

Welcome!

# Introduction Round

# Group Rules

1. Be respectful to one another (for example, let others finish speaking).
2. You can decide for yourself what you want to share.
3. If you need a break or would like to leave the group, please leave the room quietly without disturbing the group.

# Metacognitive Training (MCT)



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**Meta:** comes from the Greek word for “about”

**Cognition:** comes from the Latin word for “thinking”

**Metacognition:** Thinking about thinking

# Why MCT?

- Experiencing mental health difficulties can make negative thought patterns stronger.
- Many of these thought patterns can be changed through training.

Today's Training

Session:

Empathy

# What's empathy?

- Recognizing the emotions of others
- Empathy = to feel with



# Exercise

Goal:

Collect clues about others' emotions

# Recognizing Emotions

What could this person be feeling?



# Recognizing Emotions

What could this person be feeling?



How sure are you about your guess?

# Recognizing Emotions

What could this person be feeling?



Uncertain

Cold

Angry

...?

# Bottom Line

- **It's not always easy to interpret emotions correctly!**
- Most of the time we can't be completely sure that we're identifying others' feelings correctly.
- Falsely interpreting emotions can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or even conflicts.

Background

# Recognizing Emotions

What do you look for when you want to empathize with someone?

# Recognizing Emotions

What do you look for when you want to empathize with someone?

- Facial expression
- Body language (gestures)
- Situation or surroundings
- What the other person is saying
- With people that you know: prior knowledge

**How reliable are these sources of information?**



# Clues About Others' Feelings

- Usually, some of these clues are reliable
  - For example, what the other person says
- Some indications are less reliable
  - For example, the situation or surroundings

→ **We should always try to take as much information as possible into account when empathizing with others.**

# Training Session Goals

# Session Goals

- Discuss what information sources are available to help you identify what others are feeling
- Practice considering as many clues as possible when figuring out what others are feeling

# Exercise

Goal:

Realize that others' feelings are not always clear based on their facial expressions alone

# Exercise

You will be shown a picture or part of a picture.

Decide what is going on with the person in the picture.

Please also discuss with the group how sure you are about your guess.

# What is this person feeling or doing? How sure are you about your guess?

**Clip:**



1. A union leader gives a speech to his colleagues (1920s)
2. Fight at the market
3. A musician sings a love song

What is this person feeling or doing?  
How sure are you about your guess?

Passion!



1. A union leader gives a speech to his colleagues (1920s)
2. Fight at the market
3. A musician sings a love song (in a retirement home)

What is this person feeling or doing?  
How sure are you about your guess?

**Clip:**



1. A blind monk
2. A suspicious look
3. Shooting an arrow



What is this person feeling or doing?  
How sure are you about your guess?

Concentration!



1. A blind monk
2. A suspicious look
3. Shooting an arrow

What is this person feeling or doing?  
How sure are you about your guess?

**Clip:**



1. A marathon runner
2. A desperate blind man
3. An American politician jogging with bodyguards

What is this person feeling or doing?  
How sure are you about your guess?



1. A marathon runner
2. A desperate blind man
3. An American politician jogging with bodyguards

# What is this person feeling or doing? How sure are you about your guess?

## Clip:



1. A bride says, "I do!"
2. A woman in a pub
3. A woman complains about a parking ticket

What is this person feeling or doing?  
How sure are you about your guess?



1. A bride says, "I do!"
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What is this person feeling or doing?  
How sure are you about your guess?

**Clip:**



1. A woman eats maggots with disgust
2. A woman lowers her head in shame
3. A woman is happy about someone else's failure

What is this person feeling or doing?  
How sure are you about your guess?



1. A woman eats maggots with disgust
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# Bottom Line

You see: facial expressions and gestures can't always be clearly interpreted!



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You see: facial expressions and gestures can't always be clearly interpreted!

More information (about the situation, what you already know about the person, asking directly) should be consulted so that you can interpret facial expressions and gestures better.

Background

# What's this all about?

People who have experienced mental health difficulties can have (but don't necessarily have to):

- problems identifying others' emotional expressions (for example, joy or sadness)

# What's this all about?

People who have experienced mental health difficulties can have (but don't necessarily have to):

- problems identifying others' emotional expressions (for example, joy or sadness)
- difficulties understanding why others may act a certain way

# Exercise

## (Examples in Everyday Life)

Goal:

Practice using several sources of information to identify other's emotions using examples from everyday life

## Example in Everyday Life

During an appointment, the doctor has a stern, serious expression and an intense stare.

**Why?**

# Example in Everyday Life

During an appointment, the doctor has a stern, serious expression and an intense stare.

## **Why?**

- Is he/she angry?
- Or maybe very focussed?

...

## Example in Everyday Life

A person close to you (for example, a family member) comes over for a visit but is very quiet and doesn't say very much.

**Why?**



# Example in Everyday Life

A person close to you (for example, a family member) comes over for a visit but is very quiet and doesn't say very much.

## **Why?**

- Is the person bored?
- Is the person angry about being here?
- Or sad?
- Maybe the person doesn't know what to say?
- Or is the person tired?

## Example in Everyday Life

At soccer practice, the coach complains about a mistake you made.

**Why?**

# Example in Everyday Life

At soccer practice, the coach complains about a mistake you made.

## **Why?**

- Does he not like you and wants to kick you off the team?
- Did he overreact?
- Maybe he is very busy or stressed and easily irritated?
- Does he usually complain a lot in general?

...

## Example in Everyday Life

A stranger smiles at you while walking down the street.

**Why?**

# Example in Everyday Life

A stranger smiles at you while walking down the street.

## **Why?**

- Is she listening to her favorite song?
- Is she on her way to meet her best friend?
- Did you make her smile?

...

# Example in Everyday Life

Your boss lets you go home early.

**Why?**

# Example in Everyday Life

Your boss lets you go home early.

## **Why?**

- Is he in a good mood because your project was successful?
- Did he notice that you seem very tired?
- Is he generally generous with his employees?

...

# Example in Everyday Life

A woman looks at her cell phone and smiles.

**Why?**



# Example in Everyday Life

A woman looks at her cell phone and smiles.

## **Why?**

- Is she watching a funny video?
- Did she get a message from a friend?
- Has a package that she ordered been delivered?

...

## Example in Everyday Life

A man lets you go before him in the checkout line in the grocery store.

**Why?**

## Example in Everyday Life

A man lets you go before him in the checkout line in the grocery store.

### **Why?**

- Is he just a nice person?
- Did he notice that you were in a hurry but he himself has plenty of time?
- Did you let him go before you last week and he wants to return the favor?

...

# Example in Everyday Life

**Are you familiar with this?**  
**Do you have your own examples?**

# Learning Objectives

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- It's often not easy to correctly identify others' emotions.

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- Facial expressions and body language give important clues about others' emotions. But they can also be misleading!

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- It's often not easy to correctly identify others' emotions.
- Facial expressions and body language give important clues about others' emotions. But they can also be misleading!
- It's important to be familiar with others or observe them carefully before judging how they feel.



# Learning Objectives

- When gauging others' feelings, we should always look for as many clues as possible, for example:
  - Facial expressions and body language
  - Situation or surroundings
  - What the other person is saying

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- When gauging others' feelings, we should always look for as many clues as possible, for example:
  - Facial expressions and body language
  - Situation or surroundings
  - What the other person is saying
- **When we ourselves are under stress, it can be especially hard to identify how others feel!**

# Closing Round

What's your takeaway from today's session?

Thank you for your  
participation!

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