

Activity 4 – Body scan meditation

Activity type: Mindfulness

Learning goals: The purpose of this activity is to pay attention to the inner experiences. This is because according to Rogers (1982) the first step to be able to accept others and care for them, is to be aware of their own inner experiences. This can be practiced by performing some mindfulness exercises. Trainees will practice in regulating the own awareness to the inner mental and physical events in the present moment and to get connected with them.

Specificities: The activity can be implemented either individually or in group. In both cases after the mindfulness technique, trainees will discuss in group their experience.

Duration: 40 minutes

Needed material: Body scan meditation audio file.

Instructions:

Make yourself comfortable and close your eyes gently following the instructions (in the audio file) to practice body-scan.

Questions for reflection:

How was your experience with body scan meditation?

Did you have any difficulty in practicing?

Do you feel different after practicing it?

Are there any feelings you want to share with us?

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Information for the trainer:

At first you can give some useful information about the technique of “body scanning” to trainees and point out the importance to do this kind of exercise regularly in order to develop empathy and connectedness with inner and outer worlds.

Body scanning involves paying attention to parts of the body and bodily sensations in a gradual sequence from feet to head. By mentally scanning yourself, you bring awareness to every single part of your body, noticing any aches, pains, tension, or general discomfort. The purpose of this technique is to tune in to your body—to reconnect to your physical self—and notice any sensations you’re feeling without judgement. While many people find the body scan relaxing, relaxation is not the primary goal. The goal is to train the mind to be more open and aware of sensory experiences—and ultimately, more accepting. So, paying attention to the body and bodily sensations is the “gateway” to more caring behavior—allowing us to notice that someone is suffering or that our actions are hurting someone and by this this way we can improve our empathy.

When participants are ready to start the meditation exercise, they can have access to the script of it through the platform or in case of group meditation you can read them the script. At the end of the meditation, invite all trainees to share their experience.

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