WORKSHEET 119 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Flowers and stones

A lifeline of the moments that did me good and those that hurt

AIM

Build a symbolic lifeline with the person (flowers = moments of resources, stones = very difficult or traumatic events) to prepare trauma work, without going into the memories.

WHO IT IS FOR

People who have experienced several traumatic events (violence, exile, war, accidents), as preparation for EMDR work or narrative exposure.

DURATION

One session (45-90 min)

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Lay out a rope or draw a line: the beginning is birth; the end that is still rolled up, the future.
2. The person places, in order, flowers for good moments and stones for very difficult ones (a candle is possible for bereavements).
3. For each symbol: the age and a title of one or two words, without any detail.
4. Photograph or copy the line: it will serve as a map for the following sessions.

POINTS TO WATCH

An exercise inspired by the lifeline in narrative exposure therapy (NET), to be done in session. The instruction is not to tell the stones at this stage. Check current stability and safety before starting. Going back over one's life can bring up painful memories. At home, the instruction is to write just one word for a difficult moment, without going into detail; work on traumatic memories is done in session (EMDR, NET), once there is enough stabilisation.

REFERENCES

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PSYCHOLOGIST'S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 119 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Flowers and stones

Best done with your psychologist

On your lifeline, the flowers are the moments and people that did you good. The stones are the moments that hurt you. Today the stones aren't told: they are just put in their place, with one word.

1. With your psychologist, place the flowers and stones in the order of your life.
2. For each one: your age and one or two words, without details.
3. Next to each stone, look for a flower close in time, if there is one.
4. At the end, look at all the flowers: they are part of your story too.

Age	Flower or stone	One or two words	A nearby flower

What I feel when I see my whole line, with the flowers:

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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