WORKSHEET 57 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Making room for homesickness

Welcoming homesickness without drowning in it

AIM

Help the person recognise and welcome homesickness when it comes (triggers, sensations, thoughts), without fighting it or getting stuck in it, and connect it with what matters.

WHO IT IS FOR

Homesickness, nostalgia that comes back at particular moments (holidays, smells, music, anniversaries).

DURATION

10-15 min in session; when homesickness appears

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Normalise homesickness: it shows what matters and can also sustain a sense of continuity.
2. Identify the triggers (dates, smells, music, conversations, social media).
3. When it comes: name it, notice where it is in the body, breathe around it (worksheet 19), without trying to push it away.
4. Ask: “What does this homesickness tell me about what matters to me?” and find a small related gesture (calling, cooking, writing).
5. Notice whether homesickness leads to isolation or rumination, and rebalance (worksheet 53).

POINTS TO WATCH

> Homesickness is not a symptom. It becomes a concern when it goes with lasting isolation, sleep problems or depressive signs: then assess more broadly.

REFERENCES

Harris, R. (2019). ACT Made Simple: An Easy-to-Read Primer on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (2nd ed.). New Harbinger.
Bhugra, D. & Becker, M. A. (2005). Migration, cultural bereavement and cultural identity. World Psychiatry, 4(1), 18-24.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 57 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Making room for homesickness

A smell, a song, a celebration: homesickness arrives without warning. It hurts, but it also tells you what matters to you. You can welcome it without drowning in it.

1. Name it: “Right now I’m feeling homesick.”
2. Notice where you feel it in your body and breathe around it, without pushing it away.
3. Ask yourself: what does it tell me about what matters to me?
4. Make a small related gesture (calling, cooking, listening to some music, writing).

When	What triggered it	Intensity /10	My small gesture

What does my homesickness tell me about what matters to me?

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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