FORT is Radical Therapy by Women*. FORT is self-organized. FORT is non-commercial and is passed on for free. Within FORT there are no therapeutic experts. The participants are guiding the sessions themselves in teams. In FORT no advice will be given. The group adheres to confidentiality. A FORT group lasts for at least one year.

Every FORT meeting consists of different rounds that are fixed parts of every session. These alternate with organizational times, games, exercises and body work.

Goods and News
Everyone reports on what is good and new in their lives. Like that ride on a bicycle, changes in their lives.

Paranoid fantasies
Fantasies are there to confirm conjectures in the group. How is one perceived by the others? Everyone expresses their assumptions and checks their intuition. Fantasies can only be confirmed or denied. There are no explanations nor justifications.

Working time
Everyone works on their own topics and issues and will be supported by another participant.

Stamps (Anger)
Conflict in the group will be taken as an incentive to look more closely: What causes the irritation? How does this feel? Where does one know this from?

Strokes (Appreciation)
The participants express appreciation for each other, ask for recognition from others and reject recognition that does not feel coherent.

Attention time
If someone is distracted or agitated, they will work with an attention time to be able to feel focused again. Another participant will support them in this.

FORT information evenings are organized at irregular intervals. The Start collective can also put you in touch with experienced FORT practitioners in your region and/or assist in organizing an info evening in your city. RT (Radical Therapy) groups are initiated if 12–14 people are committed to join. The knowledge of how to form a FORT group is passed on by experienced FORT practitioners during two intense training weekends, so-called Starts.

More information about FORT
(in German) www.fort-frauen.de
Queer RT queer@fort-frauen.de
About MTT (Men* practicing Radical Therapy)
www.maenner-selbsthilfegruppe.de
Radikale Therapie
www.radikale-therapie.de
Inga: We were just talking about how it feels. We are all dealing with emotions, loneliness and feedback. For example, the question of how our socialization affects us differently. Why are some people more confident than others? Someone who was raised in a house that introduced a few methods from Radical Therapy: Fantasies, Stamps and Strokes. We talked and I was thrilled. Not long after that, I realized that I was a friend. Nederland is in a community in Manchester, founded in the first Radical Therapy. We talked about dealing with conflicts with them, I look forward to meeting and eventually coming to the FORTH after the end.

Inga: For me, this was the igniting moment. I read Hulke's book 'Looking for Women' and felt a deep sense of excitement. We started talking about how it feels to work together and how we can improve this.

Jess: Dealing with the "difference" is interesting from a systemic background. Announcing a disturbing dialect can be a therapy move. It breaks certain patterns. The pattern of the "Victim," that indirectly seeks attention but can't say "I need time." But instead gains attention by taking off their sweaters. Announcing a disturbing dialect breaks the "pattern" (they may not take up space. You can't feel it. You take up space. That's okay. Then we continue."

Inga: There is a similarity in the Westend. What can I do, what can't I do? There are so many rules and therefore also mistakes, the fear of mistakes. That has changed. And for a while you've been experiencing strong impulses. Indeed, following such impulses without hesitation, you learn to take an attention. This decreases a bit. You can see and feel. And you can go on with it. What is this doing to me? I have this impulse. What is this actually?"

Jess: I don't know this and that creates space to observe these patterns.

Inga: When the styling is too strong, it's important that we notice subtle patterns. But within Radical Therapy, people learn to work with these impulses. This deconstruction gives me a lot of security.

Inga: What do you know about the roots of Radical Therapy? How did it come into existence?

Jess: In the 1960s, Eric Berne developed Transactional Analysis. One of his clients was Claude Steiner. Claude Steiner came into contact with different activities, among others Hulke Wyy. Together, they developed this concept of Radical Therapy. Hulke Wyy introduced feminist social criticism. It was about offering therapy and putting it in a political context.

There was also one particular person - a person that always led. At some point the guidance was also applied, simply because they were not able to be around on their own. There were a lot of Radical Therapy groups that existed in the US back then. They also regularly published the magazine "The Radical Therapist.

Once from our start collective is a big deal. Hulke Wyy and Wyy went to find out more about her. At some point in time, she got in contact with Claude Steiner. A few years ago, they had this idea to start meeting with people from Berlin and the US context to learn more about the roots of Radical Therapy.

Inga: We also met Dana Lee Nicholson, who drew the illustrations for Hulke Wyy's book "Looking for Women". She is an expert on many issues of "The Radical Therapist."

Inga: With the Feminist Health Care Research Group, we often met up with activities and feminists of a different generation. It prompted us to talk again about appreciation. To someone who actually lived this, that you now want to learn from is a form of appreciation after all. It is also a form of responsibility and work to make this a part of my life. Now this generation is still here. I want to see you about this collective memory gap. How did FORTH and INMY change? How did they influence the US?

Jess: A person named Gall Pharran, the first in touch with the INMY, was also active in the counseling movement. She got these two approaches together that didn't have anything to do with one another back then. Gall Pharran travelled to the Netherlands and was in contact with feminists to whom she passed these methods on. To work with emotions - a political context. It was about creating space for activities. As far as I know, she held three one-week training sessions for about 50 feminists in the Netherlands. They then continued to work in groups, and so, after the first few groups established themselves, who adapted this to their needs. Gall Stayed in the Netherlands for a while longer and also worked on other topics, e.g., racism, then went to Paris.

Inga: Did she organize the first "Women's conferences" in the Netherlands? Jess: She did a lot in the field of rights of good/bad sex and sex workers. We went to the conference from our start collective tracked her down and met Gall. She was a bit shy. She said she didn't even know that this practice was still alive and had managed to become a lot of excitement on many sides.

During the 80s, the first men's groups splintered off to Germany and only later came the women's groups. The first instructions were always written by Dutch people. The first script was also Dutch. There are some in my FORTH group that have been doing FORTH for 20 years. There are people coming to the Easter meeting that I know from when you got on your Startweekend. There are some people who have completely different experiences with FORTH. We, the Berlin women, have a slightly different vibe there. We want to do a number of things differently and we founded groups, and question the term "woman."

Inga: I wanted to talk to you about gender specific FORTH.

Jess: I find it opposing in my FORTH group to be with people of different ages and work with them. At first, we know a little about each other. I know how we act and how much we hold on to a stereotype. The group is a social and political. But also, how many of us are from a different background, to attract rage, to do something completely new. To use the idea of harmony, it also sounds too much necessarily.

Inga: I felt that I was talking about gender specific FORTH.

At the same time, I perceive it as a great injustice that women are so strongly affected here. Maybe "I wouldn't even have decided for a gender specific group, particularly because of the exclusions of the category gender. Do I want to be made the woman/ness a thing? In the group, I notice that it is an important part of the work. How do you see that?

Jess: It is in any case a turning point. With FORTH in Berlin we are so lucky to have a lot of people that are interested in Radical Therapy. We can start FORTH groups, we can start INMY groups, there are queer groups. In the countryside there aren't that many people.

I think that many who come to a FORTH group for the first time don't know what it means to have such a safe space. There is no confrontational with certain issues. In what we want to ask asked people. A heterosexual person isn't confronted with certain topics and accepts there, which is again different for lesbians.

To me it is much more about a safe space, about certain discrimination active in society not happening here. This doesn't mean to explain to men what is sexist. I am firm of this obligation and can work on what empowers me. In order to then go back outside and encourage more people in a larger room to manoeuvre.

The rules FORTH and INMY differ slightly. They are based on certain assumptions on socialization. For some these assumptions are valid. For others they don't or they don't identify with these assumptions. For example. They require a different kind of safe space because in a FORTH framework they could encounter transphobia.

With FORTH, the assumption is generally speaking that female- socialized people have troubles taking space for themselves in a hard time being in conflict. They generally have a hard time expressing repressed aggression or repressing the feeling of being too strong. Their interventions in FORTH go towards: Take yourself seriously. Take space. It is okay to trigger something. And to that space.

In the Radical Therapy groups for men, something is the same in the foreground. In male-socialized groups, such as the assumptions for women, often leads to braking contact. INMY, the main focus lies on staying in contact. Expressing desires in order to stay in contact, expressing desires in a relationship. Heterosexual men, cis men, often believe I only get affection and tenderness from female-socialized people and have a sexual relationship with. MTxK is also about the personal contact, about learning that desire for being close can be shared with other women and men. In the contact also plays a role in FORTH, but MTxK more strongly on it.

When we did the first (or the first in years) queer intervention, we took all these assumptions apart and asked: How do we do that? In queer interventions we can't assume that there is this one personal specific socialization. Some will bring this and others that with them. What do we do that and how? Here we are still in the process of learning and I think we will start a second queer group.

Aktionstext FORTH (Feminist Health Care Research Group) (Inga Zimpich) Illustrated by Jina Moon 2018 Featured on the drawing: Anna, Anita, Beate, Inga, Lisa Hering, Jana Ward was a member of the RT South Collective and is a part of the Berlin FORTH organisational structure Tom and Jana Ward from the FORTH structure in Berlin for starting this group. March 2018

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