

Its magnificence and beauty are not dependent on whether or not it is seen or what the weather is like. The mountain doesn't care whether it is in the sunlight or enveloped in clouds - whether it is blazing hot or freezing cold. It just sits there and is itself.

Sometimes the fiercest storms and thunderstorms of unimaginable strength roar on it; and then spring comes - the birds sing again in the trees and flowers bloom in the mountain meadows, and huge amounts of meltwater shoot down into the valley in the mountain streams. While all of this is happening, the mountain just sits there, not really being impressed by what is happening on its surface.

Despite the constant changes in our own lives, we can embody the same unwavering stillness and a sense of being rooted - just like the mountain.

You can relive this image of the mountain from time to time - whenever you need its qualities. You can become this mountain again and again, you can sit like a mountain again and again in between. Mindful, dignified, present and deeply rooted with the earth in true stillness.

Now you say goodbye to your mountain and become yourself again. But you take a piece of it with you into your life, which you now re-enter with all your attention.

You consciously breathe in and out deeply, stretch your arms and legs and come back to the here and now.