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Workplace learning through digital work supervision and peer support

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Vipuvoimaa
EU:lta
2014–2020



Background

In Finland, the reform of the social and health sector and related digitalisation and electronic services are changing work today and in the future.

In the reformed social and health sector, many leaders will work in a decentralised organisation, where the work units under a manager are located in physically different places. This emphasises the need for remote management and remote management skills.

Covid-time has increased need for digitalisation in many ways.

➤ As work and working conditions change, it is important to take care of the wellbeing of staff, which is supported by work supervision and peer support. Digitalisation makes it possible to implement these remotely.

More Remotely - Work in Social and Health Care Is Changing

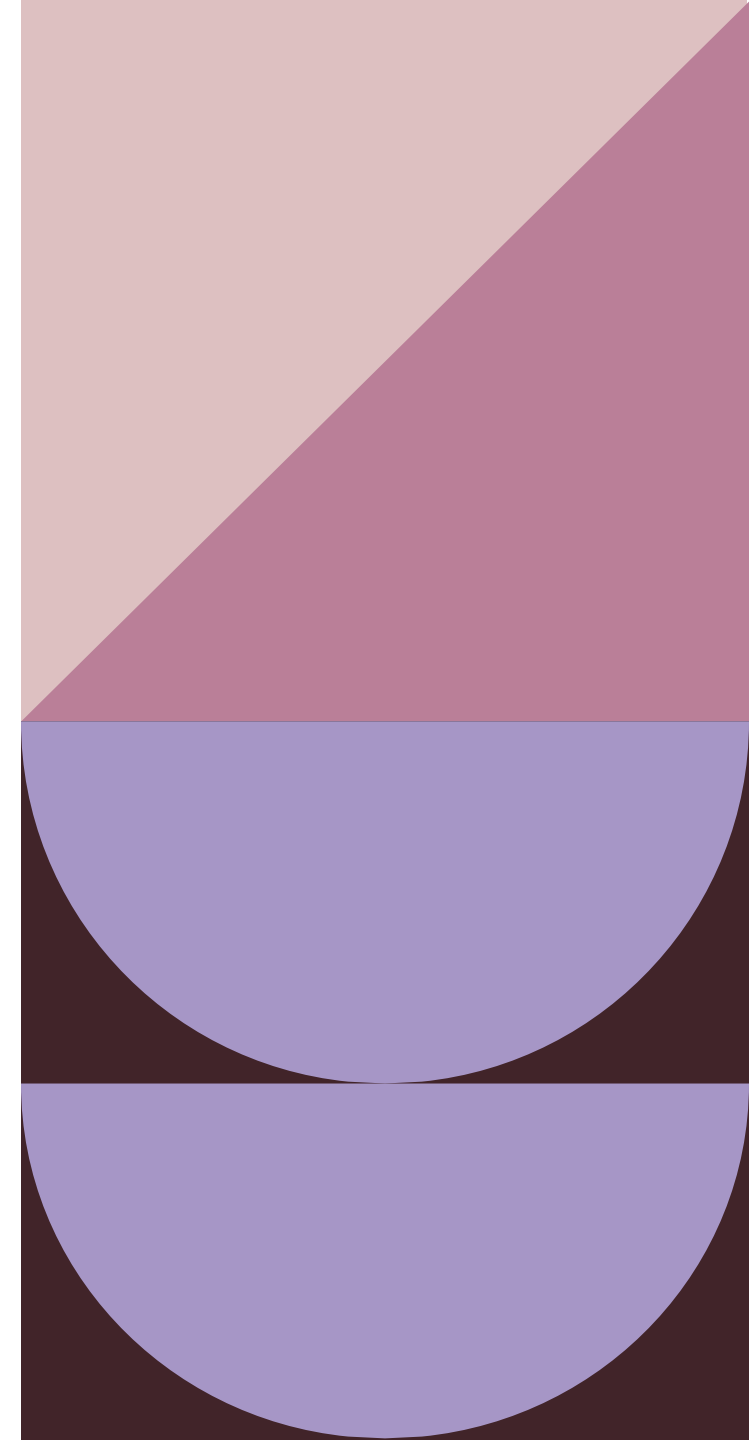
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A national EU-funded project

The overall goal of the project is to increase work wellbeing, work management and work productivity.

In this project, we are developing

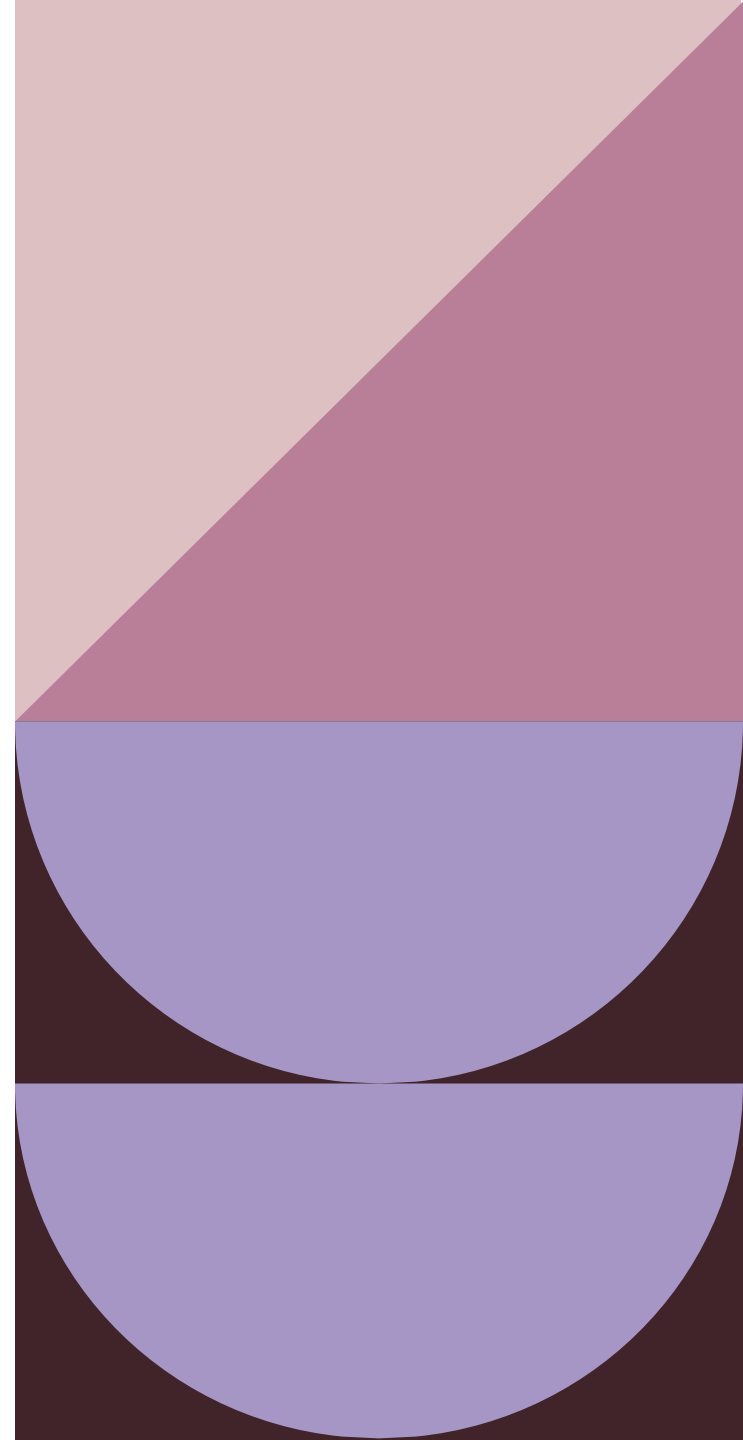
- remote leadership,
- remote work supervision,
- remote peer support



Project management and partners

The national project is administrated and coordinated by Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) and the other participants are

- the University of Eastern Finland,
- the University of Lapland
- Satakunta University of Applied Sciences
- Local government employers in Finland



The concept of remote

- Remote work control takes place via video
- Remote peer support is everything that doesn't happen face to face
 - text message by phone or email
 - voice message by phone or video
 - chat message
 - video conference on a computer or phone

Theoretical concept

- Work supervision is regular, planned and goal-oriented activity that can address work and related expectations, feelings and roles (Juuti 2016, 145-147). Remote work supervision is implemented digitally.
- Peer support is mutual support and comparison of experiences. Peer support should always be confidential and voluntary. Remote support is implemented digitally (e.g. Zoom platform)
- Remote work supervision and peer support represent a new and courageous change from face-to-face work supervision and peer support to online supervision and support.

Need of peer support among leaders

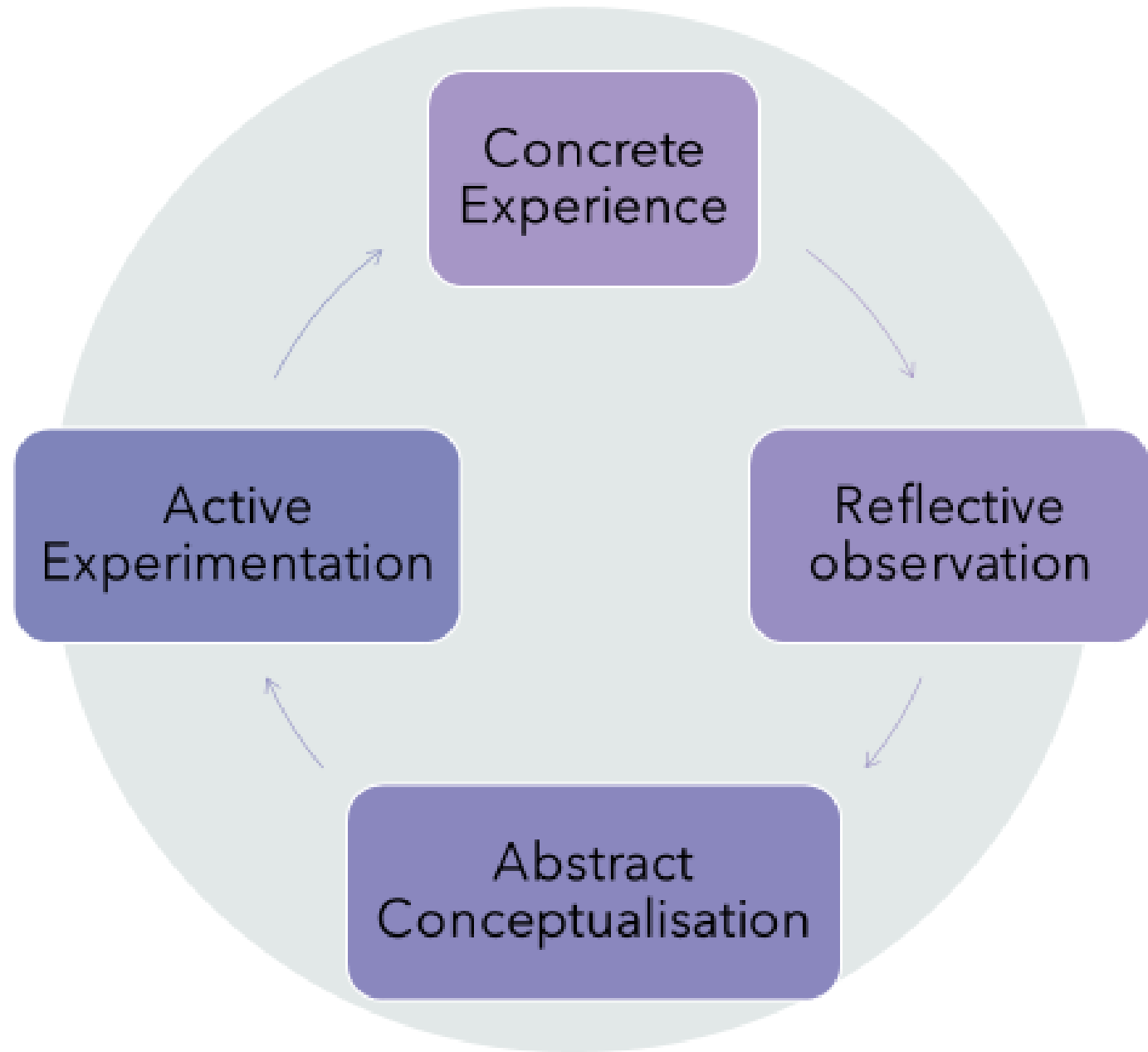
- Studies have shown that weaknesses in leadership, low influence possibilities and lack of work supervision and peer support among leaders have a negative effect on service quality and can cause insecurity among employees.
- Professional work supervision for leaders allows consideration of these phenomenon and in these meetings they can solve problems together and learn from each others.
- Remote work supervision also enables remote leaders and employees to take part in these supervision meetings.

The Experiential Learning Cycle

David Kolbe 1984

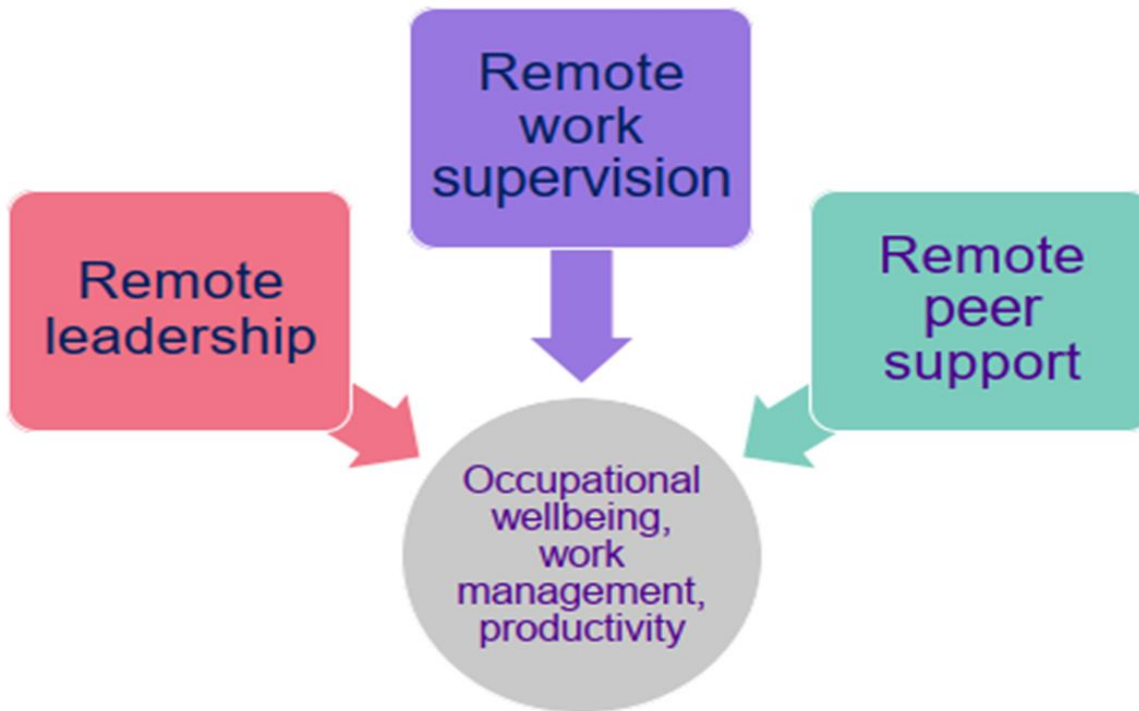
Kolb's model highlights the importance of the reflection component in the learning cycle.

Reflection allows the person to process what just happened during the experience.



Practical implementation of the project

Target groups and coaching model



Participants

- 84 leaders/managers
- 54 employees

Implementation of the coaching model

- 6 groups, 9 coaching sessions per group
- Face-to-face meetings and remote meetings
- The workshops covered the project topics and modified activities
- Online course on wellbeing at work
- In addition to workshops, regional and national seminars and webinars on project themes.



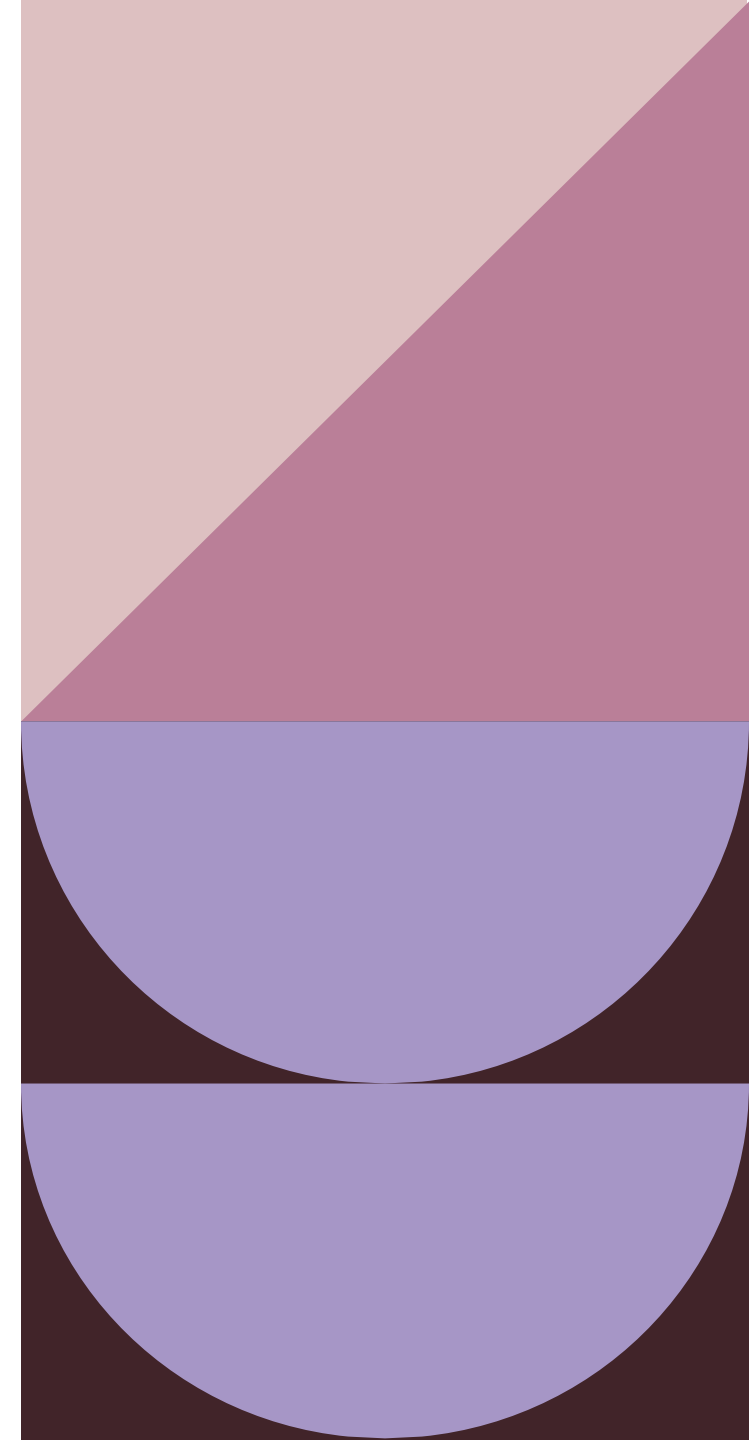
Some advance results of remote work supervision for leaders

Interviews of 11 leaders

Mikkonen, P. & Kalliokoski, S. 2021

Professional Work Supervision

- Work supervision is a regular, planned and goal-oriented activity, that can address work and related expectations, feelings and roles, run by an educated supervisor (Juuti 2016, 145-147).
- Remote work supervision is implemented digitally.
- Leaders' work supervision is a positive and enabling process that offers the opportunity to bring a leader or a group of leaders together to reflect on work practice.
- The educated supervisor has studied coaching skills for two years
- S/he comes normally from outside of the working place
- A group of 2-6 participants and the supervisor, 1½ hours/meeting, 1-2 times / a month
- Based on the absolute confidentiality



Essential factors in Remote work supervision



How to build up the TRUST between a supervisor and a group



How to build up the TRUST between group members



Strong COMMITMENT to the group and to the shared goals



Open INTERACTION via computer or video or just by phone

Challenges and risks during the remote work supervision process

No camera in use

A restless room for the remote meeting

Multitasking during the meeting

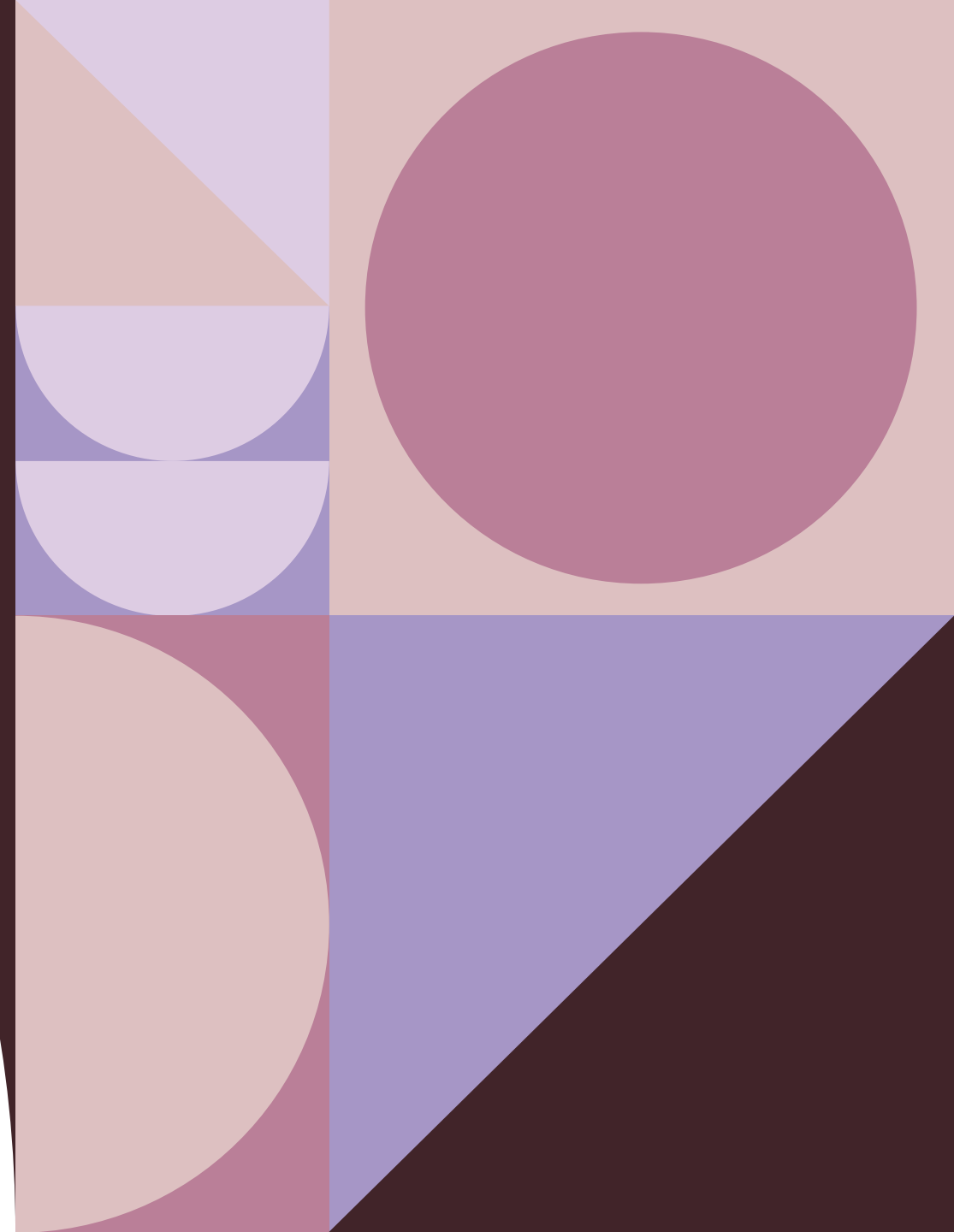
How to express and interpret emotions or gestures on a screen

Feelings afterwards, need of company

Some results from Remote peer support

(Boundy, A. & Järvinen, K. 2021)

- **Participants:**
 - 13 employees were interviewed
 - Participants were home care workers
 - the interview time was about 1-1.5 hours
 - group interviews
- **Analyzes**
 - content analysis were used



4 Forms of Peer Support

1. Practical peer support

- Sharing a difficult and challenging thing
- Confidence and confirmation of your own thoughts
- Joint decision-making and solutions to unclear issues
- Talking about things and sharing your own experiences
- Exchange of news and discussions

2. Mutual peer support

3. Ongoing peer support

4. Fast remote peer support by phone

To consider

- Trust is needed for peer comparison
- Peer support is a broad reflection on both big and small issues
- Using peer support to remember the rules of the game
- Difficulty in distinguishing between peer support and remote peer support

Pandemic time and development of remote support

Peer support during The Pandemic

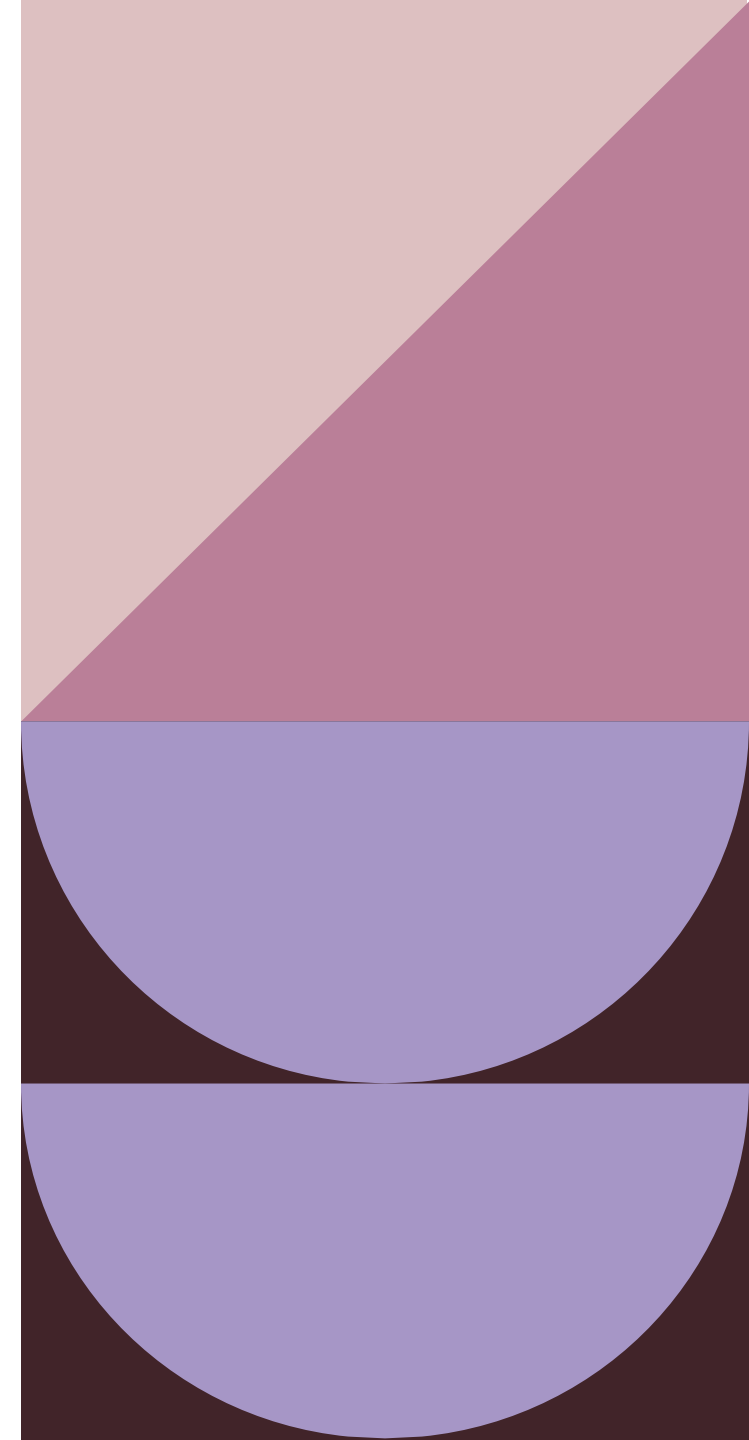
- Remote connections were utilized more during the pandemic
- Remote connections have become familiar
- Remote peer support via phone, tablet, teams and messaging
- Pandemic made it difficult to have or give face-to-face peer support

Development of peer support

- Training and workshops for remote support
- Supervisor involved in developing peer support
- Good advice does not take root in practice - rooting would be important

Other practical findings

- In the beginning the interviewees did not understand the concept of remote support
- Some of the interviewees understood remote support only as video-mediated
- Bad remote equipment of the interviewees, same computer at work,
- Some did not have a mic or camera - Answering during the working day, disturbing sounds
- Interview in Teams because of the corona, no eye contact, gestures, expressions, difficult to get in touch with the interviewee other than by name



References

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- **Juuti, P. & Vuorela, A.** 2015. Leadership and the well-being of the work community. Jyväskylä: PS-kustannus.
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- **Tenhunen, M. & Laaksonen, H. 2021.** Manifestations of unethical management in the social and health sector. Tampere University of Applied Sciences.



Kiitos!