

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)



# Metacognitive Training (MCT)



**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

# Finding Explanations

Some people have the tendency to **always** blame themselves.

→ Reason = me

# Finding Explanations

Some people have the tendency to **always** blame themselves.

→ Reason = me

Others have the tendency to **always** blame others.

→ Reason = others

# Finding Explanations

Some people have the tendency to **always** blame themselves.

→ Reason = me

Others have the tendency to **always** blame others.

→ Reason = others

**Are you familiar with this?**

# Finding Explanations

Some people have the tendency to **always** blame themselves.

→ Reason = me

Others have the tendency to **always** blame others.

→ Reason = others

This is known as **attribution style**.

# Finding Explanations

Some people have the tendency to **always** blame themselves.

→ Reason = me

Others have the tendency to **always** blame others.

→ Reason = others

This is known as **attribution style**.

**There can be several different causes for one single event!**

# Training Session Goals

# Session Goals

- 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

# Alex failed a test.

Explore possible reasons for this

**Alex himself?**

**Another person or other people?**

**Circumstances or coincidences?**

# Alex failed a test.

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.

# Alex failed a test.

## 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.

**→ 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

# Bottom Line

As discussed, situations can have very different causes.

# Bottom Line

As discussed, situations can have very different causes.

Moreover, several factors are often involved **at the same time**.

# Bottom Line

As discussed, situations can have very different causes.

Moreover, several factors are often involved **at the same time**.

Nevertheless, many people often prefer one-sided explanations (for example, blaming others rather than themselves, or the other way around).

# Bottom Line

As discussed, situations can have very different causes.

Moreover, several factors are often involved **at the same time**.

Nevertheless, many people often prefer one-sided explanations (for example, blaming others rather than themselves, or the other way around).

= **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:

# Unhelpful Explanatory Tendencies

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

# Unhelpful Explanatory Tendencies

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?**

# Example in Everyday Life: One-Sided Explanations

**Event:** Others laugh while you talk.

**One-sided explanation:** I am being laughed at.

**Alternative explanation:** Coincidence – someone told a joke at the same time.

# Example in Everyday Life: One-Sided Explanations

**Event:** Others laugh while you talk.

**One-sided explanation:** I am being laughed at.

**Alternative explanation:** Coincidence – someone told a joke at the same time.

**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?**

## 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:** This person is always unfriendly.

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

# 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:** This person is always unfriendly.

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

**Can you relate to this?**

# Example in Everyday Life: One-Sided Explanations

**Event:** A fellow patient gives you candy.

**One-sided explanation:** It's only because he is thoughtful and nice.

**Alternative explanation?**

# Example in Everyday Life: One-Sided Explanations

**Event:** A fellow patient gives you candy.

**One-sided explanation:** It's only because he is thoughtful and nice.

**Alternative explanation:** You are also always nice to him and have often helped him.

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

# Example in Everyday Life: One-Sided Explanations

**Event:** A fellow patient gives you candy.

**One-sided explanation:** It's only because he is thoughtful and nice.

**Alternative explanation:** You are also always nice to him and have often helped him.

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

**Can you relate to this?**

# Learning Objectives

# Learning Objectives

- Always think through several possibilities that could contribute to a situation or event (especially self/others/circumstances).

# Learning Objectives

- 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!

# Learning Objectives

- 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!