

RETURN FROM HOSPITAL: HOW CAN I SUPPORT MYSELF

MODULE 1: RECOVERY

Meeting 4: basic structure

WHAT ARE MY STRENGTHS AND HOW TO BUILD MY OWN SELF-ESTEEM?

Objective: To support people to realise their strengths, to realise that they have resources to build on, to empower themselves and to boost their own self-esteem.

Programme	Instructions	Time schedule	Conditions and equipment, notes
Welcoming	Welcoming, introduce the trainers and context of the group (see recommendations for the opening of the session in the Guide for trainers).	5-10 min	
Group agreements	Recall and add if necessary (see recommendations for creating safe atmosphere and group agreements in the Guide for trainers). Highlight, why it is important to focus our attention to what works, to our strengths.	5-10 min	



Funded by
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CENTRUM PRO ROZVOJ PÉČE O DUŠEVNÍ ZDRAVÍ
CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE DEVELOPMENT

**Warm up
and
introduce
each other**

Introduce each other

Option 1:

We sit ideally in a circle and the trainer introduces the introductory activity:

- Hand out papers folded in half to the participants, which we have prepared in advance.
- Everyone writes their name on one side of the card and draws or writes on the other side: What I like to do that not many people know about
- We give the choice that they can draw or write the answer, they can also write just the name (acute) and maybe just think about the topic if they would like to engage in writing or drawing what they like.
- The tutors also get involved in the exercise, they paint a representation of themselves on paper and can give this as an example at the beginning of the exercise.
- After everyone has finished, we start introducing and sharing together what everyone likes.
- We start introducing each other from the tutors to lighten it up, to give an example, something a little bit funny (e.g. Jana - climbing trees, smelling flowers)

We can mention for example:

"Everyone is unique and everyone has a hobby, a hobby that people in the circle don't know about. We would like to ask you if you would write your name on one side of the paper and on the other side write or draw what we like to do, what is our interest or

10-15 min

Prepare the papers for the name tag – folded paper in half.

Have enough of writing utensils and crayons or markers with you to offer people during the exercise.

what makes us happy and we can share it here with others. It can be just a color, a food, a shape that describes us in some way, but also an activity such as running, eating food, playing chess, etc. It can be something that many people don't know about you yet, but is important to you. Pick something here that you can say that is okay for you and makes you feel good about it."

Option 2:

Another exercise to introduce this topic (backup option)

- Introducing myself - say my name and think of a word for the initial letter of my name as a surname that describes me and is positive (e.g. Magda the Wise, butterfly, mummy). It can be an adjective, but it doesn't have to be, it can be another word that says something about me and is positive.
- If someone can't think of what to say about themselves in this way - the group will help - brainstorm on a flipchart where the words will be written and the person will then choose which one suits them best. Just one word.
- A variation of that in the whole group is that the group brainstorms words for others, the person says a name and the group brainstorms positive words for the initial letter - the person then chooses the one that fits them best and expresses it.
- Opportunity for a short conversation about what it means to the person, what led them to choose that word.

Alternatively, you will need to bring flipchart paper and markers for the alternative exercise.

Main topic
1. part

Objective: To help the participants become aware of their strengths. That their life is not only made up of illness, but that they have resources to fall back on. The goal is also to destigmatize the illness and the experience of being hospitalized, to support a person's self-worth, to give information about how stigma and self-stigma can work and how to possibly counteract it, to reinforce the awareness that I have value just by being human, to help a person find respect for themselves.

1. Sharing the **peer trainer's experience** of how he perceived himself, how he worked on his self-esteem, how illness affected his perception of self-worth, stigma and self-stigma, and finding strengths. How to protect yourself against stigma and how to look for a realistic picture of your abilities.

2. **Exercise "Recovery and roles"** - what place in my life does the illness take now, how much space does it take, what else is in my life, what defines me (what roles do I have, how do I perceive myself, what do I do)

Offer M. Ragins' recovery diagram and invite them to draw how they now perceive themselves - how much space does illness take in their lives and what else shapes them (see worksheet).

We can state, for example:

"Mark Ragins, an American psychiatrist, painted this picture of what illness sometimes does to a person, how it can overshadow other important things in life... (draw a bicycle on paper and describe the illness, how it takes all the attention). But there's more to life than illness. We believe that each of us has so much more to us. (Draw a second picture, placing other possible roles in the

15-20 min

Have ready a workbook and stationery, crayons and markers ready for painting.

circle, see workbook. We can link this to an example of a peer tutor's experience, how they thought of themselves during hospitalisation, what parts were overshadowed but yet were there and show a second diagram where illness is just a part in life and there are other roles, according to the story shared). *Now try to think about how you have it, what part in your life is now occupied by the difficulties you are dealing with and what else is in your life that is important to you, that you love, that shapes you? Even though illness may overshadow some parts now, it is important to know that we have them and they are part of us. You can draw this in your notebook. It's mostly for you, you won't have to show it or share it in the group."*

We will **open up a discussion** about what it means to people, what they have discovered in it for themselves, if it is changing for them in any way over time, what roles have emerged and are most meaningful to them, or how it is possible to support these parts of their lives now during their stay (not waiting until I am home, but what can be strengthened now, I am not just an illness here either). Emphasize that this is a representation of how they are experiencing it right now and it changes over time and the parts of themselves that they have named as significant can support their recovery.

Ideally, we will give space for each participant to talk about their "schema" and get reflection from the group, but make sure they can only share what they want to share (the picture may or may not show).

BREAK



Main topic
2. part

Objective: Strengthening awareness of one's own strengths, self-confidence and sense of self-worth.

Introduction - why it is important to recognize own strengths:

- We will introduce this section by explaining why it is important to focus on what we do well, what we can do, what works for us. Everyone has certain strengths and resources, we can re-find them, realise what we rely on.
- We mention that people sometimes evaluate themselves only by what they can do, what skills they have. Of course, we can think of our skills as something to value. But a person is shaped by much more than what they can do, such as their character, their values, their life experiences, their temperament, their specific interests, their personal wants and desires, etc. The people he has around him who are his friends, acquaintances, family, or even his background, things, personal objects he has are also important. All of this is a resource of some sort and is something we can draw on (we offer to think of strengths in terms of the CARE Model's Strengths Matrix without mentioning it directly (den Hollander, D., Wilken JP, 2022).

25-30 min

Equipment:

- workbook
- pens and markers

We then open up a collaborative discussion and brainstorm how they would support a person if they were in a similar situation to themselves.

3, Write questions on the flip chart and facilitate brainstorming:

- *If you could support someone in a situation similar to yours, what would you tell them, what advice would you give them?*
- *If you wanted to encourage such a person, to appreciate them, how would you do it? What would you notice? What could you appreciate?*

4, Exercise worksheet My strengths and qualities
(inspired by Therapist Aid)

Option 1: the least demanding for the acute care department

- First, we ask participants if they want to do the exercise at all, if they have the strength to do it.
- We will ask them what helps them to cope with being in hospital, how they do it.
- We will appreciate that just being at the group shows their ability (appreciate their presence and their reactions in the group).
- We can then offer the 8 questions from the worksheet and choose with them only 1 or 2 to focus on, or decide on a topic and have the group agree on it.

For example: *"Let's pause at 'difficulties I have overcome'."*
And ask people in the group individually what they can be proud of, asking about what helped them overcome it and what they have learned from it.

- Based on this discussion, then name what the strengths are and how we can use them for what we want in life (we can link this to the previous Recovery and Roles exercise - how can I use my experiences and strengths now to strengthen my other roles in life).
- Offer the opportunity to make notes for themselves in the workbook with the understanding that they can add further as they go along.

Option 2 - for a group where participants are already able to work independently and are more open to group discussion

- First, we will ask if people are aware of their own strengths and if they are somehow able to appreciate and support themselves. How they think about themselves, how they relate to themselves, whether and how being in hospital now has changed them in any way, affected their view of themselves and whether they perceive a change in what they think about themselves and what they value about themselves.
- We will then offer a strengths exercise:
 - a) We will select 2 questions together with the participants.

They will first think about these on their own and write them down in the workbook. We then share them in the group and think together about what this means for each person and how we can take inspiration from each other. Afterwards, participants can edit their notes, add to them if necessary.

OR

b) We go through all the questions together - opening one question at a time and sharing as a group. Again, first one writes for oneself and then it is shared in the group.

OR

c) The most self-demanding option - everyone works independently on their worksheet and then we share as a group.

- Afterwards, we can also encourage participants to mark (e.g., underlining, highlighting, number scale) what they perceive as most important or strongest (e.g., having a sense of humor, being committed to change and trying treatment, persevering, being willing to help others, etc.).
- We reflect together on what it means for them to name these strengths and how they can use them for their recovery.
- We encourage them to continue working with the worksheet - they can add to it, ask people who know them well what they would add, etc. The worksheet can also be an important basis for planning what people want

	<p>to achieve in their lives, as well as for co-creating a treatment or discharge plan for the ward.</p> <p>Notes for trainers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link the discussion and exercise on strengths to the Recovery and Roles diagram – write something down, some roles other than patient emerged - there is a resource for finding experiences, abilities, wishes etc. • If participants find it difficult to write, we normalize this, it's fine – they may or may not write, they may just think about it, or we may offer to help them write the item, either by us or by colleagues. • If participants find it hard to name whatever strengths they might have, it is good to have thoughtful examples for each question in the worksheet. Trainers can give a personal example or give several different examples from which people can choose. It is also possible to work together with the group first to put together ideas of what might be there and then people can choose for themselves what fits best. 		
<p>Closing the topic</p>	<p>At the end of the meeting we will summarize together with the participants main findings from the meeting. We can highlight that every single person with mental illness has experienced stigma and that it is up to us how we deal with it.</p>	<p>15-20 min</p>	<p>Workbook for participants, pens for writing</p>

Summarising the experience from the whole “Recovery chapter”

Final reflection

We can state, for example:
“Even though the situation in society is improving, we can unfortunately still perceive a strong stigma towards people with broken souls, which mostly stems from ignorance and misunderstanding. But it is up to us how we approach the topic. We can build on our strengths and not let ourselves be broken. We can see ourselves as equal to those around us, able to recover and live a full life despite the obstacles of society. There is power in illness and we can gain that power by expanding our horizons from illness to what is positive in us. What am I without the word disease. Get rid of our own preconceived ideas about ourselves (Destigmatize ourselves). To believe in ourselves and trust in the process by which our soul is trying to tell us something through illness.”

We will ask participants if they could say for themselves **what was important for them at the meeting**, what inspired them, what they realized, and what they feel they need further:
“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.

Summarising the experience from “Recovery chapter”
Within the summarising we will address that we have finished first chapter “Recovery” in the training. Together with the participants make a remembering, what topics

Possible certificates of completion of the “Recovery module”

	<p>related to recovery we have covered in the meetings and ask participants to make their own remarks and conclusion findings in the table in their workbook.</p> <p>If you feel so, it is possible to prepare and give to the participants certificate of completion of the 4 Recovery modules.</p>		
Evaluation	<p>We will ask participants to give us a 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.</p>	5 min	Have feedback forms printed out.
Goodbye	<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>	5 min	

	<p>Invite the participants to the next meeting, where we will pick up today's theme, and address the topic of communication - how to understand how the other is behaving and what they are saying, how our actions can affect each other, and how we can work on having good relationships and understanding each other.</p>		
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The training and all materials were developed within the Erasmus+ funded project Education and Empowerment for Transition to Community, implemented by the Centre for Mental Health Care Development in collaboration with the Estonian Wellbeing and Recovery College and the Association for Psychosocial Support Susret in Croatia.

The project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This material however reflects the views only of the author, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.