

Silent Connections

Mindfulness of our thoughts allows us to perceive them for what they are - ongoing mental processes, rather than facts.

Most of the time, however, we are so consumed in them that we miss the important connections that exist between our context, thoughts, and emotions.

When this happens, we often allow our mental state to shape how we feel, as well as our behaviors. For example, being in a bad mood might lead us to interpret an off-hand comment as an insult.

Cultivating mindfulness of our surroundings means adopting a non-judgmental mental state and experiencing our context instead. By making objective observations about the things we think and feel, we become more open to the world around us.

We can engage with others better to build stronger connections and positive relationships with other people.

Silent Connections centers heavily on mindfulness of other people, and using non-verbal communication to build those connections.

Instructions:

1. Ask all the group participants to walk around the room silently. Ask all members to try and communicate with one another silently - no speaking is allowed!
2. Using only non-verbal cues such as eye contact, smiling, and facial expressions, encourage participants to immerse themselves in the experience of building silent connections.

Debriefing:

After a few minutes, regroup. Consider the following questions together:

- *How was the activity for you?*
- *How do you feel? How did you feel during the exercise?*
- *In your day-to-day life, what prevents you from building silent connections with passer-bys?*
- *Do you think non-verbal communication can help us build connections effectively?*
- *What else do you feel you have learned from Silent Connections?*