



From survival towards a meaningful life

Revion rehabilitation
workbook for clients



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FOR THE USER OF THE WORKBOOK

You are holding the Revion rehabilitation workbook, which you will be using during your rehabilitation. The exercises in this workbook have been compiled on the basis of our experience with Revion rehabilitation, and we have selected exercises we have used most frequently with our clients and found to be beneficial.

The first section of the workbook, *Where I am coming from and where I want to be*, provides information on ADHD, autism, the importance of your learning history, and psychological flexibility. This section also contains personal perspectives from autistic people and ADHDers. You can use the exercises in this section to stop and reflect on your own learning history and your journey towards today. You will also be able to think about the direction you want to head towards in future, and any obstacles you may face on this road. You can then define the objectives for your rehabilitation, in cooperation with your appointed worker.

The *Where I am coming from and where I want to be* section is followed by the *Skills training* section, which contains exercises and information related to various skill areas. The exercises will not be carried out systematically during the rehabilitation. Rather, the objectives of your rehabilitation steer the selection of which exercises to focus on and which matters to process in the different phases of your rehabilitation. Exercises beyond those included the workbook will also be used.

If you have any questions about the contents of the workbook or the exercises, you can ask your worker during the rehabilitation meetings. Some exercises will be carried out during your rehabilitation sessions, and others may be set as homework to be done between sessions. Make sure to bring your workbook to the rehabilitation meetings!

We wish to thank all our clients who have participated in the Revion rehabilitation. Your feedback has been instrumental in the development of the rehabilitation. Special thanks go to our clients who have produced text sections for this workbook, and to our supervisor, Kalle Partanen, for the expert support.

We hope that this workbook will support you as you take steps towards something important and meaningful in your life through rehabilitation.

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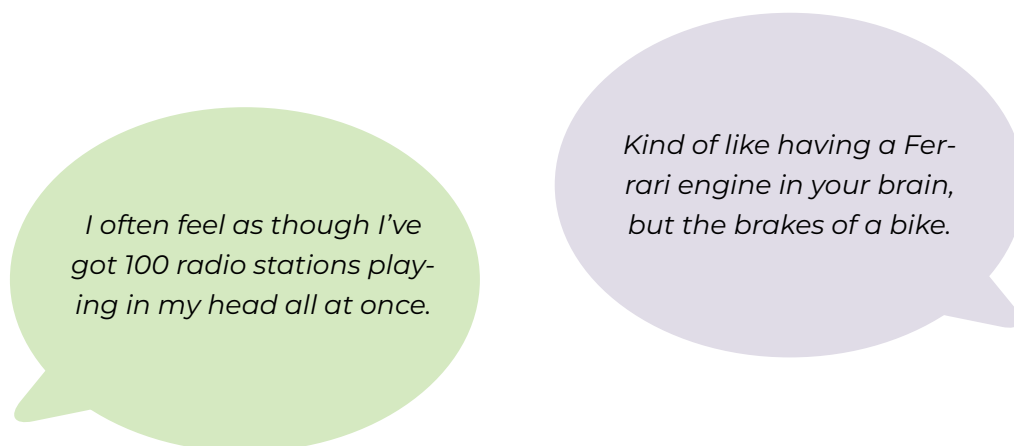
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The Revion rehabilitation is intended for neurodivergent people (ADHD, autism) and people with a criminal background, and its objective is to allow people to learn the skills required to live a good life according to their own values. The Revion rehabilitation and its remote rehabilitation form were developed in the Revion project (2021–2022), funded by the Ministry of Justice. The rehabilitation model was developed in the 'Legal protection and rehabilitation 2020' (Oikeusturva ja kuntoutus kuntoon 2020) project (STEA, 2018–2020).

WHERE I COME FROM AND WHERE I WANT TO BE

ADHD

ADHD (attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder) covers difficulties with concentration, hyperactivity, and impulsive behaviour, which are manifested differently in different people. Some may have more difficulties with concentration, others present hyperactivity and impulsivity, and some may have all of these. The traits alone do not mean challenges with everyday life, as they have many positive sides that may be used to stand out.



ADHD is often associated with difficulties remembering things and planning, carrying out and assessing one's own actions (difficulties with executive functions). Starting tasks, setting goals, proceeding systematically, and long-term work may be difficult. Carrying out tasks that are monotonous or are boring may feel exasperatingly difficult. Variation, for example taking breaks or alternating between two different tasks, may help in being able to complete boring tasks.

ADHDers often experience emotions quite strongly, and their feelings may shift rapidly. Strong or even uncontrollable reactions to emotions (difficulties with emotional regulation) are common. Adults often feel that the thing that most harms their life is impulsive behaviour, along with difficulties with emotional regulation, concentration, and executive functions. Similar impulsivity and challenges with concentration and emotional regulation may be also experienced by people without ADHD, because these traits are affected by many kinds of factors. However, these traits are part of ADHDers from early age in some form.

At best, ADHDers can be energetic, creative, innovative, and enthusiastic. They are more curious than most, and able to concentrate on things that interest them with passion. They can often be immersed in interesting things in a goal-oriented fashion in the long term. Living in the moment and a strong emotional life, both typical of ADHDers, are often also considered attractive features, and such people often find it easy to form new relationships.

HOW COULD DIFFICULTIES WITH THE REGULATION OF ACTIVITY MANIFEST

- ♦ You feel inner restlessness
- ♦ You feel the need to move around, and you find it difficult to sit still
- ♦ You need to do several things at the same time
- ♦ Your energy levels vary from being hyperactive to hypoaroused (passivity, difficulty getting started)
- ♦ You speak up more than others, and you may have been told that you speak too loudly

HOW COULD DIFFICULTIES WITH EMOTIONAL REGULATION MANIFEST

- ♦ Your emotional reactions are very intense (e.g. anger or excitement that is disproportionate to the situation)
- ♦ Your moods vary quickly
- ♦ Your relationships begin and end quickly
- ♦ You are easily burdened and your stress level is often high
- ♦ You worry about things constantly and easily get caught up in your negative thoughts
- ♦ You experience depression and anxiety

HOW COULD DIFFICULTIES WITH ATTENTION REGULATION MANIFEST

- ♦ You are easily distracted by environmental stimuli (e.g. sounds, movement)
- ♦ You get lost in your thoughts when you should be focusing on something else
- ♦ You often misplace your belongings or forget to bring them with you
- ♦ You are absent-minded
- ♦ You are often late or turn up at the wrong time
- ♦ You find it difficult to understand and/or follow the instructions provided
- ♦ You often leave tasks unfinished
- ♦ You find it hard to stop doing something you find particularly interesting

HOW COULD IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOUR MANIFEST

- ♦ You are impatient
- ♦ You interrupt others in the middle of what they are doing
- ♦ You talk over others or answer before the question has been finished
- ♦ You do things quickly and without thinking
- ♦ You are an adventure-seeker and often act based on what brings you immediate reward and pleasure

ADHD KIROUS VAI RIKKAUS

"ADHD, kirous vai rikkaus, ADHD, akuutti flippaus,
ADHD, kirous vai rikkaus, ADHD, akuutti flippaus"

Mokailen täyttäes, lomakkeitt, lompakos tuntuu, tuli hakemus kustuu
Aivot tuotti pelkkää tuhnuu, oma vika ku niihin luotti,
Saatanan kela, kelas eka, kelas vika, kyykyttävä byrokratia sika, kylmät tunteet tuli nuhteet
Meitsi parastaan panee, ja kela täti ragee,
lähen hanee oravanpyörää, mis lyötyä lyödään, elävältä syödään, kuoppanen tie, mihin mua vie

"ADHD, kirous vai rikkaus, ADHD, akuutti flippaus,
ADHD, kirous vai rikkaus, ADHD, akuutti flippaus"

E masiksee vajoa, Ei lekuri päähäni kajoa, sekoilen, virtapiirit, väärinpäin mesoilen,
näin tän näin, aivosolut päittäin, lääkitystä päivittäin,
kaasu on jarru, jarru on kaasu, meno taattu, syntymälahjaks saatu,
sielus tuikkii kipinä lelut paskaks skidinä,
ylivilkkaus kirous vai rikkaus, laulunaihe, ässänä hihassa, piikkinä lihassa,
kuoppanen tie, mihin mua vie

"ADHD, kirous vai rikkaus, ADHD, akuutti flippaus,
ADHD, kirous vai rikkaus, ADHD, akuutti flippaus"

Kaks puolta kolikolla, ennen vanhaa poltettii roviolla, tylsää tosikolla,
niin tai näin, tarpeeks ku koheltaa, ni ADHD, todetaa,
kovempaa, kovempaa eikä pysty lopettaa, elämä opettaa
joopa joo, ei tää Via Dolorosa, oo,
ADHD, ja PsykoGee käsi kädes, kulkee,
kuka muuta väittää julkee, kaks sanaa turpa umpee, et taida mua tuntee
kuoppanen tie, mihin mua vie

"ADHD, kirous vai rikkaus, ADHD, akuutti flippaus,
ADHD, kirous vai rikkaus, ADHD, akuutti flippaus"

PsykoGee

The lyrics are in the original Finnish,
and have not been translated.

Autism

Autistic and neurotypical people have different ways of perceiving the world. This difference could be compared to phone operating systems that work in different ways, such as iOS vs. Android. Autistic people have to cope in a world built for neurotypical people, or from the perspective of a different operating system.

Autistic people may have a quite different way of interacting with others to that of neurotypical people. Their interests and leisure activities may also differ from their peers, and they may find it difficult to find people with similar interests in prison, for example.

Many autistic people have consciously learned to act as neurotypical people do (masking), and have used deduction to figure out unwritten rules related to social situations, which neurotypical people find obvious, for example. Even when the challenges with interaction are not visible on the outside, this conscious deduction process may be very burdening.

Autistic people tend to associate a single meaning with matters, which makes it more difficult to understand or acknowledge the changes in meanings between situations. An autistic person may, for example, have learned that crying means sadness, even though crying in another context may mean being moved, happiness, or joy.

Autistic people tend to pay more attention to details than the bigger picture of situations. This may make it more difficult to perceive the bigger picture. However, this allows them to focus on an individual task with considerable precision or learn a great deal of detailed information. Utilising previously learned information and experience may be difficult, which may make even a familiar place seem new if something changes, and require a new adjustment to the situation.

Like ADHD, autism manifests itself in many different ways in different people. All autistic people share, to some extent, differences in communication and social interaction, repetitive behavioural patterns and routines, and sensory processing differences. It should be remembered that like ADHD, autism is about a different way of experiencing and perceiving the world, not an illness that should be 'cured'.

HOW MIGHT AUTISTIC TRAITS MANIFEST IN YOUR INTERACTIONS, CONVERSATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS?

- ♦ You take things literally and may find it difficult to understand why others don't say things as they are.
- ♦ You may find it difficult to understand hidden messages in what other people say, or deduce the message if it was not said out loud.
- ♦ You are easily misunderstood and may be considered rude when you say things straight, for example.
- ♦ Other people get irritated by you, but you don't know why.
- ♦ Participating in conversations may be difficult: you may find it difficult to choose suitable topics, recognise and take your turn, or read other people's nonverbal communication to see whether they are interested in the topic.
- ♦ Interactions seem difficult to follow and predict, and it feels difficult to participate in them.
- ♦ You may find it difficult to perceive rules related to social situations or recognise what kind of behaviour is expected of you.
- ♦ You may find it difficult to understand the motives or perspectives of others, when they don't say them out loud.
- ♦ Others may not recognise your anxiety, anger, interest or pain, for example, because they find your emotional expression (gestures and facial expressions) difficult to interpret.
- ♦ Social situations feel overwhelming and you need time to recover from them.

HOW COULD AUTISTIC TRAITS BE REFLECTED IN THE WAY YOU BEHAVE

- ♦ You feel a strong need to maintain your routines and ways of doing things.
- ♦ You want to know exactly what will happen and what is expected of you in different situations (e.g. the need to know the progress, times, or participants of a situation).
- ♦ You adhere to agreements and rules carefully.
- ♦ Transition situations may feel difficult, particularly if you don't know exactly what will happen.
- ♦ You find it difficult to deal with everyday tasks that seem easy to others.
- ♦ You are particularly interested in a subject or subjects and would like to spend a lot of time on that subject or talking to others about it.
- ♦ You perceive the world in great detail and are more interested in details than others.
- ♦ You repeatedly use the same expressions or phrases when you speak.
- ♦ If your needs for stability and predictability are not met, you may experience very intense anxiety.

HOW COULD THE SENSORY REGULATION CHARACTERISTICS MANIFEST

- ♦ You are either hypersensitive or hyposensitive to various sensory stimuli, such as sounds, touch, smell and taste, as well as light, colours, temperatures or pain.
- ♦ A particular movement or other sensation may feel very soothing to you, and you may find yourself using it particularly in stressful situations.
- ♦ When you get really excited about something, you want to move in a certain way (e.g. jump or sway).
- ♦ Your sensory hyper or hyposensitivity may cause you to feel anxious or increase your stress level, and unpleasant sensory experiences can also be felt as physical pain.

EXPERIENCES OF AN AUTISTIC CLIENT

My characteristics related to autism have affected my everyday life, my studies, and in particular my social relationships. Mathematics has been difficult for me, but I have found many kinds of memorising assignments easy, and I remember new things easily. I have found tasks that require manual skills to be the most challenging for me both in my studies and in everyday chores. I have also faced this challenge while in prison. Sometimes, getting dressed and taking care of my appearance have also been more difficult for me, and others have commented on it.

Being assigned routines and rules from higher up has made things feel easier in prison. My days and weeks have had a clear structure, which feels natural. My daily rhythm used to be a mess, but now I go to sleep in the evening and wake up in the morning. I have also learned to go to the gym regularly and to cook, both of which are skills that I intend to bring with me, along with the normal everyday rhythm, when I get out.

I have always found social situations to be unnerving, because normal discussions are not natural to me. Introducing myself to others, small talk, and handing out compliments are difficult for me, for example. I have always found it difficult to form and maintain friendships. These challenges with social situations have been with me even in the prison environment. Sometimes it feels difficult to meet new people and interact with them in prison. Due to these challenges with social situations, I have been left out of many social relationships in my life, which has had a negative effect on my view of myself and my feelings, and eventually led to the crime I committed.

I feel that I have benefited from the prison environment and that I have been on a ward suitable for me, which has allowed me to learn to live as part of a community. The Revion rehabilitation has made me better prepared for facing social situations, even though the feelings of nervousness are still there.



The effects of the learning history on the present

The kind of people we are today (the way we act in different situations and react to various things in our environment) is a result of our innate characteristics and our life experiences.

We have all had our own way of reacting to stimuli in our environment since we were born. Some of us are innately more curious about new things, while others prefer to keep a distance from new things. Some feel strong emotions quickly, while others don't. ADHD and autism are also innate characteristics. These characteristics in themselves are neither problematic or unproblematic. Rather, the important thing is whether or not an individual's characteristics are compatible with the support and requirements of their environment. For example, a child who is innately easily burdened and grows up in a restless childhood environment is more likely to get anxious easily as an adult, compared to the same child being allowed to grow in a calm and less burdening environment.

The relationship with the adult caring for them, such as a parent or other guardian, is an important factor in shaping the child's personality. This is known as an attachment bond. The adult caring for the child must recognise the child's needs and different emotions, and react to them as best they can. This way, the child will learn the significance of emotions in social interaction and in communicating their needs (e.g. when I cry → I am comforted). The child also learns that emotions are temporary and acceptable experiences. The child will also learn to regulate their own feelings gradually, in interaction with an adult.

Sometimes, however, the characteristics of the carer and the child are not compatible. It can then be difficult for the adult to interpret the child's needs and react to them in the way the child needs. The carer may also not have the ability to regulate and accept their own feelings, which makes it more difficult to accept the child's feelings and teach them emotional regulation (e.g. getting angry at the child or belittling the child's feelings when they are crying).

In addition to our innate characteristics and attachment bond, we are affected by our other life experiences, such as a new relationship, success in a hobby, or the overall safety/lack of safety of the living environment. The feedback we have previously received from our environment, such as encouragement or belittlement, affects how we act today and how we see ourselves.

Sometimes, we experience very difficult or even life-threatening traumatic events in our lives. They can be individual events, such as being the object of violence or the death of a loved one, or repeated traumatic events, such as being bullied at school or domestic violence. These kinds of intense events change the way our body and mind react to our environment, for example by setting up our body to be constantly alert. After a traumatic event, things that were previously perceived as neutral may begin to cause fear or anxiety. Negative life experiences may expose a person to many kinds of mental health disorders, such as anxiety and mood disorders, or the use of intoxicants. For many, intoxicant use serves as a coping mechanism and fulfils the aim of stifling thoughts and emotions brought on by difficult experiences.

***Regardless of our learning history,
it does not define what we can do.***

YOUR LIFE HISTORY

1. Draw a line down the centre of the paper to represent your life history.
2. Write on it central life events, phases, and changes, starting with your birth and continuing to today.
3. Mark down your greatest moments and most difficult crises.
4. Write the names of people important to you to the various phases of your life.
5. What strengths do you find in your past?

Psychological flexibility

Have you ever done something that was important to you, even though it stirred up difficult emotions and thoughts? How willing are you to face unpleasant thoughts, emotions, memories, and bodily sensations (internal experiences)? Psychological flexibility means the willingness to face difficult internal experiences in a way that supports your progress towards your goals and targets.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY SKILLS CAN BE SUMMARISED IN THESE THREE POINTS:

1. The ability to face thoughts and emotions as they are
 - ♦ making room for all kinds of thoughts and emotions
 - ♦ thoughts and emotions are allowed to come and go freely
 - ♦ not judging, keeping your distance, and not reacting
2. Being present in the moment involves the ability to consciously participate in this moment and focus on what you are doing
 - ♦ awareness of your thoughts and emotions is part of the ability to be present
3. The ability to recognise what is important and meaningful to you, and to act accordingly in your everyday life
 - ♦ the ability to set goals derived from your values and to commit to working towards them

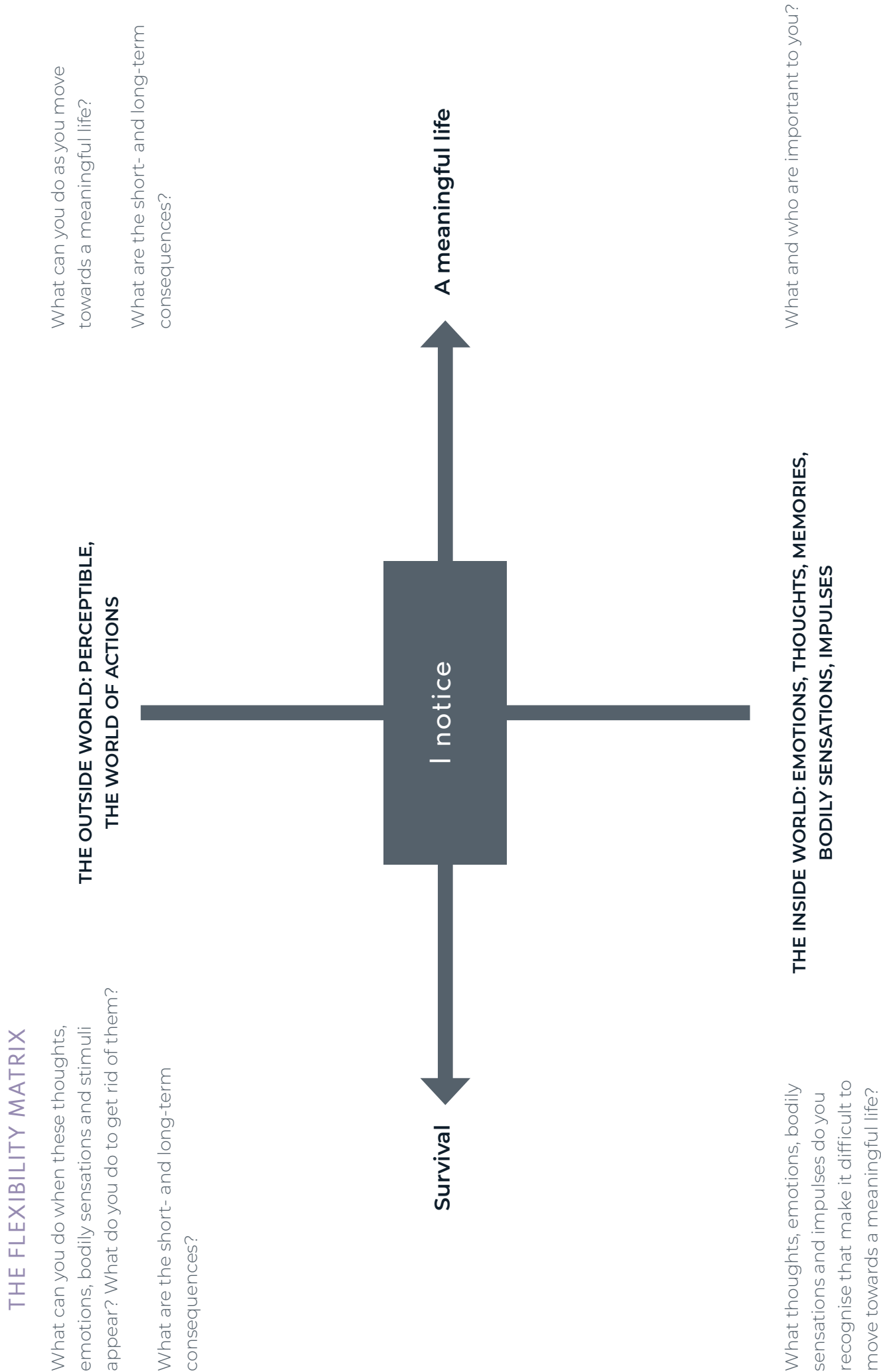
THE FLEXIBILITY MATRIX

The *flexibility matrix* on the next page shows the aspects of psychological flexibility. It will allow you to reflect on your own experience from a distance and from a new perspective.

The purpose of the flexibility matrix is to:

- help you recognise why you act the way you do in challenging situations;
- increase your freedom to choose actions which are in line with your goals and values;
- help you distinguish between your internal and external experiences;
- help you recognise what is happening in your internal and external worlds when you face a challenging situation.

Internal experiences refer to thoughts, memories, emotions, bodily sensations, and impulses, while external experiences refer to experiences arising through the five senses. The flexibility matrix allows you to see the actions you have carried out in order to avoid difficult internal experiences (coping) and the actions that will take you towards something important (meaningful life).



My goals

Enter your rehabilitation goals in the spaces below, and use the numbered scales to assess your initial situation regarding your goal and the target situation you wish to reach. Describe your initial situation and target situation in words below the scales. You can review your initial situation, current situation and target situation along the way.

Consider whether your objectives follow the SMART principle:

Specific – Has the objective been clearly defined?

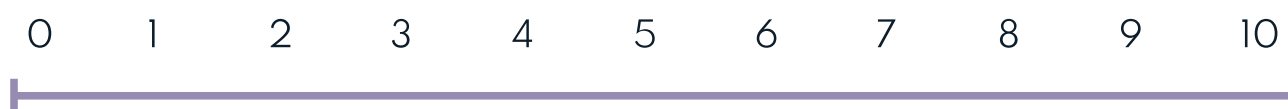
Measurable – How do I know whether something has changed?

Attainable – Is it possible to achieve this objective during rehabilitation?

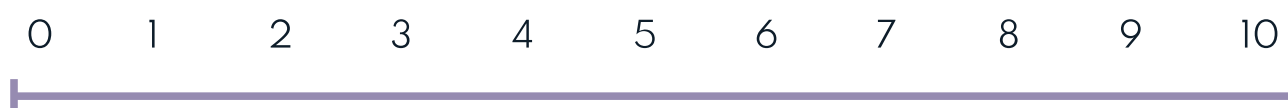
Relevant – Is my objective meaningful, and does it lead towards a meaningful life?

Time-limited – Is the change current and has a schedule been set for it?

My goal 1:



My goal 2:



SKILLS TRAINING



Clarifying values and committing to values-based action

What do you want your life to be like? What kinds of things do you want to spend your time on? If you are thinking about these questions, you are thinking about your values. Values simply mean the things that are important to you. Values answer the questions of what kind of person you want to be, and which ways of being and doing are important to you. Values can be used as a kind of a compass to indicate the right direction for building your own good life.

Clarifying values is important, because they guide your behaviour in relation to yourself, your family, other people, work, studying, wellbeing, and a host of other things. If you haven't identified your values, you may be lacking direction for your life or find it difficult to see alternatives to your actions. Sometimes, rules related to a criminal lifestyle or the prison community, for example, may be mixed with your own values.

Sometimes, internal and external obstacles get in the way of carrying out actions according to your goals and values. External obstacles may include financial issues, getting out of prison with no apartment, a burdening environment that doesn't meet your individual needs, such as a studying environment that burdens the senses or ability to concentrate, for example. Through its attitudes and ability to consider different ways of acting and interacting, your environment can either support or prevent you acting according to your values. Internal obstacles may include difficult emotions, impulses, negative interpretations, and disapproving thoughts. Means used to avoid, suppress or get rid of emotions and thoughts may lead to momentary relief, but in the longer term, they are harmful and strengthen negative internal experiences. Therefore, it is important to reflect on how actions taken in everyday life and familiar solutions have worked: have they taken you further from or closer to the things that are important to you and your goals.

Difficulties with executive functions and/or concentration, as well as inexperience in everyday or social skills may also prevent you from acting according to your values. Executive functions are particularly necessary in situations where you are learning new things and do not yet have a clear way of acting. In practice, executive functions are involved in almost everything we do. Challenges with executive functions may be manifested in many ways, such as the lack of initiative, difficulties getting started with things, or challenges with perceiving the steps necessary for reaching a goal. Challenges with executive functions can also present as getting stuck in a certain action, or repeating the same mistakes, due to the difficulty of finding alternative strategies.



IDENTIFY YOUR TEN MOST IMPORTANT VALUES

Identify your ten most important values in the list. This list is not exhaustive, and you can add to it if you feel that a value important to you is missing.

How are these values manifested in your life?

responsibility	elegance	positivity
accuracy	pleasure	practicality
adventurousness	enthusiasm	professionalism
selflessness	equality	caution
ambition	excitement	quality
self-confidence	fairness	punctuality
authenticity	trust	safety
balance	family-orientation	self-fulfilment
communality	presence	self-control
courage	freedom	self-confidence
calmness	kindness	sensitivity
carefulness	generosity	competence
challenge	mercy	simplicity
commitment	development	stability
compassion	happiness	speed
competitiveness	health	spontaneity
consistency	helpfulness	permanence
satisfaction	honesty	success
control	respect	support
cooperation	humility	sobriety
flawlessness	independence	gratitude
politeness	inventiveness	thoroughness
creativity	perception	consideration
curiosity	intelligence	tolerance
determination	justice	tradition
reliability	love	realism
dedication	loyalty	understanding
industriousness	goal orientation	uniqueness
discipline	obedience	consensus
freedom of choice	transparency	usefulness
economic efficiency	orderliness	vision
efficiency	originality	listening
effectiveness	patriotism	

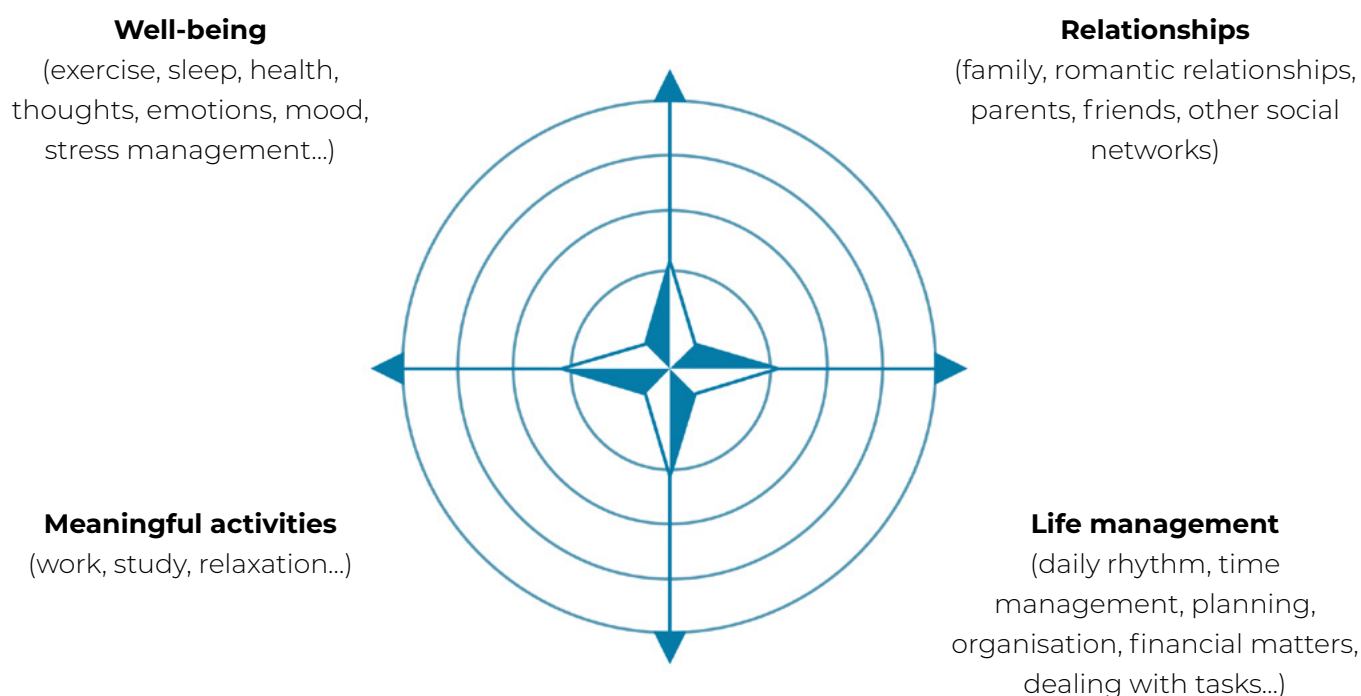
LIFE COMPASS

Are you living as you would like to live? How happy are you with the different aspects of your life?

The following image shows the life compass with four directions. Colour more rings for the aspects of life mentioned on the compass that you are happier with. Start colouring from the centre outwards. Think about what is actually possible in your current life situation.

For example, you may be dissatisfied with the circumstances of your life but happy with how you are tackling them. Or, you may be dissatisfied with your health if you have a severe illness, but feel that you are doing everything you currently can about it. Or you may be unhappy with the behaviour of a friend but be satisfied with the way you behave towards them.

This exercise is not about comparing your situation to the perfect or ideal situation, but rather about considering what is possible in your life right now.



How much colour did your compass pick up? In which areas of your life are you most satisfied with your own actions? What kinds of things make your everyday life more meaningful, and what important things are they related to?

Most people feel that they don't always act as they would want to, and their compass is left largely uncoloured. What kinds of things could you add to your compass? Again, think about what is possible, rather than what would be perfect or ideal.

IMPLEMENTING VALUES IN PRACTICE

Use the 'Identify your ten most important values' exercise to identify your three most important values. When you have done so, think about actions that would implement these values in your everyday life, as well as any obstacles that may make these actions more difficult. You can also use the Life compass exercise on the previous page.

MY THREE MOST IMPORTANT VALUES	ACTIONS in line with this value	POSSIBLE OBSTACLES that make it difficult to carry out these actions
<i>Example: With respect</i>	<i>Example: I ask someone for their opinion on a matter and show them that I am listening to what they say.</i>	<i>Example: Feeling annoyed by what the other person said because I disagree.</i>

Next, assess on a scale of 0–100 how likely you think it will be that you carry out one or more actions according to your values within the next week.

0 _____ 100
Not at all likely Very likely

Actions in line with my values that I intend to carry out over the next week:

ACTION PLAN FOR CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

ACTION PLAN	
THE CHALLENGING SITUATION: • Being released • Lack of routines • Homelessness • Unemployment • End of a relationship • Financial difficulties • Falling ill • The loss of a loved one • Other, what?	My values that I hope will be evident in this situation
RISKY BEHAVIOUR • Drinking too much alcohol • Using drugs • Isolating yourself from others • Stopping exercising • Watching too much television • Playing video games or online games excessively • Gambling • Not getting enough sleep • Missing work/school • Dwelling on things • Sleeping too much • Avoiding certain situations or people • Not taking care of yourself • Giving up on your goals • Blaming yourself • Blaming others • Keeping your problems to yourself • Using violence • Committing crimes • Other, what?	Skills I have learned that I can use in this situation
	Advice to myself – remember these three things! 1. 2. 3.

Keep this action plan at hand in case of challenging situations!

Contact with the present moment and flexible attention

Mindful awareness and acceptance means pausing in the present moment without judging or trying to change our internal or external experiences in any way. Contact in the present moment means, for example, sitting on your bed, hearing the sounds around you, and feeling the bed under you and the floor under your feet. Being fully present with all of your senses in what you do and where you are. You can sense tension, tingling, heat, or coldness in your body, while being aware of how your mind wanders, your breathing, or an emotion that is present at this time. Mindful awareness can also take the form of an activity. For example, when you are focusing on your posture and the muscles needed for movements at the gym. All of these observations are ways of practicing being in the present moment. Our ability to be mindfully present varies from one situation and moment to the next. It can be influenced by our emotional state, environmental distractions, and our own energy levels, for example.

We cannot choose the thoughts our minds produce or the feelings we experience. However, we can influence how we react to these thoughts and feelings. Awareness of our emotions and thoughts allows us to better regulate our behaviour (do things that are important to us) even when we experience uncomfortable emotions and thoughts. Mindful awareness therefore aims to allow you to react to your thoughts and emotions in new ways, and not to silence the mind or erase the emotions. Practising mindful awareness and acceptance can, however, help us to let go of the struggle against our own thoughts and feelings, which is the struggle that causes us suffering.



SHOVELLING IN A HOLE

Imagine you are walking across a meadow full of holes. Eventually, you will fall into one of the holes and will want to try to get out. You have a backpack with you, and you look at what is inside. There is a spade. You start digging your way out of the hole with the spade. You dig and dig. What happens? The more you dig, the deeper the hole gets. You are stuck at the bottom of the ever deepening hole, and blame yourself for being there. The situation may seem hopeless: digging will not get you out of the hole, but rather will make the hole deeper. Why don't you stop digging? Can you put the spade down and stop? This way, you won't make your hole any deeper, at least.

Mindfulness awareness skills and concentration are closely linked. If you find concentrating to be difficult, the spotlight of your attention may shift uncontrollably from one thing to the next – perhaps, while reading this, your attention has shifted onto a voice you heard around you or your own thoughts. In order to improve our concentration, we can practise consciously observing where our attention is and flexibly moving it to something else.

Practising flexible attention begins with learning to observe what our attention lies on at any one time. When we have learned to recognise the object of our attention, we can learn to consciously return it to a thing we want to concentrate on. Learning present-moment awareness skills can therefore improve our ability to concentrate, in addition to improving our emotional regulation skills.

Practising present-moment awareness skills is like going to the gym. At first, it is difficult, and we will have to start with easy exercises. The more we practise, the easier it becomes. As your skills become automated, you don't need to think of the movement of every muscle individually. As with gym training, mindful awareness and acceptance training is never complete, and you need to maintain the skills regularly throughout your life.



THE SPOTLIGHT OF ATTENTION

Our attention is like a spotlight. It can be like a floodlight beam lighting a wide area, or it can point to a single thing, like a laser beam. In terms of our concentration, emotional regulation, and all goal-oriented activities, it makes a difference at what and how we direct our attention. What you shine the spotlight of your attention on is shown clearly, and everything else stays in the dark. Just like a torch beam, you can direct your attention at yourself: your thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations. You can also direct it at your environment or your sensations: what can you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel around you.

For those experiencing anxiety, the spotlight may be focused on fears and threats, which leaves no room for things that increase safety and wellbeing. Those experiencing social anxiety may only pay attention to negative comments from others, leaving all kind words and gestures in the dark. This kind of focus maintains problems and prevents them from being changed. However, the problem does not lie in thoughts, emotions, memories, or other internal events, but in focusing all of one's attention on these and not leaving any room for anything else.

Observe your own spotlight of attention in different situations.

How wide is your beam?

What kinds of things usually take up most of it?

What do you notice, and what might you overlook?

If your spotlight shines on events inside your mind, try to refocus it on what is on the outside: what can you see, hear, or smell.

How do the issues in the spotlight affect your feelings?



USING THE SENSES TO CONNECT WITH THE PRESENT MOMENT

Focus on noticing your sensory experiences. This exercise helps you to concentrate and connect with your surroundings. Do the exercise a few times every day, particularly when you find yourself lost in your thoughts or emotions. You will notice how the exercise brings you back to the present moment. Spend about 30 seconds on each sense.

Follow these steps:

First, observe what you **see** when you look around you.

Then concentrate on listening to the **sounds**.

Take note of the different **scents** you can smell.

Notice what you can **taste** in your mouth.

Then notice what you are **touching** and how it feels, how your clothes **feel** against your skin in the different parts of your body, or how the different parts of your body feel when they touch each other or the surface you are on.



NOTICING YOUR THOUGHTS

Notice your thoughts and take a step back. You can imagine yourself standing on a river bank, watching your thoughts written on leaves floating down the river. Or you can be sitting on the seashore and see your thoughts as waves, or standing by a motorway where the cars going by are your thoughts. Create an image that suits you. If a particular image annoys you or doesn't suit you, change it so that it works for you. Approach your thoughts with interest and curiosity. Allow your thoughts to come and go.

Be like a curious observer who wonders:

Where did this thought come from? Where is this thought going?

Try not to judge or criticise your thoughts. Simply notice them as thoughts, don't analyse them further or get caught up in them. However, if you find yourself caught up in a thought, simply take note of it and bring your attention back to observing your thoughts without judgement.

Also note that every thought that has come to your mind at some point has also left it at another point.

Carry on for a couple of minutes.



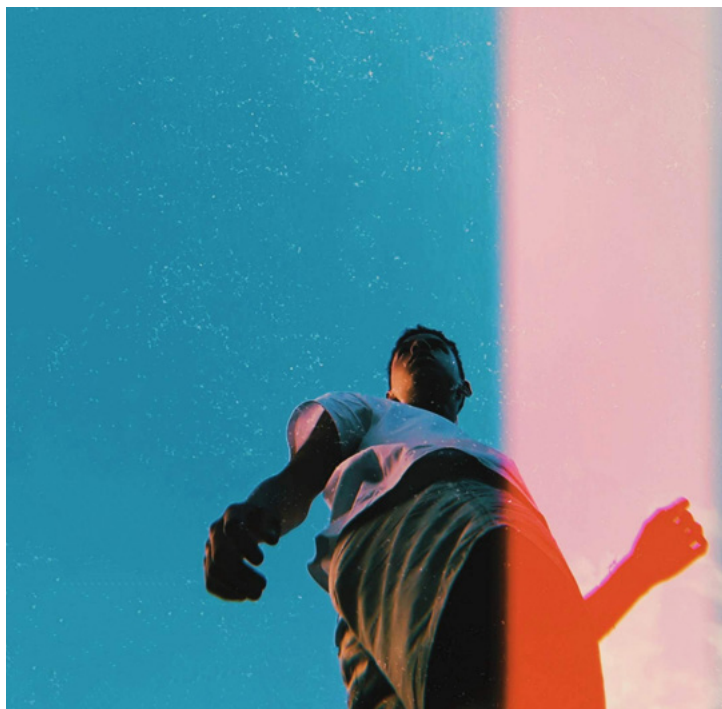
USING YOUR BREATH TO CONNECT WITH THE PRESENT MOMENT

Try to see how long it takes for a thought to enter your mind if you try to focus only on your breathing for a few minutes.

Close your eyes and begin concentrating on your breathing.

Notice which things (such as the sounds in your environment) and thoughts compete for your attention. Whenever you realise that your attention has strayed from your breathing, bring it back. Every time you notice your attention shifting is a victory.

You can use this exercise if you want to develop your ability to be present, or when you realise you've become lost in your thoughts.



BEING MINDFUL IN EVERYDAY SITUATIONS

You can practise mindfulness during many kinds of everyday activities, such as brushing your teeth, drinking coffee, eating, talking to someone, having a shower, or working out.

If you are doing the exercise during a workout, you can choose to do a specific part of the training or the whole session using mindfulness. Pay attention to these things:

- Observe your bodily sensations in connection with your movements, with no judgement.
- Notice how the movements and sensations change with exertion.
- Also note when your thoughts take you away.
- You can do some of the movements with your eyes closed, which can help you focus more effectively on the sensations in your body.



OBSERVING IMPULSES WITHOUT REACTING

Sit on a chair with your back straight. Pay attention to any impulses you notice inciting you to act for a few minutes. These might include the desire to change position, the desire to scratch a certain spot, or perhaps the desire to stop the exercise, for example. Simply observe these impulses and don't react to them.

- You can adjust the duration, starting with 20–30 seconds, and then gradually increasing the time.
- After the exercise:
 - How did you experience the exercise?
 - Were you able to simply observe the impulses?
 - Was it possible for you not to react to the impulses?

Practise observing impulses without reacting to them in different kinds of everyday situations.

- When eating, learn to recognise the impulse to bite. Do not react to this impulse, and when you have succeeded, make a conscious choice and bite the food.
- Whilst eating sweets, learn to recognise the impulse to bite, but don't act on it. Then, make a conscious choice to eat the sweet.
- In conversation situations, learn to recognise the impulse to talk. Don't react to it, and then make a conscious choice to participate in the conversation.
- You can also come up with your own ideas for situations in which you could learn to not react to impulses. When practising the observation of impulses without reacting to them, it is important to start with neutral situations.

My ideas for practising observing impulses without reacting to them:

Which of the exercises will I try out over the next week?

You can reflect on your experiences of practising the observation of impulses without reacting to them here:

DROP YOUR ANCHOR

Plant your feet firmly on the floor, as if you were dropping an anchor.

Press your feet into the floor. Notice the floor supporting you. Notice the muscle tension in your legs as you press your feet towards the floor. Notice the sense of gravity running from your head, along your spine, and to your legs and feet.

Notice your entire body. Breathe out slowly ten times and slow down your breathing. Breathe out very slowly so that your lungs are completely emptied. Let them fill up of their own accord as you breathe in.

Notice which sensations you have as your lungs are emptied. Notice how it feels when they are filled again. Notice how your chest rises and falls. Try to let your thoughts come and go, as if they were cars driving past you, waves hitting the shore, or leaves gliding in a stream.

Look around you and notice what you see and hear around you. Notice where you are and what you are doing.



After the exercise:

What did you notice during the exercise and immediately afterwards? What was the experience like for you?

Have you noticed any change in the way you observe the things around you?

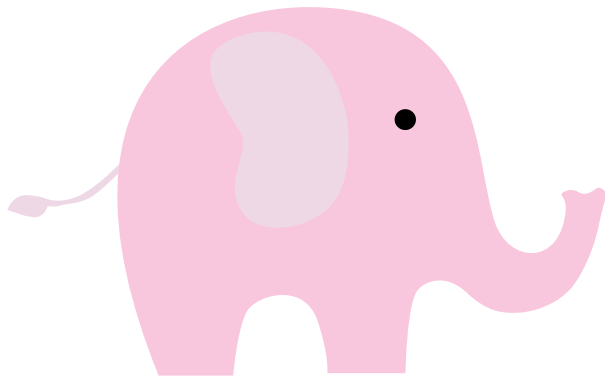
Allow things to happen as they are for a moment, and try not to judge or criticise them.

Relationship with your thoughts – I am not equal to my thoughts

Our thoughts are content produced by our minds: internal speech, sounds, words, or images. Our minds constantly produce thoughts, like a radio channel that is always on. According to research, our minds produce approximately 60,000 thoughts every day!

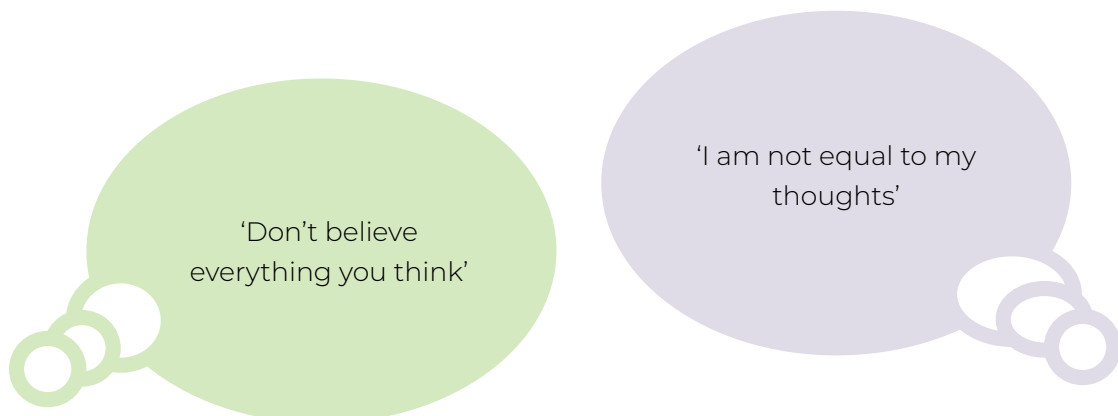
Sometimes we pay attention to our thoughts and sometimes not. For example, when the radio is playing, we sometimes listen to it actively, and other times pay no attention when we are focusing on some other interesting thing. Our emotions, such as joy, sadness, shame, or anger, can influence the kinds of thoughts our minds produce and how credible they seem. Our thoughts can also awaken many kinds of emotions.

Thoughts are neither true nor false, but they may or may not be in line with the outside world. They may be useful, or they may not be useful at all. Thoughts do not threaten us, and even the most distressing, shameful or frightening thoughts cannot actually hurt us. Therefore, thoughts in themselves do not cause problems. Problems arise when we believe our thoughts to be true, begin to act incited by our thoughts, or when we try to avoid thoughts due to the unpleasant feelings they provoke. The harder we try not to think about something, the more it will demand our attention.



Try not to think about a pink elephant for one minute. Think of anything other than a pink elephant. Did you succeed? If you did, did you notice how much concentration it requires? How can you do things that are important to you while trying not to think about a pink elephant? If you didn't, did you notice how difficult it is to control your thoughts?

We cannot erase thoughts from our head, but we can change how we react to our thoughts. We can learn to distance ourselves from our thoughts, to recognise which thoughts are useful and which aren't and what it means in the short and long term if you take a thought to be true and something we must act according to.



PASSENGERS ON THE BUS

Imagine you are a bus driver. When you start making changes in order to better align with your values, you will meet troublemakers on the way who will try to influence the direction of your bus. The troublemakers might shout 'It won't work anyway!', 'You will fail!', 'You'll never find anyone!', or 'Nobody will hire someone with that background!'. They will try to order you around, call you names, and try to change the direction of your bus by shouting at you. This is how your mind will try to convince you that the change is impossible. Emotions arising in you can also try to make achieving your goals more difficult. Your thoughts and feelings are working together to make you give up on your goals.

A motley crew of troublemakers consists of thoughts, feelings or desires to do something. As the bus driver, your job is to choose a direction and steer the bus in the direction you want. You can try to throw these troublemakers out of the bus on the way, but you will find them waiting for you at the next stop. You will realise that even though they have ugly and scary voices, which they use to threaten you, they can't actually harm you. You don't have to believe them or follow their commands. So you can return to the driver's seat and carry on driving. The passengers can continue to threaten you. They will say you won't succeed and that you'll be disappointed. Even so, you will carry on driving and stay on the course you've chosen.

We all have our own passengers on our bus. They demand the driver's attention and hope we will listen to them. They also want to decide the direction of the bus for us. Their power lies in the fact that they are often able quite subtly to persuade the driver to act according to their own wishes. Noticing their effects on our choices is often very difficult. Getting to know your passengers will help you maintain the direction you've chosen, regardless of what they say. The passengers on the bus are your history, and you have to make your journey with it. Whatever your past may have been, you can always create a new history, starting from the present moment.



PASSENGERS ON THE BUS EXERCISE

The previous page introduced the *Passengers on a bus* metaphor. Now it is your turn to recognise and name the passengers on your bus. What kinds of troublemaking passengers do you have travelling with you? What are your passengers shouting from the back seats?

Passenger 1 (name):

What are their favourite lines? What are they shouting about?

Passenger 2 (name):

What are their favourite lines? What are they shouting about?

Passenger 3 (name):

What are their favourite lines? What are they shouting about?

Now that you've identified and named the passengers on your bus, what options do you have as the bus driver? What happens if you obey the passengers? And what happens if you try to throw the passengers out by any means necessary?

DIARY OF AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

Learn to recognise your own typical thoughts and to notice when they appear in your mind. During the monitoring period, list your unpleasant thoughts in the table below. Once you have identified them for the first time, keep track of how often they occur. Then, assess how strongly you believe each thought and how useful you think it is, on a scale of 1–5.

How often does the thought occur? (1 = not at all, 2 = sometimes, 3 = somewhat often, 4 = often, 5 = all the time) How strongly do I believe this thought? (1 = not at all, 2 = to some extent, 3 = quite a lot, 4 = a lot, 5 = completely) How useful is this thought? How does it help you live the life you want to live?

How often does the thought occur?	The automatic thought	How strongly do I believe this thought?	How useful is it?	What happens if I believe this thought?
1 2 3 4 5	Eg. 'I'm lazy and inefficient'	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
1 2 3 4 5	1.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
1 2 3 4 5	2.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
1 2 3 4 5	3.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
1 2 3 4 5	4.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
1 2 3 4 5	5.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
1 2 3 4 5	6.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
1 2 3 4 5	7.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	
1 2 3 4 5	8.	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	

DEFUSION – DISTANCING YOURSELF FROM YOUR THOUGHTS

This exercise aims at learning to change your relationship with your thoughts, which will decrease their influence on your behaviour and choices. You don't need to change the content of your thoughts. The aim is to learn to view your thoughts from a new perspective, so that you are no longer so easily swayed by your mind. Try applying the techniques below to your thoughts. Choose the option that feels most suitable for you, and try it out over the next week.

DEFUSION

- I have a thought...
For example, if you have the thought 'I cannot stand this situation', try to distance yourself from it by noting 'I have a thought that I cannot stand this situation'.
- Say the thought quickly/slowly/in a funny voice/singing/rapping.
Repeat the thought out loud until you notice your relationship with it changing.

What happens to the thought and the emotions associated with it?

THANK YOUR MIND

When your mind starts producing distracting thoughts, just give it a quick thank you:

'Thank you, mind, for your advice! You are doing your best, and that is good, but I'm not going to take this advice.'

'What an interesting thought!'

How old is this thought?

Where was it created?

Whose voice can you hear in it?

THOUGHTS AND BEHAVIOUR

Observe how a thought affects your actions.

How will your behaviour change if you take this thought seriously?

What do you start or stop doing when it appears?

Is that a helpful thought in terms of your behaviour?

THE USEFULNESS OF A THOUGHT

Consider how useful your thought is at this moment and what kinds of alternative solutions it offers.

If you let this thought dictate what you do, how will it work in the long run?

Will listening to it help you live a life in line with your goals?

THOUGHTS AS TEXT MESSAGES

Imagine that your mind is sending you text messages. You keep receiving advice and interpretations from your mind.

What if you could colour-code the messages from your mind in two colours: useful messages in one colour and useless ones in another?

How can you tell them apart?

Which messages from your mind should you listen to, and which should you ignore?

What will happen if I take this message seriously?



DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN FACTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

You can use this exercise when you have experienced a difficult situation in your life. Later, as you become better at it, you can learn how to use it in actual difficult situations. This exercise will teach you to distinguish between facts and evaluative thoughts that are often judgemental, and to describe these thoughts. When you learn to describe your thoughts, you can distance yourself from them, which will decrease their power over your behaviour.

THE SITUATION	THE FACTS OF THE SITUATION (anyone can see)	INTERPRETATIONS / EVALUATIVE THOUGHTS	PRACTISING DESCRIPTION
Example: <i>Network meeting</i>	Example: <i>The discussion centred on the achievement of the objectives. People shared their own views.</i>	Example: <i>'Idiot' 'We are arguing about nothing.' 'Nothing seems to be enough.'</i>	Example: <i>I find myself thinking 'idiot'. I find myself thinking 'We are arguing about nothing'. I find myself thinking 'Nothing seems to be enough'.</i>

What kinds of emotions are related to the facts of the situation and the evaluative thoughts?
What changes when you start to describe your assessing thoughts?

LETTING GO OF THE NEED TO JUSTIFY

This exercise will allow you to learn to recognise justification thoughts and decrease their influence in carrying out actions according to your values. The list contains typical explanations and reasons for not doing something that supports your wellbeing. Mark the ones you recognise as typical for yourself, and think about what happens when you act according to them.

MY MIND'S FAVOURITE REASONS FOR NOT DOING IMPORTANT THINGS	I RECOGNISE	CONSEQUENCES
I was too tired to go out.		
I didn't go to work or school because I was feeling down.		
I have no motivation to do anything.		
I keep to myself because with others, I would just end up feeling sad or in a bad mood.		
I can't bring myself to do it because I'm still in such a sensitive state.		
I use intoxicants because I feel lonely and sad.		
I can't stand this feeling, and would rather just forget the whole thing.		
I can't be bothered to get out of bed today.		
I'm not going to call my loved ones because I'm not in the best of moods right now.		
I use intoxicants so I don't have to think or feel anything.		
This isn't going to work out, I'd better give up.		
Something else, please specify.		

How many familiar reasons or explanations did you find? Allowing justification thoughts to steer your behaviour can be deceptive: it brings momentary relief, but may also lead to a cycle of coping behaviour. However, remember to be merciful to yourself, because seeking momentary relief is human. You can still learn to distance yourself from the instructions of your mind and choose differently.

IDENTIFY YOUR VERBAL RULES

Identify rules created by your mind on various areas of your life, and then assess the consequences of following the rules. When is following the rules effective, and when does it cause problems? *Words used in rules: Should, Shouldn't, Must, Can't, Have to, Always, Never, Impossible, But*

Object of the rules	Example	Your rules	Consequences, benefits and drawbacks of following the rule
My relationships with other people	'I can't stand it when other people think badly of me.' 'If I don't do well, others won't respect me.'		
Facing unpleasant emotions	'I have to get rid of this feeling.' 'I don't want to think these thoughts.'		
Overcoming difficulties	'Asking for help is a sign of weakness.' 'You can't trust anyone anyway.'		
What is fair and unfair, or right and wrong	'It is unfair that others just want to make things difficult for me. Why should I bother to do my bit?'		
My relationship with myself	'I can't fail.' 'I have to be strong and I mustn't show any weakness.' 'I have to know everything.' 'I can't be a good father.'		

Make room for all kinds of feelings

Emotions are constantly changing internal experiences. We can react to what we see, hear, feel, smell, and taste, or we can react to what we think. Emotions are messages that steer and help us in different situations. They give importance to things and help us make decisions. When a certain emotional state is activated, we feel the emotions (e.g. sadness), bodily sensations (a lump in the throat), thoughts ('I will be alone'), and impulses to act (the impulse to cry or numb yourself with intoxicants) related to it.

Usually, emotional reactions are appropriate. A threatening situation, for example, can arouse feelings of fear or anger, which prepare us to act (fear to flee and anger to defend ourselves). Sometimes, strong emotions may be so-called secondary emotions, which are not related to the situation itself but rather your thoughts and interpretations of the situation. You may find yourself getting angry at your spouse when they are unable to meet you as agreed, even if your primary emotion is disappointment or fear of being abandoned. It is important to recognise the primary emotions, so that we can act appropriately.

Emotions are not dangerous. They in themselves cannot harm you, although they may cause you to feel unpleasant. Making space for all kinds of emotions means facing them exactly as they are. When you learn to face your emotions and stop fighting them or trying to suppress them, they will bother you less. You will learn to recognise that emotions come and go, which in turn means you'll be less likely to get caught up in them.

Beach ball

Imagine your unpleasant feelings and thoughts taking the shape of a beach ball. You don't want to feel these unpleasant thoughts and emotions, so you try to push the beach ball under water. However, the beach ball bounces back to the surface the deeper you try to push it. You'll have to use both hands and all your concentration and energy to keep the beach ball under the surface. When you hold on to the beach ball, the feelings and thoughts it represents are attached to you and take up all your attention. If you let go of the ball, it might drift in the water near you, which might feel unpleasant. However, the ball might also gradually drift further away from you. Whether the ball stays near you or floats further away when you let go, at least you can use your hands and energy on other things important to you.



Practising mindful acceptance is an important skill for emotional regulation. It does not mean we have to learn to like difficult emotions. Rather, it means facing our emotions, not judging them, and without reacting to them. Simply pausing to reflect on an emotion and observing it as it is reduces its intensity and impact on us. You can practise mindful acceptance. It is best to start in a calm place and situation.

You can practise mindful acceptance following these instructions. Their order does not matter.

Scan your body from head to toe. Observe all the sensations you notice in your body. Do not react to them. Allow them to be as they are.

Wait and notice when a thought arises. Allow the thought to pass without getting caught up in it. Whenever you notice a thought, you can say to yourself: 'this is a thought'.

Observe any impulses you can spot right now. What do they encourage you to do, or do they encourage you not to do something? Practise not reacting to the impulses and observe what happens to them.

Try to identify the emotion associated with that state of mind. Label it and allow it to be exactly as it is, without judging it.

TUNTEISIIN

Tunteit on monenlaisii, joku tunteeton, on ilosii on veemäisii,
 Psykogee ja elämä läimii, vasten kasvoi sylkääsee, suruun lestin rykäsen,
 Tiedän mist puhun jos vihaa puhkun, kellää ei kivaa, päällä helläl saatan neitoo himaa,
 mustasukkast, te ette musta saa
 Darraa pukkas, pelkotilat päättä nostaa, tasottavii päätän ostaa, ikävä mamii,
 Rakkauden soturi Soidintanssi ku sopulil, PsykoGee lentopusui lähettelee, sudelle sukuu
 Rakkaudest ulvon, hartaasti ja kunnol, syyllist etitään ei mitään omaltunnol,
 Rikoksii enintään, mitä jos vanhoi haavoi ei auki revitä,
 Ole oma ittes, älä esitä, rukoile tai setitä, mut älä esitä, psyko pyytää, peilistä löytyy syypää,

"Tunteisiin usein vedotaan, tunteisiin rakastutaan, seotaan, tunteisiin, alkaa potuttaa,
 mut ota lungisti vaan, ota lungisti vaan"

Tunteiden tulkki vai tunteellinen juntti,
 Mörkö nimelt kateus, se on synty niinkun ahneus
 Riku Rikas rahaa ku roskaa, pedon kidas psyko köyhän bostaa,
 Pennei laskeskelee tukii nostaa, ei tietoo asunnosta, porttikielto lähikauppaan,
 Suru kävi raukkaan ku turskaan haukka, se miehen murtaa ja turha siit on purnaa,
 Härkää sarvist ja duunii ettii, jotain smuuttii settii, valaa sementtii tai puita halaa,
 Kaikki käy kuha rahaa saa, valtio velkaa, mut niit saat odottaa, Psyko takas rokottaa,
 Tules makas ku elämä monottaa, Tuonelaan, miehet jonottaa huomenna kaikki paremmin,
 PsykoGee, positiivinen kaveri, niiku seikka se on saletti ku Moskovan baletti niinku seikka
 se on saletti

"Tunteisiin usein vedotaan, tunteisiin, rakastutaan, seotaan, tunteisiin,
 alkaa potuttaa, mut ota lungisti vaan, ota lungisti vaan"

Nihkeet skeidaa, viel paremmaks muuttuu
 Gee Veisaa ja herkemmät suuttuu
 Rankkaa mutten hittoakaan nakkaa, mikä miehen ajaa, tunteet tappaa,
 Kenen syy mun syy, sun syy, psyko vaa kysyy,
 Nobaa sytyn mut kaks sekkaa, ja kiukku vekka, kaks seikkaa ja kiukku vekka

"Tunteisiin, usein vedotaan, Tunteisiin, Rakastutaan, seotaan
 Tunteisiin, Alkaa potuttaa, Mut ota lungisti vaan, ota lungisti vaan."

PsykoGee

The lyrics are in the original Finnish, and have not been translated.

MAKING ROOM FOR YOUR EMOTIONS

The next pages provide space for examining your various emotions. The intention is for you to stop and think about the situations in which you notice an emotion arising, the kinds of thoughts that arouse the emotion, the kinds of changes you can feel in your body while you are experiencing the emotion, and the kinds of actions the emotion incites.

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE RISE TO FEELINGS OF ANGER?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE RISE TO FEELINGS OF ANGER?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

ANGER

What other words do you use when talking that are suggestive of the emotion of anger?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY DO YOU FEEL ANGER?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY ANGER

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE RISE TO FEELINGS OF DISGUST?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE RISE TO FEELINGS OF DISGUST?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

DISGUST

What other words do you use when talking that are suggestive of the emotion of disgust?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY DO YOU FEEL DISGUST?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY DISGUST

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE
RISE TO FEELINGS OF FEAR?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE RISE
TO FEELINGS OF FEAR?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

FEAR

What other words do
you use when talking
that are suggestive of
the emotion of
fear?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY
DO YOU FEEL FEAR??

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY
FEAR

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE
RISE TO FEELINGS OF GRIEF?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE RISE
TO FEELINGS OF GRIEF?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

GRIEF

What other words do
you use when talking
that are suggestive of
the emotion of
grief?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY
DO YOU FEEL GRIEF?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY
GRIEF

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE
RISE TO FEELINGS OF LOVE?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE
RISE TO FEELINGS OF LOVE?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

LOVE

What other words do
you use when talking
that are suggestive of
the emotion of
love?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY
DO YOU FEEL LOVE?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY
LOVE

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE
RISE TO FEELINGS OF JEALOUSY?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE RISE
TO FEELINGS OF JEALOUSY?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

JEALOUSY

What other words do
you use when talking
that are suggestive of
the emotion of
jealousy?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY
DO YOU FEEL JEALOUSY?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY
JEALOUSY

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE RISE TO FEELINGS OF GUILT?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE RISE TO FEELINGS OF GUILT?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

GUILT
What other words do you use when talking that are suggestive of the emotion of guilt?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY DO YOU FEEL GUILT?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY GUILT

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE RISE TO FEELINGS OF SHAME?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE RISE TO FEELINGS OF SHAME?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

SHAME
What other words do you use when talking that are suggestive of the emotion of shame?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY DO YOU FEEL SHAME?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY SHAME

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE
RISE TO FEELINGS OF JOY?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE
RISE TO FEELINGS OF JOY?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

JOY

What other words do
you use when talking
that are suggestive of
the emotion of
joy?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY
DO YOU FEEL JOY?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY
JOY

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF SITUATIONS GIVE
RISE TO FEELINGS OF ENVY?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

WHAT KINDS OF THOUGHTS GIVE
RISE TO FEELINGS OF ENVY?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

ENVY

What other words do
you use when talking
that are suggestive of
the emotion of
envy?

WHERE IN YOUR BODY
DO YOU FEEL ENVY?

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

IDENTIFY YOUR URGES CAUSED BY
ENVY

- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆
- ◆

ABC CHAIN ANALYSIS

VULNERABILITY FACTORS	PROMPTING EVENT	THOUGHTS	SECONDARY EMOTION	PROBLEMATIC BEHAVIOUR	SHORT-TERM CONSEQUENCES	LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES
<i>For example:</i> <i>Insomnia</i> <i>Fatigue</i> <i>Hunger</i> <i>Relationship problems</i>	<i>My friend didn't respond when I contacted them</i>	<i>'Nobody is interested in what is going on in my life'</i> <i>'People only want to take advantage of me'</i>	<i>shame</i> <i>rage</i>	<i>I drank a couple of bottles of booze and took some drugs</i>	<i>It provided momentary relief</i>	<i>I'm embarrassed, and won't get in touch with my friend</i> <i>It's hard to value myself</i>
	PRIMARY EMOTION shame					
	PRIMARY EMOTION					

SKILFUL EMOTIONAL REGULATION

When we face setbacks in life that stir up difficult emotions, we need:

1. Acceptance, which means facing and taking things as they are, without distortion.
2. Taking care of yourself and redirecting your attention, or distancing yourself from the difficult thing, as well as doing things that support your wellbeing and everyday things that are important to you.
3. Solving problems: working to make things better. Problem-solving skills do not work for emotions and thoughts, but sometimes, if we want to live according to our values, we also have to make difficult decisions regarding our life situation, such as ending harmful relationships.

You can list skills and actions you can use when faced with a difficult situation in the circles below. For example, enter skills you have learned for facing difficult emotions and thoughts without judging them or reacting to them in the **Acceptance** circle. You can enter alternatives you can use to redirect your attention to other important everyday things, such as outdoor activities, exercise, reading, listening to music, in the **Taking care of yourself** circle. Enter things you can influence in a situation, and actions that help you progress towards important goals, such as ending a dysfunctional relationship or seeking external help for agreeing on matters related to the children, in the **Problem solving** circle.

The form consists of three purple circles arranged in a triangle. Each circle contains a title and four horizontal lines for writing.

- ACCEPTANCE**

- TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF**

- PROBLEM-SOLVING**

MINDFUL COPING

Mindful coping skills are necessary in situations where you are faced with difficult emotions and approving observation is not enough, because you need the skills to decrease the intensity of the emotion in order to make choices according to your values and goals. The stages of applying mindful coping skills:

1. Notice the painful emotional state (emotions, thoughts, and bodily sensations) and notice and accept the impulse to act.
2. Recognise that your emotional state is so intense that you must first use the mindful coping skills.
3. Choose a skill to alleviate your emotional state.
4. Act in accordance with your values.



The STOP skill

The STOP skill aims to help you resist acting on your first impulse, and thereby preventing the situation from becoming worse. You can use it in situations where you are consciously trying not to act in a problematic way, such as trying not to use intoxicants.

1. Stop, stand still, don't move.
2. Take a step back.
3. Be aware of your emotional state (bodily sensations, thoughts, impulses, feelings).
4. Stay aware. Be aware of the impulse, but use other mindful coping skills that are efficient for you.

Take a timeout

The ability to take a timeout is suitable for many kinds of difficult situation where strong emotions are present and the best alternative may be to walk away from the situation. However, walking away is not possible in all situations. Therefore, learning other mindful coping skills is useful.

Redirecting your attention

Redirecting your attention is one of the quickest ways to calm your body down. There are many different ways to do this, such as:

- Talking to a friend, engaging in outdoor activities, listening to music, watching TV, reading, etc.
- The *Using the senses to connect with the present moment* exercise in the 'Contact with the present moment and flexible attention' section.
- Alleviating intense emotions through bodily sensations:
 - ▶ Wash your hands and face with cold or warm water.
 - ▶ Take a cold or a hot shower.
 - ▶ Do physical exercises until you are exhausted (for example, cell exercises, bodyweight exercises, or run until you are exhausted).
 - ▶ Long exhalation: breathe out so that your lungs are completely emptied, at which point the inhalation begins automatically. Repeat a few times.
 - ▶ Muscle relaxation: Tense and relax different muscle groups in turn. The time spent relaxing should be longer than the time spent tensing the muscle.

STRESS AND HEIGHTENED AROUSAL

Stress is an important part of life, and it arises from changes experienced as positive (e.g. a new relationship), as well as negative (e.g. a negative decision regarding a move to an open prison). The stress reaction aims to increase the arousal of the body, making us ready to act.

The experience of stress is individual, and different things cause stress for different people. Recognising your own stressors and stress reactions makes it easier to manage stress. Which of the stress reactions listed below do you recognise as typical for yourself?

Thoughts and information processing:

- ☐ distressing thoughts
- ☐ frightening thoughts
- ☐ thoughts of worry
- ☐ difficulties with concentration
- ☐ difficulties with memory

Physical bodily reactions:

- ☐ increased heart rate
- ☐ rapid or shallow breathing
- ☐ breathing difficulties
- ☐ sweating
- ☐ muscle activation
- ☐ muscle tension and aches
- ☐ headache
- ☐ dizziness
- ☐ different types of rash
- ☐ a tightness in the chest, arrhythmia
- ☐ stomach upset
- ☐ grinding teeth
- ☐ lack of sexual desire
- ☐ sleep problems
- ☐ high blood pressure

Emotional reactions:

- ☐ stress
- ☐ restlessness and difficulty relaxing
- ☐ nervousness
- ☐ inefficiency
- ☐ fatigue
- ☐ depression
- ☐ anxiety
- ☐ fear of losing self-control

Behavioural responses:

- ☐ avoiding situations
- ☐ isolation
- ☐ irritability towards others, arguing
- ☐ changes in eating habits
- ☐ using intoxicants
- ☐ inefficiency
- ☐ aggressive behaviour
- ☐ difficulty in making decisions

Do you recognise the early signs of rising stress levels, and how can you tell when you are already very burdened? On a scale of 0 to 10 (0 = no stress at all and 10 = extremely stressed), what is your current stress level? How can you tell right now?

List the methods you can use to support your recovery and manage your stress:

Short-term stress that disappears once we have completed a task helps us to cope with our everyday chores. Long-term stress that cannot be relieved is often experienced as problematic. In such situations, the thing causing stress is often not a task to be carried out, such as making a phone call to an authority. Instead, the stressors are often more extensive or unspecified thoughts or entities, such as the lack of trust in a relationship. Long-term stress drains our energy, which affects our ability to cope. Difficult and uncertain life situations always involve stress that cannot be relieved simply by resolving the issue, and other methods must be used to relieve that stress.

The observing self

There is a permanent part of us all that notices our thoughts and emotions but is not equal to us. We have conflicting sides, but the self is constant, and it is never broken or cracked. When you learn to reach this permanent, observing self in yourself, you can change your relationship with difficult thoughts and feelings, and notice that you are separate from them.

The sky

Imagine yourself as the sky, and your thoughts and feelings as weather conditions. The sky is constant, but the weather is always changing. You provide a space for the changing emotions and thoughts; you are the sky. You become aware of the fluctuations in the weather, or your emotions and thoughts, and realise that you cannot be equal to your emotions and thoughts. You are separate from them.



The self can be examined from three perspectives: the conceptual self, the experiencing self, and the self-as-context.

The **conceptual self** refers to verbal conceptions of the self, such as 'I am a criminal', 'I am better than others', 'I am a failure', or 'I am not as good as others'. These examples describe negative stories about the self, which have been strengthened through life experiences. If these stories start to become facts, they will lead to a narrowing of your behaviour. It is therefore important to learn to recognise the labels that our minds are programmed to create, and to learn to distinguish between helpful and unhelpful stories about ourselves. What will happen to me if I take this story as fact? What kind of activity does this lead to?

Our sense of self may encompass various aspects, some contradictory, but the perspective from which we examine these different stories remains the same.

The **experiencing self** refers to the side of you that notices the constantly changing experiences. The ability to recognise and label one's own experiences is a skill that develops from childhood onwards. It can also be called a mindfulness skill. At its core is observing one's own experiences here and now and the ability to name those experiences.

The **self-as-context** is represented by the sky; a place for varying weather conditions, yet separate from them. There may be scattered white clouds, rain clouds, or thunderclouds in the sky, but they are not equal to the sky. Strengthening the 'self-as-context' perspective makes it easier to accept difficult emotions and thoughts, as they are recognised as separate from the self and constantly changing.

SELF-COMPASSION

How do you treat yourself when you are faced with painful thoughts and emotions? Are you able to face the difficult thoughts and emotions in a conscious and accepting way? Can you recognise that suffering is part of being human and that we all experience it? Can you treat yourself as you would your best friend? These are questions of self-compassion. It is a skill you can learn. When we are able to be compassionate towards ourselves, we can recognise, tolerate and accept our own weaknesses. We can process them, grow, and develop.

I AM

Write five positive comments and five negative comments about yourself.
For example '*I am kind*', '*I am helpful*', '*I am weak*', '*I am a loser*'.

Positive comments:

1. I AM...
2. I AM...
3. I AM...
4. I AM...
5. I AM...

Negative comments:

1. I AM...
2. I AM...
3. I AM...
4. I AM...
5. I AM...

Examine your comments. Are you really, 100 per cent of the time and in all situations, as your comments here suggest? Do other people agree with your comments?

Next, add the three words 'or maybe not' after your comments. For example, '*I am friendly or maybe not*', '*I am a loser or maybe not*'. Then read each sentence again slowly and see what happens to the weighting of your interpretations.

THREE SELF STORIES

This exercise aims to identify your different kinds of self stories. You will write three different descriptions of yourself, each highlighting a different aspect of your personality. The first of these is a job seeker story, in which you aim to convince the employer of your strengths. The second is a dating profile, aiming to get as many positive responses from potential partners as possible. The third one is a compilation of your faults, which you would use to convince your psychiatrist of your faults.



Me as a jobseeker

I am a person who...



Me in a dating profile

I am a person who...



Me with my compiled faults

I am a person who...

How many words do you need to describe all these aspects of yourself? Even if a verbal description were accurate in describing one aspect of you, what else are you? Can you distinguish between facts and opinions in the descriptions?

What facts are included in the descriptions?

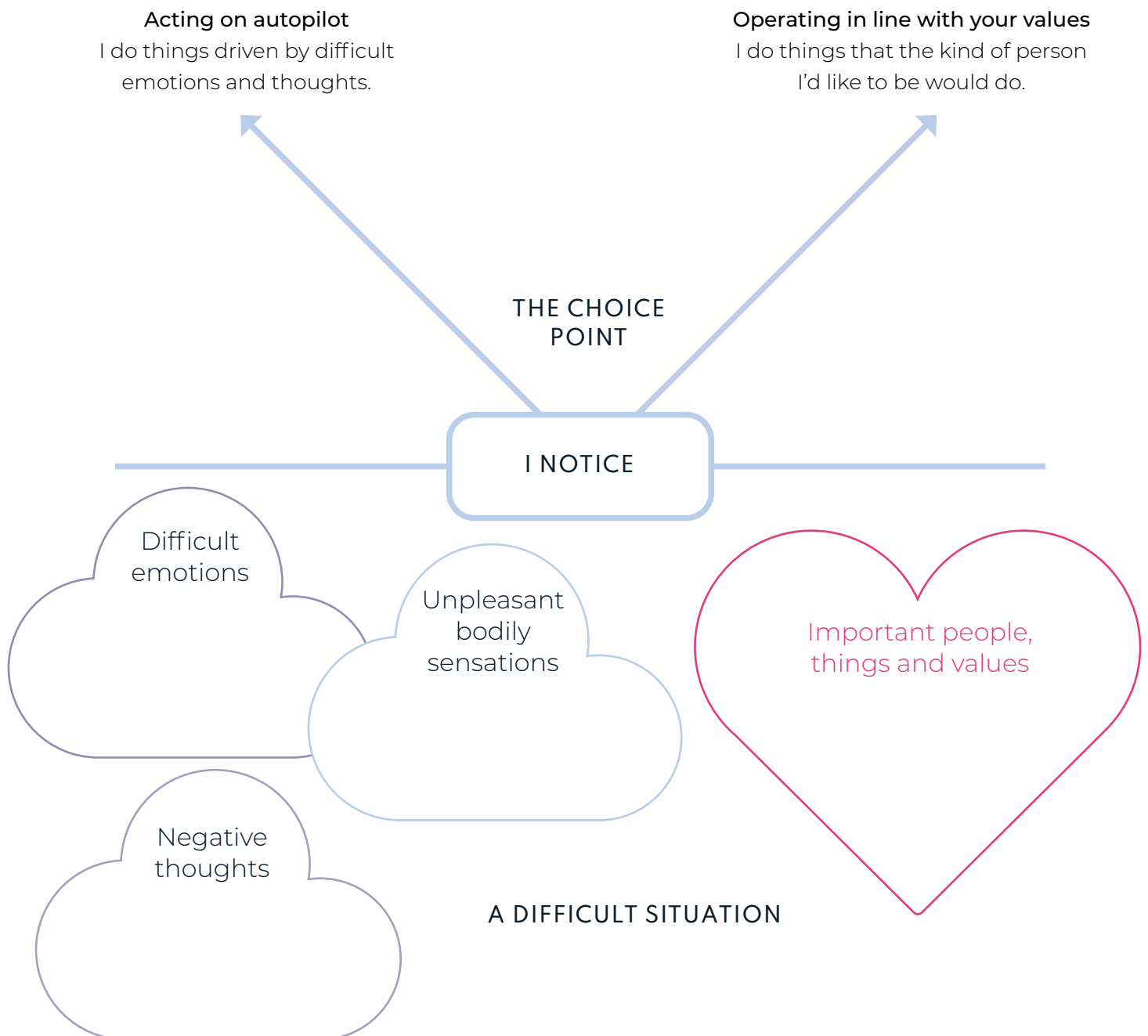
What opinions are included in the descriptions?

What happens if you take these stories seriously?

THE CHOICE POINT

The efficiency with which we react to difficult emotions depends on how well we can notice the moment of choosing. That moment is when you realise you are feeling emotionally activated and understand that you can choose how to react. You can then either use autopilot or act according to your own values.

Choose a difficult situation to examine. What do you do when you are on autopilot? What are the things and values that are important to you? What actions would be in line with these in this difficult situation? Enter these in the figure below.



HOW DO I WANT TO TREAT MYSELF?

Go back to the ten most important values you chose earlier. Which three of them are the most important to you, and ones that you want to be visible in relation to yourself? When making your choice, think about how you would like to be treated.

The three most important principles I want to act in accordance with in relation to myself are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What kinds of actions can you take in your everyday life in order to manifest your three most important values? Plan out five ways for manifesting each value.

Value 1:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Value 2:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Value 3:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Every morning, select actions for one value that you intend to carry out in relation to yourself that day. At the end of the day, take a moment to reflect on how this planning of actions according to your values affected your day.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY TO YOURSELF

Go back to when you were a preschooler. What would you like to say to your preschooler self today? What kinds of kind or encouraging words could you say?

Go back to when you were a teenager. What would you like to say to your teenage self today? What kinds of kind or encouraging words could you say?

What kinds of kind or encouraging words could your teenage self say to your current self?

Imagine yourself five years older. Imagine that you are wiser and more experienced. Try to step into the shoes of your future self and look at your current situation through the eyes of your more experienced self. How does your current situation look through the eyes of your older self? Do you feel compassion or understanding towards your younger self? As an older and more experienced version of yourself, what would you say to your current self?

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF YOU WERE IN THEIR POSITION

Being able to switch perspectives helps us to understand how different parties can experience the same situation in very different ways, or how getting further information may change your experience of the situation. Which aspects of a situation affect how you would be likely to feel? You can also consider whether someone else might feel differently in the same situation.

Read the description of the situation and think about how you would feel if you were in their position:

1. Jaakko has just found out that his dog was run over by a car.
How would you feel if you were in Jaakko's situation in this case?

The dog was hit by Jaakko's friend, who didn't notice the dog running into the road in the dark.
How would you feel if you were in Jaakko's situation in this case?

2. Just before an agreed family visit, Marko is told that the visit has been cancelled.
He is not told why. How would you feel if you were in Marko's position?

Later that day, Marko finds out that his wife cancelled the visit but didn't tell him.
How would you feel if you were in Marko's position in this case?

3. Another prisoner on the ward comes to the door of Antti's cell to challenge him to a fight.
How would you feel if you were in Antti's position?

Antti knows that the person is suffering from severe mental health issues and that he does not currently have any medication, which has made him particularly anxious. How would you feel if you were in Antti's position in this case?

4. Pekka is on the bus on his way to work when the bus suddenly stops, and the passenger next to him spills his coffee on Pekka's trousers. How would you feel if you were in Pekka's position?

How would you feel if you were in the position of the passenger next to him?

Effective interaction

Social and interaction skills encompass many different areas. In addition to communication skills, such as speech, listening, and alternating conversation, we also use social information processing skills in our interaction with other people. When interpreting social situations, we aim to recognise and understand both our own feelings and those of others, so that we can draw the right conclusions about the situation.

Strong emotions can make effective interaction more difficult, in which case you may need to draw on your emotional regulation skills. It may be helpful to try to distinguish between the facts of a situation and your own interpretations of them, shaped by your beliefs and past experiences. You may need to use your mindful coping skills to decrease the strength of the emotion before being able to act according to your values in a social situation. In this case, the skills exercises in the *'Make room for all kinds of feelings'* section may be useful.

OUR BEHAVIOUR IN INTERACTIVE SITUATIONS IS INFLUENCED BY SEVERAL FACTORS:

- ♦ vulnerability factors
- ♦ the difficulty of the situation
- ♦ your interpretation of the situation
- ♦ previous experiences of similar situations
- ♦ beliefs about yourself and other people
- ♦ whether your skills are sufficient in a given situation
- ♦ previous experiences of the consequences of your behaviour



REFLECT ON YOUR SOCIAL SKILLS

Various social skills are listed below.

1. Put a + next to the situations that you find easy.
2. Put a – next to the situations you find difficult.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ♦ Listening | ♦ Helping others |
| ♦ Starting a conversation | ♦ Negotiation |
| ♦ Maintaining a conversation | ♦ Standing up for your rights |
| ♦ Asking questions | ♦ Facing teasing |
| ♦ Thanking | ♦ Avoiding difficulties with other people |
| ♦ Introducing yourself | ♦ Avoiding disputes |
| ♦ Handing out compliments | ♦ Making a complaint |
| ♦ Asking for help | ♦ Responding to a complaint |
| ♦ Joining a group | ♦ Encouraging others |
| ♦ Giving instructions | ♦ Facing an awkward situation |
| ♦ Following instructions | ♦ Coping with being excluded from a group |
| ♦ Saying sorry | ♦ Standing up for a friend |
| ♦ Convincing others of something | ♦ Facing convincing |
| ♦ Recognising your own feelings | ♦ Handling failure |
| ♦ Expressing your own feelings | ♦ Facing conflicting messages |
| ♦ Understanding other people's feelings | ♦ Facing accusations |
| ♦ Facing another person's anger | ♦ Preparing for a difficult meeting |
| ♦ Expressing affection | ♦ Facing group pressure |
| ♦ Sharing something with another person | |

Reflect on your assessment and think: do you need to change something. Would you like to be able to develop some of the skills?

IDENTIFY THE AIM OF THE INTERACTION AND SELECT A SKILL

Identifying the aim of an interaction helps you to clarify the best way of expressing a wish or need or to say no to a request. Aims of interactions can be classified as follows: factual aims, aims related to maintaining relationships, and aims related to self-respect.

Examples of skills related to each goal and their phases are listed below. An example of stating a wish regarding being notified of changes to agreed visits (factual aim) is presented in connection with the first skill (DEAR MAN). In such a situation, it is also important to ensure that the relationship with the partner remains good (relationship-related aim). Under the second skill (GIVE), there is an example where the primary aim is to maintain and improve the relationship with the child and the child's mother. Under the third skill (FAST), there is an example scenario in which maintaining self-respect and sticking to one's own values is the primary objective when dealing with a problem that has arisen in a friendship. Space has been left after each skill for your own example or current situation where you could use the skill.

Factual aim

DEAR MAN is a skill you can use to effectively make requests, express wishes or refuse something.

The steps are:

1. **D**escribe the situation without judgement, sticking to the facts:
'You said you would come and see me at the weekend, but you didn't turn up.'
2. **E**xpress your feelings or opinion about the situation:
'I was worried when you didn't come.'
3. **A**ssert your point, say what you want, or refuse clearly:
'It is important to me that you let me know if you're unable to come.'
4. **R**einforce, give positive feedback:
'I would feel relieved if I knew in advance, so I wouldn't worry unnecessarily and begin to doubt you.'
5. (stay) **M**indful: keep your focus on your goal and stay on track.
If necessary, repeat over and over again, calmly and kindly.
Do not react if the other person makes a verbal attack or changes the subject.
6. **A**ppear confident:
Use a confident tone of voice and speak clearly.
7. **N**egotiate:
Be prepared to negotiate. For example, you can ask the other person *'How could we solve this?'*

The more clearly you can describe what you want the other person to do and why it is personally important to you, the more likely you are to get what you want.

Practising the DEAR MAN skill

Your situation: _____

Describe: _____

Express: _____

Assert: _____

Reinforce: _____

(stay) Mindful: _____

Appear confident: _____

Negotiate: _____

An aim related to maintaining relationships

When it is important for you to maintain or improve a relationship in an interaction situation, you can use the GIVE skill. It is useful in all situations involving interaction, but its importance is particularly evident in the most significant personal relationships.

The steps involved in the GIVE skill are:

1. (be) **G**entle – behave kindly, be polite and gentle. State your point without threats, attacks, sarcasm, or judgement:
'It would really mean a lot to me if our child could come and see me. It makes me feel bad when I see them so rarely, and I'm afraid they might not even recognise me soon.'
2. (act) **I**nterested. Listen to what the other person has to say. Let them finish what they have to say without interrupting.
3. **V**alidate – show that you understand the other person's feelings, wishes, difficulties and opinions related to the situation:
'I understand that it is difficult for you to come here and that it takes a lot of effort on your part. I have been nasty towards you at times, and I understand that you might not want to have anything to do with me.'
4. (use an) **E**asy manner – behave calmly:
Stay calm and reassure the other person if necessary. Use a light tone when presenting your point. Humour may sometimes make a situation easier.

Practising the GIVE skill

Your situation: _____

(be) Gentle / kindly, politely, gently: _____

(act) Interested:

Validate / act understanding:

(use an) Easy manner / calmly and with a light tone:

An aim related to self-respect

You can use the FAST skill in interaction situations with central aims related to self-respect.

The steps involved in the FAST skill are:

1. (be) **F**air – be fair and just. Be fair both to yourself and to others:
'I understand that you had your reasons for lying, but I find it really disrespectful that you lied and made me look bad.'
2. (no) **A**pologies – don't apologise unnecessarily. Apologise when there is a reason to do so, for example, if you have been wrong or made a mistake. You don't need to apologise for existing, for making a request, for having opinions, or for disagreeing.
'It hurt me that you lied to me.'
3. **S**tick to your values. Keep a clear picture in your mind of what is in line with your values and moral principles. Don't compromise your values just to get what you want or to make someone like you.
'It is important to me that I am able to trust my closest friends, and I don't want to behave the way you do, as that's not in line with my values.'
4. (be) **T**ruthful – be honest. Stick to the truth, even if it feels difficult. Don't lie or exaggerate.
'I'm not really sure if I can trust you after this. We should let things settle down and then see whether we can still continue our friendship.'

Practising the FAST skill

Your situation: _____

(be) Fair: _____

(no) Apologies: _____

Stick to your values: _____

(be) Truthful: _____

Strategies to support executive functions and attention

In order to get things done, you should think about what your actual goal is. Formulate your goal so that you can clearly assess whether you have achieved it or not. Decide in advance when you will do it, and note it in your calendar. Decide how to reward yourself when you have done what you need to do: have a cup of coffee, listen to music, or watch an episode of a TV show. However, don't reward yourself beforehand.

Breaking a goal down into smaller steps:

Think about your goal: is it too extensive, such as 'get a profession'. How could it be broken down into smaller parts? What kinds of partial goals does your goal include? What kinds of tasks do you need to complete to achieve your goal? For example, if you want to work as a driver and you have lost your driving licence, you'll first need to take certain steps to get your licence back. Regaining your driving licence may require, for example, substance use monitoring or driving lessons. In this case, working on these partial goals is the first step towards your broader goal.

Creating a to-do list:

- ♦ Write down things that you haven't done yet on a blank sheet of paper, in the order they come to mind.
- ♦ Try to break them down to as small parts as possible: cleaning consists of arranging things on the table, making the bed, putting rubbish in the bin, and so on.
- ♦ Then underline the most important, most urgent or most stressful tasks.
- ♦ Number the underlined tasks in order of importance or urgency.
- ♦ Cross out each task once you have completed it.

If you notice that a particular task is always left undone, consider whether it is too broad to be carried out (e.g. cleaning your home or writing an essay), and try to break it down into smaller parts (e.g. vacuuming a bedroom or selecting the topic for the essay).

We often end up not doing the tasks that stir up unpleasant feelings, such as the fear of failure or shame. See how your mood changes when you focus on thinking about this task you have not done. What thoughts come to your mind?

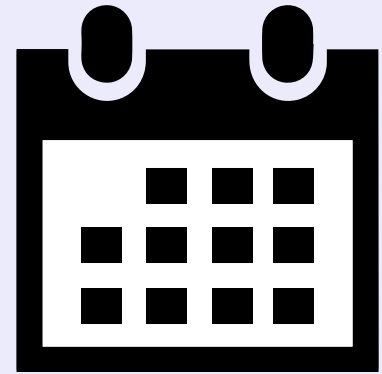
Also think about how you might feel when you finish the task that brings up these unpleasant emotions.

- 
- ~~• call the probation officer 1~~
 - set a reminder on your phone for tomorrow's meeting 2
 - draw up a training plan
 - wash the dishes
 - send a message to a friend

TIME MANAGEMENT:

Learn how to use the calendar:

- ♦ Mark down any meetings you have agreed on in your calendar right away, and make sure that you haven't agreed on something else before you agree on the meeting.
- ♦ In addition to meetings, school or work days, and group meetings, mark down any tasks you need to remember ('call the social worker', 'send a note to the instructor').
- ♦ Make it a habit to check your calendar every morning or evening to see which tasks and appointments you have marked for the coming days.
- ♦ Remember to take your calendar with you, especially for important meetings!
- ♦ Draw up your own weekly schedule in the form of a timetable. Make a note of activities that take place every week (e.g. outdoor activities, group sessions). You can find the weekly programme template at the end of the exercise section.
- ♦ Establish routines that work for you, and do them at the same time each day or on the same day of the week.
- ♦ Take note of how long a certain task takes for you, so that you can reserve enough time in the future. However, remember to leave room for changes in your schedule.



Don't overfill your calendar or weekly schedule, remember to take some time to rest too!

Remembering things:

Use sticky notes and to-do lists (see 'Creating a to-do list').

Write your reminders clearly and keep your notes in a visible place, such as on a noticeboard or inside your calendar.

If you are in an open prison, on parole, or have been released, learn to use the reminders on your phone.

Ask others to remind you of things.

**The pomodoro technique:**

Select the task you want to get done.

Set a timer to go off in 25 minutes.

Work on the task until the timer goes off.

Once the timer has gone off, mark the task as completed.

Take a short break.

Carry on working and take a longer break after every fourth work session.

If you are unable to concentrate on the task for 25 minutes, shorten the time to a length that it suits you.



A PROBLEM-SOLVING TECHNIQUE

Select the problem you want to begin to solve. Follow these steps carefully.

1. Defining the problem: What is your problem? Describe it as tangibly and precisely as possible.	
2. Objective: What do you want to aim for? What would you like to do or change? What would you like to see changed?	
3. Alternatives: Come up with as many possible ways as you can to solve the problem. Don't evaluate the alternatives at this stage. Instead, try to come up with as many different solutions as possible.	
4. Assessment of the alternatives: Cross out any alternatives that are impossible or too difficult to carry out, or that you do not wish to carry out. Write a plus sign (+) after any option you like or think might be feasible. Number the options that you have given a plus sign (+) to in order of preference: 1 = best, 2 = second best, and so on. Base your assessment on what feels right to you and what you can actually put into practice.	

THE PLAN BASED ON THE PROBLEM-SOLVING EXERCISE

A plan for carrying out the change

(schedule, what will you do and how, what could help, etc.)

Follow-up and evaluation:

Decide how and when to assess the effectiveness of your plan.

SCHEDULE FOR A WEEK

time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							
11-12							
12-13							
13-14							
14-15							
15-16							
16-17							
17-18							
18-19							
19-20							
20-21							
21-22							
22-23							
23-24							

Plan your weekly schedule. Remember to keep your schedule realistic and make a note of your rest periods.

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