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3a) Ethical issues: teaching ethics and being ethical teachers

When terrorism is getting closer –

Individual experiences of adolescents in the 21st century

The recent terrorist attacks such as those in Paris and Brussels shocked people all around Europe. Various surveys among German adolescents have shown that their experience is particularly characterized by anxiety. The accumulation of terrorist attacks across Europe, as well as the assumption that the experience is not only characterized by anxiety lead to following questions: How do adolescents experience, feel and react on terrorist attacks in the 21st century? Furthermore, it is of interest how social workers, related specialists, as well as parents can support young people appropriately. This study is based on 8 interviews with adolescents aged between 14 and 18. Additionally, two experts working in specific counseling centers were interviewed. The results show that the experience of terrorist attacks is characterized by much more emotions such as anxiety, fear, shock, concern, anger, mourning, compassion, as well as disappointment, annoyance, excitement, and unidentifiable emotions. These emotions, however, are accompanied with many diverse bodily states impacting posture, body tension, facial expressions, and gesturing depicting the individual experience of young people. Moreover different causes for the individual experience are mentioned. Especially thoughts due to the incidents and corresponding media reporting are main triggers. Nevertheless it can be seen that adolescents apply different methods to relieve themselves from related thoughts and individual experiences. Social workers, related specialists, and parents can support them by offering themselves as open conversation partners and taking them seriously. In groups especially the exchange of views is working very well. In conclusion, it can be said that the experience of adolescents is characterized by diverse emotions, impressions, and bodily stirrings. Ultimately, even though anxiety is the most reported emotion, this study shows that there is a wide variety of experiencing terrorists attacks.