Situation Interview: Instructions

With this type of interview, a specific problem situation is reenacted on the BondingBoard. In this way, the behavior of the people involved can be presented step by step in a chronological sequence according to the criteria emotionality and closeness relevant to attachment. It can be carried out with children, parents, teachers and other professionals as well as in an adult-only context.

Each step and the state of emotion and closeness is graphically recorded in a mini BondingBoard with crosses and arrows. In addition, five points are recorded in writing: 1. Acting person, 2. Action, 3. Thoughts, 4. Emotions and 5. Proximity. Clients often incorporate this information spontaneously into their narrative. Example: *"He did this on purpose. I yelled at him, ran into my room angrily and slammed the door."* There is no need to ask any further questins here, as the notation appears unambiguous: 1. person = the narrator, 2. action = yells at him, runs into her room, slams the door, 3. thoughts = he did it on purpose, 4. emotion = anger = red, 5. near = off in room = absent. Further inquiries may also be omitted if the point in question does not seem important, is likely to lead to repetitive answers and if there is a risk that the interview will become too sluggish.

Of course, we not only show interactive behavior alternately in an action-reaction patterns, but also in parallel, simultaneously. For practical reasons, however, a *ping-pong* approach is followed here. Usually, clients can name a sequence. If a person behaves more passively, several subsequent steps can also be completed for the more active person. Instead of *'ping-pong'*, an interaction sometimes follows the pattern *'ping-ping-ping-pong-ping'* . Since thoughts and emotions can change despite being passive, it may be necessary to ask specific questions, for example: *"So A isn't doing anything else. Has his thoughts or feelings changed?"* If so, make a separate entry and put down *"nothing"* or *"just listening"* or something similar under action.

The counseling specialist and the client often recognize during the course of the interview, at what point in time and which persons show suboptimal reaction patterns. If necessary, the usefulness can be queried under "6. use". The answer is jotted down, divided into *'very problematic'* to *'very helpful'* or with a Likert scale from 0 to 6, for example, in order to be able to make a meaningful selection for part 2 of the interview later on.

Steps with low benefit can be described as potential *junctions* at which alternative *behavioral 'tracks', thoughts (possibly only interpreted intentions)* and *feelings* can be explored. If you want to change a reaction pattern, it is advisable not only to look at the critical tipping moment, but to include one or two steps beforehand.

The interview is divided into two sections:
1. The description of the problem situation and
2. The exploration of possibilities for change

If clients are not yet familiar with the structure of the BondingBoard, this must be explained to them in advance.

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Part 1 follows a repetitive pattern and should be adhered to in this form in terms of content if you want to fully exploit the detailed problem analysis. Since this is not a standardized procedure, the specific wording is not decisive. Any additional questions such as *'why'* , *'what else'* , *'would X see it that way?'* may be braided in. However, the pre-formulated sentences can serve as a guide until you have had a certain amount of practice with the method. It is also advisable to choose cases at the beginning in which the analysis can be limited to two people. The answer sheet is also built for two people. The complexity increases exponentially with the number of people. There are experiences and there are suggestions for the parallel presentation of multi-person settings, but no standardized interview has yet been developed for this. However, additional people can be included very easily in serial representation. For example, like, *"Okay, so that's how it goes with Mom. How about Dad?"* Or: *"That's how it is at home. And at school? With teacher A/special education teacher B? In situation X/Y?"* etc. Different colored figures can also be used for such second representations.

In **Part 2,** different possible question types are outlined, which are feasible after Part 1. The question forms selected here are based on behavioral therapy, systemic solution-oriented and mentalization-based approaches. However, they are only to be understood as examples. Depending on the status of the consultation, the focus will not already be on behavior-oriented focal points, but only the offer of being able to describe a situation with visual support, promoting the understanding of processes, enabling multi-perspective views, recognizing and appreciating stress, etc. Each counselor will have their own question sets at hand, adapted to their own focus, therapeutic approach, client, and counseling process. One is often tempted – partly also by the client – to go quickly to the level of action. It is worthwhile, also when looking for a solution, to revolve around the protagonists' thoughts and feelings, what is expected, hoped for or feared in connection with possible change.

Variants:

Part 1 and 2 can be woven together. In Part 1, resource- or solution-oriented questions can already be included, if one likes to, in each individual step. However, this increases the complexity, makes it difficult to get an overview and to immerse yourself in the emotional flow of the problem situation. Of course, part 1 can also be left early, as soon as steps have been determined that can be followed up with part 2. This can be useful if you want to spare the client an analysis of embarrassing moments of escalation or if you are not sure whether you have the basis of trust for this.

If you want to proceed purely exploratively, you can also do without the problem-focused part 1 and, based on part 2, only use hypothetical, future-, therapy-goal- and/or solution-oriented question types.

In the case of very complex, long situation descriptions, the last sheet is a template that can be used for both Part 1 and Part 2 and can be extended as required.

In a further development, the interview should be able to be used in such a way that a criteria-oriented evaluation of the attachment pattern prevailing in the situation described is possible. There is a score sheet intended for users who are already well acquainted with attachment theory. Professionals interested in contributing to the further development can request a copy of the current version of the evaluation guide at hello@bondingboard.com. Anyone who agrees to participate in the further development will receive our questionnaire templates free of charge.

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Name: …… ……. . Date: …… TA: …….

❒Problem-focused ❒Solution-focused (When things are going well / How it should be / ...)

Rating of behavior the TP :	**ABC:**	**V1 Viewing direction:**	**1** turned away	**2** turned towards	**3** abruptly changing	….
		V2 body orientation:	**1** turned away	**2** turned towards	**3** abruptly changing	….
		V 3 queries/help needed:	**1** avoidant	**2** adequate	**3** overdone	….
		V4 Emotionality:	**1** avoidant	**2** adequate	**3** overdone	….

*D/V5: ❒**.1** distracting ❒**.2** punitive/disruptive ❒**.3** caring ❒**.4** anxious ❒**.5** mouth-fumbling*
*❒**.6** stereotype ❒**.7** emotion ≠ content ❒**.8** rigid ❒**.9** whispering ❒**.10** trauma insert*

Remarks:

Person A ***Evaluation of emotion (1), behavior (2) and relationship (3) of the people in the situation :*** *Person B*

❒A1	***Minimizing:***	*Does not see a problem, plays it down, is emotionally unaffected, "don't know" feeling*	*A1❒*
❒B1	***Differentiated:***	*Shows appropriate, problem-solving emotions, if ambivalence, it is consistent*	*B1❒*
❒C1	***Maximizing:***	*Shows exaggerated emotionality, self-centeredness, actions/descriptions of the subject ramble on into trivialities/infinity*	*C1❒*
❒D1	***Catastrophic:***	*Is blocked/helpless, experiences diffuse aggression/danger, has residual fear or malicious thoughts*	*D1❒*
❒A2	***Distracting:***	*Distracts himself/other person is passive, waits, hopes problem goes away, avoids the problem, "don't know" what to do*	*A2❒*
❒B2	***Constructive:***	*Acts solution-oriented, competently, confidently or seeks/accepts/gives necessary help*	*B2❒*
❒C2	***Contradictory :***	*Showing behavior and emotion that don't go together, is the starting point for inconsistencies, behavior seems unrealistic, exaggerated*	*C2❒*
❒D2	***Incoherent:***	*Displays bizarre behavior out of context, abrupt and random changes*	*D2❒*
❒A3	***Detached:***	*Lets (seek of) help come to nothing, withdraws permanently, does not share emotion/problem*	*A3❒*
❒B3	***Cooperative:***	*Is compassionate, considerate, balancing, leads history to a good ending for all*	*B3❒*
❒C3	***Demanding:***	*Shows overt or covert aggression directed at the other person, anger or distrust and/or clinging*	*C3❒*
❒D3	***Controlling:***	*Shows punitive- or caring-controlling behavior, role reversal, harsh punishing, humiliates, or shows fear of counterpart*	*D3❒*

Remarks:

General observations:
(Cooperation / course / deviation from implementation specifications / ideas / do history and movements match? / abrupt changes / ...)

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Situation Interview Part 1 ***BBB-Sit-V2.2***

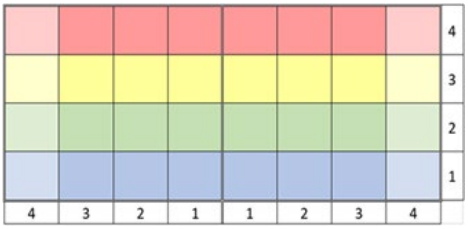
Name: …….. Date: …… TA: ……

Problem focus

Introduction: *I would like to go through this situation step by step with this game board. Maybe we can work out more good information that way. It's best to start a few steps before the problem occurs. When everything is still fine and the problem is not yet apparent, what do people do?*

1. Which person would you like to start with? (note)
2. What is the person doing? (note)
3. And what does the person think? (note)
4. And how does it make the person feel? (note) Now we represent that on the game board. (Child B on the right / caregiver A on the left) I put the figure in the middle column (slide up and down in 'reachable'), on which color do you have to set the color in the stomach? OK, Color X
5. How how is closeness to be set?
(6. How problematic or useful is this behavior? Is what X is doing good?)

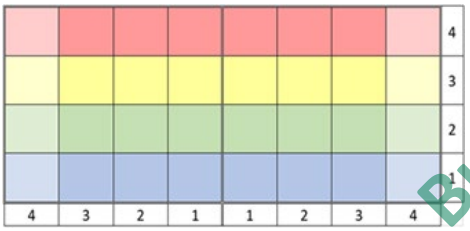
1a



Person 1: ……
Action: ……
Thoughts: ……
Emotions: ……
Proximity: ……
(Usefulness: ……)

Then we go to the second person:

1b

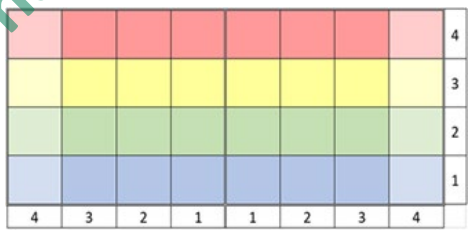


Person 2: ……
Action: ……
Thoughts: ……
Emotions: ……
Proximity: ……
(Usefulness: ……)

Now let's see step by step what the people are doing and how they are doing until the situation is resolved / the stress is over:

1. *Person: Who thinks, feels or does what next?*
2. *Action: What is the person doing?*
3. *Thoughts: What is the person thinking? What's on their mind?*
4. *Emotion: How does the person feel now? So on what color is the figure on the board?*
5. *Closeness: How close does the person feel to the other person now? Does the figure have to be pushed to the left or to the right, or does it stay where it is?*
6. *Possible benefit: How helpful is the behavior?*

2



Person: ……
Action: ……
Thoughts: ……
Emotions: ……
Proximity: ……
(Usefulness: ……)

Note:

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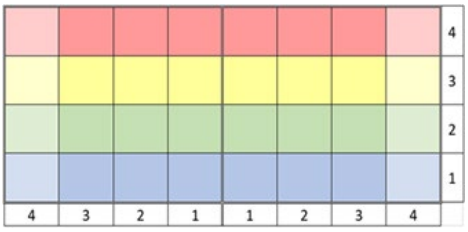
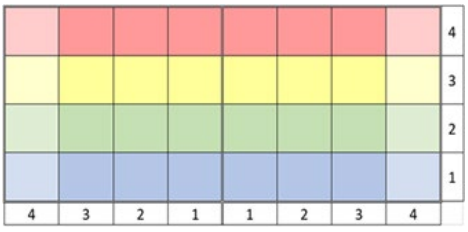
3 

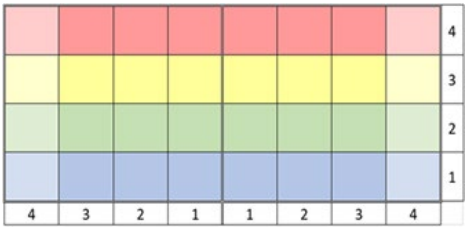
Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

Note:

4 

Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

Note:

5 

Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

Note:

6

Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

Note:

7

Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

Note:

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Name: …….. Date: …… TA: …….

Change focus

Some possible starting points:

Which step should we take a closer look at first? …
We found that from step X onwards it became problematic. …

-What should be different in this step? (Action, Thought, Emotion, Proximity)
-What is going on in Person A/B to make this happen? What does A think B's thoughts/feelings are?
-What could be done in the steps before X so that the problem does not arise in step X?
-What does person A/B need, to be able to act / feel differently?
-What is happening if it goes well? What if it's not as bad?
- What would people do if there was no more problem? If it was 1% smaller?
- What is your goal? How would Person A/B have to behave to make themselves feel good/proud?
-Who has the best chance of getting something moving and when? How?

At step X the figures were still like this (laying)…. How do you redraw step X on the game board?

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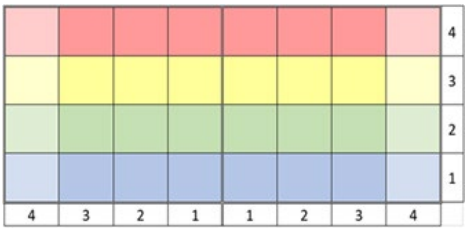
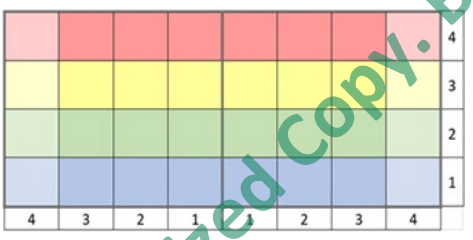


Person: ……
Action: ……
Thoughts: ……
Emotions: ……
Proximity: ……
(Usefulness: ……)

Note:

How is this continuing?

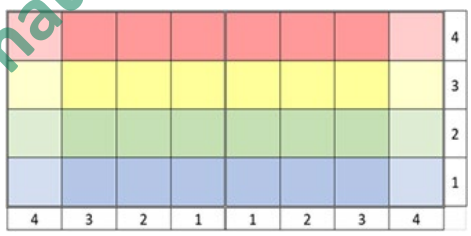
….



Person: ……
Action: ……
Thoughts: ……
Emotions: ……
Proximity: ……
(Usefulness: ……)

Note:

….



Person: ……
Action: ……
Thoughts: ……
Emotions: ……
Proximity: ……
(Usefulness: ……)

Note:

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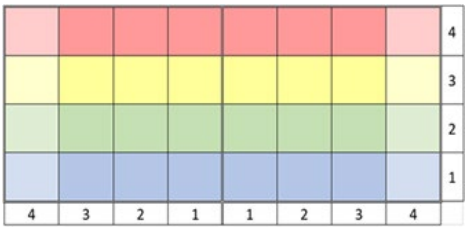
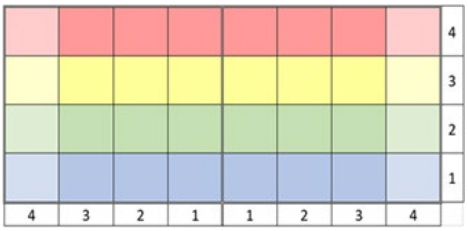


Note:

Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

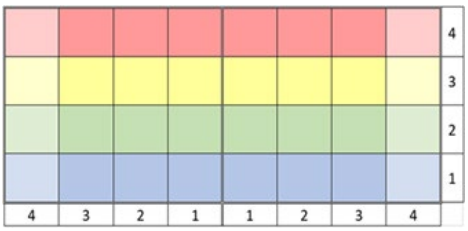
....



Note:

Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

....



Note:

Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

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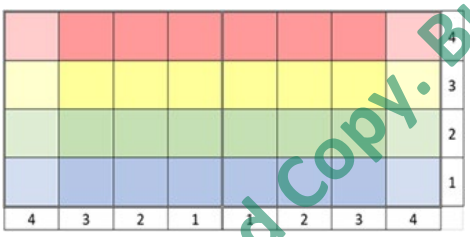
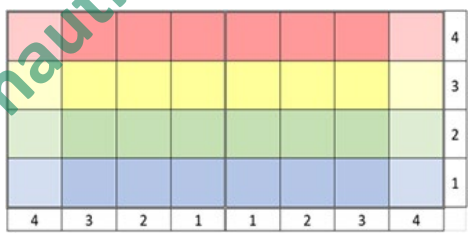


Note:

Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

....



Note:

Person: .....
Action: .....
Thoughts: .....
Emotions: .....
Proximity: .....
(Usefulness: .....)

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