



6. GLASSES THAT DISTORT REALITY

Specific workshop objectives

At the end of the workshop, the student will be able to:

- Better understand the concept of intolerance and identify its different types
- To recognize situations to which it is particularly sensitive
- To deal more consciously with their intolerances
- Become aware of the importance of the social support network

How the workshop works

Welcome the students and present the workshop objectives and how it will work.

A. The week in review (10 min)

1. Now, ask the students how their week went. How did you feel in general? Did you step outside of your comfort zone? If so, in which situations? If not, why? Did you identify other situations that make you feel good or increase your anxiety? If yes, which ones?
2. If you want to go into more detail, you can ask the following questions:
 - Did you learn anything new about yourself?
 - Did you notice anything different about the way you perceive or react to certain situations?
 - Did you learn anything about your comfort zone and your personal objective?

B. The mountain meditation (10 min.)

1. Tell the students they are going to do the mountain meditation. Ask them to find a place where they can sit comfortably with their eyes closed without being disturbed. They can sit on the floor or on a chair, whichever they prefer. Ask them to close their eyes if they want to.
2. You can use the script at the end of this workshop to lead the meditation yourself, or

you can use the audio at this link (duration: 8 min. 23 sec.): <https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Mountain-meditation-1.mp4>
(Centre RBC d'expertise universitaire en santé mentale, n.d.).

3. If time permits, once the meditation is finished, talk about it as a group. For example, ask the students how they feel now, what they remember from the mountain meditation, if there was a passage that stood out for them, etc.
4. Tell the students they can access the audio at the address indicated in their *Handy student guide*.

C. Outside of my comfort zone, what things make me react most? (25 min)

1. You divide the class into groups of 2 or 3 students. Give them the titles, definitions, and scenarios for different types of intolerance (see the worksheets at the end of the workshop), along with sticky tack. Each group must work together to match the correct title to its definition, scenario, and picture. They must then stick them to the wall.

Title: Intolerance to uncertainty: I worry about everything!

Definition: An intolerance of potential danger, change, and anything new.

Scenario: Valerie is very excited this morning. It's the end-of-year field trip. She spent hours last night getting ready to make sure she didn't forget anything. When Valerie gets to school, the teacher announces that they won't be able to go to the waterslides as planned because of an equipment breakdown at the park. She tells them they'll be going indoor climbing instead. Valerie panics. She's never climbed before. She thinks to herself: "What if something happens? What if the others laugh at me because I'm terrible at it? What if I panic halfway up the wall and freeze?" etc.

Picture:



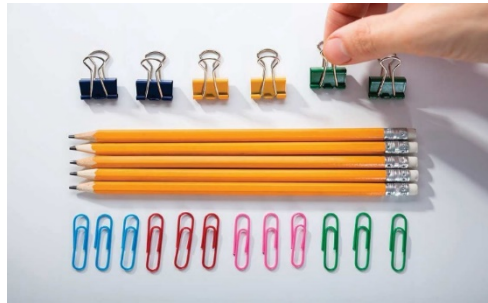
Title: Perfectionism: I'm not satisfied unless it's perfect.

Definition: An intolerance of the risk of error, an intolerance of things not being perfect, a tendency to criticize your own achievements and self-blame.

Scenario: Charles is invited to an advanced video game design camp for teens. Everyone attending the camp is talented and skilled. At camp, Charles is trying to design a game prototype. After working on it for 20-30 minutes, he realizes it's not quite up to par because of some technical issues. He decides to start over. Thirty minutes later, he again decides his prototype isn't good enough. He decides to start over again. Time goes by. He realizes he has only 30 minutes left to complete his prototype. He becomes super anxious.

He doesn't know how he'll produce a prototype that will meet his standards in such a short time. He panics to the point that he can't function anymore.

Picture:



Title: Excessive responsibility: I feel guilty all the time.

Definition: An intolerance of the fact that bad things might happen to others, and that it will be your fault because you didn't do anything to prevent them.

Scenario: Before leaving for school in the morning, Marie notices that her dog threw up his breakfast. She starts to worry. She remembers giving him a treat the night before. She thinks it might be her fault that the dog is sick. She calls her mom to ask what she should do. Her mother tells her not to worry and they'll deal with the situation that evening. Marie runs to catch her bus, still worried about the dog. She thinks about him all morning. At lunch, she decides to go home to check on her dog. But that means she

won't have time to eat. When she gets home, she finds her dog asleep. She offers him food, but he refuses. She calls her mom again. Her mother is angry that Marie left school to check on the dog. She tells her to stop worrying and that she'll take care of it when she gets home. Marie goes back to school, still worried. She's very concerned about her dog. The situation weighs on her mind all afternoon.

Picture:



Title: Fear of being judged by others: I know they're judging me.

Definition: An intolerance of possibly being judged and criticized by others, of being laughed at and ridiculed.

Scenario: During math class, right before lunch, Julien asked a question that made everyone laugh. It was a really dumb question that clearly showed he wasn't following and didn't understand the material. At the end of the class, the teacher made fun of Julien by repeating his question in a mocking voice. Julien is embarrassed and doesn't want to eat lunch with the others. He walks past the lockers and thinks he hears his classmates whispering behind his back. He passes two teachers, who look at him. He wonders if they know what happened to him in class. He decides to hide out in the library for the entire lunch hour. He finally comes out for the first afternoon class. He's the last one to get there and sits at the back of the class. He'd like to disappear for the rest of the day.

Picture:



Title: Intolerance of negative emotions and unpleasant physical sensations: Something's wrong with my body!

Definition: A tendency to worry excessively about the physical sensations and symptoms caused by anxiety.

Scenario: Julie is having trouble concentrating in French class this morning. She can't stop thinking about the stomach-ache that started just after she got to school. It's not that bad, but she's worried about what's causing it. The more she thinks about it, the worse she feels. And then she starts to feel a little queasy. What if she gets sick and must go home? What if she throws up in front of everyone?

Picture:



2. When both groups have finished sticking the title, definition, scenario, and picture for each type of intolerance to the wall, review their answers with them and make corrections, as needed.
3. Ask the students to rate, on the scale from 1 to 10 in their Handy student guide, how much they identify with each of the intolerances. This exercise illustrates how they can be more sensitive to and tend to avoid certain types of situations. By being aware of this, they can pay closer attention to this type of situation in their daily lives and try to adopt strategies for dealing with it. Intolerances are like glasses that distort reality. When you're aware of them, you can try to remove them and see the situation differently.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
It doesn't sound like me at all			It sounds a bit like me				It really sounds like me		

4. Ask them to identify which type of intolerance they identify with the most, write it down in their *Handy student guide*, and share their thoughts with the group.

D. The importance of my social support network (10 min)

1. Ask the students why they think it's important to surround themselves with supportive people they can trust. Complete with the following explanations:

Having a social support network is a protection factor in coping with stress and life events. It helps meet various personal and social needs, including support for self-esteem (through the appreciation that others feel for us), the feeling of usefulness (by feeling useful to others, which increases our self-esteem), emotional support (by providing comfort, listening, and understanding), concrete help in terms of favours and occasional financial assistance, relevant information (by giving relevant advice, information about opportunities), academic support, support for social integration (helping to make new friends, meet new people), etc. This social support network can also help when it comes to dealing with the developmental stages of adolescence. Being able to rely on different people is reassuring (Pauzé , 2019).

During adolescence, it's important that a teen's social support network include both adults (parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, teachers, coaches) and peers (friends, classmates, teammates, cousins). A balanced network is therefore made up of adults and young people (Pauzé *et al.*, 2019).

What matters most is not the number of people in the social support network, but the satisfaction derived from this support and the quality of the relationships. Having friends who are arguing with each other can be more stressful than comforting (Claes, 2003).

When you are feeling stressed or dealing with an anxiety-provoking situation, the main role of the people in the social support network is to provide support by being present, understanding and available, and listening without judging, while providing support and relevant information (Pauzé *et al.*, 2019).

Reciprocity is also important in a social support network. You may have friends who ask for a lot but give little in return. Over time, these friends can become a source of stress in your life. On the other hand, if you take a lot from certain relationships but give little in return, these people may burn out, or you may end up feeling like you owe them something.

2. Ask students how they feel about their social support network and how they could improve it or develop it.

E. This week's challenge (5 minutes)

1. Explain that this week's challenge (also in their *Handy student guide*) is to try to identify their emotions and the need behind them and to apply a strategy. Explain, as needed.



COMPLEMENTARY SHEET

The mountain meditation

(Bell, chime, or sound of Tibetan singing bowl)

Get into a comfortable position. Close your eyes and simply observe your breathing, without trying to change it. Observe the movement of air through your body as you breathe in and out.

Now imagine a beautiful mountain, one that you like to visit or that is just a figment of your imagination. Focus on the image of this mountain by imagining its shape, summit, nature and colours. Let the image of the mountain become clearer and clearer in your head. It doesn't matter what it looks like—just let the mountain draw clearly into focus. Observe it in detail.

Look at the stillness of the mountain. Admire how solid and magnificent it is, from near and far. This mountain represents strength and confidence.

When you feel ready, imagine that this mountain is you. The mountain and your body, both motionless, are one. Try to feel the grounding effect of the mountain. Feel its strength and force becoming yours, little by little, even though you're sitting right here. Like the mountain, you are becoming unshakeable.

With a sense of calm, you observe the changes of your environment, the movements of the sun, the passing of the seasons and, like the mountain, you simply stand there. It absorbs the warmth of the sun and tracks the movements of the clouds, but it remains there, completely still. It bears witness to all these changes.

The mountain receives visitors and listens to them marvel at its beauty or complain about the bad weather. Nothing affects the mountain; it always remains profoundly itself. The strength and beauty of the mountain never change, whether or not people see it, whether or not they pay attention to it, whether or not clouds blanket its summit.

Day or night, rain or shine, alone or crowded with visitors, the mountain remains itself, solid and still. Sometimes, the mountain experiences howling winds or raging thunderstorms. But it remains standing, traversing every ordeal, impervious to the weather.

In the same way, try to channel the mountain's strength and power in your own body. Bear witness to the changes in your environment, good and bad. Welcome this strength and allow it to move inside you.

If you want, you can now take the time to reactivate your body by stretching gently, yawning if needed, and coming back to your surroundings by slowly opening your eyes.

(Bell, chime, or sound of Tibetan singing bowl)

