



MentEd

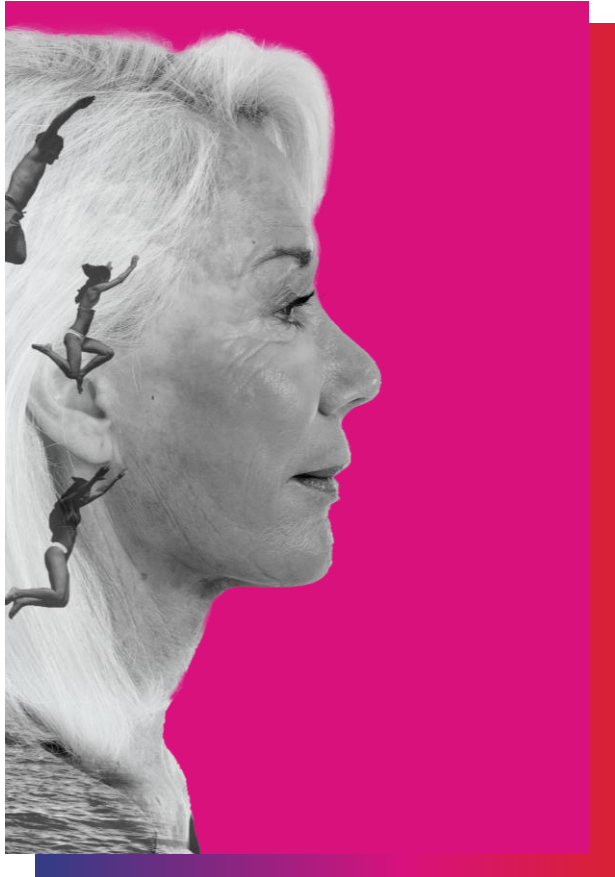
Mentalisierungsbasierte Pädagogik

Erasmus+ mentalisation training for educators

# Toolbox

## Mentalizing in practice group 1





Group 1

# Structure



1 Active

2 Reactive

Group 1

# 1 Active

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1. Mindfulness exercises
2. Rituals (fairy tale hour, discussion round in the morning, etc.)
3. Role play for emotion regulation

Group 1

# 1 Active

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## 3. Role play for emotion regulation:

- Small groups or in pairs
- Group formation & group dynamics: e.g.: draw lots, count, conscious allocation by leadership or members form groups themselves
- Empathy, reading and understanding of own and others' emotions (mental states) in the group
- Variations (pretend/assign emotions or let group members decide for themselves or suggestions of emotions that group members choose themselves)

## Group 1

# 1 Active

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- Procedure in the small group: Person A imitates a chosen/drawn emotion, and the rest of the group tries to guess the shown emotion
- „Why do you think the person feels that way? What signals does the person send out that you believe that this person is sad?“ → promotes mentalization
- „What situation could have led to the emotion shown?“ → Compassion
- "How could you comfort the person?" -> Person A is asked if the comforting worked or if he/she would have liked something other than comfort. Why did the comforting work? What helped to regulate the emotions?

## Group 1

# 1 Active

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- Final meeting in the large group: guided reflection on what has been experienced:
  - Structuring of the reflection discussion in the large group through targeted questioning (possibly visualization). First the group members who imitated the emotion and then the person who was supposed to guess the emotion and comfort person A.
  - „What emotion was difficult/easy for you to play?“
  - „How did you feel while playing the emotions?“
  - „How do you think the person who played the emotion felt?“

Group 1

# 1 Active

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- „How was the feeling of comfort for you? Has it been particularly easy or difficult for you?“
- „How did you feel when perceiving/experiencing the played emotion?“
- Epistemic trust is promoted by: mentalization and group membership
- The aim is to have the experience the world through the eyes of the other person (to mentalize)

*! Caution/mindfulness towards the group members during the activity, as triggers may occur. Any need for discussion that arises must be taken up sensitively by management!*

## Group 1

# 1 Active

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- To empathize with others and to sensitize the perception and assessment of one's own limits/border crossings and those of the other person
  - Paired, opposite
  - One person walks towards the other until he stretches out his arm and says stop as soon as it gets too close to him; Variation: Person goes one step further towards the other according to the instructions of the management, who knows nothing of the following border crossing. Both are to exchange views on this border crossing. How did it feel to keep running despite the "stop"? How did it feel that the person is getting closer and closer, even though their own limit has been verbally expressed?



# 1 Active

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*! Caution/mindfulness towards the group members during the activity, as triggers may occur. Any need for conversation that arises must be taken up sensitively by the management!*

- Stress ball: Who needs it? Why? Who needs it and for how long? Leads to the expression of existing emotions/feelings and possibly prevents an untargeted emotional outburst.

Gruppe 1

## 2 Reactive

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- Volume regulation of the class by guided, targeted noise change (increase, decrease); e.g. gestures, sounds by group  
Goal: Emotion regulation, influence group dynamics, create a positive atmosphere
  - 
  - Mood light:
- Where am I right now? Why am I there?

Group 1

## 2 Reactive

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- Body journey
- Gentle tapping of your own body/massaging
- Change of location -> out into the garden/outdoor area and free play or guided activity



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# Toolbox

## Mentalizing in practice group 2



Group 2

## Structure

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1 Emotional trash cans

2 Sorrow / Trouble Eater

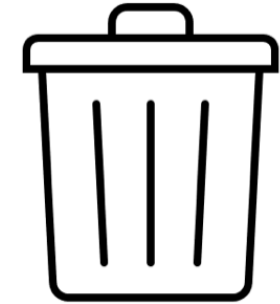
3 Emotional Diary

4 Warm Up



# 1 Emotional Trash Can

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*Occasion: Stressful, disturbing, difficult .... situations.*

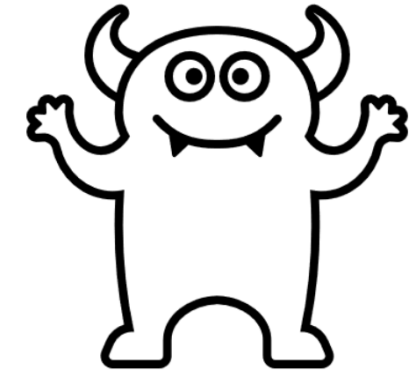
*When: After work, during the break, free hour, ....*

- Describe and record the situation (writing, voice message)
  - Pick up on your own feelings
  - Don't rush: Take your time (possibly coordinate with colleagues)
  - Intervention → „stop and rewind“
- 
- Writing down or speaking up as the first way to process the situation.
  - The situation can be revisited at a later time (distancing oneself from the situation). The written or spoken feelings can be analyzed, reflected on and questioned.
  - There is also the possibility to exchange ideas with the clients about the situation afterwards and to ask and compare their perspective if it seems to make sense for the situation.

Group 2

## 2 Sorrow / Trouble eater

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*Occasion: Stressful, disturbing, difficult .... situations, feeling uncomfortable*

*When: anytime*

- Writing down or drawing a situation/feeling
  - Crumple notes and throw them into a worry-eat bucket (bucket is located in a central and accessible place)
- 
- Perception of one's own feelings
  - Crumple and throw away: feeling/situation can be unloaded
  - In advance, it can be discussed with the group whether notes are taken out again and reflected (~grief box) or whether they are "eaten" (destroyed)

Group 2

## 3 Emotional Diary

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*For each month there is a circle with 31, 30 or 29 parts, which should represent the days. In this circle, it is recorded daily which feeling was strongest.*

*Different feelings can be sought together (joy, sadness, anger, fear/anxiety, surprise, disgust).*

*Each feeling gets a certain color and with this color the respective day is marked in a circle (painted).*

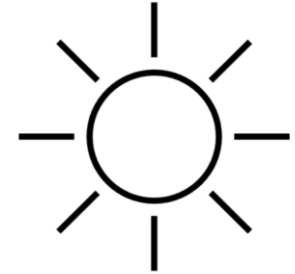
- Perception of one's own feelings
- Reflection of the (school) day
- Observation of feelings and changes during the month/year
- Differences can be addressed and associated with external conditions



Group 2

# 4 Warm Up

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*Examples: Zipp-Zapp-Pow, Shake it off, cow barn*

- Activation of the body and mind in the morning or afternoon
  - Lightening of the mood through a casual setting
  - Strengthening the group feeling/cohesion through shared fun and interactions
- 
- other form of perceiving the group
  - Person within the group
  - Every person within the group is perceived and seen



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# Toolbox

## Mentalizing in practice group 3



Group 3

## Structure

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- 1 Ideas for promoting mentalizing
- 2 Ideas for mentalizing intervention

# 1 Ideas for promoting mentalization

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- Group emotionalization through a common “WE” (What happens to our “WE”? What can we do to make our “WE” feel better?) → change of perception / perspective, attention to one's own feelings and feelings of others
- Class discussion: Pupils with a need for conversation throw a note in a mailbox during the week. On the last day of the week, these topics are discussed. Teachers have an observational function. Pupils determine the moderator → promote the “I” and “YOU” perspective, perceive all pupils with their needs

# 1 Ideas for promoting mentalizing

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- Joint introduction to the lesson: Thematizing and verbalizing of one's own feelings (possibly with emotion card) Group memory (emotional map and situation)
- Book reading in class: Emotional scenes are followed by an interruption of the story → empathy with the characters of the story – What do the protagonists feel? Support of emotional verbalization through emotional cards
- Group dynamic interaction/cooperation tasks with subsequent reflection, e.g.:

# 1 Ideas for promoting mentalizing

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- **Meter stick, ice floe game, spider web**
- Reflection: Who has which role? How did the student feel in each case? Address perceptions during the task
- 4 Characteristics Game: Strengthening of external and self-perception in groups of 3. Everyone in the group says 4 traits to themselves, one of which is wrong – the others are trying to guess the wrong trait

## 2 Ideas for mentalizing intervention

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- Intervention in case of dispute:  
Group is in a general state of conflict by two polarizing groups, teacher is not perceived, no learning possible, emotionally charged situation
- Observe the entire group → Build security and trust in the group, engage with the group and show trust and understanding, time and recognition
- Respond to needs and make an offer → Communication
- Range of movement to offload tensions
- Perceiving non-mentalizing modes in oneself and others

## 2 Ideas for mentalizing intervention

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- Role plays in conflict situations – "Chair changes" make it easier to put yourself in the other person's shoes (pedagogical elements) → thematize feelings and perceptions, self-perception and external perception, perception in the "here and now"
- LSCI - Life Space Crisis Intervention
- Differentiation of behavior and person
- Exercise to increase one's mindfulness
- Spatial separation (if resources exist)





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# Toolbox

## Mentalizing in practice group 4





Group 4

## Structure

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- 1 Collection of ideas
- 2 Reflection rooms
- 3 Systemic view, communication bridges
- 4 Mindful Minutes

Group 4

# Key question

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How can mentalizing-promoting spaces be created,  
that are not too dynamic ("everyday setting")  
and support a mentalizing attitude  
("I try to understand you from within")?

*Focus: Cooperation with parents*

## Group 4

# 1 Collection of ideas

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### **Organizational/spatial-structural level**

Institutional opportunities for retreat/discussion

➤ „reflection rooms“

### **Interactional level**

**Systemic view; Communication bridges**

Low-threshold contact and access options

### **Individual level**

Dealing with one's own thoughts and feelings; Mindfulness

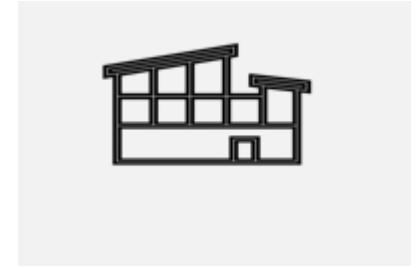
Sensitivity to inner processes

**"Mindful Minutes"**



## 2 Reflection Rooms

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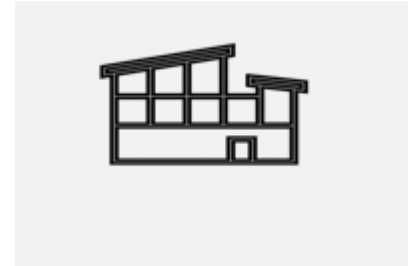
### „Reflection Rooms“ on a spatial-structural level

- Spaces that offer educational professionals with opportunities to take “time out”, to listen to themselves, to think about mental states
- **Important:**  
These "reflection spaces" are not simply there but must always be turned into such places and used as such.  
Create acceptance for the use of these spaces and integrate them firmly into the organizational framework.

Group 4

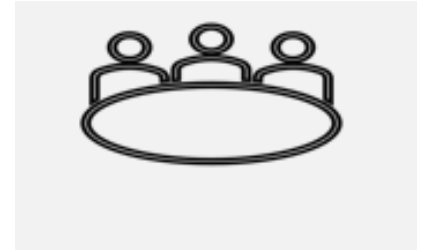
## 2 Reflection Rooms

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„**Reflection rooms**“ through institutionally anchored opportunities for discussion

- Joint case understanding, working groups, supervision



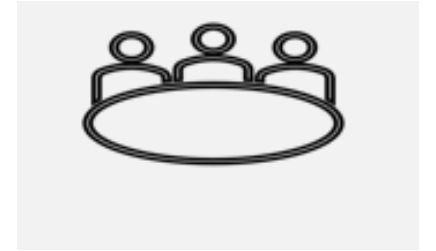
## 3 Systemic view, communication bridges

### ➤ „Systemic view “

- Search for the meaning of behavior in the systemic-relational context through the use of network cards; drawing test "Family in animals"

### „communication bridges“

- Low-threshold communication offers: Use of messenger tools (company mobile phone)/"post folder" as a communication bridge between family and school
- Regular discussion offer (not only for problems of the learners) → relationship work



## 3 Systemic view, communication bridges

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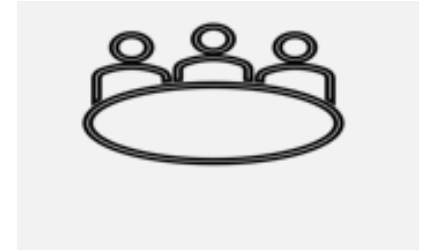
- Include the circumstances of the families → make appointments, inform yourself about the families and be interested, if necessary, make home visits
- Taking into account language barriers & cultural differences
- Change of perspective: How well can parents communicate in the German language and contribute their views? Are parents familiar with the school system or do they first need to get to know and understand it?



Group 4

## 3 Systemic view, communication bridges

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- Write parent letters in different languages or at least point out the possibility of a translation upon request
- Labelling of the rooms in several languages
- Invite a person from outside to conversations with parents who speaks the parents' language of origin or implement technical aids:

Group 4

## 4 Mindful Minutes

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- **Conscious breathing:** Connect and feel with your own breath -  
Mentalization-promoting effect: Create awareness of your own sensations, calm down, reduce the stress experience
- **„Mentalizing hand“:** based on 5-finger method; each finger is linked to mentalization-stimulating questions and considered in relation to a (problematic) situation – “mentalizing hand” as a kind of guide for reflexive thought processes, reflexive thinking is gradually initiated, promote reflection instead of reaction

Group 4

## 4 Mindful Minutes

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Possible procedure:

- Thumbs – THAT: *That concerns me, I think about it.*
- Index finger – YOU: Benevolent curiosity: *What could the other person think/feel*
- Middle finger – ME: Self-reflexivity: *What does this have to do with me? How do I feel? What does the situation do to me?*



Group 4

## 4 Mindful Minutes

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- Ring finger – WE: Relationship level & context location: How can the relationship be described? What interactions exist – e.g. how do one's own feelings and actions affect my counterpart?
- Pinky: COULD IT BE?: Hypotheses, non-knowing attitude: I know that I don't know, but could it be that...?

→ mentalizing posture



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# Toolbox

## Mentalizing in practice group 5





## Group 5

# Structure

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1 Atmosphere: in classroom, group room etc.

1.1 Morning/noon/evening (in between)

1.2 Stressful situations

1.3 Mindfulness Exercise

1.4 Exercises on the topic of emotions

1.5 Games

## Group 5

# 1.1 Morning/noon/evening (in between)

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- Before you enter the place/situation "feel inside" and consciously pause
  - perceive the environment, the events and one's own feelings
  - perceive the feelings of the addressees
- develop a mentalizing attitude

## Group 5

# 1.1 Morning/noon/evening (in between)

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- open up to yourself and your addressees and communicate how you feel.

Use morning circles (Monday morning) and closing circles (Friday afternoon) to create conversational occasions, such as weekend reflections or weekend outlook. Bringing the children and themselves into a mentalizing attitude through specific questions.

→ Goal: Epistemic trust: Basic trust in a caregiver has a positive influence on self-perception and ultimately on the self-image of the addressees



## 1.2 Stressful situations

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- Set clear signals when it becomes too much - this applies to all present people (children & adults) e.g. singing bowls / gong, bell etc.
  - Focus on self-awareness
  - Mentalizing in a group: "I perceive that..."
  - address the children: "How are you experiencing this right now?" and encourage children to mentalize through further questions.
- Goal: To recognize the difference between effective and ineffective mentalization

Group 5

## 1.3 Mindfulness Exercise

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- progressive muscle relaxation and reflection (what did I feel, how did that feel).

## 1.4 Exercises on the topic of emotions

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- Editing picture book stories: Looking at/reading certain books with the children and questioning the events and talking to the children/addressees about how they would feel if they were in the position of the character in the story.
- From the film “Alles steht Kopf“: analyze, together with the addressees, different film sequences and talk about the events or how you felt yourself. For children who were dealing with the topic of emotions for the first time, use the characters from the film to explain certain emotions to them. Or question them what they think or how the characters in the story feel. Book tips: "the little we"

## 1.4 Exercises on the topic of emotions

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All participants choose symbols to express their emotions/constitution:

- Clothespins & Emotion Cards: Each child gets a clothespin with his name or symbol on it and can cling it to a certain emotion image in the classroom /group room according to his condition
- Emotion cards "Today I am" (fish cards)
- Box with objects that could represent emotions and then talk about them in a circle

## 1.4 Exercises on the topic of emotions

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- Symbol cards with weather (sun, rain, rain and thunderstorms, cloud, rainbow). The addressees choose cards and are allowed to explain why they feel this way
- The symbol cards can also be used as daily rituals to start the day together.
  - Goal: Joint Attention: To draw attention towards the emotions that the children feel → promote mentalization through joint relationship design

## Group 5

# 1.5 Games

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- Emotion memory: at each discovery, talk briefly about why the person in the picture shows a certain emotion.
- Human emotion memory: Couples are formed and a person goes out the door. The couples come up with an emotion and have to recreate it as identically as possible. The person from outside comes back in and has to guess which emotions belong together and name them.

Group 5

# 1.5 Games

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- Jeux Dramatique: Addressees depict a story non-verbally with the help of different colored cloths and then reenact the story non-verbally. Afterwards they talk about their experience and their feelings.
- Work with the concept "Faustlos", which actually serves to prevent violence, but at the same time a lot can be reflected on the emotions of others and one's own emotions.