

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: Finding Explanations

Exercise

Goal:

Find as many explanations for an event as possible

Lisa and Maria have plans together today.
Lisa doesn't show up.

Why didn't Lisa come?

???

Reasons

Why didn't Lisa come?

Possible explanations from Maria...

- Maria isn't important to Lisa. This wouldn't have happened to someone else.
- Lisa is forgetful – she lost track of time.
- Lisa's car broke down.

Reasons

Why didn't Lisa come?

Possible explanations from Maria...

- Maria isn't important to Lisa. This wouldn't have happened to someone else. → **Maria herself**
- Lisa is forgetful – she lost track of time. → **others**
- Lisa's car broke down. → **situation or coincidence**

Bottom Line

- There are many different possible reasons for the described situation.
- If we don't have enough information, we shouldn't be too quick to assume something.

Background

Finding Explanations

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Are you familiar with this?

Finding Explanations

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This is known as **attribution style**.

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There can be several different causes for one single event!

Training Session Goals

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- Consider possible factors that contribute to certain situations.
- Don't choose one explanation too quickly.
- Be aware that several different factors often can contribute to one situation at the same time.
- Discuss the possible consequences of certain attribution styles.

Exercise

Goal:

Practice looking for different explanations for an event

Alex failed a test.

Explore possible reasons for this

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Alex himself?

Another person or other people?

Circumstances or coincidences?

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Possible explanation:

Alex didn't study enough for the test. Besides that, his teacher is very tough and made the test very difficult. And because Alex didn't sleep well the night before, he couldn't concentrate during the test.

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→ Alex himself, the teacher, and the circumstances all played a role

Sophie couldn't sleep well last night.

Explore possible reasons for this

Sophie herself?

Another person or other people?

Circumstances or coincidences?

Sophie couldn't sleep well last night.

Possible reasons (several causes at the same time):

Sophie couldn't sleep well last night.

Possible explanation:

Sophie has a lot on her mind lately (for example, she is worried about the future). Moreover, her roommate was making a lot of noise during the night. There was also a loud storm going on outside.

→ Sophie herself, her roommate and the circumstances all played a role.

Hannah bought John a gift.

Explore possible reasons for this

Hannah herself?

John?

Circumstances or coincidences?

Hannah bought John a gift.

Possible reasons (several causes at the same time):

People stop talking when Ben enters the room.

Explore possible reasons for this

Ben himself?

Another person or other people?

Circumstances or coincidences?

People stop talking when Ben enters the room.

Possible reasons (several causes at the same time):

Someone tells John that he looks exhausted.

Explore possible reasons for this

John himself?

Another person or other people?

Circumstances or coincidences?

Someone tells John that he looks exhausted.

Possible reasons (several causes at the same time):

Jasmine wins a game.

Explore possible reasons for this

Jasmine herself?

Another person or other persons?

Circumstances or coincidences?

Jasmine wins a game.

Possible reasons (several causes at the same time):

Background

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= **Attribution style**

Unhelpful Explanatory Tendencies

Making it a habit to **always** find one-sided explanations can lead to problems in the long run, for example:

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Making it a habit to **always** find one-sided explanations can lead to problems in the long run, for example:

- conflicts with other people if you always blame others for bad things
- low self-esteem if you always blame yourself for bad things.

Exercise

(Examples in Everyday Life)

Goal:

Explore different explanations for common events

Example in Everyday Life: One-Sided Explanations

Event: Others laugh while you talk.

One-sided explanation: I am being laughed at.

Alternative explanation?

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Can you relate to this?

Would anyone like to share a similar experience?

Example in Everyday Life: One-Sided Explanations

Event: You can't find your watch in your room.

One-sided explanation: Someone has stolen the watch.

Alternative explanation?

Example in Everyday Life: One-Sided Explanations

Event: You can't find your watch in your room.

One-sided explanation: Someone has stolen the watch.

Alternative explanation: You had hidden the watch in the cupboard so that nobody could see it. You forgot about this.

Can you relate to this?

Example in Everyday Life: One-Sided Explanations

Event: While you're riding the bus, a stranger says something unfriendly to you.

One-sided explanation: The person wants to do something bad to you.

Alternative explanation?

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Or: Just coincidence – maybe this person is under a lot of stress.

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Or: Only coincidence - you came by at the exact same moment when he opened the bag of candy.

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Others are not **always** to blame if something goes wrong – just as we ourselves are not **always** to blame if something doesn't work out!

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- Always think through several possibilities that could contribute to a situation or event (especially self/others/circumstances).
- In everyday life we should try to judge situations realistically:
Others are not **always** to blame if something goes wrong – just as we ourselves are not **always** to blame if something doesn't work out!
- Usually several different factors contribute to an event or occurrence.

Closing Round

What's your takeaway from today's session?

Thank you for your
participation!