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Return from hospital How can I support myself **WORKBOOK**



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





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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL RECOVERY GUIDE



1.1 What is recovery? What does recovery mean to me personally?

NAME:



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Overview of topics

This workbook is a companion to the group programme "*Return from hospital: How can I support myself*", which consists of twelve sessions in total. We hope you find inspiration and support for your own recovery journey here.

Here is a list of all topics:

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

Right now, you are opening the first chapter of the topic "*How to support my recovery*". We will focus on shared knowledge, how we can understand recovery and give you some inspiration, how to think about your own recovery process, what does recovery mean to you personally and what do you need the most for yourself.

If you would like to, you can share your thoughts with the treatment team or other people who support you or continue by yourself with following chapters and topics in the group programme or in the workbook.

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The story of my recovery

Reflection of the peer trainer on his own recovery

Every person who has a mental illness remembers the day they learned their diagnosis. The shock and the question, "Why me?" The question of why me, why did this happen to me, offers us a great opportunity to come to terms with ourselves. Reconciliation and acceptance of life as it is.

Life can be very painful, but it can also be very beautiful. You know a broken soul hurts a lot more than a broken leg. But I'll come back to the question, "Why me?" There is the word "I" in that question, and another question: WHO AM I? Personally, I think that who I am is a given to a certain extent, but in a certain part I create who I am. We have the ability to decide who we want to be. The possibilities are countless. For example, to choose recovery. I will recover, I will fight, and when I fall again, I will stand up. We still have a choice, a choice to create our own life. Our own selves.

I often fall down on the road to recovery. I fall every day, but every day is a fresh start to try again. I can see myself as having lost my battle, or I can see myself as a fighter who learns to get up in the morning with determination.

When my illness started, I felt like my life was over. I was hospitalized in a hospital in Slovakia at the time and learned that I had a terminal illness. I was given no hope of recovery, and I began to feel like I was no good to anyone, not even to myself. My whole world came crashing down. I wasn't good enough for myself, I was delusional that everything bad in the world was my fault. It was very hard. I lost almost all my friends. Because I went crazy. The self-stigma and the pain were so strong. Then I remembered the picture that hung in our room at home. Jesus in front of Pilate. Jesus' hands are tied there, but the look in his eyes radiates strength. In that moment I said to myself, God's will be done. I made peace with my illness and accepted myself and began to fight. I think I started to believe in myself.

Believe in yourself and see yourself as a person who deserves to live. I decided to find out the meaning of my life. Why I live, suffer, rejoice. I have to admit that the meaning of life is very slow to emerge. But I do know of one shortcut. Believe in myself or in God and do the best I can. It is said that he who seeks God finds himself, and he who seeks himself finds God. I have discovered my strength, the ability to believe. Faith in recovery, in life, in process.

I see the sickness of the soul as an opportunity for change. My illness has given me much. Apart from the pain and hopelessness that can be intense at the beginning of an illness, it has given me understanding. Before my illness, I lived a life without a sense of self. Every person on earth has a self. But often the self is hidden in the confusion of society, the expectations of others, or the expectations of oneself. The illness just wanted to tell me that I have a self and it is worth fighting for and discovering myself. I have to say, looking back, I'm glad I got sick. The way I perceive myself now is much better than the way I perceived myself before the illness. The very word "illness" is the opposite of power. Seeing your own power is a gift, and we all have it. No one can say they don't have a SELF, and seeing your SELF is very important in my opinion. We are all different and have different journeys, but sometimes just stopping and saying I AM is enough to be and live a full life.

When I was in the hospital, everything was grey. But slowly I was able to start seeing colours. I just had hope that it would work. Tomorrow is a new day, and if I fall, I'll get up. I'm good at getting up now, even though it hurts. (Tibor, peer trainer)

What is recovery? What does recovery mean to me personally?

For me, recovery is change. Every illness offers a time to stop and change. I had to change: Stop taking drugs and alcohol, stop traveling (although I can now), take medication. In the word recovery there is the word melting, or transformation. I had to change, from iron ore to something that has shape and is useful to me and society. And I want to persevere, changed. Because I need it to live a meaningful life. (Tibor, peer trainer)



The moment a person is diagnosed with a mental illness can bring a sense of relief, but it can also cause feelings of loneliness and stigma. It affects our relationships, sense of self-worth, perception of who I am, erodes our confidence, sense of purpose and fulfilment and is often accompanied by feelings of loss of hope in our own future:

- Recovery is often likened to a journey and just as we prepare for any journey we need to plan, prepare equipment, have a map, signposts, rest stops and sometimes roadblocks to avoid danger.
- Recovery is about finding ways to manage all these difficulties and to live a happy and fulfilled life - one that we define for ourselves, with or without the difficulties that professionals call symptoms.
- Recovery is a personal experience, a personal journey, and it differs for each of us. It cannot be prescribed, it cannot be forced, but it can be achieved by each of us.
- Relationships and learning from each other are also part of recovery. There is no magic formula that will guarantee recovery, but we can gain a lot of inspiration from others and find what works for us.

[Inspired from <https://www.mhe-sme.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Short-Guide-to-Recovery.pdf>].

RECOVERY CAN ALSO BE ABOUT DISCOVERY, FINDING OUR STRENGTHS AND INNER WORLD THAT WE THOUGHT WE HAD LOST LONG AGO. IT'S A PROCESS THAT OFTEN REQUIRES HEALING, TIME, KINDNESS TO US AND THE CLOSENESS OF THE OTHER PEOPLE IN OUR LIVES.

Sometimes you may hear the word recovery from workers in connection with recovery, the disappearance of symptoms and a return to normal life and functioning. Such recovery is sometimes called 'clinical'.

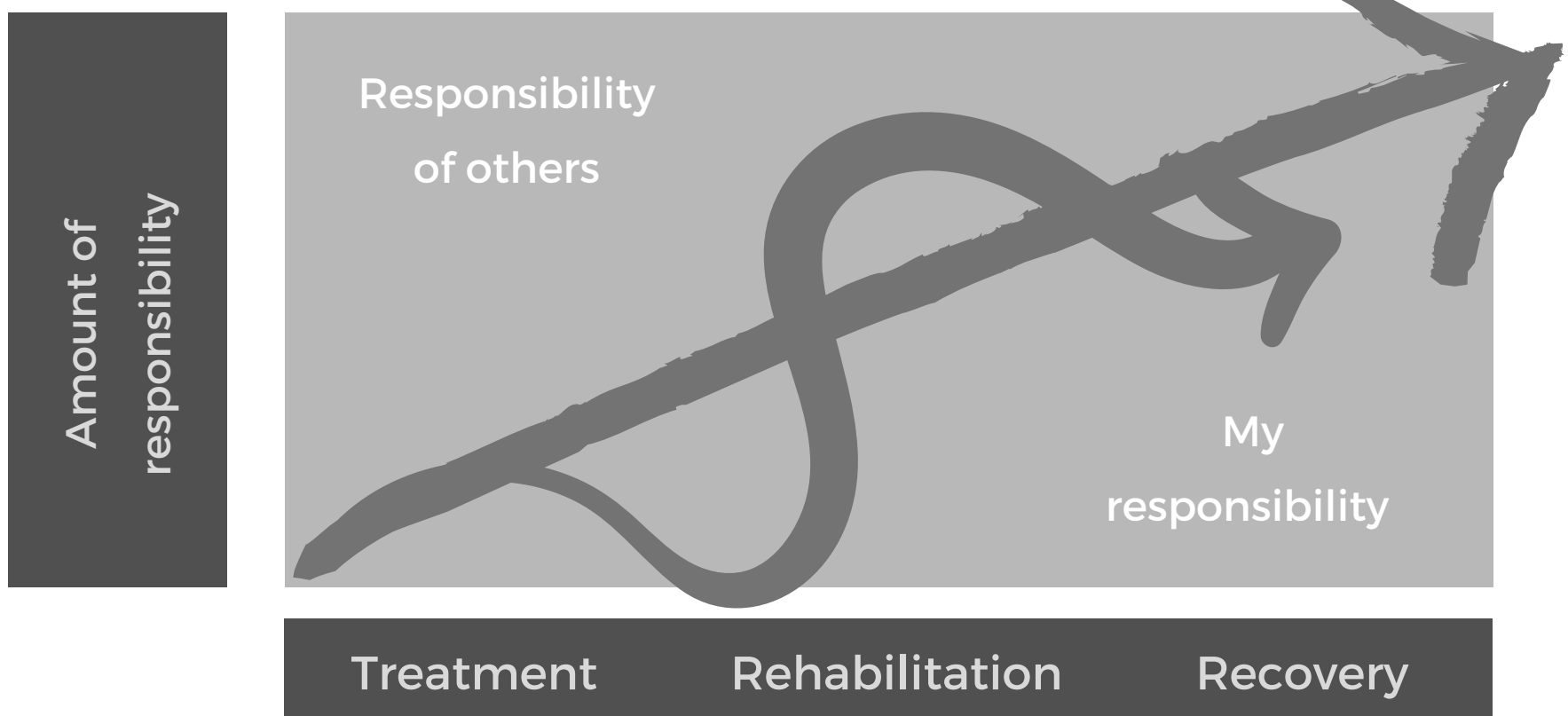
'Personal' recovery, on the other hand, emphasizes achieving inner contentment and living a happy life, regardless of whether the symptoms of the illness persist. This emphasis on personal recovery has evolved from the experiences of many people with mental illness around the world and has now become the foundation of all mental health care.

RECOVERY IS "A DEEPLY PERSONAL, UNIQUE PROCESS OF CHANGING ONE'S OWN ATTITUDES, FEELINGS, VALUES, GOALS, SKILLS, AND ROLES. IT IS A WAY OF LIVING A HAPPY, HOPEFUL AND REWARDING LIFE DESPITE ALL THE LIMITATIONS CAUSED BY ILLNESS. RECOVERY BUILDS NEW MEANING AND PURPOSE IN LIFE BY OVERCOMING THE CATASTROPHIC EFFECTS CAUSED BY MENTAL ILLNESS."
(ANTHONY 1993)

Recovery and responsibility

It happens, that the illness time to time tries to convince us, that we do not have our life in our hands anymore. We can feel overwhelmed by the illness and its symptoms and at this moment it is reasonable to seek for help. **No one should be alone on the recovery journey!** It is not a failure or a sign of the weakness - we believe in opposite. The moment you open your self for help it is the sign of courage to start healing process, because something in you strive to change the situation and get your life back. Gradually, how people gain their strengths back, they can take back the control and responsibility for their life, as they want to live it.

We offer to you a scheme below which might help to think about this topic in general. But, you know, the recovery process is so individual! You can feel you have the control and responsibility in some parts of your life and in some not or only partly. It is an ongoing process. Take this scheme just as an inspiration to think about.



The foundation of every day I live at is the belief that recovery is possible. Because of this, I am able to think about the future with optimism and have faith that things will get better on the hard days.

I know exactly what I need for my recovery. Silence, solitude and fewer responsibilities. But I have a large family to take care of, so I divide my energy between them and my needs. I am recovering more slowly, but it makes sense and is very important to me. (Magda, peer trainer)

You can read more about recovery, for example, here:

www.zotaveni.cz

<https://power2u.org/>

www.thecare-network.com

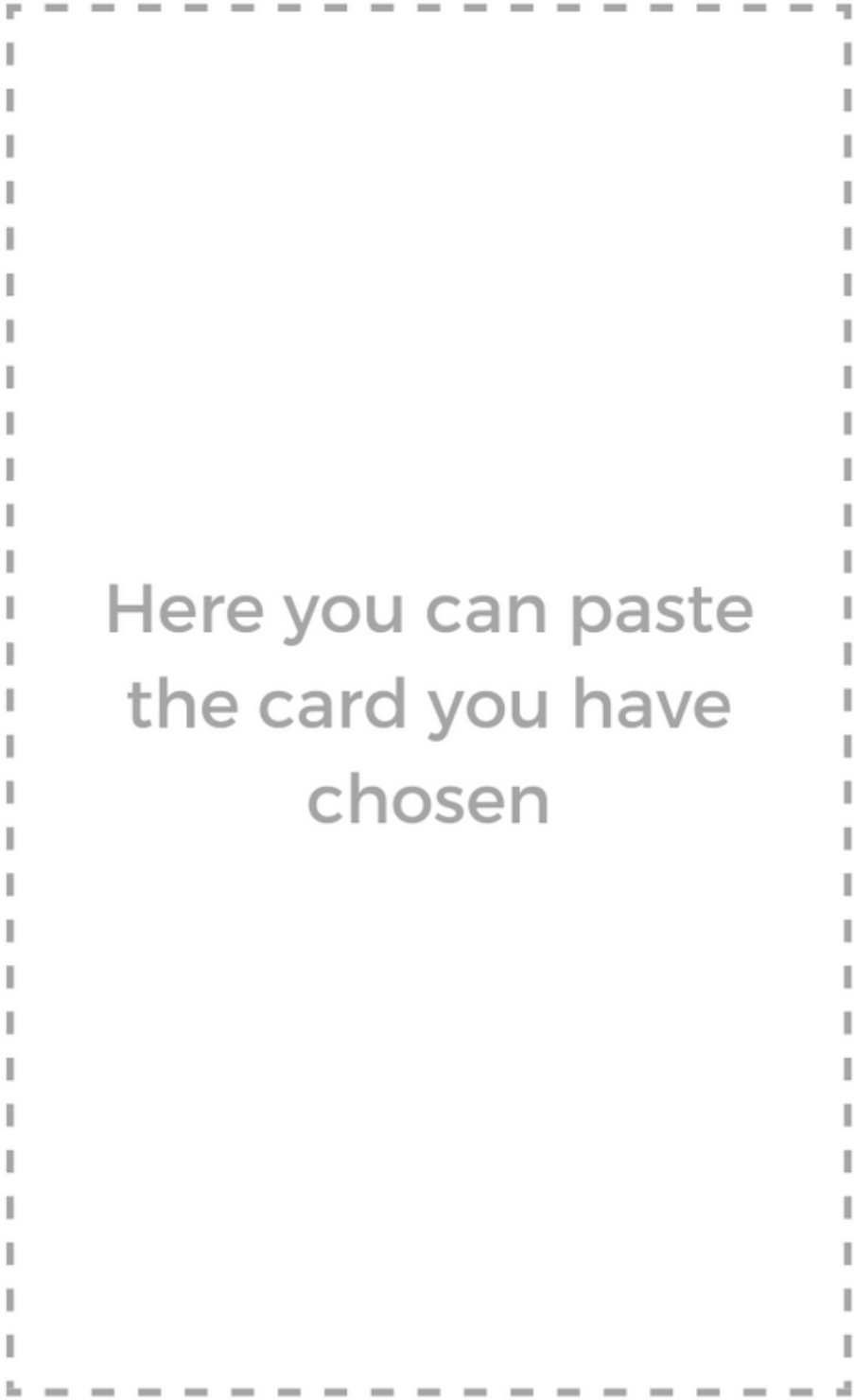
Where I can get more information about recovery (write down the resources available in your place: materials, books, websites, self-help groups, people, you may ask etc.).

Worksheet: Recovery Cards

<p>IDENTITY</p> <p>Respect and value myself</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>IDENTITY</p> <p>Be able to laugh at myself</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>IDENTITY</p> <p>Be myself</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>IDENTITY</p> <p>Get to know myself better</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>
<p>MEANING AND PURPOSE</p> <p>Don't give up</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>MEANING AND PURPOSE</p> <p>Be useful</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>MEANING AND PURPOSE</p> <p>Have the trust of others</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>MEANING AND PURPOSE</p> <p>Have the opportunity to do something I'm interested in</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>
<p>RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>Have things in my own hands</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>Like myself more</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>Be responsible for my own affairs</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>RESPONSIBILITY</p> <p>Not take responsibility for others</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>
<p>DECISION MAKING</p> <p>Be able to decide</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>DECISION MAKING</p> <p>Know what I want</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>DECISION MAKING</p> <p>Forgive myself for the mistake</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>DECISION MAKING</p> <p>Have space to make my own decisions</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>
<p>HOPE</p> <p>Have more energy</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>HOPE</p> <p>Trust myself</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>HOPE</p> <p>Experience nice moments</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>	<p>HOPE</p> <p>Have something to look forward to</p> <p>RECOVERY</p>

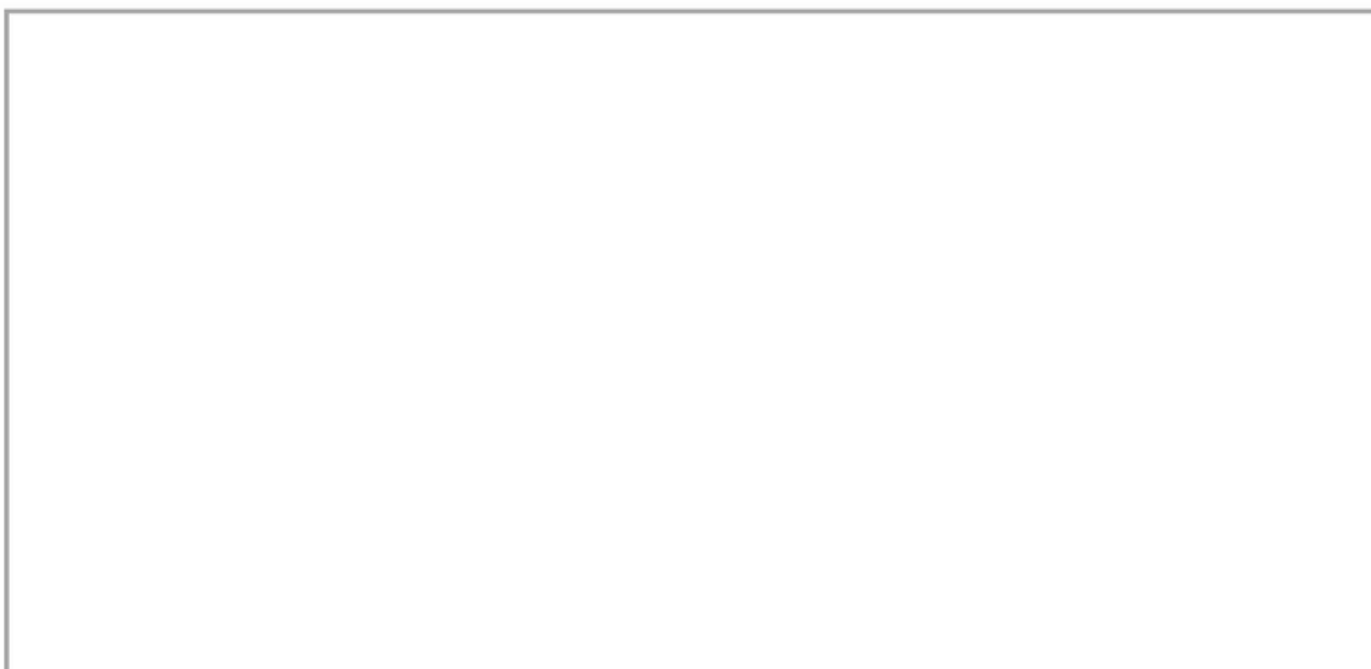
Worksheet: What I need most now for my recovery

What I need most now for my recovery



Here you can paste
the card you have
chosen

What could help me or what can I do for myself now?



Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL RECOVERY GUIDE

1.1 What is recovery? What does recovery mean to me personally?



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL RECOVERY GUIDE



1.2 How can I support my recovery during hospitalisation?

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Overview of topics

This workbook is a companion to the group programme "*Return from hospital: How can I support myself*", which consists of twelve sessions in total. We hope you find inspiration and support for your own recovery journey here.

Here is a list of all topics:

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

You are now opening the second chapter of "*How to Support Your Recovery*". We will focus on how you perceive your stay in the hospital, what possibilities you recognise here to support your recovery, and we will offer a space to search for places in the hospital where you can feel safe, relieved or where you have a good feeling.

If you would like to, you can share your thoughts with the treatment team or other people who support you or continue by yourself with following chapters and topics in the group programme or in the workbook.

All materials can be found on:

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How can I support my recovery during hospitalisation

The illness gave me time to stop. In the hospital, I had time to stop. I had food, accommodation, support from the staff. You don't have to do anything but cooperate with the staff and follow the rules of the hospital. I must admit that I never felt comfortable in the hospital. I wanted to be free. But with hindsight, I can see that recovery starts in the hospital. I've been hospitalized five times and it was in the hospital, the last time, where I said to myself, I must recover. (Tibor, peer trainer)

The first hospitalization was the first step to recovery for me. I've spent a total of six months in the hospital in the last eight years. Although it was not easy for me to be hospitalized, the treatment has helped me a lot each time. The first time, it literally saved my life.

And what am I doing for myself now? Every day I take care of my mental health by trying to be aware of my needs. Whether it's the physical ones and the great need for rest, or the needs of the soul, where I try to bring positive stimuli into my life, such as surrounding myself with nice photos and pleasant music. (Magda, peer trainer)

People may perceive a hospital stay in different ways. Many people dwell on why they went to hospital and how to make it so they can be discharged. The question of how to function in the hospital environment is also important.

We'd like to offer you a perspective that sees a hospital stay as one part of your journey to recovery. It can be seen as one episode in a series of your life that has a beginning and an end, that something has passed over and something will follow.

It is possible to use the time spent in the hospital for yourself and start on the road to recovery. It is possible to focus on processing things from the past, or on preparing for the next life. One can also use the time in the hospital to discover what brings them a sense of security, relief or pleasure. We therefore offer some food for thought on how you can use your time in hospital for yourself.

For a start, you can think about whether there are places on the ward or hospital site where you feel comfortable or enjoy spending time, and which ones they are. You can also think about whether these places are associated with a particular person who gives you support.



You can also think about what you are already doing for your recovery at the moment, in the hospital, what you could start doing, or what is not helping your recovery and what you would like to avoid. The following worksheet can be used for this purpose.

Worksheet: How can I benefit from the hospital stay for my recovery

How I can benefit from the hospital stay for my recovery

What I'm already doing for my recovery	
Share experiences with other people, to be inspired	
Learn about the illness	
Rest, regain strength	
Confide in someone about my suffering	
Take time to think and plan	
Make new friends	
Try something new (e.g. horse riding, working with ceramics)	
Learn from the mistakes	
Keep a diary	
Learn how to cope with crisis moments	
Ask doctors about the effects of medication or psychotherapy	
Go for a walk	
Call a friend	
Listen to music	
Meet with family or friends	
Find out what makes me feel good	
To be interested in the outside world (via internet, newspapers, TV)	
Try meditation	

To be able to rely, to trust	
Stability, predictability	
Calm, rest	
Move	
Create	
Being spontaneous	
Progress	
Meaning	
Concentrate	
To know, to understand	
Be informed	
Fun and pleasure	

What do I feel is the most important thing for me at the moment?

My ideas, what can I do for that?

Worksheet: Hospital stay has a beginning and the completion



Here you can stick a string or strip of paper that represents your stay in the hospital

Worksheet: Where I feel comfortable in the hospital



Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL RECOVERY GUIDE

1.2 How can I support my recovery during hospitalisation?



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Return from hospital

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PERSONAL RECOVERY GUIDE



1.3 How to recognise what do I need and what helps me?

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- 4, My support network

You are now opening the third chapter of "*How to Support Your Recovery*". We will focus on how we can be more aware of what is happening to us, what are we experiencing, how do we feel. Here you will find some short exercises helping to release the tension and you will have the opportunity to think about your actual needs.

If you would like to, you can share your thoughts with the treatment team or other people who support you or continue by yourself with following chapters and topics in the group programme or in the workbook.

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How to recognise what do I need and what helps me

We're all different. We all have different needs. Before I got sick, I was all about sex, drugs and rock'n'roll. My needs were in meeting shallow needs. The disease showed me that there was more to this life than my needs. Creating values, being useful to society, making my life meaningful. The essential thing is to find our own meaning of illness and what the illness has to tell us. I would never have found what I really needed without the disease. Now I have a wife, two children, a house and a life to fall back on. Compared to the chaos, anger and misunderstanding, I am a step ahead. (Tibor, peer trainer)

What is stress and how to work with it

To begin with a little theory... The word stress comes from English (tension, pressure, load), which is originally from the Latin word *strigo*, which means to tighten.

The *Practical Dictionary of Medicine* is more precise when it says that stress is "a state of the body that is a general response to any significantly applied strain, whether physical or mental".

What is stress

Stress is a normal part of everyday life and cannot be completely avoided. A small dose of stress motivates and stimulates us. Too much or too long stress weighs us down and has a negative effect on our body and soul. For this reason, it is good to learn to work with it.

There are two basic types of stress:

- stress that stimulates us: to a reasonable extent, it stimulates a person to higher and better performance
- stress that burdens us: undue strain that can damage a person and cause various diseases

My body gives me enough signals to know what my needs are. I suffer from migraines and extreme fatigue. These ailments are exacerbated by overwork.

An important time of my year is the time spent at the spa. At this time, I find again a certain balance and energy for the next days in reality. (Magda, peer trainer)

Manifestations of stress

Stress manifests itself mainly in the following areas: thinking, emotions (moods, feelings), behaviour and physical symptoms.

In **thinking**, stress often involves automatic negative thoughts, imagining that everything will go wrong, scenarios, worrying excessively about unimportant things, worrying excessively about health, lowering self-esteem, difficulty concentrating, impaired memory, withdrawing into oneself, and extreme fatigue.

On the **emotional level**, stress is most often manifested by feelings of tension and discomfort. A person may experience fear and anxiety. Often a person is irritable, nervous and acts rashly. He or she is in a bad mood, which affects behaviour, concentration and performance.

In **behaviour** one is often irritable, more sensitive to the behaviour of others and acts rashly. He or she may prefer to avoid tasks or, on the contrary, try to accomplish everything in haste. Requires reassurance.

Mental stress also manifests itself in the body. Physical reactions are often the first symptom a person experiences when stressed, e.g., sweating, hot flashes, cold sweat, chest tightness, shortness of breath, stomach pain, etc.

Stress management

It is important to remember that if stress affects us negatively, it is possible to learn to work with it consciously, especially on a physical and psychological level. Therefore, it is not possible to say to yourself: *"I will not stress."* But rather to realize: *"I'm in a challenging situation right now and I need to do something for myself to feel better."*

Physical plane - the seven dimensions of bodily relaxation:

- Conscious breathing
- Slowing of the pace of movements and speech
- Relaxation of the face (massage, water wash, shower)
- Simple physical exercises (see the following chapter How to get distance and peace to think?)
- Auto relaxation exercises
- Reorienting to another activity (physically leaving the situation and going for a walk)
- Counter-stress touch (hugs, petting animal fur)

Psychological plane - the seven dimensions of mental relaxation:

- Awareness of the present moment (focusing the senses on one thing)
- "Shutting down the brain" (diverting attention to another topic or saying in your mind, "STOP!" and imagine, for example, pressing a button to turn off your thoughts)
- Listening to music
- Satisfaction visualization (recall a good memory)
- Autosuggestion of stress management (imagining achieving a goal, resolving a situation, telling myself I can do it)
- Thought relaxation (dreaming)
- Communication (to confess, to confide)

What helps me when I'm under stress?

How to get distance and peace to think?

Difficult situations, unpleasant memories and strong emotions easily overwhelm us. We are then unable to come up with solutions to problems, we are stressed and exhausted. We need to learn to calm our minds and recharge our strength. With calm and distance, problems are easier to solve.

How can I help myself?

The following practices help people relax on a physical and mental level and gather new energy. Something different helps everyone. Try what works best for you. If something doesn't suit you, don't force yourself to continue. It's good to try and practice in relative calm. Repeat these short techniques when you feel tense.

Change your body position

When you are paralyzed by discomfort, try to stand up or walk. Become aware of the parts of your body where you are currently stiff and try gently massaging or stretching them.

My observations and ideas for the exercise:

Self-assessment table

FIRST EXERCISE				
How did I do the first time?				
1 well done	2	3	4	5 couldn't do it
How did I feel afterwards?				
1 it was nice	2	3 nothing has changed	4	5 it was unpleasant

THIRD EXERCISE				
How did I do the first time?				
1 well done	2	3	4	5 couldn't do it
How did I feel afterwards?				
1 it was nice	2	3 nothing has changed	4	5 it was unpleasant

Be aware of contact with the ground

While standing, slowly transfer weight from one leg to the other. You can take off your shoes. Be aware of the contact of the soles of your feet with the ground. Be aware of the firm support of the ground beneath you. Breathe freely.

My observations and ideas for the exercise:

Self-assessment table

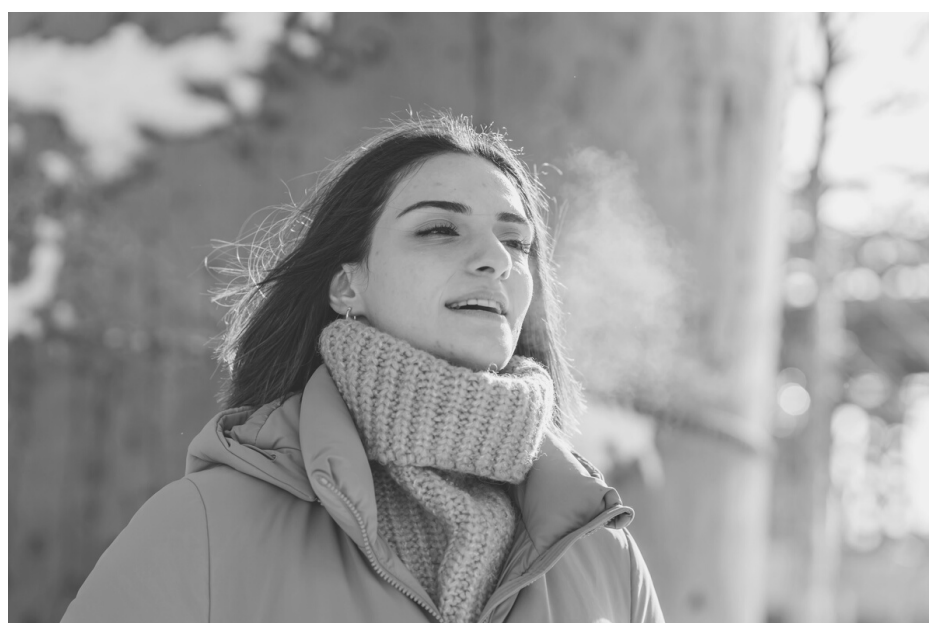
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Breathe out anxiety

While sitting or standing, breathe in freely through your nose and out through your mouth. Pucker your mouth into a small circle as if you were pronouncing the vowel sound oh. This will naturally slow the exhalation. Repeat several times.

My observations and ideas for the exercise:



Self-assessment table

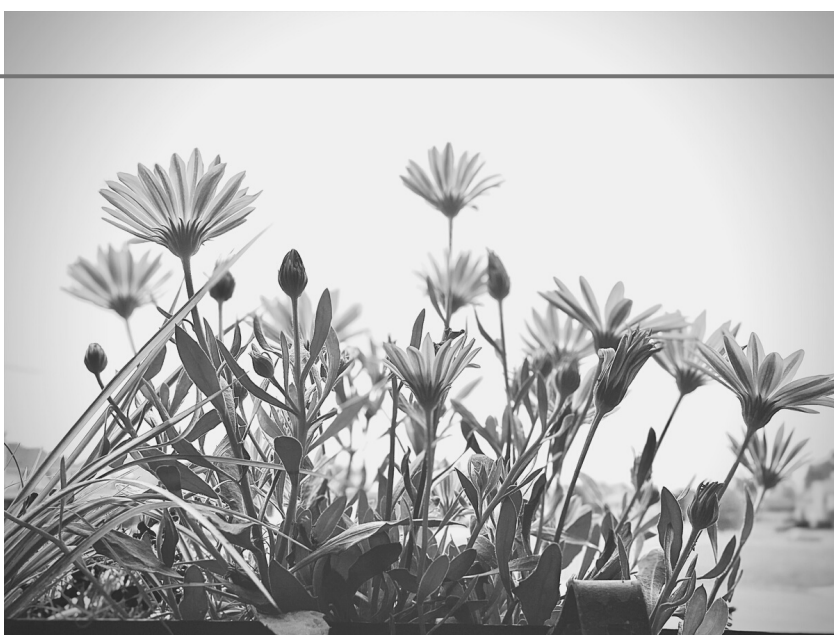
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Find your calming points

Take your time to take in your surroundings. What object evokes relaxing feelings and thoughts for you? It could be a flower in a pot or a postcard. Concentrate on that thing. If unpleasant feelings arise, drop the thing and return to viewing a neutral or pleasant thing.

My observations and ideas for the exercise:



Self-assessment table

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"With all our senses" - how we perceive the world

To improve our mental well-being, we need to be aware of what makes us feel good and be in touch with ourselves.

Mental illness is often associated with a change in perception and experience. Sometimes people feel that their senses are dulled by the illness, at other times their sensitivity is heightened. It can therefore be helpful for our recovery to focus on how we perceive things and work more with our senses.

We perceive the world through **sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste** and are in contact with it because of this. Our senses are also the building blocks of all communication with other people. By using our five senses, we can perceive the world in a more positive way, even though reality is not simple. Teach your senses to "remember" pleasant sensations. Below you can make a note of what you perceive as pleasant.

Touch

We give, manifest, and receive a lot by touch. Through touch we can understand the messages hidden in various gestures such as a handshake, a caress, or a hug. This sense is closely linked to feelings and emotions.

This touch feels good to me:

- 1. CARESSES
- 2. WALKING IN NATURE BAREFOOT
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

My dog Kessie knows when I'm sick and is always close to me. I stroke her fur and it eases my anxiety. When I was hospitalized and didn't have her with me, my fellow patients did different haircuts and that was very nice. (Magda, peer trainer)

Hearing

Hearing is the sense by which we perceive a multitude of sounds. Some are pleasant to us, and others are not. The sounds of nature have a beneficial effect on humans.

What I like to listen to:

- 1. FLOWING STREAM
- 2. BIRDSONG
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

I often have a head full of thoughts I can't push away. At such times, and also regularly before falling asleep, I listen to audiobooks. I take my thoughts to another world and then I am able to, for example, fall asleep or overcome a social phobia and go out among people. (Magda, peer trainer)

Sight

It allows us to perceive light, shapes, colours, contrasts, distance and significantly affects our orientation in space.

What I like to watch:

- 1. SUNSET
- 2. FINE ART
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

In times of depression and anxiety, the world around me loses its colours and becomes black and white and gloomy. I search for my photos taken when I was better and associated with pleasant memories. And I say to myself: "It will be good again." Even though sometimes I'm in a state where I can't believe it. But in retrospect, I know that it still helps. (Magda, peer trainer)

Smell and taste

These senses are closely related and the sense of smell in particular influences taste. For without smell there is no taste.

What smells and tastes good to me:

1. THE SCENT OF ROSE
2. TASTE OF STRAWBERRIES
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

As soon as my mental state starts to deteriorate, I often lose my appetite and there is nothing to please me. Although I like coffee and chocolate, at this time it is just a liquid and a piece of tasteless matter for me. But I have found that I can still perceive smells. I surround myself with pleasant smells, especially those that are associated with pleasant experiences. (Magda, peer trainer)

Inner world and our needs

In addition to using our senses to perceive the world around us, we can also focus our attention on our inner world - on our needs and what our body is telling us.

As a result of stress, we can become overwhelmed with thoughts and stop noticing what our body needs, so we forget to drink enough, don't go to bed on time, don't rest, eat irregularly, don't pay attention to the fact that something hurts, etc. If we ignore these signals for long periods of time, our mental discomfort can deepen.

What position do I like to rest in?

1. FOR EXAMPLE, IN A CHAIR, CURLED UP IN A BALL
2. _____
3. _____

When I focus on myself, what do I perceive first?

1. FOR EXAMPLE, A HEARTBEAT
2. _____
3. _____

What time of day do I have the most energy?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Worksheet: What do I need now?

What do I need now?

Before you go back to thinking about your worries, try answering the following question: What do I need right now? You can add: to be able to bear the problem, to have the strength to do it, to feel better...

Here you can write what comes to your mind:	
Here you can write what comes to your mind:	
Feel affection, understanding	
Not to be alone	
Being part of the group	
Friendship	
Love	
Reconciliation	
To be accepted as I am	
Touch	
Awards, recognition	
To enrich others	
Independence, freedom	
Have space or time to myself	
To have an influence on things	
Do things at my own pace	
Feel safe	
Get help and support	

To be able to rely, to trust	
Stability, predictability	
Calm, rest	
Move	
Create	
Being spontaneous	
Progress	
Meaning	
Concentrate	
To know, to understand	
Be informed	
Fun and pleasure	

What do I feel is the most important thing for me at the moment?

My ideas, what can I do for that?

Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL RECOVERY GUIDE

1.3 How to recognise what do I need and what helps me?



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL RECOVERY GUIDE



1.4 What are my strengths and how to build my own self-esteem

NAME:



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



Overview of topics

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1. How to support my recovery

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- 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

You are now opening the fourth chapter of "*How to Support Your Recovery*". We will focus on the question of what place the illness has in our lives, what effect it has on how we think about ourselves and how we perceive ourselves. You will be able to remind yourself of your strengths and qualities that can support you in your recovery.

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What are my strengths and how to build my own self-esteem

A beautiful example of believing in yourself is empowerment. Discovering your own power. Often, for the duration of my illness, I didn't know where to bounce back from. I was floundering and searching for what would help me. One day, however, I realized that mental illness is on a soul level and as long as my body is safe, has food to eat and a roof over my head, I am safe. I can lean on reality. Now, anything can come into my head. Everything will pass. I understand my own power because of reality, which is stable. There's an English song that goes: "I want to be free, to be myself, to see myself as I really am." I can do just that by waking up in the morning and having the confidence that a sick soul can lean on a healthy body. (Tibor, peer trainer)

I know very well that self-confidence does not go hand in hand with success in life. I've had a lot of those since I was a kid, and yet I didn't believe in myself enough. My illness has taught me a lot, including how to be more confident. How to like myself more and be kinder to myself.

I am more aware of my strengths and try to realize where I can use them to the fullest. It is meaningful to me to work in mental health care to help others who have experienced similar health issues to begin to recover and live better lives. (Magda, peer trainer)

Stigma is a barrier on the road to recovery

STIGMA is a concept that we somehow understand in principle as a negative expectation towards a particular person or group of persons.

Aspects of stigmatisation

- UNKNOWLEDGE: lack of information
- JUDGEMENTS: these are attitudes, negative expectations, which are not necessarily associated with discrimination
- DISCRIMINATION: unlike prejudice, this is a real behaviour where a person may be rejected for a job competition, for example

Self-stigma

of people with mental illness is inherently linked to public stigma. Self-stigma occurs when a person knows the social prejudices that apply to a given group, agrees with them and applies them to themselves.

Destigmatization

This is a kind of change in the attitudes that society has towards the mentally ill, which can be achieved mainly by better informing the general public, for example by providing enough information..

What to do against stigma and self-stigmatisation

- See yourself as an equal
- Become aware of your strengths
- Meaningful life roles
- Information on the issue

Destigmatisation programmes

There are several different associations or organisations actively working on destigmatisation in relation to people with mental illness.

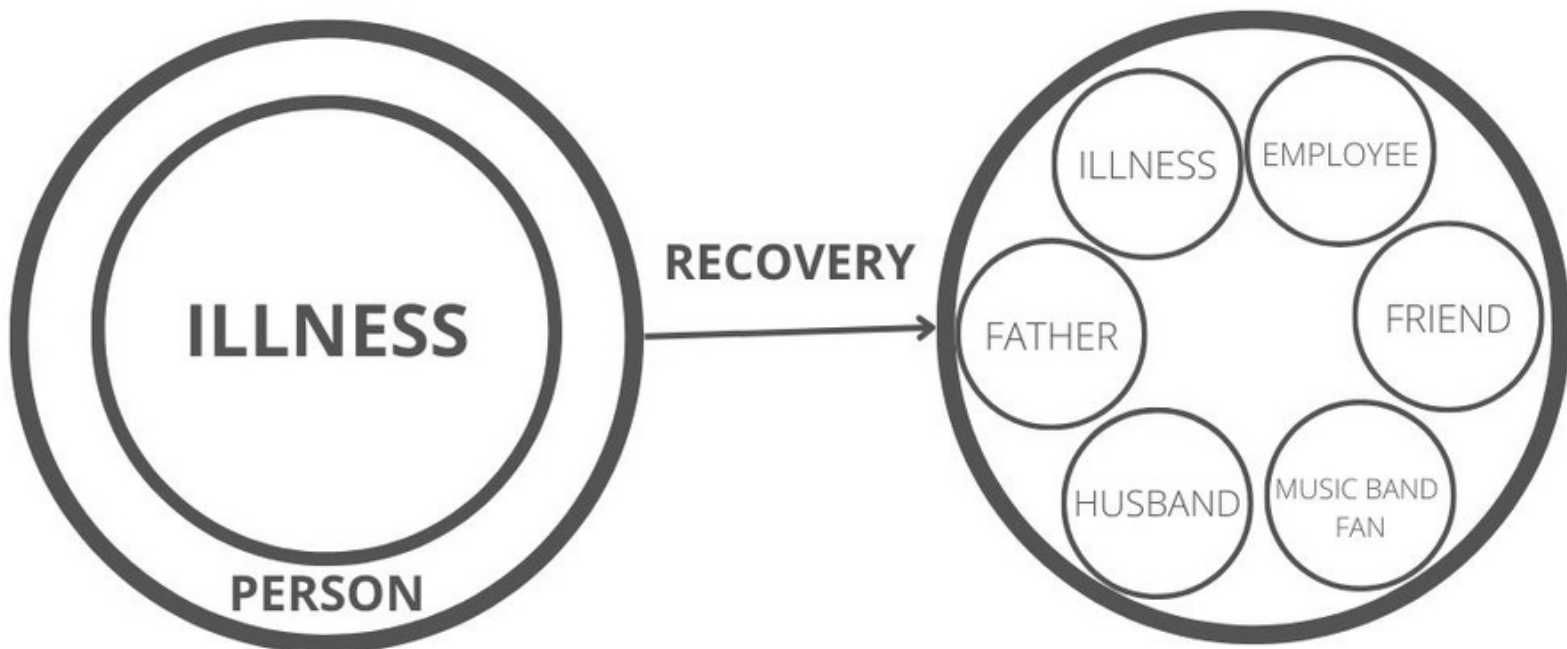
<https://www.cmhcd.cz/stopstigma/uvod/>

<https://www.psychiatrie.cz/deni-zdravotni-a-socialni-politika/deni-destigmatizace>

<https://www.reformapsychiatrie.cz/projekty/destigmatizace-nudz>

Recovery and roles

There may be times in our lives when a challenging situation, such as an outbreak of mental illness, consumes all of our attention and we don't notice anything else. It may seem that everything else in our lives has disappeared and only the illness remains. In order to recover, it is important to start looking again at who we are, what is important to us and what we enjoy. Even when we are experiencing a challenging time in our lives, we can remain ourselves, be a friend, a partner, a philosophizing poet, a mom, a son, an avid fisherman, a cake lover...



Adapted from Mark Ragins

How do I perceive myself?

If I imagine that illness is only a certain part in my life, what else shapes my life?

What are my roles and interests in life?

Worksheet: My strengths and qualities

My strengths and qualities

Things I'm good at:	Compliments I've received:
1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
What I like about my appearance:	Difficulties I have overcome:
1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
I have helped others by:	Things that make me special:
1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
What I value the most:	Moments when I made others happy:
1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.

TherapistAid.com, 2015

We're coming to the end of the *"How to Support Your Recovery"* topic. Please remember each meeting and write down key words or messages that are important to you.

What do you take away from these meetings for yourself? What was most important to you?

Good job! Please thank yourself for the participation and write here a word of appreciation to yourself.

Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL RECOVERY GUIDE

1.4 What are my strengths and how to build my own self-esteem



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION GUIDE



2.1 Body language and how to understand other people's behaviour

NAME:



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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

You are now opening the first chapter of "*How we communicate with each other*".

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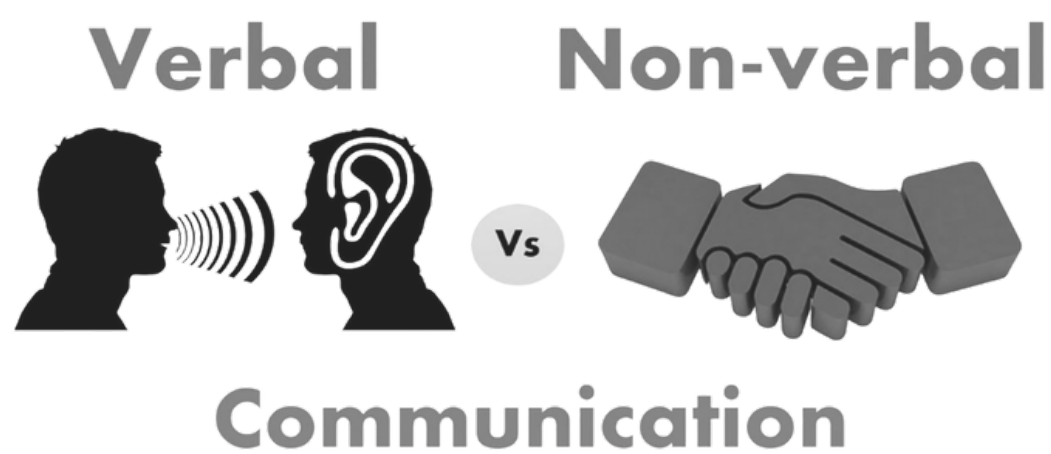
<https://www.cmhcd.cz/centre/our-activities/current-projects/support-when-returning-from-hospital-to-the-commun/>

Body language and how to understand other people's behaviour

On communication

Communication (from Latin: *communicare*, meaning "to share" or "to be in relation with") is usually defined as the transmission of information.

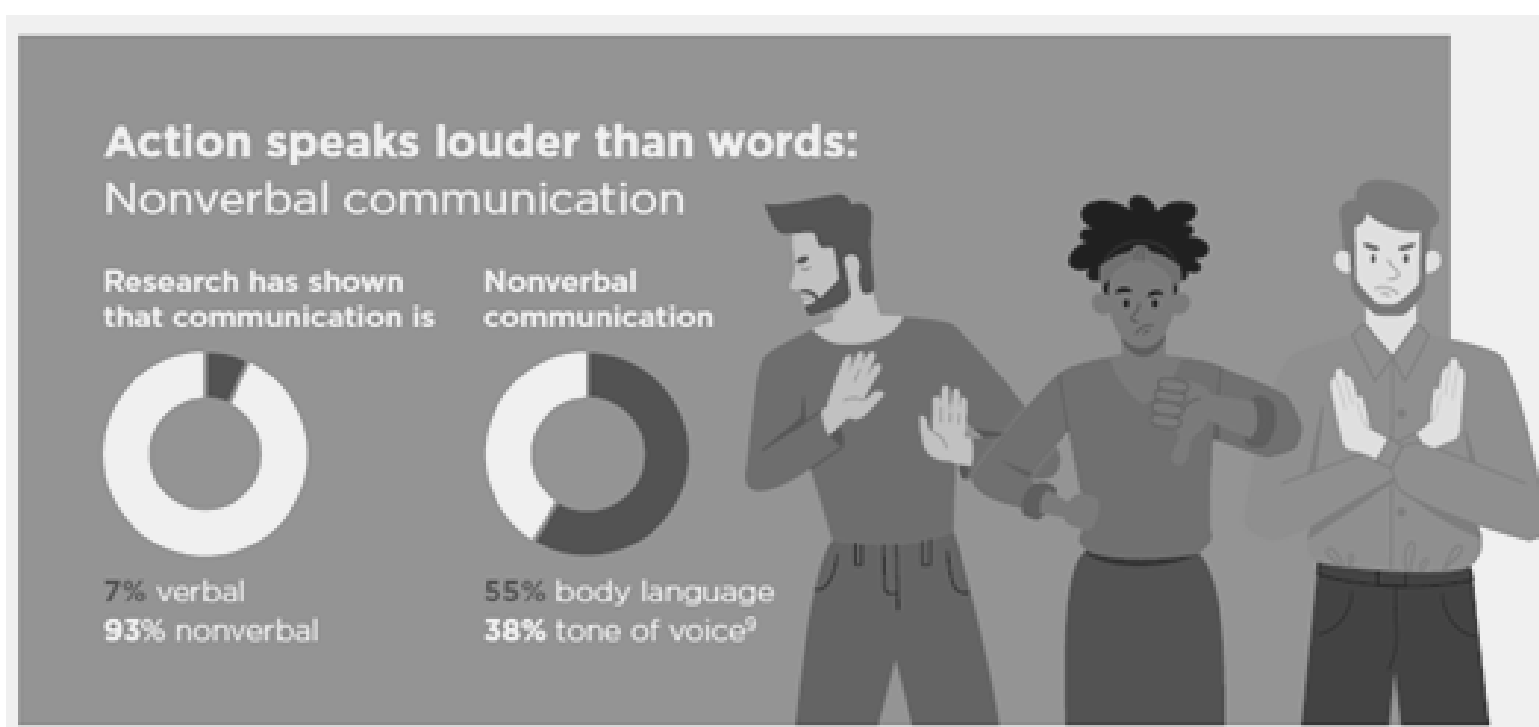
Communication is the act of giving, receiving, and sharing information - in other words, talking or writing, and listening or reading. Communication is fundamental to the existence and survival of humans.



Key Differences

The use of **body language** goes back to prehistory and indeed pre-language times. After all, when we didn't know how to communicate verbally, all we had was to communicate with **non-verbal signals**.

Some signals are universal. Everyone around the world understands that smiling suggests happiness, satisfaction or when you want to show that you don't mean any harm. Crying is taken for sadness or pain. How come these facial expressions are universal? How come we can understand each other through body language? There are indeed some cultural differences, but there are also many similarities. Despite various racial differences in body shape and colour around the world, there is still a lot of similarity among humans which directly leads to comparable uses for body language.



How to read body language

Facial expressions

Think for a moment about how much a person is able to convey with just a facial expression. A smile can indicate approval or happiness. A frown can signal disapproval or unhappiness.

In some cases, our facial expressions may reveal our true feelings about a particular situation. While you say that you are feeling fine, the look on your face may tell people otherwise.



FACIAL EXPRESSIONS ARE ALSO AMONG THE MOST UNIVERSAL FORMS OF BODY LANGUAGE. THE EXPRESSIONS USED TO CONVEY FEAR, ANGER, SADNESS, AND HAPPINESS ARE SIMILAR THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

Gestures

Gestures can be some of the most direct and obvious body language signals. Waving, pointing, and using the fingers to indicate numerical amounts are all very common and easy to understand gestures.

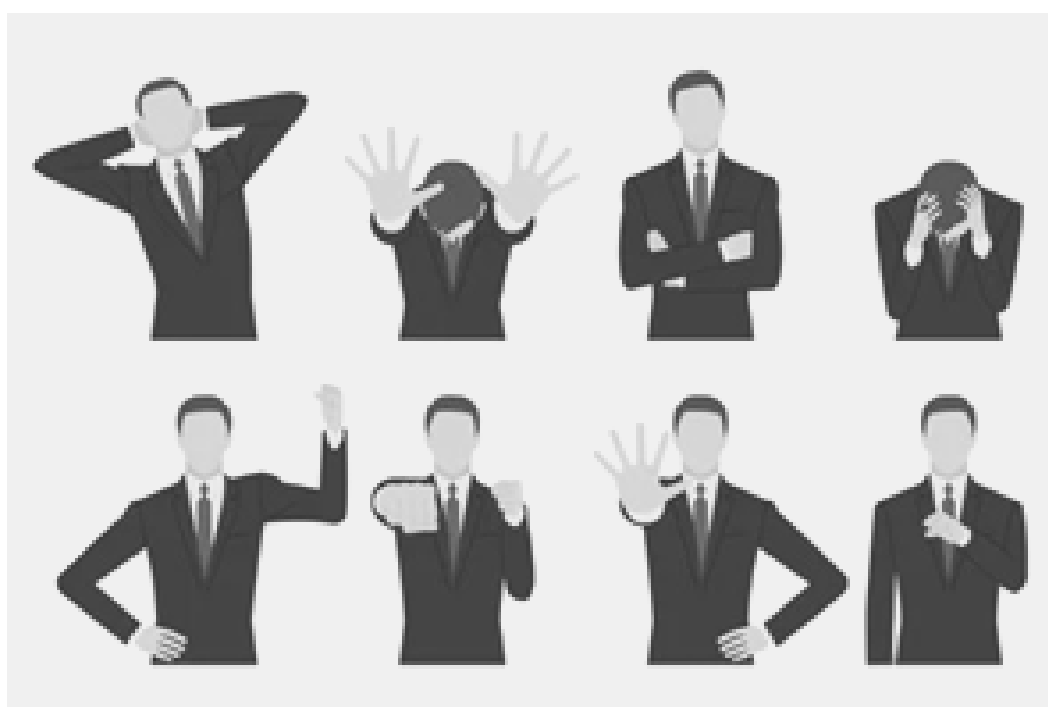


Posture

How we hold our bodies can also serve as an important part of body language.

The term posture refers to how we hold our bodies as well as the overall physical form of an individual.

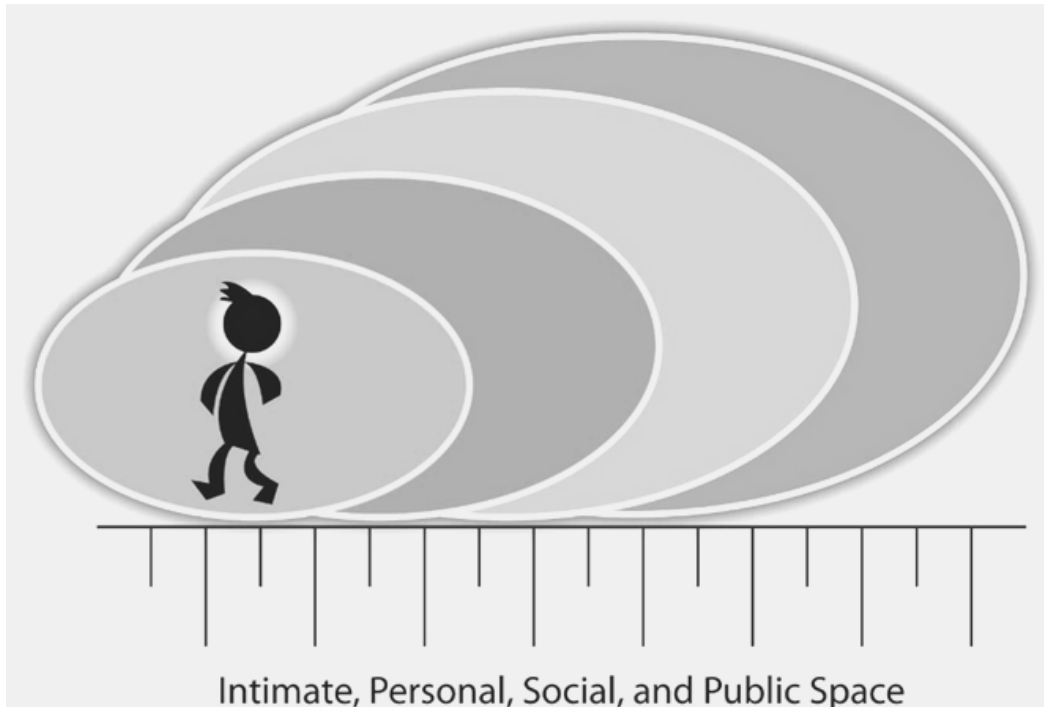
Posture can convey a wealth of information about how a person is feeling as well as hints about personality characteristics, such as whether a person is confident, open, or submissive.



Space

Have you ever heard someone refer to their need for personal space? Have you ever started to feel uncomfortable when someone stands just a little too close to you?

It refers to the **distance between people as they interact**. Just as body movements and facial expressions can communicate a great deal of nonverbal information, so can the physical space between individuals.



According to Edward Hall, intimate space is up to 0,5 m, personal 1,2 m, social 3,6 m and public 7,6 m.

Boundaries are very personal and different. It also depends on the culture. It's because personal space — how close we stand to our colleagues, our friends, strangers — varies widely between countries. Sociologists have studied the whys and hows, and they've come up with some theories about why these social norms exist. Temperature tends to affect how people define personal space. So do gender and age.

But, they think, our personal boundaries have a lot to do with where we grow up. These researchers sort the world into “contact cultures” (South America, the Middle East, Southern Europe) and “non-contact cultures” (Northern Europe, North America, Asia). In non-contact cultures, people stand farther apart and touch less.

Movements



We should be aware that we could read body language wrongly!

Story of peer trainer

I think that that in the story of communication with people, it's very important to be able to be neutral. Not to let emotions lead the communication. And be inquisitive. The Eastern saying, "I know I know nothing," helps me a lot. And thus, I can't judge my loved ones for what they say. Being neutral and not having expectations helps me a lot. Not being afraid to ask what the person means when I don't understand. No one has ever told me they won't explain something if I don't understand it. So do the doctors at the hospital. One day, it happened that I felt peace in my soul. I was hospitalized in the psychiatric hospital in Havlickuv Brod at the time. I sat down in a meditation position. A doctor walked past me. She didn't say anything, just increased my medication. I couldn't help it, and I went to ask if it was somehow related, but the doctor told me that no, that from one point of view the medication was not increased. She said she's been watching me for a while. Interestingly, I'm still on that given dose. When I tried lowering that dose, already with a new doctor, it didn't keep me going. It's very important not to be afraid to ask. Not to be prejudiced against yourself or other people. We're only human, and there are no people in the world who haven't doubted themselves at some point in their lives. Mental issues bring a lot of self-doubt, but if we can't rely on ourselves in the moment, we can at least rely on others. For example, I believe that there are no psychiatric doctors in the world who want to harm us, people with experience. They are human, so they operate with their fears and anxieties. But most people in psychiatry want to help. And the level of help we ask for is determined by us. When a person can distinguish what is pathological and what is normal in their mind, they can interact with the environment without fear of being locked away against their will. (Tibor, peer trainer)

All people are not the same, so we communicate differently. I like to talk in a calm way. Then I feel comfortable and relaxed. That suits me best. I talk to my roommate in a friendly way, and we exchange stories about events from his work. We are talking about a sport we both love very much. Sometimes about likings. Sometimes we talk about the past and the difficulties we went through and experienced. We understand each other well about problems in the family, although each of us has his own problems.

There is another roommate in our apartment with whom the situation is challenging. We often do not understand each other, and it seems to me that there is no desire for understanding. Then communication is difficult. When I notice a sullen face, scrunched-up eyebrows, pursed lips, and fast walking, I interpret it as a signal to keep a distance. Since I don't like conflicts and arguments, I withdraw. That way I have peace of mind and avoid stress.

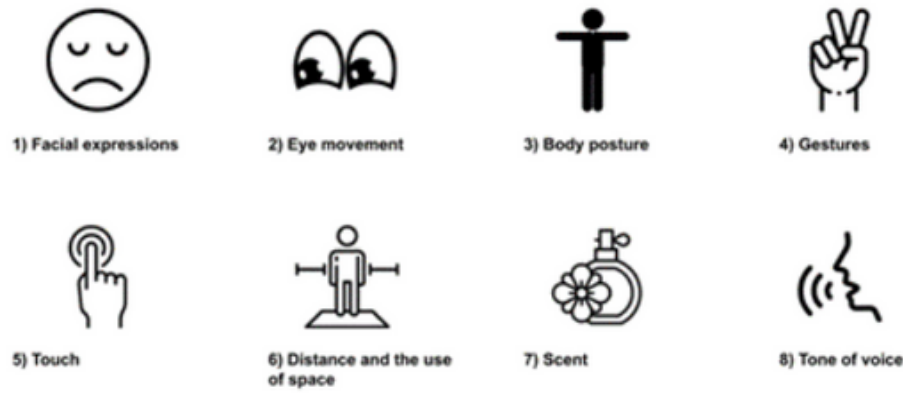
My communication is quiet and non-intrusive. I establish good relationships with people around me. The only thing that bothers me is the bad relationship with my brother, as well as my roommate. It seems to me that there must be goodwill on both sides. Until then, there is silence.

But when above mentioned roommate needs a favour, then we have a really nice conversation.



It seems to me that a person who thinks that is above others and likes to impose his will and dominate gets abandoned and lonely. I try to avoid such people. (Tomislav, peer trainer)

Worksheet: Main forms of body language

Main forms of body language



How your body speaks when you are relaxed? Angry?

	 RELAXED	 ANGRY
FACE		
EYES		
BODY POSTURE		
GESTURES		
TOUCHING		
DISTANCE		
SCENT		
TONE OF VOICE		

Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL COMMUNICATION GUIDE

2.1 Body language and how to understand other people's behaviour



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION GUIDE



2.2 What helps mutual understanding and how to prevent conflicts?

NAME:



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2. How we communicate with each other

- 1, Body language and how to understand other people's behaviour
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You are now opening the second chapter of "*How we communicate with each other*".

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What helps mutual understanding and how to prevent conflicts?

Why is good communication important?

Verbal communication is any communication that uses language to convey meaning. It can include oral communication, such as speaking to another person over the telephone, face-to-face discussions, interviews, debates, presentations and so on. It can also include written communication, such as letters and emails.

COMMUNICATING CLEARLY IS NOT EASY, WE ALL INTERPRET THE INFORMATION WE GET DIFFERENTLY THAT'S WHY IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO ASK QUESTIONS AND CONFIRM UNDERSTANDING TO ENSURE THE COMMUNICATED MESSAGE IS NOT DISTORTED.



I live in a big apartment with five people. Where there are many people, there is also a lot of diversity. Sometimes in a good way and sometimes in a bad way. I don't like it when someone swears. This disturbs me because I find it inappropriate. I withdraw in such situations and do not take part in them. We agree on household chores, but there are also sparks sometimes. We are trying to reach a common solution in a peaceful way. In this agreement, it is important that we listen to each other because by listening and agreeing we respect each other.

However, I did not communicate with my sister for almost a year. Often the conversation ends in an argument. Because for her, the attack is the best defence. (Jelena, peer trainer)

What is the secret of good communication and connection?

Listening is key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result, communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated.

If there is one communication skill you should aim to master, then listening is it.

Listening is not the same as hearing! Hearing refers to the sounds that enter your ears. It is a physical process that, provided you do not have any hearing problems, happens automatically.

Listening, however, requires more than that: it requires focus and concentrated effort, both mental and sometimes physical as well.

Listening means paying attention not only to the story, but how it is told, the use of language and voice, and how the other person uses his or her body. In other words, it means being aware of both verbal and non-verbal messages. Your ability to listen effectively depends on the degree to which you perceive and understand these messages.

Listening is not a passive process. In fact, the listener can, and should, be at least as engaged in the process as the speaker. The phrase 'active listening' is used to describe this process of being fully involved.

Seven levels of listening

1	Not listening	Not paying attention to or ignoring the other person's communications.
2	Pretend listening	Acting like or giving the impression that you are paying attention to another person's communications, but not really paying attention to that individual.
3	Partially listening	Only focusing on part of the other person's communication or only giving it your divided attention.
4	Focused listening	Giving the other person your undivided attention to his or her communication.
5	Interpretive listening	Going beyond just paying attention but really trying to understand what the other person is communicating.
6	Interactive listening	Being involved in the communications by asking clarifying questions or acknowledging understanding of the communication.
7	Engaged listening	Being fully engaged in communications involves listening to the other person's views, feelings, interpretations, values, etc., concerning the communication and sharing yours as well with the other person(s). In engaged listening, both parties are given the opportunity to fully express their views, feelings, and ideas.

Communication is a two-way process: why and how to listen well

Successful communication begins with good listening. Over time, good listening will allow you to:

- Gain valuable insight into the experience of another person.
- Help other person to feel heard and understood, which usually will increase his/her willingness to hear what you have to say.

Avoid reactive listening. Listen to understand, instead of thinking about how you can argue back or convince the person to change her/his wrong beliefs. Avoid interrupting or criticizing. Even if (s)he criticizes you, don't argue.

You may need to set limits on when, where and how long you can listen. Try to choose a **time and place** when other person wants to talk and you will be able to focus your attention on listening well.

When you need a break from listening, say something like: *"I'm sorry. I know you probably have more to say, but I need to take a break now."* This type of limit setting helps to make it safe for you and the other person and will help you to remain calm as you listen.

These guidelines provide helpful general advice, but individuals and situations differ, so you will need to learn what works best in your situation and develop approaches that work well for you and another person.

Some Suggested Responses to Use During Listening

You can say:

- *Let me see if I have this right. Are you saying that ...?*
- *I hear you saying Did I get that right?*
OR: *Can you tell me more about that?*
- *If I heard you correctly, you said that ... Is that right?*
OR: *I can understand why you feel/want ...*
OR: *How do you feel about that?*

You can use nonverbal responses (e.g., nodding your head). You will need to figure out which responses work best in which situations. For example, sometimes the other person may appreciate eye contact and other times eye contact may make her/him uncomfortable.

Additional Advice

If you are just beginning to use reflective listening, you may want to begin by saying something like *"Today, I'm going to try something a little different. I'm going to try to understand how you really feel and what you really want by listening very carefully to what you have to say."* If appropriate, you may want to apologize for not listening in the past.

If another person doesn't want to talk to you, you may find that he/she is more willing to talk if you can reduce the intensity of the interaction (e.g. by talking while engaged in a joint activity), or (s)he may be more willing to talk with someone else (e.g. another family member or friend).

Expressing Yourself Effectively

It is also important to explicitly **recognize positive qualities and behaviours** of the other person. Some people feel bad about themselves. It can be very helpful to hear praise for his positive qualities and behaviours. Give reassurance and hope.

At other times, you may want to address a challenging topic and try to solve a problem. You may need to postpone this type of conversation until you have established a relationship of trust, so the other person is willing to listen to you. Try to choose a time when you are both calm. Think about what would be the best setting for a conversation; in some cases, it will be best to choose a time and place where you will not be interrupted, but in other cases your conversation may be more successful in a semi-public venue like a restaurant.

When you speak:

- Use a calm tone of voice and speaking style.
- Use brief, concise sentences.
- Allow time for a person to process what you have said and respond.

Be thoughtful about how you describe a problem. Aim to present a problem in a way that won't trigger emotional reactions that preclude reasonable discussion.

- Use "I statement". "You statements" tend to imply blame, which can cause the other person to feel angry and uncooperative.
- Describe a specific behaviour that is of concern.
- Avoid attributing the behaviour to character flaws or assumed motivations.
- Avoid terms such as "always" and "never".

NO

"You made me so upset when you were gone all night and I didn't know where you were. You are always so inconsiderate! You never think about my feelings."

YES

"I get worried when you're gone all night and I don't know where you are. For my peace of mind, when you go out in the evening, I need you to tell me where you're going and when you'll be home."

It is important to recognize that most problems or issues are not resolved in a single conversation. Instead, it usually takes a long series of conversations with reflective listening and empathy to accumulate the understanding and build up the trust needed to solve problems.

Also, behavioural change usually **takes time** and occurs **gradually** (think about your own efforts to increase exercise, improve your diet, stop smoking, etc.). Before a person makes a significant change, there usually is a substantial period when his/her thinking is changing as (s)he becomes more open to the possibility of change and begins to think about how (s)he might change. Even after behaviour begins to change, there will probably be relapses.

It is often more effective to focus on creating a positive, supportive environment that prevents problems, instead of dealing with problems after they arise.

Our emotions affect how we communicate

To listen and communicate well, you will need to be calm. You will probably find it challenging to cope with pain, anger, criticism and/or blame from another person.

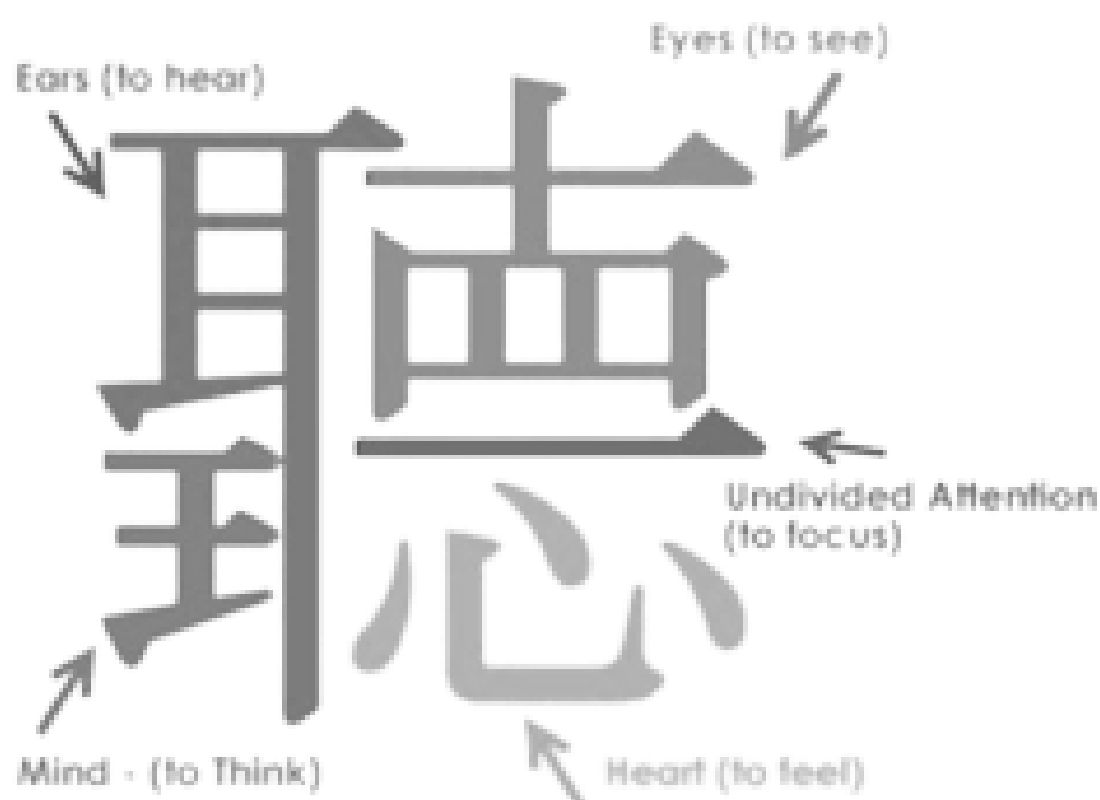
We could communicate better if we can maintain some emotional distance. To stay calm, you may find it helpful to do deep breathing if you start to get upset while you are listening.

Identify and deal with any anger or fears you may have. Even when you don't talk about your negative emotions, your nonverbal expression of these emotions may upset another person.

To reduce your anger, it may help to remember that difficult behaviour is usually a symptom of a person's difficulty rather than unkind, thoughtless, or manipulative behaviour that (s)he could stop if (s)he would only try to change her/his behaviour.



Chinese symbol for listening (ting):



Red: Ears (to hear) . Blue: Eyes (to see) . Purple: Undivided Attention (to focus) . Yellow: Heart (to feel) . Green: Mind (to think)

GOOD EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION CAN MAKE IT EASIER TO BRING UP ISSUES, MAKE REQUESTS WHEN NEEDED, AND RESOLVE CONFLICT WHEN IT ARISES.

How to express positive feelings?

We all feel good when our efforts are acknowledged. When we give people positive feedback about what they've done, however small, we let them know they are appreciated. And that sense of being noticed and cared about can help foster further change and growth. Try deliberately expressing positive feelings using these steps:

1. Look at the person.
2. Tell the person what he or she did that pleased you.
3. Tell him/her or her how it made you feel.

For example: *"I'm proud of you for going to your meeting even though you didn't feel like it."*

Making positive request

All close relationships involve doing things for each other to some extent. We all want and need things from the people we are close to. But how we communicate our wants and needs can have a big impact on how the other person responds. A request is most effective when it is clear, specific, and stated positively. Try these steps:

1. Look at the person.
2. Make a specific request.
3. Tell him or her how you would feel if the request were granted.

For example:

"I'd appreciate it if you could go shopping for groceries today."

"I'd like you to come with me to my doctor's appointment this Wednesday. I'd like your help in explaining my medication side effect to her. I would be so relieved to know you can be there with me."

Expressing Negative Feelings

We all have negative feelings at times. Learning to express them constructively is crucial to resolving conflicts and getting along with others. To air negative feelings in a way that will help resolve them, try these steps:

1. Look at the person and talk with a serious tone of voice.
2. Tell the person what he or she did that displeased you.
3. Tell him or her how you feel as a result—be specific.
4. Make a request for change, if possible.

For example:

“I was worried when you didn’t come home from work at your usual time. In the future, if you think you’re going to be late, please call me.”

“I’m angry that you stopped taking your medication. Can we talk about what your concerns are and work out a way to get them addressed?”

Making Compromises and Negotiating

People don’t always agree on what they want to do together, how to achieve goals, or how to solve problems. Healthy, close relationships rely on some degree of “give and take,” with each person giving as well as taking. When people disagree about something, being willing to compromise is an effective way to reach a resolution.

Try these steps:

1. Explain your viewpoint.
2. Listen to the other person’s viewpoint.
3. Repeat back what you heard (to show you understand).
4. Suggest a compromise.
5. Be open to talking over other possible compromises.

Requesting a Time-out

If feelings become very intense and heated, it can be hard to communicate effectively and resolve problems. Taking a break from intense feelings can provide time for people to calm down, collect their thoughts, and approach the situation as constructively as possible. To request a time-out, follow these steps:

1. Indicate that the situation is stressful for you.
2. Tell the person that the stress is interfering with constructive communication.
3. Explain that you would like to take a temporary break.
4. Say when you will be ready to talk again and problem-solve about the situation.

For example, you could say:

“I’m feeling stressed right now by this conversation. I’d like to take a break now and discuss this with you later when I’m feeling calmer.”

How to overcome communication barriers?

A communication barrier is something that prevents either person from understanding the information they are being told.

Barriers to communication can be overcome by:

- checking whether it is a good time and place to communicate with the person
- being clear and using language that the person understands
- communicating one thing at a time
- respecting a person’s desire to not communicate
- checking that the person has understood you correctly
- communicating in a location that is free of distractions
- acknowledging any emotional responses, the person has to what you have said.

Don’t make any judgements about what someone may be experiencing, always ask!

Worksheet: How to improve your communication skills

How to improve your communication skills

Communicating effectively is like any other skill: it takes practice to get good at it. Change is hard for everyone. People may feel awkward or uncomfortable at first when trying out the skills and strategies discussed in this handout. With practice, the skills of good communication will feel natural over time, and the long-term rewards and benefits to the quality of family relationships are well worth the effort.

Instructions: Choose a communication skill you would like to practice over the next week, and try to practice it every day. Use this chart to record what you said.

Skill: _____

DAY	PERSON, YOU TALKED TO	SITUATION	WHAT YOU SAID

What helps mutual understanding

Think about when you interact with others:

- a. What do people do that helps build positive communication?
- b. How do you show others respect and trust?

Now take some time to describe what you think positive communication looks like.

	WHAT IS HAPPENING WHEN I FEEL ...	WHAT DO I DO TO HELP OTHERS FEEL ...
comfortable and safe		
respect respected		
trust trusted		
valued		



Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL COMMUNICATION GUIDE

2.2 What helps mutual understanding and how to prevent conflicts?



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION GUIDE



2.3 How to talk about myself and what to tell others

NAME:



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



Overview of topics

This workbook is a companion to the group programme "*Return from hospital: How can I support myself*", which consists of twelve sessions in total. We hope you find inspiration and support for your own recovery journey here.

Here is a list of all topics:

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

You are now opening the third chapter of "*How we communicate with each other*".

If you would like to, you can share your thoughts with the treatment team or other people who support you or continue by yourself with following chapters and topics in the group programme or in the workbook.

All materials can be found on:

<https://www.cmhcd.cz/centre/our-activities/current-projects/support-when-returning-from-hospital-to-the-commun/>

How to talk about myself and my experience of illness

Story of peer trainer

Personally, I think we need to communicate about our illness with discretion. I tell my new friends and acquaintances after a while what is wrong with me, and their reaction shows what I can expect from them in the future. People who are worth it stay in my life and those who are not worth it leave. At my last job, I had to disclose my illness at the interview. I was hired as an assistant to people with mental disabilities and did this job for three years. Basically, nobody noticed my illness and I did the job well. I had to remind my superiors that I didn't have the strength to do some things and basically stigmatized myself. If I had done it smartly, I wouldn't have brought up my illness. I could have said I wasn't feeling well today, but not said it was because of schizophrenia. That's how I stigmatized those around me and lost my job over time because I didn't agree on future collaborations. So, I speak carefully about my illness and sometimes there is no need to say anything at all if no one asks. I also must be careful how I talk about my illness. At the beginning of my illness, when I was shocked by the diagnosis, I used to say: "My name is Tibor, and I am schizophrenic." This was not a very happy solution or communication. Now I am more likely to say that I have recovered and am recovering from schizophrenia and am living a full life with a disease that has the label of incurable.

Communication is not just about escalating stories with family. It's often about everyday life and the little things. It helps me a lot to know that NO is a complete sentence. I don't have to explain anything. Often just saying NO in a polite version is enough. Often, we know what we want, but the patterns in our mind won't allow us to say no or yes. I don't like the sentence: "What will other people think of me." We can be polite to others but still take care of ourselves and keep ourselves first. What other people think is their business, just as what I think is their business. (Tibor, peer trainer)



I grew up with two brothers and a sister. My childhood was happy and joyful. I mostly got along well with my brothers and sister until the end of primary school. That's when the disagreements with my brother started, which contributed to the deterioration of my mental state.

I wasn't very interested in school, but I finished secondary school in mechanical engineering. After returning from the army, I felt restlessness, dissatisfaction and withdrew into myself. The family noticed that I needed professional help. My first meeting with a psychiatrist was pleasant because I could talk openly with him, and I had the feeling that he understood me.

I found my first permanent job in 'Dalekovod'. After 9 months of work, I had an injury at work. I lost my fingers. I didn't tell anyone about my mental difficulties at the time. Maybe I should have because I was abstracted, and the machine pulled my glove and crushed my fingers.

The next time I sought help from another psychiatrist, he said I would be fired if they found out about the diagnosis at work. I was helped by a general practitioner who hid the diagnosis in the computer. I received compensation in the company and was transferred to another position.

Throughout my working life, I have dealt with the illness and symptoms of grief, excessive guilt, and inferiority complex. At work they noticed that I had mental difficulties, but I had support in my work environment.

I have no experience of anyone treating me badly or rejecting me.

Despite the illness, I achieved 25 years of work experience and am now retired.

I still remained on good terms with my former colleagues. I have a lot of friends. I always tell my diagnosis openly because that's how I feel best. Who cares - that's his business. (Tomislav, peer trainer)



Worksheet: What to tell others

Tell or not to tell

Marie is 32 years old and has had more than a dozen years of struggling with schizophrenia. Despite this disability, things are working out well: she hasn't had a hospitalization in five years. By many people's standards, she has beaten her mental illness. Still, Marie frequently attends mutual help groups where she provides support to peers who are struggling with more acute problems related to their illness. She is also an outspoken advocate against stigma. She testifies at government hearings where she discloses as a person with mental illness who is outraged by the disrespectful images of mental illness that are rampant in our society. Marie is a person who identifies herself as "mentally ill."

John has a very similar history to Marie. He has struggled with schizophrenia since he was 19. Now, he is 32. He has not been hospitalized in five years and almost no one at work or in his social circle knows about his illness. John Henry wants it that way. Not only does he choose not to let others know about his past, but he does also not view himself as a person with mental illness. "I'm a complex being with only a very small piece of me having to do with mental illness." John is a person who does not identify himself as "mentally ill.."

What are the pros and cons of Marie's choice?

PROS	CONS

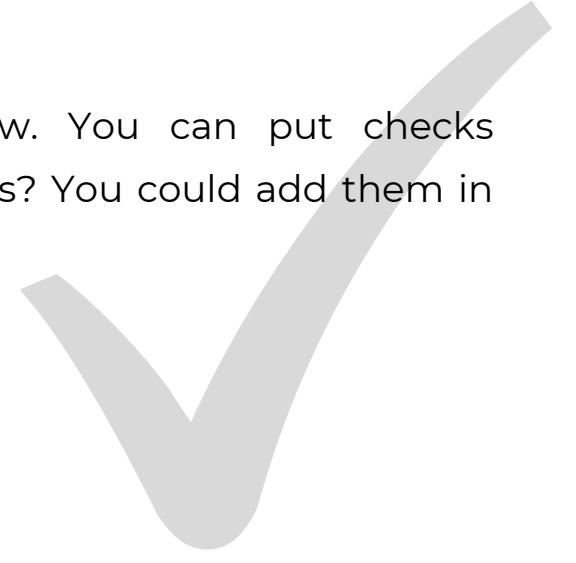
What are the pros and cons of John's choice?

PROS	CONS



Reasons why people disclose their mental health issues

Several reasons why people might disclose are listed below. You can put checks to the reasons that especially stand out for you. Are there others? You could add them in the blank lines.



<p>1. To Tell the Secret</p> <p>“I just wanted someone else to know that I get hospitalized for bipolar-affective disorder.”</p> <p>“I don’t want to have to feel like I’m sneaking around with a secret.”</p> <p>“I felt bad for having to keep private. I don’t want to feel bad anymore.”</p>	
<p>2. Understanding</p> <p>“I’m hoping others will understand not only my mental illness, but the difficulty of trying to keep it a secret.”</p> <p>“I don’t want to have to feel like I’m sneaking around with a secret.”</p> <p>“I felt bad for having to keep private. I don’t want to feel bad anymore.”</p>	
<p>3. Support and Assistance</p> <p>“Sometimes I get sad. I’m looking for friends who can be supportive.”</p> <p>“Can you give me a ride to the doctor?”</p> <p>“Sometimes, I just need someone to talk to.”</p>	
<p>4. Reasonable Accommodations</p> <p>“It’s the law. When I ask for sensible help at work, you need to give it to me.”</p> <p>“Can I come in a half hour late this week? I’m feeling a little down. I’ll make it up next week.”</p>	
<p>5.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	

Worksheet: Costs and benefits of coming out with mental health issues

Costs and Benefits of coming out with mental health issues



Let's make a list of all the costs and benefits of coming out, of telling other people about your experiences with mental health issues.

Benefits represent why you would do it, what you expect to happen that is positive because of disclosing to others. **Costs** are why you wouldn't do it, the negatives or harm that could result from disclosing.

BENEFITS	COSTS

Costs and benefits balance

Now, you have a comprehensive list of pros and cons. However, only you can decide for yourself how these costs and benefits balance. But first, we want you to consider other issues associated with weighing the costs and benefits of disclosure.

The impact of costs and benefits are sometimes relatively immediate; at other times, the impact is delayed. Generally, people tend to be more influenced by short-term costs and benefits because they happen sooner. But long-term costs and benefits frequently have greater implications for the future. So, make sure you carefully consider those as well.

Don't censor yourself

Sometimes people censor themselves as they list costs and benefits.

For example: *"I'm worried that people won't have lunch with me if I tell... Nah, that's a dumb idea. I'm going to take that off the list."*

Don't dismiss any cost or benefit no matter how "silly" it may seem. Put them all on the list so that you can consider all advantages and disadvantages together. Sometimes the items that you want to censor are important; you may just be embarrassed about the issue. Know that, if the item is irrelevant, you'll ignore it in the final analysis.

Example of costs and benefits

Consider the list of advantages and disadvantages in table below for additional ideas about possible costs and benefits. However, don't limit yourself to these options. Frequently, you will come up with a cost or benefit not in the list that is especially relevant to you.

BENEFITS	COSTS
You don't have to worry about hiding your mental illness/difficulties.	Others may disapprove of your mental illness or your disclosure.
You can be more open about your day-to-day affairs.	Others may gossip about you.
Others may express approval.	Others may exclude you from social gatherings.
Others may have similar experiences.	Others may exclude you from work, housing, and other opportunities.
You may find someone who can help you in the future.	You may worry more about what people are thinking about you.
You are promoting your sense of personal power.	You may worry that others will pity you.
You are a living testimony against stigma.	Future relapses may be more stressful because everyone will be watching.
	Family members and others may be angry that you disclosed.

Hurting myself with self-stigma

While terms like people with mental health difficulties and people in recovery might hurt less, they may confuse the public about the stigma issue. We believe it is mental illness and not mental health that is stigmatized by the population. Still, words can hurt, and some people do not like to identify themselves as a person with mental illness.

Stereotypes and prejudices

Below mentioned stereotypes and prejudice are false and unjust.

- People with mental illness are **violent** and **unpredictable**.
- They **choose** to be mentally ill.
- They are **weak** and **incompetent**.

Unfortunately, some people with mental illness may agree with stigmatizing beliefs like these and internalize them.

- I have a mental illness so I must be **violent** and **unpredictable**.
- I have a mental illness, so I **choose** to be mentally ill.
- I have a mental illness so I must be **weak** and **incompetent**.

It is hard to decide to come out when internalizing self-stigma.

What do you think about yourself

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very much disagree						Very much agree

Sometimes I agree with stigma:

_____ People with mental illness are weak.

_____ I should feel ashamed of myself.

_____ I think I am less a person because of mental illness.

_____ I can't reach my goals because of mental illness.

Add up all numbers to put a total score here

If you scored more than 20, you may think how to challenge personal heartfelt self-stigma.

How do you wish to identify yourself?

The question below helps people consider terms that work for them, how they wish to identify themselves. After completing the discussion, you might state way(s) you wish to be identified in terms of your experience with stigma.

What ways – other than MENTAL ILLNESS – might be the object of discussed stigma?

How do you want to be referred?

--

Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL COMMUNICATION GUIDE

2.3 How to talk about myself and what to tell others



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION GUIDE



2.4 How and with whom to talk about my illness

NAME:



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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

You are now opening the fourth chapter of "*How we communicate with each other*".

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How and with whom to talk about my illness

Story of peer trainer

There were 8 children in my family. I am the youngest. I remember the happy moments from my childhood, but I don't even want to think about the unhappy ones.

I love sports, and in primary and secondary school I played handball. When I was 21 years old, my mother passed away. A few months before that, I got a job in hospitality and catering business. I worked normally for three years.

At the age of 24, I started feeling insomnia, restlessness, dissatisfaction, fear, lack of interest. I discussed my difficulties with my sisters. And that was the first time I consulted a psychiatrist. I got therapy. I thought my bad condition would pass, but it didn't. It was difficult for me to function. I was on sick leave for a while, and I wasn't feeling well at all. I didn't want to socialize or talk; I withdrew into myself. Feelings of sadness and grief overwhelmed me. And because of them, I didn't feel comfortable anywhere. I was unhappy and thought it was only happening to me.

After the hospital treatment, it was more difficult to return to work because I thought about what people would say and think about me. Due to the illness, a sense of inferiority appeared. I think they knew my diagnosis at work. After one treatment, I couldn't go back to work. I couldn't work anymore, and I got a pension. At that time, I was a tenant because I was working and could pay for the rent. After losing job, it was no longer possible. Despite the large family, there was no room for me. I ended up in foster care and stayed there for 3 years.

My sister, the one I don't talk to now, stood up for me and contacted the Susret association in 2009. By some miracle, there was a vacancy and so here I am! (Jelena, peer trainer)

Despite the progress we have made in the past decade, the stigma associated with mental illness still exists in our community. The way we talk about mental illness and the things we express publicly through media, social media, in our homes and in our workplaces can make a difference.

Preferred language

Certain ways of talking about mental illness can alienate members of the community, sensationalise the issue, and contribute to stigma and discrimination.

Below is a summary of preferred language to use when communicating about mental illness.

DO SAY	DON'T SAY	WHY?
A person is 'living with' or 'has a diagnosis of' mental illness	'mental patient', 'nutter', 'lunatic', 'psycho', 'schizo', 'deranged', 'mad'	Certain language sensationalises mental illness and reinforces stigma.
A person is 'being treated for' or 'someone with' a mental illness	'victim', 'suffering from', or 'affected with' a mental illness	Terminology that suggests a lack of quality of life for people with mental illness.

A person has a 'diagnosis of' or 'is being treated for' schizophrenia	A person is 'a schizophrenic', 'an anorexic'	Labelling a person by their mental illness.
The person's behaviour was unusual or erratic	'crazed', 'deranged', 'mad', 'psychotic'	Descriptions of behaviour that imply existence of mental illness or are inaccurate.
Antidepressants, psychiatrists or psychologists, mental health hospital	'happy pills', 'shrinks', 'mental institution'	Colloquialisms about treatment can undermine people's willingness to seek help.
Reword any sentence that uses psychiatric or media terminology incorrectly or out of context	'psychotic dog', using 'schizophrenic' to denote duality such as 'schizophrenic economy'	Terminology used out of context adds to misunderstanding and trivialises mental illness.

How does language play a role in stigmatizing mental illness?

Stigma happens when a person defines someone by their illness rather than who they are as an individual. For example, they might be labelled 'psychotic' rather than 'a person experiencing psychosis'.

It might seem obvious, but there are different ways to come out

1. Five ways of disclosure are described and guide you through considering the costs and benefits associated with each strategy.
2. Process of selecting a person to whom you are considering disclosing
3. How might others respond to your disclosure?

Five ways to disclose or not disclose

- People might disclose their experiences with mental illness and treatments in different ways.
- Understand the costs and benefits of disclosing in five different ways.
- Different costs and benefits are associated with each of the five ways. The costs and benefits you identify may depend on setting/environment.

TABLE 1: FIVE WAYS TO DISCLOSE OR NOT DISCLOSE

1. SOCIAL AVOIDANCE: Not telling anyone about your mental illness and avoiding situations where people may find out about it. This could mean working or living in a sheltered or supported work environment, where you only associate with other people with mental illnesses.

Benefit: You don't encounter people who will unfairly harm you.

Cost: You lose the opportunity to meet new people who may possibly be supportive.

2. SECRECY: Participating in work and community situations but keeping your mental illness a secret.	
Benefit: Like social avoidance, you withhold information about your mental illness from others. But, you don't avoid important settings like work or the community in the process.	Cost: Some people feel guilty about keeping secrets. You may also receive less support from others because they are unaware of your mental illness.
3. SELECTIVE DISCLOSURE: Disclosing your mental illness to selected individuals, like co-workers or neighbours, but not to everyone.	
Benefit: You find a small group of people who will understand your experiences and provide support.	Cost: You may disclose to some people who then hurt you with the information. You may have difficulty keeping track of who knows and who doesn't.
4. INDISCRIMINANT DISCLOSURE: Making the decision to no longer conceal your mental illness; this does not mean, however, that you are telling everyone your story.	
Benefit: You don't worry who knows about your problems. And you are likely to find people who will be supportive.	Cost: You may tell people who then hurt you with the information.
5. BROADCAST YOUR EXPERIENCE: Actively seeking out and educating people about your experience with mental illness.	
Benefit: You don't have to worry who knows about your history of mental illness. You are promoting a personal sense of empowerment in yourself. You are striking a blow against stigma.	Cost: You are going to encounter people who may try to hurt you with this information. You are also going to meet people who disapprove of your political statement.

To whom might you disclose?

- Some people are better to disclose to than others.
- Learn how to identify a good person to whom you might disclose.
- Understand the procedure for “testing out” the person before disclosing.

In the previous section, we showed that people might disclose their experiences with mental illness and corresponding treatments in different ways. If you are considering selective disclosure, this section helps you to identify a possible person for disclosure. Two things are considered:

- a) How might you identify a good person to disclose to?
- b) There is a way in which you might “test out” the person before fully disclosing.

Who is a good person to disclose to?

There are several reasons why you might pick a specific person to disclose to. Table 2 groups these into three types of relationships. Review each type and determine which one(s) appeals to you. There are blank lines where you might add additional types of relationships and qualities that are important to you.

TABLE 2: TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS & IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD PERSON TO DISCLOSE TO

1, FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP

The person provides some function to you where knowing your experiences with mental illness might help accomplish the function.

Sample functional relationships include:

- psychiatrist
- doctor
- minister (church)
- teacher
- team member

2, SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIP

The person seems to be friendly and will provide support and approval to you when they find out about your experience.

Characteristics of this kind of person include:

- pleasantness
- open-mindedness
- concern for others
- loyalty
- trustworthiness
- helpfulness

3, EMPATHIC RELATIONSHIP

Some people to whom you might disclose have had similar, though perhaps less painful experiences: "I know what it's like to be depressed." These kinds of people can provide an empathic relationship. Their characteristics include:

- willingness to listen
- an understanding nature
- kindness
- honesty

4,

5,

How to know if I can tell the other person about the illness

There is a nice way to test whether someone might be a good person for disclosure. This method is summarized in worksheet 1. As an example, consider someone you know to whom you might disclose. After entering the name of the person to whom you might disclose in the worksheet, write down a positive example about someone with mental illness from recent news stories, magazine articles, TV shows, or movies.

Consider this example: *“I see Mary on the bus station dock every day; she seems to be a nice person.”*

“Hey Mary. Did you see E.R. on Channel 5 last week? Sally Fields was in it. She portrayed this woman with bipolar disorder trying to help her adult son struggle with the first signs of mania. I was really impressed by the show; they did a nice job of describing the symptoms of their psychiatric illness; you know, in a fair way. What do you think? Do you know anyone like this? What do you think about people sharing their experiences with mental illness?”

Then, stop and listen to Mary’s response. How might you rate her answers to the follow-up questions in worksheet 1 if she said:

“Yeah... I saw that. I have a friend with bipolar disorder and shows like that one from ER really help me better understand what she must do to be successful.”

Some might rate her responses as high on being sensitive and kind and, thus, as a person to whom you might disclose. If Mary had said:

“You know, I am sick and tired of these kinds of cry baby shows where they make mental illness look so noble.”

How might your ratings be different? Some might view this reaction as less sensitive and hence, Mary might not be a good candidate for disclosure.

After listening to the person to whom you might disclose, rate her or him on the three follow up scales in the middle of worksheet 1. Then, add up those ratings into a single total score, which you should fill in the provided box. If the score is higher than 16, the person is probably a good candidate for disclosure. Scores less than 9 suggest that the person may not be the best for disclosure. The decision is unclear for those in the 10-to-15-point range.

Let’s practice!



Worksheet: How to check if I can tell the other person about the illness

How to check if I can tell the other person about the illness

Name of the person: _____

News story, TV show, movie (positive image of mental illness):

What do you think about stories (shows, movies) like these?

What do you think about people like this in the story (show, movie)?

Do you know anyone like this?

Now rate the person's responses on the seven-point agreement scales below.

The person's responses were sensitive.						
Strongly disagree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The person's responses were kind.						
Strongly disagree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
They are kind of responses I would want to get if I disclosed to him/her.						
Strongly disagree		Moderately agree			Strongly agree	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Add up the scores:

Below are some suggested cut offs for the score totals:

Enter total here

16-21: Probably a good person to disclose to
3-9: Probably not a good person to disclose to
10-15: Uncertain

Was there anything else to note about their response? If so, please write it here.

How might others respond to your disclosure?

Be certain of one thing: disclosure will impact the people around you. You need to consider the various ways in which people may respond and plan your reactions accordingly. Table 3 lists a variety of reactions to disclosure that are sorted into groups by positive vs. negative emotional response.

EMOTIONAL RESPONSE	
Positive	Negative
Understanding "It must be hard living with your illness and the secret."	Disrespect "I don't want some dangerous loony like you around."
Interpersonal Support "I'm here for you if you need someone to talk to."	Denial "I'm not giving you any special breaks because of your mental illness."
Assistance "Can I give you a lift to the doctor?"	Retribution "I'll get you fired. I don't have to work next to a crazy guy like you."
	Fear/Avoidance "You're dangerous. I'm staying away."
	Gossip "Hey, did you hear about Joe? He was committed to the insane asylum."
	Blame "I have the same kind of problems as Gayle, but I don't go around and blab about it."

Which of these have you experienced? Are there other examples? List them here, plus any others not in the Table 3.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Discuss these with the group. Worksheet 2 on the next page provides an opportunity to try out how it might feel to come out with your difficulties (mental illness).

Worksheet: Cope with disclosure - how I can feel about

Cope with disclosure: how I can feel about

Find a friend to role-play the following.

You are with several co-workers and say:

"I was hospitalized for schizophrenia about six times."

Put your example here : _____

Your role-play partner says:

"Wow, they let you out?"

"That's affirmative action for you. Anybody can get a job out here."

"Do you ever feel out of control?"

"I'm asking for a transfer. I don't want to work around your kind."

"That's ok honey. I'll cover up your mistakes."

"Do you live in a hospital at night?"

**After listening to these comments, rate yourself on the scales below.
Circle the number that best represents how you feel in response to these statements.**

Not at all ashamed		Moderately ashamed			Very ashamed	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all nervous		Moderately nervous			Very nervous	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all sad		Moderately sad			Very sad	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all angry		Moderately angry			Very angry	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

We're coming to the end of the *"How we communicate with each other"* topic. Please remember each meeting and write down key words or messages that are important to you.

What do you take away from these meetings for yourself? What was most important to you?

Good job! Please thank yourself for the participation and write here a word of appreciation to yourself.

Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL COMMUNICATION GUIDE

2.4 How and with whom to talk about my illness



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDE



3.1 What home means to me?

NAME:



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



Overview of topics

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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

You are now opening the first chapter of "*Safety and return from hospital*".

Content

1. What home means to me?

Safe place: story of peer trainer

The meaning of safety at home

Exercise: Safety at home

Basic needs at home

Things I need to sort out

Exercise: What I need and what I need to do?

Everyday Routine

Exercise: Things to do EVERY DAY to help me set up routine and enjoy again my life after hospital (after crisis)

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What home means to me?

Safe place

Story of peer trainer

When people say safe place or safe home, I think of the years of traveling I've done. I did street theatre, hitchhiked around Europe, and slept wherever I could in a sleeping bag on a mattress. I mean, it doesn't seem safe now, but I was used to it. After an outbreak of illness or hospitalization, all I had to do was grab my backpack and hit the road. I was so used to it, I felt safe. Until now, I have a bad habit of saying: "I'm going home." And I mean the place where I lay my head down at night and fall asleep. Now, in hindsight, I can see that it wasn't a happy habit, because my real home was the apartment in Slovakia where I grew up. There I was able to completely relax, to regenerate. I think that's one of the most important roles of our safe place. After overcoming one of the psychoses, I slept for sixteen hours and was awake for eight. I just needed to rest, and it took six months. It's nice to get involved in society and work, but if you don't have the strength, you can't do it.

But I don't think I'm a very good example of a person who was able to prepare to return to a safe place after hospitalization. I went years without taking my medication and lived a life that wasn't fulfilling. Unfulfilling for myself and society. I didn't have a place in society, so I didn't have much to go back to. After the last hospitalization I was already in the Czech Republic and I had a family, it was different. I had somewhere to go and someone waiting for me. Maybe that was what led me to recovery. Having a new home and people who love me.

What I need now at home are people I can rely on. And they can count on me not to start doing drugs and run out on the road at the first riot. When I'm really sick and the weather permits, I go into the woods, light a fire, grab a cot and a sleeping bag, and reminisce about the wilder old days.

It's good to belong somewhere and have a place on earth where I feel safe. I know that many people with mental illness struggle to fit in and feel safe wherever they are. Fortunately, there are people in society who are trying to create the conditions for people with mental illness to live fuller lives. However, we hold the reins of our lives primarily in our own hands. By being responsible to ourselves and others, taking medication, and creating something fulfilling, we can change our lives for the better.

I believe that everyone can feel at home wherever they are. In him/herself. (Tim, peer trainer)

The meaning of safety at home

Feeling safe is largely subjective. What makes a situation safe can be different for different people. In any case, security relates to the feeling of whether you can influence the situation, whether you have some control over it. Another aspect of safety is the sense of security that the situation offers you.

The term "basic safety" means the absence of physical and emotional threats, the confidence that there is food on the table and a roof over your head. In addition, basic safety has its own meaning for each person: for one, it is the feeling of a supportive elbow and the proximity of people, for another, keeping a distance from other people.

Returning home after the hospital can be quite difficult. I have experienced this myself when the walls of my home harassed me, and I was in a critical state. At the same time, people are very different, some feel very well at home. I started to feel better when I started visiting a mental health day centre. There were people with similar problems, and no one treated me badly because of the diagnosis. It was white, clean and warm. I felt safe. Right now, I feel good in my home. Home is where I rest. I don't let all people home, but those I know and trust. (Ann, peer trainer)

The first hours (again) at home are very important. The following exercise will help you describe how safe you feel at home.



Exercise: Safety at home

1 A. Make a drawing/ picture that relates to safety for you. It can be a place, time, situation, etc.

1 B. Exercise: What does safety at home mean to you? What makes a home safe? At what times have you felt this safety (in childhood, related to certain people, events, etc.)?

2. When you are discharged from the hospital, do you have a safe place to go? Where are you actually going?

3. How do you plan to go home? Do you need something (e.g., from home) before you set off?

4. What do you need in the first few days to feel safe?

Basic needs at home

Continuing your journey after a crisis can be hard. It is always difficult to restart things that you have not done for a while. It can take some time for these challenges to disappear completely. Your confidence may have been shaken by your crisis. Because of your crisis, you may not have seen people who are important to you for some time; you may feel that you have upset some of your friends, relatives and others who you care about, or you may feel very thankful for the support others have provided while you were in crisis.

Whether you were in hospital or at home during your crisis, it is sensible to start thinking about your plan for continuing your journey after the crisis as soon as you are able to. You do not have to feel fully well to start taking back responsibility for doing some of the things that are important to you. Although it may not always be easy, starting to get back into your usual routines can make you feel better and can help you to move forward in your recovery.

Things I need to sort out

After a crisis, you may want to think about whether there are challenges that arose during the crisis, such as financial difficulties or medical problems that need to be resolved.

In each case, it may be sensible to think about the things you need to sort out as soon as possible and deal with things that can wait until you are feeling stronger. It can also be useful to give some thought to when you will do each thing, how you will do it and whether you want anyone to support you (e.g. receiving advice for financial difficulties; obtaining emotional support from friends or family as you sort out problems; finding transportation to certain places, etc.). You can make plans for these in the table below.



Exercise: What I need and what I need to do?

What I need?	What I need to do	What help I will need	Which supporter I will need to contact	When I need to do it
E.g: I need money				
E.g: I need medication				
E.g: I need food				
E.g: I need to clean my home				
E.g: I need to pay taxis				

Everyday Routine

Having a regular routine and things to do can be helpful in maintaining wellness. This can balance your life and give you a structure to build on. Think about the day-to-day things that you need to do to remain well. These may be things that you are already doing or things that you want to do because they would make you feel better.

Most routines are quite simple – for instance, things like:

- Preparing and eating healthy meals at regular times
- Going for a walk and enjoying nature
- Working in a garden
- Going to work or college
- Reading a book, newspaper or magazine
- Taking medicine
- Wake up at 10 o' clock etc.





Exercise: Things to do EVERY DAY to help me set up routine and enjoy again my life after hospital (after crisis)

In the following boxes, choose and list the things you can do EVERY DAY and SOME DAYS throughout the week to feel good.

Things to do EVERY DAY	When will I do them?		
	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
E.g: Taking medication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.g: Going outside	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.g: Getting out of bed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.g: Eating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.g: Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 o'clock	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Things to do SOME DAYS a week	Days I will do them on						
	Mo	Tu	We	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
E.g: Going to church	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.g: Visiting mental health centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.g: Swimming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.g: Going to a recovery group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ideas for table: Things I need to do for myself every day to keep myself feeling all right

- buy food
- prepare meal 3 times in a day
- drink at least 6, 8-oz glasses of water
- avoid caffeine, sugar, junk foods, alcohol, nicotine
- exercise for at least 1/2 an hour
- get exposure to outdoor light for at least 1/2 hour
- take medications
- take vitamin supplements
- have 20 minutes of relaxation or meditation time
- write in my journal for at least 15 minutes
- go to work
- pay my bills
- get at least 7 hours of sleep
- organize my clothing for next day
- get hugs from my husband/ wife
- don't watch anything serious on TV
- accomplish something
- read the Bible
- do yoga
- take sleep meds on time & refrain from stimulating activities
- take a break at work
- do housework
- read a book
- go outside, walk in nature.



Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDE

3.1 What home means to me?



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDE



3.2 My safe place

NAME:



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



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- 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

You are now opening the second chapter of "*Safety and return from hospital*".

Content

2. My safe place

- Home safety
- Exercise: Things to avoid
- What are triggers?
- Exercise: Find out your triggers
- How to create my own safe place?
- Exercise: Steps to create a safe place

If you would like to, you can share your thoughts with the treatment team or other people who support you or continue by yourself with following chapters and topics in the group programme or in the workbook.

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My safe place

Home safety

After a mental health crisis, the rhythm of life may be disturbed. Then it can be useful to think about how you can take care of yourself, adapt and create positive daily routines. Below we list some of the options from which you can make your choice. Find a suitable way for you to enrich your daily life, keep things in your days that work well for you, or instead learn something new, which can be both fun and contribute to self-confidence.

After a crisis, the literature suggests:

- Be curious and aware of the world around you, your feelings and your mental health situation.
- Find support from companions.
- Allow time for therapeutic activities.
- Nurture your social life.
- Take care of your physical health.
- Contact the organization that offers support opportunities.
- Try something new or rediscover an old hobby.
- Do good, show someone you care.

If we start to feel guilty or extremely sad, we need to seek help immediately, because it can be difficult to cope in the aftermath of a crisis.

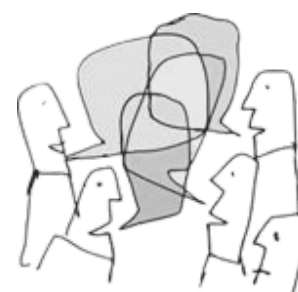
You know yourself best. You can learn from previous crises. Think about your experiences and write down on the next exercise sheet what you want to avoid in the future and what will support you.



Exercise: Things to avoid

Things to avoid	What supports me to avoid?
E.g: Don't want to constantly think negatively	I look at nature from the window; I pick up a book with good thoughts, etc...
E.g: Failure to follow the treatment plan	

Please share with the group. Name one thing you decided to avoid.



What are triggers?

Every single day is different from the others. We are exposed to various changes in our environment – from different weather to various behaviours of our family members and strangers in the street. We feel differently every day, even in term of our physical wellbeing. Naturally, everything that happens around us and inside affects us. Sometimes it makes us smile, sometimes it makes us uncomfortable or distressed. Once we have a history of trauma or mental health problems any of the things can become a trigger.

Therefore, triggers are events, circumstances, even thoughts or sensations that can cause a strong emotional reaction. You can think about them as sensitivities that you developed because of your experiences in the past. For example, hearing fireworks might be a trigger for someone who have been in a war and thus the person reacts to them with a strong distress. There is a list of triggers in the following exercise.

Triggers are always individual. A thing that triggers me can pass totally unnoticed by you. Reacting to triggers is completely normal. If we don't recognise our triggers and if we don't know how to calm ourselves when we are triggered, this all might cause a mental health crisis. Most often in some stressful situations there are more than one possible trigger. A combination of several triggers has always a bigger effect.

What happens when you are triggered?

How do you know, that some triggers might be important for you as well? Probably you know from the experience that in these contexts you were feelings distressed. There are various signs of this distress that you can notice in yourself or others. See some of them in the list below:

- Anxiety
- Fear, confusion
- Agitated or rhythmic movements
- Hyperventilating, being short of air
- Heavy feeling in the chest
- Sweating
- Feeling pains
- Crying
- Feeling of being disconnected from yourself
- Clenching your teeth
- Speaking in a very fast pace
- Very loud or very quiet voice
- Swearing
- Avoiding eye contact or having an intense eye contact
- Threats, aggression

For the people around someone who have such reactions it might seem sudden or strange as if the reactions came out of the blue. Let's say someone had really distressing memory and became very agitated. What happens next often depends also on the people around who do not know about the memory. So, they can escalate the situation essentially adding more triggers (e.g., criticizing, speaking loudly) and this can lead to a conflict or a mental health crisis. Alternatively, they can provide comfort. You yourself also can take some relaxing activity to calm down if you notice the triggers or signs of distress. We will speak about those calming techniques later in the course.

For now, it is important to remember is that if there are signs of distress, there always is a trigger for it. Because all human behaviour has a reason!



Exercise: Find out your triggers

Triggers	How does it make me feel?				Can you specify the situation?
	I'm ok with it	A little bit uncomfortable	Quite uncomfortable or distressed	Very distressed	
Certain noises			X		E.g: I get frightened if I hear noises of someone shouting for help, also loud explosions.
Being yelled at					
Being pressured to behave the way you don't want					
Spending time alone for a certain length of time					
Being criticized					
Having too many tasks to do					
New events or unplanned circumstances					
Not having a choice					
Loud noises					
Other people around being agitated or stressed					

Being late					
Experiencing disrespect					
Not being listened to					
Other people touching or using your things without permission					
Other people staring					
Participating in a conflict or just seeing it					
Reminder of a negative past event					
Feeling pain or getting sick					
Certain feelings					
Certain sensations in the body					
Certain smells, tastes, noises					
Being in the dark					



Remember that following a daily plan increases the feeling of security and reduces the feeling of helplessness and fear caused by uncertainty. Make sure that your daily schedule includes both useful and enjoyable activities.

I do pleasant activities at home. At the end of each day, I write down at least 5 good things that happened during the day. They don't have to be big things, e.g. the weather was nice and sunny or I made myself something good to eat. Sometimes I choose to increase the proportion of good things in my days even more. Sometimes I write down the things I am grateful for. I like to have a daily plan so that I can always do something pleasant. (Ann, peer trainer)

How to create my own safe place?

My safe place is my current home. Everything is there as I wish. Since I go to work, it's good to rest at home. At the same time, I can't stay at home for very long, then depressive thoughts can come. So I try to plan my time in such a way that rest and other activities are balanced. I can be myself at home, if I'm tired, I skip cleaning for a few days. For me, the most important thing is to make ends meet - to have taxes paid, to have money for food and other things. A safe place can also be in the mind. I picture myself in a place where I have felt safe. For example, I imagine that I am sitting on top of a mountain with my back against a tree, feeling the warmth of the sun and the gentle breeze. It is possible to create such a safe place for yourself. (Ann, peer trainer)

A safe place is a place that is supportive, comfortable and reassuring. It is good to be in a safe space. In the previous exercise, we experienced that our stimuli are different. In the same way, we are also calmed by different things. The following questions will help you think about how to design a safe place for yourself.

The aim is that this place:

- Helps to calm down if it has not been successful elsewhere.
- Helps to calm down when the emotion is strong.
- Helps control impulses.



Exercise: Steps to create a safe place

1. Choose the location of a safe place in your place of residence.

- You can choose a whole room or a part of the room as a safe place.
- Think of a place in your place of residence that brings you peace and well-being, where you go to relax, or where you simply like to be and what makes you feel good.
- Assess whether the place you have chosen can be redesigned, elements can be added there if desired.
- Assess whether this space is usable at all times and is easily accessible.

Draw a room plan here:

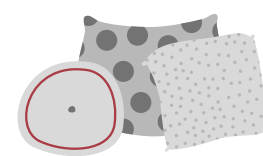
2. Choose elements that characterize a safe place. You can use these elements to design the room and increase the feeling of comfort.

- Different stimuli like smells, sounds etc. create different sensations in us. Choose the ones you like.
- Elements that make you feel good and bring out good emotions are suitable for use in a safe place.
- Evaluate opportunities (size, budget). Be realistic. If necessary, find alternatives.

I choose the following for my safe place:



Smells:	Materials:
Sounds:	Items:



Make a plan to create a safe place:

- Why is planning important? A good plan helps to prioritize activities and make better use of time. Make an achievable plan, that way you will succeed more surely :-).
- Ask relatives, friends, support person for help if something is needed or missing.
- For some activities, you may also need the help of a worker (painter, etc.).
- It is good to think about the budget as well.

Plan to create a safe place			
Activity	Date	Budget	Notes
Deadline:			

- 3. Create a safe place.**
- 4. Use the place.**



Please share with the group. What is your safe place like?



Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDE

3.2 My safe place



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDE



3.3 What is good for my body and soul

NAME:



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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

You are now opening the third chapter of "*Safety and return from hospital*".

Content

3. What is good for my body and soul

Mental and physical wellbeing

Exercise: Things I might to do for myself every day to keep myself feeling all right

Mindfulness

Exercises: Mindfulness

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What is good for my body and soul?

Mental and physical wellbeing

An important part of recovery is acknowledging that we are worth taking good care of ourselves. Changing lifestyles to promote optimal health can feel overwhelming and unsustainable. How you feel can affect your ability to carry out everyday activities, your relationships, and your overall mental health. However, how you react to your experiences and feelings can change over time. Emotional wellbeing is the ability to successfully handle life's stresses and adapt to change and difficult times.

The National Centre for Emotional Wellness in the United States describes emotional wellbeing as an awareness, understanding, and acceptance of feelings and an ability to manage effectively through times of change or challenge. At the core of wellbeing is the principle of self-responsibility. We are primarily responsible for our health, and we must take personal responsibility for our choices that we make in regard to our health. While we don't "choose" to live with a chronic disease, we can choose our attitude and how we meet the challenge of living well with a disease.

Improved physical health can be a personal support in our efforts to heal from the many consequences of a psychiatric disability. When we feel better, we can be more hopeful, we can be more willing to take risks to grow and change.

Each person's "healthiest self" is different. We have different bodies, minds, living situations, and people influencing our lives. A key strategy in seeking optimal physical health is to take small steps to improve our health and lifestyles. Small steps in our lifestyle can add up to big changes in our health. Eating well, moving more, smoking less or not at all, and seeking health screenings are important areas where we can make positive choices that will support our recovery.

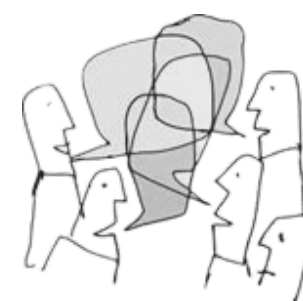
Physical activity is an important tool in helping us maintain a healthy heart, blood pressure, glucose levels, and weight. Physical activity also is a natural tool to assist us to improve our energy levels, our mood, reduce feelings of stress, anxiety and depression, and improve our self-esteem.



Move more!

We need to move our bodies more to live long, healthy lives. Increased physical activity is an important way we can improve our health. It is recommended that adults are active for at least 21 -22 hours a week. Try to be active for at least 10 minutes at a time. Set your goal to move for a total of 30 minutes a day. Collect your minutes in small ways, such as walking up and down the stairs and refusing to use the elevator. Walking is a great way to increase your activity levels, and it can be done mostly anywhere and is free. Decrease your screen time by watching less television and less time on the computer. Consider purchasing a pedometer and track your daily steps instead. Set your goal to walk 2,000 steps (about 1.5 km) a day.

How do you rate taking care of your mental and physical health?



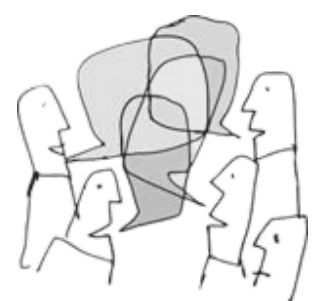


Exercise: Things I might do for myself every day to keep myself feeling all right

- prepare 3 healthy meals & 3 healthy snacks
 - servings of whole grain foods / of vegetables / portions of protein at each meal
- drink at least 5-6 glasses of water
- avoid caffeine, sugar, junk foods, alcohol, nicotine
- exercise for at least 1/2 hour
- get exposure to outdoor light for at least 1/2 hour
- take medications
- take vitamin supplements
- have 20 minutes of relaxation or meditation time
- write in my journal for at least 15 minutes
- spend at least 1/2 hour enjoying a fun, affirming and/or creative activity
- get support from someone who I can be real with
- check in with myself: how am I doing physically, emotionally, spiritually
- go to work
- play my guitar
- look in the mirror & say 5 good things about myself
- appreciate myself
- laugh
- play with a child
- give & get a hug
- listen & support someone else
- get at least 7 hours of sleep
- organize my clothing for next workday
- read the comics
- read favourite magazines
- don't watch anything serious on TV
- dealing with hobbies (specify)
- get hugs from relatives
- cleaning rooms
- read or write poetry
- accomplish something
- read the Bible
- do something cognitively or mentally challenging
- do yoga
- make or listen to music
- connect with someone
- read something pleasant or comforting before I go to sleep
- take sleep meds on time & refrain from stimulating activities
- take a break at work
- make a "to do" list
- walk in nature
- go to forest
- go to movie
- make art
- go to exhibition
-
-

What activities do you want to bring into your life?

How to implement these activities or what you need for this? Finding information, means, financial resources, time, transportation, etc.



Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us. Mindfulness is a quality that every human being already possesses, it's not something you have to conjure up, you just have to learn how to access it. When we meditate, it doesn't help to fixate on the benefits, but rather to just do the practice, and yet there are benefits or no one would do it.

When we're mindful, we reduce stress, enhance performance, gain insight and awareness through observing our own mind, and increase our attention to others' well-being.

Mindfulness meditation gives us a time in our lives when we can suspend judgment and unleash our natural curiosity about the workings of the mind, approaching our experience with warmth and kindness — to ourselves and others.



Exercise: Mindfulness

Mindfulness meditation

The goal of mindfulness meditation is simple: to pay attention to the present moment, without judgement. However, as you practice, you'll find that this is easier said than done.

During mindfulness meditation, you will focus on your breathing as a tool to ground yourself in the present moment. It's normal that your mind will wander. You'll simply bring yourself back into the moment by refocusing on your breathing, again and again. Follow the instructions below to begin practicing mindfulness meditation

Wandering Mind- it's normal that your thoughts will wander during mindfulness meditation. At times, it might feel like a constant battle to maintain focus on your breathing. Don't worry—that's normal. Instead of struggling against your thoughts, simply notice them, without judgment.

Sometimes you might feel frustrated or bored. That's fine- these are just a few more feelings to notice. Your mind might start to plan an upcoming day or worry about a responsibility. Notice where your thoughts are going and accepting what's happening. Acknowledge that your mind has wandered and return your attention to breathing. Expect to repeat this process again and again.

Whenever you are able to return your concentration to your breathing. Continue this process until your bell rings (bell ring), or until you are ready to be done.

Breathing

Begin by bringing your attention to the present moment by noticing your breathing. Pay attention to your breath as it enters and then leaves your body. Before long, your mind will wander, pulling you out of the present moment. That's OK. Notice your thoughts and feelings as if you are an outside observer watching what's happening in your brain. Take note and allow yourself to return to your breathing.

And becoming aware of the movement of the breath as it comes into your body and as it leaves your body. Not manipulating the breathing in any way or trying to change it, simply being aware of it and of the feelings associated with breathing. And if you feel comfortable with it, observing your breathing deep down in your belly. Feeling the abdominal wall as it expands gently on the in-breath, as it falls back towards your spine on the out-breath. And simply being totally here in each moment, with each breath. Not trying to do anything... not trying to get any place, simply being with your breathing. On an in-breath, or on an out-breath, and just observing...

Moving up close to your breathing and keeping the attention here... As if you were riding the waves of your breathing, fully conscious of the duration of the in-breath, and the duration of the out-breath, from moment to moment.

And every time you find that your mind has wandered off the breath, to just be aware of it is as soon as you can be. And gently bringing it back to your belly, and back to the present, back to the moment-to-moment observing of the flow of your breathing.



Bell ring

Body Scan

During the body scan exercise, you will pay close attention to physical sensations throughout your body. The goal isn't to change or relax your body, but instead to notice and become more aware of it. Don't worry too much about how long you practice but do move slowly.

Begin by paying attention to the sensations in your feet. Notice any sensations such as warmth, coolness, pressure, pain, or a breeze moving your skin. Slowly move up your body—to your calves, thighs, pelvis, stomach, chest, back, shoulders, arms, hands, fingers, neck, and your head. Spend more time on each of the body parts, just noticing the sensations.

After your travel up your body, begin to move back down, through each body part, until you reach your feet again. Remember: move slowly, and just pay attention.



Bell ring

Five Senses



Open your eyes

Use the exercise to quickly ground yourself in the present when you only have a moment. The goal is to notice something that you are currently experiencing through each of your senses.

What are 5 things you can see? Look around you and notice 5 things you hadn't noticed before. Maybe a pattern on a wall, light reflecting from surface, or a knick-knack in the corner of a room.

What are 4 things you can feel? Maybe you can feel the pressure of your feet on the floor, your shirt resting on your shoulders, or the temperature on your skin. Pick up an object and notice its texture.

What are 3 things you can hear? Notice all the background sounds you had been filtering out, such as air conditioning, birds chirping, or cars on a distant street.

What are 2 things you can smell? Maybe you can smell flowers, coffee, or freshly cut grass. It doesn't have to be nice smell either maybe there's an overflowing trash can or sewer.

What is 1 thing you can taste? Pop a piece of gum in your mouth, sip a drink, eat a snack if you have one, or simply notice how your mouth tastes. „Taste“ the air to see how it feels on your tongue.

The number for each sense is only guideline. Feel free to do more or less of each. Also try this exercise while doing an activity like washing dishes, listening to music, or going for a walk.

Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDE
3.3 What is good for my body and soul



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Return from hospital

How can I support myself

PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDE



3.4 My support network

NAME:



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



Overview of topics

This workbook is a companion to the group programme "*Return from hospital: How can I support myself*", which consists of twelve sessions in total. We hope you find inspiration and support for your own recovery journey here.

Here is a list of all topics:

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

You are now opening the last chapter of "*Safety and return from hospital*".

Content

4. My support network

- Feeling of security: story of peer trainer
- My supporters and people important to me
- Exercise: Social network analysis
- What meaningful roles I have and what I can offer others
- Exercise: My roles
- Sources of support in the community and how to contact them
- Exercise: Support Resources in my community

If you would like to, you can share your thoughts with the treatment team or other people who support you or go by yourself through all of chapters and topics in the group programme or in the workbook.

All materials can be found on:

<https://www.cmhcd.cz/centre/our-activities/current-projects/support-when-returning-from-hospital-to-the-commun/>

My support network

Feeling of security

Story of peer trainer

The feeling of security is very personal and important for everyone. For me, security provides a good relationship with people, loving and being loved. I don't know a single person who doesn't aspire to it.

Thinking about my childhood, I feel that I was loved and accepted by my relatives and friends. It gave me a sense of security. I adapt easily and make friends quickly. An even more important security than one given by people, for me is refuge in God. That makes me feel safer.

After arriving at the Susret association, after the earthquake in Zagreb*, I felt anxious and insecure in my apartment, so I spent a lot of time outside. One day a young man introduced himself to me and asked for help. I just had to sign a contract to buy a cell phone, and he would transfer it to himself later and I wouldn't have any problems. I believed him and wanted to help, so I got into the car with him and we completed the transaction.

It was only later that I became suspicious and called Dominik. Even small children know not to get into the car with strangers, and I did that.

The assistants helped me report the fraud to the police and cancel the signed contracts. In one place we succeeded, but in another I had to pay. That trust cost me HRK 2,900 and my bad feeling. It could have been much worse.

My example shows that it is not always good to trust everyone and breaks the stereotype that people with mental disabilities are dangerous. (Tomas, peer trainer)

*Note: the earthquake in Zagreb was on March 22, 2020. strength 5.5. according to Richter's scale

A support network is very important because no one has to recover from a serious illness and the things that come with it alone. I lost almost all my friends and all my jobs because of mental health difficulties. It was very difficult. I felt like I was thrown out of society. I wondered if I was such a bad person that why no one wanted me. Fortunately, I still had a family that supported and understood me. At the mental health day centre, I found a friend with the same diagnosis who was very good to talk to. But sometimes a person can be quite alone. If there is even one person who is with you, recovery is much easier. A pet can also help with recovery. (Ann, peer trainer)

My supporters and people important to me

A social network is a collective term for all important people who have a supporting role in your well-being. Friends, colleagues at home, work and study partners, partner, family members, support person, can form a social network etc.

It is worth thinking about the importance of the people in your social network and the frequency of communication with them - this will help you better notice what support opportunities you have. Dutchmen Wilken and Hollander say that communication is two-way – what other people mean to you and what you mean to others are both important. Thus, the social network offers both support and development opportunities. The worksheet below contains specific questions, by answering which you will describe your social network and become smarter about the current situation.

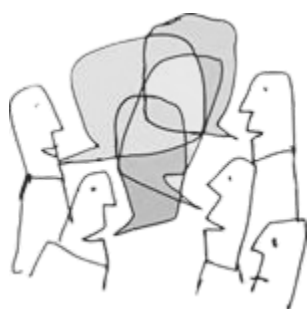
Social networks can be of very different sizes. It may be that the social network is small. So, you don't have to fill in every cell in the table below. However, there is no such thing as a person who does not have a network. Everyone always has at least one person they interact with. Step by step, we want the social network to be as wide and strong as possible. This contributes to personal and social recovery – increases the opportunities to participate in society.

Sometimes describing a network brings back bad memories. In this case, remember that sadness is natural and part of processing what life events, illness, or addiction have brought about.



Exercise: Social network analysis

Social network analysis © J.P. Wilken (1999; 2011)				
The most important people and their support:		Date:		
A. Very important and a lot of support	Names in order of importance:	1. What does the support mean to you (specifically if possible)?	2. What do you mean to this person?	
	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
	4.			
	5.			
B. Very important, but little or no support	Names in order of importance:	1. Do you want more contact with him/her or more support?	2. What kind of support do you want more from this person?	3. How could this be achieved?
	1.	Yes / No		
	2.	Yes / No		
	3.	Yes / No		
	4.	Yes / No		
	5.	Yes / No		



What did you learn about yourself by completing this worksheet?

Which supporters do you think are missing from your life? What kind of support do you want more?

Do you want to meet new people? If so, with what interests or people from what fields? How to achieve this?

With your own strength and the help of others, you will be successful!

What meaningful roles I have and what I can offer others

Each person fulfils many roles at the same time. For example, in everyday life we fulfil family roles such as father, mother, brother, sister, child, etc., as well as professional roles such as co-worker, doctor, teacher, student, etc. Roles can also be distinguished as long-term and short-term. Examples of long-term roles include many family roles, as well as professional roles if they last for a longer period. We constantly fulfil short-term roles every day: bus driver, pedestrian, shopper, etc.

Through roles, we create meaning in our lives. It can be significant:

- sense of contribution
- existence of a goal
- feeling embraced
- belonging
- recognition.

Roles are an opportunity to connect to others and to use one's skills and talents for the well-being of oneself and others. Meaningful roles have a good effect on us. When we share what we like with other people, we create friendships. Some role increases self-esteem. Enjoying some role, such as a runner, contributes to good physical and mental health. In the role of a student at school, we learn new skills. Completing driving school and getting behind the wheel of a car increases independence and reduces dependence on others, such as bus times. Participation in the work of an interest protection organization entails exercising one's rights. Acquiring a new profession improves job prospects, and starting a new job improves financial independence. These are just a few examples how having different roles increases lifestyle options.

In the next exercise, you can write down your different roles. The roles have different proportions, some are underused, some are overused, but some are fairly used. You can indicate how things were with the "use of the role" in the past, how it is now - in the present, and how you plan for the future. It shows how the importance of roles changes over time. Also, think about your dream role(s) - mark it in the table for future reference.

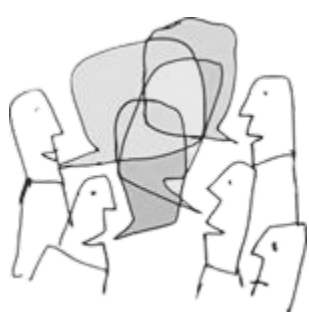


Exercise: My roles

Mark if you have fulfilled the mentioned role in the past, are fulfilling it now or plan to fulfill it in the future. MY ROLES:	The past	The present	The future

Ideas for the table – different roles:

- Family roles: father, mother, brother, sister, child, parent
- Student
- An employee, both part-time and full-time, occupation
- Volunteer for community, school, party, etc.
- Caregiver for a family member or friend
- Home maintainer doing regular household or garden work
- A friend who regularly spends time with his friend
- A family member who regularly spends time with a relative
- Hobbyist who regularly engages in a hobby (e.g., sewing), activity (e.g., playing a musical instrument), participates in a club (e.g., chess club)
- Participant in organisation regularly as a member of a group or club (e.g., committee member), civic or political organisations



What did you learn about yourself by completing this worksheet?

Which roles are most meaningful to you?

Sources of support in the community and how to contact them

One of the most effective things that brings security and happiness is having certain people around in our lives whom you can get advice and help when needed.

It is said that a community is an oasis of opportunity. You just have to find good opportunities and supportive people. The support network includes people who help and support you in achieving goals, planning activities, solving problems. So, it's worth thinking about what opportunities there are in your community.



Exercise: Support Resources in my community

- Your family doctor
- Your psychiatrist
- Your mental health nurse
- Your psychologist
- Addiction counselling
- Psychological, debt, and addiction counselling for the unemployed
- Social rehabilitation team
- Vocational rehabilitation team
- Experience counselling
- Support groups
- Local government, social department
- Victim support services
- Faith-based community
- Online environments and social networks
- Leisure activities
- Job opportunities

Add your supporting contacts here:

We're coming to the end of the group programme "*Return from hospital: How can I support myself*". Please remember all program and topics and write down key words or messages that are important to you.

What do you take away from the programme for yourself? What was most important to you?

Good job! Please thank yourself for the participation and write here a word of appreciation to yourself.

Return from hospital

How can I support myself



PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDE

3.4 My support network

Return from hospital

How can I support myself

WORKBOOK



All of us can find ourselves in a situation where we feel unwell and need professional help and support. The workbook has been created to help people better understand what they are experiencing, to create space for themselves and to offer different ways of working through the symptoms of illness and overcoming mental illness. You will find suggestions and ideas to think about. In some sections we then offer practical tips and people with mental illness' own experiences of overcoming their illness. If you are currently in a psychiatric hospital, you can use the guide for inspiration on how to bridge your stay and find support for your recovery there too.

The workbook is a companion to the group programme Return from Hospital: How can I support myself, which consists of twelve sessions in total and focuses on three different topics: how to support your recovery, how we communicate with each other and safety and return from hospital.

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