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Return from hospital How can I support myself GUIDE FOR TRAINERS



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



Workbook and program description guide for the trainers

How to support personal recovery in a hospital or welfare institutions

INTRODUCTION

The overall objective of the program is to **support key competences of people with mental health problems before the discharge from psychiatric ward/hospital or long-term residential facilities** with the aim to support their recovery.

One of the proven resources supporting recovery is **sharing experiential knowledge about personal recovery process and building resilience to overcome symptoms of the illness by gaining information and training in specific skills**. Thus, this program combines these ways of learning and stands clearly on the **principles of Recovery colleges - promote hope, opportunities, and strengthen to gain control to have life in one's hand back again**. The program is aimed to support people: to develop resilience, understand the process of recovery, to know what possible sources of help are available, to be able to ask for help when needed and to be sensitive to what is happening and take preventive actions when becoming unwell.

The program was developed by teams from three countries - Czech Republic, Croatia and Estonia. Each team was composed by **experts by experience and experts by profession**. Co-creation sensitive to cultural differences and specific situations in the facilities was the base of our work. In each team there are **certified CARE Model trainers**. CARE is abbreviation to **Comprehensive Approach to Rehabilitation and Recovery** (to found out more, visit <https://www.care-academy.com/>) and this approach was used as a core resource for the work.

PROGRAM RETURN FROM HOSPITAL: HOW CAN I SUPPORT MYSELF

The program provides content designed to support people in their recovery process while they are in a hospital or welfare institution. The program material consists of PROGRAM DESCRIPTION and the WORKBOOK for participants.

- PROGRAM DESCRIPTION provides elaborate structure of each session, and you can find there instructions for the exercises and recommendations for leading the session. Learning objectives are identified for each meeting with selected appropriate methods, and designed activities that will engage participants and support them for discussions, insights, reflections, or thinking.
- The WORKBOOK is a companion to the group program and is aimed as a resource for the participants of the program. There are exercises, personal recovery stories, information etc. The workbook is divided into 12 parts which accompanies the topics of the program. Each participant will receive a copy of the current topic of the session. The workbook is aimed mainly as a supportive material during the program session but can be used as self-help guide material as well.

The sessions build on each other, so it is recommended to go through all the sessions with the group. However, it happens that participation is not possible for various reasons. Therefore, the Workbook is ready so that everyone can work on the topics on his/her own or with a staff member.

The program consists of 3 MAIN CHAPTERS - RECOVERY, COMMUNICATION, AND SAFETY. Each chapter is then composed from 4 topics, so the program has **twelve sessions in total**.

The program structure:

1. How to support my recovery

- 1, What is recovery and what does it mean to me personally
- 2, How can I support my recovery during hospitalization
- 3, How to recognise what do I need and what helps me
- 4, What are my strengths and how to build my own self-esteem

2. How we communicate with each other

- 1, Body language and how to understand other people's behaviour
- 2, What helps mutual understanding and how to prevent conflicts
- 3, How to talk about myself and what to tell others
- 4, How and with whom to talk about my illness

3. Safety and return from hospital

- 1, What home means to me?
- 2, My safe place
- 3, What is good for my body and soul
- 4, My support network

The training is conducted in pairs that consist of one expert by experience (peer trainer, a person with lived experience) **and one expert by profession** (a professional using recovery-oriented approach). This is an important premise for leading the program to support equality, partnership and other recovery principles.

The trainer's team is recommended to be external but can be formed within the professionals in the facility also. Each format brings its advantages and disadvantages, and it is necessary to adjust creating safety in the group with the reflection of the circumstances (more information about these experiences you can find in [Evaluation report](#) of the project).

The program is created to target the situation when people are in a psychiatric ward/hospital or in a welfare institution. The topics, exercises, information etc. used in the materials are created in relation to that. In case the trainers will decide to use the program in other circumstances, we highly recommend adjusting the exercises and materials towards the situation to prevent misunderstandings and setbacks to the situations the people already overcome.

Recommended timeframe of the program is one or twice a week a session. Each session is prepared for **1,5 hour meeting**, but can be shorter or longer - adjusted in relation to the group needs. The length of the program is then **6 - 12 weeks**, depending on the frequency.

THE STEPS IN IMPLEMENTATION

By following the steps below and the Structure of the meeting, a trainer will deliver engaging and effective meeting that will have a lasting impact on the participants. To deliver effective presentations, facilitate group discussions, and use interactive activities to engage participants, steps are divided into phases:

Preparation phase

1. Agreement with hospital staff (on the ward) on the content of the training, topics, understanding about the aim, structure and methodology
2. Timely announcement of the Training for the staff (leaflet) and participants (leaflet)
3. Personal introduction (face to face) of training team and short content of the training to the participants (a week before the start, and possibly in the morning that date of operation also)

Execution phase

1. Opening of the meeting:

- a. sensitive and respectful greetings to participants, showing appreciation for their time, courage, desire to come (see examples how to create good working atmosphere and safety below)
- b. introduction of the Training, training team and position (employee, external associate, freelancer, etc.)
- c. warm up game and introduction of the participants

- d. introduction of the topic of the meeting (what we want to talk about in this meeting and why)
- e. group agreement (respect, listen each other, safety rules, etc.)

2. Topic of the meeting

- a. Topic – material for read, play, discussion, sharing experiences according to the Structure of each meeting (Program description with detailed structure of the meeting and Workbook for the topic)
- b. Summary

3. Closure - evaluation

- a. Feedback (what was important for participants, inspirational, what they are already doing, etc., see below)
- b. Evaluation form (written form)

Ending of the program

1. Certificate of completion

- a. Celebration

LANGUAGE SENSITIVITY AND RECOVERY ORIENTED LANGUAGE

The language reflects our values, thoughts, and positions. It is a key element in healing process. We use Model CARE approach as a base of our work, where recovery principles, creating personal professional bond and equality are strongly present.

- We treat participants' communications in a non-judgmental manner and maintain neutrality. We do not communicate that something is wrong or right.
- We are not talking about the sickness or illness but about person's life experiences. We offer participants that they are trying to process this very unusual experience ("dealing with impossible").
- We try to reduce participants feelings of guilt and shame related to hospitalization. We note that this was a complex situation with more than one cause. And that it can happen to anyone.
- We normalize participants' adaptation difficulties to the hospital or facility environment if they talk about it. A hospital stay may be neither good nor bad. It depends on the situation and point of view. We perceive the hospital environment as a kind of "microcosm".
- The people "are more than the program" – we focus on the personal stories, questions, and needs. We empower people to actively participate and co-create the meeting, so we adjust the program and use of the materials to actual situation – using presence approach.
- We respect each person equally. That also means, we understand, that people might have special needs, e.g., to stay in quiet, to go away, not to participate in the exercises or repeat things several times etc. None of this might prevent the person to be part of the program. The attendance is voluntary, and the group might be adjusted to the group needs.

Examples, how to open the meeting with the sensitivity to language:

"We really appreciate you taking the time and willingness/strength/determination to come. Today we want to talk about what an outbreak of illness or mental health difficulties can mean for a person and what can help in managing/healing them. All of us have had the experience of overcoming something in our lives, having to cope with an unexpected event, a challenging situation in our lives, for example. We want to explore these ways with you and think together about how to manage and recover from a challenging situation or difficulty that brings a person to hospital. So, we would like to dedicate today's meeting to recovery."

"We believe that recovery is not somewhere far away, beyond the walls of the hospital, but instead can begin or perhaps has already begun here and now/by entering the hospital."

"Recovery is different for each of us, some people need rest and time, others need lots of stimulation and activity. In the hospital it can feel like time has stopped, but from our perspective people here work on themselves so much every day...!"

"We'd like to share our experience of what can help in recovery, and also create a place or space where you can find what is important to you in relation to recovery right now."

"Today we would like to explore with you what recovery means to you and offer you some topics to explore that we will talk about together, maybe even try something together, it will be up to you to choose what topic is most interesting/helpful to you."

"Maybe your question, curiosity, need to learn, experience, discover something has brought you here. It is very important for us to know what you yourself would like, what you are interested in, because we can adjust the meeting program according to what is most important for you now."

CREATING SAFETY AND GROUP AGREEMENTS

Draft joint agreement

If we want to talk to participants about personal experiences and recovery, we need them to feel safe and have enough support, openness, and acceptance. At our meetings we would like to create a "recovery island", a space where it is possible to be both active and relaxed, to speak openly and without fear of repercussions, to get inspiration from others and to pursue what we feel is important in life.

How to create such a space? Here are some ideas for group agreements (traditions or rules):

- We respect each other.
- We speak for ourselves and share our perspective or experience.
- Personal information and communications remain between meeting participants.
- Each participant is important and can enrich the others.
- We focus on what works and what succeeds.
- We take care to ensure personal well-being and needs.

Ask participants, what else they need to feel safe and free?

You can use those recommendations how to create safe space, a „recovery island“, in each session and to let the group co-create their own traditions, so they can feel safe and open space for healing. It might be useful to remind the agreements than within each session to remind the safety and respect as important premise for the meeting and empower participant to be part of creating such environment.

Examples how to ensure a safe and open atmosphere in the group (group agreement):

"We would like to work with you on how to create a good atmosphere at the meeting so that we feel comfortable and can talk openly about what we are experiencing and what everyone needs most right now."

"You may already be familiar with certain group agreements from various programs in the department/facility. What do you personally think is important for us to arrange together so that you can feel safe here? ... Is there anything that you definitely need/that we need to know/to look out for? Is there anything we definitely shouldn't do?"

"We want to offer joint agreements (write ideas for the agreement on the flip) that have worked well for us, is that okay for you?"

"If any of you need anything, please feel free to tell us. It's important to us that you can feel comfortable here."

"We want to get to know you more, bring topics that are important from our experience in recovery, reflect on them together and create a space to share experiences and support you where you are right now, to support you in your personal journey of recovery."

"We are all here to think together about recovery and how to support your recovery while you are in hospital/facility. There is no one single perspective, on the contrary, the experiences of others can enrich/inspire us, everyone is an expert in their own recovery and only you have it in your hands. There is no need to be shy, everyone's opinion and experience is important to us and we want to make it heard here." Etc.

(more elaborate you can find group agreement recommendations in a PROPOSAL FOR A GROUP AGREEMENT)

EVALUATION AT THE END OF THE MEETING

At the end of each meeting, set aside approximately 10 minutes for an evaluation. Ask participants to fill in the evaluation form with emoticons (see attached). They can fill it in anonymously. Then invite them to reflect briefly.

You can use the question:

- What did you take away from today's meeting? (If you could choose one thing from this meeting you do not want to forget, what it would be?)
- What did you like most?
- What did you find most useful for yourself?
- What did you find most important for you today?
- Would you like to appreciate someone (you can also appreciate yourself)?
- How could the meeting be improved next time? Do you have any suggestions for us or for the program?

EVALUATION AT THE END OF THE “CHAPTER”

The whole program of 12 meetings, in a periodicity once per week, may last even three months. Clients' stay in hospital is usually shorter and many participants therefore only attend part of the program. We therefore **do not leave the overall look back at the program until the very end but include it after finishing of each thematic chapter** (recovery, communication, safe environment at home).

Set aside 25 - 30 minutes at the last session of each chapter (topic Recovery, Communication, Safety) for a longer look back at the entire topic.

- Briefly summarize the content of the previous sessions and ask what stuck most in the participants' minds.
- Give space for participants to talk about what the program has brought them so far and how it has helped them on their journey out of hospital.
- Clients can also share their insights from completing the workbook between meetings.
- Appreciate participant engagement and incremental progress.
- Encourage them to formulate recommendations for the next meeting or the next iteration of the program.

CERTIFICATION AND CELEBRATION

We highly recommend celebrating successes and validate each step in personal recovery journey. As a part of this you can give to the participants a **Certification of completion** of the whole program or in case, that the person participated only in one chapter of the program, you can create a certificate of completion for that chapter. Saying goodbye with the space to conclude gained experiences and celebrate achievements might be a nice way how to support the people and highlight their resources.

By following the structure and techniques outlined in this Workbook and Program description, you can create a supportive and engaging training environment for participants and their recovery process.

Good luck in your training endeavours!

Attachment 1

EVALUATION FORM



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Feed back on the meeting

How was it for you to follow the meeting?



1



2



3



4



5

1: Not easy at all. Difficult for me. 5: Absolutely easy. I understood everything very well.

How much is it applicable to your life?



1



2



3



4



5

What drew your attention?

Would you like to tell us something more?

Attachment 2

EXAMPLE OF CERTIFICATE



Return from hospital

How can I support myself

GUIDE FOR TRAINERS



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