

RATIONALIZING FEAR. FINDING SOLUTIONS TO FACE OUR FEARS.

Creativity applied to fear (Activity 2/12)

DESCRIPTION

This activity is aimed at carers of elderly people living in residential homes so that through the development of their creativity they can help and support the elderly in situations or emotions of fear. The situation created by the COVID-19 virus means that the elderly find themselves alone in very difficult situations, including death. The aim of this activity is to support people who work in nursing homes with different profiles and without specific training to deal with the diversity of the elderly in the emotional management of fear through creativity. Fear is an emotion. Emotions are states (mental and physical) that move us to something. To a certain degree they can move us, but they can even paralyse us (fear - terror, rage - more rage). This activity is oriented to face fears, to propose solutions to situations that frighten us, to avoid inflexible positions. Fears are often denied (so as not to feel bad), hidden (so as not to worry others or not to be considered badly) and we pretend they do not exist, avoiding them or avoiding topics or situations that provoke them ("better not to talk about it", "it's not important", "we'll leave it for another time, now we don't have time",...). With this activity an active stance will be maintained, directly confronting the situation that produces fear and facing the consequences or trying to maintain control and avoiding impulsive behaviour. It is an activity to work on fear from the use of reason.



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OBJECTIVES

- Encourage and develop the creativity of all those working in nursing homes so that they can help to effectively combat the fear of the elderly by giving concrete and specific responses to each person's situation.
- Learning to react and act in fearful situations without being paralysed by fear to the point that our decisions and attitudes are subordinated to it.
- Change negative thoughts that can increase the feeling of fear into rational thoughts.
- Learn different techniques to work on fear at its root and gradually dismantle it.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- Cards or sheets of paper
- Pens

IMPLEMENTATION - INSTRUCTION

This activity consists in that in groups of 3-4 people, we are going to study different situations to see what we can do to reduce fear in each of them. Each of these situations is prepared on different cards or sheets of paper (these are indicative examples). Each group is given a different situation. Examples:

- Your child is seriously ill; you are afraid he/she will die.
- You are going to the doctor; you are afraid that you have a serious illness.

The examples of problematic situations or situations that generate fear can be diverse, depending on the group of people participating in the activity, a certain number of these situations will have to be written down, they can even be situations related to our daily life.

For example, you are walking down the street and you feel that someone is chasing you and this generates fear. Depending on the duration of the activity, we can give only one situation per group or several. Participants will write down the solutions they find to these fears so that they understand that all fear disappears when it is rationalised. Examples of solutions to rationalise fears are:

- Be informed. For example, if I am afraid of pancreatic cancer, I can find out which population is most affected by this type of cancer, the number of cases, etc.



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- Work-accept. Accepting my fears and not fighting not to feel them.
- Humour. Take my fears with humour, make irony or jokes about them.
- Reason. Think rationally about the fear, e.g. how likely it is to happen.
- Think positive. Change negative thoughts to positive and realistic thinking, understanding that it doesn't have to happen.
- Express feelings. Express that emotion of fear in any way we want, writing down how I feel for example.
- Socialising. Socialise with other people and talk about our fears.
- Ask for help. Ask for help from other people, institutions or people who work in health to help me.

The aim of this activity is for participants to learn from these imaginary situations to understand what their fears are, to know how to analyse them in depth and from there to dismantle their fears by "rationalising" them with the techniques they have learnt.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

The activity can be extended by creating feedback at the end of the activity, about what fear is for them, if there is trust in the group you can talk about the fears of each one, how to face them. In addition, Participants can be given a small information leaflet on what they can do to deal with fear.

If there is enough time, a role-play can be done in small groups in which participants act out a situation in which they have faced a fear by rationalizing it and overcame it.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Through the development of this activity, caregivers are expected to acquire new options on how to react to the emotion of fear in their personal lives and in their work with the elderly.

Fear is a primary emotion and we have to learn to live with it and know how to react to it, rationalizing our fears allows us to take action and benefit from them. The aim of this activity is for participants to learn to understand their fears and mitigate them. If we learn not to let fear control us, we will realize that it is not fear that causes the problem, but the way we deal with this emotion, an emotion that makes us, quite simply, human.