

An indignation control training has been developed and tested for its effectiveness. The training was based upon a cognitive model of emotions. One's own cognitions in emotional situations are often considered to be "assertorically" true. Therefore it was tested, whether the emotion could be controlled by means of reflecting about one's own assertoric judgements and considering alternative interpretations of the current situation. The cognitive training was compared in terms of effectiveness to a relaxation training.

Participants were randomly distributed to the experimental conditions: cognitive training, relaxation training and control group. Six training sessions à 90 min. - one per week- were conducted. Pre- post and follow-up-test after 3 month were undertaken. As dependent variables the following measures were used: Participants reported a personal indignation encounter and indicated their reactions to imaginal situations. Additionally a real provocation was realised.

The data analysis was based upon a group of 72 persons. The cognitive training proved to be more effective in reducing indignation compared to the control group. Especially for behavioural measures the cognitive training was also superior compared to the relaxation approach. Taken together for the cognitive training group indignation in the own situation as well as in imaginal situations was reduced. Also perspective taking could be improved as well as destructive reactions in imaginal situations were reduced. After the real provocation less physiological arousal was reported as well as less negative reactions observed. Almost all effects remained stable over the 3 month follow-up period.

The results clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of the new method. This new approach is also relevant for psychological interventions: A more precise control of emotion is possible because the training is based upon the specific cognitive components of the emotion. As a consequence, clients on their own are able to question their interpretation of a situation based upon each single cognition.