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DESISTKIT

Resource-oriented distancing from extremist behaviours and ideologies

Manual
Introduction to the DesistKit, CaseReflector & DesistCards

CaseReflector
Instrument (PowerPoint) for caseworkers to reflect on individual distancing processes

DesistCards
Set of Cards to use in counselling sessions with individuals

The ***DesistKit*** is a set of tools developed for professionals working closely with individuals holding extremist views or showing extremist behavior. The two core tools of the DesistKit, the ***CaseReflector***, and the ***DesistCards*** as well as the accompanying **Manual** aim to strengthen caseworkers within multi-agency-collaborations and support them in structuring distancing processes with the affected individuals. The ***DesistKit*** supports professionals to gain a nuanced understanding of the individual's situation. This allows them to reflect on their own projections on the individual as well as prioritize their unique needs and available resources for change. The ***CaseReflector*** visualizes the progress they make throughout the distancing process.

CASEREFLECTOR

The ***CaseReflector*** is a digital tool in the form of a PowerPoint slide deck that supports case workers in reflecting on and better structuring and documenting cases in the field of CVE.

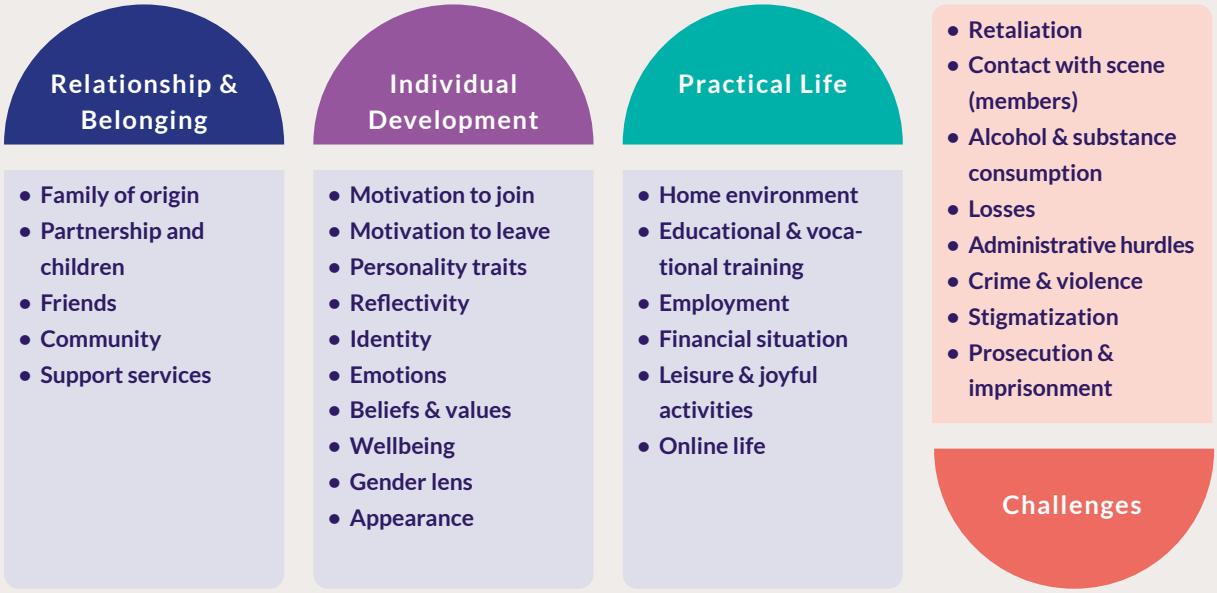
The core of the ***CaseReflector*** is a table consisting of multiple distancing factors that can play a role in the context of distancing processes and relate to important topics in counselling sessions. The distancing factors are grouped in four main categories (Relationship & Belonging, Individual Development, Practical Life, and Challenges) and based on the research project DISLEX3D[1], along with insights gained from modus|zad's scientific monitoring of and support to organisations in the field of CVE. Additionally, the list of factors was evaluated by external experts. The ***CaseReflector*** promotes a resource-oriented and gender-focused point of view on distancing processes from extremist behavior and ideology of the individuals they are working with.

1 DISLEX3D was a research project on distancing processes in the year 2019-2022 by modus|zad.

DESISTCARDS

The ***DesistCards*** are a set of cards that can be used in counselling sessions to help start a conversation and strengthen the working relationship. Reflection questions that refer to the distancing factors gathered in the ***CaseReflector*** are listed on the back of the cards. They can also serve to identify which topics the individual wants to work on, what are important resources for the individual, and to jointly set goals for the counselling process.

Overview of Distancing factors



AIM OF THE *CASEREFLECTOR*

The overview of distancing factors provides at a quick glance several relevant topics and can help caseworkers to remember certain topics they may have not addressed yet, uncover blind spots, and help to prioritise topics to work on in counselling sessions. In addition, it allows caseworkers to take a step back from their casework to reflect on (1) what they already know about the individual's situation, feelings, and desires, (2) what they only suspect or may be projecting onto the individual, and (3) what they do not yet know and what would be helpful to talk about with the individual. Intertwined with the reflection process is the working relationship. To establish this relationship is a key goal of each counselling setting.

Another relevant objective built into the instrument is the opportunity for goal setting, ideally together with the individual. As a final component, the ***CaseReflector*** supports caseworkers in communicating about distancing processes with other stakeholders, including in multi-agency settings, while not disclosing any personal data. The goal of communicating with other stakeholders about the distancing process is for them to gain a more nuanced understanding of the important work and its underlying approaches. In general, the ***CaseReflector*** can help summarise observations, thoughts, hypotheses, and developments in the distancing process, prioritise the individual's needs, and reflect on structures of discrimination that the individual may face.

WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT THE *DesistKit*?

RESEARCH-BASED: The ***DesistKit*** is based on empirical data. This means that it was developed taking the latest research findings on distancing into account. The core of the ***DesistKit*** are the distancing factors, that are grounded in empirical evidence. They were gathered mainly through the research project DISLEX3D and have been evaluated by experts in the field via interviews. Additionally, the ***DesistKit*** is influenced by these concepts: Desistance, distancing, working relationships(s), human agency, gender, and intersectionality. The reasoning and their specifics are explained in the following chapter/section.

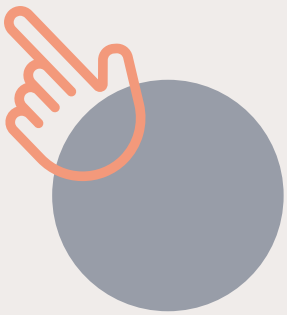
FOCUSED ON PRESENT & FUTURE: The ***DesistKit*** focusses on the current and future life situation of the individual, rather than lingering on the past radicalisation process. This allows for a more change-oriented point of view. The goal is for individuals to take responsibility for the present and their future. However, reappraising past events can also play an important role once distancing processes have been set in motion.

RESOURCE-FOCUSED: The ***DesistKit*** focuses on resources. This means that it supports a way of working with individuals that emphasises identifying and mobilising existing strength, assets and supports positive change and well-being. It shifts the focus from solely addressing problems or deficits to recognise and utilising the resources that individuals possess. By adopting a resource-focused approach, professionals aim to foster resilience and self-efficiency while also promoting a sense of empowerment and self-determination.

LANGUAGE-SENSITIVE: The ***DesistKit*** seeks to be language-sensitive. This means to have an increased sensitivity and awareness towards language and its impact. Language sensitivity refers to the ability to recognize the power and influence of words and acknowledges that language affects thinking, perceptions, and relationships with others. Words not only convey information but also carry meanings, biases, norms, and values. This can be especially relevant within the P/CVE context when individuals are ostracized and/or experience discrimination. The ***DesistKit*** attaches great importance to a sensitive language that does not stigmatise, alienate, or demotivate the individual and therefore aims to refrain from a security-oriented use of language.

GENDER-RESPONSIVE: The ***DesistKit*** has a gender-responsive approach. Gender responsive refers to a framework that considers the different needs, experiences, and priorities of individuals based on their gender. It recognises that gender roles, norms, inequalities, and expectations impact people's lives and therefore programs and practices should be designed to address these gender-specific factors. Historically, the field of P/CVE has often failed to consider the ways in which gender influences both radicalisation and distancing processes. A focus on gender-responsiveness in the ***DesistKit*** hopes to remedy this traditional blindspot.

You can download the *DesistKit* here.



GET IN TOUCH WITH US

Violence Prevention Network/icommit project

Alt-Reinickendorf 25

D-13407 Berlin

+49 (0)30 407 55 122

icommit@violence-prevention-network.de

www.multiagencycooperation.eu

www.twitter.com/VPNDeradINT

European Forum for Urban Security

Violence Prevention Network

modus | zad

University of Bucharest

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