

Welcome!

# Introduction Round

# Group Rules

1. Be respectful to one another (for example, let others finish speaking).
2. You can decide for yourself what you want to share.
3. If you need a break or would like to leave the group, please leave the room quietly without disturbing the group.

# Metacognitive Training (MCT)



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**Meta:** comes from the Greek word for “about”

**Cognition:** comes from the Latin word for “thinking”

**Metacognition:** Thinking about thinking

# Why MCT?

- Experiencing mental health difficulties can make negative thought patterns stronger.
- Many of these thought patterns can be changed through training.

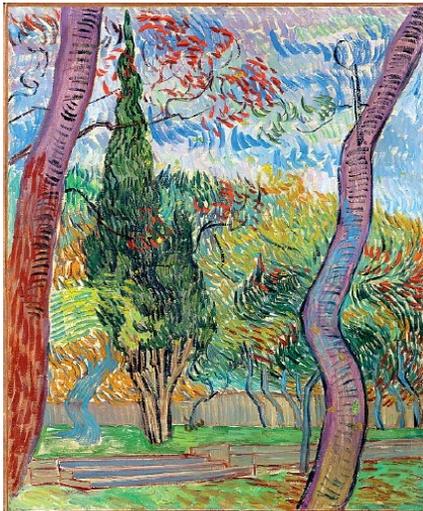
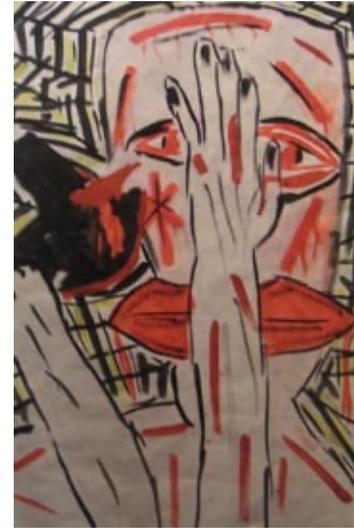
Today's Training  
Session: Dealing with  
Prejudice

# Exercise

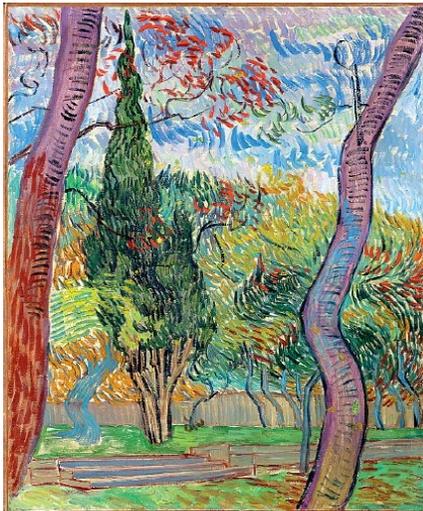
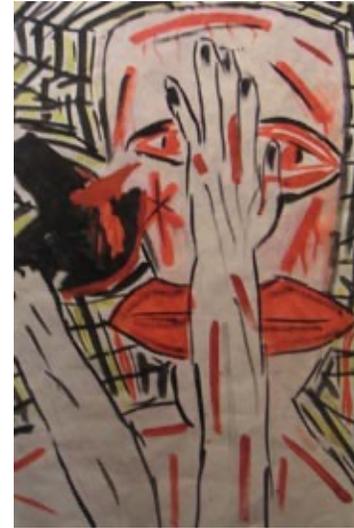
Goal:

Demonstrate that the value of artwork does not depend on the mental health of the artist

Which of these paintings were painted by people with psychotic symptoms?



Which painting was sold for the most amount of money at an auction?



# Which painting was sold for the most amount of money at an auction?

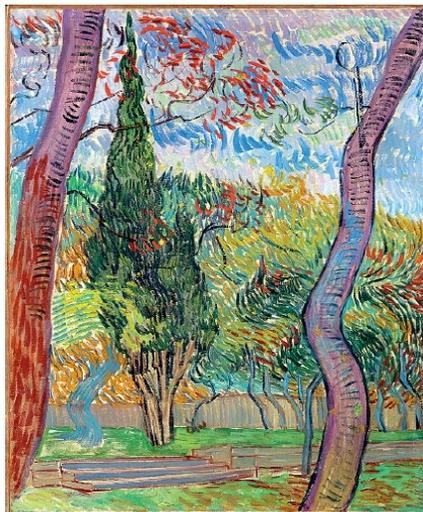
More than  
\$100 million



\$0



almost \$30  
million



Approximately  
\$10,000

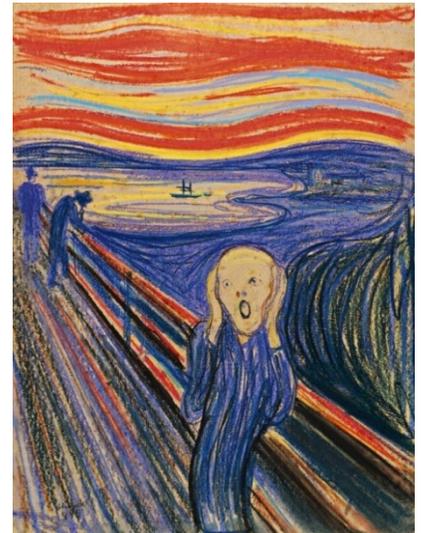


# Edvard Munch

The painting "The Scream" was sold for more than 100 million dollars to an unknown buyer. This makes it one of the most expensive paintings in the world.

The artist, Edvard Munch, most likely suffered from bipolar disorder:

- He suffered from manic, delusional and depressive symptoms.
- Because of this, Munch was a patient for over 8 months in a psychiatric hospital.



# Steffen Moritz

This painting only has personal value to the painter.

It was painted by Professor Doctor Steffen Moritz when he was 16 years old:

- He is a psychologist and head of the clinical psychology research group in the psychiatry department at the University Medical Center Hamburg Eppendorf, Germany.
- Steffen Moritz has so far not been in psychiatric treatment.

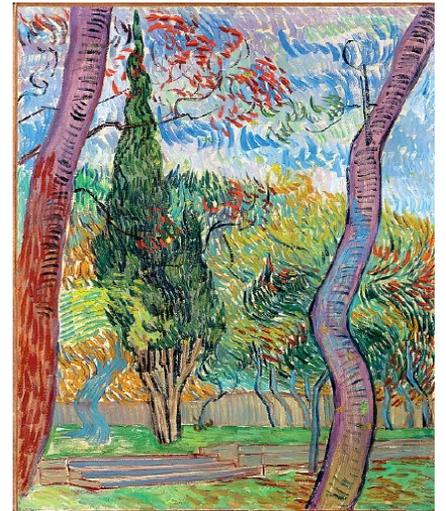


# Vincent van Gogh

The work of art "The Garden of Saint Paul's Hospital ('Leaf-Fall')" is worth almost 30 million dollars.

Van Gogh painted it during his inpatient treatment at the Saint Paul psychiatric hospital in 1889:

- Van Gogh suffered from severe mood swings, self-harming behavior, anxiety, delusions, and hallucinations.
- Nowadays, he would probably be diagnosed with psychosis or bipolar disorder.



# Ringo Starr (Drummer for the Beatles)

Ringo Starr is known for being the drummer for the Beatles. Since 2005, he also paints:

- The work "Timberland" was created in 2013.
- His paintings are usually sold in the four-figure price range.
- To our knowledge, Ringo Starr has not yet been in psychiatric treatment.



# Bottom Line

- One cannot tell from a painting whether the painter is mentally healthy or not

and

- one cannot tell based on how someone looks whether someone has a mental disorder or not.

# Bottom Line

## Question:

Many of the greatest works of art were created by people with mental disorders.

**Does this lessen the value of their art?**

# Bottom Line

## Question:

Many of the greatest works of art were created by people with mental illnesses.

**Does this lessen the value of their art?**

**In our opinion: NO!**

# Bottom Line

- Being mentally ill does not mean that a person is unable to do meaningful and valuable things.
- Even healthy people can paint "crazy pictures", for example.
- Mental disorders can both inspire and inhibit creativity.

# Training Session Goals

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- Discuss the fact that experiencing mental health issues does not lessen the value of people or their accomplishments.
- Learn that mental illness is widespread in Germany.
- Challenge the negative prejudices which people with mental illness often face.
- Consider ways to tell others about one's own diagnosis in order to prevent stigmatization.

Background

Is it normal to have mental health issues?

# Is it normal to have mental health issues?

How many people in Germany suffer from a mental illness?

**What do you think?**

# Is it normal to have mental health issues? Mental Illness in Germany

A 2014 survey found the following:

- almost one third of all respondents had been mentally ill within the past year.

# Is it normal to have mental health issues?

## Mental Illness in Germany

A 2014 survey found the following:

- almost one third of all respondents had been mentally ill within the past year.
- almost 10% of the respondents had affective disorders such as depression.
- almost 3% of the respondents had some form of psychosis, for example, schizophrenia.

# Is it normal to have mental health issues?

## Mental Illness in Canada

- about 20% of all respondents to a survey had been mentally ill within the past year.
- around 8% of the respondents had affective disorders such as depression.
- about 1-2% of the respondents had some form of psychosis, for example, schizophrenia.

# Is it normal to have mental health issues?

Remember: No one is immune to experiencing mental health difficulties!

A mental illness should not be regarded as a **weakness** but instead should be understood as an expression of increased **sensitivity**.

# Prejudice Against People with Mental Illness

## Example: Psychosis

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## Example: Psychosis

Which assumptions or prejudices towards people with psychosis have you heard of?

What assumptions do you personally have about people with psychotic symptoms?

# Prejudice Against Psychosis

Common assumptions about people with psychosis:

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Common assumptions about people with psychosis:

They are...

- not intelligent
- dangerous

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They are...

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**STOP!**

**THAT'S NOT TRUE!**

# Prejudice Against Psychosis

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## Not intelligent?

- The development of mental illness is not related to intelligence.
- Many people with psychosis have above average intelligence.

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→ Justified? NO!

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## Dangerous?

- People with psychosis are often victims rather than perpetrators of abuse and violence.
- But: If they are perpetrators, then the media is more likely to report about it. Sometimes the nature of the crime is distinctive, for example the attack on the German politician Wolfgang Schäuble by a mentally ill perpetrator.

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## Dangerous?

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- But: If they are perpetrators, then the media is more likely to report about it. Sometimes the nature of the crime is distinctive, for example the attack on the German politician Wolfgang Schäuble by a mentally ill perpetrator.

→ Justified? NO!

# Prejudice Against Psychosis: What can be done?

Inform yourself about it and talk about it!

# How do I tell others about my illness?

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You do not have to tell anyone about your mental illness or your diagnosis!

But: talking about your illness with people you trust (for example, family or friends) can sometimes be helpful.

Other people can listen and support you. Sometimes they can spot early warning signs of a potential upcoming crisis earlier than the affected person themselves.

# How do I tell others about my illness?

If you do want to tell someone about your disorder: try describing your symptoms instead of naming a diagnosis.

# How do I tell others about my illness?

Recommendation: Explain symptoms instead of a diagnosis

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Example: Depression

Symptoms could be described as:

*“Every person feels very sad sometimes and doesn’t feel up to doing much. That’s how it was for me, too. But this sadness lasted for weeks and there was nothing that could cheer me up. In the moment, you feel like it’s always been this way and it’s always going to be this way.”*

# How do I tell others about my illness?

Recommendation: Explain symptoms instead of a diagnosis

- It can be helpful to briefly describe your symptoms, especially with people you don't know very well. This is often more helpful than giving the name of the disorder.

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- In order to be able to explain the disease to others, you should become an expert on it yourself.
- **Using facts is the best way to correct any false beliefs that others may have.**

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- Mental disorders are common.
- Sometimes people have wrong assumptions about mental health issues such as psychosis.
- It may help to explain the symptoms rather than to name a diagnosis that could potentially be misunderstood.

# Learning Objectives

- Experiencing mental health issues or having a mental illness diagnosis does not mean that one is worthless or incapable.
- Mental disorders are common.
- Sometimes people have wrong assumptions about mental health issues such as psychosis.
- It may help to explain the symptoms rather than to name a diagnosis that could potentially be misunderstood.
- You do not have to tell others about your disorder.
- Telling your family or close friends about it can be helpful (for example, for support).

# Closing Round

What's your takeaway from today's session?

Thank you for your  
participation!

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