



Core Beliefs

The loss of a sense of one's identity is particularly strong in trauma. It may that person view herself as totally worthless. If trauma was severe and started very early in the childhood one can develop even quite serious identity disorder. Challenge core beliefs can serve as exploration of own incorporated beliefs, have an interview to accept or deny them. In that way we are supporting the power of our conscious mind.

Module	Submodules	Group size	Duration
• Intervention	• PTSD and the Brain	• Individual • Small group	• 1 hour minimum

Keywords

values, beliefs, internalized images, sense of yourself, subconscious mind

Aims

When we are able to recognize, confirm and be able even challenging our belief system, we start to support the power of our conscious mind. Related trauma and brain connection by challenging our core beliefs and thoughts plays an important mindset indicator.

Participants

The activity can be carried out individually or in a small group of 7 to 12 participants.

Description

Any negative belief you have can be changed or/and modified if you choose so. Since this process is not easy, it requires a great deal of persistent effort. If you want to challenge your core beliefs, you have several options:

- You may look for evidence that your belief is valid.
- You may debate your beliefs with others.
- You may try visualization or imagery to change certain aspects of the belief.

To challenge your belief you may also ask yourself certain questions (partially adopted from Resick 1994):

- What is the evidence for and against belief?
- Is the belief the fact or a habit?
- Is my interpretation of certain situation accurate?
- Am I thinking in black-and-white or all-or-nothing ways?

- Are the words I am using extreme or exaggerated (e.g. must, should, ought, always, forever,...)
- Am I making excuses?
- Is the source of information for my belief reliable?
- Are my judgements based on feelings, not facts? Do I consider a feeling to be a fact?
- Is the belief my own, or belong to someone else?
- Does it fit in with my priorities, values and judgements?
- Does it make me feel bad?
- Is it hurtful to me?
- Is it hurtful to others?
- Is it considerate to me?

Ask the participants to write down five beliefs, come out of their life experiences. Let them rate them further on in a range and maybe change the order. The trainer/teacher/facilitator encourage them to make pairs and present the beliefs with the other by taking some steps (questions) from above. Give them some 15 minutes for exchange. Then invite them back in the circle, open the discussion, especially about negative and destructive or self-sabotaging beliefs and ask participants for the feedback.

Material

paper and pen, poster, color pens

Method

self-exploration, internalization, experiential learning, discussion, feedback

Advice for Facilitators

It is expected that the trainer is skilled in the basics of group dynamics and be sensitive enough to work with such users/clients and sensitive themes.

Source (APA)

Adapted from: Williams, M.B.; Poijula, S. (2016). *The PTSD Workbook, Third Edition*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc.

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