

Session 08

Fear and trust II

Material/wall

Rope, sleeping mask/veil for eyes

Straight/sloped wall with many big footholds and holds

Goal of the day

Perceiving one's own fear, perceiving one's own behavioural patterns, dealing with fears, developing trust in others, developing trust in oneself

Exercises

Breathing meditation, Visualisation exercise, Warm-up, School of trust, Blind bouldering, The mountain

Starting phase

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|-------|-----------------------|---|
| 00:00 | Mindfulness exercise | Breathing meditation |
| 00:10 | Checking in | <i>How am I today?</i> |
| 00:30 | Topic: Fear and Trust | Trust as the counteragent of fear: when fear decreases, a sense of safety grows
Visualisation exercise for trust in one-self and trust in others |

Active phase

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|-------|---------------------|---|
| 00:35 | Warm-up | Warm-up in the group, group ritual optional |
| 00:45 | Group exercise | School of trust (with variations)
In pairs/in the big group
Exercise on trust in one's partner:
<i>What helped you to feel more trust? What did you do to give others a sense of safety?</i> |
| 01:05 | Bouldering exercise | Blind bouldering
In small groups
<i>Were you afraid? How did you deal with your fear?</i> |

Final phase

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|-------|---------------------|---|
| 01:35 | Final round | <i>What are you taking with you today? What experiences have you made with trusting yourself/receiving trust/trusting others?</i> |
| 01:50 | Relaxation exercise | The mountain |

Breathing meditation

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.

Description

This exercise is performed in a sitting position.

Find a comfortable, upright seating position.

Feel the points of connection to your chair.

Feel your feet firmly on the ground.

Take your time to settle into your seat.

Relax all muscles that you do not need to sit upright (shoulders, your face, etc.).

Close your eyes or set your gaze to be in front of you.

Thus prepared, now turn your concentration inward and bring your attention to the breath.

Breathe in deeply and out again. Observe the breath without influencing it.

Feel how the breath flows through your nose into your lungs, and how your chest rises and falls. Breathe deeply into your belly, and feel it rise and fall.

Some breaths may be shallow, others deep. Remain in non-judgmental observation.

Notice each breath from beginning to end.

Repeat in your mind "in" when you inhale and "out" when you exhale.

Whenever you notice that your mind is somewhere else, kindly but firmly bring your attention back to the breath.

Whatever else is perceptible may be there.

You don't need to do anything with it at all, pure observation.... (5 min.)

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

Topic - Session 08

Fear and trust II

Background information

Trust is the counteragent of fear. When we trust ourselves and others we can increase our sense of safety and reduce our fears.

Relationships rely on mutual trust and giving trust to/ taking responsibility for others. However, also placing trust in others is key to relating, and can deepen the relationship and the experience of being together. A relationship without trust cannot succeed. Trust-building measures can be: communication and exchange, respect, transparency, honesty when dealing with each other, making up of mistakes, taking responsibility and being open to trust others.

Trust in oneself plays an important role in the relationship with oneself. Trusting oneself can expand one's experiential and agentic capacities, which may lead to being able to overcome fears. It is important to let and accept pride as a reward of one's own effort, as pride can strengthen one's own trust, confidence, self-efficacy, and self-worth.

The goal is to explore one's behavioural patterns in regards to trust in oneself and others, while also getting to know taking on responsibility (earning trust) and giving over responsibility (giving trust).

Key questions

Which feeling is contrary to fear?

Who can I trust?

Is it easy or hard for you to trust somebody else? What helps to build trust?

What kind of feeling is it, when somebody trusts you? What can you do to ensure safety to another person?

How good can you trust/rely on yourself? What might make this easier?

Learning goals

Expanding one's own possibilities of action through trust.

Giving responsibility away/taking responsibility: Experience of cohesiveness, being together in a relationship (deepening of relationships).

Overcoming fear with pride, a good feeling which should be allowed to be felt (this is the salary at the end of the month, if you don't take it and feel it, you work for nothing), positive influence on self-worth and self-efficacy.

Trust in oneself can help to overcome fear.

Visualisation exercise

Individual exercise

Description

A rope is placed on the floor. The two ends of the rope each represent the ends of a scale ("very strongly" to "not at all") for answering the three following questions. The participants are asked to stand in the place where they would place themselves in order to answer the question.

- 1) How strongly do you trust yourself?
- 2) How much do other people trust you?
- 3) How easy is it for you to trust others?

Material/wall

Free space or space on mats

Therapeutical themes

Social relationships, responsibility/dependency

Key questions

How did you feel about answering the question? Did you find it easy or hard to decide where you find yourselves on the scale? What did you notice? Are you comfortable with where you were on the scales, or would you like to change something?

Variations

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Tips

The rope should be long enough so that everyone has enough space.

Take your time and let the participants briefly feel how they are doing with this position.

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.

School of trust

Partner exercise

Description

The exercise is first demonstrated by the therapist, then the participants perform the exercise themselves in teams of two. At the beginning, the two partners stand behind each other, facing the same direction (distance approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ arm's length). The person in front is letting themselves fall back, and the person behind is catching the person early on the shoulders (with arms outstretched, secure stance: T-foot position). Afterwards, they switch.

Material/wall

Free room/space on mats

Therapeutical themes

Getting to know each other/group cohesion, mindfulness, anxiety management, body awareness/body focus, communication, responsibility/dependence.

Key questions

How did you guys feel about the exercise? Did you find it easy/hard to trust? What helps to trust?

Variations

Different variations can be performed in ascending difficulty: the distance to the catcher's hands is increased, then drop with eyes closed, then drop forward. The participants walk in pairs through the hall, the person in front raises his hand in the air, counts down from 3 with his fingers and drops at 0, the person behind catches.

In addition, the exercise can be done as a group exercise: Participants stand in a circle, 1-2 people walk by on the outside and tap a selected person on the shoulder, they drop backwards and are caught.

Tips

This is very much about trust among each other: trust is hard to build and easily destroyed. Therefore, it is advisable to take slow steps, to demonstrate the exercise and to slow participants down rather than incite them.

There should be an absolute feeling of psychological and physical safety. Important: only let yourself fall if you really want to - if you don't want to, stay standing!

Make sure that the body tension is maintained! Participants who find it difficult to let themselves fall will, for example, try to let only the upper body fall and keep the legs straight. This should be noticed and addressed. It may be helpful to change the posture of the head: Look straight ahead and fix your gaze onto a point in the room!

Perform the exercise "falling forward" only with same-sex couples.

Partners should be about the same height and weight.

Blind bouldering

Individual exercise

Description

Participants climb an easy and already known route with veiled/covered eyes (or closed eyes). Boulder colours are irrelevant and should only be commented, if the climbing flow is hindered by it or if the climber is lead into a wrong direction.

Material/wall

Sleeping mask/veil/scarf to cover eyes

easy, already known routes, straight/sloped wall with many big holds and footholds

Therapeutical themes

Self-perception, fear and overcoming fear, mindfulness

Key questions

How does it feel to climb with your eyes closed, compared to climbing with eyes opened?

What helped to deal with the fear? Were there parallels to what goes through your mind/thought patterns you have in everyday situations?

Variations

Instead of covering the eyes, participants can also close them. If a participant feels insecure, then they can try climbing one piece of the route with open eyes and try closing them once they are safely standing on a boulder again, or just complete parts of the route with eyes closed.

Tips

Pay attention on the boundaries of the participants, reflect on their own expectations and taking a step-by-step approach. Participants should not ignore their fear, but be mindful and take the steps they need/feel able to, to complete this exercise. Make participants aware that they need to tune into how they feel over the course of the exercise. If fear comes up, they can climb back some steps and focus on a safe and stable stance, and then consider whether they want to try it again or not.

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.