

Report from project and course development

– by Dorothee Tettweiler (*This report is only based on my experiences as an employee*)

From August 2018 to May 2019 a project arranged by Unique Mind ESP was carried out in Trondheim municipality. [Report from Trondheim municipality.](#)

Trondheim crisis center was one of two departments that participated in the project. The purpose was for the employees to gain techniques to better deal with stressful situations at work and for their own self-care by facing demanding days at work. By using techniques, we should be able to see the ripple effects on the working environment, sickness absence, stress level and a more goal-oriented way of working.

Early in the process, after the first day of the course, I started using one of the techniques. *Nightfilm* technique is a planning tool, which is in short is used to sort out and clear the mind, as well as to get an overview of the next day. While putting things into perspective and create new solutions.

After a few weeks, I started to sleep better, I was able to finish the day without bringing home incidents from work and I felt better prepared for an always unpredictable day at work at the crisis center.

Before (daytime)conversations, it helped to take deep breaths and find my inner room, which is, in short, an inner stress-free zone. This helped me to have a focused calmness, and made it even easier to start a conversation with a clean slate.

I began to see interlocutors as "icebergs" each with their own story. In short, an iceberg is used in the basic course (formerly known as ConsciousnessTraining™, as an explanatory model of how we function mentally. Here we look at the understanding of our own and other people's behaviour. As well as an interpretation and understanding of feelings, thoughts and interaction. We look into our "perception of reality", and a new perspective of oneself in the world.

This enabled me to listen and understand better. The conversations became more effective, and it was easier to help the person concerned understand one own's situation better.

Thus, it didn't take a long time before I introduced *Nightfilm* and the iceberg to some of the residents of the crisis centre. Many thoughts and not least worries about the future characterize the first days at the crisis centre. It was very helpful being able to write down all the painful thoughts, which is part of the *Nightfilm* technique.

But what gave hope from the start was the focus on tomorrow and how we want it to be. This is unfamiliar thoughts to most of us. One often lies awake at night dreading, for example, a meeting tomorrow, worries about what will happen, has thousands of possible and impossible solutions for the worst-case scenario... Being able to write exactly how one

want tomorrow to be like gives the individual back the control that was given away over many years.

Feedbacks were positive and it looked like residents who used the tools got out of crisis mode faster.

More employees started using the tools in a work context. The entire staff group, as well as the management, gathered and sat up goals for the future operation of the crisis centre. The employees were more generous towards each other, and the iceberg model helped them to handle the different characters in better manner.

Together with a colleague, I was responsible for conducting a course about violence in close relationships. The course was held twice a year. The target group is women who have been exposed to violence in close relationships and have progressed to a safe place in life. Many however are still struggling with the effects, and to help them forward there is a course offered by the municipality.

Motivated by experiences from the basic course in DB-System[®] (formerly known as ConsciousnessTraining[™]), we began to include parts of the toolbox in the course in the spring of 2019. We had received some tips from Deborah Borgen. (founder of DB-System[®].) Feedback was positive, but it felt as if we failed to meet our own expectations. We talked to Deborah about this, and we agreed to create a course where the basic course is adapted to this group. With approval from the head of department, we got started and created a course consisting of 6 sessions of 2 hours each. The course was once a week. This gave the participants the opportunity to practice what they had learned between each session.

We had good experience previously in raising awareness of what it means to be exposed to violence over time. Sharing experiences provides a common understanding of why people struggle in the aftermath of an abusive relationship. Now we were able to offer a method that would help participants understand their own reaction patterns based on the iceberg model, as well as techniques they could use themselves.

On the course, the participants would, among other things, gradually learn to use *Nightfilm*, understand their own reaction patterns based on the iceberg model, have a "pep talk" inside their mental room and go back to the green zone by using the techniques. The course was created, and we were very excited to see how the participants would react.

Before we started, we had, as usual, an interview with all the participants. We mapped the needs and informed them about changes we had made in relation to the content. All the participants signed and agreed that they would take part in a course, where we had adapted a new method called DB-System[®] (formaly known as ConsciousnessTraining[™]).

The plan was that it could also be a follow up after the course to understand more about the effects of DB-System®. We also thought that it could be a good way to do further research on DB-System® in the context of low-threshold services in the municipality.

The course was conducted with 8 participants.

Here is a brief summary of the feedback we received:

- All participants had gained greater insight into their own situation.
- Many felt more courage/motivation to find meaning in life and deal with challenges.
- Everyone gained more understanding of why they and others think and act as they do.
- Several reported better night's sleep, less physical pains such as headaches, upset stomach and inner turmoil.

These are some excerpts from the feedback:

"... greater joy in daily life ... a lightness that I have not known before ... greater courage in life, strength, dare to set goals."

"... I am better at doing things right away and I am more relaxed when meeting others..."

"... I look forward to waking up every morning. Every morning is exciting, what will the day bring! (Earlier, I looked forward to the evening and going to bed)"

"... would have liked to have 2-3 more sessions ... there should have been 1 session after about e.g. 1 month and in 6 months, so that one can fine-tune the techniques or ask the questions one get after doing this alone for a while..."

"... have seen how these tools have given me more joy, greater peace of mind, energy and a clearer mind. To constantly PRACTICE without giving up. I have become more aware of my own things, had acknowledgement that enable me to continue working with e.g. themes such as self-esteem, asking for help, take a little more space in my own life. I have found DIRECTION for further work with myself ..."

Several of the participants have wanted further follow-up, and I also see the need to elaborate on certain themes.

I personally hope to be able to continue this work.

Life is unpredictable, and I have since completed the course, quit my job and moved to another county. Little did I know that I would have such a great need of the tools! Shortly after moving, my husband died, and I was in deep grief alone in an unfamiliar place.

It is no exaggeration that the basic course in DB-system® (formally known as Consciousness Training™) and its tools have helped me through the darkest time. This has made me even more aware of how valuable the concept is.

The course, which was developed for women exposed to violence in close relationships, is a valuable contribution to help for self-help. I will work actively so that more municipalities can offer [this course](#). I would like this to eventually also be offered to men who are exposed to violence in close relationships.



TRONDHEIM KOMMUNE

Report

Trondheim municipality at the Unit for substance abuse services and the Unit for mental health and substance abuse started a collaborative project with Unique Mind ESP in August 2018. Two groups of employees from the units, in addition to other invitees, completed basic courses in DB-System® (formerly known as ConsciousnessTraining™) over a period of nine months. The objective of this collaborative project was, from the two units' side, to provide employees with techniques to better handle stressful situations at work and for their own self-care by facing demanding working days.

Project description

The first course was conducted on 22 and 23 August

- Follow-up day on October 24th
- Repetition of the course was conducted on 22 and 23 January
- A new follow-up day on March 20th
- Review and guidance of the project, carried out in the units on 20 and 21 May
- Summary and the last day of the project May 22nd

In addition, there have been online meetings and guidance over the phone along the way

Description of the basic course in DB-System® (formerly known as ConsciousnessTraining™)

Most of the work in the fields of health, social and care is in what we call relational professions, which entails high demands on mastering one's own emotions when dealing with others.

The basic course is a scientifically published training of the brain that reduces stress and increases efficiency and include concrete techniques for self-care.

Two research projects have been carried out on DB-System®. The research has been carried out on healthy people, and shows that the training provides increased learning ability, better memory, increased ability to self-regulate, as well as a greater ability to use logic to solve new problems.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnhum.2016.00664/full>

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnhum.2017.00644/full>

Trondheim Crisis Centre

During the project period and after the course days, the staff group at Trondheim Crisis Center worked on common goals and vision for the center.

There has also been work on identifying strengths in the working environment, and the employee group has focused on how they want it to be in their daily work, what they want to achieve and what they want to do differently.

Individually, some employees have used the techniques deliberately to prepare for difficult cases, and several say that they have become more robust after the course. Employees report that they handle the hectic daily working life in a better manner, that they have a different sense of calm and are better at dealing with stress. Some report that it has become easier to cooperate with colleagues, both internally in the unit and with others with whom they don't have a close working relationship with. They've gained a greater understanding, and talk about increased "relational competence."

Several also report better night's sleep, and that they are more confident in their own decisions. Easier to prioritize and allocate time when there are many tasks, which previously became more overwhelming. Other statements from employees are:

"Take deep breaths in difficult situations, easier to find solutions"

"Better at reading signals about the needs of residents and users"

" Become more easily "tuned in", and more present "here and now" and become more efficient at work"

After the course, the employees were asked if they had noticed any changes in the staff group, and the following feedback was given:

More generous with others, more tolerance and a better "atmosphere" in the staff group, better at recognizing colleagues' strengths, better at notice each other at work.

Bispegata 9D - department for young addicts

Bispegata 9D was in a somewhat unfortunate situation when the collaboration started. The measure was under construction and very late in the progress plan due to building challenges. The employee group was therefore not assembled until March -19. This characterized the continuity of the work, as employees had daily work in various other departments within the unit. It has also been a challenge that in an establishment process new employees start, and others will leave along the way. Based on this, the department has not succeeded in implementing what we learned, and putting it into a system in the same way that we have seen our colleagues at the crisis center achieve.

Regardless of these challenges, the group overall had only positive feedback after the course, and when using the techniques we learned.

Employees have practiced using the techniques individually. Several have given feedback about daily use and that they have had a good effect from this on a personal level. At the start of the department, we included the course as a topic in all department meetings where we shared experiences. There we received feedback that the techniques were used to prepare for meetings, to relax and to clear the mind at the end of the day. With this, employees experienced getting a better overview, more calmness within themselves to cope with stress and that challenging meetings were better prepared and carried out with greater safety and good results.

Trondheim, 08.05.20

Trondheim crisis center Bispegata 9d