

NEW SHAPE TO MISTAKES



MAIN FEATURES

Strengthened skills (TASC Cluster)	CONSTRUCT, SUPPORT
Suitable for	Teachers, Students
Difficulty level	Medium
Individual setting	No
Group setup	Yes
Minimum number of participants	2 or more
Average duration	60 minutes
Special Equipment	No
Online version	No

1. DESCRIPTION

In this activity, students can learn the concept of "reframing" (White, 2002, 2007), that is, how to help students consider personal failures as a way to explore their values.

Participants are divided into pairs. In turn, the role of the facilitator is assumed, and the part of the Participant is carried.

The Participant is invited to talk about a failure he has had in his life or an episode of failure he has had in the past.

The Facilitator is invited to ask specific questions according to a practice map - the TASC Map of Conversation on Failure - inspired by White's Failure Conversation Map (2002).

2. OBJECTIVE / BENEFITS

The exercise trains students to deconstruct the concept of "failure", in tendency as a sense of inadequacy, incompetence, insufficiency, deficit, and backwardness that looms in people's lives.

This activity aims to help students find an alternative way of thinking about failure, that is, to consider it a habit to explore their (and students') values.

In addition, the activity aims to teach how to use particular questions to reformulate the idea of failure.

These questions are constructed in a way that aims to avoid judgment and guilt (self- and hetero-), so their use can help students approach this topic with a less judgmental stance towards themselves and students.

When taking on the role of participants, students may have the opportunity to explore their personal values. Therefore, they can reflect on how to express them to improve and how to help students tell them to improve the quality of the classroom climate.

3. Related SKILLS CLUSTERS

No. 1 - CONSTRUCT, which in this case refers to the idea that students can consider having their personal value systems. As a result, if they become more aware of these values and why they mean to them, they can increasingly align their actions and behaviours with these values.

- The skill mentioned above in this cluster is **Personal Agency** because the teacher acting as a Participant can consider that he has the power to work in a way more aligned with his values. By extension, with the help of the TASC Map of Conversation on Failure, he/she can also support students to become more aware of their agency.

No. 4 - SUPPORT, which in this case refers to the idea that the practice of reformulating the concept of failure helps students to deal with this topic without judgment, seeing it as a useful pretext to start a conversation about values.

- The competencies aroused in this cluster are **to avoid guilt and suspend judgment**.

- **Avoiding** blame is aroused because using the TASC map of conversation about failure helps students avoid pointing the finger at themselves (and/or students), using derogatory language that describes themselves (and/or students) as problematic or unable to achieve goals.
- **The suspension of judgment** is aroused because reframing the concept of personal failure helps students avoid negative judgments towards themselves and / or students as people. By reframing an episode of failure that they have had (or that students have experienced), students can learn that there is always another way to narrate things and that each person's life is richer and more complex than we think.

4. HOW TO DO THE EXERCISE

Step 1 / Preparation:

Divide the group into pairs.

Explain to students that this activity makes them practice how to deal with the topic of personal failure, whether it is related to their profession or the students' lives.

Here's a text you can use to explain the purpose of the activity:

The phenomenon of personal failure seems to be deeply linked to the modern norm according to which a "healthy" person is able to be autonomous and independent in his actions and failing to reproduce this norm classifies people as "personal failures" in his own eyes and those of others. The ghost of failure also haunts people in their daily lives and hovers in school, haunting both students and students with the fear of being seen as inadequate and incompetent in achieving a given standard.

But what if we considered a failure, instead of a person's inadequacy to meet certain standards, an act of resistance to those standards? A way in which the person must express his refusal to act on social values that he does not feel aligned with his vision of the world?

If we see failure in this new way, a question we might ask ourselves is:

If the person, through failure, is resisting standards and values that he does not recognize, then what are his values? How can we help the person act in a way that is more aligned with their values without feeling that sense of inadequacy?

This exercise's purpose is to help you consider failure in this alternative way.

To do this, each couple member will in turn assume the role of Facilitator and Participant. When assuming the role of the contributing P, the teacher can talk about an episode in his professional (or personal) life in which he experienced a sense of failure.

In assuming the role of Facilitator, however, he is invited to use the Tasc Map of Conversation on Failure, a set of questions to be asked to the Participant to help him talk about the experience of failure differently.

The TASC map of the error conversation is described in the table below (each pair will receive a copy).

TASC MAP OF THE CONVERSATION ABOUT FAILURE	
STAGE	EXAMPLES
1. Ask the Participant to tell about an episode in which he or she had a failure	<p><i>Can you tell me about an episode in your professional life (or personal life, if you want) that you think has represented a failure for you and for this you have felt a sense of inadequacy, incompetence, insufficiency, deficit or backwardness?</i></p> <p><i>Can you tell me about an episode in your professional (or personal) life where you felt you were unable to meet certain expectations about how you should behave, or speak, or act, or be?</i></p>
2. Failure in relation to what?	<p><i>What is this sense of inadequacy/incompetence related to?</i> <i>Let's see it from different angles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>In relation to your professional role?</i> - <i>In relation to your gender?</i> - <i>In relation to your role as a parent?</i> - <i>In relation to your partner role?</i> - <i>In relation to your role as a brother?</i> - <i>And so on...</i>
3. Failure response	<p><i>What have you done to manage this sense of inadequacy that you have?</i></p> <p><i>What have you done in your quest to feel adequate?</i></p> <p><i>What have you done to compensate for this sense of deficit?</i></p> <p><i>Why do you think it was so important to try to meet those norms/expectations?</i></p>
4. Personal values	<p><i>What led you to say, "Okay, enough of these efforts to be absolutely equal to these norms or expectations, let's keep things as they are"?</i></p> <p><i>Why did you decide to let go of the quest to meet all those expectations and meet just a few of them?</i></p> <p><i>Why did you think it was necessary, at some point, to stop and pursue absolute</i></p>

	<p><i>alignment with those norms/expectations?</i></p> <p><i>What values led you to say, "Stop this search for alignment at all costs"?</i></p>
5. Giving voice to personal values	<p><i>When you experience these values, which led you to stop the effort of being fully aligned with those norms/expectations, what is it like for you? Are you giving yourself a hard time? Or is it different?</i></p> <p><i>What would happen if you decided to give a more evident presence of these values in your work?</i></p>

Point out to participants that the types of questions represented in the table are in a specific order, from talking about the sense of failure as inadequate and ending with talking about the values underlying the act of failure.

Also, clarify that the questions described in the table are examples only, so Facilitators can feel free to modify them based on how conversations with participants progress.

Explain that the exercise in pairs lasts 40 minutes. After 20 minutes of the set time, the members of the couple swap roles.

Step 2: Talk about failure

Each pair begins the conversation, in which one assumes the role of the facilitator and the other assumes the role of the Participant.

They swap roles at half the set time.

The trainer pays attention that each Facilitator merely asks the type of questions described in the table, following the order. If a Facilitator has difficulty using the Map, the trainer may suggest some questions.

Final Round / Conclusion

At the end of the stipulated period, each pair takes 10 minutes to discuss the exercise. Some questions you could provide at this stage to help participants reflect on the experience are:

- *How was it for you, as the Participant, to develop an alternative view of your failure?*
- *How was it for you to discover some of your essential values?*
- *What was it like for you, in the role of Facilitator, to use the Failure Conversation TASC MAP? What was it like for you to ask these questions?*

5. CLOSING

This stage is a group discussion about the activity.

The goal is to help students in the group reflect on how they might apply this methodology while working with individual students or a class to manage their sense of failure at school.

To lead the conversation, here are some examples of questions you might ask:

- *Imagine that this experience changed how you see the concept of failure: how could these changes help you support students in improving the classroom climate?*
- *What are this methodology's critical issues and limitations if applied to your daily work? What are the situations/contexts that you think can benefit from applying it?*

You can invite participants to share their answers to questions with the group or invite them to write answers and reflect for themselves after the end of the group session.



6. SPECIAL MATERIALS

- A copy of each pair's TASC map of the error conversation.
- Pens and sheets of paper.

7. TIPS AND TRICKS

If the participants do not understand the rules well, you can propose a short warm-up session to show them how the exercise works.

8. ON-LINE VERSION

The activity can also be carried out online. A platform like MIRO (www.miro.com), for example, allows you to create conversation rooms where participants can work in pairs and you can access them to monitor how they are doing.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY - SITOGRAPHY

White M. (2002). Addressing Personal Failure. *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 3: 33-76.

White M. (2007). *Maps of narrative practice*. London: WW Norton & Co.

