

MY SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS*

– incomplete sentences on social support

The aim of 'My Social Relationships' is to help participants gain insights into and clarify their experiences and needs with respect to how those around them react to them as individuals with a chronic condition. Participants are asked to complete sentences in which the first word relates to their social relationships. Many individuals with a chronic condition experience changes in their relationships with other people. Some find that they get the right support whereas others feel they get either too much or too little attention. The challenges faced by participants are seldom something they talk to others about. In talking to the group, they may find solutions to their challenges.



Approximately 15 minutes for completing the sentence

At least 30 minutes for dialogue on questions

Sheet of incomplete sentences could be handed out during the previous session and completed at home



Sheet of incomplete sentences

Writing implements



Individual

In pairs (person beside) or group dialogue



The topic can be linked to 'Challenging Relations' in The Balancing Person

* Source: Vibeke Zoffmann

STEP BY STEP

1. The educator introduces the aim of the exercise: To verbalise the changes illness has caused in relationships with other people.
2. All participants get a sheet of sentences for completion.
3. Participants are asked to complete the various sentences in writing. Some participants may want to write a lot, others little. The idea is not to write a whole novel but just that the sentences should be completed, and these are then used as inspiration for more detailed dialogue.
4. When participants have completed the sentences, the educator asks which participant would like to take the first sentence. It is important for participants to read the complete sentence. The educator asks how other participants have completed the same sentence. Again, it is important that the sentences are read aloud, compared and discussed. It is not about finding a single right way of formulating the sentence but that the sentences provide the basis for discussions in the group.
5. The educator can ensure that each sentence is accompanied by forward-facing dialogue about the particular issue and ask participants whether anything has surprised them.
6. All the sentences are gone through as above.
7. The educator can conclude the exercise for example by repeating some of the suggestions made by participants for tackling the reactions of the outside world to chronic illness.
8. Version 2: When participants have completed the sentences, they form pairs and read their sentences to each other and discuss them.