

QUICK THERAPY SOLUTIONS PROVIDED BY COUNSELLING IN FRANCE

ARGUMENT SOLVING

This package comprises:

1. Introduction
2. Worksheet 1: Ground rules and the agreed meeting time each week for four weeks
3. Worksheet 2: Personal diary and thoughts
4. Worksheet 3: Family meetings
5. Worksheet 4: Final thoughts
6. Worksheet 5: Relaxation and visualisation exercises

Living in a family can be very rewarding but it can also be very painful. Family members are very good at knowing how to hurt us, how to reach into our deepest emotional places and press hidden buttons, how to reduce us to tears with a few well-chosen observations. However, our families are incredibly precious to us and the relationships within them are worth working at and protecting from fatal damage.

This package comprises four worksheets and will take four weeks with a weekly family circle. For this reason, it's important that the family members are willing to undertake the package together. The aim is to mend fragile relationships and start a dialogue between family members who may have had difficulty communicating.

The first worksheet are the ground rules and the meeting time for each weekly meeting.

The second worksheet is a diary for each family member and should be printed out and given out to each family member who is going to take part.

The third worksheet is for use within each weekly family meeting.

The fourth worksheet is for each family member to write down their feelings and thoughts at the last meeting

Please print each worksheet as directed at the top of each page.

QUICK THERAPY SOLUTIONS

FT1 ARGUMENT SOLVING

Worksheet 1

GROUND RULES AND MEETING TIMES

Please print out a copy of this page for each family member

Please print this page out for every member to keep. It is vitally important that everyone tries hard to keep to these ground rules as they are designed to be the "unbiased referee" of any group.

GROUND RULES

1. Keep to the meeting time and place as agreed by all family members. This time together should come first before other commitments for the next four weeks, so make sure that the times can be kept to by each member.
2. Agree that each member will be listened to and given time to speak without interruption or ridicule.
3. Agree that no-one will raise their voice or shout at anyone else for this meeting time.
4. Agree that no-one will walk out or use violent or aggressive behaviour while in the meeting.
5. Agree that all members will trust each other not to repeat what is said to anyone outside the group and that what is said is respected and not used against any member outside the group.
6. Make sure that when you meet, you are all comfortable and have drinks available so that no-one has to leave during the meeting to go to the loo or get a drink. Make sure the landline is either on answerphone or off the hook and that everyone's mobile phones are off.
7. Whatever problems are being experienced within your family, remember that you love each other and that during these meetings, at least, you will respect and listen to each other.

MEETING TIME

DAY:

TIME:

Please print keep these ground rules and meeting time available during the four weeks.

QUICK THERAPY SOLUTIONS

FT1 ARGUMENT SOLVING

Worksheet 2 – Thoughts Diary

Please print out a copy of this page for each family member

This worksheet is for use as a thoughts diary for each member to write what feelings and issues come up during the meetings over the four weeks. It is NOT for anyone else to see or to share with the family group. It is important that you keep it private so that you can be honest.

If you are unsure what to write, here are some suggestions: who annoyed you at the meetings and what did they say that annoyed you, how are you feeling deep down about all the family members and is that starting to change, are you learning anything different about how to relate to any family members and so on. Be honest and write what you really feel. The aim is to help you track what is happening emotionally for you.

MEETING WEEK 1

MEETING WEEK 2

MEETING WEEK 3

MEETING WEEK 4

QUICK THERAPY SOLUTIONS

FT1 ARGUMENT SOLVING

Worksheet 3 – For use each week
Please print out a copy of this page for each family member

Each meeting should last at least an hour but try not to go over 90 minutes otherwise everyone will get mentally exhausted.

STRUCTURE OF FIRST THREE MEETINGS

Baggage Dumping

Everyone should take 5 minutes each sharing things that have happened to them during the last week. Start with the oldest member of the group and go round according to age till everyone has spoken.

Particular Issues

Taking it in turns again, each person should talk to each member of the group and say whether they have particular problems with their thoughts or behaviour during the past week. Only choose one thing per person that annoys you the most, not a whole lot of stuff they might do that annoys you, but focus on the thing that upsets or annoys you the most. If there is someone in the group that you are OK with, leave them out. *When that person has listened to you, they cannot answer until it's their turn to speak.* This way, it avoids a slanging match and everyone will feel properly listened to.

Each person should only have 10 minutes maximum to address the person they have an issue with. If this group is small and you want to give more time for each person for this bit, that's fine but try to stick to the time limit as it helps everyone to focus.

Affirmations

This bit is important although you may feel as though you want to avoid it. Again, taking it in turns to speak, each person should address other members and say:

- one thing that they like and admire about them
- one thing that they have been really happy about what they have said or done in the past week

Closure

Depending on how much time you have at the end of the meeting, tie up loose ends that may have come up. If anyone is upset or wobbly, it's important to acknowledge how much everyone wants to support everyone else and that anyone who is upset will be offered some support. Be guided by the person who is upset, whether they want comforting or need to talk to any member of the group afterwards or whether they want to be left alone and need some space to recover themselves.

STRUCTURE OF FINAL FOURTH MEETING

Bring Worksheet 4 with you to this meeting and taking it in turns, keeping to the ground rules, share your conclusions and thoughts with your family.

QUICK THERAPY SOLUTIONS

FT1 ARGUMENT SOLVING

Worksheet 4: Final thoughts

Please print out a copy of this page for each family member

Please complete this sheet and bring it to the final meeting to share with the family group

1. Do you feel any differently now to when the group started?

2. How will you behave differently?

3. Is there anything you want to say to each family member?

4. Say how you would like things to change.

QUICK THERAPY SOLUTIONS

VISUALISATION & RELAXATION

The visualisation is an extra tool to help you escape from stress and the relaxation is something you might find useful to learn to relax properly if visualising doesn't do anything for you.

It is important that you prepare yourself in advance for both visualisation and relaxation. Make sure that you allow half an hour in a quiet room or outside in the open where you will not feel rushed or worried, where no-one will interrupt you and where you can close your eyes and know that you will not be disturbed.

VISUALISATION

Make yourself comfortable and relax your body completely. Close your eyes and clear your mind of clutter until you can just see whiteness and your breathing is quiet and even. When you feel calm and relaxed, imagine that you are standing in a wood. It is warm and you are wearing light clothes. You can feel the warmth of the sun streaming through the canopy of trees above you. You can hear the birdsong and other soundstake a deep breath and savour the smells.

Now become aware of a clearing ahead of you and walk through the wood towards it. As you walk towards the clearing you can see that there is a thick hedgerow ahead of you on the other side of the clearing with a small gate in it. You are out of the wood now and you cross the clearing towards the gate. Open the gate and walk through it and you will find that you are on the edge of a large field. The grass is short and there are wild flowers and butterflies. The ground is warm so take off your shoes. Be aware of the feeling that being here gives you. You feel really happy and at peace. You feel really strong and well. There is something in the distance, on the other side of the field.

If you want to, you can go and see what it is. If you'd rather not, do whatever you feel like doing. There's a wooden seat on the edge of the field by the gate and I'm going to sit and wait for you here. When I call you, I'd like you to wander back towards the seat where I'm waiting for you. You can come to this place by yourself at any time. You could come back at night, early in the morning or at dusk, at any time.

Come back when you feel the need for a quiet, happy place to escape to. It belongs to you.

RELAXATION

Lie on your bed, on the floor or sit in a very comfortable chair. Start with your feet...concentrate on them and use your imagination to convince yourself that your feet are growing heavier and heavier. Feel your toes relaxing and getting heavy. Make the heavy feeling slowly creep up your legs...from your ankles up to your calves...to your knees...to your thighs...up and around your hips. When you feel that they are really heavy, make yourself fully aware of the heavy sensation.

Now do exactly the same thing with your hands. Relax them completely. Imagine that your fingers and hands feel really heavy. Make the heavy feeling creep up from your hands to your wrists...creeping up to your elbows...to your upper arms. You can really feel the weight of them. Allow the heavy feeling to spread up to your shoulders...your shoulders slump with the weight.

Now make your body feel really, really heavy. Try to be aware of your muscles relaxing. Feel the heaviness creep up into your jaw and let it come open a little with the weight. Feel it in your cheekbones...around your eyes...feel the heaviness in your forehead...feel that your eyelids are too heavy to open. Your head is too heavy for your neck to support.

Once you feel the heaviness overwhelm your body from the soles of your feet up to the top of your head and that your whole body is relaxed, concentrate on slowing your breathing so that it is deep and even. Stay like this for a while. When you're ready, gradually open your eyes, take in a calm, deep breath and come back to normal.

