



# Concept note

## I04\_3: Islands of Emotions

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## Concept note

### IO4\_3: Islands of Emotions

<b>Title:</b>	<i>Islands of Emotions – Concept note</i>
<b>Intellectual Output – IO 4_3</b>	SymfoS – Symbol work counselling scenarios_3
<b>Description:</b>	<p>These interventions are designed for clients, for whom we identified a need for counselling on competences and resources through SymfoS Basic Clearing.</p> <p>This IO consists of four different interventions with specified objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Competence &amp; Resource pathway: career counselling on interests and strengths (resources and competences);</li> <li>b) Planning pathway: can be used for getting started a counselling process of training, planning towards apprenticeship, application period and job interview.</li> <li>c) Islands of Emotions: feelings regarding upcoming months, motivation for application process, planning future and career choices</li> <li>d) Inner Images: display and reflection of inner images connected to specific topic, identify fears and blockades, development of coping strategies</li> </ul> <p>As a very strong innovative element, all scenarios follow the sequence of counselling:</p> <p>First the clients start with an installation of their symbols, then she/he has to present and the supporting group (peers) has the possibility to ask factual questions. Next the supporting group gives feedback about their perception of the presentation and work done. This leads to interpretations from the whole group, guided by the Career Officer. Finally, client and Career Officer agree on concrete actions.</p> <p>This Intellectual outcome will be available as physical objects (different symbol chases); guidelines will be published on our website and as paper version. Target groups are “regular” and disadvantaged youth to support their choice on different education and/or job market possibilities.</p>
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## Islands of Emotions

Feelings control many of our activities but talking about them is one of the most sensitive issues in counselling.

What's the important role of feelings? They help us to recall our experiences sometimes in fractions of a second and to assess people and situations in order to reach our goals faster and more easily.

But often we are not aware of our feelings. This can block further steps and decisions and is often not easy to change alone.

What makes me feel what? What feelings do I trigger in others? Do I allow feelings? When do I push feelings away? What role do feelings play in my family? How do I experience feelings?

Who can name that so exactly? Feeling, accepting, arranging feelings connected with it? This often seems difficult, impossible to the client.

This is particularly the case if a large number of triggering factors are present, if they are far in the past or if they cannot be related to the current situation.

Often, it has not been possible for clients to present this verbally for a long period of time. Here the islands of emotions represent a good possibility for visualization, clarification and processing.

## Methodology for the Islands of Emotions



**Figure 1:** Islands of Emotions – both sides used

**Material Used:** Symbol case Nr. 3,

A piece of blue denim (about 150x150cm) is used as a base to symbolize the ocean. There are 22 parts of plywood in the shape of islands.

These islands are marked as follows:

Anxiety, anger, fear, depression, solitude, happiness, fright, serenity, luck, misery, love, lust, power, envy, guilt, worry, pride, shame, pain, yearning, grief, rage.

The backs of the plywood are painted in black slate. These sides can be written on with chalk and therefore used to add additional feelings or eg tasks, things, aims, etc.

Other items in this set include a small wooden ship, 10 tokens, chalk and a buoy in yellow and black. The yellow side of the buoy stands for pleasant feelings and the black side stands for unpleasant ones. The tokens are used to symbolize persons. The ship serves for transport.

## Structure of the intervention:

### I.) Starting point: Goal setting

The client considers the objectives, discusses them with the career guidance officer and afterwards a clear headline should be selected. The career guidance officer explains all available materials and the client prepares the denim (the blue ocean) as a working surface.



Figure 2: Islands of Emotions – Explanation of Material used

### II.) Choosing islands and other material

After introducing all the material available, the client starts to go through all islands and to decide, whether they fit to the topic or not. After this, the client can use the backside of other islands, label them with chalk and add additional feelings, aims, properties, whatever is needed. Also the other items, like the small wooden ship and the tokens can be used.



**Figure 4: Choose islands and additional items**

Usually, the clients are quite quick in choosing appropriate material and to create their own map of the blue oceans. We suggest that they finish within 8-10 min and for this period we let them work independently and without interruption. Afterwards the career guidance officer asks the client if the work is finished. If not, the client receives 3-5 min more.

### III.) Counselling session – clarifying your own concerns

#### 1. Presentation

The client presents the heading/ topic of her presentation.

If there is a group setting, the client chooses 2 or 3 'observers' as a 'supporting group'. These peers are actively involved in all steps of the counselling session.

He talks about what he has displayed. The client always states which island or symbol he is talking about. (e.g. "this island stands for..."). He starts his explanations at any island he wants and explains all chosen islands and other symbols used.

The practitioner listens carefully to what is being told. She is aware of the client's presence. While he is speaking, the practitioner observes his gestures, mimicry, posture, breathing, the pitch of her voice. Does he show emotions, does he touch a symbol, which one?

#### 2. Factual questions

The practitioner asks factual questions. These questions only refer to the symbols, to "what is visible". No "why"- or "how come"-questions are asked. This is not about interpretation but understanding only.

The client answers to the factual questions

#### 3. Perception

The practitioner addresses the young woman directly. She describes everything she has perceived and everything she has observed while she was told the story. If someone detects emotions, she should be able to explain how they were perceived. (Mimicry, gestures, pitches of the voice etc.)

The client listens attentively.

#### 4. Interpretation

The practitioner and the group talks about the client. She is thinking aloud, asking questions like "what is the problem?", "What should be different?", "What would he want to solve, understand, do?", "Where could be difficulties? Where not? "

The client listens attentively and does not respond for now.

#### 5. Agreement on actions

This phase leads into a discussion between client and practitioner about needed support and further steps for the client to reach his goal. At the end, the client should be committed to agreed actions.

### Additional possibility: Work with the buoy:



Figure 5: Work with the buoy

As a conclusion all used feelings can be sorted. Unpleasant feelings are placed on the black side, pleasant feelings on the right side of the buoy.

Imagine a scale now, how are the feelings distributed? Is there a balance between positive and negative feelings? Every human being needs positive experiences to survive. If these are no longer perceived, there is an urgent need for support.

Then every feeling should be checked again to see if it stays in place or changes sides.

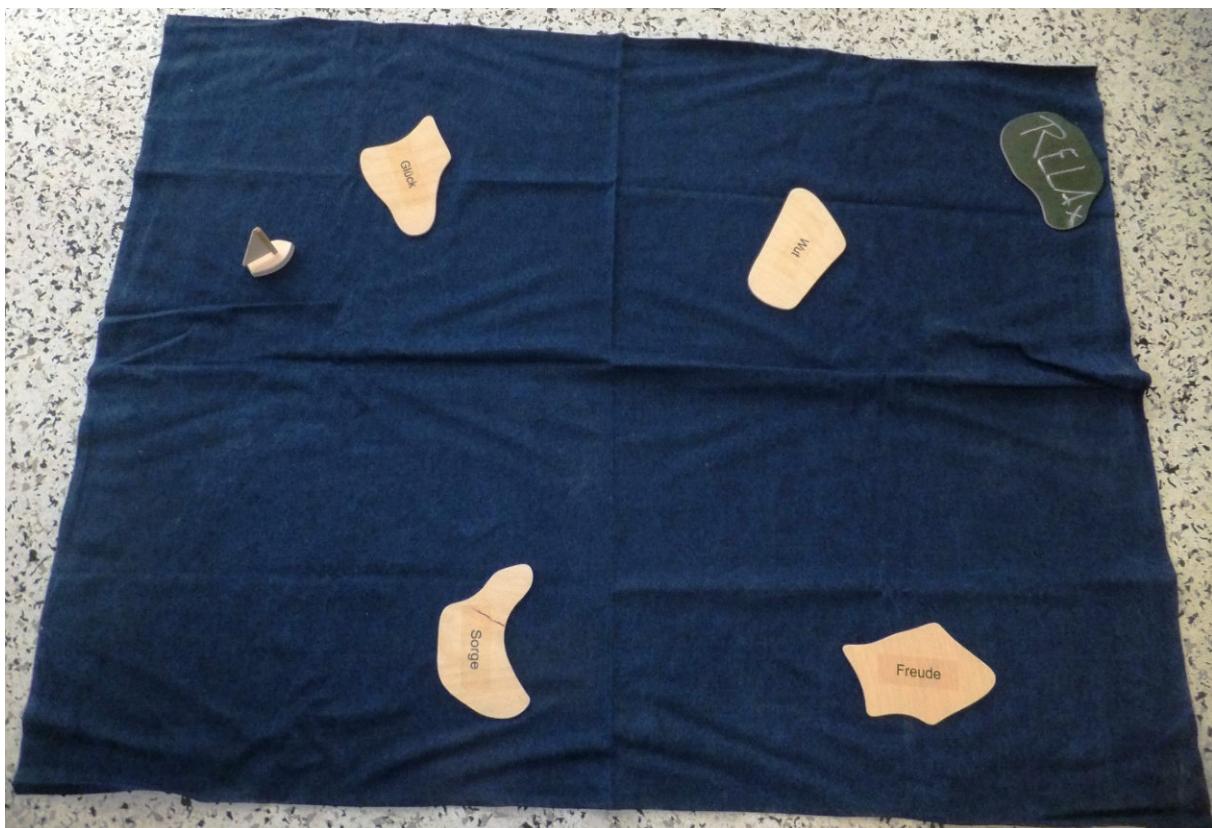
#### Example: Love

lies e.g. on the yellow side (pleasant feelings) and is given in a second pass on the black side (unpleasant feelings). It is about the longed-for love and not about the existing love.

## Case Study

- Name of the client: Peter (Name changed)
- Basic data of the client: 15 years old, secondary school student, group setting
- Name of intervention: Islands of Emotions

Goal setting: looking for an apprenticeship



**Figure 6: Islands of Emotions – case study Peter**  
(translation from German: Glück = luck; Wut = rage; Sorge = Worry; Freude = joy)

### Starting point: Goal setting

Peter's goal is to find an apprenticeship

## Counselling session

### 1. Presentation:

All persons are sitting around the denim fabric, Peter chooses a place, where he feels comfortable.

Peter starts to explain:

I chose the island of luck because it is good that I am there and have luck with my friends and my family who are always there for me.

At the same time, however, there is also always the concern, the worry, I'm going to lose someone, something bad happens.

The island of rage stands for things that make me angry. If I couldn't do something or didn't get the apprenticeship.

But if I make it then I am happy (island "joy")

But I always worry that something won't work or something bad will happen.

My grandma, for example.

That island back there is, when I've done everything with the apprenticeship, then I can relax.

### 2. Factual questions: Counselor asks "Look again, are there factual questions?

"What do you mean with, worried?" Counselor intervenes and says "Caution - worry already raises a topic and is not a question of fact".

There are no further factual questions.

### 3. Perception (without evaluation, interpretation...)

Counselor asks the observers to describe their perceptions. The selected persons address Peter and say how they perceived him during his narrative:

"He seemed to be satisfied" Coach: How did you notice that? How can you observe, if you're happy? "Yeah, not with a sad voice or anything."

"Explaining the island of worry, you didn't look at anyone, only when you explained later that you were actually always worried.

3 I thought you said it very monotonously. I haven't noticed any change in your voice or posture now.

### 4. Interpretation/Suggestions

Coach asks to 'think aloud'. "Think out loud on an appreciative level! What's he all about? What's on your mind?"

The selected people are now talking about Peter. They think out loud about what comes to their mind about Peter and his performance. Peter's just listening.

"I don't know about the anger: he's already got a grip on himself, he doesn't get so loud." Coach screams and asks, "How loud is he, when he's angry?" "No, he would

"never scream like that" coach raises question what it could mean that someone whispers that he/she is so angry?

Coach: are there thoughts about other islands?

Looking at the island of worry, I wondered if he already has experience with death?

I find it frightening, that a young person is always accompanied by concern, even when he talks about happiness, he has concern in his eye.

Coach: Anything else? I noticed myself that there's a ship standing in the middle of it somewhere. But there's no one to steer it.

## 5. Agreement & action-plan

Coach now addressed to Peter: "So Peter, what of all you've heard, actually occupies you the most?

Peter: "Yes, everything is right. Since I've been there, 3 relatives have died, so I probably worry a lot" Coach: "What about your grandma?" "She's fine, but you never know" Coach: What else? "With the apprenticeship, I'm going to make sure, I get it.

Coach: "Where would you go for help if you had it somewhere in your hindquarters?"

Peter: If I'm worried, I have my parents there.

Coach: What is your next step in looking for an apprenticeship?

Peter: I will call the HR manager next week to ask for an interview. For sure.

## Closing

The coach ends the "meeting" and asks the whole group to applaud. It starts immediately, comes honestly and lasts a long time. Coach to Peter: "You have a plan, see how long the applause lasts. Use your resources - they're here!"

OK, now take a photo if you want.



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