

Experiential Workshop

Title	<i>"The tree of life" - A biographical experience and writing exercise to discover the roots of current emotional patterns</i>	
Goals	We would like to give people an insight in one of many biographical activities you can use with groups of different sizes and without a lot of materials. By just being outside - in a beautiful natural environment - and experiencing the powerful metaphor of the tree we want therapists to experience for themselves what it means to provoke an emotional scheme related to their own patterns and to share these biographical insights with others.	
Description	<p>During this workshop, we want to invite you to go outside and stand face to face with yourself through the metaphor of the tree. Allow your own story to crystalize itself in the tree: in the form of the tree, the smell and every sensation that you feel in that moment. By letting you experience this biographical exercise yourself we want to make the link with the person you are now and in relation to others, using the group as a forum and possible healing source.</p> <p>A lot of our youngsters or even adults rush through life and through the programs without taking the time to slow down and even stand still to be more aware and feel what is going on. An exercise like this gives them the opportunity to stop running, to encounter themselves, take the time... Participants, especially vulnerable youngsters, have often not only lost connection to the outside world (and to nature) but also the connection to their own inner world. This exercise can help them in an indirect way to come closer to what really matters to them or to what keeps them busy.</p> <p>Quote from a 12 year old youngster in a family program using this exercise: "In my childhood I have two kinds of trees: a bunch of dead wood al messed up and chaotic and besides that a very beautiful tree. This is how I feel about my childhood but this is also how it goes in our family: we have very good and connected moments and we have also a lot of fights and then it's a mess. I would like to build together as a family a strong foundation from the messy wood, so that we can live in more harmony as a family."</p> <p>The workshop will be given outside and will be purely experiential. By experiencing the metaphor of "The tree of life" yourself, you can become aware of its potential of un-doing a projection linked to childhood. The exercise gives you the opportunity to get aware of the possible (mostly unconscious) projections we all make on our environment. The tree can also provide a frame that can activate emotional (dysfunctional) schemes and has the potential to be a motivator or trigger towards a (wish to) change towards more functional schemes. Given the fact that you can only change an emotional scheme when it is activated, this activity has the potential to provide a fertile soil for change, for the facilitation and creation of new and more functional schemes.</p>	
Number of participants	Minimum	8
	Maximum	16
	Name	Lynn Van Hoof & Nadia Vossen





<p>About the facilitators...</p>	<p>Background</p>	<p>Lynn Van Hoof is a clinical psychologist with a postgraduate degree in Adventure Education. She has 6 years of experience in working with youth at risk, within family- or group work at the Belgian organization NATURE. Besides facilitating experiential learning and adventure therapy programs, training teachers and youth workers in experiential education, she also provides individual therapy for youngsters and adults, implementing outdoor activities in their therapeutic process and using the approach of Emotion Focused Therapy.</p> <p>Lynn is the coordinator of the partnership project that organizes this GATE and the Belgian representative of ATIC (Adventure Therapy International Committee) who organizes the international conferences on Adventure Therapy (IATC). She strongly believes in the therapeutic value of nature and has a passion for connecting people around the globe who feel the same way.</p> <p>Nadia vossen (40) is bachelor in psychology, with a postgraduate degree in contextual psychotherapy and Adventure Education and experiential learning. She worked for years as a psychotherapist in a mental health center for children and their families in multi problem situations. She also was an outdoor guide in Chilean Patagonia and always searching for a connection between nature and the therapeutic healing process. At the moment she is a contextual (crisis) counselor for youth and families at risk. She's a volunteer at NATURE where she practices experiential learning and adventure therapy and is a member of the European strategic partnership of Adventure Therapy and coordinator of the training and intervision action group. Nadia goes for Adventure therapy because it accepts nature as a partner in therapy with the special ability to bring you back in contact with yourself, your essence and significant relations through extraordinary and authentic experiences and awareness...</p>
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