

PTSD

Several of the exercises relate to the animated films about PTSD. We therefore recommend that pupils watch the films together, supplemented with any interview films you may find relevant. The interview film about Shawk and Sisi is very relevant when discussing PTSD.

Exercise 1: Talk together


- How do experiences of war affect the father's thoughts, emotions and body?
- How do the father's reactions affect Ali's thoughts, emotions and body?
- How does Ali feel when he is at home?
- How does Ali feel when he is in school?
- How do Ali's classmates react to the way Ali is behaving?
- Why do the classmates react this way?

Exercise 2: Talk in groups of 4

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of telling Ali's teacher how he and his father feel?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of letting Ali's classmates know how he and his father feel?

Write down the advantages and disadvantages in the form presented on the next page. When all the groups have finished the task you can evaluate the information together and make a complete list of advantages and disadvantages.



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Exercise 3: Joint discussion or group discussion

- What can teachers do to make their pupils feel comfortable about sharing personal issues?
- How can teachers give their pupils the best support?
- How can pupils support their classmates in the best way?

When discussing these questions you can use the collaboration structure "Stand and share" from Cooperative Learning.

The class is split into 4 to 6 groups. Each group is given a number from 1 to 6. The group members discuss one question at a time and write down their suggestions on a list.

Example 1: You have to be able to trust the teacher.

Example 2: The teacher can't tell anyone else.

The pupils write as many suggestions as possible on their list. After X number of minutes all groups get up.

Group 1 tell the others about one of their suggestions. If the other groups have the same suggestion on their lists they cross it off. Hereafter group 2 tells their classmates about one of their suggestions. When a group has finished telling the others about all the suggestions on their list the members sit down. When all groups are sitting down the exercise is complete.

Exercise 4: Role-play

The class can do short role-plays in groups, illustrating how teachers and classmates can show support in the best way. If possible, the pupils can record the role-play on their smartphone or iPad and show it to their parents. You can also publish the role-plays on the school's intranet.



Exercise 5: Joint decision-making

Tell the pupils to make decisions based on what you say by:

- Getting up from their chair if they disagree
- Sitting still on their chair if they agree
- Getting half up from their chair if they neither agree or disagree

Read a statement out loud and ask the pupils what they think before you read the next statement:

”If you are sad it is best to keep it to yourself.”

”It is a good thing if the school knows how you feel at home.”

”The parents should inform the teacher how the family is doing at home.”

”The teacher should tell the parents how the pupils are doing in school.”

”It is the children’s responsibility to look after the adults.”

”It is the adult’s responsibility to look after the children.”



If the pupils open up and start sharing personal stories you can instruct the other pupils to use a certain signal (patting on the shoulder for instance) if they have a similar story. In this way you avoid several pupils telling the same story.

Exercise 6: Joint confidence game

In order to show pupils how confidence matters when sharing their vulnerabilities with others, you can use different confidence exercises to create room for more physical activity and discussion through play during the lessons.

For instance, you can do one of the exercises listed below.

Begin by telling pupils that you are going to do different confidence exercises together. Having confidence in others means being able to show trust. You can also tell them how important it is to have confidence in others if you want to tell them how you feel.

An exercise to create 'social glue' in the class

You can start with an exercise to strengthen the sense of solidarity between the pupils. Ask the pupils to stand across from each other in pairs.

You are in charge of the exercise. When you say ”knee to knee”, for instance, this means that one pair should put their knees against the other pair’s knees. When you say ”foot to foot”, one pair should put their feet against the other pair’s feet. Every time you give the pupils new instructions, the previous

contact stops and the next one begins. The touching should only last a few seconds. At some point you say: "switch partners" and everyone has to find a new partner. When all the pupils have found a new partner the exercise continues.

Blind walking

Ask half of the pupils to line up in a row with their hands on each other's shoulders. All the pupils have to be blindfolded, except for the one at the front who will be leading the others around the room. You can make the exercise more challenging by asking pupils to speed up or to run instead of walking. The rest of the pupils act as observers and after a while you can ask them to switch roles.

Fall over exercise

Ask 6 to 10 of the pupils to gather in a circle. One pupil gets in the middle of the circle and stands stiff as a board. The other pupils gently push the pupil in the middle to bring him or her out of balance – tilting while making sure the person does not fall. Ask the other pupils in the class to observe what happens between the pupil in the middle and the ones pushing. After a while you can repeat the exercise with another group of pupils.

When the exercise is completed you can discuss:

- What does it take to have confidence in others?
- What did the observers notice?
- What did the pupils involved in the exercise notice?
- What do we normally do in the class to encourage trust and confidence between each other?
- What can we do better?

Exercise 7: Parental involvement

As part of this exercise you can use the lists with advantages and disadvantages and your reflections on how to support each other in the best way, as teacher and pupil respectively.

You can put the lists up in the classroom the next time you hold a parent-teacher meeting and use them as a starting point when discussing a good home-school collaboration regarding the pupil's well-being.

If the pupils have made short role-plays they can present these to their parents and discuss them at home.