

# RETURN FROM HOSPITAL: HOW CAN I SUPPORT MYSELF

## MODULE 1: RECOVERY

Meeting 1: basic structure

### WHAT IS RECOVERY AND WHAT DOES RECOVERY MEAN TO ME PERSONALLY?

**Objective:** Convey the message that recovery is an individual journey and begins in the hospital, during hospitalization.

Programme	Instructions	Time schedule	Conditions and equipment, notes
<b>Welcoming</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We <b>welcome each participant individually</b> (warmly, personally, sensitively and respectfully) <b>on arrival</b> (lecturers greet each participant, handshake depending on the possibility of contact).</li><li>• We will <b>appreciate people coming</b> and finding the space/desire/time/courage etc. and thank them for their interest and time. We will welcome people to the group.</li><li>• <b>The trainers briefly introduce themselves to the group, introduce the topic of the meeting and the context of the group</b> (what we want to talk about in this</li></ul>	5-10 min	If it is possible with regard to the operation of the department, we will offer coffee, tea, water or small snacks. To be arranged by the trainers or a person in charge of the department, subject to approval by the department team.



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	<p>meeting and why, we will state how we understand our meeting-modules and in what spirit we want to conduct them).</p> <p>(See recommendations for the opening of the session in the Guide for trainers.)</p>		<p>Workbooks and recovery cards should be prepared.</p>
<p><b>Group agreements</b></p>	<p>We formulate that we are now in hospital, which in itself can be challenging, people may be experiencing different feelings and thoughts. Therefore, we want to create an "island of recovery" at the meeting. We want to notionally separate the meeting space (we are not members of the treatment team etc.) from the regular operation of the ward. To release tension. To create a place for our recovery.</p> <p>(See recommendations for the opening of the session in the Guide for trainers.)</p>	<p>5–10 min</p>	<p>Flipchart paper to write group agreements (safety, operations)</p> <p>Reference to the workbook, where participants can find overview of the topics and basic information about the program.</p>
<p><b>Warm up and introduce each other</b></p>	<p>Warm up exercise and mutual introduction: <b>"A map of where we come from."</b></p> <p>We sit ideally in a circle. In the middle of the circle, place a flipchart paper on the floor and draw the place where we are now (a psychiatric hospital) in the middle. State the principle of the exercise. The trainers start and go through the</p>	<p>10-15 min (depending on the size of the group, each person about 3-5 min)</p>	<p>Flipchart paper and markers to plot where we are (psychiatric hospital) and create a shared map of where participants are coming from.</p>

example themselves. Then they invite the group members to introduce themselves, say their name and draw on the "map" the place where they come from (the place where they were born, where they came from or the place where they now stay and where they came to the hospital from).

We will talk about the "journey", where someone is from, where they are from, and the journey back, from the psychiatric hospital to their home, or to some other place they might go when they leave the hospital. We want to reinforce the awareness that a hospital stay is only for a certain period, it's part of the recovery journey.

When a person plots a place on a map, says the name of the place (if they can't share it, it can be marked without a name), we can follow up with questions:

- Where would one invite us to go in a given place?
- Some particularity, nook, something that makes a place special/important to a person?
- Where would they want to return to/live? (could be a fantasy)

We can state for example:

*"We would like to get to know you more. Now we are meeting here at the XY Psychiatric Hospital and each of us originate from somewhere, has come from somewhere and has been led here by some path."*

Possibly A4 paper to write the main topics of the meeting (instead of a flipchart) and sticky notes to vote on the topics.

*"Let's try to put on paper how we all meet here, where everyone comes from or where they last stayed before they came here. For example, I'm coming from Prague, that's probably somewhere around here. I'll try to draw it. I was born there, and I've lived there almost all my life. But I'm not quite in the city centre, we live on the outskirts, and it looks more like a small village than a big city. And today I'm here because it's important for me to meet people and because I believe that if you have space to think about yourself and have understanding and support from others, your life can be better."*

*"And if I were to recommend a place in our area, we have an old waterworks there, now it's been renovated and there's a pond with reeds and water lilies and especially in winter it's great when the pond freezes over, and you can skate on it."*

*"Would it be possible for you to introduce yourself, tell us your name and where you come from?"*

Let's repeat the person's name out loud and see if we can call him that. Accompany the person in drawing by showing interest, summarising what he/she says and extending questions.

We will call on each group member in turn to introduce themselves. If someone does not want to, we will ask if he/she could just tell us and we would draw it on the map instead of him/her with his/her permission, letting them guide us where and what to draw. If someone doesn't want to be in contact with the group at all, doesn't respond to our

approach, we can say that it's okay, that we are just getting to know each other, and it is possible to join later.

We always thank you for introducing yourself and sharing.

After everyone introduces themselves, we **thank and appreciate the map we have created**, how varied it is, how we can see movement in it (we will elaborate later, see below) - recovery can also be understood as a journey, a movement. We can point to something important that arises on the map, highlighting that there are different paths, and that being in hospital now is a particular moment in one's life, and we meet here precisely to reflect together on what one needs for oneself right now to return back, home or to some new, better place.

**Participants' expectations and needs:** Finding out what people need, what they are interested in and what they came up with to today's meeting with.

Let's ask:

- what brings them to today's meeting, what attracted them
- if they've ever heard of recovery, if they know the term
- what they want to know about recovery, what they need, what questions they have

We can state for example:

*"Thank you so much for introducing ourselves to each other and creating this map of where we come from. When I look at it, I see a lot of important messages in it. Each point points to a personal history and a particular path. We can see a lot of movement in the map, different directions. In the same way, we can see recovery as a movement, a journey forward and sometimes backward so that one can find the right direction again."*

*"Today we would like to explore with you what can be important on this journey, how we can look at recovery and what it means for you personally."*

*"Maybe some of you are carrying a certain question, maybe there is something you are more interested in. It's important for us to base the meeting on what you are interested in, what you would need for yourself right now, we can tailor the meeting to that."*

*"Have you ever heard of recovery before? ... It's a bit of a strange word, isn't it? For example, I understand recovery as a kind of personal journey, where one returns to oneself, understands oneself more and can take one's life in one's own hands. But we're going to talk about what recovery is and what it means for each of us today."*

*"What would you be most interested in? What would you like to do? What would you add? Do you have a question? What would you like to hear/experience/share here today? What is important to you today?"*

	<p><b>Let's summarize what we want to talk about at the meeting.</b> If it is difficult for participants to express themselves on the topics, we can hand out sticky notes for voting, asking them to stick a paper on the flipchart (or on A4 paper on the floor if we write the topics there) on the topic that is most important to them today.</p> <p>If there are any specific questions, write them on the flipchart, repeat them, thank them for the question and express, acknowledge, its importance.</p>		
<p><b>Main topic 1. part</b></p> <p>What is recovery and what it means to me personally A personal story</p>	<p><b>Objective:</b> To help participants realize that recovery is not something that is in the distance, something that awaits them once their hospitalization is over, but that they are already working on their recovery, here and now in the hospital. To awaken hope for recovery, to reinforce acceptance that everyone has a different path to recovery.</p> <p><b>Recovery topic introduction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We start by saying that it is important to seek what recovery means for each of us - there is not just one answer, one path.</li> <li>• We will share for ourselves what recovery means to us. Each trainer will say for him or herself what recovery is for him or her, they can relate to the definition of recovery and highlight a particular part.</li> </ul>	<p>15–20 min</p>	<p>Information in the worksheet: What is recovery. Definition of recovery, possible stages, an overview of the "recovery cards" and a blank sheet to stick the card(s) the participant chooses.</p>

- **The peer trainer will share his own experience** - the peer trainer's narrative especially about the beginnings of recovery, how he found hope at the time he was admitted to the hospital, what helped him believe that recovery was possible, what helped then, what was important. We can point out that the realisation that I was working on recovery came later, not everything could be discerned in the acute ward, but in retrospect one can see that one was already working on oneself there.
- Refer to the materials in the workbook, we can read together the definition of recovery and ask what participants think about it.
- We will try to open a conversation - **a discussion about what recovery means to the participants**, offering the opportunity to ask further questions.
- Before the break, we will state that after the break we will work with the cards and focus on what we are doing now for our recovery, what we need and what could help us now.

We can state for example:

*"There are moments in life that take us by surprise, we can't prepare for everything that comes into our lives. Maybe the decision to be hospitalized can be such a moment. At such moments, we sometimes re-evaluate how we live, looking for what would help us. Sometimes it's hard to see that things could go for the better again, we can be overwhelmed by everything that's*

Have printed recovery cards with you for each participant.

Have paper glue with you so that participants can stick the card in their workbook.



*happening and sometimes we get hopeless."*

*"At the same time, these moments provide an opportunity to pause, to reflect on oneself, to decide to change things - to live up to one's own expectations, to strive for greater personal satisfaction and fulfilment."*

*"Recovery is a very personal internal process. Many people who have experienced mental illness have dared to talk about their experiences related to the illness and what helped them overcome it. Importantly, it became clear that everyone needs something different for themselves, there is not just one path to recovery. You can't even tell in advance who will recover quickly and who will need more time. Some people have been in hospital once, others talk about the decision for recovery only coming after several hospitalizations. No one knows in advance how recovery will go, but what we can say for sure is that recovery is possible and that there are certain important prerequisites, things that usually help people in recovery. That's why we're here today to talk about it with you and to look for what you need for yourself right now."*

*"We've put together some information about recovery in the workbook that you can use now or later."*

*"The view of the experts may differ from what one experiences inside oneself. Sometimes we even talk about so-called clinical recovery, a sign that all symptoms of the disease have subsided, and the person is functioning in the normal things in life. But this alone may not make a person happier. Also very important is the so-called personal recovery, finding oneself, fulfilment and meaning in life (we can add personal experience). One can recover*

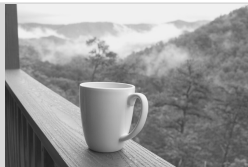
*even if some symptoms of the disease persist (we can add personal experience of the trainers)."*

*"Sometimes it can seem that our life is all about illness, we are overwhelmed by it and can hardly imagine that life could be better again. We put many demands on ourselves, we may hear from those around us that we need to 'finally function again', to be able to take care of ourselves, to take care of the household, to go to work again, but when the illness is too strong, these are unimaginably big goals, and such demands can be rather exhausting."*

*"We can start with small steps and ask ourselves: When did I feel hope that things could get better? What did I learn today? What do I know better about myself now than I did before? What am I deciding for myself here? What have I mastered today?" Etc.*

*"Getting up in the morning, managing breakfast, the community, getting out here with the people on the ward, it's not a small thing, it takes a lot of effort sometimes. That's not something to take for granted. The fact that a person can manage even these 'small things' shows that they have some resources and their own ways of handling situations. If one can handle this, perhaps one can build on it, it is an important resource for the next steps one decides to take (we can ask what helps them, how they handle it, what makes them feel good in the department, how they already take care of themselves).*

**BREAK**



**Main topic**  
**2. part**

**Objective:** Help discover the important areas to support recovery - the assumptions a person already has and what they need most for their recovery at this time so they can focus on it further.

**Areas of recovery**

**Recovery topics:**

- 1, Hope
- 2, Decision Making
- 3, Responsibility
- 4, Meaning and Purpose
- 5, Identity

**Questions to support recovery:**

- What I'm already doing for myself
- What is helping me
- What I need now

Following on from the previous section, we will offer 5 areas of recovery - Recovery Cards. Depending on the attention and needs of the group, we may choose to vary the difficulty of the card work.

**1. Option:** Select 1 area of recovery, spread the cards from this area on the floor, ask participants what their experience has been and share the trainers' experience with the topic (how significant this area has been in the peer trainer's personal recovery process or other experiences from the trainers' practice). We then invite participants to choose a card or cards that are important to them now and stick it in their notebook (each participant has their own set). We discuss briefly what the person needs and what they can do for themselves now.

**2. Option:** Spread the cards out (without sorting them into categories). Let the participants read the cards. We ask them what appealed to them, if they have personal experience of something that helped them, for example. Encourage them to choose 1 card, according to what they would need for themselves now. We will ask what this means to the person and what they could do now for themselves to move forward in this matter. If they don't

20–45 min  
(in relation to the chosen exercise variant)

Have the cards printed. People take them away and can stick them in their workbook.

20 cards, 5 areas of recovery, we have formulated specific statements on each topic in the worksheet + on the cards.

Ideally a set of cards for each participant in a format they can stick in their workbook. A set of cards to use for the group to spread out on the floor - better to have printed in a larger format to make it easy to read.

What I can do for myself

have an idea of what they could do for themselves now, invite the group to brainstorm ideas of what they could try now. We record the ideas on a flipchart and the person can then choose an idea and write it down for themselves in a workbook. This is how we spend time with each participant, so that everyone gets to talk about their chosen card and is given space and support.

**3. Option:** Introduce all 5 areas of recovery. For each area, ask participants what the concept means to them, what they think it means (hope, decision making, responsibility, meaning and purpose, identity). We then vote with the participants on the 3 areas that are most important to them now that they want to address. We then lay out the cards in these chosen areas and have participants read them, choosing what they already have that helps them and on the other hand, putting what they perceive they would need for themselves now. We then discuss with the participants what their experience has been and what would help them now, supplemented by the personal experiences of the trainers. We can either use one set for the whole group or each participant has their own set of cards and works independently first and then shares in the group. Finally, we invite the participants to make a note in their workbook - what they already have, what they are doing for themselves (on a sheet with an overview of all the cards) and to stick the card or cards they perceive they need most for themselves now on

the other side of the workbook. If there is space, focus on individual participants and what they need now, as in Op.2.

**4. Option:** work with all the cards, spread them out on the floor and let the participants read the cards. We ask the group about their experience. We can start the discussion from what they perceive they are already doing well, what they are doing for themselves. Then we ask what they perceive they would need most now. Invite everyone to spread out their set of cards and choose 1 to 5 cards of what they would need for themselves now and stick them in their workbook. Depending on the size of the group, you may also want to do 3 smaller groups by topic and allow about 10 minutes for this smaller group to talk together about the topic. Then we think together about what could help to fulfil this need, what the person can do to do this already during the hospital stay and if there is something/someone who could support the person in this. Suggestions and tips can be written on a flipchart. After the group discussion, encourage participants to note down ideas for themselves about what they could try now, similar to options 2 and 3.

**Related questions:**

- What I can already do, what I am already doing for myself, what I perceive I have.
- What do I now need for myself/for my recovery?
- What or who can help me fulfil this?

**Closing the topic and reflection**

At the end of the meeting, we will summarize what the meeting was about, what we covered, and summarize in points what we talked about together. We will ask participants if they could say for themselves what was important to them about the meeting, what inspired them, what they realized they were already doing for their recovery, and what they feel they need to do next.

We can state for example:

*"We want to thank you very much for meeting us today. We focused on what recovery is, how it can proceed. We talked about how it's a very personal and unique process for each person. The peer trainer shared personal experiences with recovery, what helped to manage the hospitalization and where hope was awakened that a person can have life in their hands again."*

*"We then looked at different areas of recovery, what we are already doing for ourselves and what we perceive we need for ourselves now. Maybe each of you came up with something that you can do for yourself now, already here on the ward in the hospital."*

*"It is very valuable for us to hear how you perceived the meeting? What was important to you? What was the most interesting? Was anything difficult or challenging for you? Is there anything that you would have needed differently from our side? What are you leaving with today? What was it like for you?" Etc.*

5-10 min

<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>We will ask participants to give us short feedback in the form. Preferably, they should fill it out right at the meeting. We will reassure participants that completion is anonymous and that it does not affect their treatment or participation in the group in any way. We will stress that this is important to us so that we can improve the programme to help people as much as possible. (Find more in Guide for trainers.)</p>	2–5 min	Have feedback forms printed out.
<b>Goodbye</b>	<p>We will, if possible, personally say goodbye to each participant and thank them for their participation, just as we welcomed each participant at the beginning. If we remember the names of the participants, which is desirable, we can address each participant by name when saying goodbye. We wish them continued success and say that we look forward to seeing them again.</p> <p>We will invite participants to the next meeting (1.2. How I can support my recovery during hospitalisation?), where we will pick up on today's topic, and discuss what can help them in their recovery, where they feel comfortable in the hospital, what resources are there for them and what currently helps.</p>	2-5 min	

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