

Resilient Families Practice Thinking Together

What is a Thinking Together?

Thinking Together is a structured process used to support practitioners looking to solve a dilemma or problem through a useful and purposeful conversation with their colleagues.

Thinking Together is from AMBIT, and you can find out more, including two short videos explaining the process here:

<https://manuals.annafreud.org/ambit-static/thinking-together>

A Thinking Together is good for helping to feel 'unstuck', to experience mentalizing by your colleagues, and to reflect on the feelings the work provokes. It helps keep the conversation focussed, marked and boundaried.

A Thinking Together is also a great way to get 'headspace' - moving from a place of greater disturbance ("*I just don't know what to do about this*") towards calmer places or people, where *attuned* and *productive* thinking together (a.k.a. [Mentalization](#)) is more possible.

Thinking Together Steps (Simplified Version)

The following steps make up the Thinking Together process:

- **Mark the task**
The facilitator invites the practitioner with the dilemma to set what they want to achieve from the Thinking Together. This needs to be specific such as: "I want to feel...I would like a procedure for...I want to know how to help...". The other practitioners listen and / or take notes.
- **State the case**
The practitioner with the dilemma tells the story. The facilitator sets a time limit. Supporting colleagues can remind the practitioner that they just need relevant information. Once they have finished, supporting colleagues can ask some clarifying questions.
- **Mentalise the moment**
The facilitator invites the group to mentalize the practitioner with the dilemma first, and then to mentalize the child/young person/family/network member in the story. If the person with the dilemma has been mentalized sufficiently (to the extent that they can see that you understand them), it can lead to them coming up with their own solutions. Again, the facilitator sets a time limit for the group's reflections.
- **Return to purpose**
At this stage, the facilitator brings back the person who brought the dilemma, and invites them to reflect on what they heard from their colleagues, and whether the task has been achieved.